

CONTROL / *CONTRÔLE*: COMPARING DISCOURSES OF POWER AND REBELLION IN
HAIR CARE PRODUCTS

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Abstract

Since the Antiquity, female hair has been a powerful social semiotic, used to determine women's sexuality, mental states, and adherence to gender norms. As a result of this extensive signifying power, many disciplinary practices have evolved to regulate female hair. In this thesis, I use critical discourse analysis methods to determine what ideologies are present on consumer hair care products. I investigate a selection of products found within a Fairbanks, AK beauty store, analyzing the English and French text on the labels. The results of this analysis show that hair product labels directly address the disciplinary practices that circulate through our culture, often referencing control, aggression, and defensive relationships. The language to evoke control is modified slightly between Anglo-American and French and Franco-Canadian contexts, with the former more likely to use managerial terms in the discourse. Hair product labels also appropriate language of resistance, ultimately creating an adversarial relationship between the consumer and nature.

Dedication
To Maren Hammond Wilding

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Introduction

Ô toison, moutonnant jusque sur l'encolure!

Ô boucles! Ô parfum chargé de nonchaloir!

Extase! Pour peupler ce soir l'alcôve obscure

Des souvenirs dormant dans cette chevelure

- "*La Chevelure*," Charles Baudelaire¹

Entering the Ulta Beauty storefront in Fairbanks, Alaska, I find it remarkable how many men there always seem to be. That is, there seems to be an inordinate amount of men waiting in their cars in the parking lot -- always in the driver's seat, either chatting on their phones or absently swiping at their touchscreens. I have yet to enter this store without noting that at least a quarter of the parked vehicles are occupied by a lone male. Once in the store, of course it is a different matter. With only a small section of male-oriented products, a few shelves under a sign reading "The Men's Shop at Ulta," the proportion of men in the store are similarly low. It is clear that at this particular space at the corner of a Fairbanks strip mall is divided: women are inside, men are out.

This observation is clearly not groundbreaking; certainly Ulta has a specific market, and large teams of people working only to attract that market. And of course it is not earth-shattering to note that ideologies of gender are played out and reflected in the beauty industry. But given the nature of my purpose for entering the Fairbanks Ulta so often, attempting to discover what *exactly* those gender ideologies are and how they are reflected on the thousands of bottles and boxes contained inside, the legion of waiting men, seemingly guarding the entryway (indeed, I

¹ O fleece, that down the neck waves to the nape! / O curls! O perfume nonchalant and rare! / O ecstasy! To fill this alcove shape / With memories that in these tresses sleep. Translation by Doreen Bell (Baudelaire 32). Original French found on page 259.

often wonder why they do not drive to one of the nearby shops or restaurants and come back to pick up their female companions when they are ready?), creates an eerily demarcated entrance. Opening the door to Ulta, I seem to leave a clearly defined masculine space outdoors and enter a feminine one.

I went into the Ulta feeling very much like Thoreau as he went in the woods “to front only the essential facts of life.” In my case, I hypothesized those essential facts would be found in the essential tools of an ideal gender performance: hair products. Though I have never been particularly literate in hair styling, never learning to coif my hair into the latest trends, there is no way to ignore that there is *something* about women and hair. Growing up reading magazines like *Seventeen*, essentially a guide for gender performance for the young adolescent, where “in 2001, 22 percent of advertisements were for hair care products alone” (28) sociologist Rose Weitz writes in her book *Rapunzel’s Daughters: What Women’s Hair Tells Us About Women’s Lives*, the connection between styled hair and femininity is presented as common sense. This connection is echoed in more literary texts, from Baudelaire’s languorous portrait of dark tresses in *La Chevelure* to Solange Knowles’ recently-released song “Don’t Touch My Hair.”

Though issues of hair arise in celebrated literary texts, concern with hair generally is still often marginalized, characterized as silly and immature, the mark of anti-intellectualism. However, Weitz writes that “far from being trivial, these concerns reflect deeper truths about women’s lives” (*Rapunzel’s Daughters* xii). Investigating hair and hair products is a way for me to critically confront prejudices about what is worth scholarly attention. While Weitz uses personal interviews to uncover these embedded truths, I choose to use the hair products themselves, discovering stories constructing the label text.

I also wanted to see how these stories were rendered in French, in addition to the English text. Most beauty products offer descriptions in several translations, often placing their French translation in a primary position. While Anglo-American culture is in many ways quite similar to French and Franco-Canadian culture, enough social and linguistic differences exist to make comparing the two languages a potentially fruitful endeavor. Moving to just a slightly different context is a useful method for finding “truths so embedded in our culture that they can be as difficult for us to see as for fish to see water,” as Weitz puts it (*Rapunzel’s Daughters* xii).

In a sales context, the connection between women and hair is even more clearly delineated than in literary and popular textual reference; hair care products are clearly gendered both on the bottle and by placement in the store. The hair care products are also clearly racialized, with brands marketed towards black women with natural hair placed in a separate and specifically labeled section. In short, hair care brands are uniquely interested in preserving race and gender constructions, constructions which contribute to inequality. With the majority of products marketed towards a normative white female audience, the industry sends the message that men do not require specialized hair equipment. In contrast, black women are expected to undergo many forms of hair treatment; the minimal and marginalized presence of specifically marketed products in mainstream beauty supply stores more likely reflects and perpetuates the social erasure of black women. While very blatantly working within social power structures through marketing and store arrangement, it is striking how often and how blatantly power and control arise on the product labels themselves. Hair products represent discourses of the controlled female body, which are fixated on power, and do so by blatantly using language evoking power.

Working on this thesis during the 2016 election season made my investigation of hair products and power feel all the more relevant. At a commencement speech at Yale University, Hillary Clinton told the class of 2001, “I have learned, and this may be the most important thing I say to you today, that hair matters. Pay attention to your hair—because everyone else will” (qtd. in Ofek 147). Of course, 15 years later Clinton lost a presidential election to a man with infamously bad hair. This outcome solidified the reality of the continued significance of gendered hair norms in contemporary culture. Why was Clinton required to make strategic hair changes throughout her career — creating a blonder, more feminine look while supporting her husband’s election bid, then forming a shorter, more masculine look while running for Senate (*Rapunzel’s Daughters* xiii) — while Trump’s hair remained a constant punchline without significant damage to his career? Why is it clear that Clinton is only speaking to the women in the Yale commencement audience? Why does women’s hair matter, and how do women learn that it does?

These are the questions that I look to hair product labels to answer. Inspired by the varying politics that govern male and female hair, in this thesis, I explore the relationship between women, power, and their varying hairstyles, investigating what women are working to signify when they “pay attention” to their hair. In the first chapter, I trace the ideologies that have shaped women’s hair in Western European culture, both figuratively and literally, since the Middle Ages. From mourning medieval widows to Shakespeare’s *Ophelia*, to Christina Rossetti’s *Laura*, untamed hair has broadly signified untamed women—wild, hypersexualized, mad, and/or dangerous deviants from the social order. I also introduce the theoretical framework of my semiotic analysis, weaving together Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s conceptual metaphor, while also incorporating translation theory to

move my analysis across cultural contexts. In the second chapter, I describe my methods for gathering and analyzing texts. Implementing Fairclough's critical discourse analysis methodology, I describe my findings, using metaphor to enact ideological patterns across the hair product texts. In the third chapter, I interpret my findings, explaining the connection between the metaphors that consistently arise and their corresponding ideologies, making visible the stories of power and control residing on an ordinary bottle of shampoo.

Chapter 1 Context

1.1 Historical and Literary Background²

Given the historical connection between unruly hair and madness, excess sexuality, and social deviance, it is not surprising that many contemporary women are interested in controlling their hair. In this section, I demonstrate that hair has been used as a symbol of feminized wildness and madness through history, with a specific focus on an example from the early modern period, Shakespeare's Ophelia, as a case study. I then discuss how these concepts continued, if not strengthened, in the Victorian era. My intentions are to establish historical precedence and outline the ideology driving written depictions of women's hair, creating the opportunity in subsequent chapters to outline the intertextual relationship between today's hair product labels and past Western literature.

In her article, "The Power of Women's Hair in the Victorian Imagination," Elisabeth Gitter argues that women's hair has had political implications since ancient Greece, if not before. She writes, "Folk, literary, and psychoanalytic traditions agree that the luxuriance of the hair is an index of vigorous sexuality, even of wantonness" (938). While connections between hair and sexuality will hold, female hair has been a space to demonstrate various excesses. Through Antiquity and into the Middle Ages, widows often displayed their grief at their husband's funerals. "Elaborate hair display in mourning for the dead was particularly women's business," writes Robert Bartlett in "Symbolic Meanings of Hair in the Middle Ages" (53). Bartlett continues, "Letting down or loosing of the hair was a form of mourning exclusively the preserve of wives and widows. When married women let their hair down, they expressed a suspension of

² Portions of this section are taken from coursework completed in Dr. Terry Reilly's Renaissance and 17th Century British Literature course and Dr. Rich Carr's 19th Century British Literature course.

the normal social code” (54). Further, women would demonstrate grief by pulling and tearing their hair.

Women who loosened their hair while in mourning in the Late Antiquity and Middle Ages were open to criticism. These disturbances of cultural norms, while tolerated by some because of the incredible distress that losing a husband caused, was sexualized and criticized by others. Bartlett quotes fourth-century clergyman John Chrysostom, writing:

For they make an exhibition in their dirges and laments, they bare their arms, tear their hair, make furrows in their cheeks. Some do this from sorrow, some from show and ostentation, some from wantonness, baring their arms even in the sight of men. (55)

Though women were allowed some lenience from the customs that dictated their hair styling during a time of mourning, as Chrysostom's writing shows, these deviations were strictly monitored. Making use of the somewhat-acceptable practice made women vulnerable to accusations of excess—not just excess grief, but excess of vanity and sexuality as well.

Just as mourning practices were gendered and sexualized through the Late Antiquity and Middle Ages, the physical manifestations of madness were subject to the same ideations in the early modern period and continued through the 19th century. According to Jane Kromm in her article, “The Feminization of Madness in Visual Representation,” conceptualizations of madness were distinctly gendered. While male madness was regarded as aggressive, early modern ideas of female madness “set up the female figure as a site for sexual display” (Kromm 508). She continues, “The sexually preoccupied madwoman ... challenges the male viewer's desire for sexual authority and domination” (Kromm 508). Madness in women was considered dangerous,

not because of the physical harm it may cause others, but because the unrestrained sexuality that accompanied it was considered a threat the social order.

Shakespeare's Ophelia is an iconic representation of the connections between sexuality and madness. After her father is murdered and she is rebuffed by Hamlet, Ophelia quickly loses her sanity. Interestingly, the first signal of Ophelia's madness is her hair. In 4.5, Ophelia enters with the specific stage direction: "Enter Ophelia [distracted, with her hair down, playing on a lute]." This is the first time Ophelia appears since the death of her father, and though a gentleman hints that she is not entirely well, it is through her hair that Ophelia herself first expresses her madness. The stage direction supports the strong ties between loose hair and madness in the play. For one, it calls to mind the mourning widows of the Middle Ages, whose grief was so extreme, they not only let down their hair, but started to harm themselves by pulling hair out. This both foreshadows Ophelia's eventual (possible) suicide and connects her mourning to uncontrollable emotion, and finally, to the loss of her faculties. Second, the specificity of the direction implies that it would be abnormal for Ophelia to have her hair down, and that the audience will recognize this. If loose hair was a common hairstyle that Ophelia may wear any time, the sign would be meaningless, and Shakespeare would be unlikely to include the detail. Finally, given that "the luxuriance of the hair is an index of vigorous sexuality, even of wantonness" (Gitter 938), Ophelia's displayed hair signals a sexualized female madness.

The sexual nature of Ophelia's madness is made explicit not long after she enters in 4.5. Not only is the loss of Hamlet and, by extension, a future sexual partner part of the impetus for Ophelia's insanity, but she demonstrates her madness with overt sexual language:

Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By Cock, they are to blame.

Quoth she, "Before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed.
So would I 'a' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed. (4.5. 60-66)

These plainly sexual lines shock the King, who responds, "How long hath she been thus?" (4.5. 67). Ophelia's madness causes her to violate social norms with sexual language. Further, Carroll Camden, in her article "On Ophelia's Madness," argues that Ophelia's mad state reveals true sexual desires, writing, "These coarse and uninhibited lines are the sort which might unconsciously and naturally float to the top of Ophelia's muddled mind if her thoughts had been dwelling on Hamlet's love and on possible marriage to him" (252). While Ophelia was sane, social codes dictated that she not reveal sexual desire, though she may privately have had sexual thoughts about Hamlet. As Camden writes, "When one mentally disturbed speaks 'things in doubt, that carry but half sense', we may rightly judge the sources of her perturbations to lie in her secret desires" (252). Ophelia's sexual assertiveness, then, may be considered a monstrous deviance from the norm, as, returning to Kromm, it "challenges the male viewer's desire for sexual authority and domination" (508). Considering the challenge Ophelia's sexual language places on the social order, it is worth considering that the King is dismayed over Ophelia's language for reasons beyond concern for her welfare.

However, Ophelia does not have many opportunities to disrupt the social order, as her madness quickly results in her death. The scene of her death has long captured readers' imaginations:

There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples

That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up. (4.7 168–76)

It is worth noting that in this passage, the state of Ophelia's hair is not explicitly discussed. However, it would be challenging to find a representation of this scene that depicts her hair pulled back. Why does the passage so often lead directors, artists, and readers to envision Ophelia with loose hair? One obvious reason, of course, is that if Ophelia had her hair down in 4.5, she may not have been willing or able to put it back up before she went to the river. However, as she took the care to create garlands of flowers, and make a floral crown, this explanation is not completely satisfactory. Rather, it makes sense that so many artists have envisioned Ophelia with loose hair in this scene because of the long tradition of wild hair correlating to wildness (that is unrestricted by culture) in women. Wildness is here conflated with madness; it is through Ophelia's madness that she becomes wild. No longer functioning with culture, she descends further and further into nature, draping herself with plants, weaving them into her hair, and finally sinking into the river.

The comparison of Ophelia to a mermaid in the description of her death is also an important clue for understanding why most readers assume that Ophelia's hair is down. Like the sirens of Ancient Greek tradition, mermaids are often characterized as both beautiful and hazardous, capable of killing the seafaring men they might meet. The comparison of Ophelia to a

mermaid further reinforces the hair's connection to themes of madness, sexuality, and monstrosity. Mermaids have traditionally been depicted with long, loose hair. Gitter writes, "The combing and displaying of hair, as suggested by the legends of alluring mermaids who sit on rocks singing and combing their beautiful hair, thus constitute a sexual exhibition" (938). Again, Ophelia's madness is characterized by a lack of sexual restraint. While her madness means that Ophelia is not in control of herself, it also means that she is not controllable by others, including patriarchal social roles. As result, like a mermaid, she is dangerous. A woman's "hair is her instrument, in the fullest sense of the word: on it she may, mermaidlike, lure men to their deaths" (Gitter 938). Like a mermaid, while the wildflower-covered Ophelia may be beautiful, her excessive sexuality and deviance from cultural norms suggest monstrosity.

Of course, in our own current context, our image of Ophelia has been influenced by numerous artistic depictions. Though *Hamlet* was written around 1600, Ophelia did not appear in visual artists' work until the 18th century. This relates to the tradition of depicting madness in art. According to Kromm, there was no tradition of visual representation of female madness until nearly the 19th century, though male madness was a subject a visual work (509). Kromm writes:

The previously overlooked, paradigmatic instance of Ophelia was evoked in late-eighteenth-century British art and literature by the figure of young, lovestruck, melancholy women who occupied a pivotal position in the dynamics of sensibility. These women served as forlorn, unsalvageable objects designed to focalize male displays of proper feeling. (509-510)

While women's hair in the Victorian era was heavily sexualized, the "erotic" aspect of revealed hair was especially true in depictions of women's insanity. Kromm writes, "Loose, tumbledown locks of hair, haphazardly 'dressed' with flowers, weeds, and straw, serve as tropes for sexual

availability, lapsed social decorum, vanity, and madness” (513). With the Victorian’s interest in both women’s madness and women’s hair, it is not surprising that many visual representations of Ophelia emerge around this time. The results of this interest was prolific. According to William L. Pressly, "Ophelia was the single most popular literary subject for artists, with more than fifty portrayals recorded in exhibition catalogues" (qtd. in Peterson).

It is likely not coincidental that visual representations of female madness emerge in an era that is characterized as obsessed with hair (Gitter 936). Hair became an especially powerful symbol during the Victorian era, with descriptions of hair nearly always appearing in literature of the time. Hair, it was believed, revealed a woman’s character, but also a “woman’s hair has a life of its own: it is active, aggressive, erotic, and powerful” (Gitter 952). In day-to-day life, women were required to pay a great deal of attention to their hair to conform with the current fashion. Ruth Goodman writes in *How To Be A Victorian*, “The sleek, shiny precision that was favoured throughout the period, with not a hair out of place, could not be achieved by the vast majority of women without additional help from a range of mixtures, potions, and lotions” (119). Not only did forming one’s hair into the latest fashion require a great deal of products, but it also took significant amounts of time. Weitz describes common 19th-century hair-styling routine: “Each night, women would braid the long sections of their hair and then either pin up their curls or wrap them in rags. In the morning they used flat irons to straighten the uncurled portions of their hair, used heated curling irons (if they had them) to curl the other portions, and then arranged their curls, ringlets, and additions” (11). While working class women could not afford to spend the time to style their hair elaborately, and there was a marginal movement for women’s “dress reform” (*Rapunzel’s Daughters*, Weitz 10), which called for simpler standards of dress overall, everyone “felt the pressure to be at least neat and tidy” (Goodman 119). The detriments of this

emphasis on meticulous hairstyles were not restricted to time lost arranging one's hair: activities were restricted because of hairstyles. "Given the time and effort required to create these hairstyles, women avoided any activities that might damage them," Weitz writes (*Rapunzel's Daughters*, 11).

This attention to hair was reflected in literature. Gitter writes, "Victorian writers were fascinated not only by the problem of "reading" women's hair- interpreting its meaning and exploring its symbolic value - but also by the hair itself. No other writers have lavished so much attention on the physical properties of women's hair: its length, texture, color, style, curliness" (941). Hair had the potential to show a broad range of characteristics; purity, sexuality, domesticity, and temperament all could be read into a woman's hair style. Hair traits became an efficient method to signal characters:

The brown, neatly combed heads of the virtuous governesses and industrious wives; the tangled, disorderly hair of the sexually and emotionally volatile women like Hetty Sorrel and Catherine Earnshaw; the artfully arranged curls of the girl-women like Dora Spenlow Copperfield and Isabella Linton are all familiar, even conventional elements in Victorian character description. (Gitter 941)

Used as a shorthand for character, literary depictions of hair in the Victorian period both revealed and reinforced beliefs about female hair.

Hair color became an especially prominent method of identifying character in Victorian literature. Creating a binary between light and dark hair, blonde hair was the golden standard of female beauty in the era, and often signaled a virtuous and desirable woman. By contrast, "dark-haired women were often construed as more libidinous and as governed by sexual or criminal passions" and were described by the era's "male scientists as criminal, aggressive or wanton,"

writes Galia Ofek in her book *Representations of Hair in Victorian Literature and Culture* (61). This coding of light-haired women as pure and dark-haired woman as passionate may be related to a connection between blonde hair and childhood, as young children tend to have lighter hair that becomes darker as they grow (Ofek 61). As a result of the connection with blonde hair and childhood innocence, “women with fair hair were intuitively ‘read’ by male scientists as more infantile, helpless, asexual and passive, and were favored as a ‘safe’ type,” Ofek writes (62), whereas dark-haired women were considered more adult and masculine, and therefore more challenging. Fair-haired women, Victorians believed, simply performed feminine ideals better than their dark-haired counterparts.

Hair and currency were conflated. For example, in Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market*, hair becomes a stand-in for female purity. In the poem, Laura is tempted by the goblin's fruits, and acquiesces to their demand for hair as payment:

They answer'd all together:

“Buy from us with a golden curl.”

She clipp'd a precious golden lock,

She dropp'd a tear more rare than pearl,

Then suck'd their fruit globes fair or red. (Rossetti)

As Gitter writes, “that this transaction is sexual is obvious; Laura's golden hair is her currency, and in squandering it she surrenders her innocence” (946). Once the goblins receive the lock, they no longer are interested in selling Laura their fruit, though she desires it more than ever. Gitter further explains: “Patronizing the goblin market costs Laura all her gold and removes her from the marriage market: inevitably her hair turns thin and gray, and the ‘joys brides hope to

have' are nearly lost to her" (946). This clear allegory, meant to instruct its audience on the importance of preserving female virtue, shows the extent that Victorians conflated hair and sex.

Victorian uneasiness about sex led to a conflation of female hair and danger. During this period, many artists and writers called upon the image of Medusa from Greek mythology (Gitter 952), whose hair is famously replaced by poisonous snakes. However, in the 19th century imagination, Medusa's hair was "at once beautiful, evil, erotic, and heroic" (Gitter 952) as intriguing as it was repulsive. Like Ophelia's madness, the sexual danger of Medusa's hair also makes her iconic; "It asserts Medusa's identity while retaining its own totemic, animistic power" (Gitter 952). Medusa well-symbolizes the complicated nexus of meanings applied to female hair. As Gitter puts it, the multifaceted nature of Medusa's hair points to the heart of the Victorian obsession: "Silent, the larger-than-life woman who dominated the literature and art of the period used her hair to weave her discourse; immobile, she used her hair at times to shelter her lovers, at times to strangle them" (936). Hair in 19th century ultimately could be read both as sexually alluring and monstrosly dangerous.

Meanwhile, across the Channel in France, Balzac asks "*Combien de choses une femme ne pourrait-elle pas dire avec sa coiffure?*" ("What can't a woman say with her coiffure")³ writes Carol de Dobay Rifelj in her book *Coiffures: hair in nineteenth-century French literature and culture*. Like for the Victorians, for Balzac, a French woman's hair is readable — it says something about who she is. This characteristic extends beyond Balzac in French literature, where in general "hair not only marks social position: it may also gives cues to personality" (Dobay Rifelj 22). In other words, norms surrounding hair and gender are greatly similar in both French and Anglo culture and literature, even down to common imagery: "Hair has rich metaphoric associations in literature, and they are already inscribed in the French and English

³ Dobay Rifelj's translation.

languages. It is associated with both water and light. We say that water is flowing, that it is wavy. In French, it is often *ondoyant, ondule, or flottant*” (Dobay Rifelj 18). When comparing French and Anglo-American representations of women’s hair, it is useful to note that the cultures have very similar traditions.

While in many ways treatment of women and hair was similar in French and English contexts, there are slight differences. Primarily, French treatment of female hair was not quite so binary as Victorian representations. For example, in “*La Chevelure*,” Baudelaire describes a lover’s hair falling around him much like a tent, Gitter writes (942). This image is also used by Victorian poets, for whom the “hair tent is not so much the dark, perfumed, erotic mystery that Baudelaire imagines as it is a warm nest. Embraces are there, of course, but the hair tent is not primarily a bower of sexual love: it is a retreat from the world, a refuge for the poet, a cocoon” (942). In other words, the Victorian poets more readily desexualize a positive depiction of female hair, making the hair tent a more maternal image. By contrast, Baudelaire is able to create an image of women’s hair that was both positive and highly sexualized; the lover’s loose hair does not automatically connote frightening hypersexuality.

The ideology of women and hair represented in the Western literary canon is still found today in literature and popular media, and on the packaging of consumer hair products. Using Norman Fairclough’s definition of intertextuality, “how texts draw upon, incorporate, recontextualize and dialogue with other texts” (17), it becomes apparent the contemporary hair products are in conversation with those female characters. Hair product descriptions, written with the purpose of selling the product itself, consistently remind the consumer that hair must be controlled in order for its owner to be beautiful, confident, and powerful. They also regularly put

forth the assumption that the female body is naturally unruly and undisciplined, and in need of outside sources to help maintain control.

1.2 Theoretical Background

When I first decided to focus this project on the analysis beauty product labels, I had just completed my graduate theory seminar. I had also just spent a significant amount of time researching feminist translation theory and was itching to put that theory into practice with my thesis. Rather than thinking of specific theorists to apply, I conceived of this project with some base assumptions:

1. Basically anything can be read as a text.
2. All texts can teach us something about culture.
3. Our culture contains a series of hierarchical, binary relationships that privilege some and disempower others.
4. Gender is performance.

Some of these assumptions are, of course, easily connected to specific theorist (number 4 is clearly indebted to Judith Butler, for example). Others pushed me towards theorists and methodologies that aligned with (and expanded on) these assumptions: Michel Foucault's "Politics and the Study of Discourse" and *Discipline & Punish* and Norman Fairclough's *Language and Power*, as well as other writings on critical discourse analysis (CDA). Foucault's and Fairclough's works created a framework for understanding and describing language, discourse, and ideology.

As these base assumptions have shaped the entire form of this project, not only my concept and planning, but also my subsequent research, I want to specifically outline them. This practice is partially at the suggestion of Fairclough in *Language and Power*: "I think it is

important not only to acknowledge these influences rather than affecting a spurious neutrality about social issues, but also to be open with one's readers about where one stands" (5). While further research expanded my base assumptions, none of these beliefs were wholly contradicted, and they still stand as the backbone for this project.

1.3 Bringing in Critical Discourse Analysis

What was lacking in my base assumptions was a more nuanced definition of a text, as well as the concepts of discourse and ideology entirely. Critical discourse analysis provides a framework for my project built by scholars dedicated to these particular ideas. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer summarize the main characteristics of CDA succinctly in their introduction to *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*:

In general, CDA as a school or paradigm is characterized by a number of principles: for example, all approaches are problem-oriented, and thus necessarily interdisciplinary and eclectic ... Moreover, CDA is characterized by the common interests in de-mystifying ideologies and power through the systematic and reproducible investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual). CDA researchers also attempt to make their own positions and interests explicit while retaining their respective scientific methodologies and while remaining self-reflective of their own research process. (3)

Further, the *critical* in CDA signals a connection to critical theory, which puts forth that "social theory should be oriented towards critiquing and changing society as a whole" (Wodak and Meyer 6). This critical approach extends to CDA practitioners themselves, who acknowledge that "researchers, scientists and philosophers are not outside the societal hierarchy of power and status but are subject to this structure. They have also frequently occupied and still occupy rather superior positions in society" (Wodak and Meyer 7).

While CDA is always interested in investigating power, social structures, and language, there is no prescriptive procedure for using the methodology. In fact, CDA actively avoids becoming a homogenous system, according to Wodak and Meyer: “In contrast to ‘total and closed’ theories, such as Chomsky’s Generative Transformational Grammar or Michael Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics, CDA has never had the image of a ‘sect’ and does not want to have such an image” (5). However, CDA still functions within the structured academic system, and so has developed several “schools” (Wodak and Meyer 5) or lines of research. For this project, I have relied heavily on writings by Fairclough—one of the founders of CDA. Fairclough emphasizes approaching the study of discourse with an expansive, interdisciplinary approach:

In seeing language as discourse and as social practice, one is committing oneself not just to analysing texts, nor just to analysing processes of production and interpretation, but to analysing the relationship between texts, processes, and their social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutional and social structures (26).

Without prescribing a precise method, Fairclough provides a three-part framework for putting CDA into practice — helpful for someone new to CDA. I also drew on Fairclough because I found his aim “to help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation” (1) highly applicable not only to my own interests, but particularly to studying beauty products labels — which contain language few people are very conscious of, but, upon a closer look, clearly contribute to domination.

It follows then that I use Fairclough's definitions of *text*, *ideology*, and *discourse* for this project. Fairclough defines a text as a "product rather than a process — a product of the process of text production" (24). Fairclough aligns himself with Michael Halliday to use the term *text* for both writing and speech (24). Conceiving a text as a product clearly distinguishes it from *discourse*, which Fairclough sees as the "whole process of social interaction of which a text is just a part" (24). Discourse, according to Fairclough, is "language as a form of social practice" (41). Further, the study of discourse "ought to stress both the determination of discourse by social structures, and the effects of discourses upon society through its reproduction of social structures" (41-42).

Discourse is intertwined with power, Fairclough continues: "power is exercised and enacted in discourse, and ... there are relations of power behind discourse" (73). Ideologies, in particular, are forces of power found in discourses. Eve Chiapello and Fairclough describe ideology in "Understanding the new management ideology: a transdisciplinary contribution from critical discourse analysis and new sociology of capitalism":

An ideology is a system of ideas, values and beliefs oriented to explaining a given political order, legitimizing existing hierarchies and power relations and preserving group identities. Ideology explains both the horizontal structure (the division of labour) of a society and its vertical structure (the separation of rulers and ruled), producing ideas which legitimize the latter, explaining in particular why one group is dominant and another dominated, one why person gives orders in a particular enterprise while another takes orders. (187)

This definition of ideology is particularly useful for my study because of its focus on binaries, i.e. the dominator vs. the dominated. The binary focus pairs well with hair products, which draw upon large binary structures, like male vs. female, straight vs. curly, and styled vs. natural.

CDA ideally does not stop at uncovering ideology in texts, but considers the material consequences of discourses, as Fairclough writes: “Even while we focus upon language and discourse, let us remind ourselves that social emancipation is primarily about tangible matters such as unemployment, housing, equality of access to education, the distribution of wealth, and the removing of the economic system from the ravages and whims of private interest and profit” (234). In other words, it is important to note that CDA ideally does not study discourse just for the sake of study. This tenet of CDA links it to Foucault — “one of the theoretical ‘godfathers’ of CDA” (Wodak and Meyer 10). Foucault’s emphasis on exteriority, not simply discourse itself, but also its conditions, is useful to consider in order to include the material results of a series of texts. Foucault writes in “Politics and the study of discourse” :

I do not question discourses about their silently intended meanings, but about the fact and the conditions of their manifest appearance; not about the contents which they may conceal, but about the transformations which they have effected; not about the sense preserved within them like a perpetual origin, but about the field where they coexist, reside, and disappear. (60)

This quote in particular is a useful reminder to expand discourse analysis beyond simply finding ideology in texts, but to consider to the actual people and environmental features affected by a discourse.

Maureen Daly Goggin’s “An *Essamplaire Essai* on the Rhetoricity of Needlework Sampler-Making” synthesizes these Foucauldian theories of discourse, which provides a useful

model for analyzing “the ordinary texts that serve as displaced forms in contradistinction to the “Other of high culture” (309). While CDA and rhetorical studies often analyze non-literary texts like newspaper articles, television, and photography, scholars often overlook the process with which these texts are made. In contrast to common practice of looking for ideology in texts, Goggin asks, “What is the range from all available material practices that may be understood as meaning-making?” (310). Focusing on praxis is another essential part of using discourse studies for social emancipations, as Goggin writes: “Theorizing and historicizing multiple material practices is critical for contributing to our understanding how rhetorical practices are learned and conducted, where and when these practices take place, who has been admitted into the practice and who has been barred, and how both access and barriers to such practices are constructed and sustained” (311). In other words, it is important to remember that texts are not just reflections of culture, but are created from a web of material conditions.

1.4 Translation Theory

Applying translation theory to the analysis of beauty product labels is a useful method for incorporating praxis in the study of ordinary texts, like copywriting on beauty products. As almost all beauty products feature writing in more than one language, studying the text in multiple language is a useful strategy to gather more information about the present ideologies while also keeping praxis in mind.

In particular, feminist translation studies emphasizes recognition of the role of the translator. The goals of feminist translation studies are situated in two major strands. The first relates to improving the social status of women, as Sherry Simon writes in *Gender in Translation: Cultural identity and the the politics of transmission*: “Feminist translation theory aims to identify and critique the tangle of concepts which relegates both women and translation

to the bottom of the social and literary ladder” (1). The second strand involves elevating the role of the translator, as “‘woman’ and ‘translator’ have been relegated to the same position of discursive inferiority” (Simon 1). In short, feminist translation theory connects women, translators, and translated texts, and work to make all more visible and respected.

The resulting praxis of feminist translation theory involves “proactive translators from the feminist school deliberately seek[ing] solutions to texts which speak against their code of values, against their political agendas, against the cultural constructs of their gender— and the result is a usurping of the traditional author-over-mimicker power structure,” writes Melissa Wallace in “Writing the Wrongs of Literature: The Figure of the Feminist and Post-Colonialist Translator” (69). Feminist translation theory also acknowledges that no matter a translator's efforts to remain neutral, there is no way to eradicate their own context and ideology. The alternative is to accept the active role of the translator, seeing “translators as manipulators— translators with the power to manipulate texts at more than one textual level” (Wallace 66). While in the approach to translation theory that values “how invisible the translator manages to remain” (Wallace 65) the intentional insertion of an ideology into a translated text would be considered beyond the pale, the “translator as manipulator” model allows for the translator to take control of the agenda proliferated in her text.

Most importantly for this project, I see a connection between translated and ordinary texts. Just as Goggin discusses the marginalization of ordinary texts, so are translated texts considered inferior. Copywriting is often considered something other than “real” writing. Neither the copywriter nor the translator are considered authors; it is not common to ask, as Foucault puts it, “from where does it come from, who wrote it, when, under what circumstances, or beginning with what design” (“What is an Author?” 213) of translations and product labels. Both

translated and copy-written texts are commonplace, useful, and often overlooked. Combining the two, analyzing the translations of consumer-product-labels, provides an opportunity to break new ground.

Finally, I bring translation into my analysis for the opportunities of understanding that a comparative approach provides. Translation may be used for “understanding of the performative, and not simply representational, nature of language” (Simon 2). Moving my analysis between English and French (my strongest second language) creates a vantage from which I can better see the performative nature of language. Including these observations in my project has the potential to reinforce my readings of the product labels, using the contrasting language a foil to highlight elements of the text that may otherwise be missed.

1.5 Applying Metaphor Theory

Combining translation studies and critical discourse analysis has some logistical challenges, however. A close reading of a single translated passage with analysis can take substantial space, not allowing for broader observations about a discourse. Fairclough’s three-part procedure— description, interpretation, and explanation — is a useful framework, but does not specifically address the problem of adding translation studies to the analysis. Fortunately, when outlining the “description” portion, Fairclough writes, “Let me stress that the procedure not be treated as holy writ — it is a guide and not a blueprint” (110). As Fairclough suggests asking “What metaphors are used?” (111) while in the description stage, adopting George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s theories of conceptual metaphor described in *Metaphors We Live By* pairs well with CDA, making it possible to group varying texts in multiple languages by metaphor.

For the purposes of this project, metaphor is a succinct way to synthesize my descriptions. However, there are preexisting ties between CDA and metaphor theory. As Wodak

and Meyer describe, it is not “ideology on the surface of culture that interests CDA, it is rather the more hidden and latent type of everyday beliefs, which often appear disguised as conceptual metaphors and analogies, thus attracting linguists’ attention: life is a journey, social organizations are plants, love is war, and so on” (8). These metaphors that Wodak and Meyer refer to are described by Lakoff and Johnson, who argue “Metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is, of mere words. We shall argue that, on the contrary, human *thought processes* are largely metaphorical” (6). Metaphors have emerged in human thought and language because our lives are populated by many abstract concepts that we need to conceptualize with a more concrete referent (115). These metaphors may be so ingrained in our culture that it is difficult to identify them as metaphorical. The metaphors that structure our experiences and ways of thinking follow a logical structure in the society they emerge in: “The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture” (22). Lakoff and Johnson’s theories of metaphorical coherence is useful method to connect the metaphors that appear on an ordinary texts, like hair product labels, with fundamental cultural values. Metaphor is a useful way to describe ordinary, translated texts and present them for interpretation and explanation.

Chapter 2 Description

In order to collect data for my analysis, I found myself, for the first time in my higher education career, exiting the library and looking for information not found on a college campus. My approach to collecting data largely involved both inductive analysis and reflection. Though I first began my data collection with some assumptions of what I would find, throughout this process, I was often surprised to find that the information did not match my assumptions. Perhaps most surprising, though, was the challenge of negotiating the personal and the empirical, dealing with consumer-oriented texts in which I may embody the target audience.

2.1 Method

To begin collecting data, I visited several stores in Fairbanks, Alaska that sell beauty products, noting the amount of products they stocked and reading through some product labels to see if any patterns immediately emerged. After initial observations of several labels at different stores (without documenting the texts), I hypothesized categories for analyzing text before collecting my data, with the expectation that I would revise these categories once I had documented all the product labels. When doing my initial observations, I looked at both hair and body products (lotions, anti-wrinkle serums, etc.), which may have affected my predictions. My first categorizations of language were:

- Reference to isolated body parts in English
- References to isolated body parts in French
- Reference to body parts as value in English
- Reference to body parts as value in French
- Reference to beauty as value in English
- Reference to beauty as value in French

- Gendered language regarding beauty in English
- Gendered language regarding beauty in French

These categories that were developed with the assumption that consumers would expect a return on their investment in the purchased beauty products, and that, because this transaction would take place in a capitalist context, this return would be framed in terms of value and currency.

To collect data, I limited my sample to what is physically available in one store in Fairbanks, Alaska. I settled on Ulta Beauty as my model store, as this company is completely devoted to beauty products, and carries a wide variety of products, ranging from drugstore to luxury brands. I limited my data collection to haircare products, as my initial research has shown that cosmetics products in general do not contain extensive amounts of descriptive text, and including body care products was too broad. I also limited my data collection to products that contain text that is wholly translated, not including products where the majority of text appears in French or English, but contains inconsequential translated text, such as warning labels or product names. When selecting products to document, I intentionally omitted brands that were aimed at children, and specific medical concerns (hair loss, lice, etc.). I also omitted “natural” and “organic” brands and product lines, as text on these products use different marketing strategies than conventional brands. While collecting data, I recorded the product name, product price, and all text appearing on the product packaging.

For the large part of my data collection process, I spent six days over a span of one month at Ulta, collecting photos⁴. As requests to beauty companies for copies of the text on their products were universally denied⁵ or unanswered, I took photos of each product in the store I was

⁴ During the data collection period, I regularly met with Dr. Sarah Stanley who assisted in developing this methodology.

⁵ The most vivid rejection came from TRESemme Consumer Services (a brand that was ultimately excluded from my study) which reads: “Thank you for contacting TRESemme regarding French and English text on product labels.

intending to analyze for my project. While more time-consuming than my initial plan, the hours spent at the beauty product retailer provided valuable insights. At times, these insights were deeply personal: I noticed that each time I went to Ulta to collect data, I took extra care with my dress and cosmetic routine: leaving my hair down and slightly wavy; applying a bold sweep of eyeliner; lacing on my one pair of boots with a slight heel, which at other times feel strange and too formal for my life in Fairbanks. I originally told myself that this is an effort to ensure access to the data; the employees may hesitate to let me spend so much time in the store if I look too far apart from the culture I am studying. A less calculated appearance may be so discordant with their brand that they would fear I would drive customers away, or a combination of my brief introduction to my research plus a casual image, may hint at a radical, anti-beauty project with which the company would not want to align themselves.

However, I do not believe that rationale totally accounts for my behavior. At least, certainly my behavior did not make sense for any subsequent visit to the store, after I was granted permission to take photos without any difficulty. True, I did not want to inconvenience the store or employees any more than necessary for my task, but this would only require meeting basic hygiene standards — standards, which in Fairbanks, where dry cabin living is common, are rather more relaxed than other places. The truth is, I think I turned my feminine performance up for these excursions because I found it uncomfortable to spend much time in that space without these markers. Ulta, with its crisp white walls, accented with bright pink trim, soundtrack of pop songs, usually with lyrics that celebrate beautiful women, containing thousands of bottles all

Unilever is committed to creating and innovating brands that help you feel good, look good and get more out of life! We appreciate you choosing the product as an inspiration for your report. We encourage everyone to do their part and invite you to visit the brand specific website where you will find information, tips, articles and resources which will assist you in your project.”

dedicated to improving one's projection of femininity, is such a strongly gendered space than any deviation from the normative is enhanced.

I think it is important to share this personal facet of my data collection process, primarily to formally disavow any ideas of complete neutrality or removal from my research. I am not immune to the notions of gender or the aesthetic pressures that come along with it. Further, I want to emphasize that it was not only the space that fostered this reaction in me, but the inspection of the products themselves. Even in the context of research and with the predisposition to seek out gender assumptions, *the store and the products inside it affect me*. Importantly this effect is not merely internal—not only do I think more about beauty and worry about my personal aesthetic value in the times surrounding these visits—but the effects also manifest concretely: ten minutes allocated to dusting off my blow dryer and sculpting my bangs into a more pleasing shape, the act of swiping blush from its plastic container, twenty dollars exchanged for a new bottle of liquid eyeliner. These texts' rhetorical potential, not only to promote an ideology of gender and beauty but also to elicit a material response, is why I was compelled to study their rhetorical strategies and determine how writer and translators are employing and reflecting cultural constructions, and with those concepts, ultimately shaping reality.

My inductive process was also useful because my original expectations of the language I would find on the products were not accurate. I initially began collecting data suspecting that I would be looking at ways that the language on the bottles would demonstrate different ideas of beauty as currency. I hypothesized that because this writing about hair appeared in such a commercial context, that I would find a significant amount of language equating beauty to money. However, I decided not to create categories until I had observed more examples of the

hair products. This method worked well, as I quickly found that there were few instances of beauty-as-currency language. On my first trip, I became interested in language that evoked sexual violence. For example, one bottle of Matrix brand sea salt spray was named “Rough Me Up;” another anatomicals brand hand soap was named “get your filthy hands on me,” with a description that read: “i’m a bottle of hygienic, liquid soap. As such, i’m used to being manhandled (and womanhandled). Go ahead and pump my nozzle (not a euphemism for anything). I won’t slap your face, accuse you of sexual harassment or threaten you with employment tribunal proceedings.” However, as I continued to inspect products while I took photos, I noticed that overt invitation of sexual aggression was not common on the labels, and that these extreme examples were more an exception than a rule. While it is interesting that anatomicals and Matrix chose to use sexual violence as a marketing tool for female-oriented products, because of my one-by-one handling of each bottle, I was able to rule this theme out as my main focus of study.

In total, I recorded 505 products from nine different companies. This took approximately ten to fifteen hours. Originally, I planned to document every product in the store that had substantial usage of both French and English. Quickly I realized that documenting every product would require an unmanageable amount of time to collect, manage, and analyze. Narrowing simply to all hair products also would have yielded too wide a sample. Eventually, for contrast, I settled on recording all hair product brands that carried men’s lines as well as women’s: Tigi (which encompasses their “Bedhead,” “Catwalk,” and “S-Factor” lines), AG, and Redken. Men’s hair care products are very limited at the Fairbanks Ulta; there were only three lines and twenty-five hair products in the store marketed towards men. To increase my sample size, I also included major women’s haircare brands that did not have men’s lines in store: L’Oreal, Paul

Mitchell, Kenra, and Matrix. These brands were all placed prominently on the walls of the haircare section of the store (not on the smaller and shorter shelves that make up the rest of the section) and I frequently overheard store employees recommend these brands to customers. To expand the reach of my analysis beyond products aimed at a normative white female market, I also included the products in the section labeled “Textured/Curly Haired Solutions;” this sample was nearly as sparse as the men’s products lines, with only two brands, Mizani and Kera Care, and a total of thirty-one products available.

To record the data, I took a total of 1552 photos for this project, using my iPhone camera. Some of these photos were of product price tags, which I did not end up using. I stored the photos and organized the photos in one album using the Google Photos phone app. This app allowed me to drop all photos used for the product in one online location and provided free cloud storage for the large amount of data.

To sort and analyze the products, I exported the photos to Evernote. Helpfully, the Google Photos app connects with Evernote, and I was able to group both the front and back photos of each product into a single Evernote note within Google Apps. Google Apps also allows users to add tags to the notes before they are exported. As I was combining all the product photos into separate product notes, I tagged the note with the products brand, primary language (first appearing on the bottle), and primary translation. Because I noticed while collecting product photos that some products, within the same brand, seemed to privilege French and some Spanish, I also noted if Spanish or French appeared on the bottles as an additional translation (English was the primary language or primary translation in all cases).

Exporting grouped photos of products resulted in 505 total notes, corresponding to the 505 products. One of my reasons for selecting Evernote, besides the integration with Google

Photos and the tagging function, was its ability to search for text in jpgs. For example, I could search for the word “control” and Evernote would bring up all notes that had a photo with contained “control.” Originally, I planned to search for control and its synonyms in both English and French to find the texts to analyze. However, perhaps because of blurriness or low quality photos, this function turned out to be unreliable.

Analysis Method

As described in 1.2, I chose to apply Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method, specifically using Norman Fairclough’s *Language and Power* as a guide. To prepare my data for Fairclough’s stages of analysis — description, interpretation, and explanation — I relied on Evernote’s tag function. I read through every product label description, adding a star-emoji tag (Evernote’s “star” function is less useful for quickly filtering notes than the tag function) for every instance of what I termed “control language.” My approach to tagging again was inductive; while every use of “control” and its derivatives were added automatically, I determined the other signs of control language as I was going through the tagging process, aiming to tag labels with synonyms and other words that signaled control of the self or others. Every time I determined a word to require a star tag, I recorded the word in a Google Doc. While this method lacks the objectivity of determining the parameters of control language first, it allowed me to observe the patterns that emerged as I worked more closely with the texts, and required a constant internal debate about what language clearly evoked control, and what were simply personal assumptions.

Once I compiled my list of control words (found in section 2.2), I attempted different methods of grouping them into patterns, eventually landing on Lakoff and Johnson’s model of

conceptual metaphor *from Metaphors We Live By*. Once I drafted my metaphors, I went through my sample again and tagged each product with the conceptual metaphors that appear on the label. Tagging each product by metaphor allows for quick sorting of products for interpretation and explanation.

A Note On My Translations

When analyzing both the English and the French versions of the product labels, I provide copies of both original texts, as well as a translation out from the French back to English. I will do this to render the differing approaches between the French text and English, as they occur. My approach here is to translate in a style that sounds mostly natural and errs towards a more literal approach, as my goal is not to communicate the information itself, but to communicate the translation. Of course, I cannot simply look past the theoretical underpinnings of this sticky goal; here I define “literal” to mean that I will as often as possible choose the words that would show up in a French-English dictionary⁶ if one were to lookup the corresponding word.

2.2 Findings Overview

In total, my sample has 505 products from nine brands: AG, Kenra, Keracare, L’Oreal, Matrix, Mizani, Paul Mitchell, Redken, and Tigi.⁷ Brands with men’s lines include Redken, Tigi, and AG. Of the 505, 480 are women’s or unspecified gender products. There are a total of twenty-five men’s products (determined based on package text and/or placement in the “Men’s Shop in Ulta” section). I also included the products in the section labeled “Textured/Curly

⁶ However, it is important to note that dictionaries are by no means unbiased and do contain cultural and personal assumptions.

⁷ L’Oreal Group is the parent company of almost half of these brands, owning L’Oreal, Matrix, Mizani, and Redken. AG and Paul Mitchell are independent companies. Kenra is owned by conglomerates TSG and Henkel. Keracare’s parent company is Avlon Industries, and Tigi is owned by the massive multinational corporation, Unilever.

Haired Solutions;” this sample was nearly as sparse as the men’s products lines, with only two brands, Mizani and Kera Care, and a total of thirty-one products available. 210 (about 42% of the sample) of these products had what I termed “control language.” Of the total twenty-five men’s products, sixteen had control language (64%). Of the twenty products with French as primary language, only two (10%) contained control language.

Most of the control language I found took the form of verbs. For that reason, and for simplicity, in the tables below I list the verb form of each word I included in the category, even if in some instances the word appears in the noun or adjective form in my sample. Using Lakoff and Johnson's model of grouping ontological metaphor, I broke the control language into three main metaphors. In the first two metaphors, the relationship between the subject and object emphasizes the former’s power over the other. The third metaphor inverts this pattern, emphasizing that the subject is less powerful than object.

The first metaphors that emphasize the subject’s relative power tend to place the consumer (note: I use the word consumer to indicate the person using the product, not the individual alone) and/or hair product alone as the subject and hair as an object. The verbs suggest that the object is in a less powerful position than the subject, e.g. the hair product *tames* hair, just as *a human tames an animal*. This category focuses on hair as a material object. The predominant metaphors in the category are HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS and HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS. Both of these metaphors emphasize an adversarial relationship between the product/consumer and hair.

HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS

HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphors were the most numerous in my sample. Following are some keywords that signaled that this metaphor was being used.

Table 1: HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS - English

Control	Harness	Lock in	Triumph over
Manage	Bind	Reform	Penetrate
(Be) in charge	Tame	Manipulate	Combat
Captivate	Stomp	Discipline	Eliminate
Fight			

Table 2: HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS - French

<i>Contrôler</i>	<i>Garder</i>	<i>Emprisonner</i>	<i>Agresser</i>
<i>Discipliner</i>	<i>Exploiter</i>	<i>Pénétrer</i>	<i>Exploiter</i>
<i>Éliminer</i>	<i>Lutter</i>	<i>Dompter</i>	<i>Combattre</i>
<i>Apprivoiser</i>	<i>Maîtriser</i>		

Using Lakoff and Johnson's concept of metaphorical coherence, I was able to draw the resulting metaphor from HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS which is

IMPERFECT HAIR IS A CRIMINAL. The metaphor IMPERFECT HAIR IS A CRIMINAL is also signaled in the hair-product texts through adjectives like *unruly* and *hard to get*.

HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS

While words that I placed in my HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS category all include some level of control over an object, what set apart these words was their relative disinterest in the object. Instead of focusing on the sustained control and/or punishment of the object, words that signal HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS metaphor focus on the preservation of the subject’s agency.

Table 3: HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS - English

Banish	Rid	Shield	Lock out
Repel	Protect	Guard	Defend

Table 4: HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS - French

<i>Proteger</i>			
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All of these metaphors function to sustain the subservience of the objects (hair) to the subject (hair product / consumer). In both of these metaphors, hair is inherently less powerful than the hair product or consumer, just as a shield is more powerful than an arrow, a guard is more powerful than a prisoner, a lock is more powerful than someone trying to open a door.

HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION

The final metaphor tends to place the consumer as the subject and natural forces or hair as the object, suggesting that HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION. The verbs used for this metaphor suggest that the object is in a more powerful position than the subject, e.g. the hair product *defies* gravity, just as *one defies authority*. If hair is directly mentioned in these sentences, it focuses on a conceptual idea of hair, i.e. if the product *defies frizz*, it is unlikely that it refers to individual fly-away hairs, but to frizz as a larger concept, the embodiment of undesirable hair. This metaphor emphasizes an adversarial relationship between the product/consumer and natural forces (which extends to unstyled hair).

Table 5: HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION - English

Defy	Resist	Give the finger	Rebel
Revolt			

Table 6: HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION - French

<i>Résister</i>	<i>Defier</i>	<i>Revolutionner</i>	
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All of these words signal insubordination. For example, a teacher does not defy, resist, revolt against or rebel against a student. In the product labels, these verbs signal that the consumer or product is going to stand up to a larger, usually natural force, such as *defy gravity*, *resist humidity*, or *give the finger to frizz*. With this metaphor, the emphasis on the relationship between these natural forces and hair are implied, as in gravity's power to make hair fall, or humidity's power to induce curl. Frizz and other undesirable hair states represent hair that

naturally emerges from one's head without interference, and is treated like an element of nature just like the physical and environmental concepts of gravity and humidity. As a result, the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION metaphor situates itself with another predominant metaphor: NATURE IS A TYRANT.

Just as important as metaphor, the product labels in my sample use metonymy as a rhetorical technique. Metonymy “allows us to use one entity to *stand for* another” (Lakoff and Johnson 36). “Metonymic concepts (like THE PART FOR THE WHOLE) are part of the ordinary, everyday we think and act as well as talk” (Lakoff and Johnson 37). By this definition, advertising is largely metonymic in nature: the car in a Chevrolet advertisement stands in for the promised freedom of owning that car, the can of Coca-Cola is part of a whole experience of fun and community that is embodied by soda-drinking. “Metonymy is not merely a referential device. It also serves the function of providing understanding. . . . Which part we pick out determines which aspect of the whole we are focusing on” (Lakoff and Johnson 36). In the case of advertising, the part of the whole has been already picked out — it corresponds to the product being sold. The opportunity for insight then comes from sussing out how the part is characterized in the sample, and how that characterization relates to the corresponding whole. In this case, the implicit THE PART FOR THE WHOLE metonymy is that hair part of the whole body. So as hair is characterized as an antagonist, it is clear that these products are functioning within the larger framework of THE BODY IS AN ENEMY. That these products are largely marketed towards women shows that this industry is both calling upon and perpetuating a gendered version of the metaphor, namely THE FEMALE BODY IS AN ENEMY.

An interesting deviation from the main metaphors of my study is HAIR PRODUCTS ARE POWERFUL BEINGS. This metaphor did not show up as often as the other metaphors I

have identified, under ten instances in my sample. However, referring to the products and consumers as a “queen,” “siren,” “your highness,” and other authority figures clearly suggests power and control.

2.3 Concerning Praxis

In “Writing the Wrongs of Literature: The Figure of the Feminist and Post-Colonialist Translator,” Melissa Wallace writes, “In fact, so highly valued is the imperceptibility of the translator’s mark, in today’s literary world, that literary translations are praised by reviewers precisely for how invisible the translator manages to remain” (65). In this way, copywriting and translation are remarkable similar. As feminist translation theory posits, both the copywriter and the translator have a traditionally been kept anonymous and invisible. As a result, close readings of either are fairly uncommon, and I have not found a published instance of analysis of translated copywriting.

This lack of critical attention may be because, in a prescriptive sense, translated copywriting is often pretty bad. For example, see the text from the Bed Head Tigi Control Freak Frizz Control & Straightening Serum label, which reads: “Fight the frizz. Stomp the curl. Control your freakin’ hair. Use Control Freak on wet or dry hair and be sleek and smooth.” The French translation is as follows: “*Combats les frisous. Aplatis les boucles. Contrôle tes cheveux indisciplinés. Utilise Control Freak sur [sic]cheveux humides ou secs et rendsles [sic] souples et lisses.*” There some very basic copyediting errors, like the lack of a space between *rends* and *les*, and the missing article after *sur*, both problems easily identified by native French speakers.

There are also likely some distinct cultural norms influencing this translation. For one, the translator uses the colloquial Quebec term *frisous*⁸ instead of the standard *les frisottis*. In

⁸ Research on the term *frisous* was completed with the assistance of Dr. Yelena Matusevich.

metropolitan French, *frisous* is an archaic slang term for German soldiers, akin to “Fritz.” I found only one instance of *frisous* applied to hair, a French Canadian beauty blog post detailing how to create wavy hair: “*Truc de lâche pour frisous pas pire*” or “Let-down⁹ trick for pretty good¹⁰ waves” (Morin). *Frisous* does not appear on readily available lists of Quebec French colloquialisms, and does not seem to be an oft-used word. Further, the French translation of this product uses the informal *tu* second person form, instead of the formal *vous*, more standard for advertising. As *vous* also functions as the plural second-person address or implies respect for the individual, its use makes more sense in an advertising context, and almost every French translation in my sample uses it. However, Quebec French is known for its more frequent use of *tu*. Overall, neither the use of the *tu* form, nor *frisous* for frizz seems to be consistent with other Tigi Products. Out of a total of eighty-seven documented, only eleven use the informal second person, and this is one of two products to use *frisous*.

It is important to consider why the translator or translators elected to use *frisous* instead of the standard French *frisottis*. Perhaps the translator wanted to cater to a Canadian audience. Maybe she wanted to render Quebec French more visible. Or perhaps it was a mistake made by a non-native speaker working as a translator. The informal second-person, however, is clearly intentional; no one who is tasked with translating anything to French could conceivably be ignorant of the difference between the two second-person forms. Regardless of intention, these deviations from standard forms forces recognition of the copywriter and/or translator; they render her or him visible.

While the “bad” translations could be used as evidence that copywriting and/or translation are beneath scholarly attention, these missteps can instead be used as trail markers for

⁹ *Lâcher* signifies letting go or release, in this case referring to a trick of releasing hair from a bun to create waves.

¹⁰ *Pas pire* more literally translates to “not the worst.”

discursive practice. They also open up a line of inquiry into praxis. This inquiry may lead to questions about authorship — Is the writer and/or translator who used the *tu* form and translated frizz to a colloquial term a different writer/translator than the one(s) who dutifully use *vous* and *frisottis*? What is his or her cultural context or motivations? Do certain brands have a certain style of writing or translation? — where copywriters and translators are often neglected. The inquiry may also lead to more material questions: What is the work environment like for the Bed Head writer and/or translator, for example, that she did not catch these mistakes? As “all discursive practices are material practices” (Goggin 310), material concerns have place in discourse analysis. Although the questions that rise from attention to praxis do not have immediate answers in text, the act of asking them avoids reifying “what Brian Street terms ‘autonomous models’ of literate practices. These models assume a monolithic, natural, and universal literacy independent of those who engage in it, absent the purposes for which it is invoked, apart from the times and places it occurs, and irrelevant to the materiality of the practice” (Goggin 311). “Bad” copywriting and translation can be a useful heuristic for uniting discourse and material practices that create it.

Chapter 3 Interpretation and Explanation

3.1 HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS

On the back of the Tigi Bed Head's On the Rebound Curl Recall Cream bottle the description of the product reads, "Reform rebellious curls into soft and defined ringlets. Our curl recall technology instantly reforms, ensuring they spring back into shape with just one scrunch." Playing on word reform, both evoking *forming* curls into their ideal shape and the reform-as-discipline euphemism (think *reform school*), this product suggests that hair must be actively placed into its proper arrangement. Though, unlike in the past when women wore mandatory up-dos, women now commonly wear their hair down even in formal and professional settings, hair still has a need to be controlled: "soft" and "defined," not in its natural "rebellious" state.

Female hair still functions as a social semiotic today, a marker that suggests to the viewer a woman's sexual availability. When hair and sexuality are so closely intertwined, the subtext becomes that the control of hair is also the control of sexuality. Hair product descriptions, written with the purpose of selling the product itself, consistently remind the consumer that hair must be controlled in order for its owner to be beautiful, confident, and powerful. To accomplish this goal, copywriters consistently use aggressive images of control, selecting verbs ranging from the mild (control, manage) to violent (stomp, discipline, harness). When looking at the list of verbs that appear in my sample together, the extent that the language suggests violence and domination is striking; taken out of context, the words seem more likely pulled from a horror film than a bottle of hairspray. Given the historical precedence of women and hair, however — when hair was, or was depicted as, very much a life or death matter, the extreme language on these hair products make sense. The HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor exists to suggest the disciplinary action women will be subject to without controlled

hair — and by extension controlled sexuality — and so argue for women to discipline their hair.

“In most societies, women’s hairstyles and head coverings ... play an important role in marking, constructing, and regulating female sexuality” writes Dobay Rifelj in *Coiffures* (84). Hair is an effective way of regulating women’s sexuality — and existence — because of its visibility: “The erotic connotations of hair lead not only to extravagant hairdos but also to the opposite, practices like covering and veiling the head, in an effort to repress sexual attraction” (Dobay Rifelj 84). Hair coverings are an effective and historied way to monitor women’s behavior through their hair. To illustrate this point, Dobay Rifelj refers to the 1st century Biblical text 1 Corinthians, which discusses women’s hair during prayer: “For if a woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered” (*Authorized King James Version*, 1 Cor. 11.6). There is no way to conceal nonconformity to hair norms when in a public sphere. Further, the visibility of hair makes the norms more apparent; few people can be ignorant of what acceptable hair *should* look like, creating a society of surveillance, where as Foucault says, “it is not that the beautiful totality of the individual is amputated, repressed, altered by our social order, it is rather that the individual is carefully fabricated in it, according to a whole technique of forces and bodies” (*Discipline and Punish* 217). This culture of surveillance has only been aided by advances in technology since Foucault’s day, with social media functioning both to display curated, perfected versions of ourselves and to be displayed by others (in other words, the unflattering candid shots of us in the background of a party scene are no longer relegated to the back of an acquaintance's closet, but instead is shared publically). The result is that when we are not actively preparing to display ourselves through digital or material public spaces, we are aware of the constant potential for

passive display, as things are arranged so that “surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action” (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 201), the essential formula for a disciplinary culture.

This social media documentation certainly extends to hairstyles. At the time of writing, there are 113,555,146 posts on Instagram tagged #hair and 20,077,686 tagged #hairstyle (the French equivalents — #cheveux with 429,649 tags and #coiffure with 415,237 — clearly have significantly less posts, though that number may be related to the medium rather than indicate interest in hair). Posts without ideal hair may be tagged with #badhair (144,070 posts) or #badhairday (954,284), an apologetic or humorous addendum to demonstrate the poster’s self-awareness of their nonconforming style. Social media augments previous hair surveillance, like social gatherings and school/work days, to create more opportunity to either display adherence to hair norms or be caught out-of-(blow-dried)-line.

This increase in surveillance provides the opportunity for discipline. In “Women and Their Hair: Seeking Power through Resistance and Accommodation” Rose Weitz explains that “disciplinary practices’ have evolved through which individuals both internalize and act on the ideologies that underlie their own subordination. In turn, these disciplinary practices have made the body a site for power struggle and potentially, for resistance, as individual choices about the body become laden political meaning” (668). Disciplinary action, especially for women, may come in the form of the hunger from dieting for an ideal slender figure and the painful process of undergoing cosmetic surgery. Maintaining an ideal hairstyle also carries its own sacrifices, from the time allowance for everyday styling, to the expense of product and haircuts, to more painful processes, like permanents and braids. Even after that trouble, strict adherence to hair norms “may reduce one’s power in traditionally male realms. Most basically, the same hairstyles that

identify a woman as conventionally attractive and increase power in intimate relationships highlight femininity. Yet, our culture links femininity with incompetence” (Weitz, “Women” 677). In other words, women who follow hair rules may well face prejudice in professional or other historically masculine settings, where she may be considered too feminine to fit in.

Opting out of hairstyling comes with consequences, however. While there may be professional advantages to downplaying femininity through hairstyling, this tactic could have a detrimental affect on the woman’s social status outside of work, including romantic relationships (Weitz, “Women” 681). Further, Weitz explains:

If a woman adopts a look that others consider not only less feminine but frankly unattractive, she may find that professional success also eludes her, for as described earlier, conventionally attractive women receive more job offers, higher salaries, and more promotions than unattractive women. And regardless of woman's sexual orientation, she risks discrimination if her hairstyle leads others to label her a lesbian—experiences shared by several short-haired respondents. (681)

Unattractive or unstyled hair may also be interpreted as a sign of mental instability (personal example: I once secured records from a run-of-the-mill talk-therapy treatment, and was surprised to find that the therapist had taken notes about my appearance, including my hair, for every meeting. Once she recorded that my hair was a bit more disheveled than normal, but noted that it was an especially windy day). In cultures where covered hair is the norm, visible hair may be taken as a sign of immodesty and impiety (Weitz, *Rapunzel’s Daughters* xv). On the flip side, in cultures where covered hair is not the norm, including contemporary United States and France, wearing a head covering may associate the wearer with Islam, potentially rendering her subject to Islamophobia. The marginalization of covered hair is notably more institutionalized in France

than in the United States; in 2004, France passed a law that banned religious symbols, including headscarves or veils, from public schools, according to BBC News (“French MPs”). In all of these cases, “bad” hair opens the door to disciplinary action, and may associate women with further marginalized groups.

Weitz concludes her investigation into women’s attitudes about hair stating, “Far from being ‘docile bodies,’ women are often acutely aware of cultural expectations regarding their hair” (“Women” 682). That awareness includes the consequences of non-adherence to cultural hair norms, which includes an association with groups that experience real discrimination, marginalization, and violence. These high stakes may be why hair product labels so often use aggressive language to sell their products; they offer the opportunity to discipline one’s own hair instead of experiencing the greater consequences of letting hair go out of control. The HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor consistently asserts that the product and, by extension, the consumer are more powerful than the hair, assuring the reader that the product will effectively prevent consequences of non-normative hair.

The result of women’s awareness of the negative impacts of non-normative hair is a marketing technique that consistently puts forth that the consumer gains power by being subject to control. In one example, the description of Redken Hardwear 16 Super Strong Sculpting Gel reads: “Empower hair with lasting control and high shine. Clean-feeling gel glides onto hair for long lasting discipline, shape memory and added thickness.” This product connects empowerment with being under control, hinting at the power that can be attained by acquiescing to social norms. This message is veiled to some extent, however, with the construction of the first clause in this description — “empower hair with lasting control,” The sentence is in the imperative, suggesting an unspoken “you” is the agent of this empowerment. However, instead

of saying “your hair,” the label simply reads “empower hair,” effectively removing the second person entirely. This is strange, because as Fairclough writes, “Despite the anonymity of mass-communication audiences, the direct address of members of the audience with *you* is very common indeed” (128). The avoidance of the second person diminishes the consumer’s agency, emphasizing that it is indeed the gel responsible for the empowerment, not the woman wielding it. Although the subject of the sentence is vague, the Redken Hardwear label seems to emphasize that the hair product has more to do with empowerment than the person applying it.

The French translation of this description deviates only slightly from the source, reading “*Prenez le pouvoir pour une tenue durable. Ce gel enrobe les cheveux pour les discipliner de manière durable et maintenir le mouvement*” (Take power for a durable hold. This gel coats hair to tidy them in a durable manner and maintain movement). While the verb *discipliner* stands in the French translation, which contains the sense of obedience, the construction of the sentence makes it hard to retain the verb when translated back to English. The verb *discipliner* is paired with hair more commonly in French than with English, with the sense of “make more regular” (“*discipliner verbe trans.*”). In fact, the French version reads more clearly than “clean-feeling gel glides onto hair for long lasting discipline,” where the noun form is quite abstract. It should be noted that Redken is under the L'Oréal umbrella, a beauty conglomerate based in Paris, and so it is possible that the text was originally written in French. Regardless though, the use of the cognates *discipline / discipliner* speaks to the emphasis placed on the concept — demonstrating that the product will effectively assist in obedience to beauty norms.

The products in my sample frequently implored women to control, tame, stomp, or triumph over their hair. To that end, the products emphasize that consumers may exploit other resources to achieve that discipline. This tactic works in two ways for hair product marketing: 1)

it provides an opportunity to highlight trendy ingredients within the product, and 2) it suggests that either the consumer or the product (and so by extension the person who uses the product) has the power to dominate something else. This tactic may focus on the consumer's power, using the imperative tense like Paul Mitchell's Color Protect Daily Shampoo and Color Protect Daily Conditioner, which read "Jeans may fade but hair color shouldn't. Harness the power of sunflower extract for longer-lasting hair color." Using the imperative to reveal the presence of sunflower extract in the product deemphasizes the company's agency and instead suggests that the consumer is the true agent of control; it reads as if the consumer is hand-selecting the sunflower extract to "harness," not picking up a ready-made, marked-up product. The French translation emphasizes this power promises of this tactic even more plainly: "*Les jeans peuvent ternir mais votre couleur ne le devrait pas. Exploitez le pouvoir de l'extrait de tournesol pour que votre couleur dure plus longtemps.*" *Exploiter* (to exploit) with its colonial implications clearly suggests a powerful subject. By ordering the (presumed female) audience to harness and exploit ingredients in the products, the labels are promising that the consumer will not only avoid consequences of non-normative hair, but that by accommodating social norms, they will also have power to wield over others.

These promises of exploitation are curiously on the nose, as power gained from accommodating hair norms comes at the expense of others, according to Weitz. She writes, "These strategies unintentionally lend support to those who equate women's bodies with their identities, consider women's bodies more important than their minds, assume that women use their bodies to manipulate men, or assume that femininity and competence are antithetical" ("Women" 683). The more women adopt the promises of the hair product labels, approaching

their hair-management strategies with ideologies and exploitation, the more they will perpetuate that system.

3.2 “Manageable Hair”

While all uses of the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor on hair products are ultimately arguing for a connection between female value and appearance, the different methods of communicating that metaphor reveal more about the contemporary culture this metaphor exist in. When comparing the English and French text on the labels, it is particularly striking how often the word *manage* is used in English — and how the French versions of the text avoid direct interpretations of that word. The word *manage* carries a strong capitalist association; Chiapello and Fairclough explain in their article “Understanding the new management ideology: a transdisciplinary contribution from critical discourse analysis and new sociology of capitalism,” that “management ideology is part of the broader ideological system of ‘the new spirit of capitalism’” (186). The use of the word *manage* and its translations in French demonstrates how appearance-based female value shifts between differing economic contexts.

In the 1971 debate between Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky, when discussing ways in which one can immediate action against injustices, Foucault speaks at length about localized governmental power — bureaucracy. When Chomsky responds, he targets the “economic, commercial, and financial institutions,” citing them as the main institutions of “oppression and coercion, and autocratic rule.” This Franco-American schism — bureaucracy versus corporation — notable at the Foucault-Chomsky debate seems to also be represented today on translated hair product labels. In my sample, most instances of *manage* in English were rendered as *facile à coiffer* (easy to style) or *contrôle* (control) in the French translation. Further, in the small group

of L'Oréal Paris products where French was the primary language, manage was not used at all (Instead *facile à coiffer* was translated back to English as “easy to detangle”).

Management is of course a disciplinary practice, perhaps most evidently in a capitalist context, and managers are the watchmen of the contemporary workplace panopticon. In the United States, management practices focus on a holistic approach to employee control. This approach, which began after the Depression, aims to emotionally invest employees in the company, according to Stephen Barley and Gideon Kunda in “Design and Devotion: Surges of Rational and Normative Ideologies of Control in Managerial Discourse”:

As the white-collar labor force grew, managerial discourse began to emphasize normative control: the idea that managers could more effectively regulate workers by attending not only to their behavior but to their thoughts and emotions. By winning the hearts and minds of the workforce, managers could achieve the most subtle of all forms of control: moral authority. (364)

As a result, the notion of organizational culture came to prominence in the 1970s (Barley and Kunda 381), with managers playing paternalistic roles, fostering “the commitment of employees who make no distinction between their own welfare and the welfare of the firm” (Barley and Kunda 382). The normative control practiced by American managers therefore is subtle, as committed employees rarely are subjected to coercive practices.

To commit both lower-level employees and managers to a company, they must also be committed to capitalism. Chiapello and Fairclough argue that ensuring accommodation to a capitalist requires discourse carrying the “spirit of capitalism” ideology. This ideology is a “necessary construct because in many ways, capitalism is an absurd system: wage-earners have lost ownership of the fruits of their labour as well as any hope of ever working other than as

someone else's subordinate. As for capitalists, they find themselves chained to a never-ending and insatiable process" (Chiapello and Fairclough 186). The spirit of capitalism ideology has evolved since the industrial revolution, but the ideology consistently presents capitalism as stimulating, secure, and just (Chiapello and Fairclough 188). Chiapello and Fairclough describe the current spirit within these three facets of creating a compelling capitalist ideology. Stimulation today is marked by "no more authoritarian chiefs," "fuzzy organizations," "innovation and creativity," and "permanent change" (189). Fairness is defined by a "new form meritocracy valuing mobility," the "ability to nourish a network," and that "each project is an opportunity to develop one's employability." Finally, security is "for the mobile and the adaptable;" "the ones who know how to manage themselves, companies will provide self-help resources." Freedom and interpersonal relationships figure heavily in the current spirit of capitalism, a tendency that makes sense paired with normative disciplinary practices. As managers work to create a culture where employees feel they have a moral obligation to the company, the employees are more likely to self-regulate, seeing their morally-righteous good behavior (doing well on the job) as the path to reward.

While the American companies aim to for "fuzzy organizations" (Chiapello and Fairclough 189) where managers are integrated into corporate culture, guiding employee to righteous commitment to their work, French companies have kept the managerial class distinct. "France has come closer than any other nation to turning management into a separate profession, with its own entry requirements and regulations. Managerial status in France is not part of a graded continuum, but rather a quantum leap," write Jean-Louis Barsoux and Peter Löscher for the Harvard Business Review. Those in management positions are highly trained and are usually graduates of the most prestigious schools in the country. In a similar vein, managers function

more as problem-solvers or think-tanks than paternalistic spirit-of-capitalism coaches, not sharing “the Anglo-Saxon view of management as an interpersonally demanding exercise, where plans have to be constantly ‘sold’ upward and downward using personal skills” (Barsoux and Löscher). The reduced emphasis on interpersonal relationships may play a role in icier relations between employees and managers. The Economist reports, “Whereas two-thirds of American, British and German employees say they have friendly relations with their line manager, fewer than a third of French workers say the same.” With rare instances of internal promotion to manager positions, the divide between the working and managerial classes are simply more distinct in France.

This culminates to the question: how might the different economic systems be reflected in the product labels, where the English text so frequently makes use of “manage,” yet the French text never does? It would be grammatically possible to render “manage” or “manageability” into French, so it seems plausible that the lack of reference to management in French translation is telling, reflecting the culture’s different management styles. One possible explanation is the difference in core values between American and French managers. In both the U.S. and France (as well as Britain and Canada), accommodating hair norms is valued because hair is linked to gender norms. Adhering to gender norms tends to be emphasized as morally correct, stemming from highly gendered Judeo-Christian traditions. As Americans tend to value managers’ “moral authority” (Barley and Kunda 364), the English language can more easily align management with the morally righteous pursuit of the conforming to hair norms. By contrast, the suggestion of the managerial class on a hairspray label may not be as effective in

French, where intellect is the key value in management; the link between intellect and styled hair is not as strong.¹¹

Finally, the choice to include management words in the English version may hint at the product's American target market. Most of the product in my sample cost around \$20-\$30 for a 30-ounce bottle. While the prices are not extremely high, these products are certainly not a bargain. As a result, the products most likely appeal to the middle to upper-middle class, the social strata often populated by professional managers. Products that assure that the consumer will have "manageable" results may appeal to those who manage others for a living, suggesting that their hair can be another ideal employee: adaptable and acquiescent. While the same product will likely be aimed at the same social class of French speakers, the paucity of capitalist or work-related language suggest that a different marketing technique is used to reach that group.

3.3 IMPERFECT HAIR IS A CRIMINAL

In order for the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor to be effective, hair products must create an antagonist that are deserving of aggressive treatment. When hair products act against hair, it is always specifically targeted at hair that is acting against the (usually female) consumer. To use hair the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor, hair product companies use a secondary metaphor: IMPERFECT HAIR IS A CRIMINAL. This metaphor is used almost exclusively on female-oriented products, likely drawing on ancient connections between women and uncivilized forces, as well as on a contemporary cultural context where the female body is viewed as dangerous and rebellious.

¹¹ A different disconnect between management and morality may be at play in Quebec. Quebec has a strong union presence, a notable contrast to American work culture. Management imagery may not functional well on hair products within Quebecois culture potentially because of union's focus on counteracting managerial power.

For this project I documented every hair product in the store marketed towards men in the Fairbanks Ulta Beauty. While this sample was small, a total of 25, there is a noticeable pattern: men do not have rebellious hair, according to the product labels. While descriptors like *rebellious* and *unruly* and verbs like *reform*, *tame*, and *discipline* are common on female-orientated products, they are non-existent in men's products. Men's hair may be "gritty" and "dirty" (descriptions found on Redken for Men Clean Brew Shampoo and Conditioner, which also takes the tact of marketing itself like beer to create a masculine image, employing Hefeweizen tasting notes on the label: "malt, brewer's yeast and orange zest"). Men's hair may be, in the most damning description, "hard to control" (AG Welding Paste), but it never seems to naturally undermine its owner. It is only women's bodies that will revolt if they are not intentionally controlled.

Further, no male-oriented product in my sample mentions the most undesirable type of imperfect hair: frizz. While male hair products may advertise their ability to create smoothness, those products make no reference to frizz. As there is no biological reason for men to lack frizz, the absence of the term on men's products suggests that frizz is a gendered construction. Claims for "controlling" and "taming" frizz appear frequently on female-oriented products, with major brands creating lines specifically targeting the phenomenon, such as Redken's "Frizz Dismiss" and Kenra's "Frizz Control" series of products. These products highly emphasize the adversarial relationship between the product and frizz. For example, Kenra's Frizz Control Leave-In Treatment reads, "Frizz Control Leave-In Treatment delivers numerous frizz-fighting benefits in one solution. The oil infused crème¹² provides lasting moisture, shine, smoothness, and optimal

¹² The Kenra copywriter's choices to use the French spelling of "cream" is especially interesting in this instance as the French translation does not retain the word at all, referring to the product as *cette formule* (this formula). See Kasuya for discussion on France's ongoing linguistic dominance, connecting French language with culture and civilization despite growing competition with English.

frizz taming control.” The final clause in this example — “optimal frizz taming control” — is an especially strong claim, pairing two “control” words with “optimal.” When it comes to frizz, it seems, one requires a full arsenal.

Frizz becomes shorthand for describing what is wrong with unstyled female hair. For example, the verb “tame” is paired with frizz with some frequency, seemingly emphasizing the animalistic nature of unstyled hair. Similar to taming a wild horse, the natural texture of hair must be tamed to be used. This connection between the female body and animals dates back to 4th century Platonic writings: “In the matter of good or bad health ... any woman or child — or animal for that matter — knows what is wholesome for it and is capable of curing itself” (Plato 80). The animalistic female body functions as the antithesis of the humane male; it is not capable of civilization, purpose, or control.

When a product does not explicitly reference frizz, non-ideal hair may be described through adjectives. Often these adjectives reference the anti-social nature of the undesirable hair. As Mizani Edge Taming Gel reads, “Control flyaways and unruly edges for sharp, tapered, and highly defined styles.” The adjective “unruly” appears frequently, emphasizing the natural hair’s non-adherence to convention. French translations of unruly carry similar meanings, usually rendered as *indiscipline* (undisciplined) or *rebelle* (rebellious). Rather than Platonic conceptions of women, this description of hair draws more upon Christian traditions, where the female body’s relative inferiority is based on its disobedience. The naturally criminal female body has even explicitly been linked to hair within popular texts dealing with Christian themes. In *Paradise Lost*, “Milton’s Eve is another duplicitous descendent of Venus, whose ‘wanton’ and ‘disheveled’ golden ringlets suggest her sinister potential” (Gitter 938). The anti-social representation of women’s hair suggests in these product labels suggest that the natural hair is in

an inferior, uncivilized state, and that this lack of cultural restraint has a potential for detrimental action.

3.4 HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS

The second metaphor that suggests that the subject is more powerful than the object is HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS. While verbs that suggest the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor emphasize that the object will be *locked in*, the defensive metaphor focuses on keeping things *locked out*. For example, the Bed Head Tigi Urban Anti-Dotes Scalp Shampoo 0 label uses this metaphor: “A clever potion containing a hero ingredient to help scalps hold on to [*sic*] moisture and defend against dryness” (“*Cette potion intelligente contient un ingrédient étonnant qui hydrate le cuir de chevelu et le protège de la sécheresse*”). As opposed to aggressive metaphors that suggest the consumer “reform curls” or “stomp frizz,” defensive metaphors function under the assumption that the hair is naturally ideal. The natural goodness of the hair must be defended from aggressors, either natural forces or invasive bad-hair qualities, to retain its purity. Setting up a good vs. evil dichotomy, this metaphor suggest that the hair products are equipped to save the the consumer from any threat.

The HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS metaphor suggests that good hair is constantly vulnerable to forces that will render it undesirable. In many cases, these forces are unnamed. Some examples: L’Oreal EverPure Sulfate-Free Repair & Defend Conditioner, “Our system helps repair damaged hair while protecting from daily color aggressors” (“*Notre système ... les protéger contre les facteurs agressants qui nuisent à la coloration au quotidien*”). This vague construction seems to make the hair-threats omnipresent.

While many products containing the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS leave the threat unnamed, there are others that are more specific. In many cases, hair products

pledge to defend the consumer against natural forces. These products “shield your style from humidity” (Mizani Styling Finish & Polish), offer “heat protection” (Paul Mitchell Ultimate Color Repair Triple Rescue Spray) and work towards “locking out humidity” (Redken Curvaceous Full Swirl Sculpt and Shine Cream Serum). Focusing more often on the control of nature than women’s bodies, the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS metaphor is part of a larger corporate discourse. As Mary Phillips writes in “Re-Writing Corporate Environmentalism: Ecofeminism, Corporeality and the Language of Feeling,” “In the face of looming ecological crisis, corporations largely persist in an instrumental view of nature such that it is represented as a risk requiring mastery, domination and management” (443) By claiming that the product will be a positive force for the consumer, an antagonistic force must be constructed: a threatening form of nature.

However, framing nature as a force working against women is far from an ideology that improves the status of women. Similar to the classical alignment of women and animals, women and nature have a longstanding tradition of conflation. Phillips writes that a concept in traditional binaries that is seen “as authentically human conforms to ideas around idealized, hegemonic masculinity and is defined in opposition to what is taken to be natural, nature, or the physical or biological realm. The feminine, women and nature are rendered as abject; ‘othered’ to confirm and justify their subordination” (444). Feminists throughout Western traditions have observed the alignment of women and nature (Phillips 445), speaking to the ideology’s breadth. The ubiquity of these binaries seems to be reflected in my sample. There is no instance when the French translations subverts the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS metaphor, an interesting contrast to the often reworked HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor translations. While contrasting ideas of female bodies and sexuality have likely led to

linguistic difference between translations, the lack of linguistic alteration in the human vs. nature dichotomy may demonstrate deeply embedded shared ideologies between the two traditions.

While the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS metaphor changes the actors in the antagonistic relationship, the emphasis on control and domination remains. With a long history conflating women's bodies and nature, it is no coincidence that the switch from the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS to HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS metaphor swaps unstyled (natural) hair with environmental elements as the objects of their agency. While predominantly marketed towards women, the products themselves are coded as masculine; they represent the "science and rationality [that] are presented as a transcendence of the feminine" (Phillips 444). As agents of aggressive and defensive action, hair products function to dominate nature, manifested both as the consumer's body and as the environment that surrounds them.

3.5 HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION

To sell their products, producers of hair products consistently put forth the assumption that the female body is naturally unruly and undisciplined, and in need of outside sources to help maintain control. This pattern begs the question: Why would women want to be told that their bodies are unreliable and need to be controlled by external forces? In her 2001 article "Women and Their Hair: Seeking Power through Resistance and Accommodation," Rose Weitz concludes that when women make decisions about their bodies, including their hair "they combine accommodation and resistance as they actively grapple with cultural expectations and social structures" (669). Women can gain certain types of power by keeping their hair controlled into a feminine hairstyle; they may find other types of power by using masculine or androgynous styling, or leaving their hair unmanaged.

Through accommodation, however, women are safe from harsh cultural backlash that accompanies resistance. Weitz explains, “The most common way women use their hair to seek power is through strategies that de-emphasize resistance and emphasize accommodation to mainstream ideas about attractiveness” (672). The control language on product labels signals to women that this product will help them gain power by accommodating certain cultural expectations about female hair. The power the product labels promise is extensive, suggesting that with proper hair styling, women can become *forces against nature*. However, by aligning unstyled female hair with nature, these products ultimately aim to foster an antagonist relationship between the consumer and herself, making controlled hair (with the help of the product) the only avenue for self-actualization.

It is helpful to quickly note what exactly accommodation to contemporary standards of female hair looks like. Weitz summarizes:

First, to be most feminine and hence most attractive, women's hair should be long, curly or wavy, and preferably blonde (Clayson and Maughan 1986; Rich and Cash 1993). It should most definitely not be gray (Kerner Furman 1997) or kinky (suggesting either African or Jewish heritage). Second, women's hair should look intentionally styled—explaining why even women who adopt tousled hairstyles like those sported by actresses Meg Ryan and Winona Ryder typically use hair gels or sprays to maintain the desired "tousle." Similarly, there is widespread agreement that women should spend time, effort, and money on making their hair attractive (Synott 1987); even Moslem women who cover their hair outside the home typically strive to make their hair attractive whenever their hair is uncovered. Finally, women's hair should look different from men's hair (Synott 1987). (672)

It is worth noting that these guidelines for attractive female hair are not wholly elective. Components like “intentionally styled” are often institutionalized, written into school or work dress codes.

Resistance can be an attractive avenue to achieve power (Weitz, “Women” 677). Countless stories that permeate American celebrate resistance, from civil rights activists in our history classes to the the rogue heroes in our action films. This attraction to resistance can extend to hair as well. As Weitz puts for, women are not simply Foucault’s “docile bodies” when it comes to their hair (“Women” 669). Women are aware of the strategies of resistance and accommodation, and can accurately predict the results of each course of action. Women understand that resistance does carry power, that it is an alternate route that seems in many ways more valid and effective than power gained through accommodation. Therefore, invitations to “start a hair revolution” on a bottle of Bed Head shampoo may prey upon a desire for legitimate emancipation from hair norms.

This interest in female resistance through hair is perhaps more easily observable when depicted in popular media. For example, scenes where women shave their heads are seen as particularly poignant in popular film. These moment of extreme deviation from norms are marked as the character’s moment of transition to an embodiment of non-normative female strength, like Demi Moore in *GI Jane* and Natalie Portman in *V for Vendetta*. While the power of shaving one’s head is, to a great extent an embrace of masculine power, it also marks a rejection of feminine paths to power — it suggests that women may fight for more options. By using rebellious language to sell their products, companies can appropriate women’s longing for resistance.

Of course, the products do not suggest that women form a meaningful resistance. Instead, the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION metaphor makes overblown promises of power and constructs antagonistic relationships between women and nature similar to the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS metaphor. For example, the Paul Mitchell Extra-Body Finishing Spray asks the consumer to “help defy Mother Nature with humidity resistance.” Not only is this promise of control absurd — a coating of hairspray is unlikely to survive a good cloudburst, much less all of “Mother Nature,” but more importantly it frames a feminized nature as an antagonist. Using Mother Nature is a common corporate trick according to Phillips: “Organizations harness cultural meanings that cast Mother Nature as nurturing or life-giving, as dangerous and fickle or as frail and in need of male protection” (448). All of the depictions perpetuate harmful ideologies of both women and nature. In the case of dangerous and malevolent Mother Nature “the depiction of nature and the feminine as threatening or monstrous are mutually reinforcing” (Phillips 448). While using the attractive nature of rebellious language to market their product to women, this Paul Mitchell hairspray is actually selling one of the most powerful discourses of female subjugation.

Just as with the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS, the French translations of the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION metaphors almost universally preserve the same sense as the English version. The only instance when the French text deviates from the English is on Bed Head’s Full Of It Volume Finishing Spray, which reads, “Give flat the finger.” The French translation “*Dites au revoir aux cheveux plats*” (Say goodbye to flat hair) is decidedly more mellow. However, every translation of “humidity resistant” is translated with the cognate “*resistant à l’humidité*.” The uniformity of language the constructs a

dichotomy between the consumer or product and nature between language suggests strong ties between the two culture's conceptions of nature.

The only reason to buy any of the products included in my research is for accommodation purposes — there is no reason to buy more than soap and water if one is concerned only about hygiene and not about style. Applying any of the products in my sample suggests accommodation to some extent. However, language that suggest resistance, like *revolution*, *defy*, and *revolt* appear with some frequency. These products themselves are not made to be tools of resistance, nor do their labels convey messages that support resistance. Instead, they simply capitalize on the allure of rebellion while simultaneously arguing for accommodation.

Conclusion

Lakoff and Johnson write that metaphors leave out elements of our experience; one thing is not wholly the other (52). For example, when considering the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS metaphor, there are no products that claim that the product will *send hair to hospital*, *reduce hair to tears*, or *rig hair with explosives*. There are limits to the metaphor, and crossing those limits makes the metaphor creative, or not conceptual. A metaphor cannot reach every logical feature and continue to be a metaphor.

Conceptual metaphors also prevent us from seeing other ways we may approach an idea. Lakoff and Johnson give the example of ARGUMENT IS WAR. When we frame arguments as combative, they write, we may lose the idea that an argument can be collaborative (10). In this project, so many of the products describe antagonistic relationships between consumers, products, hair, and nature. There is an opportunity for companies to present these relationships positively HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS and HAIR PRODUCTS ARE DEFENSIVE AGENTS masks the potential metaphor: HAIR PRODUCTS ARE HELPERS. This metaphor already exists on some product labels, like Paul Mitchell Color Protect Reconstructive Treatment: “This power packed treatment helps prevent breakage and reduces split ends.” An alternative metaphor like HAIR PRODUCTS ARE HELPERS increases the consumer’s agency, focusing on the product as a tool to be used at the hair-owner’s discretion, deemphasizing the disciplinary relationship between women and hair.

Perhaps an even more beneficial translation would be moving from HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF REBELLION to HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF CREATIVITY. A creativity-focused metaphor could radically challenge historic connections between women and controlled hair, emphasizing choice in personal expression and rejecting the alignment with female hair as a means of controlling sexuality. Like the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE HELPERS

metaphor, HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF CREATIVITY assigns the user agency. While rare, this metaphor does appear in my sample, such as Bed Head Fully Loaded Massive Volume Shampoo, which asserts that using the product will result in “Fully Loaded volume that’s as big as when you first created it.” The metaphor portrays the consumer as an independent creator that is selecting a style rather than a metonymic figure overpowered by the product.

An exercise in translation:

Understanding the ideologies present in a large percentage of hair products creates an opportunity to recontextualize the discourse. To deemphasize the intertextual link between older control-oriented depictions of female hair and contemporary hair products, the conceptual metaphors on hair products can be intentionally shifted. See the sample translation below, recontextualizing an instance of HAIR PRODUCTS ARE AGGRESSIVE AGENTS on Tigi Bed Head’s On the Rebound Curl Recall Cream to avoid control language:

Original: “Reform rebellious curls into soft and defined ringlets. Our curl recall technology instantly reforms, ensuring they spring back into shape with just one scrunch.”

Translation: “Sculpt your hair into a unique and expressive style. Our technology, best suited to curly hair, assists in bringing your vision to life, retaining your creation throughout your day.”

In this translation, I aimed to exemplify the HAIR PRODUCTS ARE TOOLS OF CREATIVITY metaphor. Reframing the discourse of the hair product labels to emphasize creativity can disrupt several harmful ideas about women and hair. For example, using the verb sculpt suggests that hair is a precious medium, not animalistic or criminal. Emphasizing “expressive,” “vision,” and “creation” deemphasizes the notion that women’s hair must be a certain way; instead, it becomes an elective means of self-expression. Finally, using the HAIR

PRODUCTS ARE HELPERS metaphor with “assists” and “best suited” emphasizes the agency of the individual using the product, disrupting the original text’s emphasis on the product’s ability to dominate the consumer.

However, it is important to remember that while these labels are perpetuating harmful ideologies about women and their bodies, the products themselves are capable of more immediate concrete harm. All of these product lines use ingredients that are highly carcinogenic. For example, Environmental Working Group rated one product in my sample, Redken Color Extend Rich Recovery Protective Treatment for Color-Treated Hair, is rated as a 10 on a 1-10 scale of hazard (10 being the most hazardous). The Environmental Working Group describes the hazards as:

HIGH concerns: Biochemical or cellular level changes, Endocrine disruption, Multiple, additive exposure sources, Contamination concerns, Irritation (skin, eyes, or lungs), Miscellaneous, Occupational hazards, Persistence and bioaccumulation; Other MODERATE concerns: Cancer, Organ system toxicity (non-reproductive); Other LOW concerns: Enhanced skin absorption, Data gaps, Ecotoxicology.

While the Environmental Working Group does not conduct long-term testing on individual products, the list of concerns associated with a non-essential hair product is nevertheless unsettling.

The material impact of products like Redken Color Extend Rich Recovery Protective Treatment for Color-Treated Hair demonstrate the necessity of unpacking the ideologies taken up by product label writers. To sell the Color Extend product, the label uses control language several times, promising “improved manageability” and “protective micro-net technology to help lock-in color and lock-out aggressors.” While the product label assures that “hair color is

protected,” the woman using it certainly is not. Color Extend is not an isolated incident. Several products potentially harmful to the user’s health use control language to help make the sale.

Simply put, just switching the discourses of hair product labels to utilize a more positive ideology of women and bodies is not good enough. The harmful nature of the products and product ingredients is a discourse in itself, demonstrating our cultural valuation of women’s appearance over their internal life, whether that be their intellect or their health. This problem points to a larger problem using their bodies as points of political action; as Weitz writes, strategies of resistance using hair “unintentionally lend support to those who equate women's bodies with their identities, consider women's bodies more important than their minds, assume that women use their bodies to manipulate men, or assume that femininity and competence are antithetical” (“Women” 683). While altering the discourses on hair product labels may help resist certain ideologies of women and hair, any gendered hair product is made with an intention to encourage the accommodation of gender norms.

Though the continued production of the gendered shampoos, conditioners, balms, and sprays in my sample is inherently problematic, their descriptions provide a fruitful lens for observing ideology. It is clear that control discourses on hair products is a fairly prominent pattern, and that this discourse plays into long-standing views of women and hair. Connecting the dots between historical texts and shampoo bottles demonstrates the sustained strength of the ideology, even in a time and place where women have more hair options than ever. Making those connections is essential then, as Fairclough writes, “Ideology is most effective when its workings are least visibility. If one becomes aware of that a particular aspect of common sense is sustaining power inequalities at one’s own expense, it ceases to be common sense, and may cease to have the capacity to sustain power inequalities” (85).

However, there is still a wealth of information woven through the hair products just in my sample that has not been described or analyzed, which has the potential to unveil more ideologies. One major source of information is the visual forms the bottles take — the colors, shapes, sizes, images, and fonts are all elements ripe for semiotic analysis. While I looked at French language, many products also feature Spanish and other languages, which all could be analyzed with a comparative approach. Further, reaching just outside the products themselves, there is potential to investigate correlations between the product language and its price. Further investigation could also take into account the advertising that corresponds to the products in my data sample. Though these lines of inquiry are not as immediately striking as the control language, there is significant potential with all to render other ideologies visible.

While this analysis does not tell every story to be found within everyday hair products, my aim is to argue that important stories are found there, and to render these ordinary texts visible. Populating our store shelves and our homes, hair products circulate through our lives. In contrast to manically choreographed Coca-Cola commercials or 600-foot GAP billboards, while idly perusing a shampoo bottle in the shower, it can be easy to forget we are reading an advertisement, intentionally harnessing long-held ideologies to convince us the product is necessary. So often these ideologies focus on power, “truths so embedded in our culture that they can be as difficult for us to see as for fish to see water” (Weitz, *Rapunzel’s Daughters* xii): calls to control the female body, to control nature, and at times conflating the two. While the tactics used to deliver the message differ across contexts — changing based on a culture’s economic climate, for example — the overall ideology of power and domination is all encompassing. If we wish to “challenge the ways in which nature and bodies, emotion and femininity are constructed and marginalized by a masculinist logic predicated on instrumental rationality” (Phillips 455),

we must question the discourses found on the most ordinary of texts, asking not only what stories are contained there, but how those ideologies are both manifested and perpetuated.

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