

The Portrayal of White Organized Racist Characters on Television

How White Organized Racist Characters are Portrayed in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*,
and *Justified*

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II

Abstract:

The purpose of this thesis is to look at how white organized racist characters are portrayed on television by taking a closer look at the white organized racist characters portrayed in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified*. It will look closer at how the social class and social status of these characters have been defined and portrayed. It will also look at how the white organized racist characters perform their gender and what types of masculinity they display, and analyze the usage of racist symbols in the form of tattoos. This thesis will show that all of the white organized racist characters portrayed in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* are male. Most of these male characters belong to a lower social class and they use social status to gain control over their environment, and to be able to advance within their society. The male characters perform their gender with intensity and as high-powered men. Most of these men show violent tendencies and little regard for the lives and wellbeing of others. All three shows frequently use tattoos displaying racist symbols. These tattoos are used intentionally and help confirm the level of loyalty each character has towards their own lives as a white organized racist.

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Chapter One:

“The Portrayal of White Organized Racist Characters on Television:

***Oz, Sons of Anarchy and Justified*”**

Introduction

Most of the white organized racist characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* are violent and angry men who are in a constant battle for power and survival. Their portrayal and storylines contain several murders, murder attempts, rapes, and other violent acts performed by a white organized racist. When Boyd Crowder, one of the main characters in *Justified*, makes a promise to kill you if you pursue him, one is well advised to take his threat seriously. The same is true for the white organized racist characters in *Oz* and *Sons of Anarchy*, but is there more to their portrayal than violence?

Focus and Approaches

The purpose of this thesis is to identify and analyze how white organized racist characters are portrayed on television. The primary sources have been carefully selected and include some of the more developed white organized racist characters on television. After carefully reviewing television shows that have featured at least one white organized racist character in at least one episode, only three shows seem to be viable for analysis in this thesis. All of the episodes that have been screened aired between 1990 and 2010. Most of the shows feature a white organized racist character in a small guest role. Some feature a white organized racist character during the course of two or three episodes. These shows have not allowed the guest characters enough airtime to develop properly which results in flat characters and they are not

viable for analysis. The only shows that have featured one white organized racist character or several white organized racist characters were *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified*. *Oz* and *Justified* feature one white organized racist character as a main character and they have several white organized racist characters in a supporting role. *Oz* also contains one of the largest ensembles of white organized racist characters on television. *Sons of Anarchy* features one white organized racist character in a recurring role and two in supporting roles.

White organized racist characters have been chosen as a topic for this thesis because it is a smaller group of characters. If the topic had included all racist characters, then the topic would have been too broad for a master thesis. If one were to look at racist in general one would have a larger amount of characters to choose from and it would be an entirely different thesis. White organized racist characters embody their racist beliefs to a larger extent than characters who might act racist once in a while. Their group belonging is often more visually accessible, which makes them easier to place.

Research Question

The main research question in this thesis is how are white organized racist characters portrayed on television? To answer this question the following sub questions will be asked. What social class and social status do the white organized racist characters belong and how is it presented? How do the white organized racist characters perform their masculinity, and how do they present this masculinity to others? The third sub question is how are tattoos of racist symbols used as a part of character portrayals?

Primary Sources

The primary sources used in this thesis were selected based on a set of conditions. The first condition is that the television show or episode has to contain at least one racist character that is either two or three-dimensional in order to be viable for analysis. The second condition is that the character has to belong to a white organized racist group. This group can be a visible group where the viewer is exposed to other visible members of the group, or it can be a group that is mentioned and defined to such an extent that it is made clear that the group is an actual group. The third condition is that the TV show or episode has to be available on the American iTunes store or on DVD. Tv.com was used as a tool to search for television shows that might be of interest. One of the parameters set while searching for potential sources was the time frame 1990-2010. During the initial search there were several TV shows and singular episodes that contain one or more white organized racist character, but there were only three TV shows that feature white organized racist characters as main or supporting characters of importance in their storyline. These three shows, *Oz* which aired between 1997 and 2003, *Sons of Anarchy* Season One and Two which aired in 2008 and 2009, and *Justified* Season One, Two and Three which aired between 2010 and 2012 are the main focal points of the analysis in this thesis.

Oz

The first season of *Oz* aired on the American TV channel HBO in 1997 and concluded with its sixth and final season in 2003. This was the first hour-long show that HBO made and it was ground breaking and innovative in many ways. It also paved the way for shows that have come to life on television in recent years. It was ground breaking because it attempts to make

the characters and the violence that are a part of their day to day lives more vivid. One of the executive producers of the show, Barry Levinson, has stated that some of the scenes of the show are so realistic that it is at times unsettling and disturbing to watch, "(...) as it should be." One of the main actors, Rita Moreno, has stated that the show would have been impossible to make on a commercial network, because "It has a very, very gritty, very realistic feeling to it." The show contains a high quantum of violence and profanity.¹ The storyline of this show takes place within the walls of a fictional prison named Oswald Maximum Security Penitentiary. In the first episode of Season Three the name of the prison is changed to Oswald State Correctional Facility, Level four.² The title of this show also functions as a nickname for the prison amongst its staff and prisoners, as well as the media that often appear during the course of the show. The storyline focuses on the life of inmates serving time within one of the prison wards, Unit Five, also known as Emerald City. This ward is an experiment created and run by the Unit leader, Tim McManus. McManus' vision is that with a proper program, the prisoners might become better people and they might have a better chance of not continuing with their criminal lives once they are released from Oz. He also wants to have a variety of prisoners inside Emerald City, i.e. prisoners that have committed different types of crimes and prisoners that have been set to serve different lengths when it comes to their prison sentences. Some serve life without the possibility of parole while others serve shorter sentences with the possibility of parole.³ In the final episode of *Oz* McManus reminisces as to why he wanted to create Emerald City. He says that he wanted to

¹ Barry Levinson and Rita Moreno. In: *Behind the Scene. Oz: The Emerald City Collection*. (2008) Home Box Office, Inc.

² *The Truth and Nothing but*. Season 3, Episode 1. *Oz: The Emerald City Collection*. (2008). Home Box Office, Inc. Original Airdate: 7/14/1999

³ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997.
Ancient Tribes. Season 2, Episode 2. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/20/1998

create a life for the prisoners who reside in Emerald City, because for most of the inmates, the life in Emerald City is most likely the only life they will ever have.⁴

The show contains several white organized racist characters and all of them are members of the Aryan Brotherhood. This group is often referred to as the Aryans or as the Nazi's on the show. Most of the characters that belong to this group are flat background characters. These flat characters give depth to the portrayal of the more developed white organized racist characters by showing the developed characters as members of a larger group. The white organized racist characters in *Oz* that will be analyzed in this thesis are Vern Schillinger, James Robson, Karl Metzger, Mark Mack, Andrew Schillinger and Hank Schillinger. Vern Schillinger is the leader of the Aryans in all of the seasons of the show. Mark Mack is Schillinger's second in command during Season One and partially in Season Two. Robson claims Mack's position when Mack dies in Season Two. Metzger is a correctional officer who comes to work in Emerald City at the end of Season Two, but an inmate kills him at the beginning of Season Three. Andrew and Hank Schillinger are Vern Schillinger's sons and although they are not portrayed as white organized racists while appearing in the show, they both have the official symbol for the white racist group Aryan Nations tattooed on their body and they both seem to be affected by their father's hatred towards non-whites and the government. Another white racist character that appears on the show, Wolfgang Cutler, will be mentioned in the analysis of James Robson. Cutler's interaction with and actions towards Robson are the only sides of his small storyline that is of interest in this thesis and it will be examined in Chapter Three.

All of the characters present in *Oz* are placed within a larger hierarchy. Vern Schillinger is in many ways at the top of the food chain within his group, but that does not

⁴ *Exeunt Omnis*. Season 6, Episode 8. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 2/23/2003

imply that he is at the top of the food chain within the prison itself. The hierarchy in *Oz* is an intricate and complicated system and it is based in a dog-eat-dog world. It truly is the survival of the fittest. Schillinger makes a strong impression from the first episode of Season One. A new inmate is introduced in every episode. In the pilot, the audience is introduced to Tobias Beecher. Beecher was a lawyer, a father and a husband before he was sent to prison for killing a young girl. Schillinger approaches Beecher his first day in Emerald City. Schillinger tries to give Beecher the impression that he is friendly, sympathetic and trustable. Beecher's first impression of Schillinger is false. Schillinger has lured Beecher into moving willingly into his cell. Schilling makes Beecher his possession. Schillinger's decision to do so is a defining moment that builds the foundation of their relationship with each other throughout the show. Their mutual storyline starts when Beecher becomes Schillinger's sex-slave and ends with the death of Schillinger in the final episode of the show. In between these two episodes, their story is a rollercoaster of events filled with vicious acts towards one another.

Oz differs from *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified*. The storyline plays out within a total institution, which limits the lives and actions of each of the characters. All three shows contains cultures where the male characters have to fight for their right to survive and exist, but this culture is far more prevalent in *Oz*. One of the reasons for this can be linked to the fact that all of the characters are locked inside a world they cannot escape. When you dislike someone, or someone threatens you, you cannot run away. You have to be present in the situation and every threat made to end your life seems to be far more likely to be carried out than in the two other shows. *Oz* also has one of the most developed white organized racist characters on television, Schillinger.

Sons of Anarchy

Sons of Anarchy first aired in the fall of 2008 on the American channel FX. The main storyline revolves around an outlaw biker gang by the same name. The biker gang goes under the name Samcro on the show. Most of the storyline in *Sons of Anarchy* takes place in a small town in California, fittingly named Charming. The town itself is a fictional town that houses several criminal groups who live alongside non-criminal residents and the Charming police. Throughout the first season of the show there is a visible war going on in Charming. You have the Biker gang on one side, the Charming police on another side and the white racist skinhead group, *The Nordics*, also known as *the Nords*, on a third side of the battle. The Nords have joined the battle because they want to thrust Samcro into a lowered position within the local criminal network. To further complicate the storyline, other gangs from outside of Charming are involved in the story as well. The main portrayal of Charming as a town shows how the Charming police deal with the Sons of Anarchy and with the white supremacists that reside in town. Most of this struggle revolves around control. The gangs present in Charming want to control Charming. *The Nords* are known for cooking Methamphetamine and for being behind the prostitution, which takes place in Charming and the surrounding county. The Sons of Anarchy try to control *The Nords* to a certain extent by outlawing drugs and prostitution inside the town limits of Charming. In the words of Ethan Zobelle: "Clay vows to keep Charming safe and drug free (...)".⁵ Clay is the President of Samcro. The visual struggle between Samcro and the Nords is obscure in many ways. At the beginning of Season One Samcro talks with the leader of The Nords, Ernest Darby, and one of his men. Samcro decides what other groups located in Charming can and cannot do. Darby and the Nords are known for the making of methamphetamine and Samcro have decided that

⁵ *Small Tears*. Season2, Episode 2. Sons of Anarchy (2010) Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. Original airdate: 9/15/2009

they are not allowed to sell or produce methamphetamine inside Charming. The Nords have to sell and produce methamphetamine in a neighboring town. The fact that Samcro decide what other groups are allowed to do causes aggravation. Darby is not happy with being the underdog in Charming. He would like to do as he pleases.⁶ In the first episode of Season Two a new white organized racist group enters Charming, The League of American Nationalists, also known as The League. This further complicates the storyline in *Sons of Anarchy* and the struggle for control over Charming as a town tightens. This new group is unambiguous about why they have arrived and what types of goals their organization is founded upon. They are not white supremacists. They see themselves as white separatists. They wish to gain control over Charming and to get Samcro to stop dealing firearms with non whites. The League's presence in Charming is sudden, but they make a large impact from the moment they arrive in the storyline. Their first action is to try to get Deputy Chief David Hale on their side. Deputy Chief Hale functions in several ways as a moral compass on the show in general. He is not willing to make deals with anyone, not Samcro, Darby or the newly arrived League of American Nationalists.⁷

There are three white organized racist characters featured in the first two seasons of this show, Darby, Weston, and Zabelle. Darby has a small role within the show and his only purpose seems to be to create some substance in the storyline and give a fuller image of Charming as a town. Weston and Zabelle have a more significant role in the storyline arch of the second season. They are both antagonist characters and help give life to the storyline that is being pursued through the entire season. It opens with them arriving in town, and by the final episode of Season Two, Weston is dead and Zabelle barely escapes alive. Each character brings an important perspective on the portrayal of white organized racist characters

⁶ *Pilot*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy* (2009) Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. Original Airdate: 9/3/2008

⁷ *Albification*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy* (2010) Original airdate: 9/8/2009

on television. Mostly because they belong to two different groups, believe in two different ideologies and they embody different characteristics, histories and focus. Darby is the leader of the Nordics who are a racist skinhead group. He also believes in white supremacist ideology. Weston and Zabelle are members of the League of American Nationalists a white separatist group. The character that is most loyal to his goals, group, and cause is Weston. He whole-heartedly believes in his ideology and is willing to do anything to carry out his beliefs, while Darby and Zabelle use their ideology and their beliefs as a means to an end. They use their beliefs and groups to gain money and recognition. Darby and Weston will be analyzed in this thesis, but Zabelle will only be mentioned. Zabelle is only mentioned in concrete situations involving Weston. Darby and Weston's social class and social status will be analyzed on Chapter Two. Their gender performance and masculinity will be analyzed in Chapter Three, and the significance of their tattoos of racist symbols will be analyzed in Chapter Four.

Justified

Justified is a modern western and it first aired in March 2010 on the American television channel FX. The main storyline takes place in Harlan, Kentucky, which is a rural county located in one of the poorest regions in the US. In the pilot, we are introduced to the protagonist, Raylan Givens, who is originally from Harlan. He is forcibly relocated to his home state after a shooting. When Raylan returns home, the audience is introduced to a set of characters that live in Harlan. One of these characters is Boyd Crowder. Boyd runs an underground Aryan group in Harlan and he is one of the characters of interest in this show. Boyd is a three dimensional character with a significant role in the main storyline. Boyd is the

antagonist in this show and he is often involved in the smaller stories as well as the main story arch of each season. As the audience is introduced to Boyd we see him as the leader of a small group of white supremacists. These men willingly follow Boyd's lead through the bombing of a church, blowing up a car, robbing a bank, and in setting a trap for Raylan.⁸ In the first episode, Boyd has several followers, and two of these characters are featured in later episodes, Devil and Dewey. Devil's character portrayal is too narrow to analyze in this thesis. He will be mentioned in this thesis, but only to give a clearer picture of Boyd's portrayal. Dewey has more airtime than Devil and his portrayal is developed to such an extent that he can be analyzed.

Boyd's past as a white organized racist is what made him interesting for analysis. Boyd is only portrayed as a white organized racist in the first episode of *Justified*, but he is not allowed to forget his past and neither is the audience. Boyd's past as a white organized racist leader is given continuity through spoken reminders made by other characters. Boyd comes from a low socio-economic status and a family known for their criminal activity. To be a Crowder in Harlan County has become a trademark, which stands for men who are criminal and violent. Boyd Crowder's social class and social status will be analyzed in Chapter Two. His masculinity and his gender performance will be analyzed in Chapter Three, and the significance of his racist tattoos will be analyzed in Chapter Four. Dewey Crow will be analyzed in Chapter Two, regarding social class and social status, and in Chapter Four.

⁸ *The Pilot. Fire in the Hole. Season 1, Episode 1. Justified. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010*

The Real Hate Movement

The white organized racist characters analyzed in this thesis are fictional characters portrayed in fictional settings. They are also subjected to a social reality which is a part of a fictional world. In one way, one might claim that within their reality they are real and to the audience they become realistic. Fictional characters on television are in many ways pure fiction, but they seem to be inspired by real life people, events, arch types, and ideas. Some singular episodes featuring white organized racist guest characters seem to mimic life; for example, an episode of *Boston Legal* features a family who has white supremacist beliefs. This family consists of parents who believe in a racist ideology and their twin girls. The girls are a singing duo who performs songs with racist lyrics.⁹ This family seems to be inspired by a real life white supremacy family, the Gaede family. The Gaede family includes a single mother, April, two identical twins, Lamb and Lynx, and their younger sister. Lamb and Lynx became a sensation within white supremacy circles when they started performing as a singing duo at a young age. They have also appeared in two documentaries. In the first one “*Louise Meets the Nazi’s*”¹⁰ April Gaede and her daughters are just three of several neo-Nazis that are interviewed, but in the second documentary, “*Nazi Pop Twins*”,¹¹ they are the focus of the documentary. The differences between the two families are easy to identify. The family in *Boston Legal* comes from a higher social class than the Gaede family. This assessment is made on the basis of the general description given about the family, as well as their clothing and the way they talk and act. They are dressed in classy clothing. The father wears a suit, the mother a business suit and the girls wear cute, summer dresses. The family in *Boston Legal* is also constructed and portrayed in a manner that might remove most associations to the Geady family, but these families have two common denominators. The first is the twin girls who sing

⁹ *The Nutcracker*. Season 3, Episode 10. *Boston legal*. (2009) Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment LLC. Original Airdate: 12/5/2006

¹⁰ Theroux, Louise. *Louise Meets the Nazis* (2003) BBC DVD

¹¹ Quinn, James. *Nazi Pop Twins* (2007) URL: <https://www.youtube.com/user/jdoodlesdocumentarie>

racist songs and the second is that the parent(s) are passing on racist ideology to the kids.

When you look at the main subject of the episode in *Boston Legal*, it raises the same question as the documentaries where the Geady family appears. Is this a wise way to raise children or is this child neglect?

Oz also seems to have drawn inspiration from real life. The white supremacy group in prison is called Aryan Brotherhood. The Aryan Brotherhood is known as one of “(...) the most notorious, powerful, and violent prison gangs in America.”¹² The Aryan Brotherhood was formed in San Quentin State Prison, California, in the late 1960s. It was originally called the Blue Bird Gang in the late 1950s and early 60s, but when racial segregation was lifted and racial tensions grew, it changed its name to the Aryan Brotherhood in 1967. Its purpose was to offer protection to white inmates. Originally, one had to be of Irish descent to be allowed membership, but over time and as they gained more members who had racist attitudes, they became less concerned about Irish descent and only required their members to be white and to hold the same beliefs as the group.¹³ The group also held its motto to a high esteem, “Kill to get in. Die to get out.”¹⁴ To call the white organized racist group in *Oz* the Aryan Brotherhood is fitting if one takes the history of the gang in to consideration. Their persona as a violent and powerful gang in *Oz* is also fitting. Several of the members of the Aryan Brotherhood in *Oz* are shown as having tattoos. These tattoos often depict a Swastika, but five characters in *Oz* also have the symbol of the Aryan Nations tattooed on their bodies. It is hard to determine why the writers of *Oz* might have used this symbol. One possible reason is that the leader and founder of the Aryan Nations, Richard Butler, used different prisons and penitentiaries to recruit members for the Aryan Nations during the 1980s. Butler used the Aryan Brotherhood

¹² Hothouse, David. *Leaders of Racist Prison Gang Aryan Brotherhood Face Federal Incitement*. (2005) URL: www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-report/browes-all-issues/2005/fall/smashing-the-shamrock. (read on: 10/15/2012)

¹³ Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Freedom and Privacy Acts. Subject: Aryan Brotherhood*. Part 1 of 1. URL:

¹⁴ Ridgeway, James. *Blood in the Face. The Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, Nazi Skinheads, and the Rise of the New White Culture*. (1991) New York: Thunder's Mouth Press. P.91

in prisons to gain new members.¹⁵ The white organized racist group in *Oz* can be tied to two specific groups that exist in real life. The groups portrayed in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified* are not as specific and identifiable, but this does not imply that groups or events in real life do not inspire them.

Counterculture and Social Movement

White organized racists can be said to belong to a subculture, but it is more likely that different individuals who belong to different groups also adhere to a different subculture that holds similar beliefs. William W. Zellner has chosen to define their cultural belonging as a counterculture. To label it as such, one will have to view it as a counterculture that derives from the dominant culture of the society where it is active. Zellner writes, “A subculture is part of the dominant culture, but some aspects of the subculture’s value system and life-style set its members apart from the larger culture.”¹⁶ A counterculture, however, takes a more drastic position inside the larger scope of a culture. A counterculture is deliberately opposing certain aspects of the larger culture. Zellner has chosen to use the Ku Klux Klan as an example and he writes, “The Klan is a prime example of a counterculture that, despite overwhelming mainstream opinions against it, retains its core audience and attempts to teach its “truths” to others.”¹⁷ Several organized racist groups have taken counterculture to a level where they have separated themselves from society as a whole. Many groups have done this by not recognizing the federal government. This is often referred to as ZOG, which is an acronym for Zionist Occupied Government. ZOG is often described as the multicultural state run by Jews, and many white nationalists have created closed societies where they are at war

¹⁵ Ridgeway. *Blood in the Face*. (1991) p.91

¹⁶ Zellner, William W. *Counter Cultures. A Sociological Analysis*. (1995) New York: St. Martin’s Press. P.vii

¹⁷ Zellner. *Counter Cultures*. (1995) p.vii

with the multicultural state. In other words, they have gone as far as physically separating themselves from society.¹⁸ Organized racism can be viewed as a counterculture, but it can also be viewed as a social movement along the same line as environmentalism and feminism. Kathleen M. Blee has drawn a line between what she calls the hate movement and social movements because they have similar traits. Organized racism attracts members who come from different backgrounds. These members do not all come from the same class or have the same level of education. It also attracts members who pay attention to policies and are concerned about individual identity and rights. These members are able to incorporate their concerns and agendas into collective action.¹⁹ Blee also relates organized racism with social movements because:

“Racial activism is more than the sum of racist people or racist groups. It is a *social movement*, a “family” of overlapping groups organized to spread racist and anti-Semitic ideas and terrorist tactics. And as a social movement whatever its goals, organized racism shares features with other, more benign, social movements.”²⁰

In a way, both labels are suitable when describing organized racism as a part of the dominant culture. Blee writes that she does not find the secretive and hierarchical groupings of organized racism surprising. Nor that organized racist groups have chosen to get their message across by using terrorism instead of electoral politics. One of the reasons why some groups embrace terrorism is because, "Today's racist movement is politically and socially marginal, scorned in almost every sphere of mainstream society, from the media, education, and organized religion to electoral politics."²¹ Blee's notion of organized racism as a social movement and Zellner's notion of organized racism as a counterculture share two

¹⁸ Zeskind, Leonard. *Blood and Politics. The History of the White Nationalist Movement from the Margins to the Mainstream.* (2009) New York: Farrar Straus Giroux p.67-68

¹⁹ Blee, Kathleen M. *Inside Organized Racism. Women in the Hate Movement.* (2002) p.6

²⁰ Blee. *Inside Organized Racism.* (2002) p.5-6

²¹ Blee. *Inside Organized Racism.* (2002) p.6

dichotomies, friend/enemy and us/them. Society has ostracized organized racist groups and organized racist groups have drawn away from mainstream society. In this thesis, the term counterculture is appropriate when describing the white organized racist groups. The white organized racist groups in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* are not a social movement. The members within each group seem to be connected by a loyalty to their cause and by a strong involvement in their group, but the motivation behind their group membership does not seem to be based on the criteria put forth by Blee. The groups portrayed in the primary sources seem to be a counterculture, but these groups are not opposing the larger aspect of society. These groups are a counterculture when compared to the mainstream culture within their immediate society. They do not comply with the mainstream culture they draw away from it and are in opposition to it. In *Oz*, the Aryan Brotherhood acts as a counterculture within the mainstream society of the prison itself. They are not the only counterculture present inside *Oz*. Several groups do not comply with the mainstream society created by a majority of the inmates. In *Sons of Anarchy*, the Nordics and the League of American Nationalists are a counterculture in the established mainstream society. The local motorcycle club and the police run this society. In *Justified*, Boyd and his Aryan group are opposed to the larger system within Harlan County. When Boyd dissolves his group, he continues to create new countercultures.

Hate Groups

The white organized racist characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* belong to different groups that share similar traits with groups in the U.S. *Southern Poverty Law Center* (SPLC) have created a hate map. This hate map is available on their site, updated regularly, and

contains a list of every active hate group in the U.S. In 2010, there were 1,002 active hate groups in the U.S. and in 2011 there were 1,018.²² Blee writes that white organized racist groups can be divided into four categories, "(...) racist skinhead, Christian Identity (CI), neo-Nazi, and Ku Klux Klan."²³ *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* contain organized racist groups that can be placed within three of Blee's categories. The Ku Klux Klan are not represented or portrayed as a group within any of the shows. Each category contains different groups that are not associated with each other. The traits of the groups who belong to the same category share a common ideology. Neo-Nazi groups share a love for Hitler, Nazi Germany, and a hatred for Jews. Most groups also hate minorities, gays, and believe in ZOG. They believe Jews control the government and economic entities.²⁴ Several different neo-Nazi groups vary in how they execute their ideological beliefs. Most of them trace their ideologies to Hitler, World War II, and fascist Europe. These groups often believe that it is wise to separate Aryans from non-Aryans. The degree of separation varies from a belief in separation of these two designated groups in the form of physical and geographical separation. Some groups want to either remove, quarantine, or kill non-Aryans to achieve a more optimal and controllable separation. Blee states that one of the significant traits of neo-Nazi groups is that they choose to merge rituals, insignia, and beliefs from German Nazism, such as the Swastika, commemoration of Hitler's birthday and death day, and a denial of the Holocaust, with "(...)antagonism towards African Americans, immigrants of color, nonracist skinheads, and municipal authorities."²⁵ They have also created their own symbols intended to draw them into the society and make them feel a sense of belonging to their group and to make them more recognizable to members and nonmembers. The signs include a runic SS

²² SPLC. *Hate Map*. URL: <http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/hate-map> (Read on: 5/16/2011 and 10/15/2012)

²³ Blee. *Inside Organized Racism*. (2002) p.193

²⁴ SPLC. *Neo-Nazi*. URL: <http://splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/ideology/neo-nazi> (Read on: 5/16/2011)

²⁵ Blee. *Inside Organized Racism*. (2002) p.196

symbol, often mistaken for thunderbolts, Nazi war eagle carrying a Swastika, and Swastikas accompanied by the runic SS symbol.²⁶ Blee also states that some of the neo-Nazi groups have created their own culture, which involves partying, drugs, and alcohol combined with racist white power music and street violence.²⁷ In an episode of the documentary series, *Gangland*, they feature a neo-Nazi group located in Oregon. The narrator explains that their culture includes a dress code. The group featured in the episode is primarily a racist skinhead group who combine skinhead culture and ideology with neo-Nazism. Their dress code includes black Dr. Marten shoes and red suspenders, both functioning as a signature. The red suspenders inform other members whether or not you adhere to the same ideology and the doctor martens can inform others of your status within the group. If you have white laces, you are a member. If you have red laces, you have spilled blood on behalf of the group or on behalf of the ideological beliefs held by the group. If you have no laces, you are not a member, but can be classified as a probate or a hang-around. In other words, someone who wants membership, but has not yet become a member. It is not uncommon to acquire the red laces during a boot party. A boot party takes place when one, or more commonly, several members attack someone who is perceived as an enemy of their group, their beliefs, or their cause. It is called a boot party when someone is forced down on the ground and kicked with steel toed boots.²⁸ In *Gangland*, it is stated that the group in question is openly against drugs. They feel that drugs have ruined many young, white lives and these Aryan lives could have been spared. People who are perceived as enemies of this group are drug addicts, immigrants, and people who are nonwhite.²⁹

²⁶ Valentine. *Gangs and Their Tattoos*. (2000) p.64-65

²⁷ Blee. *Inside Organized Racism*. (2002) p.196

²⁸ SPLC. *Racist Skinheads*. URL: <http://splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/ideology/racist-skinhead> (Read on 11/8/2012)

²⁹ *Skinhead Assault*. Season6, Episode 4. *Gangland*. (2009) History channel. iTunes Store. Original airdate: 12/10/2009

Christian Identity was imported to the US in the 1940s.³⁰ It is also known as British Israelism and revolves around the belief that white Christians are the real Israelites and they are the Israelites mentioned in the Bible. They believe that Northern Europeans, the British, and white Americans are decedents of the ten lost tribes of Israel.³¹ The doctrine of Christian Identity claims that the races that can be classified as non-white were created before Adam and have been created without a soul. Christian Identity have two names they frequently use to describe these races, they are “pre-Adamic” or “mud-people”. Jesus is considered by Christian Identity to be Aryan, despite being described as a man who was born in the area of the current Israel. Jews are described as the direct embodiment of Satan.³² Some within Christian Identity have gone as far as claiming that Jews and all non-whites are the offspring of Satan and his minions. The racial divide found within the doctrine of Christian Identity is known as “the two seed lines”, because the racist theory claims that Eve was impregnated twice. The first seed came from Adam and gave her Abel. Abel is seen as the father of the white Aryan race. The second seed came from Satan and gave her Cain. Cain is the father of Jews and non-whites.³³ The ideas supported by Christian Identity might sound preposterous, but it is important to keep in mind that several Christian Identity groups have found justification for racism, anti-Semitism, and cruel acts towards individuals by interpreting the Bible.³⁴ Zeskind reminds his readers that this is not a new phenomenon by writing:

“It was the church that burned Jews at the stake during the Spanish Inquisition. English-speaking slaveholders read Genesis and claimed that Africans were the descendants of Ham, an accursed race bound by God to be “hewers of wood”. In the Gideon (King James) edition John 8:44, they read John to claim that Jesus says of the

³⁰ Blee. *Inside Organized Racism*. (2002) p.195

³¹ Ridgway. *Blood in the Face*. (1990)p.53

³² Zeskind. *Blood and Politics*. (2009) p.62

³³ Blee. *Inside Organized Racism*. (2002) p.195

³⁴ Zeskind. *Blood and Politics*. (2009) p.62

Jews. “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do.” The anti-Semitic sap that Identity adherents drew from the Christian tree had risen and fallen for almost two millennia before CSA set up camp.”³⁵

CSA refers to a group called The Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord. The group was originally started in Arkansas as a small, fundamentalist Christian group. The group adopted the ideology of Christian Identity in the 1970s and crossed over from selling weapons and hate literature and into terrorism in the early 1980s. They also declared war on ZOG in the mid-1980s.³⁶ Another group that adheres to Christian Identity is the Aryan Nations. This group was founded in 1977 by Richard Butler and was largely dismantled when he died in 2004. At the end of the 1990s, the group was both feared and respected within some subcultures. In 1998, some of the group members were involved in a shooting towards a woman and her son. The Aryan Nations held a meeting at their compound in Idaho when the woman and her son drove by. When the woman was in close proximity to the compound, her car backfired. This caused a reaction amongst some of the men who were standing guard. They interpreted the sounds made by the car as gunfire and responded by shooting at the car. In 2000 the Southern Poverty Law Center brought a lawsuit towards the Aryan Nations and their leader Richard Butler. The lawsuit resulted in a depletion of the group’s financial funds and this depletion crippled them. They were in financial ruin until Butler’s death in 2004 and the loss of Butler was one in a long line of losses for the group.³⁷ Despite Blee’s categories, an organized racist group may merge ideologies and beliefs from different categories. This is the case with the Aryan Nations. Southern Poverty Law Center has classified the group as neo-Nazi, despite their practice of and belief in a race theory that can be traced to Christian Identity.

³⁵ Zeskin. *Blood and Politics*. (2009) p.62

³⁶ Kushner. *Encyclopedia*. (2003) p.102

³⁷ SPLC. *Aryan Nations*. URL: <http://splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/groups/aryan-nations> (read on: 10/11/2012)

The Hate Groups in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified*

The white organized racist groups presented in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified* believe in ideologies that are classified as neo-Nazi, racist skinhead, or Christian Identity. A few of the groups have merged two of the ideological beliefs into one. The group present in *Oz* is The Aryan Brotherhood. The Aryan Brotherhood does not seem to follow a specific racist ideology. One reason for this can be that the Aryan Brotherhood consists of members who belong to a range of groups on the outside of the American prison system. Another reason can be that some members are recruited inside the prison and have no affiliation to any groups on the outside of the prison walls. If one takes into account the primary reason as to why the Aryan Brotherhood was established in San Quentin, California in the 1960s, it seems that they might not need any firm ideology to believe in, in other words, they do not need to adhere specifically to Christian Identity, neo-Nazi affiliations, or identify themselves as racist skinheads. They are the Aryan Brotherhood and they were created as a means for white people to be able to stand together against other prison groups. Their main ideology seems to be based on loyalty to the white race. They also hold a strong belief in white power and white supremacy. In the late 1990s, they were also known for their affiliation with the Aryan Nations.³⁸ In *Oz*, several of the Aryan Brotherhood members have the Aryan Nations symbol tattooed on their bodies. The Aryan Nations tattoos are displayed on the bodies of the characters the first time the audience sees them. This implies that the tattoo was there before the audience was introduced to the characters and that the characters who wear the tattoo are affiliated with the Aryan Nations on the outside of the prison. Although the creators of *Oz*

³⁸ Anti-Defamation League. *Bigotry Behind Bars: Racist Groups in U.S. Prisons*. URL: http://www.adl.org/special_reports/racist_groups_in_prisons/print.asp (Read on: 11/8/2012)

have chosen to give five characters Aryan Nations tattoos as a part of their portrayal, they never raise the Aryan Nations as a topic. The groups in *Sons of Anarchy* belong to two different ideologies. Darby's group, The Nordics, seem to be racist skinheads based on their clothing, their tattoos, and their shaved heads. Zabelle's group, League of American Nationalists seems to be a neo-Nazi group. They hold a strong belief in white separatism, which includes not wanting to associate with non-whites. They also want to create their own haven for white people where they can live without being influenced by minorities. The group in *Justified* is described as an underground Aryan group and as a neo-Nazi group. In the first episode of the show, the leader, Boyd Crowder, shows the audience that he believes in a race theory established by Christian Identity. Boyd asks Raylan "Whose side do you think the government's on Raylan, us or people with money? And who do you think controls that money? Who do you think wants to mongrelize the world?" Raylan does not know the answer and Boyd continues his speech by saying, "The Jews. See I recruit skins. They do not know any more than you do. I have to teach them, that we have a moral obligation to get rid of the Jews, see it was in the Bible. In the beginning of creation. In the beginning, Raylan, you had your mud people. They are also referred to as beasts because they had no souls. See they were soulless and then Cain. You remember Cain now? Well Cain he laid down with the mud people and out of these fornications came the Edomites. Now do you know who these Edomites are? They're the Jews Raylan."³⁹ The speech Boyd gives Raylan in this episode indicates that Boyd believes that Jews run the government. It also indicates that he believes in religious beliefs held by Christian Identity, especially their race theory. He also mentions skins, which can indicate that he recruits racist skinheads.

³⁹ *The Pilot: Fire in the Hole*. Season1, Episode 1. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

Genres of Television and Antagonist Characters

Television shows come in a multitude of genres. Each genre contains a specific recipe as to how a show should be made in order to belong within a genre. John Ellis writes, "One of the remarkable features of television is the way that its genres are so explicit and instantly recognizable. Channel surfers, idly pushing the buttons on their remote controls (...) can instantly attribute accurately what they see to one of the great genres of television."⁴⁰ Ellis also writes that television genres create stability for the viewer. The meaning of a television shows can change, "(...) but the formats remain largely the same. (...) For each genre brings its own particular set of rules, its own favored modes of understanding and interpretation." Each genre also contains its own "emotional economy".⁴¹ Ellis lists all of the genres within the format of television. The television shows represented in this thesis belongs to only one of these genres, Drama. Ellis states that Drama shows are often "(...) based in an institution which provides a handy flow of individual incidents around and through which the core characters live their particular problems."⁴² Hospitals and Police Precincts are common locations for Drama shows. Ellis, who is a British scholar, has identified that the American Prime-Time Drama has developed a "distinctive multi-standard approach" where they focus on as many as five different storylines in an episode. One storyline opens and ends within an episode, while the remaining storylines will continue over the course of several episodes or the entire season.⁴³ The storyline in *Oz* takes place within a prison and each season contains 8 episodes, with the exception of the 4th season, which contains 16 episodes. The storyline in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified* takes place in small American towns. These towns do not qualify as institutions, but they create limitations as to how many characters can be involved in the storyline. They also create a parameter that helps build the storyline involving the main

⁴⁰ Ellis, John. *Seeing Things, Television in the Age of Uncertainty*. (2002) London: L.B.Tauris Publishers. P.102

⁴¹ Ellis, *Seeing Things*, (2002)p.103

⁴² Ellis, *Seeing Things*. (2002)p.123

⁴³ Ellis, *Seeing Things*, (2002) p.124

and supporting characters, as well as help build an environment where the characters can thrive, explore, and develop. It creates, as Ellis puts it, "a handy flow of individual incidents".⁴⁴

Pamela Douglas writes, "Television series aren't bought or sold on ideas, but the ability to deliver those ideas."⁴⁵ Douglas focuses her attention on how one can write a good pilot for a television show in her book, "Writing the TV Drama Series." Douglas writes that it is important for a writer to be able to deliver characters who come across as authentic. The situations these characters are placed within also have to be authentic.⁴⁶ William Rabkin argues that a character from a television show has to be likable, compelling or relatable.⁴⁷ He also writes that the audience might watch a show once because they are interested in the premise of that show, but they will continue to watch the show because they like the main or supporting characters.⁴⁸ Douglas relates the different characters on television to the concept of visitors. These visitors tell you about their hopes, fears, and dreams and might engage you with their personal stories. As a viewer you control when the visitor can enter your home and when the visitor leaves, and each week you can get a new dose of your favorite visitors through your television or computer screen. It also helps a show if the audience considers a character their friend. A character, a set of characters or a TV show as a whole has to engage the viewer and allow the viewer to relate to either the personal accounts of one particular character or to larger parts of a storyline.⁴⁹ Well-developed shows are able to achieve this and are able to build characters and storylines that are hard to resist. They will also be able to get the viewer to come back season after season. It is also essential that the audience root for the

⁴⁴ Ellis, *Seeing Things*, (2002) p.124

⁴⁵ Douglas, Pamela. *Writing the TV Drama Series. How to Succeed as a Professional Writer in TV*. 3rd edition. (2001) California: Michael Wiese Productions. p.46

⁴⁶ Douglas, Pamela. *Writing the TV Drama Series*. (2001) p.5

⁴⁷ Rabkin, William. *Writing the Pilot*. (2011) California: Moon & Sun & Whiskey Inc. p.33

⁴⁸ Rabkin. *Writing the Pilot*. (2011)p.31

⁴⁹ Douglas. *Writing the TV Drama Series*. (2011) p.13-14

characters that hold a central position in a storyline.⁵⁰ One of the key elements in creating characters in general is to start with the main characters and the protagonist or in some cases the protagonists. Some storylines also contains an antagonist or an antagonistic force. One also have to separate between the main character, or characters, the supporting characters, back ground characters and guest characters.

Antagonists

Most narratives within the drama genre focus on one main character or on a small group of main characters. Within a group of main characters, one of them is the protagonist. Within creative writing, one often focuses on the protagonist within a story, but the antagonists within a story are the type of characters that are interesting in this particular thesis. Few television shows rely on the protagonist to create a story. In order to make a show interesting one needs a cast of main characters as well as supporting characters. These characters will vary in depth and development. It is common for a story to include an antagonist. In creative writing, the antagonist is someone who creates an obstacle for the protagonist and makes it harder for him/her to reach his/her goals.⁵¹ To be an obstacle is an external force in the protagonists' life. The antagonist can be the root of a conflict within a storyline.⁵² Within television, the antagonist can be the root of several conflicts at different points in the storyline; for example, Boyd in *Justified* changes his goals and his presentation several times during his storyline. Every time Boyd changes his goals, he creates a new set of conflicts in Harlan County. During the first episode, he is the leader of an underground Aryan group. They blow up cars and rob banks. This creates a conflict in the life of Harlan, but it also creates a conflict for Raylan. It creates a conflict because Boyd wants Raylan to leave town,

⁵⁰ Douglas. *Writing the TV Drama Series*. (2011) p.15, 51

⁵¹ Gotham Writers' Workshop. *Writing Fiction. The Practical Guide From New York's Acclaimed Creative Writing School*. Edited by Alexander Steele. (2003) New York: Bloomsbury. P.40

⁵² Gotham Writers' Workshop. *Writing Fiction*. (2003) p. 58

and in an attempt to force Raylan to leave, Boyd threatens to kill him.⁵³ When Boyd becomes overtly religious and decides to create his own church camp in a wooded area of Harlan County, he recruits criminals and drug addicts. Boyd promises them a new chance in life as long as they follow his rules and his lead. Boyd also decides to start a war with methamphetamine producers. When he decides to blow up a methamphetamine laboratory and a truck with supplies for another methamphetamine laboratory, he creates a conflict on behalf of his father. This conflict is not taken lightly and several people die.⁵⁴

Total Institutions

In 1961, Erving Goffman published "*Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates.*" The book itself contains a set of essays where Goffman explores the inner life of what he defines as total institutions. Goffman describes a total institution as a closed society separated from mainstream society. The inhabitants of a total institution are often placed within it against their will or out of necessity. Prisons, asylums, nursing homes, and boarding schools are examples of total institutions where the inmates are forced to live within the institution. These institutions are highly controlled environments. Goffman writes, "Their encompassing or total character is symbolized by barrier to social intercourse with the outside and to departure that is often built right into the physical plant, such as locked doors,

⁵³*The Pilot: Fire in the Hole.* Season 1, Episode 1 *Justified.* (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

⁵⁴*Veterans.* Season 1, Episode 11. *Justified.* (2010) Original Airdate: 5/25/2010

Fathers and Sons. Season , Episode 12. *Justified.* (2010) Original Airdate: 6/1/2010

high walls, barbed wire, cliffs, water, forests, or moors."⁵⁵ Jails and penitentiaries fall under the classification as total institutions, possibly even more so than other institutions, because they are built to protect society from certain types of individuals who are seen as intentionally dangerous to society.⁵⁶ They can also serve as a good example of what a total institution is. There are several security measures in place to ensure that a prison is upheld as a controlled environment, such as high walls, bars on windows, and highly restricted contact with the world outside the institution help keep the inmates within the institution. The inmate is unable to leave the institution and has to adapt to its internal structure, culture, and society. The inmate also has to adapt to a new way of living his/her life. Total institutions break down the barriers between three central spheres of modern life. It forces an individual to sleep, work, and play within the same physical space and area. In society, there is a tendency to conduct each sphere in different physical spaces. Outside a prison you are free to conduct each activity where you like and alone. When someone is confined to a total institution, he/she has to conduct each activity with a large number of other people and some of these people might be incompatible with you. Still, the system forces you to share the same physical spaces and carry out the activities as they are scheduled. Within a total institution, the individuals who are subject to it often have to follow a tight schedule.⁵⁷ Each inmate comes from what Goffman calls a 'home culture'. This culture is the way the inmate lived his life before he was incarcerated. This culture is also something that the inmate might have taken for granted. Once the inmate is inside a prison, the culture from his previous life falls away because of the nature of the institution itself. In the inmates prior life his culture was anchored within a larger framework and a total institution does not offer the same type of framework as the

⁵⁵ Goffman, Erving. *Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. 1961. New York: Anchor Books. A Division of Random House, Inc. p.4

⁵⁶ Goffman. *Asylums*. (1961) p.4-5

⁵⁷ Goffman. *Asylums*. 1961. p. 5-6

larger society. Goffman has chosen to label this process as 'disculturation'.⁵⁸ The internal structure of a total institution combined with a separation from mainstream society forces them to create a society that is specific to the institution. The society in a total institution determines how the inmates relate to each other and how they conduct themselves. The inmates are bound by rules and regulations, but they are also able to create a society that is not closely monitored by the guards and employees at the institution.⁵⁹ In *Oz*, the inmates have managed to create a society that is hidden from the correctional officers and prison administrators. The correctional officers and administrators are aware of the existence of the society and cultural exchanges that take place between the inmates, but they are unable to intervene. Violent men, drug use, and power struggles define this society.

Method

In this thesis the main approach will be to answer the questions put forth in this chapter by using textual analysis. The primary sources used in this thesis are visual sources, but the main aim of this thesis is to look at the actions and storylines of each white organized racist character through three different questions. The characters analyzed in this thesis and the societies they exist within will be treated as if they were non-fictional individuals. The purpose of approaching these characters and analyzing them as if they were non-fictional will hopefully give an answer to the main question, how are white organized racist characters portrayed on television. Each show aims toward a feeling of realism and the writers seem to have aimed at making the characters realistic. Most of the theory used to answer the sub

⁵⁸ Goffman. *Asylums*. 1961. p.12-13

⁵⁹ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997

questions in this thesis are sociological theories. These theories deal with social class, social status, as well as how individuals interact with one another socially.

Internal Chapters

Chapter Two will take a closer look at social class and social status. Weber's definition of social class and status will be the main theoretical framework in this chapter. The white organized racist characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* belong to a lower social class, but why they belong to a lower social class will be discussed further. Chapter Two will also take a closer look at social status and how the white organized racist characters in each show have redefined and reshaped what is seen as honorable within their respective societies. Chapter Three will look at how the white organized racist characters perform their gender and how they represent themselves to others. It will also look at what can happen to a character if he changes his gender performance or his representation of self. Chapter Four will look closer at body modification and the significance of tattoos of racist symbols. Racist symbols, such as the Swastika, are powerful symbols and they send a clear message to anyone who sees them. It is easy to assume that a person who has a Swastika tattooed on their body is a racist. This chapter will look closer at how the individual who wears the tattoo displays it and how it is shown to others, as well as, how it is shown to the audience. Each chapter will attempt to answer one of the sub questions within Chapter One and the findings in each chapter will help answer the main question in this thesis, how are white organized racist characters portrayed on television.

Chapter Two: “Social Class and Social Status”

Introduction

This chapter will look closer at social class and social status, and will attempt to answer the following question, “What social class and social status do the white organized racist characters belong and how is it presented?” Social status is related to social class, but should not be intertwined with the definition of social class. Webber suggested in 1922 that social class and social status are two separate entities. Social class is a system, which divides individuals into separate classes which are, “(...) formed by the social relations of economic life or, more specifically, by relations in the labor markets and production units.”⁶⁰ An individual who is in a good financial situation belongs to a higher class than an individual who is in a lesser financial situation. For example, a professional manager belongs to a higher social class than a non-skilled manual worker, because the professional manager makes more money than non-skilled manual workers make, and presumably have more opportunities.⁶¹ Social class relates to the financial situation of individuals, but social status relates to how individuals relate to each other within a particular society. Webber writes that the individuals within a social class do not need to feel interconnected, but individuals who share a social status are related to one another to a higher extent.⁶² Chan and Goldthorp have chosen to define status as:

⁶⁰ Chan, Tak Wing and John H. Goldthorp. *Class and Status: The Conceptual Distinction and its Empirical Relevance*. (Aug. 2007) in: *American Sociological Review*. P.513

⁶¹ Chan. *Class and Status*. (Aug. 2007) p.513-514

⁶² Weber, Max. *Makt og byråkrati*. (2000) Oslo:Gyldendal Norske Forlag AS p.60

“(…) we regard a status order as a structure of relations of perceived, and in some degree accepted, social superiority, equality, and inferiority among individuals. This does not reflect personal qualities, but rather the degree of “social honor” attached to certain of their positional or perhaps purely ascribed attributes (e.g. birth or ethnicity). The social hierarchy thus created is expressed in differential associations, especially in more intimate kinds of sociability (…) and in lifestyles of differing distinctions that are seen as appropriate to different status levels.”⁶³

The white organized racist characters analyzed in this thesis belong to a lower class, with the exception of Zabelle in *Sons of Anarchy*. Zabelle is the only white organized racist who owns a legitimate business. The white organized racist characters in *Oz*, are incarcerated in a prison and their social class and status differ from the white organized racist characters in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified*. In this chapter, the social class of the white organized racist characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* will be defined, but only the social class of the white organized racist characters in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified* will be analyzed. It is hard to analyze which social class the white organized racist characters in *Oz* belongs to because they have been taken out of society and placed within a total institution. The nature of prisons makes it hard for inmates to belong to a social class along the same lines as characters who live in a world outside a prison. In *Oz*, social status becomes more important, because it is possible to analyze actions that are considered socially honorable inside the prison.

⁶³ Chen. *Class and Status*. (Aug. 2007) p.514

Social class and Social Status in *Oz*

In *Oz*, it is hard to place the characters into a social class structure, because they reside within a total institution. This total institution has created a physical barrier between the characters and their former lives. When an individual has been placed within a total institution, they become, in many ways, civilly dead. They are not able to participate in or socialize with the world outside the prison. Many of the rights and activities the individual enjoyed in their former life has been temporarily suspended; for example, voting rights, work, and family life. When an inmate is incarcerated, they go through a process that Goffman has chosen to label “disculturation”. Every inmate in *Oz* has to leave his “home culture” behind when he enters the prison. The “home culture” represents who the inmate was before he arrived in *Oz*. The “disculturation” process transforms the inmate from a man living one particular life on the outside, to a man who has to adjust to the society and culture inside the prison.⁶⁴ The changes that take place when an inmate first arrives in *Oz* are well illustrated with the character Beecher. Beecher was a lawyer, a husband, and a father prior to his incarceration, but once he is incarcerated, he has to leave those aspects of himself behind. One can assume that Beecher belonged to the middle class prior to his incarceration, but when he was committed of a crime he lost his right to practice law. He is also unable to be a father and a husband the way he used to. The audience also witnesses that Beecher is unprepared for the reality that faces him in prison. For someone like Beecher, who has no street skills and no previous experience with serving time, the consequences of “disculturation” are severe. Beecher is unaware of how the social structure in *Oz* operates and he is lured into a trap where he is forced to become Schillinger’s slave. Schillinger is the leader of the Aryan Brotherhood inside the prison and

⁶⁴ Goffman. *Asylums*. (1961) p.12-13

teaches Beecher a few valuable lessons in prison life. Never trust anyone. Social status matter more than social class, and to have power is of great importance.⁶⁵

At the beginning of Season Two, McManus, decides to make education mandatory in Emerald City. His reason to do so is to offer the inmates a chance to acquire a GED. McManus decides to make this a priority because he feels that a GED will give the inmates a better chance to live a crime free life once they are released from Oz. McManus argues that only half of the prisoners in Oz have finished High School. Most of the prisoners come from low-income households, poor housing, and have parents who are without an education and often without jobs. Once McManus starts his program he gathers a small group of inmates who will be the first to be able to get a GED in Oz. McManus quickly discover that a few of the inmates cannot read. One of these inmates is a 16 year old and another is in his late 20s.⁶⁶ McManus' educational program fails. It does not fail on the basis that the inmates participating in the program are unable to obtain their GEDs. It fails because Governor of their state puts an end to the program.⁶⁷ McManus tries to fight the Governor's decision, but is unable to. It is hard to define the prisoners by social class, mostly because the society inside prison contains few opportunities to advance financially or to uphold the social class they had prior to their incarceration, but it is possible to look at their social status. McManus' program attempts to give the inmates who have not finished High School an opportunity to enhance their chances of climbing the socio-economic ladder. A GED can also function as a facilitator in the inmate's life and his way out of a life of crime.

One of the cultural changes that the prisoners go through when they arrive at Oz is tied to social class. When the prisoners arrive in Oz, they go through a social transition where they

⁶⁵ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997

Visits: Conjugal and otherwise. Season 1, Episode 2. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/14/1997

⁶⁶ *Ancient Tribes*. Season 2, Episode 2. *Oz*. 2008. Original Airdate: 7/20/1998,

Great Men. Season 2, Episode 3. *Oz*. 2008. Original Airdate: 7/27/1998

⁶⁷ *Family Bizness*. Season 2, Episode 5. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/10/1998

have to learn how to manage life as a classless individual. They also have to learn to handle the growing importance of social status. Beecher comes from a very different social class and socio-economic background than many of the other inmates in Emerald City. He had a job that paid well and a prestigious education. Beecher's transition from being a middle class man to becoming a classless inmate seems to have been harder on him, than Schillinger's transition from a working class man. Schillinger was a widower and a single-dad prior to his incarceration. The writers of *Oz* do not explore how Schillinger handles the transition from being a single-dad and a working class man to becoming an inmate. When the audience is introduced to Schillinger, he is an inmate who has adjusted to his life as an inmate. Other inmates in Emerald City and the other units within Oz come from different backgrounds, but many of them have been gang members who lived and worked on the street. The social class and socio-economic background the prisoners in Emerald City belonged to prior to incarceration is no longer important when they arrive in Emerald City. The ability to adapt to change in your immediate environment becomes increasingly important. Personal characteristics such as street smarts and the ability to manipulate other people also become increasingly important.

Social status and what is viewed as "social honor" in *Oz*, differs from what is viewed as "social honor" outside the prison. All of the inmates have been convicted of a crime and sentenced to serve time in jail. One can presume that this is considered dishonorable outside the prison, but inside the prison, the mere premise of having been sentenced to serve time in jail, has left the inmates equally dishonored. The type of crime the inmates have committed is what sets them apart from each other. The crime itself, along with other factors, can help set one inmate apart from another. The crime an inmate has committed can help create a presumptive social status when the inmate arrives in Oz. An inmate who has been convicted of murder may be more dangerous than an inmate who has been convicted of driving under

the influence. Within the storyline of *Oz*, social status is derived from “social honor.” Chen and Goldthorp’s definition of social status as, “(...) a structure of relations of perceived, and in some degree accepted social superiority, equality, and inferiority amongst individuals.”⁶⁸ can be related to how an inmate’s social status is constructed in *Oz*. Social honor is related to how an individual chooses to act. Two of the cornerstones of the social system in *Oz* is to create fear in others and command their respect. To be able to do so an inmate will have to prove that he is socially superior, as well as, willing to create fear in others and command respect. Schillinger is feared, respected and viewed as socially superior in his environment because he has given his fellow inmates reason to fear him, to respect him and to view him as superior. Beecher fears Schillinger in the first season of *Oz* because Beecher know what Schillinger is capable of. When Schillinger has gained control over Beecher and made Beecher his property, he decides to brand Beecher with a Swastika. To take control over another individual in this manner and to brand that individual shows that Schillinger is a ruthless and violent man.⁶⁹ Schillinger also force Beecher to change as a person. In one episode, Schillinger forces Beecher to kiss him and to wear makeup. Schillinger threatens Beecher when he refuses to do as he is told. Beecher fears what Schillinger might do to him and decides to do as he is told.⁷⁰ Beecher chooses to show Schillinger respect out of fear. Robson, who is Schillinger’s second in command in *Oz*, is respectful toward Schillinger because he genuinely respect him. This respect is mutual. Robson and Schillinger know that they can rely on each other. If Robson is involved in an altercation, he knows he can count of Schillinger.⁷¹

Schillinger is viewed as a man with a high degree of social honor. One of the reasons for this is because Schillinger has power. Weber writes that the individuals who are located on

⁶⁸ Chan. *Class and Status*. (Aug. 2007) p. 514

⁶⁹ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997

⁷⁰ *Straight Life*. Season 1, Episode 5. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/4/1997

⁷¹ *Conversations*. Season 4, Episode 10. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 1/4/2001

the lower end of the structure of social class often have little power and they have few items to trade within the market. What these individuals can offer is their labor and the product of their work.⁷² Although social class and social status are different from one another, it seems that Schillinger is interested in what an individual can offer him and whether an individual is useful to him. Robson has several characteristics and traits to offer Schillinger. Robson can offer Schillinger loyalty, physical strength, and support. Schillinger can offer Robson membership in the Aryan Brotherhood, support, and fellowship. This mutual exchange seems to help both parties advance their social status. Schillinger social status is gained from his role as a leader. In order to remain the leader of the Aryan Brotherhood, he has to act in a manner that agrees with his position. Schillinger is willing to rape and kill to prove his worth. In the first episode of the show, Schillinger tricks Beecher into trusting him. Beecher is unsuspecting and unprepared for what Schillinger has in mind. Schillinger wants Beecher to become his property, or in other words, his “woman”.⁷³ Schillinger’s action, to force another man to become his woman, and to rape and control another man, only enhances his social status. Within Oz it is socially honorable to control another individual and to show others what you are capable of. Schillinger’s action also ensures that he will remain in power within his group. Schillinger is also willing to kill in order to reestablish his power when he has lost it. In Season Two, Schillinger has lost the power he had. He is no longer the leader of the Aryan Brotherhood. Schillinger has attempted to be granted parole and when he fails he decides that the Aryan Brotherhood have to kill someone in order to make a statement.⁷⁴ The murder Schillinger commit sends a message to the other inmates, the Aryan Brotherhood are still present in Oz and they have not grown weaker.⁷⁵ Schillinger is also able to regain his position as the leader of the Aryan Brotherhood and his status as a man decisive man with

⁷² Weber. *Makt og byråkrati*. (2000) p.54

⁷³ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997

⁷⁴ *Great Men*. Season 2, Episode 3. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/27/1998

⁷⁵ *Losing Your Appeal*. Season 2, Episode 4. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/3/1998

power. Robson's social status is not on the same level as Schillinger's social status, but Robson's social status and his role as one of Schillinger's followers help put Schillinger's social status into perspective. The concept of being socially superior inside an environment or a status system works best if the individual who is viewed as superior can be related and compared to other individuals. The social dynamic between Schillinger and Beecher in the first Season of *Oz* shows Schillinger as having a higher social status than Beecher. Schillinger is viewed as superior, but he can only be viewed as such because Beecher has an inferior social status. The social dynamic between Schillinger and Robson, however, show two men who are closer to equals within the social status system. Schillinger can be viewed as slightly superior to Robson, but only because Schillinger is the leader of the Aryan Brotherhood.

Social Class and Social Status in *Sons of Anarchy*

The white organized racist characters in *Sons of Anarchy* differ from the ones who can be seen in *Oz* and *Justified*. *Sons of Anarchy* contain three organized racist characters, Darby, Weston, and Zabelle. Zabelle belongs to a higher social class than Weston and Darby. Zabelle is a businessman and when he arrives in Charming, a small town in Northern California where the storyline in *Sons of Anarchy* take place, he opens a cigar store. Zabelle wears expensive suits and drives an expensive car.⁷⁶ Zabelle is the leader of the white separatist group the League of American Nationalists and Zabelle's actions on the show indicates that Zabelle make a considerable amount of money through illegal activities. Zabelle sells heroin to the leader of a motorcycle gang. Zabelle has made an arrangement that guarantees him a large portion of the proceeds of the heroin sales.⁷⁷ Zabelle's outwards

⁷⁶ *Albification*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

⁷⁷ *Potlatch*. Season 2, Episode 8. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 10/27/2009

appearance as a businessman grants him a different social position than Weston and Darby. Weston is Zabelle's employee, but he is not employed in Zabelle's store. He is a soldier within Zabelle's organization. Weston carries out any order given by Zabelle, as long as it relates to their cause. Their vision is to make Charming a haven for white separatists. Darby is also self-employed, but he does not belong to the same social class as Zabelle. Darby's business is based on the production of methamphetamine.⁷⁸ An illegal business of this sort can be a good source of income and for Darby, it has helped him buy a nice home in a middle-class neighborhood, but it does not necessarily imply that he belongs to the middle-class.⁷⁹ The money Darby makes because of his methamphetamine business and his involvement in prostitution is able to give him an income, but it does not help him advance within the social class structure of Charming.⁸⁰ He is not shown as having a higher social class than the other citizens who reside in Charming.

Social status plays an important role in the portrayal of Zabelle, Weston, and Darby. The difference in social status determines how these characters are viewed by the residents in Charming, but also how they are viewed and relate to each other. Zabelle and Weston are equal in many ways, but Zabelle's social status is superior to Weston's because Zabelle is a legitimate businessman who can be respected as such amongst the not racist residents of Charming. Weston, however, is a soldier for the white separatist cause and more importantly, he is a soldier employed by Zabelle.⁸¹ Weston looks down on Darby and he feels that he is superior to him in every way. Weston employs his own manner of viewing social status. Weston relates social status to his own ideological beliefs and whether an individual can be seen as a friend or a foe. He also employs his own manner of measuring whether an individual is loyal to his ideological belief and he compares their loyalty to the cause to his loyalty. Weston

⁷⁸ *The pilot*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 9/2/2008

⁷⁹ *The Pull*. Season , Episode 8. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 10/22/2008

⁸⁰ *Fa Guan*. Season 2, Episode 9. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2019) Original Airdate: 10/13/2009

⁸¹ *Albification*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy* (2010) Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

expresses dissatisfaction with Darby. He tells Darby that Darby is not serious enough about the cause. Darby has employed Mexicans to work in his methamphetamine lab and Weston dislikes this. Weston takes this as a sign of disloyalty. Darby puts money before race.⁸²

Weston's way of viewing social status compared to how serious and loyal an individual is toward their ideological belief translates to the viewer. Weston does make a good point. In their world, filled with violent, lower class men, status becomes important. The status that matters in their world does not necessarily intersect with what is viewed as a superior social status outside their world. Birth and ethnicity as invalid factors in regards to their social status, because the three white organized racist characters in *Sons of Anarchy* share certain traits, such as the fact that they are all white and neither of them seem to have been born into a particularly wealthy family. If Zobelle, Weston, or Darby has been born into a family that would grant them a superior social status, then this has been hidden from the audience of the show. How they uphold their ideological beliefs gain importance.

Social Class and Social Status in *Justified*

Most of the storyline in *Justified* takes place in two geographical locations. The first is the city of Lexington, which is located within Fayette County, Kentucky. The second is Harlan County, Kentucky. The two locations are portrayed as polar opposite. Lexington is the place of business on the show. This is where the Marshall's office, the courthouse, and the city jail are located. While the portrayal of Harlan is a place, where the poor white coalminers reside and live their lives. In Season Two, a third geographical location is added, Bennett County. The first two locations are real, while Bennett County is fictional. Coal mining is mentioned as a typical labor in Harlan during Season One, while in Season Two we see that Boyd has

⁸² *Albification*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy* (2010) Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

taken legitimate work as a coal miner and mining becomes a larger part of the storyline.⁸³ A part of this storyline involves an internal struggle between the people of Harlan County and Bennett County and between the people of Harlan County and a large coal mining company called Black Pike.⁸⁴ There are several differences between Lexington and Harlan on the show. When a scene takes place in Lexington the buildings are of a higher standard, while the buildings and scenery of Harlan often show the audience houses and buildings of a poor standard. The first time Raylan goes to Harlan to visit Ava, who has just killed her own husband, her house is located in the middle of nowhere. Her house and the street it is located on cannot be found on any map. The first time Raylan goes to visit Boyd he finds him in an abandon church. The church is neglected and in need of renovation. It is surrounded by over grown grass and bushes.⁸⁵ Raylan's father, who lives in Harlan County, also lives in a rundown house that is in desperate need of renovation.⁸⁶ Some of the characters even lives in trailers. Boyd is one of the characters that live in a trailer.⁸⁷ These elements emphasize the differences between Lexington and Harlan. It also shows that the characters who reside in Harlan County are poor. Boyd and Dewey are two of these characters and they belong to the lower class. According to Chan and Goldthorp, a self-employed individual belong to a higher social class than the lower class.⁸⁸ In the case of Boyd, he is a self-employed criminal with his own white organized racist group. This type of self-employment does not qualify Boyd to be viewed as a working class man. He is still a lower class man.

Harlan County and its population belong to a different socioeconomic status than the population of Lexington. Harlan is also in many ways portrayed as a place where a large part

⁸³ Justified. *The Moonshine War*. Season 2, Episode 1. Original Airdate: 2/9/2011

⁸⁴ Justified. *Brother's Keeper*. Season 2, Episode 9. Original Airdate: 4/6/2011, *The Spoil*. Season 2, Episode 8. Original Airdate: 3/30/2011

⁸⁵ Justified. *The pilot*. Season 1, Episode 1. Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

⁸⁶ Justified. *Lord of War and Thunder*. Season 1, Episode 5. Original Airdate: 4/13/2010

⁸⁷ Justified. *The Pilot*. Season 1, Episode 1. Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

⁸⁸ Chan. *Class and Status*. (Aug. 2007) p.513-514

of the population is poor working whites and some are even unemployed. This difference in socioeconomic status between Lexington and Harlan on *Justified* is not that far from the reality of real life Lexington and Harlan County. In the 2010 census, the county of Lexington-Fayette housed 295,803 people. 75,7 percent of the population of Lexington were white. 88,3 percent of the population who were 25 years of age or older were high school graduates and 39,1 percent of the population had a bachelor degree or a higher degree. The median income of the population of Lexington was \$47,469 and 17,4 percent of the population lived below the poverty line between 2006 and 2010.⁸⁹ The population of Harlan County in 2010 contained 29,278 people. 96,1 percent of the population were white. 68,4 percent of the population who were 25 years of age or older had graduated high school. While only 11,1 percent of the population had a bachelor degree or a higher degree. The median income of Harlan County in 2010 was \$26,582 and 30,7 percent of Harlan County's population lived below the poverty line between 2006 and 2010.⁹⁰ Harlan County is located in Eastern Kentucky and is a part of the Appalachian region. In 1964, President Johnson established the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) whose primary goal was to study and improve the economic situation and living conditions of the people who live in this region.⁹¹ The ARC is still a functional commission in Appalachia and one of their main functions is to fund projects that address and promote the following identified Goals:

1. Increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the nation.
2. Strengthen the capacity of the people of Appalachia to compete in the global economy.

⁸⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. *State and County QuickFacts: Lexington-Fayette, Kentucky*. 2010. URL: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/21/2146027.html> (Read on: 03. April. 2012)

⁹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau. *State and County QuickFacts: Harlan County, Kentucky*. 2010. URL: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/21/21095.html> (Read on: 03. April. 2012)

⁹¹ Black, Dan A., Mark Mather , and Seth G. Sanders. *Standards of Living in Appalachia, 1960 to 2000*". (2007) ARC: Appalachian Regional Commission.

3. Develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive.
4. Build the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce Appalachia's isolation.⁹²

The ARC has labeled Harlan County as a distressed county.⁹³ The ARC states that a distressed county is one that is amongst the most economically depressed. The counties that are labeled as distressed counties are ranked as the poorest 10 percent of all counties in the entire United States.⁹⁴ The reality of the socioeconomic situation in Appalachia and Eastern Kentucky is reflected in the way they have chosen to portray Boyd and the other citizens who reside in both Harlan and Bennett County. This region is often portrayed as extremely poor in American media and in American popular culture. It is often portrayed by using stereotypes connected to hillbillies, rednecks, and white trash.⁹⁵ The creators of *Justified* employ some of these stereotypes, to a certain extent, when they portray Boyd, Dewey, and the Crowder family. They also employ stereotypes involving Appalachia when they portray the people of Harlan and Bennett. Anne Shelby writes that these stereotypes and the jokes centered on them, not only ridicule the subject of the stereotype and the joke. It also helps people to dehumanize members of certain groups and to deny those people full humanity. While employing stereotypes and to joke about certain groups within society functions as a tool "(...) to ignore history, politics, economics, and culture."⁹⁶ In a show, such as *Justified*, the stereotypes they have chosen to use when portraying certain characters does not come off as

⁹² Appalachian Regional Commission. *About ARC*. URL: <http://www.arc.gov/about/index.asp> (read on: 25.April.2012)

⁹³ ARC. *Socioeconomic Data: Harlan County, Kentucky*. URL: http://www.arc.gov/reports/socio_report.asp (read on: 25.April. 2012)

⁹⁴ ARC. *County Economic Status in Appalachia, Fiscal Year 2011. (Effective October 1 2010 through September 30, 2011)* URL: http://www.arc.gov/reports/socio_report.asp. (Read on: 25 April. 2012)

⁹⁵ Shelby, Anna. *The "R" Word*. In: *Back Talk From Appalachia*. (1999. Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky) p.155

⁹⁶ Shelby, Anne. *The "R" Word*. In: (1999) p.158

mean spirited or as a way to dehumanize that character. Instead, it seems that the stereotype is a way of building certain characters. In some cases, characters such a Dewey, serves a function. Boyd is a strong, charismatic leader, but he would not come across as strong and charismatic in the way he does if he did not have followers and soldiers. The people who follow Boyd, whether he is an Aryan underground leader, is in charge of a church-camp in the middle of the woods or trying to control drug trade within Harlan, needs people who will follow his lead and carry out his missions. Dewey's portrayal deepens the portrayal of Boyd. Dewey's portrayal shows a man with a low social status. When Boyd's social status is compared to Dewey, it shows that Boyd's social status is significantly higher. Boyd is able to gain an honorable position, socially, because of his status as a leader.

The storyline involving Dewey Crow plays on a certain stereotype. Dewey is portrayed as a poor, criminal, white racist and a dimwitted hillbilly. The portrayal of Dewey falls within the stereotype of the "hillbilly fool". Sandra L. Ballard discusses and traces the origin of the stereotypical Hillbilly fool in her article "*Where did the Hillbillies come from? Tracing Sources of the Comic Hillbilly Fool in Literature.*" Ballard looks closer at medieval images of the fool as well as the Renaissance jesters and contemporary American literature and culture. She connects these images of the "hillbilly fool" to southern Appalachia. "Reexamining fools in their historical context offers us another way of looking at them - as mockers, truth tellers, and mirrors of culture, subversive identities that overlap and intertwine."⁹⁷ Some of the characteristics attributed to the noun fool are "Deficient in judgment or sense, one who... behaves stupidly, a silly person, a simpleton."⁹⁸ Dewey fits this description in many ways. Dewey lacks the ability to measure the consequences of his actions. The audiences' first meeting with Dewey shows him barging into Ava's house in the

⁹⁷ Ballard, Sandra L. *Where did the Hillbillies Come From? TRacing Sources of the Comic Hillbilly Fool in Literature.* In: (1999) p.139

⁹⁸ Ballard. *Where did the Hillbillies Come From?* (1999) p.140

pilot. The first scene featuring Dewey lays the groundwork for his portrayal as a man who does not think before he acts. Dewey meets Raylan on the inside of Ava's front door. Raylan informs him that he is a deputy Marshal and tells him to go outside, knock on the door and if Ava wants to see Dewey, Raylan will let him in. Dewey walks outside to his car, pulls out a scattergun from his trunk and points it at Raylan. Raylan is calm. Dewey seems confounded by Raylan's behavior. Raylan informs him of his intentions, "Mr. Crow. You better hold on for a sec while I explain something to you. I want you to understand. I don't pull out my sidearm unless I'm gonna shoot to kill. (...) I want you to think about that before you act and it's too late." Dewey understands the seriousness of this situation and puts his scattergun away, once he is inside his car he decides to threaten Raylan. Raylan answers by smashing Dewey's face against the steering wheel. In this scene, Dewey is not portrayed to the full potential of the stereotype. He is shown as a man who tries to assert himself toward another and shows fearlessness to an extent, because he is trying to assert power towards a US Marshal. As his character develops, he is increasingly portrayed as a fool. Dewey is also portrayed as a simpleton through the way he speaks and the way he acts. In one episode, Boyd kicks Dewey out of his church camp. Raylan drives past Dewey and asks him, "Why aren't you up there at church-camp with Boyd and the other commandos?" Dewey explains that he was kicked out for breaking one of Boyd's rules. All of his rules are from the bible and Dewey is unable to remember all of them. Raylan tries to get Dewey to tell him which rule he broke and Dewey chooses to disclose, "They called me an on-a-nist." And he adds "I bet you don't even know what that is, smart ass." Raylan tries not to smile as he informs Dewey, "Well, actually, I do." Dewey replies, "Well I didn't. How do you think it was. Boyd running me down in front of everybody?" Raylan answers, "I don't know. Funny?" Dewey tells Raylan to go to hell as he walks away from the car. Raylan shouts for him to stop, walks out of his car and follows Dewey. Raylan is able to stop Dewey, he deputizes him as an assistant US

Marshal and tells him that he has to tell Raylan everything he knows about Boyd and his involvement in the explosion of a methamphetamine lab. Raylan tells him that if he refuses to cooperate and do his duty as a deputy he can face no more than three-years in a federal prison. Dewey gets angry and tells him, "This is bullshit!", but in the end, he believes Raylan and tells him everything he knows about the explosion. Dewey returns to the camp after the Marshal Service has raided it. The audience learns that Dewey has told Boyd that the Marshal Service was coming and Boyd was able to hide all of his guns before they arrived. Boyd has a conversation with Dewey, where Boyd wants to know how Dewey was able to tip him of about the search and how much he told Raylan about the camp. Dewey explains to Boyd that Raylan deputized him and threatened with jail time if he did not comply. Boyd asks Dewey if he whether he is or is not aware of the fact that Raylan's actions were false. Boyd forgives Dewey for his discretion, but tells him to leave and never return. Dewey seem to understand that he did something wrong, but he thinks Boyd is treating him unfairly. Dewey admits that he was unsure of whether or not Raylan could deputize him, but he felt obligated to speak truthfully. In one way, Dewey resembles a defiant child in this scene featuring Raylan, and he comes across as childlike in general in the scene with Boyd. Mainly because he is easy to fool and he has a lowered understanding of how and why his actions have a negative outcome.⁹⁹ Ballard writes that others have compared other "hillbilly fools" on TV as childlike. Ballard states that several characters in *The Beverly Hillbillies* have been characterized as childlike. Jethro has been characterized as "infantile" in his behavior and Granny has been characterized as "childlike in her near senility."¹⁰⁰

Harlan County does not fit into Goffman's definition of a total institution, mainly because the inhabitants of Harlan can leave the county when they please. It does resemble a

⁹⁹ *Veterans*. Season 1, Episode 11. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 5/25/2010

¹⁰⁰ Ballard. *Where Did Hillbillies Come From?* (1999) p.139

total institution based on the environment present in Harlan. Harlan is a controlled environment where each individual inhabitant has a predefined role. The inhabitants can try to change the way they perform their role in the local community, but their attempt will be fruitless. The roles they play are not fixed, but it is not transient either. Boyd tries to change his life in Season Two by living a law-abiding life as a coal miner.¹⁰¹ His attempt is fruitless because the other inhabitants of Harlan are not able to see Boyd as a law-abiding citizen.¹⁰² When Boyd attempts to change his life, he also changes his social status. When Boyd lived his life as the leader of an Aryan group, he was feared and respected. He had a high social status. When he lives as a law-abiding coal miner, the individuals he encounters view him differently. He is no longer able to incite fear and command respect. The portrayal of Dewey shows a lower class man who gives an impression of being a drifter. At the same time as Boyd is dissolving his Aryan group, Dewey is sent to prison.¹⁰³ When Dewey is released from jail, he joins Boyd in Boyd's church-camp, but when Boyd ostracizes him for masturbating, he is quick to pack his duffel bag.¹⁰⁴ Dewey is portrayed as a drifter. He is never shown as living in one particular place, with the exception of the episodes when Dewey is incarcerated.¹⁰⁵ In Season One, Boyd lives in a trailer next to an abandoned church¹⁰⁶ and in Season Two, he rents a room in Ava's house.¹⁰⁷ Dewey's living situation shows him as a man who belongs to the underclass, while Boyd belongs to a lower class.

¹⁰¹ *The Life Inside*. Season 2, Episode 2. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 2/16/2011

¹⁰² *Cottonmouth*. Season 2, Episode 5. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 3/9/2011

¹⁰³ *Fixer*. Season 1, Episode 3. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/30/2010

¹⁰⁴ *Veterans*. Season 1, Episode 11. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 5/25/2010

¹⁰⁵ *Fixer*. Season 1, Episode 3. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/30/2010

The Gun Fighter. Season 3, Episode 1. *Justified*. (2012) Original Airdate: 1/17/2012

¹⁰⁶ *The Pilot: Fire in the Hole*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

¹⁰⁷ *The Life Inside*. Season 2, Episode 2. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 2/16/2011

Conclusion

The white organized racist characters analyzed in this thesis belong to a low social class, with the exception of Ethan Zobelle in *Sons of Anarchy* who is portrayed as a businessman and a leader of a white separatist group. Weston, Darby, Boyd, and Dewey belong to a lower social class. They are not employed within a legitimate business and their income comes from illegal activities. If they had been employed by a legitimate company they might have belonged to the working class. In *Oz*, the characters live their lives within a society where social class is annihilated. Their society is in many ways a classless society and social status has a greater impact on their day to day life. In *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* social status is important, but they have chosen to redefine social status. Social status is to some degree measured against the position you hold within your society and your position is evaluated based on your “social honor”. The white organized racist characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* live lives where what is considered honorable is set apart from mainstream society. The white organized racist characters in *Oz* have been committed of a variety of crimes, which deems them as not honorable in a social setting, but inside the prison itself, all of the prisoners are equal in this respect. One might even argue that the fact that they are organized racists makes non-racist characters view them as not honorable men, because there are negative connotations connected to being a white organized racist. Their negative status in mainstream society forces the white organized racist to define a new way of being socially honorable, for example, by being violent, resourceful and brutal.

Chapter Three:

"Masculinity, Gender Performance, and Representation of Self."

Introduction

The white organized racist characters live in a world where brute force is common. The characters use brute force to gain power as well as hold on to the power they already have. The organized racist characters analyzed in this thesis include main characters and supporting characters within the television shows of *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified*. The storyline of each show takes place within a total institution. The term total institution is used to describe a closed society, such as prisons, boarding schools, nursing homes, and asylums. In *Oz*, the characters have been incarcerated in a prison, while in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified* the characters reside in small societies. A total institution is defined as a place where the inhabitants are forced to live and work within the same space. The inhabitants are unable to leave at will and are cut off from the rest of society to a large degree.¹⁰⁸ One might argue that the small town, Charming, in *Sons of Anarchy* and Harlan County in *Justified* are not total institutions to the same degree as the prison featured in *Oz*. The citizens of Charming and Harlan County can leave as they please, but their movement is restricted. When a character leaves Charming or Harlan County, he/she always return. It seems that each character within these two shows is bound to his/her home, because of family, work, and friends. They are also bound to Charming and Harlan County because of their financial situation. Most of the characters do not have enough money to move away and create a new life for themselves. The lack of money deepens their motivation to stay. Charming and Harlan County are total institutions because the inhabitants are cut off from the society that surrounds them. Charming

¹⁰⁸ Goffman, Erving. *Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental patients and Other Inmates*. (1961) New York: Anchor Books: A Division of Random House, Inc. p.xiii

and Harlan County have become closed worlds where the inhabitants live and work within the same space, and they have few opportunities to leave and start over somewhere else.

This chapter explores how the white organized racist characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* perform their masculinity and attempts to answer the following question, "How do the white organized racist characters perform their masculinity, and how to they present this masculinity to others?" The societies and culture within *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* are shaped by the fact that they are small and closed societies. They are also affected by a lack of female characters. There are few female characters present in the storyline of each show. The lack of female characters puts femininity in a different perspective and it creates few softening spots to help regulate the masculinity performed by the male characters. Male characters often perform the feminine characteristics present in each show. This causes the masculinity performed by male characters to harden. The lives of the white organized racist characters are tied into the nature of a total institution. How the white organized racist characters represent themselves to others, how they chose to act in certain situations, and how they performed their gender become important. Their social status depend on their performance. Goffman, in 1959, dealt with the subject of how people present themselves to others in everyday life. In "*The Representation of Self in Everyday Life*."¹⁰⁹ Goffman describes interactions between individuals as a theatrical performance. A performance is dependent on at least one performer and one observer. Goffman explains that a performer has a "front" stage and a "back" stage to his/her performance. The "back" is reserved for the more intimate sides of the performer as a person. This is where the performer hides his/her personal feelings and it is a private sphere. The "back" is also a place where the preparations for the "front" stage performances take place. A performance is always an act and the "front" is where the performance takes place, while the back shows a more genuine

¹⁰⁹ Goffman, Erving. *The Representation of Self in Everyday Life*. (1959)

side of the performer. A performance depends on a setting, a context and what the performer wishes to convey in a given situation.¹¹⁰ Goffman writes that the appearance of the performer can inform the observer of his social status. It can also inform the observer whether the performer is acting in a social activity, recreational activity or in a formal capacity. While his manner can give the observer information regarding the interactive role, the performer “(...) will expect to play in the oncoming situation.”¹¹¹ Here, Goffman is referring to what the performer shows the observer before they enter the performance. If the performer seems agitated or angry, the observer might conclude that the performer will enter the performance in a confrontational manner. If the performer is calm or meek, the performer might want the observer to lead him in some way.¹¹² The social front refers to the interaction itself. It contains all of the components of the “front”. It contains the performer and the observer. It also contains different routines, which are adapted to fit the different observers the performer interacts with and the settings where the performances take place.¹¹³ The white organized racist characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* belong to three different worlds that have a tight, but complex internal structure. Goffman writes, “A performance is “socialized”, molded, and modified to fit into the understanding and expectations of the society in which it is presented.”¹¹⁴ The characters within each show seem to do this deliberately on several occasions, with the exception of the characters in *Oz*, where they seem to do this most of the time. Each white organized racist character seems to mold and modify his performance to fit the character he is interacting with. When Schillinger in *Oz* is interacting with Robson he keeps his persona as a violent and fearless leader, but he is more relaxed and friendlier when he interacts with Robson than when he interacts with his arch nemesis Beecher. When Darby

¹¹⁰ Goffman. *The Representation of Self*. (1959) p.17-19, 30

¹¹¹ Goffman. *The Representation of Self*. (1959) p.24

¹¹² Goffman. *The Representation of Self*. (1959)p.24

¹¹³ Goffman. *The Representation of Self*. (1959) p.26

¹¹⁴ Goffman. *The Representations of Self*. (1959) p.35

is interacting with a member of Samcro, he seems to be more respectful if he has done something that might make Samcro angry, but when he interacts with Weston he is interested in gaining Weston's respect and his performances are adjusted to successfully achieve his personal goals.

Another theorist that has focused on performance is Judith Butler. While Goffman focuses on performance in everyday life and describes performances performed by individuals in a general manner, Butler has applied the term performance to a specific act, gender performance. In her work "*Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.*"¹¹⁵ she challenges how gender has been viewed in earlier feminist work.¹¹⁶ Butler views gender as a cultural construction and writes that "(...) gender is neither the casual result of sex, nor as seemingly fixed as sex."¹¹⁷ Butler also challenges the gender binary by creating a distinction between gender and sex and by suggesting "(...) a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders."¹¹⁸ When gender is viewed separately from sex it becomes a limitless "artifice". The consequence of the separation of sex and gender indicates that labels such as masculine can be used to describe a female body as well as a male body. The same is true for the labels feminine. Butler suggests that gender is performed because it is always an act. She also views gender as something that is created through performances, but compelled through a set of regulatory performances which are set in motion when the performer acts out his/her gender in a consistent manner.¹¹⁹ To uphold a gender performance, seems to require some effort by the performer. Butler writes, "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that

¹¹⁵ Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* (1999) London: Routledge

¹¹⁶ Butler. *Gender Trouble.* (1999) p. vii

¹¹⁷ Butler. *Gender Trouble.* (1999) p.8

¹¹⁸ Butler. *Gender Trouble.* (1999) p.9

¹¹⁹ Butler. *Gender Trouble.* (1999) p.34

congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being.”¹²⁰

Goffman argues that every social interaction is an act, while Butler argues that the gender performance is an act, both performances are conscious and repetitive. Gender performance is a large part of how the white organized racist characters portrayed in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* represent themselves to others.

The Aryan Brotherhood and Hyper-Masculinity in *Oz*

The masculinity performed by men in *Oz* is related to survival. The characters in *Oz* have been taken out of society and placed within a total institution. A total institution is a closed society where people enjoy little privacy. An individual who is forced to live within a total institution has to leave his former life behind and adjust to living in an environment where activities such as sleep, work, and recreation are performed in the same space.¹²¹ In *Oz*, the prisoners have to adjust to what the Correctional Officers have labeled “The Routine.” The routine is a set of rules the inmates are required to follow. The inmates are required to exercise regularly. They have to attend counseling for drug and alcohol addiction. They have to keep a spotless cell, work in a prison factory, and most importantly, the prisoners are not allowed to yell, fight, or have intercourse with each other.¹²² The institution in *Oz* contains a violent society populated by men who have received sentences for committing various crimes. This shapes the internal structure of their society, how it is built, and how these men choose to interact with each other. This also shapes how they perform their gender. To perform gender implies that gender is an act. A performance requires something from the performer even when the act itself has been performed many times. It can also be “molded and modified” to fit the setting it is performed within and the audience watching the performance. The society

¹²⁰ Butler. *Gender Trouble*. (1999) p.45

¹²¹ Goffman. *Asylums*. (1961) p.

¹²² *The Routine*. Season 1, episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997

in *Oz* leaves the prisoners few options of how to perform their gender. The separation of the masculine and the feminine is strictly monitored. To display behavior which is considered to be feminine will lead to severe punishment. If a white organized racist character displays feminine behavior, the other inmates will punish him. This punishment can come in the form of ridicule, physical altercations, rape, murder, or social death.

The leader of the Aryan Brotherhood, Schillinger, performs his masculinity in a consistent manner and he has a hyper-masculinity. Schillinger is violent, vengeful, and decisive. There are few female characters present on the show and the lack of feminine influence has helped create a world where there are no softening spots. The void of femininity performed by women has created a setting, which helps the masculinity to gain strength and become overtly masculine. Men perform the only feminine behavior amongst the inmates. These men belong to the group, the Gays, and they have chosen to become effeminate to insure their survival and to make it more difficult for them to become someone's property against their will. The men who act and dress like women seem to do so because they know they live in a society shaped by violence and powerful, masculine gender performances. They also know they would not be able to perform masculinity in the same way as, for example, Schillinger. Femininity becomes their salvation, because at the end of the day all of the inmates want to survive. Schillinger's gender performance depends on a constant and consistent act. If the inmates change their performance on a regular basis, they will lack credibility. This is why the feminine inmates who are members of the Gays are accepted as a natural part of the prison. After all, they serve a purpose. Schillinger performs his gender as a very masculine man. Several of the scenes featuring Schillinger show him sitting in the cafeteria or exercising in the gym. Schillinger is never alone in the cafeteria and rarely alone in the gym. At least one member of the Brotherhood always accompanies him, and when he works out his followers either spot him, exercise, or watch him as he exercises. Schillinger is

describes as a man who enjoy power play and courtship rituals before sexual intercourse.¹²³ In the first episode of *Oz*, Schillinger performs a courtship ritual designed to draw in a potential “woman.” Schillinger approaches a new inmate, Beecher. Schillinger offers Beecher sympathy and understanding and he tricks Beecher into requesting to become Schillinger’s cellmate. Once Beecher has become Schillinger’s cellmate, it becomes clear that Beecher has become Schillinger’s property. Beecher performs his gender differently than Schillinger. Schillinger has a strong masculine performance and Beecher’s gender performance is feminine. Beecher is a first time offender who enjoyed a life as a lawyer, a father, and a husband before his incarceration. Beecher has never performed hard labor and he is accustomed to civilized and polite conversations. When Beecher arrives in *Oz*, he is faced with a society that is different from the one he is used to. Beecher is polite, humble, and compliant. These qualities are not appreciated in *Oz*. They are qualities that are seen as feminine and soft. To be polite, humble, and compliant are dangerous characteristics to display in a society filled with violent, vengeful, and decisive men. When Beecher arrives in Emerald City, he becomes a perfect target for Schillinger. Schillinger needs a new “woman” and Beecher has enough feminine qualities to qualify.¹²⁴ The men who perform hypermasculinity regulate the society within the prison. The hypermasculine men also regulate what is seen as masculine and Beecher’s gender performance is not up to par.

Schillinger is the leader of the Aryan Brotherhood. Power is an important subject for all of the central characters in *Oz*, including the members of the Aryan Brotherhood. In many ways, their lives boil down to who holds the power and who are subjected to the power held by others. Schillinger loses his standing with the Aryan Brotherhood and the inmates of Emerald City at the end of Season One. Beecher is tired of the way Schillinger has been

¹²³ *Cruel and Unusual Punishment*. Season 3, Episode 6. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/18/1999

¹²⁴ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997

treating him. Schillinger has forced Beecher to become more effeminate than he originally was. Beecher's original gender performance was a performance that Beecher thought of as masculine. Schillinger forces Beecher to strip away every trace of masculinity. Schillinger forces Beecher to ask for permission to have sex with his wife,¹²⁵ he forces Beecher to wear makeup, and to act like a woman.¹²⁶ When Beecher has had enough of being forced to act emasculated, he attacks Schillinger. Schillinger sits in his cell, surrounded by followers, when Beecher throws a chair through one of the glass walls of the cell. Schillinger's eye is harmed in the attack, but Schillinger is able to retain his masculinity and his position of power.¹²⁷ In the next episode, Beecher feels that his attack on Schillinger has put him at risk for more abuse. Beecher asks to be transferred to another unit within the prison or to another prison altogether, but his request is denied. This forces Beecher to take action. Beecher walks into the gym where Schillinger is exercising. The room contains two sections. There are other prisoners present when Beecher attacks Schillinger. Beecher kicks Schillinger to the ground, locks the door separating the rooms, and throws a bench on Schillinger's torso. Beecher ties Schillinger's hands together and places him underneath the bench. Beecher undresses and defecates on Schillinger's face.¹²⁸ Schillinger would have been able to retain more of his honor, position, and standing in Emerald City if Beecher had not defecated on his face. To receive a beating is considered negative in itself, especially when you are in a position of power. Schillinger also makes matters worse when he decides to improve the way he acts towards others, because he wishes to be paroled in order to take care of his sons. He tries to convince the leader of Emerald City and the warden of Oz that he has become a better person after losing the use of his eye and after Beecher humiliated him in the gym. To be eligible for parole he has to convince the parole board that he is indeed a changed man, which forces

¹²⁵ *Visits: Conjugal and otherwise*. Season 1, Episode 2. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/14/1997

¹²⁶ *To Your Health*. Season 1, Episode 6. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/11/1997

¹²⁷ *To Your Health*. Season 1, Episode 6. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/11/1997

¹²⁸ *Plan B*. Season 1, Episode 7. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/18/1997

Schillinger to change his gender performance. He can no longer resort to violence and adopts a gender performance that can be interpreted as feminine. When a riot erupts in Emerald City, Schillinger hides in his cell, and when Beecher comes and threatens him, he shows fear.¹²⁹ Fear is a sign of weakness and is interpreted as a feminine characteristic within the prison. The sign of fear within Schillinger's gender performance and his love for his sons shows a more genuine side of Schillinger. This alteration makes him vulnerable to attacks from other inmates. Fear and concern, even concern that relates to his children, are not in agreement with the hyper-masculinity Schillinger has performed. These emotions conflict with his previous gender performance and leave him vulnerable. When Beecher threatens to make sure Schillinger is not paroled, Schillinger realizes that Beecher has to be killed. Schillinger attempts to have one of the Correctional Officers in Emerald City kill Beecher. The attempt is not successful. She lures Schillinger into a trap. Schillinger is convicted of attempted murder and his stay in Oz becomes a more permanent situation. This transforms Schillinger into a man with nothing left to lose.¹³⁰

When Schillinger realizes that he will not be able to get out of Oz, he changes his gender performance and starts a violent journey to regain the power he had. It is safer for him to be hyper-masculine once he knows he has to stay in Oz. Schillinger has noticed that the Aryan Brotherhood's position in Oz has diminished since his time in power and he lays a plan as to how they can regain power and how he can be reinstated as their leader. Schillinger realizes that the Aryan Brotherhood will have to "(...) kill the meanest motherfucker" inside the prison in order to regain the respect of the other groups.¹³¹ Once the Aryan Brotherhood has regained some of their power, Schillinger is willing to do anything to keep it. Schillinger is even willing to kill his own son, Andrew. When Andrew Schillinger is convicted of murder

¹²⁹ *A Game of Checkers*. Season 1, Episode 8. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/25/1997

¹³⁰ *Animal Farm*. Season 2, episode 7. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate:8/24/1998

¹³¹ *Great Men*. Season 2, episode 3. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/27/1998

and possession of an illegal substance, he is sent to Oz. Beecher sees this as an opportunity to harm Schillinger and asks McManus if he can be Andrew's cellmate.¹³² Andrew has a severe drug problem and is forced to get clean while he is in Oz. When Andrew goes through withdrawal, Beecher comforts him and helps him. Beecher does this by washing his face and talking to him about drug abuse. They also disclose their mutual hatred for Schillinger. Beecher also supports Andrew while they are in counseling for drug abuse. Beecher uses his friendship with Andrew as a weapon against Schillinger. Beecher has been able to do what Schillinger has not. He has established a bond with Andrew. He has also helped Andrew become drug free. When Schillinger sees that Andrew is drug free he approaches Andrew. Schillinger wants to establish a connection with his son. He wants to draw Andrew into his life, away from Beecher and into the Aryan Brotherhood. Andrew rejects Schillinger. He rejects him as a father and as a man. He expresses disapproval of the hatred Schillinger has taught him. Andrew tells Schillinger, "My whole life, you crammed into my head how superior white folks are. I don't see the truth in that. Yeah, I look around this room and I see white faces and black faces, and every color in between. And the only thing I know for sure is that we're all shit." Andrew also tells him "So fuck everything you believe in. Fuck everything you stand for, and fuck you!" Schillinger's response to Andrew's disrespectful outburst is to slap him. Andrew retaliates by starting a physical fight with his father. The correctional officers dissolve the situation and take Andrew to solitary. Schillinger has few choices in the aftermath of this situation. Andrew was disrespectful towards him in the cafeteria, a particularly crowded area of the prison. Several of the Aryan Brotherhood members witnessed the event along with members of other groups. Schillinger has to decide whether he wants to be decisive and take action or forgive his son and overlook the situation. Schillinger decides to make it clear and announces that his son is dead to him. He also pays a

¹³² *Losing Your Appeal*. Season 3, Episode 4. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/3/1998

correctional officer to deliver heroin to Andrew while he is in solitary. Andrew uses the heroin and overdoses.¹³³ The nature of a total institution forces Schillinger and Beecher to adjust their gender performance. Beecher is compliant when Schillinger forces him to become an embodiment of a woman, because Beecher is unaware of how masculinity is performed in Oz when he first arrives. When Beecher performs his gender in a more masculine manner, he moves towards a destructive masculinity. Beecher harms Schillinger's eye, he defecates on Schillinger's face, and he is responsible for giving Andrew enough backbone to stand up to his father, which leads to Andrew's death.

James Robson

James Robson is Schillinger's second in command for a large part of the show and he is an Aryan Brotherhood member whose gender performance shows many of the same signs as Schillinger. Robson is violent and determined. Robson is physically fit, never stands down in a fight, and he shows no compassion for other inmates. The inmates that are not a part of Robson's group can only be useful to him if they can perform sexual favors or have something else that he deems as useful. The first meeting with Robson shows him in his cell in Unit B. Beecher and the other inmates from Emerald City have been sent to Unit B after the riot at the end of Season One. Beecher has been placed in Robson's cell. The first scene featuring Robson shows him as he gets out of his bed, stands in front of Beecher, and commands him to perform oral sex.¹³⁴ Robson's gender performance in this first scene is developed and asserted through the rest of his portrayal. In Season Three, the prison decides to have a boxing tournament. Each group is allowed to have one member participate in the tournament and the Aryan Brotherhood chooses to send Robson based on his physical

¹³³ *U.S. Male*. Season 3, Episode 5. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/11/1999

¹³⁴ *The Tip*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/11/1998

condition and his ability to fight.¹³⁵ This is a sign of how valuable Robson is as a fighter. The Aryan Brotherhood have several eligible men, but they choose to use him.

In Season Five, Robson needs gum replacement surgery. He makes the foolish mistake of uttering racial slurs toward the dentist who will be responsible for securing his donor gums and perform Robson's surgery. Robson's actions toward the dentist show how resolute and consistent Robson is regarding how he performs his gender and his representation. When he is in the dentist's office, his performance stays the same, despite the fact that there are no other inmates in his vicinity. The dentist decides to take revenge for Robson's disrespectful behavior. The dentist secures new gums for Robson, but makes sure they are from a non-white donor. He also pays a black inmate to share the knowledge of Robson's new gums.¹³⁶ The word spreads quickly and the Aryan Brotherhood is forced to take action. Before they are able to ostracize Robson, he attempts to cut out his new gums with a razor blade. He hopes the removal of the gums will restore his racial purity. His action shows the lengths he will go through to carry out his inner beliefs. The incident reveals the only fear Robson seems to have. Robson is afraid to lose his position in the Aryan Brotherhood and be ostracized. Robson fears exclusion from the group because it will leave him vulnerable. Robson has acquired a large amount of enemies during his incarceration and if he is excluded from the Aryan Brotherhood, he will be alone. The other groups within the prison are unlikely to invite Robson to seek membership. It is more likely that his enemies will try to kill Robson. In a total institution, it is risky for someone like Robson to be forced to stand on his own. Robson has killed, raped, and committed violent acts toward several inmates in *Oz*. If the Aryan Brotherhood exclude Robson they withdraw their protection and they send a message to the

¹³⁵ *Legs*. Season 3, Episode 3. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/28/1999

¹³⁶ *Good Intentions*. Season 5, Episode 7. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 2/17/2002

rest of the prison. Robson can be harmed without repercussion. The nature of the prison also makes it impossible for Robson to escape attacks and enemies.

The Aryan Brotherhood terminates his membership to the group because his racial purity has been compromised.¹³⁷ Once he has been excluded, one of the Aryan Brotherhood members decides to make Robson his “prag”.¹³⁸ To be someone’s “prag” implicates that you belong to another person. It is also a process where a man is stripped of his manhood and forced to adopt feminine characteristics. When you become someone’s “prag,” you essentially become their “woman”. A prag has to endure a large amount of physical, mental, and sexual abuse. The mental abuse is tied to the process where the “prag” has to become effeminate. In many cases, it is not enough to perform sexual acts for another man. They often have to dress like a woman as well. Before Robson becomes Cutler’s “prag” he is alone. Other groups and inmates threaten him and he has no one on his side. Cutler’s abuse is the final hit in a series of many since his exclusion from the Brotherhood. Robson decides to turn to the prison psychiatrist, Sister Pete. Robson is forth-coming with her and shows one of the few genuine performances of masculinity. Robson tells Sister Pete that his father sexually abused him when he was a child. He also tells her that since then, he has felt that he might die at any moment. Robson adjusts his gender performance after his conversation with Sister Pete. Robson becomes compliant with Cutler’s requests and he lets Cutler insert a spoon into his rectum.¹³⁹ He wears make up and acts like a woman.¹⁴⁰ Robson’s performance as a woman is just that, a performance. Robson’s compliance towards Cutler is to a certain degree necessary for him to survive and to receive protection, but he is planning to kill Cutler. His plan becomes even more viable when members of the Italian group in Emerald City approach him. They want Robson to kill Cutler. If Robson kills Cutler, he will gain favors from the inmates

¹³⁷ *Impotence*. Season 5, Episode 8. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 2/24/2002

¹³⁸ *See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Smell No Evil*. Season 6, Episode 2. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 1/12/2003

¹³⁹ *See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Smell No Evil*. Season 6, Episode 2. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 1/12/2003

¹⁴⁰ *Sonata Da Oz*. Season 6, Episode 3. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 1/19/2003

who work in the kitchen. He will also be able to reconstitute his reputation and prove to the Brotherhood what he already knows, he is a hyper-masculine man. Robson's plan involves full cooperation with Cutler. He goes along with Cutler's sexual requests and tells Sister Pete that he fears Cutler might commit suicide. Robson tricks Cutler into Breath Control Play, which requires Cutler to restrict his breathing during sex in order to achieve a more pleasurable orgasm.¹⁴¹ Cutler dies as a result and his death is documented as a suicide. Cutler's "suicide" helps Robson to regain his previous position as a valuable member of the Aryan Brotherhood. Robson has proven to Schillinger that he never lost his masculinity.

Darby and Weston in *Sons of Anarchy*

Darby and Weston in *Sons of Anarchy* are white organized racists, but their portrayals differ greatly. They belong to two different white racist groups and adhere to different racist ideologies. Darby is a racist skinhead and a white supremacist. Weston is a nationalist and a white separatist. They also perform two different types of masculinities. Darby is cunning, but unsuspecting, while Weston is violent and loyal. Darby and Weston are different, but both are show consistency in the way they behave and the way they dress. Their clothes are appropriate attire for their behavior, their ideological beliefs, and their performance. Darby often wears tank tops, plain pants, and army boots. His group members can be seen wearing similar clothing.¹⁴² Weston also wears army boots, as well as, tight t-shirts, and army pants. Darby's clothing resembles common clothing amongst racist skinheads. Weston's representation and gender performance gives the impression of a soldier.¹⁴³ Weston takes orders well and he is loyal to his leader, Zobelle, to their group and to their cause. Weston is willing to kill and rape if he is ordered to and he does not ask questions. Some of his actions

¹⁴¹ *A Failure to Communicate*. Season 6, Episode 4. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 1/26/2003

¹⁴² *The Pull*. Season 1, Episode 8. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 10/22/2008

¹⁴³ *Albification*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

show that Weston is a cold man. He lacks compassion and holds no regard for other people. He only works to achieve the group's goal, which is to gain control over Charming. At the beginning of Season Two, Zabelle coordinates his group to attack the matriarch of Samcro. Zabelle's daughter tricks Gemma out of her car and Weston rapes her together with other members of their group.¹⁴⁴ The intention behind the rape was a message to Samcro, intended to stop them from selling guns to a black crew. Zabelle and Weston do not want people who are non-white in their area to have weapons. They hope the rape will provoke Samcro and cause Samcro to seek revenge without following a plan. Their plan fails. Gemma does not tell Samcro about the rape until she feels she has no other choice.¹⁴⁵ Weston never shows fear, not even when Samcro become a threat to his children. Samcro breaks into Weston's house after Gemma has told them about the rape. They do not expect to find children inside the house and are surprised when one of them points a gun towards one of the Samcro members. Weston has raised them to believe in the same ideologies as him, and he has taught them to distrust everyone. They decide to contact the sheriff who in turn contacts child protective services.¹⁴⁶ When Weston finds out what that his children have been taken from him, he reacts with anger.¹⁴⁷ Weston's gender performance shows a hard man. He performs his gender with consistency and does not allow anyone to misinterpret his intentions, his masculinity, or his presentation. He has a tough exterior and he gives the impression that his interior is hard and cold.

Darby's gender performance shows a man who often tries to perform gender in a manner that corresponds with the performances of other men on the show, but he often fails. Samcro, the local motorcycle club, are the kingpins of Charming and they have made a deal with Charming PD. This deal states that Samcro will keep drugs out of Charming, if the

¹⁴⁴ *Albification*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

¹⁴⁵ *Balm*. Season 2, Episode 10. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 11/10/2009

¹⁴⁶ *Service*. Season 2, Episode 11. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 11/17/2009

¹⁴⁷ *Culling*. Season 2, Episode 12. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 11/14/2009

police abstain from interfering with Samcro's clubhouse and their business. Their business is selling guns to groups located outside Charming.¹⁴⁸ The President of Samcro has given Darby an order that prevents him from selling his methamphetamine inside Charming.¹⁴⁹ This order makes Darby angry and vindictive. As retaliation for being disrespectful and domineering towards him, Darby chooses to seek out Samcro's enemies the Mayans. Darby and the Mayans decide to burn down Samcro's warehouse and steal their firearms. Darby also receives a file from an ATF agent that contains information regarding Samcro's firearms and their supplier. Darby shares the information with the Mayans, trusting that their cooperation is as valuable to them as it is to him. He is wrong and the Mayans send two young men to kill Darby. They are unsuccessful. They kill several people who are present in his house during the attack, but Darby is in an adjacent room and manages to hide.¹⁵⁰ Samcro was attacked at the same time as Darby and before they know of the attack on Darby, they think Darby was behind the attack and they suspect that he is cooperating with the Mayans. When Samcro learn of the attack on Darby, they summon a meeting with Darby. Darby knows that he cannot fight Samcro and win so he is humble and tries to escape the situation alive.¹⁵¹ Darby shows that he has blind faith in the groups he cooperates with. He trusts that the Mayans will honor their agreement when he shares his information with them. In Season Two, he receives money and muscle from Weston and Zabelle. They help him pay for his methamphetamine and prostitution business. Weston wants Darby to use white workers and he wants him to have enough money to flood the streets of Charming with drugs.¹⁵² Weston and Zabelle want Darby to make high-end prostitutes available in a close proximity of Charming. Zabelle calls the police and tells them that there is a prostitution ring located within Charming and Weston

¹⁴⁸ *Hell Followed*. Season 1, Episode 9. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 10/29/2008

¹⁴⁹ *Pilot*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 9/3/2008

¹⁵⁰ *The Pull*. Season 1, Episode 8. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 10/22/2008

¹⁵¹ *Hell Followed*: Season 1. Episode 9. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 10/29/2008

¹⁵² *Albification*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

has instructed the prostitutes to tell the police that the Vice President of Samcro is in charge of the prostitutes. The police arrest the Vice President, but when they learn that he is not responsible, they let him go. When Darby hears that Weston and Zabelle were the ones who called the police he rushes over to Zabelle's cigar shop. He asks Zabelle why they would finance his operations just to remove their support and let his business be compromised. Zabelle manages to make Darby believe that Samcro was responsible for the entire incident. He also asks Darby if he wants revenge. Weston lures Darby into a trap. They go to a warehouse owned by Samcro. When they arrive at the site they pour gasoline everywhere and Weston assures Darby that it will burn down to the ground and no one will be the wiser. He also tells Darby that he is no longer useful to him or his cause. Darby's willingness to believe Weston and Zabelle leads to the murder attempt.¹⁵³ Weston's attack on Darby is unsuccessful, but the audience is unaware of this until the third season when Darby is laying in a hospital bed recovering from the attack.¹⁵⁴ Another sign of weakness in Darby's gender performance is tied to his emotional reactions. Darby often tries to hide his emotional reactions, but he fails.

Weston is an outsider in Charming. His gender performance has not been shaped by the masculinity present in Charming, but his gender performance fit well with the environment in Charming. Darby is a native to Charming.¹⁵⁵ His gender performance is intertwined with the gender performances found amongst the members of the community present in this particular town. The masculine performances in *Sons of Anarchy* can be seen in relation to the protagonist of this show, Jax Teller, and the members of his motorcycle gang, Samcro. The members of Samcro belong to a violence society. Darby is an extension of this violent society in Season One of the show. He is willingly being drawn into a world filled

¹⁵³ *Fa Guan*. Season 2, Episode 9. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 11/3/2009

¹⁵⁴ *The Push*. Season 3, Episode 6. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2011) Original Airdate: 10/5/2010

¹⁵⁵ *Seeds*. Season 1, Episode 2. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2009) Original Airdate: 9/10/2009

with violent men who openly struggles for power. Weston and Zabelle also become a willing part of this society in Season Two.

Boyd Crowder: A Destructive Force

Boyd Crowder in *Justified* has a manipulative and charismatic personality, but he has a destructive masculinity. Boyd is in many ways a destructive force. In the first episode alone, he shows his skills as a leader and his violent tendencies. If Boyd wants something done, his followers are happy to do as he says. When Boyd's followers disagree with his instructions, they do not tell him. They carry out the task. In the first episode, Boyd blows up a church, he kills a man, he is responsible for a car bomb, and a bank robbery. Boyd also holds his sister-in-law hostage in order to draw Raylan, the protagonist of the show, to her house. Boyd also threatens to kill Raylan, but Raylan manages to shoot Boyd instead.¹⁵⁶ Boyd continues to perform his gender in a violent manner after the first episode. Some of his violent acts are committed out of will, but some are committed out of necessity. Even when Boyd does not wish to be involved in criminal or violent activities, he commits violent offences against others. In Season Two, a fellow coal miner approaches Boyd. The coal miner asks Boyd about Boyd's reputation as a violent and criminal white organized racist. Boyd rejects the coal miner and asks him to leave. Boyd leaves the bar they are in and walks to his car. The coal miner approaches Boyd's car. Boyd tells the coal miner that he is not interested in talking to him and in a moment of frustration, Boyd grabs ahold of the coal miner and drags him alongside the moving car. Boyd holds on to the man for a while, but releases him. Boyd's violent act seems to be a response he cannot control. Boyd often tries to hide feelings such as anger and frustration, but at times it overwhelms him and he has to act.¹⁵⁷ The coal miner

¹⁵⁶ *The Pilot: Fire in the Hole* Season 1, Episode 1. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

¹⁵⁷ *For Blood or Money*. Season 2, Episode 4. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 3/3/2011

continues to contact Boyd. Eventually, Boyd realizes that the coal miner will not stop until Boyd joins the coal miner's small gang of criminals. The coal miner and his friends plan to rob the company they work for and he plans to kill Boyd. Boyd learns of their plan and tricks them into blowing themselves up. The incidents with the coal miner take place during a time of Boyd's storyline where he tries to live a law-abiding life. After the coal miner and his friends are dead, Boyd steals the money they had taken and gives it to Ava. He also tells Ava that he has had an epiphany. Kyle and his fellow white organized racist Dewey have reminded Boyd of who he is. He comes from the Crowder family. Dewey also reminds Boyd that he is a violent man and a criminal.¹⁵⁸

Boyd tries to change who he is at the beginning of Season Two, but once he returns to the criminal world in Harland County he enters with full force. Boyd never apologizes for his gender performance or his representation. He states several times that he cannot change his violent past and he rarely feels sorry for the acts he has committed. During Season One, after Boyd's faith in God has been strengthened. Boyd acknowledges his past actions and views them as wrong, but he does not seem to regret them. In an episode of Season Three, he lists several of the violent crimes he has committed and tells one of his followers, Devil, "I can't discard my past any more than I can these tattoos."¹⁵⁹ This shows a man who has made peace with his violent gender performance, at least to some degree. It also shows a man who sees no reason to look at the past and regret it. During season three, he kills Devil because Devil has started to cooperate with a rival gang. Devil does this while he is still a part of Boyd's crew and he functions as a spy for his new associates. When Ava asks Boyd if he regrets killing Devil he replies, "I regret that he made it necessary."¹⁶⁰ From the middle of Season Two, Boyd often commits violent crimes because they are necessary. They are necessary in order

¹⁵⁸ *Cottonmouth*. Season 2, Episode 5. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 3/9/2011

¹⁵⁹ *Harlan Roulette*. Season 3, Episode 3. *Justified*. (2012) Original Airdate: 1/31/2012

¹⁶⁰ *Thick as Mud*. Season 3, Episode 5. *Justified*. (2012) Original Airdate: 2/14/2012

for him to achieve his goal, which is control over the drug trade in Harlan County. It is necessary in order to take control over rival crews, but also when Boyd and his crew are forced to retaliate. In Season Two, Boyd makes a deal with a woman who has control over the marijuana trade in Harlan County. Her family will continue to be in control over the marijuana produced and sold in Harlan and Boyd can take control over Oxy, Methamphetamine, and any other drug.¹⁶¹ One of her sons revokes the deal and Boyd decides that he needs to teach him a lesson. He does this by robbing him of his money and his product.¹⁶² The robbery has severe consequences, as do several of Boyd's violent crimes. Raylan's aunt, who is married to Raylan's father, is killed.¹⁶³ Boyd is bound by the limitations created within Harlan County. Boyd can try to change his behavior, and how he lives his life, but he is not allowed to change because the premise of set by his earlier performances has created a persona Boyd cannot escape. His punishment for changing his performance is attempted murder. In order to survive, Boyd is forced to either runaway from Harlan, which entails leaving everyone he knows behind, or changes his performance.

Boyd's charisma and his reputation as a violent man help him to gain an audience and to gain followers. Boyd is able to mold and modify his performances to fit his audience, with the exception of his stay in prison during Season One. When Boyd is in prison, he preaches to the other prisoners about the love of God and it is unsuccessful. His father has to intervene and prevent the other prisoners from attacking him.¹⁶⁴ Once he is released from prison, he is more successful. Boyd attends a church service, and when the pastor asks someone to testify to the work of "The good Lord", Boyd says that he can testify. Boyd speaks to the crowd with much enthusiasm and they seem to appreciate his spirit.¹⁶⁵ Toward the end of Season Two,

¹⁶¹ *Debts and Accounts* Season 2, Episode 10. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 4/13/2011

¹⁶² *Full Commitment*. Season 2, Episode 11. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 4/20/2011

¹⁶³ *Full Commitment*. Season 2, Episode 11. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 4/20/2011

¹⁶⁴ *Blindspot*. Season 1, Episode 7. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate:4/27/2010

¹⁶⁵ *Hatless*. Season 1, Episode 9. *Justified*. (2010) Original Airdate: 5/11/2010

when Boyd has decided to leave his law-abiding life behind him to return to a life of crime. He is able to gather a group of willing participants to join him in a crew who will seek to gain control over the drug trade in Harlan County.¹⁶⁶

Conclusion

The total institutions within *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* shape the environment and the culture created within the institutions themselves. The masculinity performed by Schillinger and Robson show hypermasculine men who are aware of their gender performance. They know their performance is an act. The environment within the prison shapes their performance. There are few female characters to create a softening spot. The strongest feminine influence inside *Oz* is male characters performing their gender in a feminine manner and it does not soften Schillinger and Robson's gender performance. It only seems to harden their masculinity and strengthen how they perform their masculinity. Schillinger and Robson prove on a few occasions that they are well aware of the act they put on when they perform their gender. When Schillinger wishes to be paroled from prison, he changes his gender performance, from a hypermasculinity and becomes more effeminate. When Schillinger realizes that he will not receive parole, he changes his performance yet again and resumes his gender performance as a hypermasculine man.

Darby and Weston in *Sons of Anarchy* perform their gender in two separate manners. Darby often tries to hide his weak sides, but fails. Darby is always an underdog. In Season One Samcro often decides what Darby can and cannot do. In Season Two, Weston tries to decide what Darby can and cannot do. Weston, however, is shown as a man who is extremely serious. He is a soldier for his cause, and he shows a consistent gender performance. Weston is not a hypermasculine male along the same lines as Schillinger and Robson, but he is

¹⁶⁶ *Full Commitment*. Season 2, Episode 11. *Justified*. (2011) Original Airdate: 4/20/2011

hypermasculine when compared to Darby. In *Sons of Anarchy*, Weston also demonstrates that he is a destructive force. Weston is willing to do whatever it takes to achieve his goals. Weston's long-term goal is to help Zobelle create a safe haven for the white race. His short-term goals change along with the storyline. Weston is loyal to his cause and will carry out any order given to him, whether he is asked to rape someone or kill. Boyd is in a league of his own in many ways. Boyd has a destructive masculinity. Boyd kills several people during the first three seasons of *Justified*. He also blows up a church, a car, robs a bank, and robs a drug dealer. One of the common denominators of these three shows is tied to the punishment the characters receive if they change their gender performance, especially if the gender performance contains characteristics that can be interpreted as feminine. When Schillinger changes his gender performance because he wishes to be paroled in order to take care of his two teenage sons, it does not sit well with the Aryan Brotherhood or the other inmates in Oz. When he decides to change his gender performance and go back to how he performed his masculinity during the first season of *Oz* he has to kill and rape in order to gain the respect of others. Robson is forced to become effeminate during Season Six of *Oz*. Robson has to kill his "master" in order to regain the respect of his fellow Aryan Brothers. In *Sons of Anarchy*, only Darby shows any signs of what can be labeled as feminine characteristics and Weston attempts to kill Darby when Darby is no longer useful to serve a purpose in Weston's plan. In *Justified*, Boyd is punished when he decides to soften his masculine performance. Boyd goes from having a destructive masculinity and adopts a more neutral gender performance. When someone plans to kill Boyd he realizes that he has to embrace the person he is and the person he is meant to be, a destructive man who will kill anyone who gets in his way.

Chapter Four:

“Body Modification and Tattoos”

Introduction

Tattoos of racist symbols can be seen in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified*, but it can also be seen in other shows that feature white organized racist characters. Tattoos are actively being used in the portrayal of white organized racist characters. They help as a visual aid in the physical portrayal of these characters. In some instances, they are used as a way of letting the audience and other characters know that the person wearing the tattoo indeed is a white organized racist. The tattoos are also the subject of several conversations and are used as way to tell parts of the storyline involving white organized racist characters. The main purpose of this chapter is to examine to what extent tattoos are used as a tool when portraying white organized racist characters on television.

Tattoos are classified as body modification. Body modification is a term that relates to practices that involve changing the appearance of the outer body. In some cases, these practices even change the form of the body.¹⁶⁷ Body modification is divided into two categories, *soft* and *hard* technologies.¹⁶⁸ The former relates to practices such as tattoos, piercings and scarification. *Soft* technologies change the outer body and the appearance of the body, but not the form. It is a less invasive way of changing the body. *Hard* technologies, however, relate to practices that are more invasive than *soft* technologies such as cosmetic surgery where they actually cut into the body and even use implants to change both the

¹⁶⁷ Mike Featherstone. *Body Modification: An Introduction*. In: *Body Modification*. Edited by Mike Featherstone. London: SAGE publishing. (2000) p.1

¹⁶⁸ Lisa Blackman. *The Body. The Key Concepts*. (2008). New York: Berg Publishing. P.11

appearance and the form of the body.¹⁶⁹ Biotechnology is considered a *hard* technology.¹⁷⁰ Some might think of body modification as something that stems from the 20th century and it can therefore be seen as something *new*. *Soft* technologies, especially tattoos, are not a new phenomenon in any way. Tattoos and body markings are old practices and there have been found evidence of tattoos on Egyptian mummies that stem from the period of the Middle Kingdom. The symbolism and function of these tattoos seem to change from one geographical area to another. In the Mediterranean area and in the Middle East tattoos were used as a way to ward off evil and guarantee good health in the past. While In Hawaii it was common to get tattoos to memorialize deceased relatives, and in Indonesia some people got tattoos to show off their secular accomplishments.¹⁷¹ Body markings were common in several pre-literate societies in some places they were permanent, collective and obligatory. These tattoos were seen as a part of a shared culture within the respective societies that practiced body markings and they showed as well as celebrated the different stages of life, e.g. growing into manhood and fertility, both of which are related to sexual maturity.¹⁷²

Body modification has grown in popularity in the last 40 years.¹⁷³ In the last few decades there has been a change in both why people commit to body modification as well as who modifies their bodies. According to Paul Sweetman there has been a popular image of the tattooed as a young working class male. He states that this is an outdated image of the tattooed. One of the reasons for this is that since the 1980s, both men and women who comes from different socio-economic backgrounds have chosen to enter tattoo studios.¹⁷⁴ Even though there has been a shift in who gets a tattoo, there is still a difference concerning what

¹⁶⁹ Featherstone. *Body modification: an introduction*. (2000) P.1

¹⁷⁰ Blackman. *The Body*. (2008) p.11

¹⁷¹ Bryan S. Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness: Towards a Sociology of Body Marks in Cool Societies*. In: *Body Modification*. Edited by Mike Featherstone. London: SAGE publishing. (2000). p.39

¹⁷² Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness* (2000) p. 39-40

¹⁷³ Featherstone. *Body modification: an introduction*. P.1

¹⁷⁴ Paul Sweetman. *Anchoring the (Postmodern) Self? Body Modification, Fashion and Identity*. (2000) p.51

types of tattoos people from different socio-economic classes obtain, e.g. a middle class female might obtain a tattoo that is aesthetic or sexual,¹⁷⁵ while a working class male might get one that ties him to a certain occupation or social group.¹⁷⁶ Although we have moved away from traditional tribalism where tattoos were an important part of a collective culture, we can see traces of neo-tribalism in today's society. The socio-economic divide connected to tattoos is a symbol of this. Turner writes that the part of the underclass who take jobs in the unskilled section of the work market are often trapped in a market that is underdeveloped and this makes it more likely for them "(...) to adopt a neo-tribal mentality which fits their wish for therapeutically thick/hot communities." Turner concludes that the reason they are more likely to opt for such a mentality is that they belong to a part of society where they are not mobile in the world economy, i.e. they are not culturally or physically mobile. They also lack the power to control, develop, and manage symbolism, knowledge and the systems where information is stored and shared. The people who control this sector of the market are professionals, academic elites, white-collar workers, and business professionals. Turner states that the underclass who adopt a neo-tribal mentality often seek out groups that express local solidarity and "(...) are also partly simulated forms of traditional communalism." He continues by writing that neo-tribalism today can spill over to genuine fascism. The people who partake in this neo-tribalism mentality can easily show a sense of belonging that can "(...) become overtly hostile to the cosmopolitanism of the global market. Tattoos can survive in this group as a primary mark of hot/thick loyalties."¹⁷⁷ Turner compares the traditional working-class occupations and the modern world of unemployment. Inside the traditional working class a tattoo can often be an unofficial mark of membership to a certain occupation. He uses sailors and soldiers as an example and he writes that tattoos of this sort can indicate that the male

¹⁷⁵ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.49

¹⁷⁶ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.46

¹⁷⁷ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.46

wearing it belongs to a "(...) culture of work and hardship.". While in today's world "(...) tattoos on hands and foreheads which proclaim 'Hate' are indicative of alienation and separation rather than masculine mateship." He compares this type of tattoos to the esthetic and discreet tattoos worn by professional middle-class women and by fashion models. Turner writes that these women are "(...) sexual consumer images; they are removable adornments."¹⁷⁸ All of the characters in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified* that have racist symbols tattooed on their bodies fit Turners description of men who seem to choose to show their racist tattoos to the world as a way of wanting to show others that they do not belong to the rest of society. They are primarily not the members of western society that Turner speaks of, still, the characters belong to their very own separate groups and they alienate themselves from the society. This separation and alienation is far more visible in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified*, than in *Oz*. The main reason for this is that the white organized racist characters in *Oz* belong to a very different society than Darby, Weston, Zobelle, Boyd Crowder and Crowder's followers. The life inside *Oz* is largely defined by a hostile environment where each prisoner either belongs to a group or is a loner who has to constantly fend for himself. In the case of the Aryan Brotherhood, the tattoos are used as a sign that they belong to the same belief system or at least share the same ideological beliefs to a certain extent. In many ways most of the groups are in some way separated from each other and people who don't belong to a specific group will be alienated, ignored, and in some cases killed.

Where do we place racist tattoos and the tattooed racists, especially the fictional ones, in today's society? Bryan S. Turner has developed two dichotomies concerning body modification. As he explains it, "I have developed a typology of society in terms of two dichotomies – thick and thin solidarity, and cool and hot loyalties."¹⁷⁹ Turner classifies

¹⁷⁸ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.46-47

¹⁷⁹ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.41

traditional tribalism as thick and hot because body marks were obligatory. While in today's postmodern neo-tribalism society body marks are optional, which makes today's society thin and cool. This does not necessarily imply that the solidarity and loyalties of tattooed organized racists are thin and cool. Turner writes that the thin and cool attachment to solidarity and loyalty describes a postmodern society "(...) where attachment to social reality are ironic, because they are incompatible with 'grand narratives'"¹⁸⁰ Postmodern society is a place where the self is revisable and where you can easily shift solidarities and negotiate loyalties. It is also a society where communication is not only ironic it is also "(...) tentative and reflexive."¹⁸¹ The postmodern society described by Turner is the opposite of political nationalism. Modernity can involve societies where solidarity is thick, i.e. nationalism, and loyalties are hot, i.e. ideological certainty.¹⁸² Political nationalism contains elements of this, because it requires thick solidarity and hot loyalties. It is often based on social relations that revolve around two dichotomies, i.e. friend/enemy and insider/outsider.¹⁸³ The tattooed racist, whether fictional or non-fictional, fits well into Turners dichotomy. Their solidarity is thick and their loyalties are hot. Body modification such as a tattoo could be altered by having a tattoo made over the old one or it can be removed by using laser technology.

Types of tattoos shown and their significance

Many of the white organized racist characters have tattoos. Some of these tattoos are racist symbols, while some do not hold a specific racist significance. The racist symbol that appears the most frequently is the Swastika. This symbol might also be the one that is the most

¹⁸⁰ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.45

¹⁸¹ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.44

¹⁸² Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.44-45

¹⁸³ Turner. *The Possibility of Primitiveness*. (2000) p.45

familiar to viewers. The Swastika is the foremost recognizable symbol for Hitler's Nazi Germany and the Nazi party. This is an ancient symbol that holds significance within several religions, such as Buddhism and Hinduism, and it was used several thousand years prior to the 1920s when Hitler made the Swastika a symbol for his party and his politics.¹⁸⁴ A Swastika tattoo on a white organized racist character often gives a clear indication to other fictional characters of what types of affiliations the racist character has. It is also an indication of what type of attitudes the racist character has. Several racist characters that can be found in the primary sources have tattoos. These characters range from flat to three-dimensional. The Swastika appears the most often on the tattooed racist bodies. Most of the racist bodies that are tattooed have at least one Swastika. Some of these bodies also include other racist symbols, such as the SS-bolts and the German Eagle carrying the Swastika in a medallion. In *Oz*, four separate characters carry the official symbol for the white organized racist group Aryan Nation in the form of a tattoo. The display of a specific symbol that can be tied to a specific group is rare. The only TV show that comes close to depicting a specific symbol of this kind can be seen in an episode of *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* where the *CSI* team finds a dead teenager stuck inside a storm drain. When they venture inside the storm drain, they find a room at the end of a tunnel. One of the main characters remarks, "This is beginning to look more like a clan house, then a clubhouse." They find a symbol spray painted on the wall as well as printed on a poster. The poster has a red background and shows three army men at the bottom and above them is an eagle holding a circle with a cross inside. Another *CSI* character remarks that the symbol on the wall is the same as a tattoo the dead teenager has on his hand. When the coroner examines the body together with a *CSI* character,

¹⁸⁴ United States Memorial Holocaust Museum. *The History of the Swastika*. URL: <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007453>. (Read on: 7/5/ 2011)

they find a white supremacist tattoo on the teenager's chest. It is hard to make out what the tattoo depicts.¹⁸⁵

The Significance of Racist Symbols

Having a racist symbol tattooed on your body shows a high level of commitment to a group, a cause, an ideology or an attitude. This is tied in with the nature of body modification. A tattoo is a permanent alteration of the way your body looks. To have a Swastika tattooed on your body, you not only make a permanent change as to how your body looks, you also make it possible for racist and non-racist individuals to recognize thoughts and ideas you believe in. In other words, if the tattoo is easily visible to others you expose your inner self. In the case of racist tattoos, one might say that their solidarity is thick, their loyalties are hot, and the tattoos are a confirmation of this. This does not imply that such a commitment is non-negotiable. There are some examples of visual popular culture where this has been examined to a certain extent, e.g. in the 1998 movie *American History X*. The storyline revolves around two brothers. The oldest brother, Derek Vinyard, is a committed member of a racist skinhead group. Derek's solidarity and loyalty can be described as thick and hot in several ways. He is also an up and coming member in his racist skinhead group. He is also young, angry, and violent. He leads several of the other group members through raids on behalf of the group and their beliefs. Derek's storyline is highly defined by an event that causes him to be convicted of murder and imprisoned after killing a young African American man. Derek has a Swastika tattooed on the right side of his chest and barbed wire on both of his upper arms. Once he is incarcerated, he takes off his shirt while working out in the inmate yard. He calls this a way to throw up a flag. His action places him on the prison map. It signifies to the skinheads and

¹⁸⁵ *World's End*. Season 10, Episode 19. CSI. (2010) CBS on iTunes. Original Airdate: 4/22/2010

white organized racists that he is one of them, but it is also a strong signal to send to other prison groups. The skinhead group takes Derek in and gives him a sense of group belonging. One of the group members is involved in contraband exchanges and sales. Derek notices this and finds it unacceptable for racist skinheads to deal contraband and have contact with non-whites. He shares his thoughts and feeling with the group, who laughs at him and tells him to cool down. This causes Derek to abandon the group. He turns his back on them to make a point. Derek wants to show that he does not agree with their practices and he dislikes that the rest of the group members are breaking an important skinhead rule. You do not associate with non-whites. This action yields severe consequences for Derek. The group members rape him in a shower to show him that he is a low ranking member and that his actions toward the group are not acceptable. After the rape the group expects him to rejoin the group and fall into line. Derek chooses to disrespect them publicly by upholding his contempt and level of disrespect. Through these actions, he shows that his solidarity and loyalty towards his ideological beliefs are thick and hot. Derek's actions force him to make decisions and take actions in life that differ strongly from how he would have acted if his ideological solidarity and loyalty were thin and cool.

After the rape, Derek receives a visit from his former English teacher. This teacher is a black man. The teacher manages to guide Derek onto a new path through books. Derek also encounters a black inmate. Over time, this inmate becomes his friend. By the time Derek is released from jail on probation he has changed in several ways. His ideological solidarity and loyalty is thin and cool. His feelings towards his former group have turned thin and cool. The story of Derek shows how he goes from being a person who is committed to his beliefs as a racist skinhead to how he becomes a non-racist who feels lured into believing in false messages and a hateful life style. It also shows that attitudes and ideological beliefs of this sort can be negotiated over time. The portrayal of Derek as a racist skinhead and as a devoted

organized racist is intense. The turning point in Derek comes after seeing that others who belong to his group and ideological beliefs are not as committed as him. Over time, his tattoos become a symbol of the man he was and not the man he is. In a scene that takes place after his release from prison, he looks at himself in the mirror after coming out of the shower. He touches the Swastika on his chest for a moment before he dresses. The symbolism in this scene can only be interpreted once he starts to convince his brother that the skinhead movement is wrong and a waste of time and after Derek's confrontation with the skinhead group leader, a middle-aged man named Cameron.¹⁸⁶ The portrayal of how Derek feels about his Swastika over time is rare. Boyd Crowder is the only other white organized racist character that comes close to acknowledging any regrets as far as his racist tattoos are concerned. Despite the hints of regret Boyd makes, he seems to have made some peace with both his past and the fact that the tattoos are strong relics of that past. In an episode of *Justified*, one of his partners in crime, Devil, asks Boyd a simple question. Devil states, "I just want to know which Boyd Crowder I'm being asked to follow." Boyd chooses to answer the question in the following manner:

"Hem, well. What if I told you I was a man who recruited you in that church, but then I also told you that I was the man who got shot. Who found God. Who betrayed his father. That I was the man who killed men and got a whole bunch of men killed. See Devil. I can't discard my past anymore then I can these tattoos.(...)"¹⁸⁷

Boyd has a Swastika tattooed on his arm and Skin written a cross the knuckles of one of his hands. To have "Skin" written on the knuckles of one hand is common. The tattoo itself is

¹⁸⁶ American History X. (1998) Directed by: Tony Kaye

¹⁸⁷ Harlan Roulette. Season 3, Episode 3. Justified. (2012) Original Airdate: 1/31/2012

connected to skinheads.¹⁸⁸ What is uncommon is that Boyd does not have "head" written on the other hand. This can be explained by something Boyd says during the first episode of *Justified*. He uses the word Skins instead of Skinheads. In the case of Boyd, the tattoo does not necessarily signify that his solidarity and loyalties to the racist beliefs and ideologies he speaks of during the first episode of *Justified* is thick and hot. Boyd is a character that keeps changing, and he is the only one that changes as many times as he does. Other characters are far more devoted to their racist cause and motives than Boyd. In fact, Walton Goggins, the actor who plays Boyd Crowder, confirms that Boyd is not as committed to his white organized racist group as he wants people to think he is. One of the reasons for this is that Walton Goggins, a native to the South, did not want to play yet another racist Southerner. In an interview with NPR he explains, "I never believed that Boyd Crowder was a white supremacist, to be quite honest with you (...) it was very important to me as an actor to not play this guy as a white supremacist, but to play him as a bit of a Svengali: a person who doesn't necessarily believe all that he espouses." Goggins even wanted the screenwriters to rewrite some of the script in order to make the changes in Boyd that he felt was necessary. Goggins wanted to make it possible for Boyd to change from a white organized racist to whatever he becomes along the way. Goggins' own suggestions lead to a particular development in his character, it is why Raylan tells Boyd that he does not believe everything he is saying. He thinks that Boyd just likes to blow shit up.¹⁸⁹ Raylan tells this Boyd several times during the first three seasons of the show. This interview also helps shed some light on why Boyd is a character that changes several times during the storyline. Still, it does not erase Boyd's history and it does not change how other characters keep viewing him during season two and three. Boyd used to be the leader of an Aryan underground group and people will not

¹⁸⁸ Valentine. *Gangs and Their Tattoos*. (2000). p. 60

¹⁸⁹ Walton Goggins: Playing Bad Boy Boyd on *Justified*. NPR. (January 13 2012) Original Broadcast: 5/26/2010 URL: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126889536> (read on: 8/7/2012)

let him forget it. Boyd's statement rings true. He cannot shed his past anymore then he can shed his tattoos. Both Boyd and Derek are in many ways marked for life.

The Presentation of Racist Tattoos to the Audience

The unveiling of racist tattoos to a TV audience is often dramatic. In several instances, tattoos of Swastikas are filmed in such a way that the audience, as well as other characters, are intended to understand certain sides of the character that wears the tattoo. One of these sides is the fact that the racist character is indeed a white organized racist. In the case of Boyd Crowder, the audience is first shown that Boyd is driving around with a young man, Jared, an organized racist from Oklahoma. They stop at a Federal building that is under construction. Then they drive to another location, because Boyd does not see a point in using a rocket launcher at an unfinished Federal building. To do that would "Only knock some shit around". At the new location that Boyd and Jared stop at, he gets out of the car while Jared stays behind the wheel. Boyd raises his rocket launcher and yells "Fire in the hole" before he pulls the trigger towards a church. When Boyd lowers his rocket launcher, the audience can see the Swastika on his left bicep for the first time. This takes place before the audience is informed of whom Boyd really is and before any information on his Aryan underground group is given. In the next scene, Deputy Chief Art Mullen and Raylan are in a bar talking about how Raylan and Boyd used to dig coal together at the age of 19. Mullen follows up by informing Raylan that after Raylan left the coal mining industry. Boyd joined the army and went to Kuwait for Desert Storm. When Boyd came back from the army, he stopped paying his taxes. Boyd also claimed he was a sovereign citizen. It did not take long before Boyd got involved in the patriot movement, which Mullen calls "The white supremacy bullshit". In this movement,

Boyd was making bombs out of fertilizer and gasoline. Mullen explains that Boyd has been making bombs since then. He and his crew come into a small town, blow up a car and while law enforcement are focused on the car, Boyd and his crew rob a bank. In the following scene, Boyd throws his rocket launcher in a river. He gets back into the car and climbs into the back seat. He questions why Jared did not want to blow up the church. He accuses Jared of being involved with the FBI, or the Federal Bureau of Imperialism, as Boyd calls them. Jared says, "You think I'm a snitch?" Boyd answers, "All I know is, you don't have any tattoos. You keep rubbing that head like you think that hair ain't gonna grow back." He kills Jared because the distrust between them is too deep. Once Boyd has killed the man, he calls his crew. They tell him that Jared has been verified by Oklahoma and is indeed a white organized racist. Boyd's crew is shown sitting in a trailer with a Swastika flag on the wall.¹⁹⁰ This scene is well structured. The first sign the audience receives about Boyd possibly being a white organized racist is delivered through the Swastika on his arm. The confirmation comes when Mullen informs Raylan of Boyd's past actions and their current intelligence on what Boyd is planning. The confirmation of Boyd as a white organized racist grows deeper during the beginning of the first episode. The audience is shown Boyd's Swastika, and then the flag inside the trailer. The audience is also shown some of his crewmembers. Two of them are overweight white men. They are chopping wood outside their church. Both of them are skinheads. One of them has a tattoo on his skull and the SS-runes underneath his right ear. He also has the word "Heil" tattooed on his right arm. While the other has a Swastika on his right bicep, SS runes on the right side of his chest and words, that are unreadable, on the left side of his chest. On his abdomen, he has a swastika with the words "The Final Selection" written above it.¹⁹¹ The identity of Boyd as a White organized racist grows even stronger when one of his men, Dewey Crow, gets out of a car and runs into the trailer to inform Boyd that his

¹⁹⁰ *The Pilot: Fire in the Hole*. Season 1, Episode 1. Justified. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

¹⁹¹ *The Pilot: Fire in the Hole*. Season 1, Episode 1. Justified. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

brother has been shot and killed. Dewey has the Nazi war eagle sticking up from his tank top, the words "Heil Hitler" across his Adams apple and another tattoo on his left bicep. While Dewey talks to Boyd, we can see him sitting on a sofa with the Swastika-flag in the background and Devil sitting next to him in another sofa.¹⁹² All of the elements exposed to the viewer take place in little steps, and the tattoos are an important element in showing that Boyd is not only a white organized racist. He is the leader and he has a small group of followers.

Another dramatic exposure of a tattoo of a racist symbol takes place in the hospital drama series, *Grey's Anatomy*. In a double episode during the fourth season of this show, they have a guest character that has a large Swastika tattooed on his abdomen. It takes a while before they reveal the Swastika to the audience. The writers of the episode have made his story as a man with a Swastika tattooed on his abdomen a complicated one. When we first meet Shane in the first of these two episodes, he is an ambulance driver, also called EMT personnel. Shane and his partner, an African-American woman, drive an ambulance that crashes into another ambulance. Shane looks after his partner to see if she is okay and lets Dr. Bailey, an African-American woman, help him onto a gurney. He tells her before he is taken into the ER "I know this is going to sound weird, but can you get me a guy doctor?" Once he is inside the ER, Dr. Bailey tries to examine his abdomen, the place where he has been hurt during the accident. He keeps insisting to get a male doctor and Dr. Bailey takes this as a sign that he is distrustful of women, or even lacks confidence that a female doctor can be as good as a male doctor. Dr. Webber, the Chief of Surgery, also an African-American, comes by and Dr. Bailey explains, "He doesn't want my female hands to touch him." Dr. Webber introduces himself and says that he wants to examine his abdomen. Shane resist, and Dr. Webber quickly understands what Shane means when he says that he wants a different doctor. Shane wants a

¹⁹² *The Pilot: Fire in the Hole*. Season 1, Episode 1. Justified. (2010) Original Airdate: 3/16/2010

white doctor. He asks Dr. Bailey to handle the situation. She decides to not give in to Shane's wishes and asks Dr. Yang, who comes from South Korean heritage, to examine Shane. Dr. Bailey explains to Dr. Yang "You're not black, but you're not white either" before she takes her to the patient. Before Shane allows Dr. Yang to lift his shirt, he tells her "I just didn't want her to see. I thought she might take offence, you know?" When Dr. Yang discovers what he is hiding, she is genuinely surprised to see a large black Swastika on his abdomen. The episode lasts for over 20 minutes before they reveal the Swastika to the audience, but there are several signs as to what his ideological beliefs might be before that. Shane refuses to accept treatment from Dr. Bailey and Dr. Webber, and Dr. Bailey makes the following remark when Shane wonders how much longer he will have to wait for a white doctor. "You just lie there and try not to die. Someone will come along soon to save the master race from extinction." In some ways, the storyline at this point builds up to the exposure of the Swastika.¹⁹³

The story of Shane brings us to the next topic in this chapter, the role tattoos play in telling a story that involves white organized racist characters. In these two episodes, the tattoo is what instigates the rest of the story. The story makes it seem as if Shane dislikes women only to make it seem as if he has a problem with non-white doctors. Once Dr. Yang sees the tattoo, it seems as if he was scared to let fellow medical personnel see that he has a Swastika tattooed on his stomach. By hiding the tattoo from someone who might feel that it is offensive he can try to keep a level of professionalism. Once Dr. Yang has seen the tattoo and tells Dr. Bailey, his attempt of coming across as a professional goes out the window. His cover is blown. At the same time, although he has a Swastika on his abdomen, he does not have a problem working with a black woman. They save lives together and they work well together. He tells a white doctor, Dr. O'Malley, that he is not the Devil. He is just a person with a belief system and he says, "If she wanted to marry my brother, I'd have a problem with that, but so

¹⁹³ *Crash into Me. Part I* Season 4, Episode 9. *Grey's Anatomy*.

would a lot of people." Essentially, this storyline could not have been told without the tattoo. His attitude toward Dr. Bailey and Dr. Webber shows that he does not want to be treated by non-white doctors, but it seems that his racist attitude is not necessarily the underlying issue, the tattoo is. In addition, the tattoo confirms what Dr. Bailey and Dr. Webber suspect: he is a racist. The tattoo is exposed to the audience several times. When his first surgery is over you can see that Dr. Bailey has stitched it up perfectly. Something goes wrong and she has to perform another surgery. When Dr. O'Malley explains to Dr. Bailey that Shane needs another surgery, you can see a monitor showing the Swastika in the background.¹⁹⁴

The Role Tattoos Play in the Telling of a Storyline

In *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified*, the tattoos of racist symbols are an active part of how the storyline is told during the course of the shows, i.e. they are not only a part of how a character is being portrayed physically and as a person. They are also used as a focal point in some conversations between different characters and in the interaction between different characters. This usage of tattoos of racist symbols is not exclusive to *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified*. Tattoos of racist symbols are also used in the storyline surrounding white organized racist characters that are featured as guest characters on other TV shows, e.g. in two episodes of *Grey's Anatomy*. In the case of Shane in *Grey's Anatomy*, the tattoo of the Swastika helps to make the story of Shane as a white racist more waterproof. In the beginning of Shane's character portrayal, all they have to go on is his decline to be treated by doctors who are not white. Dr. Bailey's comment on the master race also helps to thicken his portrayal as a possible white organized racist. When the Swastika is exposed to the audience and the main characters of the show, his racist opinions are no longer just opinions. The Swastika is

¹⁹⁴ *Crash into Me. Part II* Season 4, Episode 10. *Grey's Anatomy*.

treated as proof that he is indeed a racist. On several occasions during the rest of Shane's appearance on the show he is even called a Nazi, e.g. when Dr. Bailey is upset that instead of having lunch with her husband she is elbow deep in a Nazi's gut.¹⁹⁵ Dr. Bailey has to operate on Shane twice. The first time she sews it up perfectly and it still looks like a Swastika. The second time she sews it up so it becomes crooked and no longer looks like a Swastika. When Shane wakes up and sees what has happened he asks O'Malley if she did it on purpose. Dr O'Malley chooses to give Shane the following speech:

"Well, Dr. Bailey did save your life today. A black woman saved your life at a great personal cost. Next time you're looking at your tattoo and you're thinking how much better us white guys are than everyone, think about that. Because between you and me? If I had been alone in that OR, you'd probably be dead right now. And, since we're sharing belief systems, I believe if you were dead, the world would be a better place."¹⁹⁶

In the end, the people he feared would see the tattoo and be offended by it did their best to rise above and save his life, and the man he wanted to be in the OR to make sure they didn't kill him is not his ally, but his enemy.

In *Sons of Anarchy*, there is one instance where a tattoo of a racist symbol is a part of a conversation. This conversation also makes it clear that Weston feels that he is better than Darby and sees him as a lesser person. Weston also views Darby as a person who is ranked lower within organized racism. Weston approaches Darby at his workshop. He asks if Darby has thought about the League of American Nationalist's offer, i.e. Zabelle's offer. Darby tells him that he has talked it over with his people. Weston is offended by Darby's response and tells him that his offer is a no brainer. The conversation between them escalates when some of

¹⁹⁵ *Crash into Me. Part I* Season 4, Episode 9. Grey's Anatomy.

¹⁹⁶ *Crash into Me. Part II* Season 4, Episode 10. Grey's Anatomy.

Darby's workers turn out to be non-whites. Darby defends himself by saying, "Business is down 30 percent. I can't afford the white guys." Weston tells him that he should never put money before race. Weston gives Darby an envelope containing \$5000. Weston's goal is to help Darby get his meth and prostitution business into Charming. Darby laughs at Weston's proposal and says, "When Clay finds out that I'm dealing Crank and pussy in his backyard?" Weston replies "There's a phone number inside the envelope call it and tell our Aryan brothers how much man power you need. And if I were you, I'd button up your shirt." Darby has a Swastika tattooed on his upper chest and he tells Weston that he has nothing to hide. Weston becomes condescending towards Darby and replies, "It's not about hiding. You haven't earned it." Weston truly feels that Darby has not earned enough Aryan respect to have a Swastika tattooed on his body. By hiring non-whites to work for him, Darby has shown that he does put money over race. Darby has also shown that he is not as serious about their cause as Weston is. After all, Weston is willing to kill and even rape for their cause.¹⁹⁷

In *Sons of Anarchy*, there is also an incident where a tattoo is a part of the storyline. This part of the overall storyline lasts from the first episode of the season and causes the downfall of Weston and Zobelle in the two final episodes of the season. Weston has a tattoo on his chest of a symbol, Y. This symbol is called a life rune. Weston's life rune is enclosed in a black circle and has been filled in with an orange color. One website writes that the symbol was used by a section of the Nazi party, The SS Lebensborn, during WWII. They were in charge of breeding homes where they kept young, unmarried women. The goals of the breeding homes were to impregnate the women by SS officers in order to create a "Master Race".¹⁹⁸ The Anti-Defamation League confirms that the life rune, also known as the

¹⁹⁷ *Fa Guan*. Season 2, Episode 9. *Sons of Anarchy*. 2010. Original Airdate: 11/3/2009.

Albification. Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy*. 2010. Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

¹⁹⁸ UnCommon Sense Ministries Inc. *Odinist Pagan Runes and Symbols used by Hitler's Nazi Party*. URL: <http://usminc.org/hitler3.html> (read on: 8/22/2012)

Lebenrune, was the symbol used by the SS Lebensborn. They also state that to white supremacists it signifies the future of the white race. Since WWII, the Neo-Nazi National Alliance has adopted it as a part of their logo. Neo-Nazi's and Racist Skinheads also commonly use it.¹⁹⁹ The connotation of the life rune fits well with how Weston sees the world, i.e. he is very invested in the future of the white race and feels that whites should not mingle with people who are non-white. A good example of how he views the world can be found in one of his first interactions with Darby in *Sons of Anarchy*. Weston explains to Darby that he has pulled his 6-year-old son out of T-Ball when he learned that they gave away trophies to every boy on every team. The only thing the boys had to do to get the trophy was simply to play the game. Weston's point of view is "Trophies should be earned. Teaching children that everyone's equal is a dangerous philosophy." Shortly after Weston has told Darby about his philosophy, he discovers that Darby has hired non-white workers and suggests that Darby has lost sight of the importance of not putting money over race.²⁰⁰ Weston is definitely a man whose solidarity is thick and whose loyalties are hot. He is also a character that cannot be swayed to give up his convictions. At the beginning of the second season of *Sons of Anarchy*, Weston goes as far as raping Gemma Teller Morrow. He does this in the name of the cause he and Zobelle are working on the behalf of. Gemma Teller is the wife of the President of Samcro, Clay Morrow, and the mother of the Vice President, Jax Teller. Zobelle orders Weston to rape her in an attempt to hurt the club. Zobelle's philosophy is if you cripple and hurt the matriarch of the club, you will cripple the club itself. They hope that the rape will send the club into a blind rage that will force them to act in a manner that in turn will force Charming P.D to arrest the club members. If the club is shut down or crippled it will leave Charming up for grabs. Gemma decides not to tell the club about the rape. She

¹⁹⁹ ADL. *Hate on Display: A Visual Database of Extremist Symbols, Logos, and Tattoos. Life Rune.* (2005) Anti-Defamation League. URL: http://www.adl.org/hate_symbols/neo_nazi_life_rune.asp (Read on: 8/22/2012)

²⁰⁰ *Albification.* Season 2, Episode 1. *Sons of Anarchy.* (2010) Original Airdate: 9/8/2009

leans on the Chief of Police, Unser, who is a childhood friend of hers and her son's girlfriend, Tara, who is a doctor. They even help her cover any tracks of the rape and make it look like a car accident.²⁰¹ Zabelle and Weston try to get Gemma to talk by sending her an envelope containing a mask identical to the ones Weston and his two co-rapists wore when they raped her. They send it to the clubhouse. The mask lies inside a paper bag with the name of a store on it. Gemma drives into town and walks up to the store front that used to house the store. What she finds is Zabelle hanging up a sign for his new store, a cigar shop called Impeccable Smokes. Zabelle greets her with a friendly smile and a greeting, "Good morning. You looking for Sherman's? They closed last month. Hope it wasn't a return." Gemma does not answer him. She just turns around and walks away. As she is walking away from Zabelle, she walks into Weston. Weston smiles at her and says "Sorry, ma'am." She looks at his chest and recognizes the tattoo. Later in the episode, she follows Weston and watches him as he sits down with a group of men. When the group disbands, he goes to a port-a-potty on his way to his car. Gemma pulls out a large handgun from her handbag and runs to the port-a-potty next to his. When Weston gets out of the port-a-potty his phone rings. He has his back turned to Gemma when he stops outside the port-a-potties. She points the gun at him, but changes her mind.²⁰² Several episodes pass before Gemma decides to tell her family about the rape, and she does not confirm that she inform her family that Zabelle and Weston were responsible for the rape. Gemma explains what happened and how Zabelle's daughter, Polly, tricked her out of her car. Gemma explains how the girl knocked her out and when she woke up, she was chained to a fence. Gemma says "There were three of them. When he spoke I, I knew his voice. Tat on his throat. Zabelle's right hand man, Weston." She also reveals why Weston raped her. He wanted to send a message to the club "Stop dealing guns to color." He also threatened that if Gemma did not give the club his message, he would find her and do it

²⁰¹ *Small Tears*. Season 2, Episode 2. *Sons of Anarchy* (2010) Original Airdate: 9/15/2009

²⁰² *Eureka*. Season 2, Episode 4. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 9/29/2009

again.²⁰³ Weston is identified by Gemma as the rapist because of his tattoo, but Zabelle and Weston's actions suggest that he was not trying to hide his identity as the rapist. Weston kept his tattoo exposed during the rape itself, as well as for the most part during his appearances in the second season. Exposed for the entire world of Charming to see and exposed so that Gemma will recognize it and know that he is the man who raped her. The tattoo functions in some ways as an outwards symbol. A symbol he can show the world around him, a symbol that makes him recognizable so that the world around him knows who he is. He does not have to open his mouth and verbalize what he thinks to let the world know what his opinions, attitudes, and beliefs are. He can just show them his tattoo.

Tattoos in *Oz*

The tattoos in *Oz* are far more integrated into the storyline than in *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified*. The most common tattoo displayed on the bodies of the white organized racist characters in *Oz* is the symbol for the group Aryan Nations, also known as Church of Jesus Christ Christian. The symbol shows a sword, crossed by a sideways z and topped with a crown. The second most common racist tattoo is the Swastika. The third most common tattoo seen on these characters are the SS-runes. Five characters in *Oz* have the Aryan Nations group symbol tattooed on their bodies. In two instances the Aryan Nations tattoos are used as a part of the storyline involving two of the characters. The first one we see is Mark Mack. He is Schillinger's second in command during Season One and Two. Mack has the symbol tattooed on his stomach and the first time we see it he shows it to another individual who has the very same tattoo, Karl Metzger. Karl Metzger is a Correctional Officer (C.O.) in Emerald City and his Aryan Nations tattoo is located on his right shoulder. Mack shows his Aryan Nations

²⁰³ *Balm*. Season 2. Episode 10. *Sons of Anarchy*. (2010) Original Airdate: 11/10/2009

tattoo to Metzger to let him know that he knows that they belong to the same group and believe in the same ideologies. He also shows it to Metzger in order to get him to perform a favor for Mack and another Aryan Brotherhood member. Mack wishes to switch pods with Rebadow and Busmalis, because he has found out that Busmalis has just finished digging a tunnel that is intended to take Busmalis from his pod in Emerald City to the other side of the prison walls. What Mack doesn't know is that the favor will cost him his life. Once Mack and his Aryan Brotherhood friend has moved into the new pod they decide to go through the tunnel. What they don't know is that Busmalis has weakened all the beams inside the tunnel. This causes the tunnel to collapse and Mack and his friend die as a result.²⁰⁴ The second time involves Metzger's Aryan Nations tattoo. Metzger's tattoo function as a way for the Aryans to know that Metzger is one of them, it also lets McManus know that Rebadow speaks the truth when he tells McManus that Metzger is a Nazi. Rebadow decides to tell McManus this because Metzger has just tried to kill Busmalis as a way to revenge his Aryan brother, Mack. McManus decides to confront Metzger in the C.O.'s locker-room. Metzger comes out of the shower and McManus is standing by his locker. McManus tells Metzger: "Nice tattoo." Metzger replies: "Souvenir of a misspent youth." Instead of taking the bait, McManus decides to confront Metzger by telling him that he knows who he is and what he is. Metzger replies, "All I am is a highly trained, underpaid member of the Correctional Officers Benevolent Association. But if I am what you think I am, you should tip toe." McManus asks Metzger if that is a threat. Metzger replies, "I'm merely reminding you who your friends are. Remember who you want standing next to you when one of these fuckers comes after you with a knife."²⁰⁵ In the scene where Mack shows Metzger his tattoo, they are able to communicate that they belong to the same organization. Mack isn't only a white supremacist. He is not only a member of the Aryan Brotherhood within Oz. He is also a member of the Aryan Nations.

²⁰⁴ *Escape From Oz*. Season 2, Episode 8. Oz. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/31/1998

²⁰⁵ *The Truth and Nothing but*. Season 3, Episode 1. Oz. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/14/1999

This scene shows in many ways how they can communicate a brotherhood and a shared belonging to one another without having to say the words. Mack just has to throw up a flag and it works in his favor. In the scene with McManus, however, Metzger's tattoo is not a positive symbol and it does not work in his favor.

Intelligence on gangs and their tattoos within prisons and on the street suggests that tattoos have become an important tool for Correctional Officers and law enforcement when they want to see if a prisoner has any gang affiliations. Other things they look into are hand gestures and hairstyles.²⁰⁶ It is common for a prison to have Correctional Officers who work as gang intelligence officers. Their job is to help identify whether or not a prisoner is a gang member. This process starts when a prisoner walks through the gates of a prison. The main goal of this process and investigation is to identify if a prisoner belongs to a gang and what gang that prisoner belongs to. Each gang intelligence officer has to be certified and trained on the subject. When a prisoner enters a prison, a file is started on the prisoner and a legal procedure is set in motion. This file contains all reports that involve the prisoner. The file itself is sent upwards through the prison chain and once it gets to the gang intelligence officers, they will begin their own separate gang file and database. The gang intelligence officers will evaluate the information that is gathered on each prisoner and if they find that the information is valid they will send it to the warden. The warden will decide whether to accept or reject the information. If the warden approves the file it is redirected to the attorney general's office where further actions can be taken if necessary.²⁰⁷ Tattoos are one of the methods the gang intelligence officers use to identify a gang member. Bill Valentine writes, "Of all the identifiers used to verify gang membership, tattoos are one of the most pervasive

²⁰⁶ Valentine, Bill. *Gangs and Their Tattoos. Identifying Gangbangers on the Street and in Prison.* (2000) Boulder, Colorado: Paladin Press p VII

²⁰⁷ Valentine. *Gangs and Their Tattoos.* (2000) p.1

and reliable."²⁰⁸ Tattoos of the Aryan Nations symbol, Swastikas, and other tattoos connected with white racist organizations are familiar to gang intelligence officers.²⁰⁹ Although none of the correctional officers in *Oz* are described as being a gang intelligence officer, it is not surprising that McManus recognizes the Aryan Nations tattoo on Metzger's shoulder. First, Metzger is not the only person in *Oz* who has the symbol tattooed on his body. Second, McManus spends a large part of his daily life inside a prison that contains several gangs and many tattooed gang members. The scene following the conversation between Metzger and McManus shows McManus having a conversation with Warden Glynn and the psychiatrist and nun, Sister Peter Marie. McManus informs them that before Metzger started to work in *Oz* he lived in Montana, where he was a member of the White Supremacy Warriors. He also tells them that he acquired the information through a friend of his that works for the FBI. The conversation is fruitless. McManus realizes that he will not be able to find anyone who will be willing to testify against Metzger, and Glynn cannot fire him without proof that he is connected to and working with Schillinger. Toward the end of the episode, it turns out that McManus and Glynn will not have to fire Metzger because Beecher kills him.²¹⁰ Beecher seeks revenge on Metzger because he made it possible to let Schillinger and Keller break his arms and legs at the end of Season Two.²¹¹ Two of the other characters who wear the Aryan Nations symbol as a tattoo are Schillinger's sons, Andy and Hank. These tattoos are only function as descriptive tattoos, first you learn that they are Schillinger's sons and then you see the Aryan Nations symbol tattooed on their bodies, which more or less confirms that they have followed in Schillinger's footsteps. Andy has the Aryan Nations symbol tattooed on the back of his hand,²¹² while Hank has the symbol tattooed on his neck.²¹³ In the case of Andy

²⁰⁸ Valentine. *Gangs and Their Tattoos*. (2000) p.VII

²⁰⁹ Valentine. *Gangs and Their Tattoos*. (2000) p.55-67

²¹⁰ *The Truth and Nothing but*. Season 3, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/14/1999

²¹¹ *Escape From Oz*. Season 2, Episode 8. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/31/1998

²¹² *Legs*. Season 3, Episode 3. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/28/1999

²¹³ *Obituaries*. Season 4, Episode 2. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/19/2000

we can even get a quick look at a Swastika that is tattooed on his chest.²¹⁴ The fifth character wearing the Aryan Nations symbol as a tattoo is Robson.²¹⁵

Most of the tattoos of racist symbols seen in *Oz* function as a part of the character portrayal in a way that makes it easier for the viewer as well as other characters to be able to recognize a white organized racist just by looking at his body. Some of the white organized racist characters are supporting characters who offer depth into the portrayal of Schillinger. During Season One and Two, Mack is the only named character that offers this depth. The rest of the Aryan Brotherhood members are flat, background characters. Most of these characters are only seen, they don't even have any lines. One of the flat background characters is elevated and developed further as the show develops. Wick is present during the first season. Viewers can see glimpses of him during some of the episodes, but he does not become an interesting character until Season Four. Wick has a Swastika tattooed on his right bicep and it makes it possible to recognize him as an Aryan Brotherhood member the first time he appears on screen.²¹⁶ James Robson is introduced at the beginning of Season Two, when the population of Emerald City is sent to Unit B after the riot at the end of Season One. The first scene featuring Robson shows him sharing a cell with Beecher. He orders Beecher to give him oral sex. Beecher starts to carry out the act only to bite of the tip of Robson's penis.²¹⁷ The next time we see Robson is at the beginning of Season Three. Robson is sitting with Wick and Schillinger in the cafeteria eating a meal. At this point in the storyline, Schillinger has been transferred out of Emerald City and into Unit B, where Robson resides. Schillinger is giving his Aryan followers a speech about how he doesn't understand the C.O.s and why the prison staff hasn't take any actions regarding the murder of Metzger. As Schillinger puts it, "No lockdown. No inquiry. No memorial service." In this episode, one cannot see Robson's

²¹⁴ *U.S. Males*. Season 3, Episode 5. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 8/11/1999

²¹⁵ *Impotence*. Season 5, Episode 8. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 2/124/2002

²¹⁶ *Cuts Like a Knife*. Season 4, Episode 12. *Oz*. 2008. Original Airdate: 1/28/2001

²¹⁷ *The Tip*. Season 2, Episode 1. *Oz*. 2008. Original Airdate: 7/11/1998

tattoos.²¹⁸ In the next episode, one can get a clear view of a Swastika tattooed on Robson's right shoulder blade. The tattoo is visible because Robson is shirtless in a boxing match and at this point in the storyline Robson only has one tattoo.²¹⁹ In an episode of Season Five, Robson is buying Heroin from one of the homeboys and the viewers can get a peek of the Aryan Nations symbol on the back of his neck. In the next scene, Robson is sitting in his underwear on his bed and two other tattoos are visible. The first is a tattoo of a skull with batwings on the left side of his chest and the second is a shield with the SS-runes on his left bicep.²²⁰ Robson is not the only member of the Aryan Brotherhood who acquires new tattoos while incarcerated in Oz. On several occasions during the series, Schillinger suddenly appears with new tattoos. In the very first episode, it can be determined that he has three tattoos. He has a lightning bolt on each upper arm/shoulder and a tattoo that cannot be seen clearly on the left side of his chest.²²¹ In Season Three there is a scene where Schillinger is working out in the gym and the viewers get a clear image of the tattoo on the left side of his chest. It depicts the Nazi war eagle carrying a Swastika inside a circle.²²² In Season Five there is a scene where Schillinger is about to be released from the hole. When the C.O.s opens the door to let Schillinger out of the hole, he is standing naked by the door. He has four new tattoos in this scene. The first is a tattoo on the right side of his chest that says "Andrew & Hank. RIP". The second one is a chain with a lock right below his collarbones. The third is a barbed wire that circles his bicep, below one of the thunderbolts and the fourth is a tribal on the back of his neck.²²³ In Season Six one can see that Schillinger has tattooed a pair of eyes in the back of his head.²²⁴ To get a tattoo when one is incarcerated might be hard and expensive, but it is not impossible. Bill Valentine writes that prison inmates who work as tattoo artists while

²¹⁸ *Napoleon's Boney Parts*. Season 3, Episode 2. Oz. 2008. Original Airdate: 7/21/1999

²¹⁹ *Legs*. Season 3, Episode 3. Oz. 2008. Original Airdate: 7/28/1999

²²⁰ *Impotence*. Season 5, Episode 8. Oz. 2008. Original Airdate: 2/24/2002

²²¹ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. Oz. 2008. Original Airdate: 8/25/1997

²²² *U.S. Males*. Season 3, Episode 5. Oz. 2008. Original Airdate: 8/11/1999

²²³ *Dream a Little Dream of Me*. Season 5, Episode 3. Oz. (2008) Original Airdate: 1/20/2002

²²⁴ *See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Smell No Evil*. Season 6, Episode 2. Oz. (2008) Original Airdate: 1/12/2003

incarcerated "(...) have brought the skill of tattooing to a high degree of design and innovation." He also writes that the practice of tattooing is illegal in most prisons and holding facilities. The task of making the instrument you need in order to make a tattoo is challenging and the process it takes to make ink is long. You also need to know what you are doing in order to make it as good as possible. The payment for a tattoo can vary. Some want money for the job, which often requires the inmate who gets the tattoo, to get help from a family member or a friend on the outside. Some accept tobacco or contraband as payment, while some pay in sexual favors or by doing a favor on the behalf of the tattoo artist.²²⁵

The most depictive scene in which body modification is used as a part of the storyline is during the first episode of *Oz*. This type of body modification is not a tattoo, but a scarification of a Swastika. Schillinger burns this Swastika into the skin of Beecher's rare-end and it is done so by force. The episode starts with Beecher being incarcerated in Oz. He is sent to Emerald City where he is going to share a pod with Adebisi. Schillinger befriends Beecher in the cafeteria by being friendly and forth coming. Schillinger convinces Beecher that Adebisi is a danger to him and encourages Beecher to ask for a transfer out of Adebisi's pod. Beecher ends up in Schillinger's pod and he is quite optimistic when he enters Schillinger's lions den. Beecher's optimism is short lived. Schillinger shows Beecher his true colors the moment he places his belongings on his new bed. While Beecher is making his bed, Schillinger asks him if he likes his tattoos. Before Beecher has a chance to answer, Schillinger tells him that "I'm gonna have to get you one." Beecher tells him no thanks. Schillinger simply replies "Oh, yeah. I'm gonna brand you myself." Beecher looks surprised and tells him "Livestock gets branded." Schillinger laughs and replies "Livestock. That 's what you are now. My livestock. Because now, Tobias, your ass belongs to me." In the next scene, we see that Schillinger is sitting on Beecher's legs. Beecher is stripped naked, lying on his abdomen,

²²⁵ Valentine. *Gangs and Their Tattoos*. (2000) p.2-3

restrained to the bed, while Schillinger brands him with a Swastika. Schillinger treats Beecher badly from that moment on and the Swastika is not only a way to show the audience that Schillinger has subdued Beecher against his will. It also functions as an important interaction between the two characters.²²⁶ This interaction sets the tone for the relationship between them for a large part of Season One. The interaction that takes place between them during Season One is also the root of why Beecher goes crazy at the end of the first season and why there is a war between them that lasts until the final episode of *Oz*.

Conclusion

The tattoos play an important part in how the different characters are portrayed because it ties the racist characters to different groups and ideologies. It also shows a deeper commitment to their group/ideologies. The tattoos seen in the shows mentioned in this chapter offer visual clues as to which characters can be labeled as white organized racist characters. This visual portrayal of each character is important when it comes to strengthening their roles as white organized racists. The visual clues also make it easier for the audience, as well as other characters to recognize their identity. Tattoos of racist symbols are not only a factor in the physical portrayal of white organized racist characters they are also used as an active ingredient in conversations and in how the storyline involving a white organized racist character is told. In some cases, the tattoos even set the tone for the storyline that includes a certain character, and it can help develop a story in a certain direction.

²²⁶ *The Routine*. Season 1, Episode 1. *Oz*. (2008) Original Airdate: 7/12/1997

Chapter Five:

“Conclusion”

This thesis is centered on one main question, how are white organized racist characters portrayed in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified*. These three television shows were chosen as primary sources because they contain white organized racist characters in important roles within the storyline of each show. These three shows contain white organized racist characters who are main, supporting, and background characters. They also contain some of the more fully developed white organized racist characters within American television. The analysis in this thesis looks closer at some of the white organized racist characters present in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified*. The analysis of the white organized racist characters in *Oz* looks closer at two specific characters, Vern Schillinger and James Robson. During the analysis of these two characters it has been necessary to compare Schillinger and Robson to other characters portrayed on the show. Some of these characters are able to shed some light on the actions taken by Schillinger and Robson, but also how they are portrayed. There are several other white organized racist characters present in *Oz*, but these characters are not developed to the same extent as Schillinger and Robson. Schillinger and Robson are present for a large part of the storyline and are central characters, while other white organized racist characters seem to only be a part of the storyline in order to deepen the portrayal of Schillinger and Robson. There are three white organized racist characters of importance who have been portrayed in *Sons of Anarchy*. Darby has the longest portrayal. Darby is a background character who is portrayed during the first three seasons of *Sons of Anarchy*. Zabelle and Weston appear at the beginning of Season Two and disappear at the end of Season Two. Weston and Darby are the main subject of analysis in this thesis. The analysis of the characters present in *Justified* looks

closer at the leader of an Aryan underground group, Boyd Crowder, and one of his followers, Dewey Crow.

The main question posed in this thesis has been answered by employing three sub questions, the first of which is, “What social class and social status do the white organized racist characters belong and how is it presented?” The white organized racist characters in each show belong mostly to a lower class. They do not qualify to belong to the working class, because most of the white organized racist characters are not employees. The characters that are can be described as being employed, such as Darby, Weston, and Boyd, work with in an illegal enterprise. Darby is self-employed and he produces and sells methamphetamine and control several prostitutes. This type of employment assures that Darby has an income, but his income is not great enough for him to be able to advance with in the social class system in Charming. Darby’s financial situation makes him equal or inferior to the other citizens in Charming, it does not set him apart. Weston’s social class is harder to determine, because the audience is given little information about his private life, while Zabelle enjoys a higher social class than Darby and Weston. He is a legitimate businessman and he is able to make illegitimate money and advance socially. His socio-economic status sets him apart from Weston and Darby, as well as, other citizens in Charming.

The writers of *Justified* use several stereotypes connected to the Appalachian Region in their portrayal of Boyd and Dewey. These stereotypes are connected to violence, poverty, and drugs. In Season One, Boyd lives in a trailer which is located next to an abandoned church and in Season Two he is renting a room in Ava’s house. The general socio-economic condition ascribed to the fictional Harlan County and the non-fictional Harlan County shows a county in economic distress. This is reflected on the show. Boyd is shown as a man who belongs to a lower class, while Dewey belongs to an underclass.

The white organized characters in *Oz*, live inside a prison. The nature of a total institution, such as a prison, removes the indicators of social class. The social class the inmates had prior to being incarcerated no longer matter once the inmate has been situated in *Oz*. The prison contains a controlled environment where the inmates have created a society. This society is controlled by the inmates themselves, and despite being subjected to control by the individuals who are employed at the prison, they are able to uphold the society they have created. This society is to a large degree classless. The importance of social class has been replaced with the importance of social status. An inmate can gain a greater social status by displaying social honor. The actions and characteristics viewed as honorable in *Oz* differ from what is considered socially honorable outside *Oz*. Schillinger is able to gain social status through the use of violence and by inciting fear. He is also able to gain social honor by being loyal to his group and by showing himself as a great leader. Robson has a good social status within the Aryan Brotherhood, but he is inferior to Schillinger. Schillinger enjoys a superior social position because he is the leader of their social group.

The second sub question used in order to answer the main question in this thesis is, “How do the white organized racist characters perform their masculinity, and how do they present this masculinity to others?” Schillinger and Robson are dependent on a gender performance that displays a hypermasculinity. In some ways, they can never be too masculine. Their gender performances is just that, performances. Schillinger has a few scenes where he shows a more genuine display of gender, for example, during the riot at the end of Season One, when Schillinger shows fear. Schillinger is unable to show a genuine display of gender because to do so will place his life in jeopardy. Schillinger is dependent on a gender performance that portrays him as a violent, ruthless, fearless, and decisive man and leader in

order to survive. The moment an inmate lets his guard down, he places himself in harm's way. If an inmate performs gender in a manner that can be interpreted as feminine, he risks to be punished. Robson is also dependent on a strong masculine gender performance, and his performance is masculine even when he is forced to be effeminate. Robson shows that he is secure in his masculinity to the extent that he is willing to be effeminate, not only to survive, but to seek revenge and regain his former position within his group and within the general social hierarchy.

The gender performances in *Sons of Anarchy*, shows a similar trend as in *Oz*. Weston, Zobelle, and Darby are required to perform gender in a masculine manner. The same is true for Boyd in *Justified*. The gender performance displayed within *Sons of Anarchy* and *Justified* are very masculine, often to the point where they are destructive. The masculinity performed by Weston and Boyd is destructive, because they are destructive. Weston rapes a woman to make a point and deliver a message. He is also willing to kill. Boyd kills, blows up buildings and cars, and robs banks. Their destructive nature is not only displayed within their masculine performance it has also become a large part of who they are as individuals.

The performance of gender in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified* is affected by the lack of feminine influences and by a lack of female characters. They are also influenced by the nature of their environments. In *Oz*, the main storyline takes place within a total institution and it is a closed world where the inmates are restricted from socializing with the world outside the prison. This also affects the society within the prison, because the world outside the prison is unable to influence the society within the prison. The town of Charming in *Sons of Anarchy* and Harlan County in *Justified* are not total institutions in the same manner as the prison in *Oz*, but they are controlled environments. The outside world seems to have little influence on how Charming and Harlan County are developed. The citizens within Charming

and Harlan County develop their societies as a closed entity. This affects how masculinity is performed, as well as, which masculine characteristics are honed and viewed as honorable.

The third sub question asked in this thesis is, “how are tattoos of racist symbols used as a part of character portrayals?” Tattoos displaying racist symbols are frequently used in *Oz*, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *Justified*. The tattoos are used as a form of communication. It helps the audience identify the tattooed character as a white organized racist character, but it also helps the tattooed character communicate with other characters within the storyline. In *Oz*, the tattoos are used as a signifier. The tattoos displaying a Swastika or the Aryan Nations symbol allow white organized racist characters to communicate with each other. This form of communication allows them to be recognized as white organized racists without having to verbally claim to be so. In *Sons of Anarchy*, Darby uses the Swastika as a signal of his white organized racist affiliations, but his Swastika tattoo is not well received amongst Weston who expresses discontent with Darby’s performance as a white organized racist. In *Justified*, the racist tattoos worn by Boyd and Dewey identifies them as white organized racist and it offers a sense of community and belonging, but also helps other characters remove all doubts concerning their white organized racist persona. Boyd in *Justified* is the only character that seems to recognize and acknowledge the function these tattoos have in his life. One of the reasons as to why he recognizes this fact is that it is a part of his past. Over all the portrayal of white organized racist characters on television is that of lower class men who are violent, fearless, and decisive, and with the open display of their racist tattoos they are not afraid to show their world who they are.

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