

# There are People Who Look Indecent in Clean Linen

**Michael Alexander Aird**

I do not wish to prejudge the moral implications of such a mechanism, but I shall not exceed the limits of an objective analysis if I point out that the ubiquity of the signifier in myth exactly reproduces the physique of the *alibi* (which is, as one realizes a spatial term): in the alibi too, there is a place which is full and one which is empty, linked by a relation of negative identity (“I am not where you think I am; I am where you think I am not”). But the ordinary alibi (for the police, for instance) has an end; reality stops the turnstile revolving at a certain point. Myth is a *value*, truth is no guarantee for it; nothing prevents it from being a perpetual alibi; it is enough that its signifier has two sides for it always to have an “elsewhere” at its disposal. The meaning is always there to *present* the form; the form is always there to *outdistance* the meaning. And there never is any contradiction, conflict, or split between the meaning and the form: they are never at the same place. In the same way, if I am in a car and I look at the scenery through the window, I can at will focus on the scenery or on the window-pane. At one moment I grasp the presence of the glass and the distance of the landscape; at another, on the contrary, the transparency of the glass and the depth of the landscape; but the result of this alternation is constant: the glass is at once present and empty to me, and the landscape unreal and full. The same thing occurs in the mythical signifier: its form is empty but present, its meaning absent but full. To wonder at this contradiction I must voluntarily interrupt this turnstile of form and meaning, I must focus on each separately, and apply to myth a static method of deciphering, in short, I must go against its own dynamics: to sum up, I must pass from the state of reader to that of mythologist.

—Barthes, *Mythologies*

### Type 124

And according to Harry Truman: No man should be allowed to be president who does not understand hogs. In fact, that's enabled the New York pork packer Uncle Sam Wilson—or Uncle Sam for short—to read properly *Europe's Four Little Pigs: A Greek Tragedy*. On Manhattan Island a long solid wall has been constructed to control roaming herds of wild swine, but across the Atlantic they've been painting lipstick on them for so long now you can't tell them from the bulls and the bears. This Pig-woman do I know, and I will put her in, for my second enormity, she hath beene before me, Punke, Pinnacle and Bawd, any time these two and twenty yeeres, upon record in the Pie-poudres. The common belief that she was named "Grisly" on account of her appearance when born is patently false. It's that all are neo-socialist states that provide welfare for poor people, generous unemployment, universal healthcare, early retirement and comfortable pensions. Those are pearls in their eyes and silk purses coming out of their ears. How do we identify who is "swine" and who isn't? For one, swine eat the leftovers, not the delicacies. They love rolling in mud, refuse, and the like. They are stinky, filthy animals. So, why would a person throw a shiny, valuable jewel before such an animal? It just doesn't make any sense, but obviously we must be prone to such foolishness or our Lord wouldn't have to tell us otherwise. It's well worth saying, however, that the time for charity is over and that the new Circe in Germany is pulling out a Lady Gaga-style Schandmaske to see what she can undo with the stroke of her wand. Kill the pig! Cut his throat! Kill the pig! Bash him in! Motivational strategies, like rewards and punishments, presume that the pig can fly, if he wants to. Despite the obvious folly of pig piloting, we can train behaviour under this paradigm by fine-tuning our reward and discipline tactics. Nothing should be considered too excessive, as indeed online footage shows successful instances of throwing, kicking and bludgeoning the pigs, slamming them against concrete floors, dragging them by the snout or ears, and confining them in tight metal cages. Ultimately, we want other PIGS to look on and realize that maybe this path is fraught with more peril than first thought. There is an irrational bias towards herding behaviour, and if it's imagined that the Argentine excrement can be imported into this pen, you can expect that the ECB and Brussels will be powerless to stop it. While micro pigs are somewhat of a pet fad among several notable celebrities, at the end of the day the last thing we want to do is set up our very own Pig Preserve. Pigs will do what pigs will do, and there will even be one or two Captain Hogthrobs emerge among the filth. But we will remain strong against them and their foul temptations, and give a wide berth to that curséd house. Let us away, her language growes greasier than her Pigs.

## Functional Afixedness

What intelligence? said jesting Analyst, and would not stay for an answer. We're surfing the psychological theory that, being cognitive misers, you'd rather run out on Big Data. Is typing in the search term "Who has played James Bond in the movies" the same as knowing that the answer is Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, and so on? Or is it the difference between "we need a piece on the demonstrations in Tunisia" and "we need a piece on the options the Tunisian government has for addressing the cause of the demonstrations?" While it's factually relevant to categorize what we do as spying, if it is a fact, it ain't intelligence. Reading other countries' newspapers, generating synonyms for the word "actionable," and naming an alphabet of exigent letters are very different skills, but the role is most like an assistant coach on a football team who pores through film and scouting reports to prepare a strategy for the Great Game. That means, by borrowing the DoD's concept of Information Superiority, the basic idea is to combine the notion of "challenge," which is defined in the action ontology as a phenomenon that elicits action from an agent, with the notion of "propagation" or "spreading," which comes from models of neural networks, memetics, and complex systems. This type of work requires a strong understanding of the entire spectrum of the information needs of our diverse customer set. The reality for intelligence officers in that we must woo them, sell them on the need for our services, and demonstrate the value of our material daily through its timeliness and its sophistication. If you are an intelligence officer, the title will often get you in the door, especially the first time, but it will not keep you there. Luckily, we are not in this alone, but driven increasingly by a cottage industry of semi-private firms and the sharing environment of fusion centers, our community is able to leverage information like never before. Everyone who has thought seriously about the global Web brain has come to largely the same conclusions: with *g* subdivided into broad classes such as "crystallized intelligence," which is based on long-term memory and acquired knowledge, and "fluid intelligence," which requires on-the-spot thinking to deal with unfamiliar material and novel situations, the ingenuity, innovation and capability of our contractor base has realized the second coming of bound uncertainty under every scenario. Along the lines of a "tag everything" task, we can dwell in the FutureMAP is now while investing in the gap mitigation resources of hereafter. Like a grand maestro before a sometimes-dissonant orchestra, let the data catechize you where it will. In this way, human society will begin to act more like neurons and synapses than like conventional semiconductors, and thus the network can learn or adapt to new challenges. We will always need some way of making intelligent decisions about people, even if we can't openly answer who or what, when or where.

### A Sign of Les Temps X

In fact, it would be possible to write a whole history of the inventions made since 1830 for the sole purpose of providing capital with weapons against working-class revolt. First of all, next time you open that bag of organic or inorganic fertilizer remember its cost. Your garden needs it; just be wise in its usage. This is the translative transfer by which Musil's observation can be seen to be driven when he in turn draws an analogy between the look of stupidity and the expression of exalted consciousness. Bag 'em, tag 'em, and gaze out over the pristine beauty of your own quarter acre. As a graduate student working on a doctorate at the University of Illinois, I wasn't trying to kill plants, just hasten the growth of soybeans in our short summers. Look at me—I was a botanist, and I inadvertently found something which forced me to remember my humanity and forget the rest. If only I had known, I would have become a watch maker, rather than the expert who developed weapons-grade pepper-spray. It's not Roberts' fault, really, that concentration camps were originally referred to as "refugee camps" during the Boer War, but then some asshole named Lord Kitchener gained control of the British Army and used the camps to "flush out" the undesirables. The use was just absolutely out of the ordinary and it was not in accordance with any training or policy of any department that I know of. I personally certified 4,000 police officers in the early 80s and 90s and I have never seen this before. But hey, if it hadn't been Haber, it would have been someone else. He was not dissuaded by the suicide of his wife, and of course the opposing forces responded in turn with similar tactics. I was working on a technical problem that was considered pressing. I'd do it again, if called upon, in defence of the country. What's more, I am convinced as to the wisdom and the urgency of creating the conditions under which that and related work can be carried out with greater speed and on a larger scale than hitherto. The whole business comes down to a judgement of whether our government has at least a reasonable argument. Dow's original bid, Doan recalls, was made as a routine matter of business, and like so many things in business only later became a moral or political or emotional or spiritual issue. Would we have today, for instance, the Rapid Active Rewarming technique, which filled so many gaps in our study of hypothermia, if our most intelligent minds hadn't been given a limitless range for their creativity? Because our knowledge and ability are incomplete, we are forced in every field to judge prematurely. I don't judge him for it. It's a system of judgement that I'd like to be finished with, but I don't judge him for it. We just don't do a good enough job of teaching this student how to be productively stupid—that is, if we don't feel stupid it means we are simply reproducing the means of subsistence that we require. Milton, who wrote *Paradise Lost*, was an unproductive worker. A singer who sings like a bird in the hedges is an unproductive worker. As clever as she may be flitting among the fruit that falls of its own accord, she is not confronting our "absolute stupidity." That kind of stupidity is an existential fact; it is a known known inherent in our efforts to push our way into the unknown unknowns. It seems desirable to me, he wrote, that we see this as the natural trend of social wealth,

rather than the objective conditions under which it is deployed. In warfare of this kind, uses are difficult to predict and control, but your suggestion will be given very careful attention.

### Reservoir Identity

In view of these considerations, it is possible to say when it is that a party cannot be destroyed by normal means. Warm bodies are one such indicator and can in fact be viewed as the first element. Consider the idea that as a host, you're suddenly in the business of serving people to one another. In other words, don't be afraid to invite a circus: mix as many generations, job disciplines, neighbourhoods and incomes as you can rope in. The second element must necessarily be in existence (if it is not, discussion is meaningless); its appearance is related to the existence of objective material conditions, even if still in a fragmented and unstable state. Give your guest something to do. I, for one, like to put a group of my friends together; I call them my hospitality team. That way you can keep track of the flows as they concentrate or refract, so that the vitality of your 3 self-serving bars will remain undiminished, or the endocrinic signalling of your music won't malfunction. The moment when it becomes impossible to destroy a party by normal means is reached when the two other elements cannot help being formed—that is, the first element, which in its turn necessarily forms the third as its continuation and its means of expressing itself. I always imagine this most forcefully as the element of surprise. I never seat couples together, for instance, or best friends, and when I'm in a really saucy mood I make everyone switch spots between courses. Upending the party formula can break down people's tendencies to be routine. At times it's almost like you have to force them to have fun. For that to happen, the iron conviction has to have been formed that a particular solution of the vital problems is necessary. Without this conviction the second element will not be formed. This element can the more easily be destroyed in that it is numerically weak, but it is essential that if it is destroyed it should leave as its heritage a ferment from which it may be recreated. Setting the stage properly is thus really important. You want your guests to feel awed by the ambiance, almost to the point where they start nursing a mild addiction. This can keep the festive feeling resonating well into the next work week, dissolving constrictive notions of time and space. No overhead lighting, then. If you want everyone to look good and appear sexy, votives are best. The more you set out, the more magical the space will seem, and the less it will look like a séance or psychic's hideout. The activity of the second element towards creating this ferment is therefore fundamental. The criteria by which the second element should be judged are to be sought: 1. in what it actually does; 2. in what provision it makes for the eventuality of its own destruction. Could it have come down to anything less than the Heideggerian hostiness of the host? The old and worn out conception liked to envisage a function full of wizardry and timeliness. It is true that such a position is endowed with great cohesive, centralising and

disciplinary powers. But it is also true that neither could this element form the party alone, nor could the party flourish unless this element was superseded and/or rotated equitably. To this end, I like to disappear into the kitchen for large stretches of time, or even to leave the premises altogether, thereby highlighting the particular moment of the process in which something may either exist or not exist, but after which point the historical necessity of the party becomes obvious.

### A Rising Tide Alleviates All Boats

Once upon a time wealthy Americans aren't spending so freely anymore, and the rest of us are starting to feel the squeeze. It would not be incorrect to situate this rehearsal in the philia not otherwise specified of two constant and classic companions: horse and sparrow. The aim of the present study, then, was to assess whether obtaining a sample could be combined with obtaining a free flow rate, with tops being insertive; bottoms, receptive; and versatiles, between the two. This methodology does, however, rely on patient compliance and willingness to spontaneously void without intervention. Ultimately, it is the medical provider's judgement in conjunction with the patient's clinical status that should determine the testing schedule, with the supporting cast expected to be better able to manage whatever method of drainage they might be offered. We propose that selection should favour individuals that monitor the internal state of flock mates and use this information to adjust their own social foraging tactics. That is, when there are more chances of obtaining credit with a lowered capital gains tax, the most talented of the piss poor have greater hopes of moving up (something that progressive taxation, no matter how generous, can never give). It is more than a convenience for modern economists to ignore the role of risk-taking and innovation, as if the risk-taker is largely unaffected by variations in reward. We have to infer that the anxiety of leakage during reinvestment can lead to a deferral if not outright abstinence of any intercourse at all. Our multimodal rehabilitation programme is a novelty in the international literature because it is guided by a sensitivity to the perfect and right atmosphere for a highly productive form of "urge incontinence." As they say, you can lead a horse to water, but that's just the way the world works. Jude was a good guy. Sorry to hear this. On the other hand, Marx would have been moderately impressed with the example of the 1979 ascendance of a British shopgirl, Margaret Thatcher, to Prime Minister, as well as her defying the vested, mercantilist interests of Britain by releasing the pent-up forces of production. Just think how history might have played out had she remained with those shopgirls who, instructed to urinate into their clothes or face three day's suspension for unauthorized expeditions to the bathroom, opted for adult diapers, kotex and toilet paper. This result is in accordance with the production of a state-dependent model of feeding rates and patch finding times. Look, I'm not suggesting that the hanky code's yellow bandana is the sort of irregular clip-clop that can be periodically wrung from the greater safety net. It's just been found to be more refreshing and personally liberating than any other propensity for redistribution. I'm so curious, I'd definitely like to try it one day, hopefully I will.

### **About the author**

Michael Alexander Aird's work has appeared in such journals as *Lit*, *Lungfull!*, *Canadian Literature*, *Bombay Gin*, *Rhino*, *Word for/Word*, *Shampoo*, and *Bomblog*. Excerpts from this project have come out in *Salthill*, and others are forthcoming with *Fence* and *3am*.