

The Unhinged Woman: An Intersectional Feminist Evaluation of Postfeminist Antiheroine Fiction and Online Gender Performance

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Abstract

Gaining popularity in the 1980s, postfeminist media originated as a reactionary criticism of Second Wave feminism's essentialist failings. Using the antiheroine archetype, postfeminist literature imagined characters working against traditional gender expectations as an agent of her independence and identity. Now, following third wave queer feminist incorporations and fallout from the #MeToo movement, antiheroines in postfeminist media have shifted from their traditional definition to align with stereotypes of the "unhinged woman", yet fall into an idyllic vacuum of gender equality. An intersectional and Butlerian-based feminist analysis of this new postfeminist antiheroine, as seen in Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* and Eliza Clark's *Boy Parts*, reveals the neoliberal mindset behind this archetype, indicating a shifting zeitgeist of late third wave gender performance and subsequent commodification in online subcultures. These "unhinged women" function as a dichotomous reaction against and a simultaneous hypocritical acknowledgement of hegemonic privilege and cisheteropatriarchy.

Introduction

"It's me, hi, I'm the problem, it's me," drones Taylor Swift on the vinyl as our protagonist lounges gauntly in her room. She is taking selfies after applying the Clinique Black Honey lip shade, posing coquettishly; she captions the picture "I am seeing shapes in my wallpaper", and lives in a lavish complacency. She is the hysterical, yet routine example of the 21st century antiheroine. She is "in her unhinged woman era"; a constant depressive, dichotomous *Fleabag*-adjacent state with a melted blase sexiness. An antiheroine is a character archetype which subverts the traditional expectations of a likable or traditional female protagonist. In the wake of the 2016 #MeToo movement, however, the archetype has shifted into a representation of subversive gender performance while balancing feminist activism and complacency within privilege. Now, an increased popularity of the postfeminist antiheroine genre has centered itself as an aestheticized attempt at divorcing femininity from the patriarchy. But this begs the question: how does the unhinged woman archetype manage the balance between intersectional depiction while forwarding the zeitgeist towards gender liberation? In an era of performative activism following the #MeToo Movement and the simultaneous demonization of feminist voices, the unhinged woman symbolizes a subversive femininity, yet this depiction falls victim to non-intersectional and neoliberal postfeminist conventions which disguise and repeat gendered oppression while assuming an idyllic achievement of feminist equality. An intersectional and Butlerian based feminist analysis of this "new wave antiheroine" as seen in Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* and Eliza Clark's *Boy Parts* reveals the neoliberal mindset behind this archetype while indicating a shifting zeitgeist of late third wave gender performance and reaction to Post-Me-Too cisheteropatriarchy.

Literature Review and Summary

In order to fully delve into the elements that make up a greater analysis of Moshfegh and Clark's novels, a breakdown of each novel for their themes and a summary of their plot is necessary to observe points of critique. Ottessa Moshfegh's 2018 novel *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* is a dark comedy following an unnamed protagonist, hailing from a WASP family, in early 21st century New York City. Moshfegh's protagonist
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is dark, witty and apathetic working at an art museum until she is fired for abruptly defecating on the floor. In order to cope with her severe mental health issues, ongoing grief over her parent's deaths and her rocky relationship with her best friend, the narrator lives off of her unemployment payments for a year abusing narcotics to reset her life (Moshfegh). Eliza Clark's 2020 novel *Boy Parts* is also a dark comedy following Irina, a rundown artist working as a bartender, who, on a sabbatical from her job attempts to revitalize her photography career by seducing average looking men to pose for her illicit photographs. As the book progresses, the boundaries between her love of extreme themes and her own life blur as she deals with rocky relationships with exes, past trauma and bipolar disorder (Clark). Both of these novels illustrate a subversion of traditional feminine representation, yet also portray harmful reaffirmations of internalized misogyny, neoliberal views on mobility and agency, as well as essentialist recreation of patriarchal structures highlighting their exact postfeminist characterization. In reading Moshfegh and Clark's novels, I found that these protagonists do not fit into the traditional definition of the "antiheroine"; they have no heroic motives or hope for a drastic change of circumstances. I propose that what we see here is a departure from the antiheroine to the "The Unhinged Woman".

The #MeToo Movement and Online Popular Feminism

The 2016 #MeToo movement and its ad feminam demonization of a cultural reckoning acknowledging the prevalence of sexual assault has contributed significantly to the popularity of the antiheroine. Although the movement has been praised for giving a platform for a cultural acknowledgement of gendered violence through large scale social media activism, a study from the National Library of Medicine studying the demographic representation within the #MeToo movement found that tweets authored by white women were overrepresented within the movement compared to those of other ethnicities aligning with critiques of unequal representation within the movement (Mueller). Online networked misogyny and unequal representation within this movement can be translated towards young women's socialization, and current popular feminism's shortcomings towards a simultaneous internalized misogyny along with a current alignment with the unfavorable representations within the antiheroine genre. The "manosphere", a set of websites, blogs, forums housing a subculture of men who believe their gender to be the victims of feminism. Valerie Dickel describes the networked misogyny which houses these claimed victims. She states,

The general perception of #MeToo is that women's stories and accounts are untrustworthy; discussions criticize the visibility of the movement and women's decisions to share their stories instead of remaining silent. Men denounce the fact that they can also be victims of violence, but their stories are often overlooked. Instead of demanding justice for both male and female victims, users engaging in these discourses claim that women do not have the right to talk until the problem of violence against men is addressed and resolved. These different approaches to sexual violence often lead to descriptions of rape as not harmful. (Dickel)

Following this example during their online socialization, young women may have internalized this idea of male victimhood reaffirming the postfeminist sensibilities which state a superseded need for equality. This may have led to the popularity of online subcultures glorifying the antiheroine, serving as an attempt to fall into a transgressive feminist position while creating a contradictory statement of achieved gender equality. However, these subcultures often recreate the same oppressive beliefs surrounding feminism that they wish to break down such as racism, homophobia and misogyny, manifested through an internalized glamorization of complacency than attempting to break them down. The #MeToo movement gave a platform for a cultural acknowledgement of gendered violence and often antiheroine subcultures commodify their identity around the misogynistic portrayal from the manosphere and claim agency or liberation from postfeminist falsities around an embraced gender policing.

The Postfeminist Antiheroine

Second wave feminism, ranging from the 1960s and 70s, brought great cultural and legal victories: normalizing sex positivity and birth control, yet these shifts often fell into essentialistic boxes of gender binarism. After the 1970s, however, postfeminism emerged as a counter-reactive ideology combining idyllic neoliberal visions of a future without feminism. Postfeminism is defined within this study as a critical analytic term or sensibility which refers to patterns in contemporary cultural life emphasizing individualism and agency as dominant modes of muting structural inequalities. In doing so, postfeminism assumes an achieved gender equality and a superseded need for feminism. Feminist scholars such as Rosalind Gill and Yvonne Tasker observe postfeminism then as a broad “sensibility” rather than an epistemological perspective or historical shift. British author and media studies professor at the University of Leeds, Yvonne Tasker, describes this sensibility, “postfeminism broadly encompasses a set of assumptions, widely disseminated within popular media forms, having to do with the “pastness” of feminism, whether that supposed pastness is merely noted, mourned, or celebrated. Crucially for us, postfeminism suggests a more complex relationship between culture, politics, and feminism than the more familiar framing concept of “backlash” allows.” (Tasker) This describes the study of postfeminist sensibility as an inquiry into individual motives and reactions to stimuli based cultural products such as media or art. This sensibility emphasizes itself in Moshfegh and Clark’s novels through their assumptions that their protagonists are not limited by gendered oppression and remain independent agents against a sleeping zeitgeist, yet their main upheaval reveals the same battle between balancing gendered behavioral and workplace norms while maintaining significant class and race privilege. In Clark’s novel, for example, Irina, the protagonist, complains about her best friend Flo. The scene follows Irina’s photo shoot of a young man when Flo arrives with food:

‘I got you some carbohydrates and tins and stuff while I was there.’ She walks past me (shoes on my carpet), picks up the wet tea towel as she goes, and starts putting the shopping away. Carbs. I curl my lip.

‘Gluten is the literal devil,’ I tell her. She never listens to me about food and she’d still be skinny if she did. She posts on her blog about my disordered eating. How it bothers her, how she’s always trying to feed me bread. (Clark 14).

The current almost romanticized popularity of this character reveals a problematic setup for the socialization of young women who consume and attach themselves to this genre’s convention. The base assumption of Moshfegh and Clark’s novels roots itself within postfeminist mistaking self-surveillance, body-monitoring for agency and choice. Although fans of this novel and genre may claim this depiction as perhaps a reclamation and ironic leaning into patriarchal conventions, Clarke’s heroine does not reclaim the female body from patriarchal monitoring for an isolated gaze inward, but works in the contradiction of being a patriarchal voyeur masquerading as an independent woman. Postfeminist media conventions and their balancing knife of feminist and anti-feminist ideology is best displayed through these novels’ depictions of the new antiheroine archetype: *the unhinged woman*. I define the unhinged woman, then, as a departure from the antiheroine, as an archetype of female characters who perform morally dubious and problematic behaviors in order to achieve their own desired ends. In the studied novels, the unhinged woman reveals the exact contradictory nature of postfeminism; masking oppression as independence or liberation. Melanie Haas’ introduction in her 2021 anthology collection *Antiheroines of Contemporary Media: Saints, Sinners, and Survivors* describes the increased popularity of the antiheroine and theorizes the possible overlaps with conventions common in postfeminist media. She states, “the ascent of the antiheroine in contemporary culture challenges the boundaries that limit women to idealized motherhood and domestic partnership, allowing space for narratives that diverge from social prescriptions and characters who embody visions of womanhood that affirm choice, agency, and alterity” (Haas ix). The crux remains, however, that behind this narrative of agency and mobility comes a reaffirming hegemonic voice reaffirming a continued cycle of capitalistic exploitation of gender norms. This archetype remains a double-edged sword reflecting a Post-Metoo movement refusal to comply with docility and lean into unfavorable depictions while, opposingly, recreating the same systemic issues which

cause gender oppression. Mobility and agency do not liberate if “liberation” is accompanied by complacent privilege in the first place. Rosalind Gill and her colleagues define similar conventions and overlapping themes between the antiheroine archetype and postfeminist discourse within her 2007 paper “Postfeminist Media Culture”, highlighting the potential hypocrisy behind this trope. For instance, “[postfeminism] emphasizes the contradictory nature of postfeminist discourses and the entanglement of both feminist and anti-feminist themes [...] point[ing] to a number of relatively stable features which [...] include the notion that femininity is a bodily property; [...] the emphasis on self-surveillance, monitoring and discipline; a focus on individualism, choice and empowerment; [...] the resurgence in ideas of natural sexual difference; a marked sexualization of culture; an emphasis on consumerism and the commodification of difference” (Gill 149). The unhinged woman balances her autonomy with self-sacrifice to conform to the same hegemonic principles she claims liberation from. This archetype thus retains its power within a neoliberal and essentialist mindset; her subversity is directly a refusal to conform within binary standards and capitalist norms, but the reason she is able to practice this refusal is because of her existing privilege and conformity to neoliberal cisheteropatriarchy. These depictions, although attempts at varying representation of female characters, are missing an intersectional distinction and recognition of privilege based on class, race and sexuality.

This reinforces an individual hypocritical backlash against and undermining of feminism to emphasize a falsely utopic presentation of apathetic agency and harmful behaviors within gender performance. The direct urge against postfeminist sensibilities may be, as scholar Rosalind Gill describes, to “problematize” postfeminism, but feminist media and literary studies must confront the gaps and contradictions within postfeminism to better understand capitalist exploitation and intentional lulling of the masses to embrace their oppression. As Gill states in her recent paper “Post-Postfeminism?: New Feminist Visibilities in Postfeminist Times”, “postfeminist media culture should be an object of analysis, not a position or a perspective. I do not see myself as a “postfeminist analyst” but as an analyst of postfeminism—a patterned yet contradictory sensibility connected to other dominant ideologies (such as individualism and neoliberalism)” (Gill). The base assumption of Moshfegh and Clark’s novels roots itself within postfeminist mistaking self-surveillance, body-monitoring for agency and choice. A confrontation with these hypocritical and false utopic presentations actually benefits feminist studies and scholars to show their emptiness within the exploitative realities of the current system.

Intersectional Shortcomings

Intersectional theory, coined by UCLA legal scholar Kimberly Crenshaw in the 1990s, additionally changed third wave feminist theory by acknowledging the shortcomings of heteropatriarchy within a capitalistic system in representing minorities and overlapping identity groups. Crenshaw described intersectionality as “the view that women experience oppression in varying configurations and in varying degrees of intensity. Cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated, but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society. Examples of this include race, gender, class, ability and ethnicity” (Crenshaw qtd. in Ellison). Intersectionality has since become an intrinsic aspect of feminist theory in analyzing the failures of the American legal system in creating spaces for people with overlapping identities who face oppression under race, gender, class systems. White feminist limitations within the antiheroine archetype can be best understood as a failure to encompass intersectional identities. Intersectionality is thus used not through a legal lens, but rather the failure to acknowledge overlapping discrimination from capitalism and the crossroads between privilege and oppression. An example of an intersectional critique of white feminism can be found in the 2011 SlutWalk marches, for example, which became a social justice movement to make visible the sexual violence and slut shaming still prevalent in modern day society. By leaning into derogatory terms and reclaiming them as an attempt to highlight the prejudice behind them. This movement received criticism for its racial blindness and poor intersectionality when black women’s organizations asserted that “as black women, we do not have the privilege or the space to call ourselves ‘slut’ without validating the already historically entrenched ideology and recurring messages about what and who the Black woman is. We don’t have the privilege to play on

destructive representations burned in our collective minds, on our bodies and souls for generations" (qtd. in Bilge). Similarly, antiheroines lean into unfavorable stereotypes and refuse gender policing, yet most popular antiheroines tend to be white and upper middle-class women. Of course, for white women, traditionally considered feminine canon and limited within those roles, the antiheroine comes as a "revolutionary" rejection, but for women of color leaning into the same unfavorable depictions only reinforces colonial ideas and stereotypes of a "lesser" femininity. Intersectional feminism in combination with Butlerian gender theory comes as the steady surgical hand by which one can pick apart postfeminist antiheroines for their inability to fully make space, for subversive gender performance of these characters becomes a privilege of their class and racial background. Thus, an idyllic farce of achieved gender equity only serves the neoliberal white imagination further complacent within their institutional privilege. Ottessa Moshfegh, on a podcast with the author of *American Psycho*, Bret Ellis, hinted at her position on intersectionality and "diversity politics" after Ellis complained of "literary prizes being handed out to black authors" to which she responded "If things continue in the way that they are culturally right now, nobody can say shit about my next protagonist because she's a Chinese crossdresser. You just try to tell me she's disgusting" (Moshfegh qtd. in Chu). Moshfegh has long resisted "diversity politics" and vehemently resists the title "feminist". Her work then falls directly at the crossroads of privilege and complacency within. All this is backdropped by a strict refusal to acknowledge hegemonic privilege her and her protagonists emulate and celebrate while entirely true refusing intersectional acknowledgement of gendered and racial oppression. Intersectionality is thus used not through a legal lens, but rather the failure to acknowledge overlapping discrimination from capitalism and the crossroads between privilege and oppression. Sirma Bilge, a researcher specializing in intersectionality and gender studies at the University of Montreal, critiques neoliberal themes in postfeminism emphasizing their hypocrisy and reduction of intersectional theory into deviating identity groups rather than emphasizing the systemic issues which create "the missing" overlap of these identities. She states, "political myths of "posts" (postraciality, postfeminism) and fantasies of transcendence [...] are espoused by both liberal and conservative forces. The result is a contradictory political and cultural climate replete with idea(l)s of equality, accompanied by an unbending refusal to see the persistence of deeply entrenched inequalities of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and citizenship-status" (Bilge). In an intersectional evaluation of Moshfegh and Clark's novels it is important to consider not only the overlap of class privilege, but also the systematic dehumanization of their respective antiheroines through the norming of capitalist and patriarchal hegemony. The aim of an intersectional lens in this paper emphasizes "the missing space" in the crossroads of privilege and oppression in these antiheroines. Additionally, when considering their popularity within Gen Z online subcultures, an analysis of the reductive commodification of the "antiheroine identity". This summarizes the exact neoliberal tendencies of the protagonist, creating an identitarian relationship with the unhinged women, pushing privilege, self-monitoring and binarism as part of transgressive aesthetics. Bilge adds, "the result is a contradictory political and cultural climate replete with idea(l)s of equality, accompanied by an unbending refusal to see the persistence of deeply entrenched inequalities of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and citizenship-status" (Bilge). Intersectional feminism in combination with Butlerian gender theory comes as the steady surgical hand by which one can pick apart the unhinged woman archetype for their inability to fully make space, for subversive gender performance of these characters becomes a privilege of their class and racial background. White feminist themes overlapping with neoliberal postfeminism manifest themselves in Moshfegh and Clark's novels through a mythicization and reduction of systemic oppression to past realities rather than continued struggles. Thus, an idyllic farce of achieved gender equality without intersectional feminism only serves the neoliberal white imagination to be further complacent within their institutional privilege. For future research, the blunted knife of intersectional theory within feminist and literary studies must be sharpened again to emphasize how empirical injustices create gaps and contradictions which produce discrimination. Moshfegh and Clark's protagonists are trapped exactly within this contradiction, and are enmeshed with neoliberal farces while inherently benefitting from class and white privilege.

Hashtags Maketh Woman

One of the main markers of Moshfegh and Clark's popularity is within online subcultures following unlikeable female characters or the unhinged woman archetype. These subcultures claim these characters as an amalgamation of "feminine rage" and a payback to the patriarchy through a refusal to conform under it. Yet, after an acknowledgement and evaluation of the novels' different levels of failure this claim serves as a dangerous socialization for young women who fall victim to the commodification and aestheticization of identity within these subcultures. As a consequence of being raised on social media platforms such as Instagram, Tumblr and TikTok, gen Z is frightfully familiar with the subculture aestheticization of identity. Rising culture critic and online essayist Rayne Fisher-Quann provides an in-depth meditation on Gen-Z adoption of antiheroine archetypes on online subcultures. She states, "it's become very common for women online to express their identities through an artfully curated list of the things they consume, or aspire to consume — and because young women are conditioned to believe that their identities are defined almost entirely by their neuroses, these roundups of cultural trends and authors du jour often implicitly serve to chicly signal one's mental illnesses to the public" (Fisher-Quann). This becomes especially true for postfeminist antiheroines; "#unhingedwoman" has become a subculture on popular platforms hailing authors such as Moshfegh and Clark for identifying a new era of feminine media representation. A Tiktok by Lauren Louise, user @bigbooklady, details this exact phenomenon as they walk down aisles of a bookstore captioning the post "[...] frantically searching for the next miserable hot girlboss protagonist to base my personality off of" (Louise). These glamorized aesthetics and made-up caricatures of this archetype only adds to the neoliberal and reductionist reaffirming of white postfeminist ideals. Observing these subcultures and their pedestal placements for "the unhinged woman" can indicate greater trends for fourth wave feminism, especially following social media movements like #MeToo, and how intersectionality can acknowledge capitalist reduction to these commodified identities. Through a Butlerian analysis of these antiheroines, one can better understand these growing trends within online subcultures and actively critique this ineffective mode of feminist critique.

The Unhinged Womanly Melancholy

The Third Wave Feminist movement revolutionized the cultural understanding of gender and sexuality through incorporation of previous feminist theory with queer theory. Specifically through the work of queer feminist scholars such as Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, this incorporation expanded queer visibility in feminist studies and conceptualized ideas of gender performance, differentiating sex and gender likening them through a spectrum view than a binary. This understanding of gender as a socialized reinforcement and individual performance helps break down Moshfegh and Clark's antiheroines' subversive gender performance as under a regime of gender differentialism and subsequent internalized misogyny. The 2006 anthology book *Butler Matters* details Butler's effect on gender theory, "gender is performative insofar as it is the effect of a regulatory regime of gender differences in which genders are divided and hierarchized under constraint. Social constraints, taboos, prohibitions, threats of punishment operate in the ritualized repetition of norms, and this repetition constitutes the temporalized scene of gender construction and destabilization. There is no subject who precedes or enacts this repetition of norms" (*Butler Matters* 29). One can observe this Butlerian idea of gender performance in contemporary antiheroines and make visible a shifting specifically visible in postfeminist sensibility within Moshfegh and Clark's novels their respective antiheroines then use social constraints and taboos surrounding feminine gender performance to subversive heights, but ultimately fail by reinforcing neoliberal farces of feminine commodification as a form of liberation. This attempt at subversive and agentive gender performance becomes farcical then due to the privilege these antiheroines retain as upper-class white women. Butler updated her definition of "gender as drag" in her book *The Psychic Life of Power*. Through this updated definition contemporary antiheroines can be understood as performing gender through "an unmourned grief" or melancholy recreating the traditional gender paradigm of postfeminist sensibilities. Butler incorporated that in order to conform to capitalist heteronormativity, young women must reject same sex attraction at a

young age and assuming that gender formation is directly correspondent to sexuality, they state that “what ensues is a culture of gender melancholy in which masculinity and femininity emerge as the traces of an unrieved and unrieved love” (Butler 140). This feminist incorporation of queer theory verbalizes contemporary antiheroines as an attempt at fighting a cultural notion of “traditional” femininity, yet acknowledges the relative privilege Moshfegh and Clark’s protagonist retain due to their race and class. Contrasting the popular “gender as drag” idea, this new Butlerian definition combines an early childhood socialization and societal oppression into later gender formation and consequent misogyny. Thus, gender forms as a composition of inarticulate sexuality. The unhinged woman archetype is a direct confrontation with how hegemonic power of the patriarchy shapes gender performance. Moshfegh’s heroine and her troubled relationship with her best friend, Reva, reveals the underbelly of how internalized gender norms, as harmful as they may be, are communally accepted and mourned (at a distance) to make way for heteronormativity:

Reva was like the pills I took. They turned everything, even hatred, even love, into fluff I could bat away. And that was exactly what I wanted—my emotions passing like headlights that shine softly through a window, sweep past me, illuminate something vaguely familiar, then fade and leave me in the dark again. I woke up briefly to the sound of the faucet running and Reva retching in the bathroom. It was a rhythmic, violent song—throat grunts punctuated with splats and splashes. When she had finished, she flushed three times, turned off the faucet and went back up the stairs. I lay awake until I thought an appropriate amount of time had passed. I didn’t want Reva to think I’d been listening to her vomit. My blind eye was the one real comfort I felt I could give her. (Moshfegh 114)

Moshfegh’s protagonist, for all her sardonic distancing from her grief and mental illness, brings forward profound and contradictory relations with femininity. As much as she resents and, at times, hates Reva for her frivolities; she still admits the comfort they provide each other through similar parental loss which reaffirms the normative feminine regime in their lives. These characters, despite their postfeminist traits or claims of surpassing the need for feminism, form a simultaneous confrontation and concealment of their psyches under the patriarchy. Their narratives are troubled with the exact problem of a society which has socialized them into “femininity” and the inexpressible grief that comes with it. Butler’s work is revolutionary in completely changing the perspective on traditional views of gender and sex, yet, much like intersectionality issue, this spectrum based definition of gender seems to only create deviations from the traditional binary, a repetitive and discrepant arrival at the same norm which these characters (as well as their audience) attempt to escape. Each attempt at subversive gender performance comes from within the system, constantly searching for new categorization and new labels, coming back to face the same problems which they attempt to undermine.

Future Outcomes

In predicting the future of conversation surrounding key concepts of this research, specifically postfeminist sensibilities, online identity commodification, the unhinged woman straddles both these areas as a confrontation with contradictory consumer capitalism which flattens the role of feminism to banal and neoliberal rhetoric. Pinpointing itself on diversity and identity politics within intersectional theory, as well as its use within feminist and cultural studies, the literature on gender and online identity is scarce, yet encapsulated by Angela McRobbie’s concept of “double entanglement”. Sirma Bilge discusses the role of depoliticized intersectional theory in combination of castration of radical feminist studies through McRobbie’s ideas:

This double entanglement serves important purposes for the circulation of diversity rhetorics across the academy, progressive social movements, and non-profit and corporate organizations. Intersectionality, originally focused on transformative and counter-hegemonic knowledge production and radical politics of social justice, has been commodified and colonized for neoliberal regimes. A depoliticized intersectionality is particularly useful to a neoliberalism that reframes all values as market values: identity-based radical politics are often turned into corporatized diversity tools leveraged by dominant groups to attain various ideological and institutional goals (Bilge)

Incorporating the unhinged woman as a form of late third wave feminism's entrapment within consumer capitalism and postfeminist sensibilities, this archetype remains an old beast printing itself on magazines and cultural objects begging for ingestion to aid masses to continue on sleeping under dreams of encapsulated identity rather than wake up to the exploitative reality of the world around them. Specifically when looking into the role of identity politics within third wave feminism this double entanglement and identity commodification (or signaling) is the perfect example of what Sirma Bilge calls "ornamental intersectionality". The unhinged woman archetype comes as a sort of "feminine rage" as payback for the patriarchy:

Intersectionality has been transformed by the confluence between neoliberal corporate diversity culture and identity politics in the last fifteen years and also acquired undeniable intellectual, political, and moral capital [...] which proved to be a fertile ground for opportunistic uses of intersectionality that I have dubbed "ornamental intersectionality" (Bilge)

The unhinged woman archetype comes as a sort of "feminine rage" as payback for the patriarchy. But in this ornamental attempt at incorporating feminism as identity conduits this archetype merely signals its postfeminist qualities and entrenchment within neoliberal capitalist thought through its turning of the tables. Intersectional theory has been castrated to encourage in-fighting, promote corporate "girlboss feminism" and further exploitation while increasing the gaps within empirical institutions against those most vulnerable. This brings to question how intersectional theory can be sharpened through the study of postfeminism to not problematize but confront and "see-through" capitalism to acknowledge its effect while noticing its emptiness. Rosalind Gill elaborates on the critical force of postfeminism and the value of feminist and cultural studies to de-isolate and think of current injustices in a broader and cohesive sense:

Responding to arguments that postfeminism has lost its critical force in a world in which feminism is increasingly promoted rather than repudiated I have made the case for keeping, rather than jettisoning, the notion of postfeminism [...] and contradictions between circulating media versions of feminism, and also to stress the need to think together feminism with anti-feminism, postfeminism, and revitalized misogyny (Gill)

In taking into account the gaps and contradictions within postfeminist sensibilities, we must be careful not to adopt and mistake its supposed "agency" as liberation and notice its force in promoting capitalist power. Analysis of postfeminism must be considered cohesively just as intersectionality to illustrate the gaps and internalization of power to force a sleep than to find realities.

Conclusion

Coming back to our 21st century antiheroine, still lounging in her room beautifully, we see her defined element by element into a farcical performance to cover her melancholy oppression due to capitalist hegemony. However, after exposing this compartmentalized inside rather than pitying her melancholy, one must critique and understand the blatant coverup of systemic oppression and reductive socialization entangled in a commodified identity in order to observe the larger "missing space" served by future fourth wave feminist trends. An intersectional and Butlerian based feminist analysis of this "unhinged woman" as seen in Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* and Eliza Clark's *Boy Parts* reveals the neoliberal mindset behind this archetype while indicating a shifting zeitgeist of late third wave gender performance and reaction to Post-Me-Too cisheteropatriarchy. The unhinged woman archetype confronts us with these gaps and further analysis and study of these postfeminist sensibilities shows us our own dysphoria, not against ourselves or the individual, but against patriarchy itself.

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