Masculine Trans-formations in Jackie Kay's *Trumpet*

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Abstract

Jackie Kay's novel *Trumpet* shows that transphobic beliefs may negatively affect not only trans-people but also cis-people. *Trumpet* explores the sex/gender transformations that all people experience and suggests that persecutions of trans-people may work to distract cis-people from their own ultimate inability to fully embody gender ideals.

Résumé

Le roman *Trumpet* par Jackie Kay montre que les croyances trans - phobiques peuvent affecter de façon négative non seulement les personnes trans mais aussi les personnes cis. *Trumpet* explore les transformations de sexes/genres dont toutes les personnes font l'expérience et suggère que les persécutions des personnes trans pourraient s'avérer à distraire les personnes cis de leur propre ultime inhabilité d'accepter entièrement les idéals des hommes et des femmes.

Much contemporary transsexual and transgender literature emphasizes the devastating effects that transphobia has on the bodies and minds of trans-people. Jackie Kay contributes to this important body of literature with her novel *Trumpet* (1999) which is set after the death of Joss Moody, a jazz musician who had a female body but lived his adulthood as a man. *Trumpet* provides an unusual critique of transphobia by highlighting the ways that transphobic beliefs may negatively affect not only trans-people but also cis-people - that is, those who are not transsexual or transgender.[1] By foregrounding the views of cis-characters instead of a trans-protagonist, this novel promotes interrogations of the thought processes of cis-people and the possible biases they hold while discouraging readers from pathologizing and exoticizing Joss.[2] *Trumpet* shows that the belief that gender identity should reflect one's natal sex may hinder the development of potentially fulfilling relationships with trans-people and restrict the gender options and expressions of all people. While those who knew Joss when he was alive cannot rewrite their memories of him as a man, they also cannot erase the fact of his female corpse. Thus, in order to reconcile Joss's maleness and femaleness they - like readers of *Trumpet* - must recognize the limits and exclusionary nature of the male/female gender binary.

I begin this paper by exploring how Kay's depiction of the bodily transformations that are experienced by cis-people troubles representations of trans-people as perverse and "other." Next, I turn my attention to the relationship between Joss and his adopted son, Colman, and examine the consequences of the hypermasculine transphobia that Colman expresses. I conclude by discussing Colman's reidentification with Joss which, I

argue, reflects his acceptance of his father's gender complexity and, in turn, his own.

In this paper, I use the term "transsexual" to refer to people who are cross-sex identified. This definition recognizes that transsexual people may or may not take hormones or have surgery to make their bodies reflect their sex/gender identities, and thereby aims to complicate the usual privileging of acts over identities in definitions of transsexual people as those who medically alter their bodies. Some transsexual people do not take hormones or have surgery because of the invasiveness of medical observation, the health risks involved with hormone replacement therapy and genital reassignment surgery, or lack of access to medical services.

Transgender is often used as an umbrella term that encompasses "transsexuals (pre, post, and no-op); transvestites; crossdressers; [...] persons who have chosen to perform ambiguous social genders; and persons who have chosen to perform no gender at all" (Stone 1999). While in my everyday life I alternate between using "transgender" as an umbrella term and in a more specific manner to refer to people whose gender identity or appearance is in an "in-between state" ("Transgender" 2009), in order to avoid confusion in this paper, I have only used transgender in the latter more specific manner. Thus, in this essay "transgender" refers to people who do not identify as either female or male or, on the other hand, identify to some degree as both female and male.

Tracing Gender Fluidity in Trans- and Cis-People

Trumpet was inspired by the life of Billy Tipton (1914-1989), a white American jazz pianist who "passed" as a man (Feinberg 1996, 83-84).[3] Kay made many significant changes to Tipton's character and life story in her depiction of Joss Moody as a mixed-race jazz trumpeter who resides in both Scotland and England. These changes highlight Joss's position as someone who embodies liminality in terms of his gender, race, and nationality. Kay's depiction of Joss thus works to foster intersectional analyses of oppression by encouraging readers to consider the "inextricability of racial issues from ones of gender, sexuality, class, and generation" (Clandfield 2002, 2). *Trumpet* establishes connections between the social marginalization of people of mixed race/nationality and trans-people. This approach may promote trans-sensitivity among cis-readers who are new to thinking about trans issues but are familiar with and feel empathy for the struggles that are experienced by people who are of mixed race or mixed nationality.

Joss's musical career as a trumpeter reflects his gender liminality since the trumpet has an "ambivalent form" (Monterrey 2000, 172). As Tomas Monterrey notes, "When Joss plays it [...] the phallic trumpet physically compensates for his absence of male sexual members" (172). Yet, while extending out from the body like a phallus, a trumpet also has "a concave end, combining thus the masculine and the feminine in its form" (172). It is notable not only that Kay makes Joss a trumpeter rather than a pianist but also that she sets "Joss Moody's musical career [...] much later than Tipton's" (Eckstein 2006, 55) since Joss is a trumpeter "in the 1960s, not the 1930s" (King 2001, 102). As it would have been more likely that a female trumpet player could find employment as a jazz musician in the 1960s, having Joss be a musician in this later period complicates readings of him as "passing" for the sake of his career. Kay thus joins trans theorists, such as Leslie Feinberg and Jason Cromwell, in challenging the tendency of historians to read people in the past who cross-dressed as "really" being women or lesbians who "passed" solely for strategic reasons - in order to find employment or in an attempt to escape sexist and/or homophobic oppression.[4]

Joss's gender liminality is signalled through not only his career choice but also his fond reflections on his past as a girl. His acceptance of his girlhood is apparent in the section of *Trumpet* entitled "Music" that gives readers insight into his thoughts and

experiences while he inhabits a transitional state between life and death (Kay 1999, 136). Although Joss seems to disidentify with his past, thinking that in his youth "he was something else. Somebody else. Her. That girl" (132), he also asserts that "He is himself again, years ago, skipping along the railway line with a long cord his mother had made into a rope. In a red dress. It is liberating. To be a girl. To be a man" (135). This statement suggests that Joss identifies, on some level, as both female and male, and thus he may be read as transgender (as per my earlier definition of this term). By depicting it as "liberating" to be both a girl and a man, Kay's narrative encourages readers to think critically about how the opposite - subscribing to either masculinity and maleness or femininity and femaleness for the duration of one's life - may be limiting and restrictive.

Due to the predominance of representations of transsexuality in the media and the fact that Joss lives his adulthood as a man, he may also be read as transsexual. It is thus useful to consider how Kay's description of Joss may trouble stereotypical beliefs about transsexual people. Joss's celebration of both his past and present genders troubles the notion that people who are transsexual necessarily find their youths oppressive because they disidentify with their sex and consequently struggle with their gender identity at an early age. Kay undermines readings of Joss as always having experienced cross-sex/gender identification by reiterating that he was not a tomboy in his girlhood (250; 254). As a child, Joss skips along in a dress "carrying a bunch of railway flowers for her mother" (132) and is described as looking "just like a little girl. A happy little girl" (254-255). Joss's happiness in his youth complicates the notion that all transsexual people have miserable childhoods and suggests that the stereotypical transsexual narrative of feeling born into the wrong body does not reflect the experiences of all transsexual people. *Trumpet* may thereby promote awareness of the diversity among the experiences of those who are transsexual. The contrast between Joss's feminine appearance and actions in his childhood and his adult expression of masculinity encourages readers to reflect upon how gender expressions and identities may change over time. This novel thus promotes acceptance of de-essentialized understandings of gender formation and highlights the importance of respecting whatever gender identification one has at a given time.

Furthermore, *Trumpet* complicates tendencies to "other" transsexual and transgender people by showing that both trans- and cis-people undergo sex/gender transformations. For instance, reflecting on the process of aging, Joss's wife Millicent asserts, "I am not the girl or the woman that I once was" (157). Through the years, Millicent changes from a girl to a woman to an older woman and loses the reckless abandonment that she had in her youth. As a result, she disidentifies with who she was as a child, stating, "It feels so long ago, it is as if it was somebody else who lived that part of my life. Not me. The girl I was has been swept out to sea. She is another tide entirely" (8). Similar to Millicent who describes the mental and physical changes that are brought about by aging, Joss's son, Colman, describes his transformation at puberty, noting, "The voice suddenly goes like something falling through a floor. The face gets itchy and rough. When you wake in the morning, rub the cheeks and get a shock at the stubble" (67). Colman's appearance continues to change until one day "The boy is gone" (67) and in his place there is a man. Colman's transformation from a boy into a man resembles Joss's transformation from a girl into a man which creates a parallel between cis- and trans-people. In turn, this novel complicates the view that there is something perverse about the sex/gender changes that trans-people experience.

Transphobia as Self-Harm

Throughout most of *Trumpet*, Colman is depicted as a hostile, "self-pitying bastard" (50) who fails to empathize with Joss. After seeing his father's naked corpse, Colman becomes angry, bitter and depressed, and

distances himself from his friends and his family. *Trumpet* thereby highlights that transphobia may be destructive not just for trans-people but also for cis-people. As Colman's transphobia and self-enforced isolation stem from the crisis of masculinity that he experiences upon learning that his male role model had breasts and a vagina, *Trumpet* shows the potentially devastating effects of not acknowledging that "the categories male and female, do not contain the complexity of sex and gender for any of us" (Pratt 1996, 21).

In Colman's mind the penis is the central signifier of maleness, and thus in response to learning that his father did not have a penis, Colman adopts an aggressive transphobic and misogynist hypermasculinity. He reflects, "My father had tits. My father didn't have a dick. My father had tits. My father had a pussy. My father didn't have any balls" (61). Colman's repeated assertion that his father had "tits" and a "pussy" but did not have a "dick" or "balls" reflects his struggle to reconcile the materiality of his father's body with his persistent memory of him as a man. Colman's description of Joss as "not having any balls" also functions on a figurative level since Colman refuses to acknowledge the bravery that it takes to defy sex/gender norms in transphobic societies.

Colman reflects on the possibility that Joss wore a strap-on dildo - an object that may be read as allowing for a physical bridging of femaleness and maleness. Colman thinks, "My father never got a leg over. Had a hard-on. My father was never tossed off. He never stuck it up, or *rammed it in*, never spilt his seed, never had a blow job. What did he have down his pants? A cunt - is that it? Or did he wear a dildo? Shit. If he did, he would have *rammed it in*, I promise you" (emphasis added 169). Considering the vehement transphobia that Colman expresses - as is evident in his descriptions of his father as a "pervert," "psycho" (63) and "freak" (64) - it seems here that he is attempting to position his father's maleness as inferior to his own by asserting that Joss would be incompetent at using a dildo because "he would have rammed it in." Yet, ironically, Colman also describes heterosexual cis-men as "ramming it in" when they have sex with women which undermines his attempt to establish a clear-cut divide between himself as a cis-man and his father as a trans-man. Similar inconsistencies in Colman's train of thought are apparent throughout *Trumpet* and highlight his struggle to come to terms with his father's sex/gender in relation to his own masculinity.

After seeing his father's naked corpse, Colman experiences his penis in an exaggerated form. He reflects that, "His cock seems bigger since his father died. Bigger and harder [...] There's more come too since his father died. That's weird, but it's definitely true. He's losing it" (140). Colman's belief that his penis is bigger, harder, and more potent than when Joss was alive reflects an attempt to assert the "realness," and thus superiority, of his maleness in contrast to his father's "performed" and "inauthentic" masculinity. His reflection that he is "losing it" indicates that his intensified experience of the phallus is a fantastical coping mechanism that helps him to deal with the newfound knowledge that his masculine role model did not have a penis, a fact that throws the authenticity of his own masculinity into question. Judith Butler argues that "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (Butler 1999, 43-44). Colman resists recognizing the process of repetition and mimicry that has led to his adult gender expression since this would involve accepting that his identity as a man is strongly informed by his father's "fake" masculinity. Colman's desire to naturalize his gender is apparent in the emphasis that he places on the materiality of the male body and his obsession with his penis.

Colman's lack of empathy for his father throughout most of *Trumpet* is ironic considering that he is also, on many levels, a socially marginalized subject who embodies liminality. As Colman was born in Scotland and raised in England, both his nationality and

ethnicity are liminal. His assertion that he "didn't feel Scottish. Didn't feel English either" (51) shows that he embodies a space between or beyond geographical borders. Colman is also an adopted child who belongs neither fully to Joss and Millicent nor to his unknown birthparents. Furthermore, like Joss, he is of mixed race, and thereby troubles racial boundaries. He notes that the adoption agency described him as "'a find'" because his skin was "the same kind of colour" as Joss's skin (50). He is repeatedly asked where he is from - an invasive question that implies that because he is not white he must be nationally and ethnically "other." Colman asserts, "the next fucker that asks me where I come from I'm going to say, yes, I come from Hawaii, Morocco, Trinidad, or any place they ask. What does it matter anyway?" (58). Colman's frustration highlights the difficulty of inhabiting a racially liminal space that is widely considered incomprehensible and, consequently, repudiated in societies that are obsessed with the black/white dichotomy.

Similarly, the prevalence of binary thinking about sex and gender and the presumptions that people make about Joss's sex based on his gender expression make it difficult and dangerous for Joss to be open about the disjunction between his material body and his gender even among those who love him. *Trumpet* encourages readers to recognize how people who embody liminality in regards to their race or gender may share certain experiences, and thereby develop personal and political alliances with each other if they are willing to recognize these similarities while also attending to and respecting their different experiences.

Empathy and Emotional Reconnection

While, for the majority of *Trumpet*, Colman fails to see parallels between his and Joss's experiences and shows little empathy for his father, near the end of this novel, Colman starts to reidentify with Joss and reflects upon some of the difficulties that Joss experienced as a trans-man. *Trumpet* thus documents Colman's move from rejecting Joss and denying the influence that Joss had over his gender formation to remembering his father's kindness and, in turn, Colman comes to love and respect his father once again. Colman's shifting view of Joss conveys the message that even people who are vehemently transphobic may have their prejudiced beliefs altered if they allow themselves to develop empathetic identifications with those who are transgender or transsexual.

Colman's affective change is first alluded to when he starts to feel guilty about selling his father's story to Sophie Stone, a journalist who is interviewing Colman because she plans to write a book about Joss that characterizes him as a "weirdo" (125) and pervert (126, 128). Sophie's book reinscribes disturbing media tendencies to position the transgender person as "a perennial cultural curiosity: sensational, abominable, fascinating" (Norton 1997, 140). Judith Halberstam notes that Sophie resembles Diane Middlebrook who wrote a biography of Billy Tipton's life in which she undermined Tipton's gender identity and depicted his wives as "betrayed" and "deceived" (Halberstam 2001, 24). Sophie similarly negates Joss's experiences as a man by understanding his masculinity as a "performance" that gives "her" a thrill. Sophie "realizes" that Joss "liked wearing those bandages, didn't *she*? *She* liked the big cover up. Going about the place taking everybody in. Going to the Gents. *She* got a buzz going to the Gents, didn't *she*?" (emphasis added 263). Sophie's rhetorical choice to refer to Joss with female pronouns shows how language can be used to violently erase trans-people's identities and gender expressions while simultaneously reaffirming sex/gender binaries.[5] It is unlikely that after years of living as a man Joss experienced his gender as a thrilling game. Furthermore, as the public washroom is a place where much transphobic violence occurs, Sophie's recasting of the danger experienced by trans-people in this public yet private space as "thrilling" demonstrates insensitivity to those who experience transphobic oppression.[6] As Cromwell explains, for those

who "pass" as men, "There is always some risk of being found out and marginalized as a result. Often when discovered, [...] irrespective of the duration of their lives as men, they are turned back into women and again made invisible" (1999, 12). The symbolic violence of having one's identity disavowed upon being "discovered" to be "passing" is often coupled with extreme acts of verbal, physical, and even sexual violence.

Colman's reidentification with his father becomes apparent through his growing feeling of discomfort about collaborating with Sophie and his persistent memories of his father's kindness. Colman's and his father's identities are very much interconnected, and thus by helping Sophie develop a sensationalizing and pathologizing depiction of Joss, Colman does violence both to his father's memory and to himself. Colman tells Sophie, "I'm starting to get a sore throat. It's like there's fucking gravel in my throat or something. My father used to make brilliant hot toddies for things like that. Cloves and shit" (161). Colman's guilt manifests itself in a sore throat which reflects his desire to stop collaborating with Sophie and also evokes memories of his father's caring nature. Thinking about what Sophie's book will look like, Colman imagines a "photograph of his father as a little girl [...] with sinister captions. His father keeps coming back to him. He won't stop it. He won't let him alone. Coorie in, coorie in, he says and tucks him into bed" (256). Notably, Colman is haunted by an interaction with his father that emphasizes Joss's gender liminality as he performs the stereotypically maternal act of tucking his son into bed. This memory thus calls upon Colman to recognize and embrace Joss's gender complexity.

After imagining what Sophie's depiction of his father will look like, Colman tells Sophie that he cannot continue helping her with the book. He asserts, "I am Colman Moody, the son of Joss Moody, the famous trumpet player. He'll always be daddy to me" (259). This statement signals Colman's acceptance of Joss as both his father and masculine role model. Colman's reidentification with Joss is further evident in his self-reflexive use of phrases that were used by his father (185, 223-224) and his vow to always drink Scottish malt because "His father was a malt fanatic" (213).

Meeting Joss's mother, Edith - an older white woman who Joss had told Colman was dead - helps Colman to gain an understanding of the difficulties Joss faced as a trans-man. After their meeting, Colman thinks, "How could his father have stopped seeing her? What a waste" (242). This is a "waste" for not only Joss and Edith but also Colman since he grows up without knowing his paternal grandmother. Colman's longing to return "to the house of Edith Moore, where it is safe and warm and smells of old woman" (243) highlights the strong attachment to her that develops in just a few hours, which, in turn, encourages readers to contemplate the familial sacrifices that Joss made in order to live as a man. In light of the hostility that Colman expresses toward Joss throughout most of *Trumpet*, the fact that Colman does not feel bitter toward his father for depriving him of a relationship with his grandmother suggests that Colman has gained empathy for Joss.

After Edith gives Colman a photo of Joss as a girl, Kay writes that Colman "can't get away with it. Now that he's seen the little girl, he can see something feminine in his memory of his father's face that must have been there all along" (241). Regardless of his transphobic diatribes and his verbal repudiation of his father, Colman wants to "get away with" still seeing Joss as a man. One might expect Colman's personal investment in his father's maleness and masculinity to lead him to refuse to see any connection at all between his father and the photo of Josephine. On the other hand, Colman could use this photo to situate his father as a woman, and thus "other." As Julia Serano explains, the "before" photos of transsexual people are often used "to emphasize the 'naturalness' of the trans person's assigned sex [at birth], thereby exaggerating the 'artificiality' of their identified sex" (Serano 2007, 62). Yet Colman's

response to this photo does not position his father as clearly female or male, feminine or masculine. Rather, he becomes able to see "*something* feminine in his memory of his father's face" (emphasis added 241). While recognizing an element of femininity in Joss, Colman still sees him as a man and as his father which suggests that he is moving toward an acceptance of Joss's gender liminality.

This photo leads Colman to develop a newfound investment in shielding Joss/Josephine from those who are unwilling to accept the nuances of his father's gender. He "carries the photograph [of Josephine] gently, making sure he will not damage it" (242). Colman's desire to protect Joss/Josephine is also apparent in the dreams in which he saves him/her from destruction. In one dream, he meets

> *...a small girl, his father. The girl has a mass of curly black hair, like himself. She is deaf. The girl takes a liking to him and starts to play with him. Then she leads him down to the basement [...] Suddenly the whole place starts to fill with water [...] Colman puts the deaf, curly-haired girl on his back. He is going to have to save her from drowning / [...] He has got a little girl's life on his back. He has to save her. Has to save her. Has to.* (emphasis original 260)

This dream reflects Colman's recognition, at least on a subconscious level, of the responsibility that he has to protect his father from being misread by having the complexities of his gender erased.

Colman's decision to read the letter that Joss wrote to him before he died signals a newfound desire to understand his father's gender. While Colman refuses to open this letter throughout most of *Trumpet* because he expects it to contain "a list of excuses and reasons" (65) for his father "lying" about his identity, Colman now asserts, "Whatever it is, he's up for it. He opens it carefully. It is a long letter. Must have taken him some time to write" (270). Colman's decision to open the letter implies an affective shift: he now seemingly expects it to contain more than "excuses and reasons" and is willing to learn about his father's experiences. Rather than providing a detailed account of his gender transformation, in this letter Joss recounts his father's history, noting that both he and Edith were "changed for ever by the death of [his father] John Moore" (276). Joss reflects, "I missed holding his black hand in the street. Looking at it, comparing it to my own. I was on my own then. Looking at my own hand, trying to remember my father's lines. They were darker than mine, his lifeline, his heart" (276). Joss's comparison of his and his father's hands suggests that Joss (sub)consciously modelled his masculinity on his memory of his father. His assertion that after his father dies he is on his own even though his white mother is still alive and caring for him implies that his identification with his father was strengthened by their similar racial experiences.

Although Joss's cross-gender expression may help him to keep alive memories of his father and, in turn, his tie to black culture, *Trumpet* discourages pathologizing readings of Joss's cross-gender identification as being caused by a melancholic response to his father's death. Rather than suggesting that there is something unusual about Joss's identification with his father, *Trumpet* provides a general commentary on fathers as powerful male role models by creating a parallel between Joss and Colman who both adopt aspects of their father's personas after their deaths. The similarities between cis- and trans-men are also highlighted when Joss writes to Colman that the men in their family "keep changing names. We've all got that in common. We've all changed names, you, me, my father. All for different reasons. Maybe one day you'll understand mine" (276). This assertion encourages readers of *Trumpet* to recognize that the subjectivities of both trans- and cis-people transform during their lives.

Instead of destroying his "letters, photographs, records, documents, [and]

certificates" (276), Joss chooses to leave the archive of his life to Colman. Joss writes to Colman,

> I sat down here this morning all set to destroy all of this. Burn the lot. I stopped myself. If I do that I'd literally be burning myself. I couldn't do that to myself, to my music. But most of all, I couldn't do it to you. I thought to myself, who could make sense of all this? Then I thought of you. I am leaving myself to you. (276-277)

Joss's refusal to destroy his history challenges the notion that trans-people necessarily want to erase their pasts. His assertion that burning these papers would do violence not only to himself but also to his son highlights the interconnectedness of their identities. By passing his personal history onto Colman, Joss resists the silencing of his past that he has experienced all of his life.

Colman's increased empathy for Joss shows that it is possible to shed transphobic beliefs and alludes to the benefits of cis-people acknowledging and accepting the sex/gender identifications of trans-people. Colman's self-enforced isolation comes to an end when he decides to make the long journey to go see his mother in Torr at the end of *Trumpet*. This trip signals that Colman has come to terms with the kinship bonds that he rejected after his father's death, including both Millicent's role as his mother and Joss's role as his father. Yet, rather than having Colman overtly declare full acceptance of his father, Kay chooses to have Colman be silent at the end of *Trumpet*. Notably, "We do not learn details of Colman's response to the letter" (Clandfield 2002, 19) and we are not told what Colman says to his mother upon reuniting with her. In light of Colman's verbose transphobia throughout this novel, this silence suggests that he has entered a more contemplative, empathetic, and trans-sensitive state of being.

Trumpet highlights the damage that cis-people do not only to trans-people but also to themselves when rejecting those who are transgender or transsexual. Colman's initial resistance to recognizing similarities between his and his father's masculinities suggests that transphobic violence arises, at least in part, out of an attempt to deny gender liminality in the self since persecutions of trans-people distract cis-people from their own ultimate inability to fully exemplify "ideal" or "pure" masculinity or femininity. Colman's expression of empathy and love for his father at the end of *Trumpet* sends a powerful message regarding the value of cis-people accepting gender complexities in others and in themselves. *Trumpet* emphasizes the importance of recognizing and accepting that, as femme theorist Minnie Bruce Pratt aptly notes, "every aspect of a person's gender expression and sex will not be consistently either masculine or feminine, man or woman" (1996, 21).

Endnotes

1. Although there are ongoing debates about the origins of the term "cissexual," it is generally believed to be "first coined by Carl Buijs, a transsexual man, in 1995" (Koyama 2002). As Julia Serano explains, "'Trans' means 'across' or 'on the opposite side of,' whereas 'cis' means 'on the same side of.' So if someone who was assigned one sex at birth, but comes to identify and live as a member of the other sex, is called a 'transsexual' (because they have crossed from one sex to the other), then the someone who lives and identifies as the sex they were assigned at birth is called a 'cissexual'" (Serano 2009). Laura Woodhouse explains that this term is valuable as it "enables us to recognise and challenge the privileges that cis people benefit from" (Woodhouse 2009).
2. In this paper, I oftentimes use the general term "readers" (as opposed to specifying cis-readers or trans-readers) in order to encourage contemplations of the affect that the critique of transphobia in *Trumpet* may have on both cis- and trans-people. In addition to challenging transphobic beliefs that are held by cis-people, it is important to recognize that *Trumpet* may also counter internalized transphobia in trans readers.

3. I place "pass" in quotation marks in order to signal the problematics of this term. To describe trans-men as "passing" implies that they are "really" women, and thereby negates trans-men's experiences of themselves as men. As Jason Cromwell explains, "Rather than passing, many FTMs and trans-men feel they are being seen as their true selves in living, dressing, and behaving as men" (1999, 39). The term "passing" reinforces the idea that when trans-people "pass" they hide their "true" sex from the world. This belief presupposes an essentialist connection between one's sex designation at birth and one's gender identity and it supports disturbing characterizations of trans-people as deceptive liars.

4. See, for instance, Julie Wheelwright's *Amazons and Military Maids: Women Who Dressed as Men in the Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness* (1989), Elisabeth Krimmer's *In the Company of Men: Cross-Dressed Women Around 1800* (2004), and Ellen Galford's historical novel *Moll Cutpurse: Her True History* (1984). For critiques of historical texts that ignore the possibility that strong cross-sex/gender identification existed in the past see Leslie Feinberg's *Transgender Warriors* (1996) and Jason Cromwell's *Transmen and FTMs* (1999), in particular their discussions of Billy Tipton.

5. For an example of how language can be used as a transphobic weapon see, for instance, *The Transsexual Empire* (1994) in which Janice Raymond refers to male-to-female transsexual people as "male-to-constructed females" (xxi), "transsexed men" (xxi), and uses male pronouns when talking about transsexual women. For a powerful critique of Raymond's transphobic depictions of transsexuality see Pat(rick) Califia's *Sex Changes: The Politics of Transgenderism* (1997).

6. Sophie's reading of Joss reflects the belief among some historians that cross-dressing in the past was a pleasurable source of excitement for women. Elisabeth Krimmer, for instance, asserts that,

> Surprisingly, female cross-dressers preferred the occupations of sailor and soldier even though these two professions offered a minimal degree of privacy, thus exposing the cross-dresser to a proportionally larger risk of discovery. The fact that female cross-dressers aspired to these careers in spite of such substantial obstacles suggests that they were not only interested in securing a livelihood but also in exchanging a monotonous existence for one that promised excitement and adventure. (Kimmer 2004, 27)

Although Krimmer is intrigued by the fact that "women" chose such careers "in spite of" the dangers of discovery, she implies that they actually chose this work because of these dangers and the related "excitement and adventure" associated with the act of cross-dressing. Krimmer thus identifies part of the pleasure of cross-dressing as the "thrill" of potential discovery and fails to address the danger involved with "passing."

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