

HAMILTON, SULLIVAN, M.A. 'Just' a Sweet Transvestite(?): (Re)Contextualizing *Rocky Horror's* Dr. Frank-N-Furter. (2021)
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Over the past decade, Dr. Frank-N-Furter, the gender-bending Frankenstein riff of Richard O'Brien's *The Rocky Horror [Picture] Show* has found his/her/themselves caught in a tangled web of blurred and conflicting gender conceptions as the original stage show, film, and telefilm remake "time warp" from an experimental theater piece in 70s London to an international phenomenon.

Using the original 1975 film adaptation and the 2016 television remake, this paper unpacks and analyzes the cultural contexts in which Tim Curry and Laverne Cox's portrayals of Frank-N-Furter find themselves while foregrounding how the character and its text have faced changes and reinterpretation in reaction to the project of queer and trans liberation.

I argue that while 21st century interpretations of Frank-N-Furter (particularly the 2016 remake) may prefer more binary, legible embodiments of trans womanhood in order to adopt a more progressive, forward-thinking interpretation of the character, these readings erase the non-binary/genderqueer embodiment of the character and remove the transgressive stance that the text takes towards the boundaries of gender and sexuality and how they attempt to navigate these tensions through queer embodiment.

'JUST' A SWEET TRANSVESTITE(?):

(RE)CONTEXTUALIZING

ROCKY HORROR'S

DR. FRANK-N-FURTER

By

Sullivan Hamilton

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CHAPTER I

“THE PLANS ARE TO BE CHANGED”: INTRODUCTION

October of 2019 saw the staging of a production of *Richard O’Brien’s The Rocky Horror Show* at the Park Square Theater in Saint Paul, Minnesota, one of dozens of performances of the play timed every year to coincide with the Halloween season. However, this production (described as “Naughty Fun in the Era of Trans Rights and #MeToo” on Park Square’s website (Wandrei)) would be different than many other similar productions across the United States, as the character of Dr. Frank-N-Furter, the self-identified “sweet transvestite from Transsexual, Transylvania” who was originally played by British actor Tim Curry would be assayed by actress Gracie Anderson, a cisgender woman.

In her notes in the production’s program book, director and choreographer Ilana Ransom Toeplitz writes that “‘because we’ve always done it that way’ is one of the most toxic sentences in today’s language—and nostalgia can be dangerous”, continuing that her reasoning for casting a cisgender actor is because “nobody is going to benefit from watching a man do a Tim Curry impression in a pair of cheap heels and fishnets.” She concludes her note by saying:

it's important to acknowledge that *The Rocky Horror Show* is violent towards the Trans community [...] Though problematic, I'm grateful that *Rocky* also offered us the opportunity to hold sensitive conversations about what this material sounds like in 2019: what has changed, what has not changed—and what must change. I hope we can both talk and listen, about what that looks like to all of us (6).

Dramaturg Morgan Holmes asks in her note, “what does this Frankensteinian, gender-playful, rock-and-roll, alien invasion romp inform us about normality and monsters, repression, and fears in 1973? What are the stakes of telling these stories in 2019?” Concluding that as the audience watches *The Rocky Horror Show*, they should “consider the world of 2019. What is our normality and who are our ‘monsters’? Who holds power to shift language? To wield it violently? How do our mainstream tensions between sex, politics, pop culture and technology play out?” (7) To add weight to these statements, Holmes includes a quotation from transgender author and activist Jennifer Finney Boylan,

[Drag] can be about performance, exaggeration, and entertainment; [trans identity] is about people's actual lives. You will find many trans folks who adore all of the subversive, transgressive energy that drag can bring. But many are uneasy when our lives are mistaken for ‘performance,’ and it's disrespectful to trans people to conflate the two (qtd. in Holmes 8).

In a review for the Park Square production, Chris Hewitt acknowledges that “[the role of Frank-N-Furter is] traditionally played by male actors. The role is a tricky one that contains dated notions of gender and sexuality,” adding that “if [the song ‘Sweet Transvestite’] were written today, the only way it'd fly is if it were more like ‘a sweet genderqueer person from nonbinary Transylvania’” (“Rocky Horror' Still (Somewhat) Outrageous”). The review asserts that “the notion of how Frank identifies is muddled enough [...] that there's room for Anderson to make the role her own, neither a transvestite

nor a transsexual but simply a beautiful human” (Hewitt). Here, Hewitt is correctly pointing out that much has changed in the way of society’s perceptions and understanding of gender non-conformance, and explicitly acknowledging that within the framework of Frank-N-Furter’s character, the term “transvestite” might be more accurately updated to either “genderqueer” or “nonbinary.” This acknowledgement is particularly useful when contrasted to Toeplitz’s assertion that a contemporary audience will not benefit from a man (or male-assigned) performer in the role wearing heels and fishnets. What does it say then that a binarily-identified actress dressed in feminine-coded attire and singing that she is a “transvestite” is somehow more authentic or progressive than if a male-assigned actor were to do the same thing? Would Toeplitz still have these reservations of casting were an AMAB (assigned male at birth) actor who identified as genderqueer, nonbinary, or gender non-conforming were to undertake the role of Frank-N-Furter? I argue that Toeplitz, in her attempt to remove the “violence” of *The Rocky Horror Show*, in fact committed an act of erasure towards nonbinary or genderqueer performers and characters in her casting of a cisgender woman as a character whose entire *raison d’être* is the destruction of rigid binaries and cultural taboos.

This is not the first instance of the character of Dr. Frank-N-Furter being portrayed by a cisgender woman. By all accounts, this first time a cisgender woman undertook the part was in a 2004 Australian charity production of *The Rocky Horror Show* performed by the cast of the television soap opera *Neighbours*. Here, Maria Mercedes played Frank only after obtaining special permission from *Rocky Horror* creator Richard O’Brien. “The casting of a female in the role seemed quite controversial,” reads the souvenir program for

the production, “but the more the creative team thought about it, the more we realized it was perfectly keeping with the sexual ambiguity of the show.” The program then declares that “When *Rocky* was born in 1975 [sic], a transvestite in the leading role was shocking and outrageous. In 2004, a female in the role stretched the boundaries of this original provocative concept” (Bassingthwaighte 5).

In a 2010 episode of the television program *Glee*, wherein a group of high school students attempt to stage an amateur production of *The Rocky Horror Show*, actress Amber Riley in the character of Mercedes Jones is cast in the in-story production as Frank. Riley in character as Jones says to the director, “I was re-reading the script yesterday and it said, ‘Don’t dream it, be it’ and it’s my dream to play a lead role so, I figure, why not me? I mean, I’d be all kinds of crazy sexy in that outfit. And I can reinterpret the number a little bit, making it more modern” (“The Rocky Horror Glee Show”). The television episode rewrites the song “Sweet Transvestite”, swapping “Transsexual, Transylvania” for “Sensational, Transylvania,” and changes the lyrics from “I’m not much of a man by the light of day” to “I’m not much of a *girl*,” with Riley/Jones still dressed in the character’s signature corset and heels (“The Rocky Horror Glee Show”, emphasis added). Later in 2017, cisgender actress Kiona D. Reese was cast in the role of Frank in a “decidedly feminine interpretation” inspired by the *Glee* episode, where the original glam rock of the O’Brien musical score was fused with “Reese’s throaty southern gospel roots.” Said Reese of her casting “I’m really, really challenged by this role, especially as a woman playing it. I realize that people are going to really hate it or really love it. There’s no in-between. For me, I just wanted to make Frank as relatable and real as possible” (qtd. in Eldredge).

In each of these cases, the idea of casting a woman in the role of Frank-N-Furter is framed as more progressive or modern than the casting of a man (or more precisely, a male-assigned performer) was in the early 1970s when the show was initially launched. However, neither of these instances were able to capture the boundary-pushing essence of the text in how they performed it. Mercedes in the charity concert is still presenting as a woman in feminine lingerie, and Riley as Jones as Frank does the same, while also changing the lyrics to be not only tamer for a broadcast television program about American high school students, but more muddled in their reading. What does it mean for Jones as Frank to be a woman who is “not much of a girl” and whose transvestite attire consists of a leather corset and skirt with heels? One could venture that for an actress to truly adopt a confrontational transvestite performance wherein her “girl”-ness was questioned “by the light of day,” that she would don male attire.

These issues of performance and identification are yet further complicated by the casting of transgender Orange is the New Black actress Laverne Cox as Dr. Frank-N-Furter in the 2016 television remake of the 1975 film by *Hocus Pocus* and *High School Musical* director and choreographer Kenny Ortega. Unlike Anderson, Mercedes, or Riley, Cox is an out transgender actress and activist whose work within the LGBTQ community is well-known by fans and the press. But again, Cox does not identify as genderqueer or nonbinary, she identifies as a woman, and her womanhood and her binary embodiment is not negated by her transness. While her incarnation of Frank still sings “I’m just a sweet transvestite,” this characterization of Frank has seemingly been interpreted instead as a binary transgender woman, and great pains are taken in the script to change all instances of he/him

pronouns in reference to Frank-N-Furter to she/her pronouns. References to the nickname “Frank” (save for once instance where the line “you’re very lucky to be invited up to Frank’s laboratory” is retained from the original) are also changed avoid a masculine-coded appellation, using “Dr. Furter” in its place. Interestingly, where the Narrator/Criminologist character refers to Frank in the original play and film scripts as “a man of little morals and some persuasion”, the 2016 remake changes “man” to simply “person” instead of “woman,” removing a possible binary categorization.

The casting decisions in these various incarnations of *Rocky Horror* led to some interesting methods with grappling with the text. Though Holmes cites Boylan in her program note for the Park Square Theatre production, the quote is incomplete. This quotation was taken from Boylan’s article “5 Things You Should Not Say to a Transgender Person (and 3 Things You Should)” in a section where Boylan discusses mentioning drag queen RuPaul and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* to transgender people. However, Holmes omits the next part of Boylan’s article:

As for *Rocky Horror*, here’s another delightful piece of subversive drag culture, made more enjoyably depraved over the years by the legendary participation of its audiences at the film’s midnight screenings. All of that is great. But remember that, while Frank N. Furter sings that he’s a ‘sweet transvestite from Transylvania,’ he’s surely not an actual trans woman any more than Al Jolson in blackface is actually Thurgood Marshall (“5 Things Not to Say to a Transgender Person”).

Here we have reached an interesting complication. Toeplitz and Holmes cite contemporary awareness of transgender lives and issues as reason to cast a cisgender woman in the role of Dr. Frank-N-Furter. If the YouTube trailer for the production is any

indication, Anderson still sings “I’m just a sweet transvestite from Transsexual, Transylvania”, effectively having a cisgender woman portray a transgender¹ character (“The Rocky Horror Show – Official Trailer”). Having a (presumably) cisgender man perform as Frank will not, as Toeplitz writes, “benefit” a contemporary audience in the same way a cisgender woman playing the character would. Holmes’s quotation of Boylan’s article, though incomplete, frames *The Rocky Horror Show* as regressive performance of transgender or gender non-conforming identity.

However, with more of Boylan’s quote for added context, we see that while Boylan refers to Rocky Horror as “delightful,” she both asserts that Frank-N-Furter is not a transgender character (or at least, not a binary transgender woman), but rather a “drag” character whose characterization is equated to blackface performer Al Jolson. In Boylan’s estimation, Frank is “surely” not transgender, but Frank’s “drag” is also a sort of transgender equivalent of blackface that the character performs. *Rocky Horror* here is presented as simultaneously “transgressive” and “delightful” as well as crudely stereotypical (“5 Things Not to Say to a Trans Person”).

So, in casting a cisgender or binary transgender woman in the role of Dr. Frank-N-Furter, these productions both seek to modernize the text of *Rocky Horror* and purge it of elements that may be interpreted by contemporary audiences as an unsavory depiction of queer and transgender people through the character of Frank-N-Furter. As Toeplitz remarks, who in 2020 will be served by “a man [doing] a Tim Curry impression in a pair

¹ Here I use “transgender” as an umbrella term to encompass a wide variety of identities, including binary transgender women, genderqueer and nonbinary people, and gender non-conforming people, among others.

of cheap heels and fishnets?” In both the play and the film, Frank not only wears explicitly fetishistic feminine attire, but commits a gruesome murder, has sex with both Brad and Janet in what could be generously read as a seduction but more accurately interpreted as rape-by-deception, engages in cannibalism, drugs his “guests” into performing a sexual cabaret for his amusement, and is finally killed by his servants. All these story beats align closely with sensationalistic narrative tropes for transgender characters, which depict particularly trans women and transfeminine people as hypersexual, predatory, and homicidal, as well as meriting death at the conclusion of the narrative. It can therefore be said that the accusations against *Rocky Horror* by queer activists are not unfounded, and that the changes made by directors of various incarnations of the text are responding to cultural and historical precedent. However, these changes can overcorrect, and in casting only women, transgender or cisgender, as Frank-N-Furter, these creative teams are not only sterilizing the richly layered punk rock ethos of *Rocky Horror*, but turning a blind eye to the ways in which Frank-N-Furter as a character has allowed for a genderqueer embodiment and sentiment to stake its place in popular culture.

A plot summary of *The Rocky Horror (Picture) Show* may be required for the uninitiated. Brad Majors and Janet Weiss, “two young, ordinary, healthy kids,” leave the wedding of their friends Ralph and Betty Hapschatt (née Munroe) to visit their former science teacher Dr. Everett Scott and announce their engagement. While en route to Dr. Scott’s, Brad and Janet get a flat tire, and walk in the pouring rain to a castle Brad spotted down the road to ask for a phone. There they meet the seedy butler Riff Raff, his incestuous sister Magenta, and the live-in groupie Columbia. This motley crew is led by the lingerie-

clad mad scientist Dr. Frank-N-Furter, who invites Brad and Janet up to his laboratory to witness the birth of his creation, the titular Rocky Horror. Rocky has been designed in the image of a muscle man from a bodybuilding advertisement and is intended to become Frank's new lover. After Rocky's creation ceremony is interrupted by the undead biker Eddie, Columbia and Frank's ex-lover who Frank murdered in order to use half of his brain to create Rocky, Frank mutilates Eddie with a pickaxe (or microphone stand, or chainsaw, depending on the production) and proceeds to lead Rocky to their shared "somber bridal suite." Brad and Janet are then taken to separate chambers by the servants, where Frank seduces each while attempting to disguise himself as the other. Overwhelmed by her tryst with Frank and by spying Frank and Brad having sex on one of the castle's television monitors, Janet seeks comfort in the arms of Rocky, who has escaped Frank's bedroom in fear. As Janet and Rocky make love, Dr. Scott arrives unannounced to the castle in search of Eddie, who is revealed to have been his nephew. Dr. Scott (an undercover agent of the government researching UFOs) also reveals that Frank, Riff Raff, and Magenta are extraterrestrials who have come to Earth for some nefarious purpose. His cover blown, Frank uses the "sonic transducer" in his laboratory to paralyze Brad, Janet, Scott, Columbia, and Rocky; drugging them, dressing them in corsets and high heels akin to his own garb, and forcing them to perform a burlesque floorshow "in an empty house, in the middle of the night" to an audience of no one. The floorshow concludes with an orgy led by Frank that is cut short by Riff Raff and Magenta arriving in space suits, intending to "beam the entire house back to the planet of Transsexual in the galaxy of Transylvania." Riff Raff blasts Columbia, Frank, and Rocky, and soon the castle begins to take off to outer

space, leaving Brad, Janet, and Scott in the rubble, left to contemplate what their experiences mean for their lives and relationships.

Changing the character of Frank-N-Furter in relation to shifting societal values is not an entirely new concept. When *The Rocky Horror Show* mounted its West End revival at the Piccadilly Theatre in 1990, Frank's dialogue during his liaison with Brad was altered. This change is archived in the official cast recording of the show, where Frank's assurance to Brad that "there's no crime in giving yourself over to pleasure," is given the addendum, "unless of course you forget to wear one of these" with the audible snap of a condom added to the soundtrack (1990 London Cast). In 1990, the AIDS crisis had been raging in queer communities for nearly a decade, particularly affecting men and transgender women who had sex with men. Frank's public service announcement for condoms during sex with Brad bends the character's transgressive, hedonistic sexuality for the context of the time period, when queer sex between male-assigned people carried possible consequences, even fatal ones. But even this textual postscript was lacking, while Frank uses a condom with Brad, his previous sex scene with Janet remains as it was in the original script, with no condom mentioned, even though Janet's sexual intercourse with the bi/pansexual Frank would have similar ramifications for her as well.

The goal of this paper is to disentangle the variant, permeable, and contradictory understandings of the identity of *Rocky Horror's* Dr. Frank-N-Furter, particularly as the character relates to shifting societal conceptions of gender identity and terminology as such discussions become more prevalent in public life. I do so by tracing the character's creative origins and contextualizing them within the contemporaneous queer cultures of two major

iterations: the original 1975 film adaptation of the stage show, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* starring Tim Curry as Frank-N-Furter, and the 2016 Fox television remake *The Rocky Horror Picture Show: Let's Do the Time Warp Again* which cast Laverne Cox as Frank-N-Furter. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate how moves towards more “progressive” interpretations of the character not only ignore important textual analyses of the purpose of Frank’s character within *Rocky Horror*, but also how these reimaginings leave little room for non-binary, genderqueer, and gender-variant readings of the character in favor of more palatable and marketable binary gender presentations. It is my assertion that while Frank-N-Furter is a challenging, uncomfortable, and indeed problematic character in the queer canon, it is vital that he/she/they present a subversive challenge to what we conceive as gender and sexuality in order to both remain true to the original intentions of the text and to remain relevant as the *Rocky Horror* phenomenon continues into its half-century.

CHAPTER II

“DON’T GET STRUNG OUT BY THE WAY I LOOK”:

UNPACKING THE “SWEET TRANSVESTITE”

In order to properly unpack and analyze the context of the characterization of Frank-N-Furter, we will have to grapple with the slippery, complicated, and fraught history of the word “transvestite” and its usage. Within the text of *Rocky Horror* and any of its adaptations, the only definitive statement Frank makes about his queer identity directly is found in his introductory song, “Sweet Transvestite.” Appearing before Brad and Janet cloaked in a black Dracula-esque cape, Frank sings, “I’m not much of a man by the light of day, but by night, I’m one hell of a lover! /I’m just a sweet transvestite from Transsexual, Transylvania!” before throwing off the cape to reveal his corset, garter belt, and fishnet stockings. Outside of this scene, Frank-N-Furter makes no other commentary on his gender identity or sexual orientation; instead, his rhetorical queerness originates from his visual appearance throughout the play/film, his goal of creating Rocky to serve as an erotic “playmate,” and the sexual encounters he has or is implied to have had with the other characters.

For their part, Frank’s followers, Brad and Janet, and Dr. Scott never explicitly comment on Frank’s gender performance or sexuality within the text either. Riff Raff and Magenta, Frank’s “handyman” and domestic servant, refer to Frank with he/him pronouns and address him as “master,” with Riff Raff stating that “the master is not yet

married, nor do I think he ever will be,” when Janet questions if Frank is the groupie Columbia’s husband. Towards the end of Frank’s late-night floorshow, Riff Raff and Magenta interrupt and announce their plans to return to the “Planet of Transsexual, in the Galaxy of Transylvania,” appearing in extraterrestrial space suits akin to Frank’s own attire, with fishnet stockings, garter-belts, and spiky high heeled ankle boots. While Brad and Janet react to Frank’s introduction where he reveals his cross-dressed attire with shock and fear, as Janet faints and Brad’s eyes widen with shock and his mouth begins to quaver, neither character’s dialogue mention any sort of revulsion or shock for Frank’s choice of dress. In fact, in the original 1975 film, Brad’s police statement glimpsed briefly in the Criminologist’s dossier of the film’s narrative, “The Denton Affair,” has Brad mentioning that he at first believed Frank to be a (cisgender) woman, elaborating that, “When we got there she started talking about being a transvestite. Now, I don’t keep up with the modern trends that happen in New York and all those big cities and I wasn’t quite sure what a transvestite was” (Chiovari²). Even Dr. Scott, described in the opening credits of the film as “a rival scientist” to Frank-N-Furter, never admonishes or remarks upon the Frank’s queerness, only obliquely referencing Frank’s “decadence,” and that Frank’s murder of Eddie justifies Frank’s assassination by ray gun at the hands of Riff Raff, as “society must be protected” (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*).

Therefore, the only concrete statement of identity Frank gives to the other characters, and the only identity the other characters use in reference to Frank, is

² A complete copy of Brad’s police statement from the film was obtained by fan Gene Chiovari and reprinted in the national *Rocky Horror* fan magazine *Crazed Imaginations*. In the DVD commentary, Richard O’Brien mentions that production designer Brian Thomson wrote the statements.

“transvestite.” The term was originally coined in 1910 by German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld in his book *Die Transvestiten* (The Transvestite), who also became an early advocate for transgender rights. Previously, there had been a conflation of gender nonconformance and sexuality based on the research of Karl Ulrichs, whose theories of sexual orientation focused on a gender essentialist reading of desire. Ulrichs divided sexual behaviors into taxonomies such as *urning*, which described a subset of homosexual men who possessed “female souls” and had an erotic desire for gender-conforming male partners. For Ulrichs, “The *Urning* is not a man but a type of feminine being who is female not only in the realm of sexual feelings. His entire spiritual organism, his entire spiritual temperament and character is feminine” (qtd. in Leck 41). Over time, while Ulrichs revised and expanded his research, he still focused on “sexual intermediaries,” presenting variation from cisheteronormative standards as natural and benign (41).

These “intermediary” framings were also applied to bi- and pansexuality, as Ulrichs also saw the attraction to both men and women (working within these gender binaries) as a form of “doubling” in the same way that *urning* males represented a spiritual doubling of masculine and feminine essences. These *doppelnaturen* (double-nature) people were deemed “physical-spiritual hermaphrodites” by Ulrichs, whose research increasingly focused on sexualities and gender identities that rested in liminality (Leck 60). It is important for our purposes to not only look at Frank-N-Furter’s gender presentation, but also his unidentified but enacted sexual practices. Throughout the course of the text, Frank engages in sexual intercourse with both men and women, Brad,

Janet, and Rocky explicitly, and Columbia and her ex-lover Eddie implicitly. Frank's sexual conquest of at least five binarily identified partners implicates a bisexual identity, however Frank's extraterrestrial origins and voracious sexual appetite hints towards a more expansive definition of his sexuality, one that could be understood to be pansexual, or even (thanks to Frank's non-human origins) *omnisexual* in nature.

It was not until the publication of *Die Transvestiten* by Hirschfeld that understandings between gender and sexuality began to decouple from one another (Adams 171). In 1954, American researcher Harry Benjamin developed a division between those who wear the clothing of the opposite gender or perform gender nonconforming roles, and those who wish to transition physically. It was Benjamin who coined the word "transsexual" to describe those who specifically sought physical transition, giving the term widespread notice with the publication of his 1966 book *The Transsexual Phenomenon*, hailed as "the bible of transsexuality" (172). The earliest version of the term "transgender" appeared in the second edition of John F. Oliven's book *Sexual Hygiene and Pathology* in 1965 as a differentiator between the desire to change gender and "transsexual" as the desire to transition (173).

By the 1970s, many of those in the trans community began solidifying the terminology used to describe their identities and experiences, and "as had been the case with the transvestite label during the first half of the twentieth century, the transsexual label was found to be lacking" (Adams 176), and variations of the word transgender such as *transgenderal*, *transgenderist*, and *transgenderism* began to gain more use by contemporary trans people. All these various terms fell in and out of favor over time and

location, with *transgender* finally becoming the most accepted intra-community term by the 1980s, specifically because of its wide umbrella effect that made it an easy term to apply to the many variations of trans people's experiences (173–174). However, it is important to note that while these terms gained widespread use in the 20th century West, people across the globe at all points of history have engaged in what could be characterized under the Western taxonomical umbrella of transgender behavior or identity.

This abbreviated history of transgender terminology suggests that from *The Rocky Horror Show*'s earliest history, from its original inception as a stage play at the Royal Court Theatre in June of 1973 to its initial film adaptation in 1975, the scientific and cultural understanding of transgender identity and the words employed to describe that identity and lived experience were incredibly varied across temporal and geographical sites. Still further complicating matters, while Frank describes himself as a “sweet transvestite,” he also gives his point of origin as “Transsexual, Transylvania” (though, when both the audience and Brad and Janet are introduced to the existence of this locale, they do not yet know it is a distant planet in a far-off galaxy). Though Frank may not say that he *is* a “transsexual,” the fact that he and his servants hail from a planet *called* “Transsexual” only adds more implications into the mix. Indeed, because of this linguistic twist, many contemporary reviewers of the play and original film haphazardly use both “transvestite” and “transsexual” (as well as other, more colloquial terms) when describing Frank-N-Furter. A review of the initial show from June of 1973 refers to Frank both as a “trans-sexual [sic] doctor” and a “lowering transvestite monster” who is

rendered “ambisextrous” by Curry’s performance (Billington). A review of the 1975 film adaptation for *The Cincinnati Enquirer* states that Frank “singly introduces himself as ‘...a sweet transvestite, transsexual [sic], Transylvania,’” totally erasing any nuance between the terms, and damning the film for its “totally degenerate, transvestite, transsexual, and blasphemous content” (Berrigan). In her 2003 book, *Remaking the Frankenstein Myth on Film*, Caroline Joan S. Picart refers to Frank as an “irrepressible transsexual” (69) and “transsexual alien” (71), using both “s/he” and “his” as pronouns for Frank (74). Even the actor who originated Frank seems to be in on the confusion. In a 1974 interview with *The Los Angeles Times* about playing Frank in the first American production of *The Rocky Horror Show* at the Roxy nightclub, Tim Curry remarks that “He [Frank] says he's a transvestite transsexual [sic], whatever that means,” only to add “I don't play him as a transsexual” (Kilday). Also important to note, before taking off for the galaxy of Transylvania, Magenta sings the praises of her home planet by lamenting, “Oh, sweet Transsexual!” language that (purposefully or not) closely mirrors Frank’s declaration of being a “sweet transvestite.” Despite the clear demarcations between the two terms, their intermingling by reviewers, academics, and Frank’s first actor suggest that what terms to apply to Frank were ambiguous and nebulous, eluding reviewers, academics, and even his originator.

Though Ulrichs’s conflation of gender identity and sexual desire had been mostly debunked by the contemporary fields of sexology and transgender research, such connections persisted in the popular consciousness well into the latter half of the twentieth century. These outdated assumptions not only framed gender identity and

sexual orientation as a shaping one another, but also included a heavily erotic charge to their claims. Richard von Krafft-Ebling, a sexologist who built upon Ulrichs's theories and revised them after his death, proposed a "degenerative" theory of non-heterosexual practice that moved away from Ulrichs's notions of gender and sexuality as inborn essences (Leck 156). Krafft-Ebling's theories made space for Ulrichs's inborn queerness, but focused more on queerness as a regressive, almost atavistic state. Krafft-Ebling saw male homosexual activity as progressing/regressing until the practitioner "feels like a woman in the sexual act, has an increased sensibility for passive sexual activity and under certain circumstances falls to the level of prostitution" (qtd. in Leck 156).

These same dynamics play out within the text of *The Rocky Horror Show*, with Frank-N-Furter both as corrupted and corruptor of innocence, the patient-zero for a regressive, destructive, and feminine strain of queerness. While Frank says little in terms of *what* he is, Frank's glittering paean to Fredrick's of Hollywood glamour, "Don't Dream It," gives us some glimpse into *why* he is the way he is. Standing illuminated in Fox searchlights attired in a red sequin corset, Frank sings "Whatever happened to Fay Wray?/ That delicate satin draped frame/ As it clung to her thigh/ How I started to cry/ Because I wanted to be dressed just the same!" (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*) Here, Frank gives a (possible) origin point for his gender presentation: the glamour of 1930s Hollywood in the figure of Fay Wray in her star-making turn in *King Kong*. Wray's "delicate satin-draped frame" gives inspiration for Frank's own, much more overtly sexualized feminine-coded dress, which has allowed him to "swim the warm waters of sins of the flesh."

From this point forward, Frank's queerness ultimately spreads to Eddie, Columbia, Rocky, Janet, Brad, and Dr. Scott, each either destroyed or irrevocably changed by their seduction at the hands of Frank. Eddie is killed (and later cannibalized) by Frank, Rocky and Columbia are gunned down by Riff Raff for defending Frank from his and Magenta's coup, and Brad, Janet, and Dr. Scott are left stunned and shaken in the rubble of Frank's castle after Riff Raff and Magenta blast it back to the galaxy of Transylvania. After Brad and Janet taste Frank's "forbidden fruit," the dynamics of their relationship change – Janet becomes a confident, sexually affirmed agent in her own newfound search for pleasure, and Brad, discovering that Frank's sexual temptations are "beyond [him]" becomes a femininized, passive figure. Brad, who begins his visit to Frank's castle affirming his fiancée that "it's going to be alright," loses his access to heteronormative male power to become a cross-dressed, passive being, now in Ulrichs and Krafft-Ebling's term, "double natured." Brad's final appearance in the floorshow, clad in a black corset, fishnet stockings, and black six-inch pumps proves that "degeneration could be the result of cultivation via seduction" (Leck 157), in this case, Brad's seduction by Frank earlier in the narrative.

Yet another kink (pun-intended) in our understanding of Frank's declaration "I'm just a sweet transvestite" is the implication of sexual fetish and the performance of eroticism. Frank's transvestism (as mutable and complicated as we now know that term to be) does not enact itself in Frank wearing gowns, skirts, or casual feminine-coded attire; rather Frank almost exclusively dresses in sexual feminine clothing – corsets, fishnets, high-heels, and garter belts. While "transvestite" has long since fallen out of

appropriate use to describe people under the transgender umbrella, *transvestic fetishism* has become more commonly applied to those who do not necessarily identify outside of their assigned gender role or engage in cross-gender performance outside of sexual play, but who employ crossdressing or cross-gender performance as a sexual practice. Even though Frank is exclusively presented in cross-gender attire in *Rocky Horror*, that Frank's clothing is associated with sexual fetishism adds more dimensions to what we can extrapolate about his identity. Betty Robbins and Roger Myrick, in comparing the functions of cross-dressing and fetish between *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and the drag/transgender film *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, specifically place the role of cross-gender play in *Rocky Horror* within the network of gender roles as they relate to sadomasochism and "is used to eroticize the masculine and render it complete" (276). They write that, "using transvestitism and relying on sadistic spectatorial pleasure, chronicles Hollywood's obsessive investment in the fetish as well as its reveling in the fetish" (273). Robbins and Myrick assert that though Frank is clad in women's lingerie, this is meant as a subversion of Frank's sexual identity of dominance, of being "on top" both sexually and situationally (274). In their view, the gender identification of Frank and the other characters who submit to crossdressing thanks to his influence is "irrelevant," as by the floorshow finale it is their "stockings, heels, and, most importantly, leather [that] are quite the point" (277).

While not as frequently used as a descriptor of Frank-N-Furter, it is important to also analyze "drag" and the figure of the drag queen in relation to the character and the text. Not only does *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* frequently appear in lists of "drag

films” such as *La Cage aux Folles*, *Tootsie*, and the aforementioned *Priscilla*, but in her appraisal of *Rocky Horror*’s relation to the transgender community, Jennifer Finney Boylan explicitly relates Frank-N-Furter to drag (and drag then to blackface performance). These “border wars” (to borrow from trans theorist Jack Halberstam) between drag queens as performers and the lived experiences of transgender women are not new, nor do they play exclusively upon the text of *Rocky Horror*. It is also not exclusive to queer critiques, as some feminist (particularly radical feminist) scholars have connected male-assigned performers adopting or lampooning femininity/femaleness as a form of misogynistic violence. In the article “Drag = Blackface,” Kelly Kleiman lambasts drag and drag performers, decrying it as “[representing] a continuing insult to women” that ranges from “prescription of desired behavior to simple ridicule” (699). As it specifically pertains to *Rocky Horror*, viewer Amelia Kinsinger assesses that “Frank helped revolutionize gender nonconformity during the 70s, but in today’s context, he is merely a bisexual drag queen. His character illuminates drag-culture’s main crisis—it ultimately allows cisgender men to dress up and create a parody that mocks women” (5).

So, words such as “transvestite,” “transsexual,” and “transgender” have found different modes of employment and levels of acceptability from the early twentieth century into the present, and the term transgender has been specifically adopted for its broad use in describing gendered behavior and identities. If Frank refers to himself as a “sweet transvestite,” we now can see how contingent our understanding of this phrase is on time, location, and experience. I now turn to Kenneth Burke to help us untangle some of these implications. In *Language as Symbolic Action*, Burke stresses two distinct

methods of understanding words: the “scientific” and “dramatistic” modes. While “scientific” readings focus on prescriptivist notions of “*naming*, or *definition*,” a “dramatistic” reading instead “culminates in the kind of speculations that find their handiest material in stories, plays, poems, the rhetoric of oratory and advertising, mythologies, theologies, and philosophies after the classic model.” The difference lies between “language as definition, and language as act,” and the ways in which terminology is at once a reflection, selection, and deflection of reality (44-45).

Regardless of their accuracy in describing or understanding the transgender experience, all these terminologies and their origins, from Ulrichs early attempts at understanding homosexuality, to Benjamin’s taxonomical division between body and dress, to the trans community developing and employing chosen intra- and extra-community language, to the descriptions given to sexual fetish and kink subcultures, serve to build a matrix of meanings for the queer body and its adornment. Frank-N-Furter, mutable and insatiable, moves within these networks of meaning, never truly alighting on one set, stationary understanding. Because of this, the understanding of what or why is Frank becomes nearly impossible to situate within any one geo-temporal locale. Is Frank a bigender, genderqueer, androgynous, or nonbinary person? Can Frank be understood as a depiction (albeit possibly regressive) of transgender womanhood, as Frank is performed by Laverne Cox in the 2016 television remake? Does Frank’s corseted, high-heeled, erotically charged embodiment indicate that Frank is a fetishistic cross-dresser, whose dress is not (or not only) an expression of a non-sexualized identity? Can all or none of the interpretations truly encompass all that Frank as a character

represents? What does Frank in all his/her/their ambiguity mean as we “do the Time Warp” from 1973, to 2010, to 2016, and beyond? When trying to come to terms (literally and figuratively) with Dr. Frank-N-Furter, do we take a scientific approach to understanding, stressing definitions, demarcations, and precision of language, or do we utilize a dramatic reading that encompasses over one hundred years of queer study and nearly fifty years of the *Rocky Horror* phenomenon and all the ephemera and ambiguity that comes with that? I present these analyses of the character of Dr. Frank-N-Furter as portrayed in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and the remake television film *The Rocky Horror Picture Show: Let's Do the Time Warp Again* as a way of destabilizing and rearranging binary, historical, and scientific understandings of the text of *Rocky Horror*, and its most defining and yet undefinable main character.

CHAPTER III

“I’M NOT MUCH OF A MAN BY THE LIGHT OF DAY”:

TIM CURRY AS FRANK-N-FURTER IN

THE ROCKY HORROR (PICTURE) SHOW

Shortly after its initial previews in June of 1973, a film adaptation of *The Rocky Horror Show* (now titled *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*) began filming at Bray Studios and Oakley Court castle in October the following year. Much of the original creative team, including director Jim Sharman, set and production designer Brian Thomson, musical arrangement director Richard Hartley, and costume designer Sue Blane, returned for work on the film. The team expanded on their original concepts for the stage production, which was a relatively stripped-down affair with only a white cinema screen, construction scaffolding, and Coca-Cola freezer for a set, and theatrical cast-offs, hospital donations, and sex shop bits for costumes (Pettigrew cited in Michaels and Evans 212). Also returning were the actors who originated the roles of Dr. Frank-N-Furter, Riff Raff, Magenta, and Columbia on opening night in London: Tim Curry, Richard O’Brien, Patricia Quinn, and “Little” Nell Campbell respectively, as well as Johnathan Adams, now switching roles from the Narrator to Dr. Scott. Singer Meatloaf who had played Eddie (a role traditionally doubled with Dr. Scott) in the original American production in Los Angeles and the short-lived Broadway run also returned to the cast.

While there are some differences between *The Rocky Horror Show* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* both narratively and stylistically, the film overall is a functional snapshot into the creative processes that led to the original stage production quickly becoming a smash hit across Europe, America, Australia, Japan, and elsewhere. With much of the production team and original cast returning to reprise their part in recreating the stage show, it is a useful artifact for analyzing and contextualizing the original understanding of Frank-N-Furter, particularly with Curry once again taking on the role. According to Brian Thomson, “When the film happened, Jim [Sharman] had two choices: either a really big-budget thing with stars like [Mick] Jagger playing Frank or a very small budget with unknowns like Tim” (qtd. in Michaels and Evans 75); Sharman chose the latter. Though Mick Jagger was not ultimately cast as Frank-N-Furter, part of his ethos is inherent to the character, as figures of the glam, punk, and pop rock scenes of the early to mid-1970s contributed a great deal to Frank’s conception. For as much as Dr. Frank-N-Furter is a riff on Mary Shelley’s Victor Frankenstein (and more so the *Henry Frankenstein* of the James Whale film adaptation), he is, like Frankenstein’s creature and his own, an amalgam of stolen parts reworked into a new and frightening creation: the androgyny of 1970s British rock music and the upheavals and deconstructions of Western gender norms that these glam-pop gods propagated, the anarchy and chaos represented by the folk-role of the pantomime dame, over forty years of horror films and Hollywood glamor, the intermingling of gothic decadence and sexual kink and taboo into fashion by designers like Sue Blane, Malcom McLaren and Vivienne Westwood, and creator Richard O’Brien’s own dealings and experimentations with sexuality and gender.

Frank-N-Furter's relationship with the glam rock movement of the early 1970s and its association to *Rocky Horror* has been one of the most salient connections made between the culture and the original text. Mick Jagger was not only Fox's purposed replacement for Curry as Frank, but he also attended the original production in London (Burton cited in Evans and Michaels 151). David Bowie makeup artist Pierre LaRoche was tasked with redesigning Curry's original Frank makeup for the film production (Wong cited in Michaels and Evans 60). Mick Rock, who photographed glam musical artists including Jagger, Bowie, and Lou Reed, was hired as the on-set "special photographer" for the filming of the original 1975 film (and later photographed the cast of the remake film in 2016). These connections to the contemporaneous glam music scene help establish a rhetoric of Frank-N-Furter as glam rocker.

Glam rock and its performance tropes have held important socio-cultural ties to queerness and other marginalized identities. Performers like David Bowie in his Ziggy Stardust persona also helped form a direct link to a science-fiction-tinged embodiment of glam rock androgyny. Glam and its sister genre funk rock "created an alternate reality where [marginalized identities] can forge a unique existence through fantasy and performance," often employing elements of science-fiction to "look to space not as more territory to colonize, but as a place not yet colonized, and a place that can be utilized in the subversion of an oppressive society" (Bradley 388-389). Frank-N-Furter, like Ziggy Stardust, places gender performance and ambivalent sexuality as cosmic and extraterrestrial in origin. The figure of the space alien as embodied by glam rockers, humanoid but inhuman, beautiful but degenerate, at once knowable and unknown figure

heavily into Frank's original characterization. Bowie's Ziggy Stardust character, frequently compared to Frank-N-Furter by members of the original cast and creative team, in particular "is meant to threaten mainstream culture's fear of difference and deviance [...] and put less emphasis on peace and love (not that he opposed these things) and more on (gender, sexual, and stylistic) rebellion" (Bradley 393).

This rebellion carried with it tones of decay and degeneration from heterosexuality into a sort of "ambivalent triumph of the oppressed" (Carter qtd. in Hebdige 62), particularly as Bowie and other acts attracted followers who copied their gender-bending, appropriative camp styling. These fans (or, to borrow from *Rocky Horror: Columbia-like wannabe groupies*), "perched nervously on platform shoes" in elaborate makeup and "hair rinsed a luminous vermillion, orange, or scarlet streaked with gold and silver," directly opposed the authenticity narrative that had previously dominated the rock music scene, choosing to instead embrace an Oscar Wilde inspired flair for surface-level dramatics (Hebdige 60). This was a "meta-message [of] escape – from class, from sex, from personality, from obvious commitment – into a fantasy past [...] or a science-fiction future," much like Frank-N-Furter's own call to escape: "don't dream it – be it." Like Bowie before him, who borrowed from a glamour photo of genderbending starlet Marlene Dietrich for the cover of his *Hunky Dory* album, Frank appropriates from old Hollywood icons like Fay Wray to preconfigure a break away from assumed heteronormative social roles in the floorshow. And like Bowie's bisexual possessed alien-god Ziggy Stardust, Frank's identity as an androgynous extraterrestrial from a planet called "Transsexual" may stand in as a sort of projection towards queer-

futuristic utopian ideal. Previously, rock music, particularly in the United Kingdom, called to proletariat matters of class and youth identity, particularly as hetero-masculinist identity. Now, emphasis was given to sex, gender, and queerness by drawing upon glamor images of the past to create new visions of the future on or away from Earth (Hebdige 61-62).

This glam ambivalence is expressed in Frank's musical characterization in terms of performance and textual diegesis. Of the male-assigned singers in the original film, Frank, the most femininely coded in appearance among them prior to the floorshow finale, has the deepest vocal register. Brad, ostensibly the heterosexual male lead, sings "Dammit Janet," his opening song, "with soft, warm head tones in a boyish register accompanied by strings, bells, and piano" (Reale 142). Rocky Horror, characterized by his artificially developed, "Charles Atlas seal of approval" worthy body, sings in a boyish, baffled voice atop a surf rock backing track, with actor/model Peter Hinwood dubbed over by singer Trevor White (Michaels and Evans 262-263). Indeed, Raynor Bourton, the original stage Rocky, chose to sing his introductory song "The Sword of Damocles" in a purposefully camp falsetto (Bourton qtd. in Michaels and Evans 148). Brad and Rocky are characterized as two distinct forms of western masculinity: The All-American, average upright boy-next-door and the sexualized jock/athlete built to almost resemble a parody of the Hitlerian *Übermensch*, yet both are emasculated by their musical and vocal arrangements. Frank in his corset, fishnet stockings and glitter encrusted high heels dominates both characters on the soundtrack with his purring baritone voice, and his musical arrangements are full of deep strumming guitars and dirty

sax riffs. Music theorist Steven Beverburg Reale borrows from gender theorist Marjorie Garber, linking Frank's musical embodiment with his ability to enhance his masculinity not in spite of his dress, but because of it, as "Frank's transvestism functions to heighten his masculinity regardless of the feminine signals he may be appropriating" in his makeup, heels, and corseted body (145). "Paradoxically", Garber writes, "the male transvestite represents the extreme limit case of 'male subjectivity,' 'proving' that he is male against the most extraordinary odds" (qtd. in Reale 145). Frank's musical characterization conversely mirrors his physical characterization in comparisons to the two other male main characters, bringing into question the authenticity of Brad and Rocky's masculinity.

Glam rock used such subversions in order to help its marginalized performers (or those performers who appropriated such marginalization) to develop, define, and assert new musical forms of queer power against the "heterosexual male-dominated world of rock music" (Auslander qtd. in Bradley 393). This glam performance terrain also created spaces for gender non-conformance and non-binary presentation that otherwise would have been rejected violently outside of music. "the site [sic] of a transvestite on stage can compel pleasure and applause," Judith Butler writes, "while the site [sic] of the same transvestite on the seat next to us on the bus can compel fear, rage, even violence" (qtd. in Bradley 393).

Though Brad may assure Janet that "it's all right" and that he will "pull out the aces when the time is right," Brad's B-movie heroism (and we are assured by Brad's designation in the film's opening credits that he is intended to be "a hero") is no match

for Frank's androgynous queer seduction, his musical situation within the text highlighting how Brad's heteronormative worldview cannot survive long in Frank's presence. Brad's showcase songs in *Rocky Horror*, "Dammit Janet" and "Once in a While" (present in the stage show, cut from the film) focus on heterosexual love and courtship. "Dammit Janet" is his marriage proposal at the start of the story, and "Once in a While" is sung after discovering Janet's tryst with Rocky, causing him to question if their relationship can withstand the night. Further complicating matters, this song is sung after Brad's sexual encounter with Frank, the deleted scene from the film depicting Brad singing, cigarette in hand, while Frank sleeps beside him in the bed in which they just had sex (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*).

Frank's songs instead focus on self-expression and carnal lust. "Sweet Transvestite" tells what and who Frank is, "I Can Make You a Man" (originally titled "The Charles Atlas Song") and its reprise are Frank's lustful odes to the muscular male body and all the ways it excites him, and "Don't Dream It" is Frank's plea to his victims and the audience to "give yourself over to absolute pleasure" and embrace, as the Narrator describes it, "a far more physical philosophy" of sexual hedonism. Brad's Frankie Avalon/Donny Osmond-tinged malt shop pop is a relic of the heteronormative 1950s and 60s, decimated and debauched by Frank's 70s glam rock ethos in much the same way that real life glam rock acts like David Bowie appropriated from similar past styles only to remix them in a glam camp vein. The prominence of Frank's songs, overwhelming Brad's songs in style and sheer numbers, represents a push to destroy or

deform the heteronormative traditions of soft pop rock and through Frank's appearance, refute previously held masculine-dominated notions of rock authenticity.

Important to note in Reale's assessment of Tim Curry's Frank's and his rock performance is his differentiation between the two terms "transvestite" and "transsexual." For, "like glam rockers, Frank appropriates femininity as a transvestite (not as a transsexual)." Reale writes, "because his masculinity offers the freedom to make such an appropriation. Ultimately, Frank 'wears' femininity, but is not construed as feminine" (146). This stressing of masculinity and femininity, of wearing and being, in relation to a glam ethos is echoed by members of the original creative team for *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Costume designer Sue Blane points out that Tim Curry's original Terry de Haviland heels "were too small for him [and that] was part of the look. [...] He wasn't meant to be in those shoes." She explains that "If they were made to fit, they would not look like ladies' shoes, just shoes that a drag queen might wear" (qtd. in Michaels and Evans 107). Peter Robb-King, who applied LaRoche's makeup designs onto Curry for the film, stresses, "There is more makeup on Tim than there would be on a man playing a woman, but the interesting thing is Tim was not playing a woman" (qtd. in Michaels and Evans 229). The effect that Blane and Robb-King sought in crafting Frank's visual characterization was not based in "passing" as a woman or the repetition of woman-as-performance, but rather a femininity that highlights the masculinity that seems to burst forth from underneath the surface. Even Frank's gloves, long, shimmering lurex evening gloves popular with middle and upper-class British women in the mid-50s, have

numerous drastic rips in the arms and Curry's fingers tear from the small, delicate fingers of the garment, as if they cannot possibly contain the body that inhabits them.

Though Frank's elaborate camp makeup, sequins and rhinestones, and glittery platform heels are taken from glam rock, the torn vintage clothing and intermingling of fashion and fetish draw from the then-burgeoning punk scene, of which costume designer Sue Blane has often been cited as a founding member. Though Blane says she "wouldn't dream of taking the credit for inventing punk," she does acknowledge that "certain elements of punk – for instance, ripped fishnet tights" derived from her designs for *Rocky Horror*. Punk "described itself in bondage through an assortment of darkly comic signifiers" that served as "a deliberately scrawled addendum to the 'text' of glam rock [...] designed to puncture glam rock's extravagantly ornate style" (Hebdige 63) through a reliance on do-it-yourself aesthetics such as safety pins, chains, and repurposed clothing. Frank's corset is doubly repurposed; originally created by Sue Blane for a production of Jean Genet's *The Maids* directed by Bowie mentor Lindsay Kemp, it was repurposed for Curry's role as Frank by having Curry wear it backwards (corsets traditionally lace in the back, Frank's laces in the front), painting it black to imitate the look of leather, and gluing multicolor sequins on it (Blane cited in Michaels and Evans 104). "I think the other thing I did with *Rocky* that wasn't happening in fashion – and I feel very strongly about this – was that all the costumes were distressed to a great extent," Blane insists, "I made it a very sexy gothic look [...] I think that did get taken through to punk. You were allowed to rip things and paint them" (Michaels and Evans 105). Other DIY punk aspects of Frank's appearance as designed by Blane include vintage accessories taken from junk

and sex shops around London, and a discarded green surgeon's gown taken from a local hospital repurposed into a "couture creation" for Frank's laboratory appearance (105 – 106). Punk, like glam, also shares a direct line to queer identity. For while British punk was preoccupied with notions of class alienation, American punk was an expression of "alienation from and disgust with mainstream values" that had coalesced around "Andy Warhol's factory, with its transvestites, transsexuals, and rent boys" (Cole 141). This strain of punk arrived out of the glitter movement, itself seen as either an offshoot or synonym for glam rock, that had shifted from decadent to apocalyptic (McNeil in Cole 141). This American queer-punk likely began to roll into the hodge-podge of *Rocky Horror*'s aesthetics both with its initial American production in Los Angeles and first Broadway run with Curry reprising his Frank role and from Malcom McLaren's appropriation of these styles which he later brought to his King's Road fashion boutique Sex, where Sue Blane would purchase clothing later used for *The Rocky Horror Show* (Blane qtd. in Evans and Michaels 103). Vivaly, these glam/glitter/punk fashions did not materialize out of thin air; they were (mis)appropriated from queer people who lived in poorer urban centers and who did not necessarily adopt such looks as a form of transgressive performance. Indeed, a semi-permeable barrier existed between wealthy rock stars like David Bowie or Alice Cooper who adopted queer markers as an act, more underground or lesser-known queer performers like punk rock frontwoman Jayne County and Warhol superstar Candy Darling who were gay, transgender or genderqueer on and off-stage, and queer non-performers whose everyday lives and embodiments were scrutinized by the cis-heteronormative gaze (Cole 143). This meant that the punk space

was a liminal one between the lived experiences of everyday queer people and those who adopted queerness as a subculture that could be and often was appropriated by non-queers as a rebellion of fashion and aesthetics that could be easily dropped once the fad had faded (Cole 147).

Both Frank's glam and punk ethos of excess and decadence is reflected in the overt references to drug culture found in the original stage show and film. Peeking out from under Frank's torn evening gloves is a pair of crossed bandages and track lines (drawn in with makeup) indicating heroin use. Frank's corset is laced unevenly and haphazardly, "like he was stoned when he did it" according to Blane (qtd. in Michaels and Evans 105). In the opening lines of "Sweet Transvestite," Frank explains that his butler is "a little brought down" because Riff Raff believed Brad and Janet to be "the candy man," common slang then and now for a drug dealer. Upon Dr. Scott's arrival to the castle, Frank supposed that he has entered through "The Zen Room," cutting to a shot of Scott inspecting a marijuana joint with his magnifying glass, surrounded by hookahs and other orientalist drug paraphernalia. Even the design for Frank's pool in the orgy that concludes the floorshow was originally meant by Brian Thomson to be "syringe-shaped to tie it in with the whole drug thing, but that was vetoed" (Morrisroe 61). Frank also sports two tattoos in the original text (and asks Brad and Janet if they have any themselves), a heart-and-dagger with "Boss" written above it on his right shoulder, and "4711" on his upper left thigh, a reference to the cologne of the same name. These body modifications help solidify Frank as glam/punk rocker.

An important, but often overlooked, aspect of Frank's original conception is that of the pantomime dame, a common fixture of British and Australian theatrical tradition. According to Sharman in his memoir, "While audiences around the world would soon marvel, swoon or quail at this sexually rampant Frankenstein, Tim and I knew that the character's origins were located in something much more innocent – the ancient carnival tradition of misrule epitomized by the pantomime dame" (217). In another interview, Curry elaborates on Sharman's statement, adding that Frank is "really an absurdly masculine role, in the tradition of the pantomime dame...you need to make theatre as close to the circus as possible—to try for dangerous performance" (qtd. in Jurgens 519). As explained by Australian culture scholar Anna-Sophie Jurgens, the pantomime dame was born out of the Shakespearean tradition of female roles assayed by men and combined with the bawdy humor of the *commedia dell'arte* harlequinade and clowns of the Victorian circus (513). Dames typically play female villains common to European fairy tales: witches, evil queens, and wicked stepmothers and sisters, purposefully dropping the verisimilitude of female performance and exaggerating male-coded characteristics for comedic or confounding effect (514). While dames may appear alternately as "tawdry and cheap in rustic costumes, like middle-aged, balloon-breasted country yokels" or "clothed in what look like corsets—[taking] on the shape of young seductive ladies, androgynously doll-like and bewilderingly elegant," more importantly, the dame never obscures or hides his/her maleness (Jurgens 514). Australian drag/dame performer Barry Humphries, AKA Dame Edna Everage (who would later go on to star in the *Rocky Horror* sequel film *Shock Treatment*) spells out clearly that "The joke of the

pantomime dame is the tension between the female of the clothes and the stocky footballer's legs and boots" (qtd. in Jurgens 514). These elements of jocular masculinity undergirded by an at once repulsive, manque, and enticing femininity thrum below the surface of Frank's glam-goth-fetish exterior. Where glam rock's relationship to bi-gender/non-binary gender embodiment is ambivalent beauty, the pantomime dame is an antagonistic attack on both maleness, femaleness, and in-between-ness with a morbidly comic allure. This almost Freudian death-drive approach is born of the pantomime dame's connections with early clowning and the Jungian trickster archetype, as "Frankie's fervent, seductive irreverence is clown-like as many clown characters typically express a challenging, wanton vitality, uninhibited sexually and socially" (Jurgens 517). These roots to the anarchy of the pantomime dame and his/her own connections to hostility and resistance to mores around sexuality, gender, propriety, and violence further moves Frank-N-Furter away from grounded perspectives of gender and sex and more towards performance and posturing.

If we turn to the historical contexts of gender and sexuality as it pertains to *Rocky Horror*'s impressions of identity, we must also consider *Rocky Horror* creator Richard O'Brien's own (at times controversial) lived experiences as a bisexual, non-binary/genderqueer person. O'Brien, who uses he/him pronouns, describes himself as being "third gender" and that he is "70% male, 30% female" (Fidgen). In the early 2000s, O'Brien began taking estrogen, explaining that "it takes the edge off the masculine, testosterone-driven side of me," and though (at time of writing) he has no interest in

pursuing a full transition, his estrogen usage has allowed his body to develop small breasts (Fidgen).

O'Brien in another interview explains that in writing *The Rocky Horror Show* "the element of transvestism wasn't intended as a major theme, although it turned out to be one. Writing a transvestite into the play was a very naive judgment. Maybe there was a lot of subconscious feeling about that subject coming through. I don't know" (qtd. in Morrisroe 10-12). O'Brien claims to have written the role of Eddie so that he could "sing a rock and roll song and pop back into the Coke machine" (qtd. Morrisroe 10), as a quick cameo in his own work before Sharman convinced him to play the butler Riff Raff. Sharman recalls in his memoir *Blood and Tinsel* that, "When O'Brien conceived of Frank, I'm sure he had in mind a lovely dress, an elegant staircase, and possibly himself. It didn't work out that way" (219). Patricia Quinn, the original Magenta in the stage and film adaptation, backs up this claim, stating that "Richard O'Brien really wanted to be Frank-N-Furter, you realize, not Riff Raff" (qtd. in Michaels and Evans 255). In later interviews, O'Brien has more readily admitted to seeing *The Rocky Horror Show* as a way of grappling with his own gender identity, and that the creation of Frank-N-Furter "was a way of perhaps dealing with that in a sneaky kind of way," though he deflects notions that he may have envisioned himself as playing Frank (Plant). Regardless, O'Brien did portray Frank in the 1990 revival at the Piccadilly Theatre (McIntosh), and O'Brien's non-binary/genderqueer identity finding expression in Frank is not immaterial to the character's conception and interpretation, particularly as queer liberation and activism continued to progress past its place in 1970s culture.

O'Brien has recently come under fire with accusations of his own (internalized) transphobia. In recent interviews, O'Brien, identifying himself as transgender, remarks that, "Being transgender is a nightmare for many people. I'm very lucky that I'm in showbiz where I can be this eccentric person and therefore it's allowed" (qtd. in Gilbey), but that a transgender woman "can't be a woman. You can be an idea of a woman," specifically citing trans-exclusionary radical feminist Germain Greer in his reasoning (qtd. in Duffy). This contradiction, of both identifying publicly as transgender and agreeing with pundits who deny trans women their womanhood, is seemingly explained by O'Brien's personal gender philosophy. O'Brien claims that all transgender women "[are] in the middle and there's nothing wrong with that. I certainly wouldn't have the wedding tackle taken off. That is a huge jump and I have all the sympathy in the world for anyone who does it, but you aren't a woman" (qtd in Duffy). O'Brien then relegates all transgender people to a non-binary identity consistent with his own. Summing up his views on gender, O'Brien remarks, "I wish we would see ourselves as members of a sentient race of beings and be nice to each other as human beings as opposed to male or female" (qtd. in Duffy), here both upholding a gender binary (claiming a transgender woman cannot be a woman, but an idea of a woman) and dismantling it (O'Brien's desire to evolve to an un-gendered sentient race). These statements have led activists and scholars to reassess O'Brien's oeuvre, either questioning what has led O'Brien to deny trans womanhood or asserting that *Rocky Horror* (O'Brien's most popular and culturally relevant work) never truly served the purposes of trans liberation.

All these cultural sources, from music, film, theater, fashion, queer subculture, and the experiences of the text's author, found themselves remixed and repurposed in the gestalt of *Rocky Horror*, sutured together, and corseted into the form of Dr. Frank-N-Furter. The major through line between these divergent sources is their shared resistance to binaries. Not only the masculine-feminine/male-female binary, but binaries of form, style, and culture that allowed influences as disparate as rock music, the Frankenstein myth, high art, and bawdy music hall drag to mesh into one coherent character: Frank-N-Furter. Frank's resistance against good taste, propriety, and heteronormativity is simultaneously a resistance against clear barriers between seemingly contradictory identities that allowed the character to progress relatively unchanged until the 21st century.

CHAPTER IV

“YOUR MISSION IS A FAILURE”:

LAVERNE COX AS FRANK-N-FUTER IN

LET'S DO THE TIME WARP AGAIN

By the mid-2010s, a serious attempt at a remake of the 1975 film started pre-production with *High School Musical* and *Hocus Pocus* director and choreographer Kenny Ortega at the helm. Initially, Adam Lambert, the openly gay one-time *American Idol* contestant who had begun performing in a collaboration with Freddie Mercury's band Queen, and who employs glam rock inspired makeup and gender-bending in his star persona, was considered for the part of Frank-N-Furter. However, Lou Adler, who executive produced the original film and brought the stage show from London to its first American engagement at his Roxy Nightclub in Los Angeles, felt that Lambert would be compared unfavorably to Curry's performance (Itzkoff). At one point, the potential cast list for the film contained out actors and performers like Johnathan Groff, Matthew Bomer, and Lady Gaga (Itzkoff), eschewing the focus that Sharman had for the original film, using a mostly unknown original cast from the Theatre Upstairs that helped lend the original film its punk ethos.

In October of 2015, transgender actress Laverne Cox, known for her turn as Sophia Burset in the television program *Orange is the New Black*, was officially announced as the new Frank-N-Furter for the film remake. Producer Lou Adler said of

her casting, “Win or lose, she was not going to be compared to Tim” (qtd. in Itzkoff). Cox herself said that Tim Curry’s original performance “provided this road map for me to become more of myself and to dream big”, and that as a gender-nonconforming undergraduate at Indiana University, she was a fan of the original 1975 film, telling *The New York Times*, “I was wearing dresses in college and had a shaved head, and there was this character [Frank] who was this wonderful validation of who I was” (Itzkoff). Bringing things full circle, Curry was later cast as the Criminologist in the television remake, perhaps as an attempt to lend it some of the gravitas of the original cast.

However, Cox’s casting was not without criticism, both from diehard fans of the original film and from members of the LGBTQ+ community, who found issue with both Cox’s casting as a character identified as a “transvestite” and for what many felt were harmful stereotypes of transgender people presented in the original text. Shortly after the announcement of Cox’s casting as Frank, Tom Hawking wrote for *Flavorwire* that, “in 2015, that same script — on a mainstream television network — loses a significant amount of its subversive nature, and instead borders on exploiting LGBTQ identities for the gaze of a largely cisgender, heterosexual audience.” Hawking also notes that “adding to that the fact that the costume for the part is generally nothing but lingerie, and you’ve got a recipe for a serious problem with fetishization” (“Why Casting Laverne Cos in the ‘Rocky Horror Picture Show’ Reboot Isn’t a Slam Dunk Idea”). In an interview with *Out* magazine, Cox answered concerns about her casting as a character identified as a “transvestite” by saying “A lot of people have been critical of a transgender woman playing a character who refers to herself as a ‘transvestite.’ But it’s really important to

note that in 1975, our understanding of the term transvestite was not the same as today” (qtd. in Berlin).

Like the Park Square production of the original stage play, the 2016 television remake sought not only to capture the themes of (in Ortega’s words) “transcendence, transformation, and liberation” (qtd. in Roshanian), but also to correct and account for changes in transgender and gender-variant representation and answer to a growing criticism aimed towards the place that the *Rocky Horror* phenomenon has occupied over the past forty years of its life. If *Rocky Horror* must change, then so too must Frank-N-Furter.

Cox’s Frank-N-Furter would be mostly removed from the same influences that had guided O’Brien, Sharman, and Curry in their creation of *Rocky Horror*’s hero-monster, and Cox’s Frank would have her edges sanded and her act cleaned up in order to fit with this new vision of *Rocky Horror* for a 2016 audience. Most notably, Frank-N-Furter would no longer be a male cross-dresser, and instead Cox’s Frank would be a binary transgender woman, like Cox herself. In a *Playbill* interview with transgender actress Shakina Nayfack, Cox is asked, “What gender pronoun do you think Dr. Frank-N-Furter prefers?” to which Cox replies “Well, *in our version*, Frank-N-Furter is a She. That was something we had talked to Kenny [Ortega] about, that it would be appropriate since I’m playing Frank-N-Furter that her pronouns would be she” (qtd. in Nayfack, emphasis added). Nayfack continues to question Cox about the word “transvestite” and Cox and Ortega’s choice to retain the original lyrics to Frank’s opening number. Nayfack describes “transvestite” as “derogatory, or as an outdated term for a dude who likes to

wear panties,” reconnecting the term to its connotations of sexual fetish. Cox explains that “transvestite” is not an appropriate term to refer to transgender people, and that “you should not refer to Laverne Cox as a transvestite, but the character that she plays in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is a transvestite in very historically specific ways,” explicitly citing early transgender rights pioneer Sylvia Rivera who referred to herself with the term “transvestite” in the early 1970s (Nayfack).

This conversation between Cox and Nayfack is interesting in the ways in which both women address the place of Frank and Frank’s self-identification with the slippery, mutable term “transvestite.” Nayfack brings attention to the word as a designation of fetish – “a dude who wears panties” – or as a slur hurled at transgender women. While Cox acknowledges these implications, she instead chooses to frame them within a historic context of transgender rights and as a term that has fallen out of favor over the passing of time and greater visibility. Cox elaborates on this stance in an interview with *Out* magazine, saying “yes, transvestite is an antiquated term. I think it’s possible to have a conversation about how language evolves. We can do that, and we can also enjoy *Rocky Horror* in 2016” (Berlin). These critiques of *Rocky Horror* through the lens of the transgender rights movement are by no means recent discourse. A January 1992 issue of *The Tartan Skirt*, a Scottish newsletter for the Scottish TV/TG [“transvestite/transsexual”] group contains an op-ed from transgender writer Anne Forrester titled “What’s in a Name?” that discusses the possibility banning the term “transvestite” within the community. Forrester argues that, “In the minds of 99% of the population, the word ‘transvestite’ has only one connotation – *The Rocky Horror Show*” (5). Forrester submits

that the term “transvestite” is not necessarily offensive in a linguistic sense, but that, in part thanks to *Rocky Horror*, “a transvestite is thought of as being queer, weird and laughable – and generally fair game for open abuse [...] to nearly everyone else, [transvestite] simply means ‘a weirdo man in fishnet tights’” (5-6). Forrester ends her critique of the word by saying that “If [transgender women] are ever to shift public opinion from suspicion and dislike to at least a little tolerance - let alone approval - then we must surely begin by seeing ourselves as rather more dignified than something out of *The Rocky Horror Show*” (7).

In this framing by Cox and Nayfack, “transvestite” is a term in reference to cross-dressing and fetishism and is unacceptable, and the acceptable understanding is as a term firmly situated in its temporal context as a formerly used term to describe (an implied) binary transgender identity. Through the past arguments by Forrester that directly tie the word with *Rocky Horror* and reductive stereotypes of transgender women, we can see how the 2016 television remake sets a template for reinterpreting Frank-N-Furter as a binary transgender woman. This is accomplished by removing aspects of the character that trend not only androgynous and gender non-binary, but also removing parts of Frank’s character such as implications of drug use, carnality, and monstrosity that could be read as an unsavory depiction of queer people broadly and transgender women particularly. This process in the television remake as described by Josh Harper is two-fold. First, there is “polishing,” defined by Harper who borrows from Herbert Marcuse as the “professional avoidance of mistakes, inconsistencies, or rough edges”, followed by “sanitization,” which is “the removal of epistemological, aesthetic, and/or ethical

conflicts that would be created by experiences that do not lay flush with one's own framework" (8).

This polishing and sanitization of the text of *Rocky Horror* results both from the different conditions that engendered the creation of the original 1975 film and the 2016 television remake and the societal and cultural trends contemporaneous to each. The original film was a mostly low-budget affair with unknown actors seeking to capture the original essence of its stage show progenitor that only gained traction after being remarketed towards a midnight movie audience. The remake was a higher-budgeted, star-focused production that garnered larger media attention during production and was forced to capitulate to the demands and limitations of a television broadcast as opposed to a theatrical release. Though not an independent film, the original *Rocky Horror Picture Show* was made with a budget of just over one million dollars (adjusted for inflation, around five million in 2016), or in the words of Sharman, "a Fox executive's lunch money," and shot on a tight schedule (Sharman qtd. in Evans and Michaels 224). With the crew "running out of time, money, and patience" (229), 20th Century Fox "gave up hope" on the project before shooting was complete, having "always considered [the film] an oddity" in Sharman's view ("History: Interviews: Jim Sharman"). In contrast, the 2016 television remake, *Let's Do the Time Warp Again*, was produced on a 20-million-dollar budget with the full support of the Fox network (Thompson), with director Ortega setting out to "[do] a deep bow to 41 years of great fun" (qtd. in Roshanian). This increased budget and studio support meant that unlike the original film, which was shot in a dilapidated castle in rural England with a costuming budget of \$1600 (Blane qtd. in

Morrisroe 22), the 2016 remake would feature more elaborate sets and costumes while still being a television film. The rain-soaked, crumbling (but since refurbished) Oakley Court castle was replaced with the pristine Casa Loma in Toronto to stand in for Frank-N-Furter's lair (Porter). Sue Blane's ripped fishnet stockings and frayed, tattered corset worn backwards by Tim Curry is replaced with an elaborate red showgirl style corset-dress paired with custom-made laser-cut latex "spiderweb" stockings – intended to be read as part of her skin (Soo Hoo) – by six-time Tony award winning costume designer William Ivey Long (Fierburg). Where Curry's Frank is replete with holes, tears, and rips that expose his body and blend gendered signifiers, Cox's Frank is perfectly coiffed and manicured, with only her shoulders and collarbone exposed, and much of the ambivalent sexuality of Curry's Frank replaced with a polished pop star glamor.

While Long and Blane both explicitly draw on David Bowie in their Frank-N-Furter designs -- Cox's Frank in particular sports a pointed red mullet akin to Bowie's Ziggy Stardust dye-job and her "spiderweb" skin-stockings are inspired by a design for Bowie by Natasha Korniloff -- Long's inspirations trend to more contemporary pop divas than sexual fetishists or street punks, with Ortega instructing Long that their Frank should be "60 percent Grace Jones, 30 percent Tina Turner and 10 percent Beyoncé" (Fierburg), with Ester Williams also listed as an inspiration for Cox's pool scene look (Lannaccone). Though Bowie's red mane of hair and fishnet ensemble are given visual nods in Long's costuming for Frank, the aggressive fluctuation and gender conflict that Bowie's costumes and performances leaned on is tacitly side-stepped; instead, Frank as

constructed by Ortega, Cox, and Long exists entirely in a binary presentation of gender.

As Harper explains,

Curry [as Frank] blends solid lines of society's knowledge framework by pulling fishnet stockings over hairy legs. Cox simply illustrates that someone who was once, but does not feel, express, or live as masculine can make the leap across the dichotomous chasm to the feminine, maintaining those solid lines (39).

Tim Curry's Frank is not about transition, but rather about transgression. The movement that his interpretation of the character makes is not one of crossing borders but of blowing them apart and suturing the remains together. In contrast, Laverne Cox's Frank is a transition, or a transformation, that is wholly complete and unquestioning. Where Curry stitched together contrasting and conflicting elements, Cox's Frank exists only in well-defined gender boundaries.

Despite Hawking's concern about Frank's traditional costume of lingerie, Cox's Frank removes the erotic elements of Frank's costuming, as well as any discomfort, ambiguity, or confrontation around binary conceptions of gender, sexuality, and queer respectability by carefully blending away the rough edges of Frank's character. Gone are the bloodied bandages at Frank's inner elbow signifying heroin use, Frank's sketchy, sailor-like "Boss" heart tattoo and "4711" thigh mark. Frank's garter belt is replaced by full hose and the possibility of black satin undies obscured by Long's dangling red sequin skirt attached to the corset. Pierre LaRoche's gaudy Frank makeup that haphazardly smears over Curry's thick, uncovered natural eyebrows is substituted with the meticulous, Instagram-worthy gloss applied to Cox.

The removal of conflicting gender signals and rough, transgressive imagery like sailor tattoos and heroin track marks also removes much of the titular element of horror from the text. Curry's Frank, arriving in a Dracula cloak, his face funeral parlor pallid and underlit, summons a scream from Janet and unnerves Brad with his decadent, overtly sexual and counter-cultural embodiment. Curry's Frank's declaration of being a "sweet transvestite" is undercut by his fetish wear and vigorous bravado. In contrast, the arrival of Cox's Frank includes a cumbersome, elaborate Medusa-esque mask that obscures her face, and descending from a cherry-picker and tossing off her cape, only reveals her red corset-dress which is further covered by a red glitter kimono-like garment. Where Curry pushes past Brad and Janet and marches through a line of his followers to his throne, Cox delicately slinks her way through the party as she sings, fittingly provided with a trio of backup singers to solidify her pop-star image. Cox, poised and polished, presents no threat to Brad, Janet, or the gender binary, her declaration of being a "sweet transvestite" muddled by her high-femme presentation and the hesitant approach that Ortega and Cox take towards the terminology of the text. In many ways, Cox's Frank requires that the audience for the television remake possess metatextual knowledge of Cox as an out transgender woman in order to properly "read" her iteration of Frank. Without this prior information, Frank presents no threat or horror to either Brad and Janet or the audience, nor asks that either question the polarity of binary gender identification. Markers that indicate Frank as a disruptor of bourgeois American hetero-cisgender norms like obvious tattoos, allusions to heavy drug use, and explicit acknowledgement of eroticism outside of fetish-free, reproductive heterosexual sex are invisible on Cox's Frank-N-Furter, who

instead adopts a clean, unquestioning femininity made queer only by the implication of transition.

This is also reflected in the set, as Frank's lair in the 1975 film and the 2016 television remake serve as useful reflections of the character's textual analysis. The 1975 castle, Oakley Court, is decaying and decorated with both traditional horror genre trappings like coffins and gargoyles, but also with reappropriated images from high art and mass culture, such as a copy of Grant Wood's *American Gothic*, a pair of monochrome *Mona Lisa* in the ballroom, Michelangelo's *David* graffitied with lipstick and nail polish, a lobby poster for the 1954 film *A Star is Born*, and a replica of the RKO Pictures film logo as the backdrop for the floorshow. These items help mark Frank as a hodge-podge, an assemblage of disparate and often conflicting inspirations and interpretations, a bridge between the chasms of respectability and "trash culture" that is roughly hewn together. In interviews, set designer Brian Thomson explains that Frank's home is "tasteful, but at the same time it's just a little wrong, a little too eclectic [...] [it's] wonderfully surreal" (qtd. in Morrisroe 61) and highlights that Frank's boudoir features a stained glass of Atlas that blends the mythological strongman with the marketing figure found at the back of 1960s comic books, as if he is not quite sure who is who (Vickerstaff 37).

The *David* statues in Frank's lab both a celebration of the Herculean masculinity exemplified by his creation, Rocky, and a site of confusion, transformation, and revision by the addition of lipstick scrawled on the white marble in a reflection of Frank's own. The lab itself, a space societally coded as a site of masculine logic and discovery, is

awash in creamy pink tiles with Frank's surgeon smock cut in the fashion of a homemaker and topped with bright pink dishwashing gloves. The lab at Oakley Court is corrupted from a locus of atomic age scientific progress and male-coded conquest to an alchemist's sanctuary where Frank's sexual imagination is given shape.

Contrastingly, despite – or perhaps because of – the larger budget afforded to the television remake, the castle set at Casa Loma is granted less textual depth than Thomson's set, even while borrowing from his original conceptions of the stage production as imagined around an abandoned cinema. Casa Loma is given a cinema marquee, posters of the films referenced in the opening number, "Science Fiction Double Feature," and a glass concessions case in the ballroom, but the overall effect provides less tension and disorientation than Thomson's "wonderfully surreal" and eclectic manor for Frank-N-Furter. This more cohesive set design joined with the more polished, glamorous Frank portrayed by Cox "preempt[s] dissociation, and thus tension" (Harper 8), that then removes the element of horror and unsettlement found in the original. The objects that serve as monuments to Frank's queerness in the remake film are similarly static and settled. A pair of Warhol-esque portraits of Cox hang in the lobby/ballroom and notably, a large rainbow crest emblazoned by half of Frank's credo: "Be It" adorns the fireplace.

In the original text of *Rocky Horror*, Frank's mantra "don't dream it – be it" is also a call to embrace hedonism, pleasure, and libertine values. O'Brien even claims to have sourced the motto from the back of a *Fredrick's of Hollywood* lingerie catalogue that implied service to cross-dressing clientele and included fashion plates deemed "transvestic" by O'Brien (VH1 Interview, cite later). Here, the "Be It" paired with the

rainbow coloring of the crest in Casa Loma can be read as pointing towards a more contemporary framework of queer identity, not the indulgence of “erotic nightmares” and “sins of the flesh”, but the performance of “authenticity” and “realness”. “Be It” here is not a call for liberation, but a demand for readability and normality that fits within a neoliberal paradigm. Levi Hord writes that “in order to be fully compatible with queer identity qualifiers in neoliberal cultures, the transgender body must be read as especially authentic” (5). This authenticity is one that situates ostensibly queer politics such as the occupation of liminal spaces and the questioning of binaries and hierarchies within the neoliberal framework of individualist pursuits of personal desire and competition (3).

Frank-N-Furter’s cadre of extraterrestrial followers, dubbed Phantoms in the play and Transylvanians in the film, are similarly streamlined. Though Blane would later regret the heterogenous designs she created for Frank’s party guests, referring to her ideas for “a sheik here, a midget there” as “too indulgent” (qtd. in Morrisroe 23), her Transylvanian designs are part and parcel to the ethos of the original film and its construction of Frank’s reality. Blane’s Transylvanians encompass a wide variety of bodies and expressions; tall, short, thin, fat, young, and old. The ensemble was sourced from both friends and hangers-on of the original stage show and the talent agency Ugly, whose current ad-copy touts that their models consist of “the most individual, wacky and peculiar looks in the industry; from trannies to grannies, burlesque to bikers, wee folk to rock blokes” (*About Us*). Their costuming is purposefully awkward, all dressed -- male, female, or otherwise -- in ill-fitting tuxedos cut to emphasize and exaggerate their physical features, with garishly colored shirts, novelty sunglasses, punk hair-dye jobs,

and chintzy paper party hats. The 1975 Transylvanians represent a swath of variegated queer embodiments, and while Blane may have later wanted them to appear “identical, almost mass produced”, their disparate, subversive embodiments serve as a direct counter to the normative, cis-hetero world of Brad and Janet. The original Transylvanians were given sped-up, falsetto pitched voices to resemble the Munchkins in *The Wizard of Oz* (Michaels and Evans 260) and their choreography for “The Time Warp” is deliberately awkward. They are all slightly out of step with one another, their movements individualized and imprecise, like students at a school dance. As staged by choreographer David Toguri, the steps to “The Time Warp” never become more complicated than those described in the lyrics, “a jump to the left/and then a step to the right.”

Frank’s disciples reflect him, their bodies unruly and made compelling by their exaggerated “flaws.” Taken together, the representatives of the Transylvanian galaxy flaunt their disruption of normative propriety and embrace individualism and multifarious possibility. Fat, thin, old, young, tall, and short alike gawk at Brad and Janet’s undressing and leer as Frank presents his creation of Rocky in the laboratory. Populating the margins of the first half of the film, the Transylvanians serve as a logical end-game for Frank’s call, “don’t dream it – be it,” and represent the possibility of an interstellar queer utopia where an abundance of bodies and expressions can, as Bradley says of glam rock’s possibilities, “[reject] the values of the white heterosexual suburbia [and] look to space, [as] a place that can be utilized in the subversion of an oppressive society” (389).

The remake Transylvanians remove this assertion of subversion in favor of a more sleek, glossy incarnation, like that of their version of Frank-N-Furter. While the remake

strove for more racial diversity, and this is demonstrated in their Transylvanian assemblage (of the original film's nineteen Transylvanians, only five were portrayed by people of color), the remake still loses a great deal of the original's multiformity. Despite the 2016 remake Transylvanians being more ethnically diverse than their predecessors from forty years prior, they are all portrayed with young, thin, lithe bodies and stylish costumes. Long, possibly noting Blane's regret that she did not adopt a more uniformed design, costumes the Transylvanians in elaborate monochrome garments instead of Blane's lurid formal cast-offs. The new members of Frank's entourage are all uniform in height and age, with none appearing older than their early 30s, and have perfect dancers' bodies. The frivolous imperfection of Toguri's "Time Warp" is instead staged by complex, highly synchronized, and physically demanding choreography from Ortega that includes floor-shimmying, death drops, and high kicks which are outside of the capabilities of those without an extensive background in dance (important, in comparison to the original film whose legacy in part was born from fans staging amateur pantomimes of the characters presented on screen).

The world that Brad and Janet enter when they are pushed into the Transylvanian Convention in the original and in the remake are lightyears apart. While the remake Transylvanians adopt superficial markers of queer identity: snapping their fingers and cooing after Frank's entrance, sporting dyed hair and makeup in primary colors, and dance moves reminiscent of those found at underground drag balls, they do not challenge Brad and Janet's conception of the world in any significant way. They may be more stylish, but they are not more transgressive. I raise these concerns of production designs

because of the important ways they emanate from and provide textual reasoning for the character of Frank-N-Furter. In his book *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters*, transgender studies scholar Jack Halberstam writes,

Again, to return to the false opposition between monstrous and normal, it is worth noting that horror film exploits the deviant often to suggest that the maintenance of anything like a norm comes at a price. An entire night world of deviants must be constructed in order to create a world which makes synonyms of normal and law abiding, to prop up these illusions of the just society (167).

If we view Frank-N-Furter as the origin point, the head of the snake, for the queerness in the text of *Rocky Horror* (and we must recall that up until Frank's entrance song, *Rocky Horror* almost exclusively traffics in horror and science-fiction film clichés, with the introduction of sexuality and gender-nonconformance starting with the song "Sweet Transvestite"), then we must reckon with how the aspects of set, costuming, and the casting of extras reinforce (or fail to reinforce) the themes of contagion, decay, and transgression that Frank-N-Furter encompasses.

The remake Frank-N-Furter as personified by Laverne Cox works in much the same way. While her performance of femininity is more glamorous than that of Victoria Justice's Janet, it does not question or distort it, but rather raises the stakes of what can be read and performed as "authentic" femininity. Cox's Frank may have meta-textually "[made] the leap across the dichotomous chasm to the feminine" (Harper 36), but she does not question why such a chasm should exist in the first place, nor does she try to unify or satirize the discordant, conflicting, and arbitrary constructions of the two(?) sides of the gorge. Cox's Ziggy Stardust-esque mullet borrows Bowie's history of ambivalent

gender and sexuality as a marker of “authenticity” without actually raising the same questions that it did for generations prior. In another book, *In a Queer Time and Place*, Halberstam writes that, “Mainstream films [...] might borrow or even pilfer an aesthetics of drag and gender construction from subcultural sources, and they then tend to bury their subcultural sources in the process of transforming resistant performance into lucrative entertainment” (265). While it would be facetious to describe all of the influences on the text of *Rocky Horror* (including the stage show, 1975 film, and 2016 television movie) as “subcultural” – David Bowie was one of the most successful artists in music history – what those influences did for or meant to various queer identities can still be lost in the move from a low-budget film adaptation of a transgressive work in a leftist theater to a television special with five-times the budget of the original over forty years later.

Whereas Curry’s Frank represents *glam* rock excess and decadence, with their notions of decay and perversion, Cox’s Frank weaves together a presentation of *glamour*, which as transgender writer Terre Thaemlitz explains, “It seems fair to say that contemporary glamour is more associated with feminine imagery than masculine imagery and is in that way a feminine construct” (“Viva McGlam?”). Importantly, as Cox’s Frank is designed with Beyoncé, Tina Turner, and Grace Jones in mind, is Thaemlitz’s assertion that, “Glamour is suspect as a critical-minded political forum because it is about social distance, not social integration. The promise of the pop-glam diva is not the promise of social transformation, but individual transformation in which the exploited becomes the exploiter” (“Viva McGlam?”). The polished presentations of the Transylvanians and Frank-N-Furter in the 2016 television film, while borrowing cues from previously

transgressive cultural iconography, does not sufficiently challenge Brad and Janet's preconceptions of cis-heteronormative superiority, and therefore do not disrupt the same cis-hetero hierarchies that the two characters are poised to represent. Instead, the remake versions of Frank and her acolytes incarnate as filmic representations of neoliberal respectability politics. The 2016 visitors from *Transsexual, Transylvania* offer up to Brad and Janet all of the marketable coolness of queerness; parties, fashion, and the theatrics of subversion without actually calling into question the supposed place of superiority placed onto cisgender-heterosexual norms.

Keeping in mind the sources of inspiration that formed the 2016 Frank-N-Furter, and the meta-textual place that Laverne Cox's casting situates her personification of the character, it is crucial that we also understand that this is a reciprocal relationship for Cox as a transgender woman. In the many interviews that Cox has given to reporters from both queer and mainstream presses on her casting in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, part of the reason that Cox stresses the historical nature of the term "transvestite," that "[their] version" of Frank-N-Furter uses she/her pronouns, and the connections she emphasizes to historical transgender women and activists is because as much as Cox re-shapes the role of Frank-N-Furter for a contemporary audience, that audience will in turn come to associate her with the role of a "sweet transvestite from *Transsexual, Transylvania*."

As a result of her role as transgender inmate Sophia Burslet in *Orange is the New Black*, her appearance on the cover of *Time Magazine* (the first openly transgender woman in history to do so), and her activism on behalf of transgender women in the

prison system, Cox is one of the most prominent transgender people in contemporary America. In the *Time Magazine* article “The Transgender Tipping Point,” Cox explains that, “More of us are living visibly and pursuing our dreams visibly, so people can say, ‘Oh yeah, I know someone who is trans.’ When people have points of reference that are humanizing, that demystifies difference” (qtd. in Steinmetz). In becoming a “point of reference” for other transgender women (Cox prefers the term “possibility model”), the roles that Cox accepts risk conflation not only between herself and the character in the text, but that of the character and transgender people writ large.

Additionally, Cox is a Black transgender woman, one of only a handful of notable Black performers (of any gender) to take on the role of Frank-N-Furter in an incarnation of *Rocky Horror*. This compounding of Black and queer identity is particularly fraught as it applies in the lives of Black transgender women. Gender historian Emily Skidmore describes in her piece “Constructing the ‘Good Transsexual’,” that “[transgender women] depicted with the most proximity to white womanhood [...] gained the most visibility in the mainstream press and whose stories therefore came to define the boundaries of “transsexual” identity” (271). While Skidmore analyzes the coverage of white, Black, Latina, and Asian transgender women from the mid-twentieth century, the attitudes and constructions of transgender womanhood she describes in her article continue to affect transgender women in the present day. Skidmore notes that Christian Jorgensen, one of the first transgender women to gain significant media attention in the United States, was able to validate and render authentic her womanhood by replicating and hyper-articulating the performance of white, middle-class femininity (275), or in Jorgensen’s

words “[becoming] super-female, I couldn’t have a single masculine trait” (qtd. in Skidmore 276), and purposefully distancing herself from “homosexuality, cross-dressing, and other forms of sexual or gender variance [that] were often collapsed into the singular category of deviance” (Skidmore 277-278). Other white transgender women, such as Charlotte McLeod, were contrastingly compared to Jorgensen when they failed to uphold these norms by appearing aggressive or confrontational (279). Even if they still took great pains to distance themselves from gay and queer countercultures, particularly non-binary conceptions of gender performance, these women would be inevitably tied back to them for failing to replicated bourgeois white femininity (280). Skidmore surmises that “although McLeod attempted to perform white womanhood, she failed to live up to racialized gender expectations of respectability and domesticity, and thus her story troubled the bi-gender system in ways that Jorgensen's did not” (281).

Contrary to the coverage that white transgender women like Jorgensen and McLeod received, Black transgender women often had no recourse for narratives of authenticity. In being both Black and assigned male at birth, Black transgender women were seen as being almost antithetical to womanhood because of the perceived distance between their bodies and narratives of femininity and womanhood that upheld racialized notions of feminine gender, reducing Black transgender women to “objects of ridicule” (Skidmore 293). Even when Black transgender women performed domesticity, submission, or capitulation? to sexist gender norms, their gender was not read as an identity, but as deviance (291). In the mid-1960s, Delisa Newton’s biography and details of her transition appeared in the Black magazine *Sepia* to some acclaim from its

readership. Newton appeared in photographs with a broom sweeping her apartment and dressed in evening clothes for her nightclub act. While *Sepia* often showed depictions of Black women in non-domestic roles as entertainers or career-women, the focus was still on Newton's enactment of domesticity over her part-time role as an entertainer, as the stakes for her as a transgender woman were more dire in terms of visual representation (291). Newton even highlights the intersection of her race and her transgender identity, discussing the medical gatekeeping that she faced during her transition, reporting that "many doctors showed me little sympathy and understanding. 'You people are too emotional for such an ordeal,' one doctor told me" (qtd. in Skidmore 292).

Outside of the pages of *Sepia*, the white press was antagonistic and reductive in their reporting of Newton's story. The tabloid magazine, *National Insider* chose to depict Newton as "sexually deviant and incapable of maintaining a monogamous heterosexual relationship" (Skidmore 292) and chose to sensationalize her story for shock in order to hold up both white supremacy and the impermeability of gender norms. Because "it was vital that the mainstream press either ignore cases such as Newton's or treat such individuals as objects of ridicule for attempting to present themselves as 'real' women" (293) the identity of Black transgender women was, in effect, always rendered as a sort of tragic failure. Black transgender women were coerced into a non-binary existence because the explicitly racialized construction of femininity always framed their womanhood as insufficient and counterfeit. Skidmore concludes that white transgender women like Jorgensen and McLeod,

had the opportunity to put forth inclusive display of gender variance. Instead, they each sought to claim identity ‘just like’ other women, and in calling upon the notion universal sisterhood, they conflated transsexuality with whiteness, sexuality, and middle-classness. This maneuver should not be viewed personal failure on the part of these transwomen but, rather, should be taken as evidence of the strong disciplinary mechanisms within the cultural ideology of race, gender, and sexuality (294).

With these racialized components of gender identity still at play seventy years later, it would make sense why Laverne Cox and her interpretation of Frank-N-Furter would purposefully avoid or polish aspects of the character that would read as non-binary or critical of gender norms. An interpretation that is made in the image of the “super-female” described by Jorgensen in order to preempt projections onto or attacks against Cox’s womanhood when she is not on camera. While Jorgensen, McLeod, and Newton all emulated to some degree mid-century domesticity, more akin to Janet than Frank in any incarnation of *Rocky Horror*, Frank-N-Furter as played by Cox is constrained both by the historical denial of womanhood to Black transgender women and the television remake’s embrace of neoliberal authenticity narratives that place a heavy emphasis on glamour. In this framework, Thaemlitz writes, “an MTF's public acceptance is gauged by her ability to emulate glamorous body and style requirements that elude most ‘real women’ (“Viva McGlam?”).

Rocky Horror creator Richard O’Brien was publicly against the remake, declaring in an interview with the website *This is Cabaret* that the television film was “misconceived and (sadly for the players) badly cast” (qtd. in Milazzo). Here we must return to O’Brien’s statements about transgender women’s womanhood. As I previously

explained, O'Brien's personal theories of gender render all transgender women as necessarily non-binary by his contention that transgender women can only be "the idea of a woman" and therefore are always "somewhere in the middle" (qtd. in Duffy). If Cox must over-perform her womanhood on camera and remove non-binary or non-conforming markers from Frank's character in order to prevent this denial or refutation of her womanhood from being meta-textually reflected onto her, then O'Brien's comments still serve this purpose off-screen. On the web page for O'Brien's interview with *This is Cabaret*, one commenter identifying herself as "Elizabeth" writes, "The remake sucked, not because of her performance but [b]ecause Laverne Cox did it at all, after O'Brien's transphobic commentary" and accusing Cox of "[throwing] transpersons [sic] under the bus by playing [a] man in drag" (Comment on *This is Cabaret*).

Laverne Cox is therefore caught in a catch-22, by polishing and aligning her interpretation of Frank within a gender binary, the original transgressive qualities of the character are lost and sanitized, with non-binary/genderqueer identities possibly erased in favor of the promotion of neoliberal ideas of queer representation. Conversely, any blurred, contradictory, unglamorous, or gender-deconstructive performances of the character would also equate her identity as a black transgender woman to mere failed performance. Consequently, the possibility arises that her Frank-N-Furter could then render all transgender people's identities as non-binary, as "somewhere in the middle" as O'Brien asserts, dealing massive damage to the public perceptions of transgender women.

Reviews for the 2016 television remake were scathing. *Vox* critic Caroline Framke described it as a “sterile facsimile of *Rocky Horror*’s original camp,” critiquing Cox’s Frank, with her “supermodel strut” as “too glamorous, too meticulously stunning, to be truly weird” (Framke). *Variety* called out the remake’s “commercialized and easily consumed ‘queerness’ — dyed hair! mohawks! fishnets! as if all of those things have not walked down the runways of Paris fashion week, a hundred times over” and acknowledges that “Cox’s Frank-N-Furter has to be necessarily more restrained, in order to protect the actress’ dignity” (Saraiya). *The New York Times* muses that “If there were something revelatory to be gleaned by having Ms. Cox, a well-known transgender performer, rather than a man play the role, she and her director, Kenny Ortega, didn’t find it” (Gezlinger).

These critical reviews touch upon where *Let’s Do the Time Warp* fell short, but what is not uncovered is the complex layering between queer aesthetics, the politics of acceptability, and the zero-sum game that often enacts itself upon queer media once it goes mainstream. *Variety* rightfully questions if the television remake is part of “the lifecycle of alternative culture, as it makes its way to the mainstream, commodified and cut to pieces along the way” but does not see the ways in which the mainstream makes these processes visible. For queer culture to appear on mainstream evening television requires a plundering of the visual aesthetics of queerness without bringing along the questions these aesthetics raise. To cast an out transgender performer as a genderqueer character seems to be a marker of progress towards trans equality, but can also render invisible identities, experiences, and expressions that do not suitably replicate mainstream

tastes and mores. To force a transgender woman to have all characters and performances she embodies inevitably reflect upon her personal identity off-stage and then apply that to the community she is made to represent reveals a lack of imagination on the part of audiences and an inability to move forward, even as we stumble slowly towards “progress.” Perhaps this last point is itself illustrated in the need to remake and reimagine an older property that already holds its place in history without truly reckoning with its messages and philosophies in the rush to meet mass market demands.

CHAPTER V

“FRANK-N-FURTER, IT’S ALL OVER”:

CONCLUSION

Beginning in 2006, director Christopher Luscombe has helmed the major productions of *Richard O’Brien’s The Rocky Horror Show* in the United Kingdom, with additional productions mounted in Australia, and South Africa over the past fourteen years. These productions borrow the iconography of the original film such as Sue Blane’s costume designs but have upped the production values from the original sixty-seat cinema screen and coke freezer setup of the original Thomson/Sharman staging to glamorous castle sets and pristine, candy-colored costumes made more sturdy than Blane’s original second-hand cast-offs. In a review for a Luscombe directed *Rocky Horror Show* in 2015, a few short months before casting decisions for the Fox television remake were made, theater critic Ben Neutze asks, “When did one of the most influential, subversive and shocking pieces of queer culture become nothing more than another crowd-pleasing, mainstream musical blockbuster, and end up feeling like *Mamma Mia*?” “Visually, at least, it’s all rather sanitized,” Neutze protests, “Where’s the scrappiness? There’s a carefully torn show curtain, but not a ripped fishnet in sight.” In his estimation, Rocky Horror “desperately needs a director who will go back to the words on the page, unpack exactly what they mean — and what they mean today [...] It should be a hell of a lot of fun, but it has to be something more” (“The Rocky Horror Show Review (Lyric

Theatre, Sydney)”). The Park Square production in 2019 posits that *Rocky Horror*’s meaning for contemporary audiences requires editing to remain relevant and inoffensive. As in director Toeplitz’s view, “nobody is going to benefit from watching a man do a Tim Curry impression in a pair of cheap heels and fishnets” (6), and therefore Frank-N-Furter must change to accommodate the shifting attitudes towards transgender acceptance that removes the character’s seedier aspects. As directed by Ortega and portrayed by Cox, Frank-N-Furter cannot ask to many questions of either his victims/disciples Brad and Janet or the audience, not only to work as a mass market product, but in order to prevent further pressure from being put onto transgender women in ways that denies their womanhood, rendering them as non-binary against their will. This non-binary middle ground being what *Rocky Horror* creator Richard O’Brien controversially ascribes to all transgender people as he uses his position as a transgender person of note to write-over the narratives of binary transgender women.

I wish to conclude by highlighting two recent examples of Dr. Frank-N-Furter’s characterization in two vastly different productions of *The Rocky Horror Show*. In October of 2020, during the global coronavirus pandemic, *Rocky Horror* star Nell Campbell assembled a celebrity table-read/performance of *The Rocky Horror Show* to be performed over Zoom as a charity fundraiser for the Wisconsin Democrats. Campbell reached out to her former co-star Tim Curry, now in his mid—seventies and wheelchair-bound after a stroke eight years prior, to reprise the role of Frank-N-Furter, with the character’s songs interpreted by other performers. In a YouTube video from the

Wisconsin Democrats, titled “Living Our Values”, two representatives for the Wisconsin *Rocky Horror* “shadowcast” provide a content warning disclaimer for the show.

The Rocky Horror Show has been celebrated for its message of equality, acceptance, and freedom for expression of one’s sexuality and gender. At this point, our community would like to acknowledge that some acts in the original stage play and film have negative connotations towards women and the transgender community. *Rocky* is and always will be a product of its time, but one that is open to reinterpretation by modern standards [...] We feel that removing these terms and phrases – or presenting them without context – would be the same as claiming that such discriminatory language and acts never existed (“WisDems – Living Our Values”).

In the web broadcast proper, Frank’s introduction song, “Sweet Transvestite,” is prefaced by a shot of Curry, who cocks an eyebrow as the song begins with Black transgender drag queen and activist Miss Peppermint assaying the role of Frank, dressed in a leather jacket, fingerless evening gloves, black leather corset, and fishnet stockings akin to Curry’s original costume. She dances suggestively in a hotel room, the lyrics unchanged from their original composition. Frank’s other songs are performed by Fall Out Boy lead singer Patrick Stump, a straight male; Keala Settle, a cisgender woman; and Grateful Dead founding member Bob Weir, also a straight male. This casting both allowed for the originator of the role to take prominence, but also featured a mix of sexualities and identities to give life to Frank-N-Furter.

In 2018, the Aarhus Teater in Denmark mounted a production of *The Rocky Horror Show* with actor Jacob Madsen Kvols as Frank. Kvols’s Frank-N-Furter is markedly different from both Curry and Cox, eschewing a corset and garter-belt in favor of patent-leather high-heel boots, glittering codpiece, and a pointed cape, his makeup

purposefully garish and alien with long dripping black eyelashes. More emphasis instead is placed on Kvols's thin body, which has been given small prosthetic breasts set against hairy arms and pronounced phallus. In a trailer for the production, Kvols slowly struts bare-chested across the stage, falling languidly into the arms of the Transylvanians/Phantoms, allowing them to grope his artificial bosoms (Aarhus Teater). These small breasts are not unlike those that Richard O'Brien began to develop when he began taking estrogen hormones as an expression of his non-binary, genderqueer identity.

If, as Nuetze suggests, *Rocky Horror* must continue to stay something to remain relevant, or at least profitable, perhaps this production's interpretation of Frank holds the key. If Laverne Cox's ability to "the leap across the dichotomous chasm to the feminine, maintaining those solid lines [of gender]" renders her Frank incapable of asking questions, and if Tim Curry's Frank is too entrenched in icons and ideas of the past, perhaps the next iteration of *Rocky Horror*'s main character is one that attacks newer anxieties not just of gender roles, but of the gendered body. If Frank-N-Furter is to continue to push the boundaries of our understandings of binary gender, perhaps we must no longer look to the adornment of the body but the configuration of it. The tattered corset, ripped fishnet stockings and tattoos replaced with binary-defying sexual markers, hairy forearms and phallus with a lithe, curvaceous body and small, soft breasts.

Our construction of and reaction to *The Rocky Horror Show* and to Dr. Frank-N-Furter has always relied on the challenging of norms and their ridged adherence. If Frank-N-Furter is to still possess the power "chill us, thrill us, and fulfill us", we must look at the ways in which he/she/they and *Rocky Horror* make us uncomfortable, and not

move away from that discomfort, but lean into it and discover new boundaries not only to cross, but to obliterate.

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