

## **Outline - Censorship**

- CENSORSHIP IS THE DISABLING OF ONE'S ABILITIES
- In *Not Wanted*:
  - Censoring of women's abilities
    - Mrs Noyes breaks these censors → Eating apples from the orchard
    - "Women were absolutely forbidden to eat them, as were children and domestic animals. Only the elders like Noah - men who had been inducted into the mysteries - could feed from the orchard" (127)
  - Censoring out of disabled children → Lotte, Japeth's twin, Hannah's baby
    - Extreme censoring to the point of death
      - " 'You've always been taught to believe (...) that yours was the only family to have a Lotte-child. Well, that simply isn't true. Other people have them, too - including (...) Doctor Noyes and me.' " (154)
      - " 'If Japeth - whose twin had been like Lotte - could be married to a girl whose parents had produced a child like our Adam - then the blame for future Lottes and Adams could not be laid on us' " (157)
  - Dr Noyes:
    - Censoring of rape & killing of unicorn → covers it as a "ritual"
      - "Therefore, Noah had transformed the killing into what he (...) insisted on calling a *ritual death*. (...) The *ritual sacrifice* must also serve to placate Noah's decidedly uneasy conscience on the matter of the Unicorn (...) Noah turned his mind to ritual. (...) This holy dust will be mixed with mead (...) and with the blood from Emma's wound (...) and will be drunk by two young people in remembrance of the Holy Beast whose horn facilitates the consummation of their marriage." (260)
- In real life:
  - Censoring of online content:
    - Community Guidelines: An Exhibition of Art Censored by Social Media, Curated by Parma Ham, Featuring Salvia, Abhora, Fecal Matter, and many more
      - Many alternative artists were having their work flagged, reported, censored, and removed
      - This impacted their growth, and forced them to narrow their creativity
      - Parma Ham was suspended from Facebook for posting about the event
    - When online content gets reported, it goes through multiple layers of investigation to determine if it should be censored or not
      - Workers that review this reported content are not offered mental health support, and some workers get PTSD from the constant flow of extreme content

### Script - Censorship

Censorship is defined as the suppression or prohibition of any form of media that is considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security. Today, we will be exploring the impact censorship has on the individual. To begin, Timothy Findley explored the cycle of censorship in his novel *Not Wanted on the Voyage*.

The first take at censorship in the novel is the censoring of women's abilities. One of the barriers is women are prohibited from eating apples from the orchard. Mrs Noyes thinks to herself, "Women were absolutely forbidden to eat them, as were children and domestic animals. Only the elders like Noah - men who had been inducted into the mysteries - could feed from the orchard" (127). Mrs. Noyes defies her husband and eats the apples anyway. She realizes that she was not being censored from the all-powerful apples themselves, but from the independence that would sprout from her actions.

Next, the censoring of disabled children. In the novel, the birth of a disabled child is considered an ultimate burden. Mrs. Noyes expresses that disabled babies are often killed by their families out of shame. She then reveals that she, too, had a disabled child named Adam. She tells Emma, " 'You've always been taught to believe (...) that yours was the only family to have a Lotte-child. Well, that simply isn't true. Other people have them, too - including (...) Doctor Noyes and me.' " (154). Mrs. Noyes' confession goes deeper, saying " 'If Japeth - whose twin had been like Lotte - could be married to a girl whose parents had produced a child like our Adam - then the blame for future Lottes and Adams could not be laid on us' " (157). The Noyes family feels the need to censor the existence of their disabled baby, clearing their name and directing the blame to Emma. This impacts Emma as she was being led to believe that she would be at fault in the event of birthing a disabled child. When every disabled child is censored out of existence, there is little knowledge of how often they are born.

Lastly, the censoring of the rape of Emma and the killing of the Unicorn. Noah censors the incident as a ritual, therefore watering down the severity of it. Findley writes, "Therefore, Noah had transformed the killing into what he (...) insisted on calling a *ritual death*. (...) The *ritual sacrifice* must also serve to placate Noah's decidedly uneasy conscience on the matter of the Unicorn (...) This holy dust will be mixed with mead (...) and with the blood from Emma's wound (...) and will be drunk by two young people in remembrance of the Holy Beast whose horn facilitates the consummation of their marriage." (260). Through his actions, Noah is barricading the knowledge of the truth. This impacts Emma because her trauma will not be taken seriously and treated. This also impacts Japeth because he now believes that killing the unicorn and facilitating the rape of his wife was not wrong.

Findley's argument against censorship not only applies to his own ideas, but to real-world scenarios as well, such as the censoring of online content. Multiple alternative performers and artists are having their social media posts flagged, reported, and removed. This censoring is essentially telling the artist that their work is "too much" or unacceptable, and they should be ashamed of their creativity and water down their work. In response to this epidemic, DJ Parma Ham curated an exhibition titled Community Guidelines: An Exhibition of Art Censored by Social Media. The exhibition took place on February 14th at the Lethal Amounts Gallery in Los Angeles. It featured many other artists impacted by censorship, such as Salvia, Abhora, and Fecal Matter. Ironically enough, Parma Ham was suspended on Facebook for posting about the exhibition. In conclusion, excessive censorship should be avoided as it limits freedom. This has been proven to be true by Timothy Findley in his writing, as well as in real-world scenarios.