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From Elite to Inclusive: *Lysistrata* and Gender, Democracy, and War

by

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Abstract

Aristophanes' comedy *Lysistrata* has been a favorite choice for anti-war activists since its first production in Athens in 411 B.C.E. as a response to the Peloponnesian War. In 2003, *Lysistrata* was chosen for the Lysistrata Project, a global theatrical protest against the United States' planned invasion of Iraq. The Project was created in New York City but grew to involve participants from 59 countries. In this thesis, I examine *Lysistrata* in its original context of the Peloponnesian War, then I move on to the Lysistrata Project in the context of American democracy and modern Greece. I examine the roles of women and theatrical artists in politics in order to determine the role of the play *Lysistrata* in ancient and modern Western society, and how and why the ancient play was useful for a modern response to a contemporary war. While *Lysistrata* was originally used by Aristophanes to express his individual opinion about the precarious situation in Athens in the final years of the Peloponnesian War, the Lysistrata Project allowed a diverse group of individuals to use the play to express their individual opinions about an impending war in an environment where individual political expression was threatened. Ultimately, I will consider in this thesis how the Lysistrata Project's open and inclusive theatrical form allowed the play *Lysistrata* to be extrapolated beyond its original context as the opinion of one playwright, allowing *Lysistrata* to have significance in an age of globalization.

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Introduction

A question with which theatre artists often find themselves confronted is whether or not theatre, as a medium, has any real influence on the world beyond the stage. This thesis project began with the question of if and how the ancient Greek plays, the earliest extant evidence of Western theatre, are still relevant to the modern age. I chose to examine theatre as a response to war, since war has been used consistently throughout human history to settle conflicts, as well as having been consistently met with varying degrees of opposition.

Aristophanes' comedy *Lysistrata*, which was originally produced in 411 B.C.E. and features the women of Greece embarking on a sex strike to get their husbands to stop the Peloponnesian War, is a favorite choice for anti-war activists. Its bawdy humor has had entertainment and shock value throughout the ages. In addition, the fact that the sex strike actually does halt the war, and the play has a happy ending, makes it an attractive choice for inspiring hope. However, Athens was certainly not in a hopeful situation in 411; it had lost a great deal of resources and allies in its ill-fated Sicilian expedition, and calling an end to the war at that time would not have been in Athens' best interests. What I have discovered is that, contrary to popular belief, *Lysistrata* appears to have been written with a cynical mindset, not with an idealistic anti-war premise. It was also likely not written to be feminist; on the contrary, the play's depiction of women in the public sphere was a signal from Aristophanes that Athens was in a dysfunctional state.

The March 3, 2003 Lysistrata Project, organized by New York actors Kathryn Blume and Sharron Bower, used *Lysistrata* as a mass protest tool against the United States' impending invasion of Iraq. What set this initiative apart from other protests at

that time is that it used the Internet to involve participants from all around the world, and it unified the entire initiative by having all the participants make use of *Lysistrata*. Because the Lysistrata Project did originate out of a specific anti-war stance, it appears to have appropriated *Lysistrata* as a definite anti-war play. However, if the Project was to be as inclusive and widespread as it hoped to be, it could not be a clear-cut, 100% "anti-war" protest. There were readings that may have been rooted in the desire to stop the rush to war, or, such as one in Patras, Greece, that had concerns with how the United States was planning to invade Iraq, but that did not necessarily wish to stop the war altogether. Yet the Lysistrata Project as a whole was based on the idea that it could effect real social change; thus it was removed from Aristophanes' original cynical viewpoint that fifth-century B.C.E. Athens had been degraded beyond repair. Although the Project did not succeed in stopping the invasion of Iraq, it did create a forum in which anyone who desired could have their views on Iraq, and their interpretations of *Lysistrata*, made significant by being part of a widespread collective initiative. By contrast, the playwrights of ancient Athens were a more exclusive group, since most of the poets, Aristophanes included, were members of the wealthy elite. The question, then, is what factors allowed *Lysistrata* to be effective for this sort of grassroots initiative?

There have been several significant cultural changes to Western society since the fifth century B.C.E. One of the most significant has been the status of women. Women in fifth-century Athens had no rights of citizenship, and were relegated to the private sphere of the home. There were some public women's ceremonies, such as the Thesmophoria, but virtually the entire political sphere was the domain of men. Thus the extant ancient Greek plays, *Lysistrata* included, were written in a patriarchal context. The plays were

also intended to be staged and acted by men, since the theatre, as a civic activity, was also male-dominated. However, today, in all developed Western countries, women are now full citizens. Although most such governments are still male-dominated, the political sphere is no longer off-limits to women, and neither is the theatre. The Lysistrata Project is a prime reflection of this, since it shows women reappropriating the *Lysistrata* text, and the portrayals of the female characters, for themselves.

A second change in Western culture is social mobility. While fifth-century Athens was a democracy in which every citizen was able to participate in civic affairs, social mobility was limited for women, slaves, residents who were foreign-born, or had foreign parents[1], all of whom were not citizens. In addition, although all men who were citizens were able to participate in Athenian democracy, wealthier citizens had some advantages over less prestigious citizens, such as access to literacy. Social mobility was not impossible; for example, there is the possibility that Euripides' family was new money, as indicated by the story that he was mocked for being the son of a greengrocer. Yet the poets who composed plays for the dramatic festival, Euripides and Aristophanes included, were likely to have been members of the wealthy elite, thus they had access to a forum for self-expression that the poorer citizens may not have had. Athens' democracy was exclusive, rather than inclusive.

What has made the United States unique in the course of history is its "American Dream": the idea that the class into which one is born is not necessarily the class in which

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[1] From *Women in Ancient Greece* by Sue Blundell: "In 450/1 Pericles introduced a law which stipulated that in order to qualify as an Athenian citizen a man had to be of Athenian parentage on both sides, and not just, as previously, on that of his father. […] The citizenship law was reinstated in 403/2, having apparently fallen into disuse, and at some point in the following century it became positively illegal for an Athenian citizen to marry a non-Athenian" (121).

one will die; that anyone has the opportunity in the United States to obtain the life they desire through hard work. However, it is not accurate to say that the United States' social system is completely open. The government continues to be male- and white-dominated, and there are elite, wealthy families, such as the Kennedys and the Bushes, who have become political dynasties. Condoleezza Rice, the first black woman appointed in 2005 as Secretary of State, and Barack Obama, the first black President elected in 2008, are key figures in breaking the white- and male-dominated American political sphere, yet even they had the advantage of coming from families with access to higher education. Corporations have gained a huge amount of economic and political power over the last few decades with the trend toward mergers and consolidation of businesses, enabling them to grow larger, richer, and more powerful. The consolidation of media outlets, in particular, has eroded American democracy, since fewer and fewer companies control the information that citizens receive.

The period in the United States between the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, brought to the surface many concerns about the loss of democratic power of the average citizen. After the 9/11 attacks, security became more important than liberty, and government measures such as the PATRIOT Act, which, among other things, increased access by law enforcement to citizens' personal information, reflected this. A mainstream media industry, more concerned with profit than with information, led to an uninformed public, and artists (as well as others) were systematically discouraged from voicing political viewpoints. Yet throughout all this, American citizens did still have the choice of informing themselves and becoming more involved in their civic life—it was just a question of how to do it. The Lysistrata Project

used the unregulated, free medium of the Internet to spread the word and recruit as many people as they could, and in this way anyone who felt shut out of the Iraq debate acquired an outlet to voice their views.

The place of art in society has also seen some changes. While in ancient Athens theatre was an integral part of civic life, with plays voicing the poets' views on contemporary issues featured at the festivals, theatre and politics are no longer so intimately linked in the modern Western world. Theatre artists in the modern age frequently do use their craft to voice their political views and influence audiences. This is even widespread at times, such as during the radical theatre movement of the 1960s and 1970s. But in the popular consciousness, theatre is no longer synonymous with political acts. This separation of art from civic life is likely what led to artists' anxiety about the role of art, and if art has any power to change social or political conditions. If it is not taken for granted that art can have an impact on the "real world" *per se*, then how and in what ways is it useful at all?

In this thesis, I will illustrate how these differences in cultural contexts have had an impact on the role of *Lysistrata* in the political sphere. In the first chapter, "*Lysistrata* and the Peloponnesian War", I examine the role that *Lysistrata* played in the political sphere when it was first produced in 411 B.C.E. *Lysistrata* was composed on the heels of the devastation of Athens' fleet during the Sicilian Expedition of 413. As a result, Athens found itself in a precarious position from which it would not be able to recover sufficiently to get back into a favorable position in the war, but it was also not in a position to end the war without losing its remaining empire. I examine the role of the female characters in *Lysistrata* and the concept of gender in Greek society to determine

Aristophanes' purpose for writing the play. I will also show how, through the play's exposure of gender constructs, an ambiguous quality is revealed, which is ultimately why the play has continued to work outside of fifth-century Athens.

The second chapter, "The Lysistrata Project and American Democracy", situates the Lysistrata Project in the political context of the United States in the months leading up to the Iraq War. In this chapter, I examine the polarized political environment in the United States, the role of artists in a society where it is not taken for granted that they will play an active role in politics, and how the Lysistrata Project created an inclusive theatrical and political voice and space. Within the Project, theatre and politics once again became intimately linked, and power was returned to those below the top tier of society.

The third chapter, "The Lysistrata Project and Modern Greece", examines modern Greek participation in the Lysistrata Project. It focuses in particular on two readings—one that occurred at the Acropolis in Athens, and another at a Patras refugee camp. Greece was in an interesting position in the Lysistrata Project, because although the Project originated in the United States, it used a Greek text. The Acropolis reading is particularly interesting because it returns the play to the same site that the female characters in the original play occupied. The Patras reading is also significant because it illustrates how a group of disempowered people—in this case, Kurdish refugees in Greece—used the Lysistrata Project to make their problems known on a global scale.

I ultimately aim to show how *Lysistrata* has been an effective protest tool in these different contexts. In this thesis, I will examine the role of women, art, and the public and private spheres to explain what *Lysistrata* means as a response to war in 411 B.C.E. and

in 2003. Ultimately, I will demonstrate that, in 2003, the text was taken from the authority of the wealthy elite male poets, and put into other hands.

Chapter 1

Lysistrata and the Peloponnesian War

In the popular consciousness, *Lysistrata* is thought of and referred to as an "anti-war" play calling for an end to the Peloponnesian War. This view has been repeatedly reinforced throughout the twentieth century by scholars and translators. For example, The introduction to Nicholas Rudall's 1991 translation states that, "Aristophanes wrote the *Lysistrata* as an immediate and passionate plea to stop the carnage" (3). William Chase Greene writes in the 1944 article "Some Ancient Attitudes Toward War and Peace": "The *Lysistrata* […] is a play advocating Panhellenism, cooperation, and reconciliation" (523). There are studies that dissent from the view that the play was written to convince the audience, such as A.W. Gomme's 1938 article "Aristophanes and Politics", which argues that Aristophanes did not write *Lysistrata* to argue any one side. Yet even some of the scholars who argue for *Lysistrata* as a serious peace proposal acknowledge that the historical conditions made the play seem idealistic. Greene writes, "Like all idealistic programmes announced amid the stress of terrible emergencies, the suggestion of Aristophanes had no chance of immediate and complete adoption, and was even inopportune" (523). In his 1942 article "Aristophanes' Influence Upon Public Opinion", H. Lloyd Stow discusses how Aristophanes himself seemed to have an inflated sense of how seriously his views were taken, due to incidents such as the pro-war demagogue Kleon being elected as general in 424 B.C.E. despite Aristophanes' plays repeatedly subjecting him to scathing attacks, notably *The Acharnians*, performed just one year earlier. Of *Lysistrata*, Stow writes, "Tremendous pan-Hellenic feeling is displayed in the *Lysistrata* and in the *Peace*, and powerful arguments are advanced for the union of all

Greece, but, as history proves all too tragically, these arguments were futile" (92). H.D. Westlake's 1980 article, "The *Lysistrata* and the War", was one of the first studies that specifically pointed out how the historical conditions at the time the play was composed do not support the interpretation that *Lysistrata* is explicitly anti-war, and, in fact, Aristophanes may not even have meant it to be a serious peace proposal. When examined in the context of the era in which it was composed, the play is complex and contradictory, and does not appear to take a clear-cut anti-war stance. While the plot of *Lysistrata* depicts an easy end to the war with all parties satisfied, examination of the actual events of the time indicates that such an outcome was highly unlikely.

Thus the question is: what purpose did Aristophanes have in composing a play whose plot centers on a swift end to the war, when this was likely to be impossible in reality? The unfavorable political situation in Athens at the time raises questions as to whether Aristophanes as a comic playwright had any direct influence on Athenian politics, or if he was merely entertaining the audience with a wish-fulfillment comedy. Considering the role of Old Comedy in the context of Athenian society helps us to hypothesize if or how the composition and performance of *Lysistrata* intersected with Athenian politics. More specifically, the play's gender wars, with the plot driven by the female characters ridiculing and weakening the male characters, provides insight into how the playwright viewed the state of Athens.

Lysistrata was produced in 411 B.C.E., two years after the crushing defeat of Athens at Sicily in 413. After this defeat, the Athenians found themselves with crippling losses of men and resources, as well as the loss of all their Hellenic allies (Thucydides 8.2). Meanwhile, the Spartans had gained much confidence about their prospects for the

war, since they had gained additional allies from Sicily, thus reducing Athens' strength (Thucydides 8.2). Under these conditions, it appears that Athens was not in a position to regain its pre-war political status as a powerful empire. In *Aristophanes and the Political Parties at Athens*, Maurice Croiset implies that in the winter of 412, when *Lysistrata* was likely being composed, it would not have been in Athens' best interests for the war to end, since its enemies were gaining resources. Other *poleis* were likely not interested in peace either:

> Persia, the source of greatest anxiety [to Athens], was supporting the Peloponnesians with its subsidies, and was promising them the co-operation of its fleet. And it was just this that kept careful politicians from believing in the possibility of negotiating a peace. Sparta's position was too favorable for her to consent to abandon it before having completely deprived her adversary of power. (133)

It appears that while Athens was concerned with protecting what little empire it had left, its enemies hoped to render Athens powerless. If Athens' enemies had an advantage in 412, they would likely not have viewed a negotiation for peace as being in their best interests, since that may have allowed the Athenian empire to rise again. And although Athens had suffered a devastating loss at Sicily, it was able to recover enough strength and resources to continue the war. The Athenians would likely have preferred protecting the remains of their empire to surrendering and losing everything.

Although H.D. Westlake's "The *Lysistrata* and the War" challenges the reading of *Lysistrata* as a straightforward anti-war play, Westlake does describe Aristophanes as putting forth political recommendations. He is, however, careful to note, "To look for any

single political recommendation on which the *Lysistrata* is founded is […] a vain quest" (38). It is evident that *Lysistrata* does not have a clear recommendation for what Athens should do in its precarious state or how peace is to be achieved, since the reconciliation between Athens and Sparta as depicted in the play is reached quite easily once Lysistrata reminds the men of the times when Athens and Sparta were allies. Nonetheless, Westlake describes Aristophanes as composing with a practical purpose. He describes the purpose of *Lysistrata* as a response to Athenian dismissal of the advice given in his previous plays:

> [Aristophanes] is critical of the Athenians for decisions which he considers to have been misguided: they would not now, he implies, be in a perilous situation if they had the good sense to accept the advice offered by him in earlier plays. Though never a pacifist, he had urged them to seek a reconciliation with Sparta provided that it could be achieved with honour. (53)

Westlake implies that Aristophanes' previous plays, such as *The Acharnians* and *Knights*, did have a practical purpose since they offered explicit advice when the political situation was much less dire. For example, the situation of *The Acharnians*, which was produced at the Lenaia of 425, implies that the war could easily be ended; it is just that the Athenians are stubbornly refusing to stop. *The Acharnians* includes criticism of the pro-war demagogue Kleon, a favorite target of Aristophanes, and he sharpened this criticism into a more direct attack with the 424 play *Knights*. But by 411, a peace proposal would not likely have preserved Athenian honor. As Westlake writes, "hardly any Athenians can have expected Sparta even to consider peace proposals which did not virtually amount to an Athenian surrender" (40). Thus, according to Westlake, *Lysistrata* is not an explicit

proposal for peace, but more of a commentary on current Athenian issues: "Aristophanes does seem to have had an axe to grind and to have accordingly drawn attention to the consequences arising from disregard of his advice" (54). The subtlety of *Lysistrata* can be attributed to the fact that a peace proposal serving Athens' interests was not possible at that point in the war.

There is a great deal of support in the text of *Lysistrata* that Aristophanes was aware that swift action toward peace was impossible. The play depicts Athens as having dug itself into a hole that it could not get out of by conventional means; only radical measures could save the *polis* and, indeed, all of Greece. While describing her plan to Kleonike, Lysistrata says, "the hope and salvation of Hellas lies with the WOMEN" (10), and Kleonike responds with "Lies with the women? Now *there's* a last resort" (10). This exchange suggests that having the women lead the Greeks into salvation is truly a ridiculous strategy, not a real solution at all but merely a sign that there is no hope left for a painless solution.

Yet there are views that assert that Aristophanes was not actually trying to put forth his opinions on the war and the state of Athenian society. In his essay "Aristophanes and Politics", A.W. Gomme rejects the view of Aristophanes as a politician—i.e. as proposing a practical agenda—in favor of Aristophanes as an "artist". The contradictions present in Aristophanes' comedies are what led Gomme to this conclusion. Gomme writes, "For a politician there is a right and a wrong side: he urges the right and condemns the wrong; for a dramatist, though he represents a conflict, there is no right or wrong side (whatever his private opinions may be)" (99). Gomme is correct in pointing out that Aristophanes does not explicitly define a right or wrong side in his plays. Most of

Aristophanes' characters, including those in *Lysistrata*, are not portrayed as admirable just because of the side that they are on. In *Lysistrata*, many of the pro-war men are incompetent and weak, while many of the anti-war women are reckless and lazy. This would certainly seem to point to Gomme's idea that Aristophanes is depicting a total picture of society instead of his ideal. But it is not accurate to describe the role of an ancient Greek dramatist as wholly separate from that of an ancient Greek politician.

The difficulty with Gomme's proposal is that while he is speaking of Aristophanes and his work, he is using modern conceptions of politics and art. In the modern secular Western world, the spheres of art, politics, and religion can and do intersect from time to time, but they are generally considered to be separate. However, there is ample evidence that this separation did not exist in ancient Greek society. Peter D. Arnott describes how Greek choruses, who were integral to all Athenian drama, were selected from the same public that comprised the theatre audience. Arnott points out that "The chorus members were unpaid volunteers, who undertook this service as part of their civic duty" (23). It speaks volumes about the role of art in Greek society that participating in dramatic choruses was considered a civic duty. It appears that Athenian drama was very much intertwined with the affairs of the *polis* and politics, instead of being an essentially separate sphere that may have occasionally commented on politics without directly acting politically. Therefore, it seems clear that production of Old Comedy in ancient Athens was likely defined as both a creative *and* a civic act.

In "Drama and Community: Aristophanes and Some of His Rivals", James Redfield describes Old Comedy as a corrective force:

> Comedy does not state a program, but rather expresses a wish, a longing, often nostalgia, for a better world. […] [Aristophanes] is commissioned to speak for the solidarity of the audience, and as such is hostile to all innovations, including those with some prospect of improving society. […] The Old Comedian is in general hostile to the individual intelligence; he is spokesman for *themis*, which is essentially corrective and leveling. (331)

With *themis* referring to the unspoken rules and conventions governing society, and the *demos* as a citizen collective, Redfield implies that the role of the writer of Old Comedy was to present for the audience a picture of what they believe society ought to be. It would appear that what "ought to be" involved either upholding the status quo, or returning to a previously existing state; the *themis*, and consequently Old Comedy does not often push for new and innovative ideas, according to Redfield. It is clear that in the case of *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes expresses nostalgia for the pre-war glory of Athens. However, it must be acknowledged that the actions of the pro-war politicians were in the name of maintaining the power of the empire, thus they too were interested in recovering Athens' glory. The events of the Sicilian expedition had struck a devastating blow to Athenian pride, and the subtext of *Lysistrata* and the depiction of women as champions of peace implies that Aristophanes wished to draw attention to the damage that Athens had suffered. While in *Lysistrata* the targets of ridicule—Athenian politicians and citizens who had made poor war decisions— are not figures who blatantly wished to change Athens, since they too wished to uphold the glory of Athens, the women can be seen as standing in for the corrective force of the *themis*, since they wish to return Hellas to what it was before the war. This is paradoxical, since Aristophanes portrays most of

his female characters as stereotypes of unstable, reckless, untrustworthy women whose behavior needs to be regulated. Since the female characters are the ones pushing for an idealized Athens, it appears that the play focuses more on depicting the impossibility of a better world than it does on presenting wish-fulfillment.

In "The *Demos* and the Comic Competition", Jeffery Henderson expresses a view that situates Old Comedy very much in the political sphere. Since the comic festivals were institutions organized by the *demos*, Henderson writes, "they had social and political as well as religious significance: no decisions were made about the city or its individual citizens, but the city and its citizens were the festival's theme and focus. Comic festivals were not 'carnival' but civic business—and big business" (286). Clearly, he is implying that the comic festivals, and therefore Old Comedy, were not used to directly determine Athens' political direction, but nonetheless they were forums for civic ideas. Henderson describes his view on the function of Old Comedy:

> Comic poets particularly wanted the *demos* to look through the lies, compromises, self-interest, and general arrogance of their leaders and to remember who was ultimately in charge. They urged reconsideration of policies not adopted. And because they championed the underdog they performed a service useful to any democracy: public airing of minority views. (312-313)

According to Henderson, Old Comedy served to empower the audience and remind them to take control of the political sphere, exposing issues of which the audience may not have been aware. Henderson implies that Old Comedy did have an effect on the political sphere, albeit indirectly. While it did not necessarily put forth explicit recommendations, it reminded the *demos* of issues they needed to take into account, even though a play was

not guaranteed to sway the populace into reconsidering how they had voted. Henderson also describes Old Comedy's target of ridicule as the *demos* itself; the *demos* is reflected in the comedies, but "Everything is grotesquely exaggerated and caricatured, the image is all backwards and seems to reflect things that aren't there and omit things that are. But you must admit that your presence in front of the mirror is the cause of the image in it" (308). Applied to *Lysistrata*, this is similar to Westlake's view that the play is closer to a commentary than a political proposal. It is evident that with *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes was drawing attention to the loss of Athenian glory, highlighting that the Athenians were not doing enough to recapture their former glory, or were unable to recognize the difficulty of such a task.

The interlacing of politics and drama is prominent in the plots of many of Aristophanes' comedies. For example, in *The Acharnians*, Dicaeopolis uses a parody of Euripides' *Telephus* by acting as a beggar in order to make a political speech to the chorus. *Thesmophoriazusae* features Mnesilochus, also in a parody of *Telephus*, playing the role of a woman in order to infiltrate the Thesmophoria festival, which is significant in itself for blending politics, religion, and performance. The Thesmophoria was a religious festival to honor the agricultural goddess Demeter before the planting of the crops, and involved the women taking over the Pynx, where the men normally gather for assembly, and excluding men from the proceedings. While the precise proceedings of the Thesmophoria were kept secret from the men, there is some evidence, as Sue Blundell describes, of rituals that involved imitation:

> On the second day, called the *Nesta* or "Fast", no solid food was consumed, and the women sat on the ground on withies and other plants. In these rituals they

> were probably re-enacting the grief of Demeter at the loss of her daughter Persephone. But a later writer, Diodorus, tells us that the women were seeking in this to "imitate the ancient way of life" (5.4.7), so that there may also have been an allusion to the primitive condition of society prior to the discovery of agriculture. (164)

Thus the women were performing in a political space to honor a goddess who would ensure healthy crops. *Lysistrata* also features performance in political spaces. The female characters in the play use performance to achieve their political goals and return peace to Athens. After Lysistrata explains her goal for Athens, Kleonike points out that women know nothing except dressing up and ornamenting themselves: "There's nothing cosmic about cosmetics—and Glamor is our only talent. All we can do is *sit*, primped and painted, made up and dressed up" (11). Yet Lysistrata responds with: "Exactly. You've hit it. I see our way to salvation in just such ornamentation—in slippers and slips, rouge and perfumes, negligees and décolletage" (11). The women are expected to achieve their political goals through performance, self-presentation and ornamentation. They are to perform hyper-femininity in order to drive the men into the sexual desperation that will force them to end the war.

While art, politics, and religion may have been intertwined in Greek society, there still remained spheres that were meant to be kept separate. The domain of civic affairs, where art, politics, and religion resided, belonged to the public sphere, which in Greek society belonged to the men. Ideally, the private sphere of the household and family belonged to the women, and the women in *Lysistrata* disrupt this ideal with their actions. However, Athenian women were also involved in many aspects of religious life, thus

being permitted entry into the public sphere when religion came into play. Lysistrata herself alludes to this in her opening lines, "Announce a debauch in honor of Bacchos […] the streets are absolutely clogged with frantic females banging on tambourines" (9), which refers to women's public participation in rites of Bacchos, another name for Dionysos. In *Aristophanes: Myth, Ritual, and Comedy*, A.M. Bowie writes, "The idea of women in power is clearly marked in Greek ideology as abnormal, in that it occurs in mythology at times of crisis and in ritual at periods of the year which are themselves marked as abnormal" (179). The central role Greek women had in funerary rites is one such example. Thus women are expected to enter into the public sphere when things are not in order, or during times of instability, in order to return things to the normal state of affairs. And *Lysistrata* itself was produced at a very unstable time, what with Athens' crushing defeat at Sicily and the resulting hostility towards Athens from the rest of Hellas.

Although activities such as women's rituals, or the act of men playing women's roles in the theatre, suggest a degree of allowance for gender fluidity in Greek society, there did exist an anxiety about the instability of gender, and a desire for a more concrete definition. Karen Bassi describes how writers such as Plato attempted to identify a concrete masculine identity:

> […] masculinity is not guaranteed by biology or by being an elite by birth or a soldier by occupation. Indeed, it can even be predicated of a biological woman. But the possibility that not all males are masculine, or that bodily acts and speech acts are transitory and illusory, only proves the need to postulate an essential core of immutable masculinity. Plato's censorship of bodily or visualized

> impersonations thus illustrates how the critique of dramatic impersonation is a manifestation of disciplinary practices that are ultimately aimed at establishing an inner core of unchanging masculinity. Dramatic impersonation, aligned with the irrational part of the soul, threatens to destabilize that core, not least of all by exciting the possibility that it too (that core) may only be an *effect* of bodily acts. (22-23)

Bassi indicates that, while Greek masculinity and theatrical practices were grounded in the concept of imitation, there was anxiety about the instability of a *performative* concept of masculinity. The above passage acknowledges that the core of Greek masculinity may even arise, in fact, from performative acts themselves, and not from anything inherently stable or concrete. This can be seen in the difference in visibility between men and women in Athenian society. Actions that defined women as women were confined to private space—the home—and many of their acts in public space, such as the Thesmophoria rites, were off-limits to men. Men's actions, on the other hand, occurred in the public domain of civic life. Since female acts were not publicly viewable, they may have been considered to have had less defining validity than public male acts. Men's acts were publicly viewable, and therefore could be considered as more strongly defining the male gender role in Athenian society. Yet, since it was possible for women to perform in public spaces at certain times, and that some acts, such as funerary rites, were publicly viewable, this underlines how male acts were not necessarily objective defining acts merely by being more visible. As Bassi indicates, Plato, with his disdain of external impersonation, appears to reflect a desire to discover or invent a concept of masculinity

that was not dependent on superficial acts or qualities, in order to distinguish it as more stable than femininity.

This anxiety over the instability of gender is seen in the portrayal of female characters in much of the surviving Greek drama. There are many female characters who cross gender boundaries with their actions and are therefore seen as a threat to the notion that gender is innate. Clytemnestra in Aescylus' *Agamemnon* is considered a threat because she behaves in a masculine fashion and treats Agamemnon like a woman by insisting that he walk on the red carpet (Blundell 173-4). Agamemnon's lines regarding the tapestries indicate anxiety about being weakened:

> And all this—do not try in woman's ways to make
> me delicate, nor, as if I were some Asiatic
> bow down to earth and with wide mouth cry out to me,
> nor cross my path with jealousy by strewing the ground
> with robes. (918-922)

Even Sophocles' Antigone, who upholds the will of the gods, is seen as a threat to both gender stability and the state: "Although Antigone is engaged in traditional areas of female activity—mourning the dead, defending the interests of the family—she is asserting herself in a masculine fashion in order to do so. At the same time, Creon feels that his own manhood is threatened" (Blundell 174). She points to some of Creon's lines in which this is apparent:

> So I must guard the men who yield to order,
> not let myself be beaten by a woman.
> Better, if it must happen, that a man

should overset me.

I won't be called weaker than womankind. (Sophocles 676-680)

Female literary and dramatic characters who imitate masculinity as well as perform femininity expose gender as imitable, and therefore not innate. Since men viewed women as lacking the essential core that men would ideally have, therefore having only performative acts to define their gender, the idea that the male gender might only be defined by performative acts is threatening.

Aristophanes' comedies follow this convention of depicting women as unstable figures, who are either a reflection or a cause of societal instability, in contrast to men. When Lysistrata blatantly commands the women to perform femininity and makes it clear that this is their only talent, the message is that the female identity is not solid and objective, but is defined through performance and ornamentation. With these figures of instability at the centre of the peace movement in *Lysistrata*, it may very well be true that any definite "peace message" in the play is not meant to be taken seriously, and thus it is not a real political proposal. Yet the fact that *Lysistrata* portrays women as the champions of peace, in the face of the men who were creating and were continuing to create Greece's political instability, may indicate those instances to which Bowie refers—when women acquire power in order to return things to normal. The abnormality and instability of the political situation would call for a women's ritual similar to the Thesmophoria, but not a permanent state of affairs with women in power. Since the situation of the play appears to reflect the male-dominated status quo in which women in the public sphere are an anomaly, then the ideas put forth by the women in the play may not be the male playwright's real opinions. Proposals such as Lysistrata's plan to solve the affairs of

Hellas as one would untangle yarn (44), are probably not proposals that Aristophanes intends the audience to take seriously.

Indeed, the women, despite their unstable gender identity, do appear to be trying to uphold institutions that promote social stability. At the same time, however, there is the implication that, left to their own devices, women would cause more chaos than order, as implied by their sexual passions and Lysistrata's opening reference to the female Bacchic frenzy. In *Greek Comedy and Ideology*, David Konstan writes of *Lysistrata*, "It is marriage, not just sex, that is at stake. […] The women's sexual motive coexists with their commitment to marriage and the home" (48). To the mostly male audience, it would have seemed ironic that the women are advocating the stability of the home and family when they themselves embody societal instability and unchecked passions. Konstan points out the contradiction: "Aristophanes has fused two distinct and mutually contradictory images. The women's sexual passion is at odds with their custodial relation to the home" (49). The female tendency to embody and cause disorder conflicts with the female characters' desire for order. Konstan indicates that, in Athenian society, women's passions can only be permitted to flow within the confines of marriages; otherwise, the stability of society is threatened. Aristophanes' play reflects this: "The transgressive quality of feminine desire is coded as corrosive of the boundaries fixed by civic structures […] Correspondingly, the idea of autonomous female desire threatens the integrity of the household. Women's eroticism must be contained" (49). Bowie points out the function of marriage in Greek society: "Marriage was conceived as the 'taming' of the wild young woman, as can be seen from the language used of it and the representations on vases of young, ephebic males 'hunting' the fleeing girl" (179).

Marriage, then, is the means by which men stabilize the supposedly wild and unpredictable women. Thus the women in *Lysistrata* are defending the very institution that men use to control them. They are calling for the men to resume their positions as patriarchal keepers of order in Athens. In essence, the action of the play shows a reversal of the ancient Greek gender roles, which both asserts and ridicules how degraded Athens has become.

The merging of the public and private spheres in the play serves to highlight the instability of Athens, since under normal circumstances the spheres would be kept separate. Konstan describes how the women remove the barriers between the public and private spheres by making the *polis* into a household: "The city, under occupation by the women, is indeed run as a household, but not as a private household. […] The collective action of the women establishes their new domain as a communal space, the locus of the city's solidarity as a single body. The private households, for the time being, have been abandoned" (51). By infiltrating the men's domain, the women have blurred the normal separation and distinction between the public and private. However, the men expect the private sphere to remain intact, whether or not the public sphere is in order. Lysistrata proposes her plan knowing that the men, who assume the private-sphere institution of marriage would be untouched by the political events, would expect sex with their wives. However, the fact that the events of the war involved the loss of many men, leaving many women without husbands, demonstrates that public affairs are indeed affecting the private, as Lysistrata herself points out. Since the men appear oblivious to the significance of this, the women's sex strike is a strategy that directly affects the men, showing them that they may not count on the status quo in their private lives. The scene

between Kinesias and Myrrhine exemplifies this struggle to maintain stability in both the public and private spheres. Kinesias attempts to bring Myrrhine back to the private sphere exclusively, first by reminding her of her duty to her children: "Come down here, dear. For the baby's sake" (63). She complies, but soon makes it clear that, until the war is halted, she will not be restoring the whole of her and Kinesisas' marriage and family life to what it was. Since the private sphere is the domain of the women, it is Myrrhine who is to decide if and how intercourse will happen. She continues to set up a bed exactly as it would be if they were to have sex in their home, despite Kinesias' insistence that the bed is not necessary. Thus Myrrhine is sending the message that if Kinesias wishes to have sex with his wife, as he expects to in marriage, then the setting must correspond to how the bedroom would be if the private sphere was in its normal state. Yet when the setting is as normal as possible, Myrrhine reminds Kinesias, "Incidentally, darling, you *will* remember to vote for the truce?" (68). Kinesias replies with "I'LL THINK IT OVER" (68), and Myrrhine then does not give him the sexual release he is desperately seeking. Myrrhine has made it clear that the only hope for marriage to return to normal is for the political affairs of the city also to return to normal. While Kinesias would have been content with sex without the rest of the private sphere intact, Myrrhine has made it clear that her goal is to return everything to full normalcy. Kinesias cannot count on the stability of his household and marriage until the public sphere is in order.

In *Aristophanes and Women*, Lauren K. Taaffe describes Aristophanes' intentions for *Lysistrata*, and how the play affected the audience: "[…] such a great loss of men [in the Peloponnesian War] could have affected the overwhelming male-oriented self-definition of Athens terribly. […] How appropriate for Aristophanes to write for a

severely wounded city a peace play that seeks to heal with a celebration of masculinity and a return to traditional values" (72). However, although the play certainly privileges traditional values, the overall implication is that there is no easy return to these values. For such a return to occur, Athens' glory would have to be restored, which at the time was no small task. When the act of women occupying the public sphere is described as a "last resort", it would have clearly indicated to Aristophanes' audience that he was asserting that Athens was in a desperate state. It appears that Aristophanes did not intend to pander to the Athenians' traditional sense of masculine glory, but rather to show them that this glory was an illusion of their own making, which had been broken by their own actions during the Peloponnesian War.

Thus, while defending the stability of the Athenian state, the women attack the supposedly stable identity of the men when the Koryphaios of Women remarks to the Koryphaios of Men, "You're helpless outside of the jury-box" (31). Attacks such as these on the older generation recur in Aristophanes' works, most notably *Wasps*, which shows an older man having his public power stripped when he is led away from serving on the juries. Instances such as these, however, also imply that masculine power is constructed; that once the women take over the public spaces reserved for men, the men's claim to the public sphere is subverted. In other words, masculine power is not innate; because it is constructed, it is unreliable. This is also apparent when Lysistrata eventually commands the women, "Don't be ladylike" (37), thus asking them to put on a different kind of performance, the opposite of the female image and more like the warfaring male image. These instances suggest two things. The first is that the Athenians have lost sight of the masculine ideal, which is to them the most effective for shaping society. They have thus

ended up with the current feminized society that is represented in the play by the fact that women have taken over the Acropolis. Taaffe, whose thesis is that *Lysistrata* reaffirms the notion of innate masculinity, writes of Lysistrata as played by a male actor: "In the world of theater, the male-actor-as-female-character has served to disturb the illusion of 'woman' on stage, to remind us that what appears to be female is an imitation and that the admirable qualities of the main character are in fact part of authentic male interior" (71). While it is evident that Aristophanes valued the masculine ideal, ideal masculine behavior is shown in *Lysistrata* as something that can in fact be performed, and this may reflect a disillusionment about whether this is a real, innate ideal that is possible to uphold. Thus the second implication is that when male actors and their female characters are shown to assume the masculine ideal as with any other performance, the masculine glory of Athens is shown to be an illusory construct. With Athens' imperial power suffering after the events of the Sicilian expedition, the Athenians may have begun to feel that the concept of Athenian glory was a fleeting, illusory notion instead of something solid and permanent. Thus the revelations of social constructs in *Lysistrata* are crucial, since they highlight that what could be taken for granted one day could be revealed to be illusory the next.

Past Athenian glory as an illusory nostalgic belief is implied in how the characters in the play speak of Athens. The Chorus of Men demonstrate the nostalgic and exaggerated sense of Athenian glory when they describe the time when Kleomenes the Spartan attempted to take over the Acropolis. They describe the event: "but he suffered damaging losses when he ran across US! He breathed defiance—and more as well: No bath for six years," which implies Kleomenes was in the Acropolis for six years. Yet the

historical notes describe how the expropriation "lasted rather less than the six years which the Chorus seems to remember. The actual time was two days" (90). The Chorus of old men are shown to be exaggerating a historical event, raising it to mythic proportions. The Koryphaios continues the story: "That's how I took him. A savage siege: Seventeen ranks of shields were massed at that gate, with blanket infantry cover. I slept like a baby. So when mere women […] try the same trick, should I sit idly by?" (26). He uses his past glory against Kleomenes to lead himself to believe that he can easily overtake the women, yet the extent of his past glories may be a fabrication.

There are instances when certain male characters imply that Athens has been feminized. The Commissioner blames the influence of the wife of Demostratos, the demagogue who first proposed the ill-fated Sicilian expedition (96), for Demostratos' blundering proposal:

> Recall, if you can, the debate on the Sicilian Question:
>
> That bullbrained demagogue Demostratos (who will rot, I trust) rose to propose a naval task force.
>
> His wife, writhing with religion on a handy roof, bleated a dirge:
>
> "BEREFT! OH WOE FOR ADONIS!"
>
> And so of course Demostratos, taking his cue, outblatted her:
>
> "A DRAFT! ENROLL THE WHOLE OF ZAKYNTHOS!"
>
> […]
>
> And so of course Demostratos (that god-detested blot, that foul-lunged son of an ulcer) gnashed tooth and nail and voice, and bashed and rammed his program through.

And THERE is the Gift of Women: MORAL CHAOS! (32-33)

In this speech, while Demostratos is attacked for being "bullbrained", incompetent and destructive, his wife is also attacked for causing "MORAL CHAOS!" Yet it appears that the fault lies mainly with Demostratos for letting himself be influenced by his wife, since he is attacked with such derogatory names. This passage asserts that the men, especially demagogues, who control the public sphere can be easily swayed by their wives, who are not meant to have any influence in the public sphere beyond rituals of renewal. This susceptibility to inappropriate female influence may lead politicians such as Demostratos to make poor decisions that led to disasters such as the events at Sicily. Alternately, these male politicians could just be incompetent decision-makers, and the blame is shifted to their wives to avoid the possibility that the male politicians are intrinsically weak. Either the concept of male supremacy in general is fragile and not innate and solid, or demagogues such as Demostratos are weak men whose masculine power can be subverted by femininity. Aristophanes' views on the Sicilian expedition are quite clear in this passage—those such as Demostratos who initiated the devastating expedition are depicted as incompetent and weak. Demostratos is painted as someone who does not uphold the ideal of masculine supremacy; thus Aristophanes may have held the view that if Athenian society had not become so feminized, politicians would not be so weak, and therefore Athens would not be in its present situation.

Athenian weakness is reinforced when the women are shown driving away all the Archers in fear with only a few lines, exposing the male Archers as weak-willed. The Commissioner remarks "What a colossal mess: Athens' Finest—finished!" (36), alluding to Athens' recent devastating loss of warriors. He further demonstrates the Athenian

attitude when he says "I DO NOT WANT TO BE SAVED, DAMMIT!" (40), to which Lysistrata replies, "All the more reason. It's not only Sparta; now we'll have to save you from *you*" (40). It is clear from earlier plays such as *The Acharnians* that Aristophanes wished to see an end to the war. But the Athenians continued it, under the encouragement of demagogues such as Kleon. With the Archer scene in *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes lambastes the continued refusal of the Athenians to put an end to the war, and implies that the Athenians' own actions during the war are as much to blame, if not moreso, for their grievances during the war than are the actions of their enemies.

The Commissioner indicates that the behavior of the women, and the resulting chaos, is in fact the fault of the men: "For female depravity, gentlemen, WE stand guilty—we, their teachers, preceptors of prurience, accomplices before the fact of fornication. We sowed them in sexual license, and now we reap rebellion" (33). Here the Commissioner essentially describes how the men have failed to impose their ideals on the women and thus have left the women to their own devices. This has led to chaos in the *polis*, as the men lose control of the public sphere. Froma L. Zeitlin writes about this anxiety about women in the public sphere as portrayed in Euripides' *The Bacchae*:

> Men imagine they can control that interior space by attempting to control the women within it. The men object—often violently, as Pentheus does—when in the most dramatic reversal the women leave the stifling environment of the house to venture forth to the open (although equally uncivic) world of forest and mountains. ("Playing the Other" 355)

This is similar to what occurs in *Lysistrata*—the men object to the women leaving the private sphere because it is a sign that the men have lost their control over the women. In

Lysistrata, the loss of control over the women is presented as a metaphor for the loss of the Athenian ideals during the war. Zeitlin describes Athenian culture as heading towards "feminization" ("Travesties of Gender and Genre" 211), in which traditional masculine values were to be abandoned:

> Second, in the social world, as the war dragged on to its unhappy close, attention began to shift away from masculine values of politics to the private sphere—to the domestic milieu at home, to the internal workings of the psyche, and to a new validation of eros, all of which the feminine as a cultural category best exemplifies. (211)

Although Zeitlin's article is about *Thesmophoriazousae*, the play's first production has been dated to the same year as *Lysistrata*, 411, probably at that year's Dionysia (Dover 162). In the above passage, Zeitlin is describing a gradual shift that was occurring as Athens' prospects grew more grim. Thus Aristophanes may have perceived Athens as not only having lost its masculine values and previous glory, but also as not putting in enough effort to restore these values.

Taaffe describes the women presented onstage, played by male actors imitating women: "[…] we are not to identify these women with real Greek women at all. They are theatrical, comic women, whose gender identity is determined by what men think, by exaggerated fantasies and fears" (54). Taaffe implies that the comic female characters are wholly defined by what men believe women to be, rather than mimetic representations of real women. If the theatrical women of comedy are defined by male perception, it is thus further demonstrated that the women of *Lysistrata* are not meant to have an essential identity. The idea of the female comic figure is a construction of the male-dominated

society and is thus dependent on men's projections of their own preconceptions, judgments, and assumptions. When Lysistrata states: "I'm positively ashamed to be a woman—a member of a sex that can't even live up to male slanders! To hear our husbands talk, we're *sly*: deceitful, always plotting, monsters of intrigue…" (9). She implies here not only that the role of the woman in Athenian society is constructed by men, but that it is a flawed construction, one not present in real-life Athens, just as the construction of the ideal man is not present. As quoted earlier, Taafee described the "male-actor-as-female character" convention of Greek theatre as highlighting that admirable qualities of a female character actually reflect the "authentic male interior" of the male actor. Yet the "authentic male interior" is not in fact validated by Aristophanes' play. Male ideals are portrayed as most desirable, but the play does not uphold the idea that these masculine ideals are an innate part of Athenian society. While a case can be made for Taaffe's idea that male ideals attributed to a female character are because she is played by a male actor, the reverse can also be argued. It can be said that the male actors disguised and acting as women represent the feminization of Greek men. The feminine weaknesses written into the female characters are portrayed by male actors, thus raising the possibility that these feminine weaknesses apply to male figures. Since, as Zeitlin mentioned, Athenian society was seen as becoming increasingly feminized, the play could be exploiting the convention of men playing women to portray the dwindling of traditional masculinity.

A semi-ironic instance is when the men pray to Athena to restore their male supremacy:

Queen Athene, let these strumpets

> crumple before our attack.
>
> Grant us victory, male supremacy…
>
> and a testimonial plaque. (28)

The men are shown to be dependent on a female persona to restore their self-created ideals of their city, although it is a female deity whose representation is also built on men's self-created ideals. The goddess Athena is described by Blundell as a figure who "traverses and transcends the boundary between feminine and masculine roles" (26) since she performs functions associated with men such as being defender of the *polis*, as well as those associated with women such as nurturing young citizens. Lysistrata shares this ambiguous gender quality with Athena. With Lysistrata's speech and the subsequent Marriage in which Spartans are given one set of girls and the Athenians another, it is clear that in this situation, it is women who restore the male ideals. Taaffe argues that it is not feminine qualities that restored male ideals, but rather women as objects of exchange, as evidenced in the reconciliation scene:

> The men are brought together as brothers by a masculine woman by means of a clearly artificial, naked woman. Femininity has not reconciled Greece. Creatures who play to the male gaze have caused that gaze to refocus upon masculine desire. In addition, woman has been put back in one of her rightful places, as a silent token of exchange between men. (71)

Taaffe is referring to Lysistrata as the masculine woman, one who behaves like a man to champion Athens' former masculine glory. While it is not entirely accurate to describe Lysistrata as "masculine", and is more accurate to describe her as having an ambiguous gender identity, Lysistrata does perform a masculine function in the reconciliation scene

when she offers the "artificial, naked" figure of Peace to the men. That the women have been restored as objects of political exchange is a sign that the ideal masculine society is on its way to restoration. Yet having women as the catalyst for this restoration does not serve to uphold the ideal solidity of masculine power. Instead, it shows one false construct being used to uphold another false construct, thus reinforcing the idea that Athenian masculine glory is not innate, permanent, or reliable.

Lysistrata, as leader of the women, must have distinct characteristics in order to allow her to be the leader. Taaffe describes the character of Lysistrata as being an allusion to Lysimache[2], the priestess of Athena at the time (62). If so, then Lysistrata may be seen to stand as a spokesperson for Athena. If Lysistrata is inherently bound together with Athena, she is bound to the city of Athens itself and its affairs, thus standing in for the ideals of the city itself, ideals which are also defined by men. In several instances, such as when Lysistrata points out how Greeks fighting Greeks is absurd due to their history of mutually benefiting each other (70), Lysistrata speaks the playwright's political views and therefore has a function beyond upholding the mandate of the private sphere. She does not speak only for the private sphere of women; she also speaks for the male-dominated public sphere. Lysistrata speaks and behaves according to both male and female ideals, and thus she stands both for what Athens is in its present state, and what Aristophanes believes Athens should be.

However, according to Taaffe, it appears that the distinctive characteristic of Lysistrata is that she speaks primarily for men:

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[2] The name of the priestess Lysimache translates to "Releaser of Battle", which parallels the name Lysistrata, which translates to "Releaser of War" or "Releaser of Armies". I thank Dr. Selina Stewart for providing me with this information.

> Lysistrata also bears many of the standard identifiers of masculinity. She has ideas and is concerned with the future of the city, not with sex, drinking, and domestic intrigue. She plays to the male audience's comic stereotype of women. She appears to have no husband or children. Finally, her language is neither distinctively feminine nor distinctively masculine. In mimetic terms, Lysistrata is an imitation of a woman (Lysimache) who represents Athena, who is herself a male creation. Her character, no less than those of the other women, becomes an example of a man speaking about women by speaking for women, and speaking about a specific woman (Lysimache) by speaking in her place. (62)

The key consideration here is that Lysistrata's language is neither distinctively masculine nor distinctively feminine. Indeed, her entire character would be more accurately described as neither distinctly masculine nor feminine, rather than primarily masculine. While she is a man's creation who appears to be speaking for women, she is not explicitly bound to the male construction of women. She advocates that the men return home so marriage can be upheld, but she is also used to make several statements about the Peloponnesian War that go beyond the private sphere. These are statements pointing out such things as that the war pits Greeks against Greeks (78), and that the Spartans were Athens' only allies when the Greek overthrew the tyrant Hippias in 510 (79, 94). Her speech expresses opinions in a fashion akin to Dikaiopolis ("Just Citizen") of *The Acharnians*, who is used in that play to air the playwright's views.

If there is an element of *Lysistrata* that allows it to be accessible beyond the context of fifth-century Athens, it may very well be the character of Lysistrata. With little evidence of Lysistrata having a husband and a household to manage, she is removed from

the experience of the other women in the play, as well as that of real Greek women. Yet being a woman herself, she is not included in the masculine world of the male characters. Belonging to neither the domestic world of the women nor the political world of the men, Lysistrata exists outside the immediate moment of the characters in the play, and thus the experience of the Athenian audience. She exists between the public and private spheres, both of which, individually and symbiotically, were so integral to Athenian society. In addition, Lysistrata is a mouthpiece for Aristophanes' ideas, while appearing as a woman who both does and does not uphold the ideal standard of Athenian female behavior. She can at once stand for both Aristophanes' serious ideas, and for ideas—such as treating Athens as akin to wool—that are not to be taken seriously. While she advocates a return to Athenian male-centric ideals, her behavior and speech do not reflect those ideals. As a result of her liminal gender position, Lysistrata is shown to break through the domestic/political boundaries of fifth-century Athenian culture. It may be the character's liminal position that allows for the play's timelessness, because her ability to transcend boundaries means that the character is able to exist outside of the ancient Greek cultural context; therefore she is in a position to be accessible beyond ancient Athens.

It appears that *Lysistrata* is neither a serious political proposal to end the Peloponnesian War, nor a representation of society with a wish-fulfillment ending. Instead, it is a commentary arguing that Athens should never have let itself get into its current situation. Aristophanes is ridiculing and chastising the Athenians for not making the right decisions earlier, which has resulted in the Athenians being in an impossible situation now. Thus Aristophanes likely did seek to influence public opinion with *Lysistrata*, though not by directly prescribing a solution to the Athenians, but instead by

drawing attention to the state in which their *polis* finds itself. The play is not a caricature of women, but of men, and how men's loss of their ideals during the war has led to this unstable, feminized society. The women represent the unstable state of Greece, and Lysistrata in particular stands for Athens in its degraded state, with its past glories lost. Essentially, the play is an editorial; Aristophanes may not have intended to directly influence Athens' political leadership, but he likely did intend to influence public opinion.

Chapter 2

The Lysistrata Project and American Democracy

The Lysistrata Project of March 3, 2003, devised as a global protest against the impending American war against Iraq, used *Lysistrata* to unite diverse protesters and allow them to express their individual views on the war in Iraq. This theatrical protest was open to anyone who wished to participate, whether they were professional theatre artists, amateurs, educators, or people who had never before participated in the theatre. The inclusive, non-hierarchical form that the Lysistrata Project took ended up challenging several interconnected aspects of the political and cultural environment of the United States at the time. First and foremost, it was a response to the rush to military action the federal government was taking against Iraq. The government was basing its proposal to go to war on the idea that Iraq was an immediate threat to American national security and was harboring weapons of mass destruction; however, they intended to invade Iraq before these claims could be fully investigated and verified. President George W. Bush's speeches reflected a desire to polarize the issue by implying that complying with the government's desires was to be in line with American values, while dissenting was to be anti-American. Intersecting with this was a mainstream media industry that had become increasingly consolidated and concerned with profit, and an artistic sphere that was expected to be apolitical. It appeared that artists, as well as the general public, were expected either to support the proposed war or to settle into apathy, rather than to exercise their democratic right to challenge policy. The Lysistrata Project helped to subvert this mentality by using the Internet, to date the most unregulated medium of communication, to spread the word about the Project, and sought to make the Project as

inclusive as possible, open to anyone who wished to voice their opinion regardless of any previous theatrical background, social status, or political involvement. Ultimately, the Project's inclusive and unregulated form was able to challenge various hierarchies in art, politics, and even gender to assert and thereby reaffirm the power of the democratic citizen, as well as to allow marginalized people the opportunity to exercise democracy through theatre.

The Lysistrata Project was organized by New York actors Kathryn Blume and Sharron Bower. Blume had originally planned to read an in-progress screenplay based on *Lysistrata* as part of the New York-based Theatres Against War (THAW) protest on March 2, 2003. She then changed her plan to a reading of *Lysistrata* itself, in part because the screenplay was not adequately complete, and in part because audiences would be more familiar with the play itself (Blume, Telephone interview). Bower contacted Blume hoping to be hired for a show at her husband's Vermont theatre, and Blume proposed the idea of working on the *Lysistrata* reading (Blume, 26 Sept. 2009 e-mail). From there, they got the idea to expand the scope of the reading:

> We got the idea to do the reading as a benefit for humanitarian aid in Iraq given that the country had been so severely damaged by the first Gulf War and the years of sanctions. One of the beneficiaries we picked was MADRE […] We then noticed that MADRE's celebrity spokesperson was Susan Sarandon. We thought she'd make a great Lysistrata. Then we thought that if we could get her, we could do a much bigger reading. (Blume, 10 Aug. 2008 e-mail)

The possibility of expanding the scope of a *Lysistrata* reading by creating a "bigger" one led to the idea of organizing more readings: "Then, in the spirit of raising as much money

and awareness as possible, we thought we could do more than one" (Blume, 10 Aug. 2008 e-mail). Blume and Bower contacted friends in Seattle, Washington, and Austin, Texas, then decided to see how many more readings they could organize (Blume, 10 Aug. 2008 e-mail). To add more readings to the protest, they set up a website on January 9, 2003, calling for others to organize their own readings, and e-mailed everyone they knew (Blume, Telephone interview). Through the continual forwarding of the e-mails and word of mouth letting people know about the website, 1,029 readings in 59 countries eventually became part of the Lysistrata Project.

One of the concerns driving the project was that under George W. Bush's presidency, the administration had "co-opted the media" (Blume, Telephone interview). After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Bush's administration was unwilling to disclose information to the press and the public, or often gave misleading or inaccurate information[3], and much of the mainstream media was unwilling to fully investigate the issues. Thus it was difficult for the general public to undertake an in-depth critique of the administration. The lack of media investigation and critique was not a situation unique to Bush's term, although the climate following 9/11 certainly brought it to light. For almost thirty years, the United States has seen, and continues to see, a trend toward media consolidation that has narrowed the range of voices to which the public has been exposed, which in turn has interfered with the public's ability to be fully informed citizens. Starting with the relaxation of media ownership regulations in 1981, when

[3] Bill Israel's study "What Happened to Journalism?" traces examples of the Bush administration releasing inaccurate or unverified claims in the months leading up to the Iraq war. Examples include US intelligence linking the 2001 Anthrax scare to Iraq, and a December 2002 report by the State Department about the possibility of child soldiers being trained in Iraq when there were no such reports (40-41).

Ronald Reagan appointed Mark Fowler as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, larger media outlets have bought up smaller ones in increasingly large numbers (Kidd 269). During the Clinton administration, the 1996 Telecommunications Act was passed, which further relaxed ownership rules and resulted in large corporations profiting and many smaller stations folding or being acquired by large companies (Kidd 269). In *The New Media Monopoly*, Ben Bagdikian describes the large number of media outlets in the United States by 2001: "The 280 million Americans are served, along with assorted other small local and national media, by 1,468 daily newspapers, 6,000 different magazines, 10,000 radio stations, 2,700 television and cable stations, and 2,600 book publishers" (16). He goes to describe how the number of companies who own the bulk of the media outlets has shrunk over time: "In 1983 there were fifty dominant media corporations; today there are five[4]" (16). In addition, Fowler's Commission removed several content laws, including the Fairness Doctrine that required broadcasters to be balanced in the views they presented (Kidd 269). With a lack of regulation as to ownership and content, continually growing media conglomerates pursued profit and cost-effectiveness, competition was reduced, and an increasingly larger audience saw increasingly homogenized programming.

Meanwhile, smaller independent companies became less able to reach an audience. It was not a question of numbers, since the number of independent media

[4] These "Big Five" corporations Bagdikian discusses are Time Warner, The Walt Disney Company, Murdoch's News Corporation, Viacom, and Bertelsmann A.G. *Free Press*' 2008 charts deal with a "Big Six"—Time Warner, The Walt Disney Company, (Murdoch) New Corporation, Viacom, General Electric, and CBS. At the time of Bagdikian's writings, CBS was owned by Viacom.

outlets had actually increased over the years, as Jay Harris, publisher of the independent *Mother Jones* magazine describes:

> At the end of the 1960's […] the Alternative Press Index included seventy-two active periodicals on the "alternative" end of the spectrum. Today [2005], the Independent Press Association represents over five hundred member publications. […] Pacifica Radio has center-of-the-dial FM licenses in five of America's biggest cities and hundreds of affiliate community radio stations across the country. […] Alternet, Salon.com, and TomPaine.com offer daily news, commentary, and thoughtful analysis to anyone who has an Internet connection. (91)

The real problem for independent media has always been the lack of resources to reach as wide an audience as do the media conglomerates. Harris describes the difficulties with distribution and financing:

> Consolidation has reduced the number of mainline magazine distribution companies to four majors, and big retailers from Safeway to Walgreen's to Wal-Mart allocate precious rack space to only high-margin titles. […] The lack of financial prospects for many independent media endeavors severely limits access to traditional investment capital and, because of that, the availability of money for marketing, for promoting both products and ideas to new audiences is scarce and nonexistent. (91)

Harris points out that even *Harper's* and the *Nation*, independent publications with a large readership that have published for decades, are not profitable endeavors (91). In

2006, the Independent Publishers Association itself ended up folding due to financial difficulties (Fisher).

While the consolidation of the media in the United States had been a growing problem for many years, the lack of in-depth critique in the mainstream media became a key issue after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent 17 months leading up to the Iraq War. Rodger Streitmatter writes in *Mightier than the Sword*: "Beginning journalism students learn in their first reporting course that the standard formula for writing a news story is to answer the five Ws: who, what, where, when, and why. […] The titans of the journalism world faltered, however, when it came to answering the fifth question relevant to 9/11: *Why* did terrorists attack the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon" (240). Newspapers such as the New *York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Lost Angeles Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal* covered in vivid detail the events of the attacks themselves as well as the human toll and emotional impact, and asked questions about how the hijackers were able to get past U.S. intelligence (Streitmatter 242-244). However, they did not explore the motivations of the terrorists (Streitmatter 242-244). For example, the *New York Times*' early coverage emphasized the number of lives lost, described the destruction in great detail, and mentioned that the evidence pointed specifically to Osama bin Laden as the orchestrator of the attacks, but left out any discussion of why bin Laden organized the attacks (Streitmatter 241-243).

Meanwhile, Bush gave his own explanation of the terrorists' motivations through his speeches. Streitmatter describes Bush's tendency to use overly simplified rhetoric when speaking about complex issues: "Many observers had attributed the president's pre-9/11 political success to his ability to transform complex issues into black-and-white

terms. He was soon displaying that talent on live television, stating that bin Laden had attacked the United States because terrorists are bad and America is good" (244). For example, the speech Bush gave from the Oval Office on the day of the attacks contained phrases such as, "Today, our nation saw evil—the very worst of human nature." The speech gave the reason for the attacks as: "America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world." Such speeches left out Osama bin Laden's specific grievances about American foreign policy, which included American occupation of the sacred ground of the Arabian Peninsula (Strietmatter 245-247, bin Laden), and instead sent the message that the attacks had risen out of an irrational "evil". The response to the attacks was then given, in Bush's September 20, 2001 Address to a Joint Session of Congress, the vague, broad term "global war on terror". In the same speech, Bush gave the rest of the world a black-and-white choice: "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime."

Thus in 2001, there was already a strategy on the part of the Bush administration to polarize views on the United States' prospective actions in the Middle East. To be pro-war was to be on the side of the United States, i.e. "with us", and to be anti-war was to be "with the terrorists." This polarizing rhetoric was subsequently used to make the case for the Iraq War. Strietmatter describes how the black-and-white rhetoric of 9/11 was repeated to gain support for military action against Iraq: "Propelled by his success at convincing the public that the attacks were motivated by the terrorists being evil and America being good, President Bush set out to build on that idea to justify going to war

with Iraq" (249). In his January 29, 2002 State of the Union address, Bush described Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an "axis of evil." He used the "with us or against us" rhetoric again with the phrasing, "Yet as we act to win the war, protect our people and create jobs in America, we must act first and foremost not as Republicans, not as Democrats, but as Americans", thus implying that it was the duty of American citizens to comply with the government's plans. In a speech given in Cincinnati on October 7, 2002, which specifically focused on Iraq, its links to terrorism, and the threat of weapons of mass destruction, Bush used the good/evil rhetoric again with phrases such as "Terror cells and outlaw regimes building weapons of mass destruction are different faces of the same evil."

The lack of any in-depth critique in the media was also a key issue in the months leading up to the Iraq War. Harris points to a March 18, 2003 report by Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) to show the homogeneity of the network news in the months before the Iraq invasion. FAIR investigated network news coverage between January 30 to February 12, 2003 and their report lists findings such as: "At a time when 61 percent of U.S. respondents were telling pollsters that more time was needed for diplomacy and inspections (2/6/03), only 6 percent of U.S. sources on the four networks were skeptics regarding the need for war". In addition, "Sources affiliated with anti-war activism were nearly non-existent. On the four networks combined, just three of 393 sources were identified as being affiliated with anti-war activism—less than 1 percent. Just one of 267 U.S. sources was affiliated with anti-war activism—less than half a percent". An example of a corporate media outlet flattening out debate that FAIR lists in their March 19, 2007 "Iraq and the Media" critical timeline is the October 14, 2002 issue

of *Time* magazine, owned by Time Warner: "Illustrating the limited range of debate in the corporate media, Time magazine pairs a supposedly dovish piece by Wesley Clark, headlined 'Let's Wait to Attack', with a hawkish article by Kenneth Adelman headlined, 'No, Let's Not Waste Any Time'". This pairing thus featured one editorial that advocated not rushing into war and another arguing for immediate action, but neither was explicitly anti-war. Time Warner also owns CNN, which had incidents on air such as anchor Wolf Blitzer suggesting that anti-war activist Dr. Helen Caldicott was "defending the Iraqi regime"[5] (FAIR, "Iraq and the Media"), and Paula Zahn baiting former weapons inspector Scott Ritter, who argued that there was no evidence that Iraq posed a large enough threat to justify going to war, and then concluding with the question, in the last five seconds of the interview, "Do you acknowledge, though, that Iraq has defied a number of U.N. regulations here and resolutions?"[6] (CNN). These examples show a tendency for mainstream news media owned by large corporations to avoid or undercut non-mainstream views in their broadcasting.

Strietmatter describes a possible reason why journalists avoided exploring the terrorists' motivations in their 9/11 coverage: "News organizations steered clear of identifying the motivations of the terrorists because they were afraid that doing so might be interpreted as both unpatriotic and an effort to justify the attacks" (248). As an example, Strietmatter describes an incident in which columnist Susan Sontag was denounced by other journalists such as Peter Carlson and Charles Krauthammer for suggesting, in a *New Yorker* article, that the attacks were a consequence of the United States' foreign policies (248). Streitmatter acknowledges that it is also possible that

[5] November 7, 2002
[6] September 9, 2002

journalists may have been too overwhelmed with covering other aspects of the attacks to explore the terrorists' motivations (249), but the concern to appear patriotic may be the more likely reason. Mainstream media outlets, owned as they are by large private corporations, would likely be more concerned with their financial interests than in the quality of the content they present. In the case of 9/11, implying that the terrorists had specific, even rational, reasons—something that could be interpreted as meaning that the United States deserved the attacks—may have been too controversial, and perhaps scared off advertisers who may not have wanted to be seen as endorsing such a strong statement. In "The Myth of the Liberal Media", Eric Alterman implies that the mainstream media have stakes in protecting the conditions that allow the conglomerates to grow, and therefore do not have any reason to publish challenging content:

> […] print journalists have editors who have editors above them who have publishers above them and who, in most cases, have corporate executives above them. Television journalists have producers and executive producers and network executives who worry primarily about ratings, advertising profits, and the sensibilities of their audience, their advertisers, and their corporate owners. When it comes to content, it is these folks who matter, more than anyone. (114)

As Dell Champlin and Janet Knoedler point out, "News for profit is news that must attract ratings, and that means ratings from the demographic groups most attractive to advertisers. […] Broadcast media derives 100 percent of its revenue from advertisers, and cable news channels get substantial revenue from the same sources" (462). In a 2001 study of local television news, the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism reports: "In a survey of 118 news directors around the country, more than

half, 53 percent, reported that advertisers pressure them to kill negative stories or run positive ones". For example, FAIR's "Fear & Favor 2000" report lists incidents such as *Time* magazine's "Heroes for the Planet" series, which featured profiles of environmentalists but purposely avoided issues surrounding the auto industry because Ford Motor Co. was the exclusive sponsor. When criticizing the notion that the American media has a liberal bias, Alterman uses the example of the 1992 media support of Bill Clinton as something that was, even in those days before the Telecommunications Acts, driven by self-interest, not ideology. Clinton's fresh face and potential for scandal made him an ideal subject for career boosts in journalists' eyes (Alterman 112). As the conglomerates grew, with fewer companies owning more outlets in the same markets, journalists increasingly felt that they had to watch what they wrote:

> Rarely does some story that is likely to arouse concern ever go far enough to actually need to be censored at the corporate level. The reporter, the editor, the producer, the executive producer, and so on, all understand implicitly that their jobs depend in part on keeping their corporate partners happy. […] A 2000 Pew Research Center study found that more than 40 percent of journalists felt a need to self-censor their work, either by avoiding certain stories or softening the ones they wrote, to benefit the interests of the organizations for which they work. (Alterman 115-116)

The overall effect is that over time, news often became sensationalistic and lacking in substance, and avoided controversial analyses that could threaten sources of revenue. The main goal of the for-profit media was thus to protect their business interests, rather than to serve the public.

An example of a media conglomerate whose interests have been best served by endorsing the Iraq War is Clear Channel Communications, notorious for its ties to the Bush family. Dorothy Kidd, in her 2005 article "Clear Channel and the Public Airwaves", describes how Clear Channel executives contributed to George W. Bush's gubernatorial and presidential campaigns, and "In return, Clear Channel can count on strong representation within the Bush administration. For example, Charles James represented Clear Channel's bid for regulatory approval when it purchased AM/FM in 2000. He is the current antitrust chief in the Justice Department" (272). In the months leading up to the invasion of Iraq, Clear Channel was able, in some cases, to endorse the pro-war stance to a large audience, or in other cases, at least to minimize the anti-war stance. Radio personalities with anti-war stances such as Charles Goyette of KFYI-AM in Phoenix and Roxanne Cordonier of WMYI in South Carolina, found themselves losing favorable time slots or being ridiculed on and off air (Kidd 274). Many stations under the Clear Channel umbrella, especially in southern markets such as Atlanta, Georgia; Lubbock, Texas; and Dothan, Alabama[7] (Barrett) sponsored pro-war rallies called Rally for America. Many of the rallies were hosted by prominent syndicated radio personality Glenn Beck. While the company claimed that there was no direct involvement from the head offices and that the rallies were organized by individual stations, this claim was met with skepticism due to the company's centralized control structure (Krugman). In a 2003 *New York Times* article, "Channels of Influence", Paul Krugman comments on the mutual interest that the government and big media have in supporting each other, referring to initiatives such as Rally for America: "On almost every aspect of domestic policy, business interests rule

[7] According to Clear Channel's website, the corporation currently owns 6 Atlanta-based stations, 42 total in the state of Georgia, 58 Texas stations, and 22 Alabama stations.

[…] if politicians are busy doing favors for businesses that support them, why shouldn't we expect businesses to reciprocate by doing favors for those politicians—by, for example, organizing 'grass roots' rallies on their behalf?" (Krugman). While incidents such as Rally for America represent the most extreme media endorsements of government policy, it clearly served the interests of most conglomerate media to avoid highly critical or investigative approaches in covering the governments' actions.

Thus the government and the mainstream media created conditions in which American citizens could not easily be informed fully about all aspects of 9/11 or the proposed war on Iraq. However, citizens who did want gaps filled in about bin Laden's motivations were able to turn to the Internet (Streitmetter 246), an unregulated space where information could be freely exchanged. Bin Laden's 1998 "Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders" was available on the Internet. This document aired bin Laden's grievances with the United States, such as the American military presence in the Middle East, the support of Israel, and alleged massacres of Iraqis (Streitmetter 246-247, bin Laden). It was on the Internet that the opportunity for critical thinking was found, and the Lysistrata Project was able to take advantage of this unregulated space to express and foster dissent.

While politics and art could freely intermingle on the Internet, as it did with the Lysistrata Project, it was clear that offline, the general desire in the United States was to keep the political and cultural spheres separate. In the offline world, artists found themselves in an environment in which they were discouraged from voicing critical political opinions. In January of 2003, poet Sam Hamill of Port Townsend, Washington had been invited to a poetry symposium at the White House hosted by First Lady Laura Bush. As Julie Salamon reported, "[Hamill's] response was to send e-mail messages to

50 friends and colleagues asking them for antiwar poems to send to Mrs. Bush. In four days he received 1,500 responses" (Salamon). Upon learning that Hamill would be bringing this anthology, the First Lady halted the symposium:

> After learning of the protest, the White House postponed the symposium on the works of Emily Dickinson, Langston Hughes and Walt Whitman. Noelia Rodriguez, Ms. Bush's press secretary, said "While Mrs. Bush respects and believes in the right of all Americans to express their opinions, she, too, has opinions and believes that it would be inappropriate *to turn what is intended to be a literary event into a political forum.* [my emphasis]" (Salamon)

Actions such as this that kept political opinions out of the artistic sphere demonstrate both a desire to limit the number of dissenting voices and to keep the political and artistic spheres separate. The cancellation of the poetry symposium was a direct action by the White House to keep politically charged art out of an artistic event. Yet the corporate media also played a role in keeping politics out of arts and entertainment. Alexis Petridis of *The Guardian* commented on the lack of anti-war statements from recording artists in general, but especially those who were American-based or who appeared on the American media. Many artists refrained from making statements on the February 2003 Grammy awards, for example, because "CBS, who televised the awards had warned all prospective winners that if they attempted to mention the war, they would be taken off the air" (Petridis). One particularly notorious instance was the backlash against the Dixie Chicks after lead singer Natalie Maines criticized Bush at a concert in London, England. The radio chain Cumulus Media banned the Dixie Chicks' music from their country stations, and their Louisiana station KRMD held a rally to destroy their CDs (Krugman).

Not only is this separation of art and politics the opposite of Aristophanes' theatre; it is also a sharp contrast to the radical theatre movement in the United States in the 1960s, where theatre was often used as a protest medium for issues such as the Vietnam War. In America in the 1960s, an act of theatre could be an act of democracy. According to David Callaghan, the depoliticization of American theatre occurred during and after the Reagan administration of the 1980s:

> The intersection of art and politics in the 1980s produced a series of culture wars and a reactionary backlash against the so-called hedonism and legacy of the 1960s counterculture, including cuts in the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), which often supported artists who were considered in violation of traditional American values. So artists interested in experimenting with radical content found themselves under siege by influential conservative forces in the government and grossly out of sync with the nostalgia-addled political climate at the time. (108)

Callaghan describes how a nostalgic patriotism was the dominant narrative in mainstream entertainment: "[…] large audiences flocked to movie theatres to see Sylvester Stallone's Rambo character revise history and crush America's enemies in Vietnam […] and the Soviet Union became the villain *de jour* for Hollywood's blockbuster action movies" (108). The radicalism of the 1960s did not return under Bill Clinton's Democratic presidency: "[…] the conservative 1980s and the liberal 1990s were decades defined mainly by material comfort and pursuits of financial profit, with the social activism and lifestyle excesses of the 'age of Aquarius' criticized in the larger culture as passé, dangerous, and somewhat embarrassing in successive years" (Callaghan 109). This shift in ideology coincides with media deregulation. In the cultural sector, profit became more

important than ideas, and culture increasingly either endorsed the government's dominant ideas or remained apolitical.

Yet freedom of speech remained a deep-rooted American value, and this drove artists to attempt to increase their role in the political sphere as a reaction to the efforts to keep them out. Salamon writes, "For those opposing the war with Iraq, the cancellation of the poetry symposium symbolizes the part the arts can play in politics. Hearing the drumbeat of a new war, through readings, concerts, art exhibitions and theater, artists are trying to recapture their place as catalysts for public debate and dissent". Many American artists saw their exclusion from the political sphere as contrary to the very ideals of their country. Marvin Carlson, while discussing an initiative by New York's Worth Street Theater called *Voices of Peace and Dissent from Ground Zero*, writes about the mandate of that program: "Its announcements have stressed the importance of such resistant performance to the operations of democracy, quoting President Theodore Roosevelt, who in 1918 said: 'To announce that there must be no criticism of the President, or that we are to stand by the President, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public'" (14). The mandate of *Voices* thus asserts that the use of theatre to criticize political actions is very much a democratic, even patriotic, act, since the scrutiny of the government by its citizens is essential to ensure that democracy is upheld.

Rallying together for a common cause is also a deep-rooted American value, and this was employed by the pro-war side to gain support. In his State of the Union address in January 2002, Bush called for all citizens to act together as Americans, and events such as Rally for America called on Americans to stand together in solidarity. The name

itself of the "Rally for America" demonstrations reflects a demand for American solidarity—describing the pro-war rallies as being "for America" implies that opposing views are *against* America. Yet artists on the anti-war side viewed their stance as being true to American values as well, and therefore created their own initiatives for rallying together. Projects such as *Voices*, and the March 2nd THAW protest that encouraged as many New York City theatre companies as possible to perform anti-war pieces on the same day, emerged as acts of solidarity on the anti-war side. *Voices*, running from April to June 2003, featured various actors and activists presenting a variety of pro-peace plays and readings from sources both ancient and contemporary (Carlson 14). The THAW protest involved more than 120 theatre companies presenting plays, readings, or demonstrations against the war (Carlson 10). With projects such as these, individual artists created individual works under collective initiatives; they offered a forum for diverse theatrical creations.

The Lysistrata Project began as such a local initiative, yet it grew beyond New York City to a national and then to a global scale, and in the process created an international platform for diverse voices. The project had two main goals: first, to stop the impending war, or at least to delay it until the weapons inspectors could determine if Saddam Hussein did indeed have weapons of mass destruction; and second, to let the world know that not everyone in the United States was in favor of the war (Blume, Telephone interview). In addition, the Lysistrata Project was conceived to be as unregulated as possible. This meant that decisions about all aspects of the readings—the version of *Lysistrata* used, the venue chosen, the selection of actors, the decision to mount a full production or an intimate reading, etc.—were left to the discretion of the

individual participants. Thus, this theatrical act was open not only to a particular group of American citizens, but to non-citizens, and to anyone in any other country regardless of their profession or socio-economic status.

Blume describes the choice of the play *Lysistrata* itself as accidental (Telephone interview). However, it turned out to be an appropriate and effective play for its purposes. Blume considered *Lysistrata* an effective choice for the project due to its familiarity in many parts of the world (Telephone interview). Yet even with a well-known classic play unifying the project, participants still had freedom to choose any translation or adaptation that best suited their interests. Some scripts contained updated political references, thus bringing the play into the immediate political context, as well as into different cultural contexts.

However, there do seem to be elements of Aristophanes' original play that withstand the test of time and proved to be relevant in the 2003 political and cultural context. Blume describes the project itself as emulating the metastory of the play: *Lysistrata* features the "story of a group of people who feel disenfranchised in the face of an intractable problem and come up with a creative solution for addressing it" (Blume, Telephone interview). This structural element thus reflects the situation of anti-war activists in the time leading up to the war in Iraq. There was no formal civic process such as a referendum, where everyone could have a hand in deciding whether or not the United States would precipitate a war with Iraq, and there proved to be no room in the mainstream media for an in-depth critique of the United States' actions. Therefore, these activists needed alternative methods to reach a wide audience and to have any influence on the political sphere. The act of calling on anyone in the world who was interested to

join the protest parallels Lysistrata's action of bringing together women from other *poleis* to join her in protesting the Peloponnesian War.

It appears that the role of women in *Lysistrata* takes on new significance in the modern United States, where, unlike in ancient Athens, women do participate in theatre and politics alongside men. Although the structure of the United States government remains hierarchical and male-dominated—as of February 2009, women's representation in the seats of both the Congress and the Senate was 17% (IPU), and the country has not yet elected a female President or Vice-President—there is a strong sense that women's participation can and should be seen as a normal state of affairs. Both Blume's and Bower's mothers were politically active, although at opposite ends of the ideological spectrum. In the documentary *Operation Lysistrata*, Blume describes how her family has several generations of leftist activists and how her mother would take Blume, as a child, to protests against the Vietnam War, while Bower's family was very conservative and her mother was active in lobbying for prayer in schools and against abortion. It appears that Blume and Bower grew up with the idea that for women, taking an active role in politics was a normal and expected state of affairs. With this ideology behind the project, the *Lysistrata* script became less about the playwright using women to depict how weak Athenian politicians were and how they had damaged the once-glorious Athens with their poor decisions, and more about women criticizing the male-dominated establishment themselves. Thus the women in *Lysistrata* are no longer read as nonentities who represent the degradation of Athens; their actions are those of participating citizens striving for change.

The Lysistrata Project's re-appropriation of the play for women is reflected in the adaptations of the text that were used. Although participants were free to choose any translation, several versions were offered through the project's website. One translation, called *Lysistrata: A Woman's Translation*, was written for the Project by the playwright Drue Robinson Hagan and offered as an option to participants looking for a translation. She wrote her version in rhyme, imitating the style of Dr. Seuss. Although the language was changed to be accessible and to sound familiar to a broad modern audience, Hagan's translation is mostly faithful to the original, except for the elimination of topical references such as the accusation of Demosthenes' wife for the Sicilian expedition. Yet the naming of this translation as "A Women's Translation" indicates a desire to reclaim this text and its purposes for women, and to emphasize the fact that this adaptation was created by a woman. This reflects a desire to cast women as active political participants in the twenty-first century United States, rather than using female characters in a misogynistic fashion to reflect a demoralized society.

Another adaptation written by Ellen McLaughlin for a reading at the Brooklyn Academy of Music shows a strong shift towards the female characters as active participants. Although this reading involved prominent members of the arts scene, the script itself appears to be geared to average citizens, particularly those who have little political power. McLaughlin eliminated most of Aristophanes' topical references and political commentary, and while it is never forgotten that the play is set in ancient Athens, strong parallels are made between the situation of ancient Athens and that of the present-day United States. For example, Athenian Chorus Leader 2 declares: "Greeks can never agree about anything, right? But we've done the impossible—EVERYONE hates

us!" (4). This line parallels the loss of Athens' allies during the Peloponnesian War with the objections of the United States' allies to the Iraq War, and the damage to the United States' reputation when the White House dismissed their allies' concerns. There are also lines that more specifically address the United States. Lysistrata says to the Magistrate (Commissioner): "No, sir, the system you have imposed on us all these years is what is unnatural. Left to their own devices people would never choose your mayhem and sorrow. All any people has ever wanted is the chance to love and work to the best of their abilities" (38). This appears to evoke the American Dream of liberty for all, although it emphasizes individual abilities and desires. The Magistrate responds with "By all means, ally yourself with the mud-splattered doltish masses. […] But I choose to think that our Athenian destiny is special. I'm proud to breathe the rarefied air of this most exalted of nations. Our singular fate brings with it a singular burden of responsibility" (38). These lines echo the rhetoric in Bush's speeches such as the January 29, 2002 State of the Union address in which he stated, "History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom's fight", as well as his speech on the day of the September 11 attacks in which he implied the United States has a special destiny by describing it as "the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world".

Ellen McLaughlin's adaptation also indicates a stronger emphasis on women's agency. The naked Peace as an object of reconciliation between Athens and Sparta is eliminated, and so is Lysistrata's speech about the benefit Athens and Sparta have brought to each other in the past. Instead, the ending of the war comes from Lysistrata's speech from about how "It's women who have given you everything you've ever had

that's worth having. Sex. Love. Children. And of course your very existence" (59). This is similar to the original Lysistrata's speech, which occurs earlier in Aristophanes' play, in which she laments how women must produce sons only to send them off to be killed in the war. McLaughlin's Lysistrata uses the female reproductive ability to grow new life as the reason why the men should listen to the women regarding the war, since the war is a matter of life and death. Instead of the men being given control of the state again in the end, this adaptation indicates that the women have been recognized as an integral part of state affairs.

While instances such as these place emphasis on women's public power, McLaughlin's adaptation also encourages agency for all American citizens. McLaughlin's Lysistrata expresses the women's initial disempowerment more as apathy than genuine powerlessness: "You probably all spend your days the way I do, bored and scared at the same time, just numb, staring at the walls, too unhappy to even leave the house sometimes, praying that the war will end" (12). This line indicates that it is not so much external forces that are preventing the women from taking action, but internal feelings of helplessness. This highlights the key difference in cultural contexts between ancient Greece and the modern United States. Unlike ancient Greek women who were powerless non-citizens, American citizens—women included—were never actually rendered powerless at any time before or during the Iraq War controversy. There were erosions on the freedoms Americans would have come to expect, such as the PATRIOT Act, which caused anxiety about loss of privacy and increased governmental power. The dominance of large corporations in the mainstream media may have added to the political apathy that was already present in the citizenry. However, citizens outside the

government and large corporations were never completely deprived of their political voices. Americans had the options of turning to online or independent outlets for information, art, and discussion, as long as they were willing to seek them out. For American citizens, the real question was not about whether or not they could have a voice in the political sphere, but about what method they could use to express it.

In "The Masked Activist: Greek Strategies for the Streets", Sue-Ellen Case considers the idea that Greek tragedy involves the appropriation and abstraction of women's rituals of mourning and lamentation. Case describes how the ancient Greek women's laments were rituals that impacted the public sphere: "Laments consisted not only of wailing, but also of public expressions of anger and blame for wrongful deaths. […] Women's laments were a potential form of political activism in the streets. Improvised and uncontrolled by form or censure, these laments gave women a public forum of responses to civic actions" (119). Because of the uncontrolled nature of women's public laments, men may have appropriated the lament for tragedy in order to control the form (120). "The Masked Activist" describes how the practices of the Athenian theatre removed the improvised nature of women's laments: "[…] the tragic mask abstracted and appropriated public performances by women by affixing the mask, the face of the lament, exclusively onto the face of the male actor. Only the textualization of women's presence remained, issuing through the gaping hole in the tragic mask" (121).

Case goes on to examine how recent productions and adaptations of the Greek plays, such as the Lysistrata Project, reclaim the lament as a form of activism: "As the discipline of Greek theatre literally masked activism in a move to clean up the streets,

contemporary performances of the Greek plays deploy that masking effect to repoliticize the form" (120). Case describes the Lysistrata Project as reappropriating the lament and reclaiming it as the uncontrolled form it had in ancient Greece:

> Rather than abstracting away from direct political action, it abstracts towards it. In the classical tradition of Aristophanes, the comedies frolicked on the borders of the formal, often poking their fun directly at personages and events active in the political scenery of Athens. Joining that tradition, the Lysistrata Project brings the cycle of abstraction full circle, using the masked abstractions to point directly back to the improvised, unruly practice of the laments. (126)

The use of the Internet, and the free rein that participants had to create whatever reading they wanted, emphasizes the Project as unstructured, like the ancient Greek laments. Since women "organized" the Project to have no outside regulations, and theatre appeared in many public and private non-theatrical spaces as a result, it can be said that women re-appropriated the text in the tradition of the unregulated lament, and therefore took control of the lament's form for political purposes, while at the same time allowing anyone, including men, who wished to use the form to do so.

Yet Case's article also indicates that the Lysistrata Project and its use of readings and online presence continued the abstraction of gender that the Greek stage used. About the Lysistrata Project (as well as Heiner Mueller's *Medeamaterial*, which the article also discusses), Case writes: "It is precisely the abstraction of gender that continues to inform these stagings rather than the embodiment of it. Even though many productions stage gender as the sole issue of the play, in doing so they actually deploy the abstracted distance of gender from sex for their political intervention" (123). Case describes how the

use of reading in the Lysistrata Project affected the representation of women: "Yet the activist project was to organize readings of the text—the least embodied form of theatre. Most did not act out or physically represent the women's gestural systems at the core of the play's action. […] The abstraction of the classical Greek stage was further enhanced by simply reading rather than performing." (127). What Case is referring to is that participation in the Lysistrata Project did not require the theatrical woman to be acted out as the ancient Athenian theatre did, but the text could simply be read, with minimal use of the body. As discussed in the previous chapter, the female characters in *Lysistrata* were, in their original cultural context, representations of a gender without an essential core, and having them played by men highlighted the female gender as a performative construct. Having the characters played by women, as many of the Lysistrata Project readings did, would imply that women are giving the characters a solid gender identity. Yet Case implies that because a reading of the play removes the physical aspect of the play's gender representation, since the readers are not acting out gender with their entire bodies, it further abstracted the female rather than giving it a concrete definition.

Case acknowledges that the Project's logo (Figure 1), which features a woman rejecting a war helmet, is, in fact, a solid representation of gender since it features a woman's body: "Here the female sex, not the abstraction of gender, is invoked by the representation. Essentially, the Greek classical female body is deployed here as a sign for an anti-war protest held through the reading, not the playing, of a text" (126). Yet at the same time, Case describes the method of distribution of this picture as abstracting the woman's body: "The overall project, as composed of a thousand readings, came together through the virtual, disembodied technology of the internet. The woman's body, then,

was abstracted at its Internet core, distributed electronically through printed text, to groups of people who wanted to protest against the Bush war machine" (127). While the image itself is a solid representation of the female sex, the use of electronic distribution of this picture is one of the ways the female gender was further abstracted in the project, because the Internet is a "virtual, disembodied technology"—that is, the woman's body did not have a solid, physical form[8].

Figure 1

[8] In a September 26, 2009 email, Blume points out that the abstraction of the original image did not start with the Lysistrata Project, because the image was taken from the cover of a *Lysistrata* text that used a photo of a Greek vase with the woman painted on it.

Case describes what happened to the character of Lysistrata in the context of the Lysistrata Project: "Finally, Lysistrata was not a female character, but a collective, transgender identification through readings against the war" (127). Thus, Case is implying that the Project did not transform Lysistrata into a concrete female character, but abstracted her further into a symbolic figure through which all the Project's participants were united. While Case acknowledges that the female characters of Greek drama were originally written as abstract figures, her central argument on the Lysistrata Project is that the form further abstracted the representation of the female gender, including the character of Lysistrata, in order to create a contemporary unregulated lament. However, what needs to be taken into account is that Lysistrata was already a transgender character in Aristophanes' original text. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Lysistrata is portrayed with both male and female characteristics and in fact transcends both the male and female constructs, and this allows her to be part of the non-citizen class while at the same time standing for the male playwright's views. This would have already made her a transgender figure in the play's original context. The unification of the global participants in the Lysistrata Project was possible because of what was already an innate part of the text: it is Lysistrata's ambiguous position that gives the play the flexibility to speak in various contexts. The disembodiment that Case describes allowed a large number of participants to the Lysistrata character for their individual purposes, which did make the character a collective force. However, the ability of the character to transcend gender was already present in Aristophanes' text; the Project does not appear to have imposed this ability on the character.

The idea that the Lysistrata Project worked with the abstraction of gender does not appear to be a negative thing, as Case does describe the Project as a whole as a challenge to the conventional power structure: "the Lysistrata Project […] disseminates the nexus of power in the play over multiple sites of resistance to the Iraq war" (123). Thus, abstraction of the female does not undercut the idea of the female characters as active citizens instead of nonentities. Rather, it seems to indicate a dissolution of the male/female binary. Since the Lysistrata Project was inclusive, the abstraction of gender expression was one method of breaking down hierarchies, thus allowing for individual expression. It can be said that the form of the Lysistrata Project worked in conjunction with the premise of Aristophanes' original script and its gender-ambiguous title character to synthesize the subversion of hierarchies.

Although Aristophanes' original script allowed a degree of ambiguity through the character of Lysistrata, it is still important to remember that he was writing within the hierarchies of his society. While *Lysistrata* exposed the Athenian masculine ideal as illusory, Aristophanes' reversal of male/female roles in the context of the Peloponnesian War was rooted in the idea that, when society is not in chaos, the political sphere should belong entirely to men. He also worked within a theatrical hierarchy. While participation in the Athenian theatre was a democratic act, there is evidence of a hierarchy of participation since the writers of the extant work all appear to be members of the wealthy elite. Although the United States continues to have a patriarchal governmental structure, with few women in the top offices[9], the Lysistrata Project's structure ended up subverting

[9] One of the notable exceptions is Condolezza Rice, who was National Security Advisor in the months leading up to the Iraq War. In 2005 she was appointed Secretary of State and is the first black woman to hold this position. What is also notable is that her views

the patriarchal hierarchy rather than reinforcing it. In doing so, it also subverted the traditional theatre hierarchy. According to Marina Kotzamani in "Artist Citizens in the Age of the Web", Blume and Bower "hardly fit the traditional model of the all-powerful director who shapes and oversees every aspect of production" (104). This description of the "traditional" theatre director is a bit awkward and outmoded, since theatre directors are expected to work in collaboration with actors, designers, and playwrights with everyone involved acknowledged as an artist in their own right. However, when this definition is rephrased as the director as a central artist with a central vision who guides the other artists to fit that vision, it is true that Blume and Bower subverted that model. Blume and Bower allowed participants to create individual readings, which Kotzamani describes as a method of dissolving hierarchies, as well as the Project's break from the ancient Greek theatrical model:

> Reading encouraged people to approach the play in utilitarian terms—as a tool. […] Reading, in this event, had two meanings, which are interrelated: First, a reading was any representation or construction using the play. Second, a reading constituted an act of dissent. The Lysistrata Project linked both senses in allowing any representation or construction based on the play to constitute an act of dissent. (106)

The Lysistrata Project never mandated that a "reading" had literally to be the act of reading the text aloud; since the Project allowed individual organizers to make their own decisions, they could present the text using any method they wished. Thus Kotzamani is defining "reading" as the presentation of the text as *interpreted* by the performers. They

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on foreign policy were very conservative, similar to those of President Bush, and she exerted a great deal of influence over the Bush administration's foreign policy (BBC).

used the *Lysistrata* text as a tool to communicate their *own* political standpoints, rather than presenting Aristophanes' original views.

Kotzamani elaborates of the implications of the word "reading" in the context of the Lysistrata Project:

> The use of *reading* to designate representations or constructions of the play highlights the fact that classic drama such as *Lysistrata* no longer possesses a single, authoritative meaning readers can aim to discover. […] Reading, with its implication of open interpretation, offers a deeply inclusive challenge to the boundaries between the arts, between high and low art, and even between art and life. (107)

This passage implies that the Lysistrata Project reflects an era in which the text has been removed from the hands of the elite poets and all-male citizenry of ancient Athens and made available for interpretation by anyone. Thus the Project took advantage of this freedom of interpretation to erase many theatrical and political hierarchies. The playwright as the primary authority on the meaning of the text, to which Kotzamani refers, has been subverted, with the emphasis now on the individual reader's meaning carrying equal weight. Kotzamani also mentions the abolition of the "high and low art" hierarchy, meaning that free interpretation allows individuals to decide on their own conception of art. In addition, it is irrelevant to the Lysistrata Project who is "allowed" to speak in certain spheres, whether it is politicians in politics, or professional artists in theatre. The Project gave a political voice to people who were not politicians, and people who were not theatre artists, a chance to do theatre, and all the readings were considered important because each individual reading helped the Project as a collective to reach a

wider audience. With the Lysistrata Project emphasizing freedom in how Aristophanes' text can be interpreted and staged, it appears that the text is now in the hands of the entire citizen body, regardless of occupation or socioeconomic status.

However, although the Lysistrata Project's mandate permitted participation of all willing parties and valued all contributions, there were some limitations that need to be taken into account. Access to technology may have excluded certain groups of people, since the Internet was used to spread the word as well as to distribute adaptations of the script. While it is possible that people without access to the necessary technology may still have heard about the project through the non-electronic means of word of mouth, clearly people with access to the Internet (whether through their own means or through public facilities such as libraries) were reached more easily. In addition, the Project itself would not have been able to ensure that everyone's voice was equal. An elite professional theatre company that participated might have reached a larger audience, and thus would have been more visible, than a smaller-scale reading by people not normally involved in the performing arts.

An example of an elite reading is the one in which Blume and Bower themselves participated in at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Theatre (Glockner). This is a self-contained theatre of over 800 capacity that has been used for prominent shows such as Peter Brook's *The Mahabharata* in 1987 (BAM). Although Blume and Bower were not rich, nor were they celebrities, and the reading was organized on a "very frayed shoestring" (Blume, 10 Aug. 2008 e-mail), they were able to recruit famous actors such as Kevin Bacon and Kyra Sedgwick. McLaughlin's adaptation was tailored specifically for the cast, and the play was condensed in order for it to be as quick-moving and as

funny as possible (Blume, Telephone interview). It also included many elements of spectacle, such as live music and a pre-show that included acrobatics and other circus-type spectacle (Blume, Telephone interview)[10]. The use of the Brooklyn Academy, a prominent venue, was made possible by a $10,000 donation from a former board member (Blume, 10 Aug. 2008 e-mail). This reading was essentially a bottom-up rather than a top-down endeavor, but it ultimately got a prominent venue due to a large donation from a donor with the means to fund the reading. Readings such as this used established actors and established spaces, and thus represented the voices of visible and powerful members of American culture. The use of famous artists and an institutional space contributed to the visibility of this particular reading, since audiences may have attended this one because of the venue and the actors.

Yet marginalized people in both the United States and other countries were also able to create their own performance space under the Lysistrata Project umbrella. One reading in New York City was organized and performed by the city's homeless and former homeless through the Interfaith Assembly on Housing & Homelessness (*Operation Lysistrata*). In certain countries such as Israel, China, Malaysia, and Iraq, where oppressive governments and conflict stifled free political speech to the point that the lives of those who spoke politically could be in danger, readings were conducted in secret. The Project attempted to give equal weight to each reading by promoting each reading on the Project's web site, but readings that needed to be kept secret were not

[10] Ellen McLaughlin describes the pre-show in the author's note of the BAM adaptation's script: "The evening was designed as a festive event, involving a broad range of performance, including acrobats, musicians, aerialists, and political cabaret artists. There was an elaborate pre-show involving female acrobats and musicians, while in the lobby and on the street, entertaining the people lined up for tickets, were stilt walkers, musicians, and acrobats."

listed, at the organizers' requests. There were likely readings about which the organizers did not inform Blume and Bower, but used the Project's publicity material and considered themselves to be part of it.

The differences in visibility of individual readings may seem to contradict the all-inclusive mandate of the project. Yet instead of viewing these differences as pointing to the inability of the Project to give everyone an equal voice, the differences can also indicate how theatre infiltrated much more than just the public political sphere, thus blurring the line between art and life, as Kotzamani descibes. Blume comments on one of the private readings: "We actually have a woman in Jerusalem who wants to do a reading and she's really terrified. And what we've told her is that it doesn't need to be a public reading. She can invite friends into her living room, have some tea and cookies and do a reading of the play. It doesn't have to be public to be powerful and symbolic" (Norris). In the United States, an example of a smaller reading was "The Lysisaurus Project" reading in Columbus, Ohio. This was done by a 15-year-old boy, Daniel Merritt, and his father. In *Operation Lysistrata*, Merritt describes how he is homeschooled, and the high school in his area would not have been willing to put on a "risqué" play such as *Lysistrata*. Therefore he and his father wanted to do something with Daniel and his father as the only two cast members. They created a reading using plastic dinosaurs and there is no indication that there was any audience during the performance itself[11]. Therefore, unlike the Athenian gathering of the *demos* in a public theatre designated for a civic event,

[11] Photos and audio clips of "The Lysisaurus Project" were featured in *Operation Lysistrata*, thus being part of the global project allowed the production some exposure through this documentary process, even if the audience was limited or nonexistent during the actual performance. In addition, photos of the performance are available on a website for "Lysisaurus" at http://www.geocities.com/lysisaurus/.

participants of the Lysistrata Project were free to create their own performance space, whether it was in a conventional theatre with an admission charged, or a public space where any passerby could witness it, or a private space for personal companions. The Jerusalem reading in a private home was an instance of political theatre infiltrating the private sphere, as was "Lysisaurus". Readings in public places took theatre into the open where anyone could be exposed to the performance. Examples featured in *Operation Lysistrata* include a reading in Seattle, Washington, which took place on a street corner, and one in New York City's Washington Square Park. Some of the private readings brought political theatre to countries where political dissent was forbidden, thus allowing the participants to commit a democratic act where they otherwise might not have been able to.

Kotzamani describes the Project as emphasizing both the individual and the collective: "Indeed, the Lysistrata Project is intimate, in the sense that it allows us to hear […] the individual participant within the collective, contributing creativity, a point of view, character, and diversity in a global mass protest. […]The Lysistrata Project's fostering of intimacy allows us to see the protesters not as an indistinct mass, but rather as a body composed of individual citizens" (105-106). According to Blume, if the Project had been restricted to established theatres, it would have denied these voices of people who do not have access to established power in either the political or cultural sphere (Blume, Telephone interview). While the private or secret readings would appear not to have much impact on a larger scale, their very existence adds to the number of readings and theatrical spaces that made up the collective effect of the protest, instead of standing alone as isolated exercises. Even if each individual or group who was involved in the

Project had come up with the idea to stage an individual reading on their own, that individual reading would have a greater impact because it was known that the single reading was part of a larger movement. Within the Lysistrata Project, participants were neither an "indistinct mass", as Kotzamani mentioned, nor a group of scattered individuals with limited individual power. Gathering individual readings under a collective umbrella increased the power of each individual reading at the same time that each individual reading increased the scope of the collective.

Within the American context, the implication of what Kotzamani describes—of the individual being visible within a large collective—is that the project brought together the individual American value of freedom of speech and the collective value of rallying together for a common cause, and the dissolution of hierarchies allowed this to occur. Americans have the "American Dream" at the centre of their collective identity—that every individual has equal opportunity to rise to the top of the hierarchy. The Lysistrata Project worked within this American Dream, but at the same time subverted the hierarchy within which the Dream works. Its structure emphasized that the rich/poor, upper class/working class, professional/amateur artist hierarchies did not matter to making the Project effective. The individuals working on their particular reading, to whatever size audience they played, were free to enjoy their individual contribution. At the same time, each reading, no matter its size or visibility, added to the overall scope of the collective protest, thus making all of them equally important in creating the force of resistance.

The goal of inclusiveness not only cut across class lines, but ideological ones as well. In describing the readings that occurred at Union College in Schenectady, New York, Tania Garcia de Rosier writes: "The goal is to create a platform for the community

to address the impending war and discuss current affairs. Although the international staging is an anti-war effort, organizers say the event is not exclusively for people opposed to the war" (1). Most reporting on the project did give the impression that it was exclusively an "anti-war" project, but Bower describes an example of an American reading that was not a strong anti-war statement:

> We had one guy somewhere in the Midwest who was a Republican, a man who spearheaded a reading. When I sent out one spearhead e-mail that was maybe a little more impassioned than normal, he wrote back and said "Well, I'm really disappointed. I'm kind of embarrassed to tell you this but I'm a Republican and I'm a man and I'm holding this reading because I think we're rushing to the war and I thought you just wanted to stop the rush to war not the necessarily the war." […] We have all different layers of opinions about this. What we all agree on is we want to stop the rush to war, we want the weapons inspectors to continue their work and we want all of us who think that to join together. (*Operation Lysistrata*)

The variety of viewpoints among individuals within the Project may have come as a result of how word about the Project was transmitted; the unregulated nature of online communication, combined with the organizers' desire for aesthetic freedom, may have resulted in participants feeling free to interpret the mandate itself as they saw fit. Descriptions of the Project on the website did appear to evolve over time to reflect the wide scope of participants, from the purpose being described as "Let the Bush Administration know that we *oppose* [my emphasis] their war on Iraq[12]", to "Lysistrata Project participants have a wide variety of backgrounds and views, but we all believe the

[12] February 1, 2003

Bush Administration's *rush to war* [my emphasis] on Iraq is a bad idea[13]" and "Fifty-nine countries hosted 1,029 readings of Lysistrata, Aristophanes' anti-war comedy, to protest the Bush Administration's *unilateral* [my emphasis] war on Iraq[14]". Thus the Project resisted not only the war itself, but also the polarization of the pro- and anti-war sides that had been perpetuated by the government and the mainstream media. The participants were acting as one collective voice against the government's proposed actions, but they also took the opportunity to voice diverse opinions.

Callaghan criticizes the forms of twenty-first century American theatrical responses to the Iraq War as not putting forth a sufficiently forceful critique:

> Radical artists from the 1960s such as Julian Beck and Judith Malina [founders of The Living Theatre] have long conceded that confrontational tactics and forced audience participation are now dated in an age characterized by postmodern irony and sound bite-driven media communication. […] given that the average contemporary viewer has been arguably desensitized to violence and that the bar on jarring audiences out of a deep-rooted political apathy (if not cultural nihilism) has grown increasingly higher since the 1970s, artists have to take risks and be willing to offend or anger audiences and critics in order to establish a legitimate critique of the war. (114)

This criticism could apply to the Lysistrata Project as a whole, since it sought to be open to a variety of viewpoints, rather than to represent a black-and-white anti-war stance. Yet on an individual level, there were many participants who did take a direct approach that could be considered confrontational. Readings that took over public spaces, in which

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[13] March 25, 2003
[14] December 4, 2004

unwilling spectators were likely to be exposed to the performance, certainly used a confrontational tactic. An issue with avoiding forced audience participation is that in the postmodern twenty-first century, audiences have easy access to large amounts of information. It is, therefore, very easy for audiences to decide what they wish to be exposed to and what they wish to ignore. While the Internet is able to spread information very quickly to a large audience, the sheer amount of information transmitted allows users to pick and choose what to acknowledge and what to ignore; therefore, political statements made through the Internet run the risk of preaching to the choir. This is also an issue with mainstream media, since they offer so many outlets and so many options that do not focus on news; this makes current events easier to ignore. This is likely a factor that led to the apathy described by Callaghan. During the Vietnam War, not only was coverage of the war much more explicit, but there were significantly fewer media choices, and therefore the issues surrounding the Vietnam War were more difficult to ignore. In 1968, three networks—ABC, CBS, and NBC—dominated the television market, in contrast to today, where there are many specialty channels from which to choose, in addition to the many information and entertainment options online (Littleton 37). As Martin Kaplan, professor of entertainment, media, and society and the University of Southern California's Annenberg School, points out, "The networks [today] don't have the mass audience they did when people watched the three evening newscasts and had the kind of communal experience that we now see with such rarity" (qtd. in Littleton 37). Also, it is easy for an apathetic audience to avoid politically charged theatre that is confined to traditional venues. The impact of the Lysistrata Project lay in its mandate that readings could occur in any space, at any time, under any circumstances. This mandate,

coupled with the sheer number of readings that were made possible by the quick communication that the Internet offers, led to the political message of the participants infiltrating any space. With so many theatrical events occurring on the same day, in many places that were not traditional venues, it became more difficult for theatre to be avoided. While Aristophanes was working in a theatre where art, politics, and religion merged, the Lysistrata Project took the blurring of boundaries further by allowing theatre to infiltrate any space possible, thus demonstrating the blurring of art and life that Kotzamani describes.

A notable example of a reading that infiltrated public space and confronted an audience directly was a reading that took place on the Staten Island Ferry. During the March 13, 2003 follow-up meeting of directors in New York, the director of the Staten Island Ferry reading described how the reading had resulted in a confrontation. According to the director, the fifty passengers on the ferry were enjoying the *Lysistrata* reading, but at the scene in which the Magistrate enters, members of the ferry crew suddenly realized what the reading was about and they, according to the director, "went […] bananas" (*Operation Lysistrata*). The captain of the ferry came out to scream at the actor playing Lysistrata and broke up the reading, while the cast attempted to defend their freedom of speech. The director described how a French audience member got involved as well, by threatening to "take my statue back", referring to the Statue of Liberty that had been given to the United States by France in 1886. Essentially, the reading became a site where the pro- and anti-war sides ended up being forced to be exposed to each other, on a boat where escape was not possible, when under normal circumstances they might

have been able to ignore or walk away from one another. Further remarks from the director are telling:

> [It] gave a stark contrast of what it's like to be peaceful, and to be creative, and to be trying to say something in a peaceful manner versus this man who was pro-war, who was so angry that veins were popping out of his head and his throat. […] It was because we'd never really been in that situation. We've been staunch political people for a long time but we'd never been put up to the test where what does happen when someone is physically confronting you […] there was violence in it. (*Operation Lysistrata*)

These remarks illustrate that the participants were not prepared for such a confrontation, even though they were politically minded artists. With the Lysistrata Project allowing theatre to infiltrate all spaces, differing viewpoints became harder to ignore, for *both* the audience and the practitioners. This formed a site of negotiation between the pro- and anti-war viewpoints, even if this in instance, it appeared that consensus, even an agreement-to-disagree, was impossible.

Ultimately, the Lysistrata Project did not simply invert societal hierarchies as Aristophanes did to illustrate that their society is degraded, but reappropriated the text to reaffirm the power of the democratic citizen. In the American context, the solidarity symbolized by the play's plot, featuring women from various countries coming together for a common cause, combined with the unregulated structure of the protest, allowed the individual and the collective to merge. The Project created a site of negotiation, where diverse voices could be heard away from the polarizing and limiting rhetoric of the government and mainstream media. It challenged the institutions at the top of the

American hierarchy—government officials and large corporations—who were threatening to disrupt democracy. The subversion perpetrated by the Project created a collective democratic space in which anyone—from American citizens wishing to exert their democratic power, to citizens of non-democratic countries speaking out—could voice their individual views. Although it was, in a world of six billion, essentially a small affair, Blume and Bower had a very short time to organize the Project, and the quick communication of the Internet allowed a remarkable number of readings to be organized in barely two months. It would be interesting to consider if, given more time to spread the word, a similar theatrical event could occur involving either a larger number of participants or a more concentrated local collective of individuals, which would thus have theatre infiltrate either a larger or a more concentrated number of public and private spaces and make theatre even harder to ignore. The Lysistrata Project amplified the voice of each individual by presenting it as part of a collective voice; it would be interesting to see what the maximum impact of such a strategy could be.

Chapter 3

The Lysistrata Project and Modern Greece

Since the Lysistrata Project originated in America, grew out of American concerns with their own government and media, and appeared to be an expression of American values, a question arises about whose interests participants in other countries were serving by taking part in the Project. In "Artist Citizens in the Age of the Web", Marina Kotzamani points out this question and the potential for a critical response to it: "Since the project was initiated in the U.S., it runs the risk of being criticized as a contemporary expression of colonialism with a progressive front" (109). However, Greece's position within the Lysistrata Project is unique, since the American-based Project used a Greek text. Greece was also in an influential position in the months leading up to the Iraq War, since the country was holding the presidency of the European Union and was therefore in a prime position to influence Europe's response to the proposed American strike on Iraq.

Sources on the individual Lysistrata Project readings in Greece are scarce, but Kotzamani has discussed two of them in her "Artist Citizens" article: an all-female reading at the Acropolis; and a reading in an abandoned building in Patras that involved both Kurdish refugees and Greek university students. The latter reading was also featured in the documentary *Operation Lysistrata*. While Greece did have a vested interest in halting the Iraq War due to its potential economic impact on the Mediterranean region, Kotzamani points out that some Greek readings were not entirely about being against the war in Iraq (109). In particular, the Patras reading took an ambivalent position toward the war, since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's oppressive regime, which the Kurds had

fled, may have allowed them to return to Iraq (Kotzamani 105). The Acropolis reading had a definite anti-war sentiment, but also functioned to comment on the public status of women in the modern Western world (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). An examination of these readings helps determine where the Greek readings fit into the Lysistrata Project as a worldwide response to the Iraq War, and how the *Lysistrata* text is being used to address the politics of modern Greece.

Modern Greece has had a long tradition of appropriating Aristophanes' plays, and *Lysistrata* in particular, for political issues that have been immediately relevant to the nation. The twentieth century saw a great deal of appropriation of *Lysistrata* within Greece to comment on issues that had little or nothing to do with war. In *Venom and Verse: Aristophanes in Modern Greece*, Gonda Aline Hector Van Steen describes early pre-World War II Greek adaptations of *Lysistrata* in her chapter "The *Lysistrata* Euphoria of 1900-1940": "Classical scholars generally maintain that the *Lysistrata* of 411 B.C.E. is one of Aristophanes' least politicized works because it contains fewer topical gibes and more sexual humor than his others. […] Since its background of the Peloponnesian War can easily be transposed to any war in Greek or Western European memory, the *Lysistrata* has offered its producers attractive options under different historical circumstances" (77-78). While it is inaccurate to consider *Lysistrata* as Aristophanes' "least politicized" text on the basis of the lack of direct topical references, it is true that the majority of Aristophanes' earlier plays contain many more explicit topical references to Athenian politics than does *Lysistrata*. Van Steen's remark about how the play's backdrop of the Peloponnesian War has room to parallel other Greek and European wars points out the ability of the text to have significance beyond

Aristophanes' immediate political situation. It appears that the lack of many explicit topical references gives the text a flexibility that allows it to be used to comment on contemporary issues as well as those of fifth-century Athens.

What Van Steen describes in "The *Lysistrata* Euphoria of 1900-1940" is that early twentieth-century Greek companies used *Lysistrata* for political purposes having less to do with war, and more to do with gender politics and antifeminism. However, these changes in purpose did come with alterations to the text itself. Aristophanes' women's plays—*Thesmophoriazusae* and *Ecclesiazusae*, which like *Lysistrata* feature women in the public sphere—were produced with alterations as well, but they do not appear to have been produced as often as *Lysistrata*. Van Steen describes how the play was "constantly altered and updated […] Directors apparently reduced the women's plays in length, making them more concentrated and direct, provocative and whimsical" (79-80). Aristophanes' text was considered available for revision; these directors and adapters clearly gave themselves free rein to create their own tradition that reflected the political values they held in their own era:

> The *Lysistrata* tradition set its own measures of time, space, and credibility, which conformed to the politics of gender and cultural relations from 1900 on. They reflected male-female antagonism, feminism and the anti-feminist backlash, broader class struggle, the gendered text of nationalism, and –most intricately— the projection of effeminacy onto the "other" (whether fellow Greek, Eastern immigrant Greek, or Westerner) as onto the more fluid or imported art forms. (Van Steen 80)

Thus it appears that these early twentieth-century Greek companies gave themselves license to do as they would to downplay the anti-war aspect of the play in favor of recreating it as a response to the era's social issues, such as feminist movements. There was a notable shift away from Aristophanes' use of female characters to ridicule the political actions of men, and towards ridiculing the political actions of women. Van Steen writes, "All-male Greek theater companies of the 1900s transformed the women's plays into plays of men speaking about (absent) women" (81). While a return to all-male companies may seem to be a return to the ancient Athenian performance tradition, it appears that the shift was actually very much about ridiculing women and their political movements, as opposed to using female characters to ridicule male-created problems, as Aristophanes did. Thus the use of *Lysistrata* to address political concerns of the twentieth century was widespread early in the century. It appears that the most popular and frequent use reflected the desire of men in power to keep women out of the political and cultural spheres.

From 1967 to 1974, Greece was ruled by an oppressive military regime known as the Junta, or the Regime of the Colonels. This regime used propaganda and terror to indoctrinate the populace and crush dissent (Gallant 199). The handling of Aristophanes during this oppressive era is discussed by Van Steen in the chapter "Framing, Clowning, and Cloning Aristophanes". Since censorship was prevalent during the Junta era, theatre artists often used Aristophanes' comedies to express political opinions, since the reverence they were given due to their place in Greek history made them safer for this purpose, as opposed to composing original plays. Van Steen describes how theatre artists used Aristophanes during the Junta years:

> In the ancient playwright, then, progressive theatre professionals, writers and translators, and their audiences found popular and ideologically charged raw material with which to ridicule and criticize their rulers. As the junta insisted on a new political and cultural order, the treatment of Aristophanes' works became more politicized, finding new dangers and exploring new opportunities in the old comic plots. (205)

It appears that theatre artists under the Junta rule were able to hide behind conventional presentations of Aristophanes' ancient texts in order to express controversial political stances. Van Steen describes directors such as Karolos Koun, who utilized *Lysistrata* to present their views against the regime: "Koun and the declared leftist Varnales, for instance, made their 1969 *Lysistrata* reflect the immediacy of present-day reality under cover of a thinly disguised past. In the voice of a classic they expressed discontent with a regime that, as a general rule, banned performances of modern opposition plays" (205). However, due to the threat of Junta censorship, Koun did not forcibly adapt the text to reflect his perception of the present. Rather, "For the production's effect, [the company] depended on the audience's ability to recognize resemblances between the stage of life and the comic stage, whose political undercurrent they enhanced by how they interpreted rather than adapted the text" (Van Steen 205). Thus, Koun and his company did not explicitly draw parallels between the situation of Aristophanes' Athens, and that of contemporary Greece, but exploited the built-in political critiques of *Lysistrata* and counted on the audience to recognize them. There were also directors such as Alexes Solomos, who "insisted that drama lives not in the past but in the present, and that each new generation re-creates its appearance and expression" (Van Steen 204). Although his

productions of Aristophanes tended to be conventional for the time, Solomos' statement indicates that he believed classical works to be flexible, and capable of addressing contemporary issues.

The pattern of artists appropriating Aristophanes' text for modern concerns continued in the years following the fall of the Junta in 1974. The authority of the text was de-emphasized in favor of allowing individual theatre artists to interpret Aristophanes' works as they saw fit. While it was already clear from the earlier twentieth century that it was not necessary to present the text as originally performed in Aristophanes' time, the later twentieth-century artists took the de-centralization of the text further. The artists in both the early twentieth century, and during the Junta era, found a common ideology in which to ground their productions—gender politics, and opposition to the military regime, respectively. The later twentieth-century artists focused less on collective concerns and more on creating a variety of interpretations based on the desires of the individual artists:

> Most central to the Aristophano-mania or *Aristophanolatreia* of the past twenty-five years has been the process of rethinking the "author-ity" of a unified reading of the poet's playscripts in light of Greece's post-modern society and of surrounding texts, performances, and cultures. New interpretive trends validated individual emphasis and response rather than aspiring to an "objective" consensus, whether in production or translating style or in the perception of critics and broader audiences. (Van Steen 210)

Thus in more recent years, the trend has been to move away from definitive or collectively accepted interpretations, and instead move toward individual interpretations.

Traditional revivals were ever-present, but there were, and continue to be, many stagings that wrenched the text away from its original context. Van Steen describes the multitude of interpretations: "Their novel ways of dealing with old texts ranged from socially conscious presentations with a modern critical edge to samples of political and aesthetic fragmentation to stagings dominated by deadening routine and venality" (210). This trend in modern Greece appears similar to the unregulated mandate of the Lysistrata Project. As discussed in the previous chapter, while the Project was grounded in an anti-war ideology, its emphasis was also on individual interpretation, allowing for readings that presented various stances, not solely clear-cut anti-war statements.

However, Greece did have particularly high stakes in what would happen in Iraq. Greece was holding the six-month rotating presidency of the EU from December 2002 until July 2003, and therefore was in a position to influence Europe's response to the United States. In fact, the government of Greece was opposed to the United States' invasion of Iraq, as well as to the involvement of the European Union in the invasion, due to concerns about the economic effects of such an invasion on the Mediterranean region. Defense minister Yannos Papantoniou voiced these concerns in 2002: "This could help destabilize the eastern Mediterranean (region)…It will lead to higher oil prices and higher inflation" (qtd. in Accociated Press Newswires 22 September 2002). Throughout the months leading up to March 2003, Greece attempted to avert the war by pushing for the EU to develop a unified stance on Iraq (Reuters News 18 March 2003): that the EU would not become involved in Iraq without the approval of the United Nations (Reuters News 18 March 2003).

According to John O. Iatrides, relations between the United States and Greece had recovered from the tensions of the Cold War: "On the Greek side, the ruling socialists have lost their revolutionary zeal, there is no longer a domestic communist threat, and courting Washington's adversaries on the world stage is no longer an option. On the American side, Greece is no longer a Cold War outpost to be held secure at all costs […]" (107). However, Anthee Carassava describes anti-American sentiment that was present in Greece throughout the late 20th century and continued to fester through to 2003:

> Most Greeks still resent Washington's tacit support for the military dictatorship that ruled the country from 1967 to 1974. Then, in 1981, Andreas Papandreou, the Socialist leader, rose to power and threatened to shut down American military bases. Mr. Papandreou also threatened to withdraw Greece from NATO, and befriended such adversaries of the United States as Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi of Libya and Idi Amin of Uganda. Anti-Americanism, though, did not fade with Mr. Papandreou's death in 1996. In fact, passions flared during the war in Kosovo, with many Greeks still incensed about the American-led attacks on their fellow Orthodox Christians, the Serbs. (Carassava)

Greek citizens reacted strongly to the impending invasion of Iraq[15], and according to Carassava's article, it appears that a resurgence of anti-Americanism in Greece fueled some of the protests against the war and American methods. For example, a rally was

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[15] Protests have been very important in Greek civic response throughout the 20th century, especially through the universities. The 1973 Athens Polytechnic uprising against the Junta regime is one of the most notable instances of student-led political action, as this demonstration triggered a series of events that eventually led to the overthrowing of the Junta (Marrozi). Helena Smith describes in a 1991 article how widespread student protests are in Greece: "Scenes of protesting youths occupying the mahogany lecture halls of the nation's 17 state-run universities and 11 technical colleges are so common the nation would be surprised if they didn't take place" (Smith).

held in Athens on March 30, 2003, which involved protesters wrapping a statue of former American president Harry S Truman in paper with the writing "Return to Sender" (Carassava). A notable protest occurred on February 15, 2009, when anti-war demonstrations were held all across Europe. Greece's participation involved three separate rallies in Athens alone, as well as in the towns of Patras, Kavala, Iraklio, Hania, Trikala and Karditsa (Athens New Agency). While the rallies were mostly peaceful, there were some violent incidents. For example, the march to the US embassy in Athens "was briefly disrupted by masked youths hurling firebombs into ministry premises near Syntagma [Parliament] Square and offices of the Ta Nea and To Vima newspapers" (Athens News Agency). While Greece and the United States were not formally on hostile terms at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there did appear to be an undercurrent of resentment in Greece, and the proposed American strike against Iraq appeared to intensify it. While Greece did not wish to side with the United States in favor of the Iraq War, it did serve the interests of anti-war Greek citizens to ally with anti-war Americans, as they had done through the Lysistrata Project. Although details are not available on all the Greek readings, the Acropolis and Patras readings were critical of the American government's actions, but stood in solidarity with American anti-war activists, rather than being fuelled by a resentment of all things American.

In January and February 2003, at the time that the Lysistrata Project was recruiting participants, Kotzamani, a Greek-born scholar and theatre practitioner, was an Assistant Professor at Columbia University in New York City. With Greek visual artist Maria Papadimitriou, Kotzamani organized a reading at the Acropolis itself. Although Kotzamani was interested in the Project because of her own opposition to the impending

Iraq war, she did not expect that the Project would prevent the war (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). As it turned out, the Acropolis reading went beyond the immediate anti-war message to illustrate the change in the status of women from Aristophanes' era to the modern Western world (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). We recall that women in fifth-century Athens did not have any role in the political sphere, and did not even have the status of citizens. However, the 2003 Acropolis reading portrayed the women in *Lysistrata*, hence women in general, as being modern women in control of their representation, and asserting their place in the political sphere.

The Acropolis reading was deliberately composed of women only —artists whom Papadimitriou invited, as well as friends and relatives (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). Theatrical elements such as large prop breasts and longhaired wigs were used to emphasize feminine identity, and the text was edited to emphasize the scenes in which the women employ sex to tease the men (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). The desired effect was to show the female characters as firmly in control of their femininity and sexuality (Kotzamani, Telephone interview); thus the female characters, as well as the women playing them, are shown to be in control of the theatrical image they present of themselves. Kotzamani comments that in fifth-century Athens, men could portray women as they saw fit (Kotzamani, Telephone interview), meaning that the men defined what a theatrical "woman" was. With the setting of the Acropolis standing as a symbol for Western civilization and Western democracy, the 2003 reading also stood for the change in the condition of Western women through the ages. The reading was intended to celebrate "everything that has happened [for women] in the past century" (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). Kotzamani described the intent of the reading:

> [The reading] made the point that we [women] are firmly in the public space […] we speak about an issue that relates to public affairs that really matters, which is war and there is no question about whether we have a right or not to speak about war as women […] now it is firmly established that women are there to speak out in the public sphere so it was celebratory of everything that had happened for a century and it talks to the future […] it is celebrating women's presence in public space and women speaking about politics. (Kotzamani, Telephone interview)

Thus the goal of this reading was not to usurp the male-dominated political space, but to assert that in the present day, women are already an integral and permanent part of the public sphere, which is no longer the exclusive domain of men.

Kotzamani's descriptions of the setting of the Acropolis event indicate that the public nature of the reading emphasized its intent to focus on women in the public sphere. Due to the difficulty in obtaining permission to use the site, the reading did not occur on the actual Acropolis (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). Instead, it occurred "on the Pynx, the original meeting place of the Athenian assembly on the southeastern slope of the Acropolis" (Kotzamani "Artist Citizens" 104-105). The use of space is described in "Artist Citizens": "Our choice of space alluded literally and symbolically to the Acropolis not only as the original site of the women's mobilization in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, but also as an enduring and timely emblem of democracy itself" (105). Thus the choice of the Pynx is significant because it was the site where democracy was originally practised, albeit exclusively by men, and the site is also considered to be the birthplace of Western democracy. Therefore the space has symbolic value for a theatrical project that is an exercise in democracy. Thus the reading involved "women […] taking over the Pynx and

asserting their presence in a place where democracy has worked and has been exercised by men uniquely in the past" (Kotzamani, Telephone interview).

In addition, the three-week period before Ash Monday is the carnival season in Greece (Greece National Tourism Organisation); thus the reading, which in 2003 fell on March 3, took place at a time when many people would be celebrating in public spaces. Kotzamani writes that the exaggerated costume elements were "appropriate to the interpretation of the play as well as to the carnival season that was then being celebrated in Greece" (105), and that the participants "made for a very festive and humorous crowd" (105). The reading was also extremely well-publicized and was covered by the Greek national news (Kotzamani, Telephone interview), which allowed access to a wider audience: the reading was open to every citizen. Kotzamani writes how the reading was "addressed to the *demos*, the city at large: passersby, tourists, and the Greek population who could watch excerpts broadcast on national television" (105).

The space in which this reading took place provided a bridge between the original context of *Lysistrata* and the modern world. While the use of the original site of Western democracy shows how long that democracy has endured, the all-female interpretation of *Lysistrata* performed at this site—close to the same location as the actual setting of the play—shows the evolution of Western democracy. The setting allowed the women in the reading to actually imitate the actions of the female characters in *Lysistrata*. Thus, it can be said that the setting created a tangible representation of women having a voice in politics. The carnival season, or Apokreas, also bridged the past and present. The events of Apokreas recall ancient Greek traditions, but are also rooted in the later coming of Christianity: "When Christianity became the dominant religion, elements of ancient

Greek worship were incorporated into the customs and traditions pertaining to the period before Lent" (Greece National Tourism Organisation). Apokreas also combines ancient elements with commentary on immediate issues: "Dominant elements in these customs are the phallus symbols and satire, which centres on local events or focuses on current Greek and international issues" (Greece National Tourism Organisation). Thus the Acropolis reading worked within the carnival customs. It used an ancient satire to comment on the present day, showing the change from the all-male democracy of fifth-century Athens to the democracy of the modern Western world and its inclusion of women.

The use of hyper-female (prop breasts) and hyper-male (phalluses) costuming that Kotzamni described also recall ancient Greece, since the costuming was an exaggerated caricature of gender; yet in the context of the reading it reflects female agency. Kotzamani comments that the Lysistrata Project itself, as well as this particular Acropolis reading, made the statement that women can appropriate Aristophanes for whatever purpose they desire (Kotzamani, Telephone interview). This view reflects an inversion of what Aristophanes was likely doing with *Lysistrata*, which was to appropriate women—caricature them—for his own anti-war purposes. The women of the Acropolis reading deliberately chose to perform hyper-feminine women and hyper-masculine men that Aristophanes once used to portray Athens as degraded, but in making that choice they took control of the portrayal of hyper-femininity for their own use. The performance appears to be a subversion, even a ridicule or parody, of Aristophanes' original intent—the reading's purpose was to affirm women's space in the public sphere as something to be celebrated instead of something abnormal or threatening.

At the same time, however, when considered in the context of the still patriarchal political contexts of modern Greece and the United States, the affirmation of women in the political sphere remains something that undermines the status quo. Despite the advances for women, the political sphere of present-day Greece has remained patriarchal at its root. When examining the Acropolis reading in this context, the action of the women reading at the Pynx seems even closer to the actions of the female characters in the original *Lysistrata* text. Anna Karamanou, in "The Changing Role of Women in Greece", points out that although women have made many gains in the public sphere, politics in Greece remains disproportionately the domain of men:

> Greece ranks last among the 15 countries of the European Union in terms of gender empowerment and 66th worldwide, according to the classification of the UN. The results of the 1998 local elections and the 2000 general elections in Greece indicate the democratic deficit in political life: 7% female participation in local councils, 10.3% in National Parliament and 11.6% in government. It is obvious that what the Greek historian Thucydides had written 2,500 years ago, namely "The City Belongs to Men", still remains valid today and constitutes the basic principle of the structure and operation of the Greek political system. (275)

As of August 2009, women's representation on the national level in Greece has increased to 14.7% (IPU), but this is still significantly behind most other EU countries. Malta is the EU nation with the lowest representation of women in their parliament, at 8.7%; the Czech Republic is the nation ranking immediately above Greece with 15.5% percent; and Sweden has the highest representation with 47% (IPU). As of 2008, the average percentage of women in EU parliaments was 24% (European Commission). With respect

to women in politics, Greece is in a position similar to the United States, with both countries having less than 25% of government positions occupied by women and both lagging behind other developed countries in terms of women's representation. In addition, Karamanou points out that women are still expected to take the central role in the private sphere and must often compromise their professional lives:

> Women are still obliged to adapt their life in such a way so as to reconcile many different and conflicting roles. Those who are in a more sound financial position may usually employ someone to take care of the domestic work; some others may delay having children or decide not to have children at all. Demographic indicators show that many women are compelled to look after elderly relatives. Care for the children, as well as dependent spouses, objectively hinder professional progress and the personal development of women. (287)

While the Acropolis reading did not appear to address this issue outright, it places the *Lysistrata* text in an interesting position. The reading was grounded in the idea that women now have a permanent place in the public sphere, and they will no longer be relegated solely to the private sphere. It celebrated the gains that women have thus far made in the public sphere. Yet, according to Kotzamani's descriptions, it also emphasized the parts of the text that showed the women controlling when and under what circumstances the men could have sex with their wives, which show the female characters of *Lysistrata* as very much in control of the private sphere even as they have taken over the public sphere. Thus the reading can be viewed as paralleling the situation in modern Greece in which women are still in charge of the private sphere even when they have a relatively strong public presence. Of course, the public presence of women in

Greece is not as strong as in some other Western countries, and Karamanou describes this "traditional division and incompatibility between the two spheres" (287) as the cause of the struggle that Greek women face to maintain their presence in both public and private life. The Acropolis reading did not appear to present a solution to this problem, although to be fair, that was not its intent to begin with. Yet perhaps the celebration of women in the public sphere can be seen as helping to affirm their presence there as a normative reality, which can be an asset in the journey to even greater equality in both the public and private spheres.

What makes the Acropolis reading significant in the context of the Lysistrata Project is that it returned *Lysistrata* to the original site of the play, but changed the form into something better suited to address today's issues. As discussed in Kotzamani's "Artist Citizens" and the previous chapter, the Lysistrata Project used a non-hierarchical format and began with women choosing the *Lysistrata* text as a tool to advance their immediate political purposes, thus removing the authority of the text from what the male poet may have intended (Kotzamani 106). The Acropolis reading did this on an individual level and affirmed the position of women in the public sphere. In the context of modern Greece, the Acropolis reading also reflected the trend of moving away from seeking an author-itative historical meaning of the ancient text, toward favoring interpretations that reflect immediate concerns. However, the Acropolis reading strove not only to reflect local issues, but also to speak on an international level. The reading highlighted the change in the status of women in the Western world throughout the ages. In addition to the site of the reading being a symbol of early Western democracy, the

international umbrella of the Lysistrata Project and its response to a global issue allowed the Acropolis reading to speak beyond its immediate context.

In contrast to the Acropolis' very public female-centered reading was a more private, secretive reading organized in Patras. This was organized by Panos Kouros, a professor at Patras' School of Architecture, and involved the school's students as well as Kurdish refugees. The refugees had fled Saddam Hussein's oppressive regime, only to find themselves unwelcome in Greece. Although Greece was opposed to the United States' military invasion of Iraq, it was at the same time denying refuge to those who were suffering under Hussein. At the end of 2002, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported that the refugee acceptance rate in Greece had "dropped from 11.2 percent [in 2001] to 0.4 percent so far in 2002, 'one of the lowest' in Europe, even though the bulk of demands comes from countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan […] This compares with a European Union average of 15.8 percent in 2001" (Agence France-Presse 10 December 2002). Refugees attempted to enter Greece illegally, but were sent back if they were caught (Agence France-Press 25 July 2002, Associated Press Newswires 3 August 2002). Iraqi Kurdish refugees were a group that found it extremely difficult to find official asylum in Greece. Since the refugees in Patras were not welcome to participate fully in Greek society, they claimed living space for themselves in Patras' ruins. Kotzamani describes the Kurds' ghetto as being the site for the reading: "The event made use of the neoclassical ruins of an old marketplace in the city's center, a site that functioned as a ghetto for Kurdish political refugees, who had occupied the building and used it during the day to meet, watch television, go to the barber, pray, or wash clothes" (105).

The performance space was a factor in both unifying and dissolving boundaries. While the Greeks did not consider the ruins as fit for living, they were in fact being so used by the Kurdish refugees. Thus the meeting of the refugees and the students in the hitherto abandoned building also contributed to bridging the past and present as well as the two cultures, since the students met the people making present-day use of ruins that were officially considered to be abandoned to the past. The invisibility of the refugees in this space also means that the reading blurred the lines between public and private. Although the Patras reading "involved trespassing and had a clandestine quality" (Kotzamani "Artist Citizens" 105), footage of the reading in *Operation Lysistrata* shows that there seemed to be a lot of activity around the reading site. Kouros' own description says that people could come and go throughout the event and that almost the entire community (40 people total) participated (*Operation Lysistrata*). For the community of refugees, it could definitely be considered a public event, while at the same time it was hidden from the general public. Even the footage appears to show mainly the university students, most likely to protect the identities of the refugees. This space can thus be said as belonging to neither the public nor the private sphere[16]. It was a space of displacement, for refugees who were not welcome in the public sphere, and who conducted their private lives away from mainstream society.

In "Artist Citizens", Kotzamani describes the political implications of the Patras reading:

> As a protest against the war in Iraq, it was ambivalent: The Kurds had fled Saddam Hussein's Iraq and were hopeful that the war would enable them to

[16] While the space in which the reading took place existed between the public and private, its inclusion in *Operation Lysistrata* allowed it to become a significantly *public* event.

> return. At the same time, they criticized America's war as a nationalist and expansionist project. On another level […] the reading created awareness among the student participants that Greece has a poor record in the recognition of political refugees. (105)

Thus, while the impending war had the potential to allow the Kurds to return to their homeland, there was also the issue that the United States' planned invasion was not taking into account the interests of people currently living in Iraq, nor those who had been forced to leave. Greece itself was opposed to the war, but apparently for its own economic and social reasons, rather than out of concern for the people living in Iraq. Since Greece was turning away Middle Eastern refugees in large numbers, it was not demonstrating an interest in assisting victims of oppressive circumstances. In response, the main goal of the Patras reading appeared to be to raise consciousness. Thus, while the reading did not take a specific stance for or against the war, it illustrated the complexities of the situation for the people involved and how Greece is implicated in the oppression of people in or from the Middle East. It acknowledged an issue that frequently seemed to be overlooked in the controversy over the impending war.

The Kurdish refugees who participated in this reading were all men (although the Greek students were both men and women), and as Kotzamani points out in "Artist Citizens", "the two Greek readings also jointly raised interesting gender issues" (105). While the women of the Acropolis reading represented empowered women taking control of public space for themselves, the Kurdish refugees were men who did not presently have political influence. Having been displaced, and having no public status in Greece, their voices were not taken into account in the public political sphere. Thus, in contrast to

the Acropolis reading, the Patras reading was an example of a disempowered group in Greece having a forum to voice their concerns under the inclusive Lysistrata Project. The Patras reading was a kind of a reversal of the situation of Aristophanes' women—while the women of the original play *Lysistrata* are confined to the private sphere and set out to take over the public sphere so that both may return to normal, the Kurdish refugees found themselves exiled from the public sphere to which men normally belong, and the *Lysistrata* text was used as a way for them to find a civic (public) voice.

Kouros, in an e-mail to Blume and Bower, wrote that the intent was "to use real life and human contact as form" (*Operation Lysistrata*). He further describes the experience: "We could see our shadows in the white tent and we could feel more the voices. This created a very strong feeling of humanity, and a sense of sharing the same hopes and fears. We[17] spoke in ancient Greek (text), modern Greek (text and dialogues), some English and Kurdish (through spontaneous translation)" (qtd. in Kotzamani 105). Kotzamani's article describes the reading further: "Several students read excerpts from the play while, simultaneously, others held discussions with the Kurds about their political situation" (105). The form described by Kouros and Kotzamani appears to indicate a process of unification occurring through the act of reading *Lysistrata*. In terms of the language spoken, both the planned and spontaneous use of the multiple languages unified several contrasting elements. The Kurdish refugees and the Greek students, separated not only by their primary languages but by class and culture as well, allowed their cultures to interweave temporarily by sharing their languages. In addition, the ancient past and the modern present were bridged with the use of both ancient and

[17] This refers to the group of participants as a whole, the Kurdish refugees and Greek students, though the sources do not say if the both groups used all of those languages.

modern Greek. Also, the use of English can be said to have linked this individual Greek reading back to the United States, where the Lysistrata Project originated, thus further extending the international scope of the reading. With all the participants involved in reading and translating the text, as well as simultaneous reading and discussion, the conventional boundary between the "art" of performers and the "life" of the audience dissolved completely. This atmosphere of complete interactivity thus contributed to bridging the cultural and social gaps between the refugees and the students.

The global umbrella of the Lysistrata Project allowed the Patras reading to be more than an isolated exchange within a unique and select group. Kouros' correspondence with Blume and Bower, and some footage of the reading, were shown in *Operation Lysistrata*, thus allowing the individual reading to be recognized as part of the global protest. This acknowledgement of the reading allowed the ambivalent viewpoint of the refugees to travel farther than it might have if the reading had been an isolated endeavor. On an individual level, the Greek students obtained greater awareness of a pressing local issue—their own country's treatment of refugees. Yet the umbrella of the global protest also allowed those outside Greece to be exposed to an aspect of the issue that they otherwise might not have been.

While there are few details available about the other Greek readings, their existence, like those of the Acropolis and Patras readings, can be acknowledged as part of an interaction between Greece's theatrical past and present, as well as an interaction between the United States and the rest of the world. Greek artists' participation in the Project shows that modern Greece is reinventing and reinterpreting their ancient texts not only to address immediate issues within their own country, but also to speak beyond their

borders. Both the Acropolis and the Patras readings addressed issues that were relevant to Greece, rather than just the United States, but they used elements that acknowledged that the Project within which they were working extended beyond their borders. The Greek participants were using theatre as an act of democracy, just as the American participants were, and it is seen explicitly in the contrast between the Acropolis reading and the Patras reading how both Greek citizens and non-citizens were able to commit democratic acts with the *Lysistrata* text.

Conclusion

The Lysistrata Project can be considered an initiative of globalization because it brought participants from countries around the world under one umbrella by having them all perform the same act—staging a theatrical event using *Lysistrata* to criticize the Iraq invasion. Yet it managed to avoid the homogenizing trap so often associated with globalization. The Project was made up of individuals all performing a similar action, but each individual controlled his or her own use of the action. Readings such as the one at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Theatre reading were radically different from smaller ones such as "The Lysisaurus Project", which illustrates how rooted in individuality the overall Lysistrata Project was. This large group of diverse individuals established the Project itself as one large unified action, yet this unity did not dissolve the individuality of each contribution.

In particular, the examination of the Greek readings reveals how the Project was not a homogeneous initiative that focused on a singular issue or viewpoint. It appears that the inclusive Lysistrata Project umbrella enabled the Greek readings to focus simultaneously on global and local issues. The participating Greek artists took the play that belonged to their past and their national identity and used it to address issues both within and beyond their borders. The Greek readings helped to illustrate how the Iraq conflict was not an isolated issue between the United States and Iraq, but that it affected many other parts of the world. This is significant because of the American government's relentless push to go ahead with the invasion without taking into account the social and economic effects an invasion would have on other nations, including Greece, and their subsequent opposition. The two readings spoke simultaneously on a local and

international level, with the Acropolis reading using a powerfully important Greek space to celebrate the shift in the political sphere in all Western countries, while the Patras reading showed how the Iraq situation affected people who were originally from beyond Greece's borders, but were now within the country's borders and therefore could not be ignored or considered to be problems only to Iraq and the United States.

However, while I have shown in this thesis how *Lysistrata* can work in contexts outside fifth-century B.C.E. Athens, I have focused on the modern United States and Greece, both of which are democratic cultures whose origins include fifth-century Athenian democracy. As I mentioned in the third chapter, Kotzamani's "Artist Citizens" article acknowledges the risk of the Lysistrata Project being criticized as a colonialist form, since it originated in the United States. And as I discussed in the second chapter, the form of the Project itself is rooted in American identity. Further avenues of inquiry could involve exploring the significance of the Project and/or the *Lysistrata* text itself beyond a Western context.

The Patras refugee camp reading involved Kurdish refugees from Iraq, but it took place within Greece's borders and was organized by Greeks. There did appear to be a temporary dissolution of the cultural gaps between the Kurdish refugees and the Greek students, but questions remain about the power dynamic between the two sets of participants. Did the form of the reading allow the Kurdish refugees to see the *Lysistrata* text as belonging to them as much as it belonged to the Greek students? Would the Kurds have considered using *Lysistrata* for their political goals without the involvement of the Greeks? The Lysistrata Project did allow participants to participate of their own free will, with the agency to create a *Lysistrata* reading with whatever methods and interpretation

they wished, which would have allowed participants to decide for themselves what the text and the conflict between Iraq and the United States meant to their culture, and how to present this in their reading. But with this Western play as the unifying element of the Project, how much of the power imbalance between Western and non-Western cultures was it able to dissolve? Blume has mentioned a reading in a Catholic church in Nikko, Japan as an example of how *Lysistrata* is able to speak on a universal level (Kotzamani "Artist Citizens" 109). Yet a question arises: do instances such as these show that cultures can and do interect and find common ground? Or do they simply show the dominance of Western culture?

In determining if the Lysistrata Project's inclusiveness worked for other cultures, the ideal next step would be to study individual readings in non-Western countries. Since sources on individual readings are scarce, the questions are nearly impossible to answer without speaking directly to the participants. This can be very difficult, especially in cases where there a language barrier or the people are in a transitory state, such as the Kurdish refugees. However, the central question—if and how ancient Greek plays, *Lysistrata* in particular, can be relevant to non-Western cultures—can also be explored by studying other productions and adaptation. Marina Kotzamani's study "Lysistrata on the Arabic Stage" invited Arab artists to describe what a production of *Lysistrata* would look like in their cultures. According to the article, most of the productions reflected pessimism, and "a common thread of the [production] texts is skepticism over whether the civil war portrayed in *Lysistrata* is adequate to depict the complexities of war in the world today" (14). The contributors were concerned with power imbalances between cultures and this was reflected in their proposed stagings of *Lysistrata*: "The world the

contributors jointly portray is an international community connected through rapid media communications and threatened by autocratic Arab governments, U.S.-controlled imperialism, Western civilizing missions and the manipulation of the media" (83). The proposals also jointly "[transformed] *Lysistrata* into a dark, chaotic, or nihilist comedy in which popular activism is either totally ineffective or of limited benefit in stopping war and in changing society" (83). One director, George Ibrahim, who is Palestinian, "concludes that he cannot use *Lysistrata* to portray the war between Israelis and Palestinians, as there are fundamental imbalances between these parties" (15), while similar imbalances did not exist between Athens and Sparta during the Peloponnesian War. It appears that, even though there are ambiguities in the *Lysistrata* text, the ambiguities are not necessarily enough for the play to speak as a response to every kind of conflict, and may not be as effective as a response to war in some cultures as in others.

However, the Lysistrata Project's form should be taken into account because it did not just exploit the ambiguities already inherent in the text, but featured an interaction between globalization and individualism that also imposed a degree of ambiguity onto the text. *Lysistrata* was, after all, originally composed under the premise that, although the Greek theatre was a collective initiative, the texts themselves represented the individual views of the individual playwright—particularly in the case of comedy. It appears that the Project exploited the ambiguity of the text and combined it with a disembodied form, as well as the influence of globalization and post-modernism, to detach the text from its historical context. Not all the avenues of ambiguity in the *Lysistrata* text would come about as a result of the form or the globalized context, since there are ambiguities within

the text itself. However, the form of the Lysistrata Project may be a tool that can be used to extrapolate further the text for a larger variety of meanings.

Such extrapolation could be viewed as the first step in removing the text from its colonial roots. But what still remains to be answered is whether or not it can be truly detached from history. Can the play speak for everyone, even in the context of globalization, when its original context was within the roots of Western culture? I have shown in this thesis that women can certainly reclaim the portrayal of female characters from the patriarchal context in which *Lysistrata* was originally composed. But again, the examples discussed involved women from Western cultures. It would be interesting to examine how women from non-Western or post-colonial cultures interpret and use the play[18], and if they consider it as much "theirs" as Western women, even under an umbrella of inclusiveness and open interpretation.

Globalization too often seems like primarily spreading Western—mostly American—culture across the globe. Since the ancient Greek plays are part of the Western collective consciousness, there is the question of whether or not they can be relevant on a global scale without being a form of colonization. Kotzamni, in "Artist Citizens" points out that there is the risk of individual perspectives being obscured: "as the Greek readings demonstrated, to claim that people all over the world said 'no to war' can be as misleading as any slogan, masking cultural differences and differences of perspective" (109). It is true that the Lysistrata Project risks being reduced to a

[18] In "*Lysistrata* on the Arabic Stage", Kotzamani points out that few women participated in her study of Arabic *Lysistrata* productions: "In spite of my efforts to get women to participate in the project most of the respondents have been men, well-established theatre professionals in their own countries" (83). It would be interesting to consider whether this is due to women not having the same status in the theatre as men do in their countries, or if they find that *Lysistrata* is not useful to them.

homogeneous collective[19], but as I have shown in this thesis, this was not the case. Its theatrical form may allow for globalization without necessarily forcing homogeneity; it just remains to be determined if having a Western text as the unifying thread will necessarily exclude non-Western cultures. An age of globalization should also be one of cultural exchange and hybridity[20], rather than the mass imposition of a single culture. In a post-colonial context, the influence of Western culture cannot be wholly excised from the colonized culture; the goal would be to break down the power imbalances between the cultures that have come in contact with each other, not necessarily to separate the cultures themselves. Perhaps the next step in determining if *Lysistrata* remains relevant to the modern world is to see if it can interact and hybridize directly with traditional, contemporary, or future performance forms of other cultures.

[19] While some resources about the Project described individual readings in detail, many more focused on the Project as a whole without going into much detail about the various forms the readings took.

[20] Homi K Bhaba's concept from *The Location of Culture*, of cultures constantly interacting and influencing one another.

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Appendix

List of Lysistrata Project Readings

Source:
http://web.archive.org/web/20070710220605/www.lysistrataproject.com/archive.html

Note: This appendix was added at the request of my examining committee. The text below was taken from a cache of http://www.lysistrataproject.com/archive.html.

Where was Lysistrata?

These readings were organized by individuals who received email about the Project, visited this website, and took action to help unite citizens of the world for peace. These people made the first-ever worldwide theatrical act of dissent happen! We would like to send a BIG THANK YOU to all the "spearheads" who gave their energy and time to produce events in the following communities around the world! (If your name's not here and you did a reading, please email your name, city, state and country to Sharron!) Listed alpabetically by country/city:

Paula Martin in Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA
Emilia Mazer in Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA
G. Rodoni in Campana, ARGENTINA
Jacqueline in Atherton, AUSTRALIA
Jan Barham in Byron Bay, AUSTRALIA
Boom Boom la Bern in Newcastle, AUSTRALIA
Betsy Marks/Alex Hanlon in Sydney, AUSTRALIA
Zulema Capielli in Sydney, AUSTRALIA
Anna Held in Adelaide, AUSTRALIA
Arianwen Harris in Ballarat, AUSTRALIA
Michael Sharkey in Burwood, AUSTRALIA
Lindy Davies in Southbank Melbourne, AUSTRALIA
Viv Glance in Perth, AUSTRALIA
Kulturblabla in Hard, AUSTRIA
Amanda Sage in Vienna, AUSTRIA
Genevieve/Brian Bartley in Vienna, AUSTRIA
Peter Waugh in Vienna, AUSTRIA
Sandy Winfield in Battambang, CAMBODIA
Danny Whitehead in Phnom Penh, CAMBODIA
Charlene Chamberlain in Colonsay, Sask, CANADA
Brad Simkulet in Calgary, Alberta, CANADA
Jay Johnson in Medicine Hat, Alberta, CANADA
Heather Doerksen in Burnaby, British Columbia, CANADA
David Ross in Kamloops, British Columbia, CANADA
Neal Facey in Kelowna, British Columbia, CANADA
Geoff Burns in Nelson, British Columbia, CANADA

Evan Brynne/Miryam Burns in Salmo, British Columbia, CANADA
John Beaven in Summerland, British Columbia, CANADA
Studio 58 in Vancouver, British Columbia, CANADA
Terry Costa in Vancouver, British Columbia, CANADA
Monica Prendergast in Victoria, British Columbia, CANADA
Kevin Longfield in Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA
Gregory Fleet in Renforth, New Brunswick, CANADA
Judith Weiss in Sackville, New Brunswick, CANADA
Sue Leblanc-Crawford in Halifax, Nova Scotia, CANADA
Stephanie Simard in Halifax, Nova Scotia, CANADA
The Women of Wolfville in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, CANADA
Lisa O'Connell in Kitchener, Ontario, CANADA
Lesleigh Turner in London, Ontario, CANADA
Jonquil Garrick-Reynolds in Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA
Isabelle Aubut in Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA
David Russell in Peterborough, Ontario, CANADA
Marty McBride in Thornhill, Ontario, CANADA
Risa Morris in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
Cara Pifko/Aviva Armour-Ostroff in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
Maev Beaty/Vanessa Shaver in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
M. Cassidy in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
Renee Hackett in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
Patricia Ansley in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
Janet Hamilton-Davis in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
Doug Doughty in Toronto, Ontario, CANADA
Optative Theatrical Laboratories in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
Isabelle Cyr in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
Lara Goldenberg in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
Felicity Crew in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
Maude Desrosiers in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
Jacques Lemieux in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
ThÈ‚tre de la Grenouille in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
Anna de Aguayo in Montréal, Quebec, CANADA
Entrefemmes in Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec, CANADA
Le Collectif Bleuets in Saguenay, Quebec, CANADA
The Guild Society in Whitehorse, Yukon Terr., CANADA
Name Withheld in Location Withheld, CHINA
Karol M. Rony/Edwin Cedeño in Heredia, COSTA RICA
Andrea Gómez Jiménez in Heredia, COSTA RICA
Andrea Manners in San Jose, COSTA RICA
Vivian Martinez Taberes in Havana, CUBA
Loukia in Nicosia, CYPRUS
Caroline/ Linda McGuire in Paphos, CYPRUS
Vinohradske in Praha, CZECH REPUBLIC (not part of Project)
Anne Marie Helger/ Helene Vindsmark in Copenhagen, DENMARK
Lissa Brennan in DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Iman Ahmed in Cairo, EGYPT
Charlotte Harber in Cardiff, South Wales, ENGLAND
Peter Wilson in Durham, ENGLAND
David Macgregor in Hertfordshire, ENGLAND
J Michael Walton in Hull, ENGLAND
Clive/Dana Bagshaw in Leicester, ENGLAND
J. Bowtell in Lincoln, ENGLAND
Llewellyn Llew in Liverpool, ENGLAND
Amanda Stephens Lee in London, ENGLAND
Karla Ptacek online & in London, ENGLAND
Sergio Amigo in London, ENGLAND
Thalia Protonotariou in London, ENGLAND
Laura Atkins in London-Brixton, ENGLAND
Anna Birch in London-Stoke Newington, ENGLAND
Sarah Case in London/Clapham, ENGLAND
D. Heaney/ J. Herrin in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, ENGLAND
Liz Ryan in North Yorkshire, ENGLAND
Richard Conlon in Northamptonshire, ENGLAND
Alan Lewers in Nottingham, ENGLAND
Alexandra Gillespie in Oxford, ENGLAND
Simon Makin in Sheffield, South Yorkshire, ENGLAND
Colin Dolley in Walton on Thames, ENGLAND
J. Claridge in Warwickshire, ENGLAND
Annie McKean in Winchester, ENGLAND
Janika Päll in Tartu, ESTONIA
Karla Ptacek online and in Helsinki, FINLAND
Melanie Clark Pullen in Cote d'Azur, FRANCE
Lefki Papachrysostomou in Montpellier, FRANCE
Jack Souvant in Montreuil, FRANCE
Melanie Maxwell in Nice, FRANCE
Clara McBride in Paris, FRANCE
Kim Broderick in Paris, FRANCE
Xavier Martin in Paris, FRANCE
Caroline Reck in Paris, FRANCE
Sheila Coren-Tissot in Paris, FRANCE
Elsa Saladin in Paris, FRANCE
Emmanuel Balsan in Paris, FRANCE
Project AT.L.A.S. in Paris, FRANCE
Heidi Brouzeng in Région Lorraine, FRANCE
Alain Bosmans in Buis les Baronnies, FRANCE
Stephanie Lubbe in Baden-Württemberg, GERMANY
Anja Behrens/Stefan Maria Brettschneider in Berlin, GERMANY
Christian Schuenemann in Dieburg, GERMANY
Sybille Schaefer in Frankfurt, GERMANY
Claus Caesar in Frankfurt, GERMANY
Anonymous in Freiburg, GERMANY

Gabrielle Forster in Mainz, GERMANY - MAY 30-JUNE 2
Jennifer Feller in Munich, GERMANY
N. Kamtsis/Theatre Topos Allou in Athens, GREECE
Anna Tsichli/Hellenic Centre of the ITI in Athens, GREECE
Katerina Sarropoulou in Athens, GREECE
Nikos Lamprou in Athens, GREECE
M. Kotzamani/M. Papadimitriou at Acropolis in Athens, GREECE
Rowan in Kythera, GREECE
Yiorgos Antonakis in Heraklion, GREECE
Panos Kouros at a Kurdish Refugee camp in Patras, GREECE
A. Efklidis/Nat. Theatre of N. Greece in Thessaloniki, GREECE
Katerina Kitsi-Mitakou in Thessaloniki, GREECE
Alexandra Mylona in Thessaloniki, GREECE
Alkistis Kondoyianni in Volos, GREECE
Jack Warner in El Progreso, Yoro, HONDURAS
Felipe Acosta in Tegucigalpa, HONDURAS
Prajakta Karnik in HONG KONG
S. Baldursson / Nat. Theater of Iceland in Reykjavik, ICELAND
Sigrún Valbergsdóttir in Reykjavik, , ICELAND
Chandradasan / Lokadharmi in Kochi, Kerala, INDIA
Sue Winski in Ubud, Bali, INDONESIA
International Journalists (names withheld), Arbil, IRAQ
Maria Young in Cork City, IRELAND
Margie Bernard in Derry, (NORTHERN) IRELAND
Matthew Poe in Derry/Londonderry, (NORTHERN) IRELAND
Niall O Sioradain in Dublin, IRELAND
Conor O'Neill in Dublin, IRELAND
Martin d'French in Dublin, IRELAND
Conor Hanratty in Dublin, IRELAND
Brian Arkins in Galway, IRELAND
Orla Mc Govern in Galway, IRELAND
Peter Hussey in Newbridge, County Kildare, IRELAND
Ben Hennessey in Waterford, IRELAND
Unknown in Ein Iron, ISRAEL
Batia Griner in Holon, ISRAEL
Limor Shiponi in Jerusalem, ISRAEL
+ 14 story-tellers across ISRAEL telling the story of Lysistrata!!!
Givat Zeev/Batia Heron in Jerusalem, ISRAEL
Tamar Maliach in Natanya, ISRAEL
Sarit Gamliel in Tel Aviv, ISRAEL
Edda Battigelli in Gorizia, ITALY
Lydia Biondi/Argot Theater in Rome, ITALY
Teatro Miela/R. Pisciotta in Trieste, ITALY
G. Melano in Turin, ITALY (03/05/03)
Doug Evans in Nagoya, JAPAN
Leslie deGiere in Tokyo, JAPAN

Takuya Matsumoto in Tokyo, JAPAN
Yoko Mizushima Sato in Tokyo, JAPAN
Yuriko Sheila Shiramine in Tokyo, JAPAN
Diana Berza on Radio Latvia in LATVIA
Monica Smith in Beirut, LEBANON
Sharif Abdunnur in Beirut, LEBANON
Rohaizad Suaidi in Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA
Vicki Ann Cremona in Valletta, MALTA
Elhabito in Coyoacán, MEXICO
O. Medina/B. Lecumberri in Gomez Palacio, Durango, MEXICO
María Morett in Guanajuato, MEXICO
Jesusa Rodriguez in Mexico City, MEXICO
Inda Saenz in Mexico City, MEXICO (03/24/03)
Rosa Paz in Tampico, MEXICO
Katty Amador in Guanajuato, MEXICO
A. Camerena/L. Mazariegos/M. Verduzco in Morelia, MEXICO
Antonio Prieto in Zamora, MEXICO
Roberto Gonzalez in Quéretaro, MEXICO
Ingrid Docter in Hoorn, NETHERLANDS
D. DuCarme in Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS
Lodewijk Muns in Den Haag, NETHERLANDS
Karen de Vries in Utrecht, NETHERLANDS
Eric Ribberink in Zutphen, NETHERLANDS
Lyndon Hood in Dunedin, NEW ZEALAND
Philip Casey in Gore, NEW ZEALAND
Helen V. Jamieson in Wellington/Christchurch, NEW ZEALAND
Karla Ptacek online and in Wellington/Hari Hari, NEW ZEALAND
Andreas in Bergen, NORWAY
Totalteatret in Tromsoe, NORWAY
Oeyvind Brandtzaeg in Trondheim, NORWAY
Asma Mundrawala in Karachi, PAKISTAN
Myrna Castro in Panama City, PANAMA
NVC Actors Studio in Manila/Makati City, PHILIPPINES
Mozart Pastrano in Cagayan de Oro, MINDANAO
Dariusz Gabryelewicz in Warsaw, POLAND
Eugenio Monclova in Río Piedras, PUERTO RICO
Students of the U of PR in Río Pedras, PUERTO RICO
Maritza Perez in San Juan, PUERTO RICO
Eva Laporte in Moscow, RUSSIA
Iliuhin/KriM in Sosnovy Bor City, RUSSIA
Cally Phillips in Dumfries, SCOTLAND
Tam Dean Burn in Edinburgh, SCOTLAND
Angela Everitt in Wigtown, SCOTLAND
Dragan Apostolovic in Belgrade, SERBIA & MONTENEGRO
Svetlana Slapsak in Novi Sad, SERBIA & MONTENEGRO
Aleksandar Zograf in Pancevo, SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

Jonathan Lim in SINGAPORE
Priya Selvakumar in SINGAPORE
Miha Zadnikar in Ljubljana, SLOVENIA
Nevenka Likar Zuzek in Ljubljana, SLOVENIA
Tamantha Hammerschlag in Kwazulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA Manuel Erzoto in Barcelona, SPAIN
Elizabeth Breedlove in Barcelona, SPAIN
Melanie Maxwell in Canary Islands, SPAIN
Martin Miguel Vaamonde in Madrid, SPAIN
Pilar Adón in Madrid, SPAIN
Leonor Taboada in Mallorca, SPAIN
Martin Miguel Vaamonde in San Ildefonso, SPAIN
Eukene Lacarra Lanz in Vitoria, Basque Country, SPAIN
Viveka Stigzelius in Arvika, SWEDEN
Agneta Wirén in Gothenburg, SWEDEN
Tinna Ingelstam in Gothenburg, SWEDEN
Maria Norberg in HÃ°Ëllefors, Ã–rebro lÃ°Ën, SWEDEN
Lennart Eriksson in Orebro, SWEDEN
Finn Thunborg in Soederhamn, SWEDEN
Serpil Inanc in Stockholm, SWEDEN
Bim de Verdier in Uppsala, SWEDEN
Svensk Kultur in Ystad, SWEDEN
Alan Greiner in Bern, SWITZERLAND
Alexandre in Fribourg, SWITZERLAND
André Hurst in Geneva, SWITZERLAND
David Bouvier in Lausanne, SWITZERLAND
Atelier Theater Meilen in Meilen, SWITZERLAND
Matteo Capponi in Neuchâtel, SWITZERLAND
Ella Hoffman in Zurich, SWITZERLAND
Deborah Felmeth in Damascus, SYRIA
C. M. Wang/Hsu Ruei-Fong in Gau-Hsung, TAIWAN
Tainanren Theatre Company in Tainan, TAIWAN
C. M. Wang/Shr Yi-Ling in Tainan, TAIWAN
Mary Beth Maslowski in Taipei, TAIWAN
C. M. Wang/Taipei Theater Artists in Taipei, TAIWAN
Squawkt in Chiang Mai, THAILAND
Anthony Collymore in TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
Yesim Ozsoy Gulan online and in Istanbul, TURKEY
Eftal Gülbudak in Istanbul, TURKEY
Devrim Nas in Istanbul, TURKEY
Asly Ongoren in Istanbul, TURKEY
U. Uludag in Istanbul, TURKEY
Charlotte Harber in Cardiff, WALES
Clare Sain-ley-Berry/ Miranda Ballin in Cardiff, WALES
Hosted by the Welsh Centre for International Affairs
Maria Elena Garcia Diaz in Merida, VENEZUELA

G. Almandoz/M. Zeballos in Montevideo, URUGUAY
Mikki Lipsey in Saint John, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
Karen Missire in Anchorage, AK, USA
Michael Christenson in Juneau, AK, USA
Jenny Stevens in Kodiak, AK, USA
Tom O'Shea in Auburn, AL, USA
Diana Jordan Allende in Auburn, AL, USA
Ellise Mayor in Birmingham, AL, USA
Lois Lambert in Guntersville/Huntsville/Birmingham, AL, USA
Aaron Cable/Kathleen Mccall in Montgomery, AL, USA
Clint Atchley in Arkadelphia, AR, USA
Michael Henderson in Little Rock, AR, USA
Rancho Linda Vista in Oracle, AR, USA
Deb Shannon in Grand Canyon Village, AZ, USA
Ginna E. Hoff in Paradise Valley, AZ, USA
Ron May/Stray Cat Theatre in Phoenix, AZ, USA
Chris Danowski in Phoenix, AZ, USA
Lauren Barnert/Ken Hosie in Show Low, AZ, USA
Bonnie Eckard in Tempe, AZ, USA
Linda Blan in Thatcher, AZ, USA
EJ Kerwin in Tucson, AZ, USA
S. Vinson/ S. Waldenburger in Tucson, AZ, USA
Rita Mills in Tucson, AZ, USA
Connie Solari in Atherton, CA, USA
Roger Mathey in Bakersfield, CA, USA (two readings)
Bill Bastian in Berkeley, CA, USA
L.T. Renaud in Berkeley, CA, USA (03/01/03)
Private Home Reading in Berkeley, CA, USA
Randall Stuart in Berkeley/Oakland, CA, USA
Tisha Sloan in Blue Lake, CA, USA
Robert Kwalick in Carpinteria, CA, USA
J. D. Dalton in Chico, CA, USA
daltonjd@mail.csuchico.edu
Ellen Finkelpearl in Claremont, CA, USA
Rebecca Rollins in Claremont, CA, USA
Regina Cate in Concord, CA, USA
Sunny Nordmarken in Davis, CA, USA (03/7/03)
Patricia Bacon/The LuLu's in Emeryville, CA, USA
Candice & Keith Milan in Fremont, CA, USA
Jessica in Hayward, CA, USA
Stephania Widger in Hayward, CA, USA
Joyce Thrift in Hercules, CA, USA
Ann Pellegrini in Irvine, CA, USA
Gabriela Jauregui in Irvine, CA, USA
Carla Smith-Zilber in Kentfield, CA, USA
Private reading in Lafayette, CA, USA

Cal & Dixie Wood in Livermore, CA, USA
Kathryn Jennings in Long Beach, CA, USA
Kay Thornton in Los Altos Hills, CA, USA
Gleason Bauer in Los Angeles, CA, USA
-----w/ Jane Alexander and over 20 regional companies
Maryam Griffin in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Joanna Bloem in Los Angeles, CA, USA (03/02/03 & 03/03/03)
Eliza Schneider in Los Angeles, CA, USA
-----The girl from Southpark on Comedy Central!!!
Cindy Fulchino in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Maggie Bourque in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Stephen Brown online and in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Ellen Collins in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Marion Levine in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Bonnie Elliott in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Chiara Sulpriazio in Los Angeles, CA, USA
Karen Marie Seigel in Los Angeles/Burbank, CA, USA
Gioconda Belli in Los Angeles/Santa Monica, CA, USA
-----All Star Cast: Julie Christie, Eric Stoltz, Jose Zuniga...
Barbara O'Neill Ferris in Malibu/Point Dume, CA, USA
A. Gargonz in Modesto, CA, USA
Ashley Simmons in Monterey, CA, USA
David Gassner in Napa, CA, USA
Phillip Sneed on KVMR-FM & in Nevada City, CA, USA
Jason Breitkopf in North Hollywood, CA, USA
America Young in North Hollywood, CA, USA
A. Stewart in North Hollywood, CA, USA
-----Starring Charlotte Rae, Charles Durnin, Kimberly King...
Sandra Lupien in Oakland, CA, USA
Gail Tennant in Oakland, USA
Maurice Diepeveen in Ojai, CA, USA
Patti Strickand in Oxnard, CA, USA
Katie Paul in Palm Springs, CA, USA
Jane in Pasadena, CA, USA
Josephine Perry in Pittsburg, CA, USA
Donna Wapner in Pleasant Hill, CA, USA
Scott McMorrow in Point Reyes Station, CA, USA
Suzan Fairchild in Rolling Hills Estates, CA, USA
Sharon Jacoby in Sacramento, CA, USA
Ann Tracy in Sacramento, CA, USA
Sabrina Molinar/Nancy Tedder in San Bernardino, CA, USA
Jennifer Brown in San Diego, CA, USA
Joan Foster in San Diego, CA, USA
James Ferguson in San Diego, CA, USA
Monica Cuoco in San Diego, CA, USA
Dale Morris in San Diego, CA, USA

Looking Glass Theatre in San Diego, CA, USA
Christine McHugh in San Francisco, CA, USA
Jessica Heidt in San Francisco, CA, USA
L. Simon in San Francisco, CA, USA
Thyrza Eyre in San Francisco, CA, USA
H. Gatty in San Francisco, CA, USA
J.Bernier in San Francisco, CA, USA
Wm Leslie Howard in San Jose, CA, USA
------One Man Water Cooler Version!!!
Andrew Fleck in San Jose, CA, USA
Dlyan Russell in San Leandro, CA, USA
Jamie Sweet in Santa Anna, CA, USA
Ellen Anderson/Liz Estrada in Santa Barbara, CA, USA
Sarah Grojean in Santa Clara, CA, USA
Jody Greene in Santa Cruz, CA, USA
Larry Carlin on KRCB-FM radio & in Sebastapol, CA, USA
Linda Garbesi in Sonoma, CA, USA
Richard Martin in Stanford, CA, USA
Ann Patricio/Haley White in Thousand Oaks, CA, USA
Ellen Geer/ Peter Alsop in Topanga Canyon, CA, USA
Meredith Schade in Valencia, CA, USA
V. Dillman in Venice, CA, USA
Heather A. Beasley in Boulder, CO, USA
Roni Chernin in Crestone, CO, USA
Heather Larson in Denver, CO, USA
Devon Adams in Denver, CO, USA
Carol Bloom & Penny Cole in Denver, CO, USA
Ruthie Ammari Pfeiffer in Denver, CO, USA
Chip Lee in Denver, CO, USA
Suzanne Coley in Denver, CO, USA
Kathryn Moller in Durango, CO, USA
Kevin Seaman in Greeley, CO, USA
Rebecca Parnell in Littleton, CO, USA
M. Sprunger-Froese in Manitou Spgs/Colorado Spgs, CO, USA
Maria Ogren in Branford, CT, USA
David Sousa in Hartford, CT, USA
Catherine E. Hoyser in Hartford, CT, USA
??? in Madison, CT, USA
Brian Herrera in New Haven, CT, USA
Christopher Arnott in New Haven, CT, USA
Eyal Kimchi in New Haven, CT, USA
Lori Martin in New Haven, CT, USA
Nina Barclay in Norwich, CT, USA
Mary Minehan in Simsbury, CT, USA
Marilyn Archibald in Storrs, CT, USA
Martha Fleming-Ives at Wesleyan University, CT, USA

Catherine Hoyser in West Hartford, CT, USA
David Rosenberg in Westport, CT, USA
----- Starring Mia Dillon, Keir Dullea!
Mary MacDonald in Woodstock, CT, USA
Joe Martin in Washington, DC, USA
A. Roth in Washington, DC, USA
Genevieve Compton in Washington, DC, USA
C. Baker-Oliver in Washington, DC, USA
Rev. Laureen Smith in Washington, DC, USA (03/05/03)
Beebe Frazer in Lewes, DE, USA
Catherine Glynn in Newark, DE, USA
Sherry Goodman Watt in Boca Grande, FL, USA
Bonnie Benson/Crone's Cousel in Boca Raton, FL, USA
Jaime Scherrer in Coral Gables, FL, USA
Matthew MacDermid/Jenny Sejansky in DeLand, FL, USA
Laura Salazar in Dunedin, FL, USA
The Women's Theatre Project in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, USA
Frances Sinderwahl, Ph.D in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, USA
Unitarian Universalist Church in Ft. Myers, FL, USA
Karla Engel in Ft. Myers, FL, USA
Shawn LeNoble in Jacksonville Beach, FL, USA
Robbie Rand in Key Biscayne, FL, USA
Chris O'Brien in Key West, FL, USA
Connie Gilbert in Key West, FL, USA (03/03/03 & 03/08/03)
Stephanie & Patrick Shearer in Miami, FL, USA
Heather Rae Miller in Miami, FL, USA
Susan Giles-Klein in Miami, FL, USA
Kathryn DiBernardo in Orlando, FL, USA
Sandra Cawthern in Orlando, FL, USA
Kyle Bostian in Sarasota, FL, USA
Ellen Graham/Jennifer Latshaw in St. Petersburg, FL, USA
Cara Rosson in Tallahassee, FL, USA
Jean Graham-Jones in Tallahassee, FL, USA
Andres F. Pisapia in Tampa, FL, USA
Michèle Young/Gorilla Theater in Tampa, FL, USA
Gaynelle Caldwell in W.Palm Beach/Lake Worth, FL, USA
Srikanta Banerjee in Atlanta, GA, USA (02-27-03)
Sally Macewen in Atlanta, GA, USA
Atlanta Urban Mediamakers Assn. in Atlanta, GA, USA
Priscilla Smith in Atlanta, GA, USA
Shelby Hofer in Atlanta, GA, USA
Synchronicity Pef Grp/Georgia Shakes Fest in Atlanta, GA, USA
Anita Bell in Augusta, GA, USA
EstroFest Productions in Decatur, GA, USA
Sarah Nichols in Decatur, GA, USA
Virginia Dicken in Macon, GA, USA

Walter Bilderback in Milledgeville, GA, USA
Jennifer Danforth in Oxford, GA, USA
Kathie de Nobriga in Pine Lake, GA, USA
S. Hawkins in Hilo, HI, USA
Karen Archibald in Honolulu, HI, USA
Melonie Hofstetter in Lihue, Kauai, HI, USA
Ed Jor-El Elkin/Nadine Newlight in Maui, HI, USA
Betsy Mayfield in Ames, IA, USA
Jade Bettin in Cedar Falls, IA, USA
Karla Steffens in Cedar Rapids, IA, USA
Stacie O'Connor in Des Moines, IA, USA
Beth Hirst in Des Moines, IA, USA
S. Payne in Des Moines, IA, USA
Linda Johnson in Grinnell, IA, USA
Lindsey Ingles in Indianola, IA, USA
Jody Hovland/Ron Clark in Iowa City, IA, USA
Scot West in Iowa City, IA, USA
Lisa Schlesinger in Iowa City, IA, USA
Janessa Hale in Lamoni, IA, USA
Karla Steffans-Moran in Mt. Vernon, IA, USA
Ruby Nancy in Quad-Cities, IA/IL, USA
Christine Burnett in Boise, ID, USA
Barbara Martin-Sparrow in Boise, ID, USA
Cecelia Luschnig in Moscow, ID, USA
Heidi Harold in Pocatello, ID, USA
Debra Douglas in Sandpoint, ID, USA
Margie Gustafson in Batavia, IL, USA
Jane Wallace in Bloomington-Normal, IL, USA
Rebecca Fishel Bright in Carbondale, IL, USA
Laura Scott Wade in Chicago, IL, USA
-----Chicago Area 15+ readings!
Sarah Legowski in Galesburg, IL, USA
Margaret Boehle in Joliet, IL, USA
Jennifer Ludden in Joliet, IL, USA
Nadine Franklin in Malta, IL, USA
Lefki Papachrysostomou in Montpellier, IL, USA
SirToby in Oak Park, IL, USA
Donna Olson in Peoria, IL, USA
Dennis Rendleman in Springfield, IL, USA
Kari Anderson in Springfield, IL, USA
Sarah Rizza in Evansville, IL, USA
Michael Swanson in Franklin, IL, USA (2 readings)
Orene Colcord in Ft. Wayne, IL, USA
Mary Trotter in Indianapolis, IL, USA
LaRonika Thomas in Lafayette, IL, USA
Scott Strode in North Manchester, IL, USA

Erika Harriford-Mclaren in South Bend, IL, USA
LaRonika Thomas in West Lafayette, IL, USA
Katy Wolff in Lawrence, KS, USA
Don Hedrick in Manhattan, KS, USA
Lissa Staley in Topeka, KS, USA
Tyler Eastman in Wichita, KS, USA
Barbara Lakes in Berea, KY, USA
Molly Kerby in Bowling Green, KY, USA
Maggie Brown in Bowling Green, KY, USA
Roni Gilpin in Harrodsburg, KY, USA
M. Jafarzadeh in Lexington, KY, USA
Joan F. Rue in Lexington, KY, USA
Meagan Winters in Louisville, KY, USA
Actors Theater of Lousiville in Louisville, KY, USA
Pleiades Theater Co in Louisville, KY, USA
Lava House in Louisville, KY, USA
Amber Burgess in Newport, KY, USA
Joy Pace in Owensboro, KY, USA
John Maruskin in Winchester, KY, USA
Patti Powell in Alexandria, LA, USA
Sarah Jane Johnson in Baton Rouge, LA, USA
T. D. McCain in New Orleans, LA, USA
Dominica Borg in Amherst, MA, USA
Pallavi Nagesha in Bedford, MA, USA
Sophie Parker/Nicole Imbracsio in Boston, MA, USA
Nili Pearlmutter in Boston, MA, USA (03/02/03)
Michelle Kweder/Carolyn Wahto in Boston, MA, USA
Paolo S. DiFabio in Boston, MA, USA
Deborah Mero in Boston, MA, USA
Alison Potoma in Boston, MA, USA
Kyra Fries in Boston, MA, USA
Susan Thompson-Kim Mancuso in Boston, MA, USA
Jaclyn Friedman in Cambridge, MA, USA
Sarah M. Braik in Cambridge, MA, USA
Deborah Little Wyman in Cambridge, MA, USA
Lisa N. Davis in Cambridge, MA, USA (03/02/03)
Lynda Sturner in Cape Cod, MA, USA
Dina Harris in Provincetown, MA, USA
Sonali Kumar Concord Academy in Concord, MA, USA
Lauren Osornio in Concord, MA, USA
Jennifer Stiles in East Bridgewater, MA, USA
Rev. Robert F. Murphy in Falmouth, MA, USA
Heidi Wakeman in Gloucester, MA, USA
David Wade Smith in Great Barrington, MA, USA
The First Church in Ipswich, MA, USA
Mary Lincoln in Lincoln, MA, USA

Chrystal Caron in Lowell, MA, USA
Jennifer Rodrigue in Lynn, MA, USA
Kristen Fehlhaber in Marblehead, MA, USA
Rev. Robin Gray in Milford, MA, USA
Sarah Fuhro in Natick, USA
Ron Pullins in Newburyport, MA, USA
E.Soldinger/L.Kaye-Moses/Main Stage in North Adams, MA, USA
Nicholas Thaw in North Quabbin, MA, USA
Shoshana Marchand in Northampton, MA, USA
Abby Russell in Norton, MA, USA
E.Soldinger/L.Kaye-Moses/Berk. Artisans in Pittsfield, MA, USA
Lois Martin in Salem, MA, USA
Miriam Klamkin in Salem, MA, USA
Rachel Popowich in Shelburne Falls, MA, USA
Rev. Arline Conan Sutherland in Somerville, MA, USA
Beth Ann Rothermel in Westfield, MA, USA
Sally Kintner in Westford, MA, USA
Denali Delmar in Westford, MA, USA
Todd Felton in Wilbraham, MA, USA
Earthspirit in Worthington, MA, USA
Tracey Toscano in ???, MD, USA
Mandy Dalton in Annapolis, MD, USA
Roberta Wells-Famula in Annapolis, MD, USA
Anna Evanstein in Baltimore, MD, USA
Eileen O'Brien in Baltimore, MD, USA
Robyn Quick in Baltimore, MD, USA
Janelle Barlage in Baltimore, MD, USA
B. Pfeiffer/Janelle in Baltimore, MD, USA
Mary Dagold in Baltimore, MD, USA
Kateri Chambers in Baltimore, MD, USA
Denise Gantt in Baltimore, MD, USA
Tara Cariaso in Baltimore, MD, USA
Mickey Mullany in Baltimore, MD, USA
Jean Lee Cole in Baltimore, MD, USA
J. Fletcher in Chestertown, MD, USA
Jennifer Nelson in College Park, MD, USA
Chuck DeVoe in College Park, MD, USA
Gene Fouche in Frederick, MD, USA
Tania Gale in Lusby, MD, USA
Tom Mikotowicz, Ph.D in ???, ME, USA
Braden Chapman in Gorham, ME, USA
Forest Hunter in Hallowell, ME, USA (03/02/03)
Sarah Shed in Hallowell, ME, USA
Laura Slap in Kennebunk, ME, USA
Matthew Fox Rosler in Lewiston, ME, USA
D. Brown in Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Simone Yehuda in Ann Arbor, MI, USA
Anna-Rose Mathieson in Ann Arbor, MI, USA
Corey Triplett in Ann Arbor, MI, USA
Amy Arena in Detroit, MI, USA
Gillian Eaton/Meghan Clark in Detroit, MI, USA
Paul Kershaw in Ferndale/Royal Oaks, MI, USA
Rachel Finan in Grand Rapids, MI, USA
Miriam Engstrom in Grosse Pointe, MI, USA
Kevin Dodd in Kalamazoo, MI, USA
Kate Weilnau in Kalamazoo, MI, USA
Aryn Bartley in Lansing, MI, USA
John Anthony La Pietra in Marhsall, MI, USA (2 readings)
Annie Bilton in Ypsilanti, MI, USA
Jerry Girton in Austin, MN, USA
Jean M. Sramek in Duluth, MN, USA
Lis McCrea in Ely, MN, USA
Christine Winkler in Lanesboro, MN, USA
Bayla McDougal in Minneapolis, MN, USA
Amy Salloway, Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, USA
-----15+ readings all over the Twin Cities!
Craig Ellingson in Moorhead, MN, USA
Argie Manolis in Morris, MN, USA
Shari Setchell in Northfield, MN, USA
Meredith G. in Northfield, MN, USA
Ann Whelan in Rochester, MN, USA
Steffanie Moxon in St. Paul, MN, USA
Rachel M. Blunk in St. Peter, MN, USA
Pamela Marquis in Columbia, MO, USA
Diane Bulan in Kansas City, MO, USA
Kathleen Warfel in Kansas City, MO, USA
Becky Becker in Kirksville, MO, USA
Elizabeth Paddock in Springfield, MO, USA
Ann Canale in St. Charles, MO, USA
Robert Neblett in St. Louis, MO, USA
Amanda Link in St. Louis, MO, USA
Margi Oard in Gulfport, MS, USA
Catherine Freis in Jackson, MS, USA
Wild Women of the West in Billings, MT, USA
Sheila Roberts in Dillon, MT, USA
Carla Abrams in Missoula, MT, USA
Sophie Mills in Asheville, NC, USA
Lisa Sarasohn in Asheville, NC, USA
Sarah Zerner in Chapel Hill, NC, USA
Allison Modafferi/Tony Torn in Charlotte, NC, USA
Keyne Cheshire in Davidson, NC, USA
Nan L. Stephenson in Durham, NC, USA

Jack Zerbe in Greensboro, NC, USA
Carole Lindsey-Potter/Jody Cauthen in Greensboro, NC, USA
Doris G. Wallace in Hickory, NC, USA (03/30/03)
Lola Davis-Jones in Kill Devil Hills, NC, USA
Daryl Walker in Pittsboro, NC, USA
Kurt Benrud in Raleigh, NC, USA
Lissa Brennan in Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill, NC, USA
Woody Hood in Salisbury, NC, USA
Sarah Bellino in Swannanoa, NC, USA
Gina Gambony in Wilmington, NC, USA
C. Gendrich in Winston-Salem, NC, USA
Ana Noelle Rusness-Petersen in Fargo, ND, USA
Kathy Coudle King in Grank Forks, ND, USA
Judith K. Hart in Lincoln, NE, USA
Cindy Asrir in Omaha, NE, USA
Marybeth Bentwood in Concord, NH, USA
Marybeth Bentwood in Durham, NH, USA
Karen C. Prior/Rebekah Bergeron in Exeter, NH, USA
Margaret.Williamson in Hanover, NH, USA
Sharon Lajoie in Henniker, NH, USA
Dan Patterson in Keene, NH, USA
Wyckham Avery/Trippi Mikich in Peterborough, NH, USA
G. Fisher in Plymouth, NH, USA
Harmony Goldstein in Rindge, NH, USA
Lillian Ribeiro in Hoboken, NJ, USA
Laura R. Dougherty in Madison, NJ, USA
Paul Ellis in Montclair, NJ, USA
Paul Sugarman in Montclair, NJ, USA
Helen A. Kuryllo in Montclair, NJ, USA
Jane Mandel/Luna Stage in Montclair, NJ, USA
-----BIG THANKS TO LUNA STAGE 4 PRODUCING BAM EVENT!
Pandora Scooter in New Brunswick, NJ, USA
Naomi Miller in Newton, NJ, USA
Ruby in Princeton, NJ, USA
Lisa McNulty in Princeton, NJ, USA
-----starring Blair Brown, Julyana Soelys & Emily Mann
Bobbie Fishman in Princeton, NJ, USA
Peter Horn/Jenise Morgan in Westfield, NJ, USA
Jane & Phil Blume in Albuquerque, NM, USA
Uma Krishnaswami in Aztec, NM, USA
Rosalia Triana in Espanola, NM, USA
Karen O'Kain in Los Lunas, NM, USA
Claudia and Bill Page in Ojo Caliente, NM, USA
Anne Costanza in Questa, NM, USA
Argos MacCallum in Santa Fe, NM, USA
Dr. Carol Lee Callen in Santa Fe, NM, USA

James Rice in Elko, NV, USA
Renee Christy in Las Vegas, NV, USA
Judith Fetterley in Albany, NY, USA
Becky Prophet in Alfred, NY, USA
Jean Wagner in Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, USA
Marcia K. Morrison in Batavia, NY, USA
Bonnie Winfield in Binghamton, NY, USA
Maria Pendolino in Binghamton, NY, USA
Lona Kaplan in Binghamton, NY, USA
Maria Scipione in Brockport, NY, USA
Livia Woods in Bronxville, NY, USA
Beth Perkins in Brookville, NY, USA
Margaret Smith/Lorna Hill in Buffalo, NY, USA
Lisa Hayes/Mary Kate O'Connell in Buffalo/Snyder, NY, USA
Connie Meng in Canton, NY, USA
Vanessa Dillman in Cazenovia, NY, USA
Barbara Gold in Clinton, NY, USA
Cher Holt-Fortin in DeWitt, NY, USA
Tim Mele in Geneva, NY, USA
Dorothy Scharf in Great Neck, NY, USA
Nancy Rothman/Andrew Joffe in Hudson, NY, USA
Geri Lipschultz in Huntington Station, NY, USA
Lesley Greene in Ithaca, NY, USA
Danielle Woerner in Kingston, NY, USA
Laurie Peterson in New Rochelle, NY, USA
Kathryn Blume in NY, NY, USA
------Over 60 readings in NYC!!!
Actors from Guiding Light in NY, NY, USA
Bonnie Black in Plattsburgh, NY, USA
Anne Malone in Potsdam, NY, USA
Linda Starkweather in Rochester, NY, USA
Monica Florence in Rochester, NY, USA
Fionnuala Regan in Rochester, NY, USA
Dianne Fortado in Saranac Lake, NY, USA
Sarah Craig in Saratoga Springs, NY, USA
Michael Arnush in Saratoga Springs, NY, USA
Hugh Jenkins in Schenectady, NY, USA
Katie Zaffrann in Syracuse, NY, USA
Synergy/Claire Bobrycki in Syracuse, NY, USA
Susan Galbraith in Syracuse, NY, USA
Russell Sage College in Troy, NY, USA
Nora Freeman in Westchester/Port Chester, NY, USA
Danielle Woerner in Woodstock, NY, USA
Megan Elk in Akron, OH, USA
Jason Parrish/Jami Talbott in Ashland, OH, USA
Nancy Beres in Athens, OH, USA

Aaron Carter in Athens, OH, USA
Meredith Flynn in Bowling Green, OH, USA
Julie Atkin in Cincinnati, OH, USA (Ded. to Robert E. Hassett)
Kristin Dietsche in Cincinnati, OH, USA
Kevin Cronin in Cleveland, OH, USA
Susan Petrone in Cleveland, OH, USA
Susann Moeller in Columbus, OH, USA
Jared Berry/Carla Carpenter in Columbus, OH, USA
Alan Woods in Columbus, OH, USA
Mary Sue Gmeiner in Dayton, OH, USA
Andrea Auten in Dayton, OH, USA
Josh Keiter in Kent, OH, USA
Sharon Huge in Lancaster, OH, USA
Maureen Olander in Marietta, OH, USA
Don Langford in Newark, OH, USA
Thomas Van Nortwick in Oberlin, OH, USA
Ann Elizabeth Armstrong/Denise McCoskey in Oxford, OH, USA
Steven C. Reynolds in Springfield, OH, USA
Sue Carter in Toledo, OH, USA
Kristin in Xenia, OH, USA
Melissa Heston in Yellow Springs, OH, USA
Amelia Pedigo in Norman, OK, USA
Amy Pepper in Norman, OK, USA
Carolyn Roark in Stillwater, OK, USA
Amber Whitlatch in Tulsa, OK, USA
Kathy Claussen in Ashland, OR, USA
Andrea Rowe in Cannon Beach, OR, USA
Jane White in Corvallis, OR, USA
Hannah Wilson in Eugene, OR, USA
Steen Mitchell/Sue Dockstader in Eugene, OR, USA
-----Multiple Guerilla Readings!!!
Sola Radiance in Hood River, OR, USA
Ben Kerns in Klamath Falls, OR, USA
Brenda DeVore Marshall in McMinnville, OR, USA
Kate Mytron in Portland, OR, USA
Erin Jones in Portland, OR, USA
Paul Rummell in Portland, OR, USA
Anne Dunlap in Portland, OR, USA
Alyssa Bradac in Salem, OR, USA
Gail Parker in Yachats, OR, USA
Margaret Capozzolo in Bethlehem, PA, USA
Gelsey Bell in Bethlehem, PA, USA
Stephen Weitz in Bloomsburg, PA, USA (03/02/03)
Rebecca Brown in Bryn Mawr, PA, USA
Amanda Roth in Easton, PA, USA
Julie Green in Edinboro/Erie, PA, USA

Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, PA, USA
Sara Steelman in Indiana, PA, USA (04/04/03 & 04/05/03)
Casey Clapp/Adele Ulrich in Lancaster, PA, USA
J. Jones in Lewisburg, PA, USA
Tami Shilling in Meadville, PA, USA
Laurie Mufson in Mercerburg, PA, USA
Jennifer Lutz in Mt. Lebanon, PA, USA
Nelson Camp in Newtown, PA, USA
Julia Granacki in Philadelphia, PA, USA
Reva Fox in Philadelphia, PA, USA
L. Daniels in Philadelphia, PA, USA
Britt Marie in Philadelphia, PA, USA
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, PA, USA
Craig Tavani in Phoenixville, PA, USA
Renee Blinkwolt in Pittsburgh, PA, USA
Heather Arnet in Pittsburgh, PA, USA
Amy Loveridge/Paul Kovach in Pittsburgh, PA, USA
Beth Kopicki in Reading, PA, USA
Sara Phillips in Rose Valley, PA, USA
Michael J. Paulukonis in Scranton, PA, USA
Adriana Pevec Brown in State College, PA, USA
Myra Vallianos in Swarthmore, PA, USA
Alison Hirsch in Williamsport, PA, USA
Katherine Wasdin in Providence, RI, USA
Amy Kirk in Providence, RI, USA
Susan Dunn in Charleston, SC, USA
Erin Jenkins in Clemson, SC, USA
Thorne Compton in Columbia, SC, USA
Lisa Hall in Greenville, SC, USA
Jeannie Woods in Rock Hill, SC, USA
Harold Hynick in Mitchell, SD, USA
Mary Garrigan in Rapid City, SD, USA
Pat Cronin in Johnson City, TN, USA
Kara Kemp in Knoxville, TN, USA (03-08-03)
Heidi Hansen in Maryville, TN, USA
Kermit Medsker in Memphis, TN, USA
Audrey Campbell/Nancy Perkins in Nashville, TN, USA
Diane Saliba Ault in Nashville, TN, USA
-----On steps of Parthenon replica, after a sit-in to get a permit!!
Ben Oldham in Sewanee, TN, USA
John Howrey in Austin, TX, USA
-----EXTRA HUGE THANKS TO JOHN FOR WEBSITE HELP!!!
Melba Martinez in Austin, TX, USA
Jim Lile in Commerce, TX, USA
Becky Phillips in Dallas, TX, USA
Jerrika Hinton in Dallas, TX, USA

C. Gabor/B. Hara/M. Paul in Ft. Worth, TX, USA
Natalie Maisel in Houston, TX, USA
Katie Hughes in Houston, TX, USA
Raymond Caldwell in Kilgore, TX, USA
Sue Weninger/Anne Solomon in Lubbock, TX, USA
Glynis Laing in McAllen, TX, USA
DeAnne DeWitt in Rowlett, TX, USA
Andrea Arellano in San Antonio, TX, USA
Grant McKnight in Tyler, TX, USA
Caril Jennings in Ogden, UT, USA
James Svendsen in Salt Lake City, UT, USA
METROSTAGE in Alexandria, VA, USA
Terry L. Papillon in Blacksburg, VA, USA
Megan LeBoutillier in Charlottesville, VA, USA (03-02-03)
Lois Carter Fay in Dayton, VA, USA
Megan in Fairfax, VA, USA
Michael Lund in Farmville, VA, USA
B. Hardcastle/P. Wray/D. Delaney in Hampton Roads, VA, USA
Amy Cohen in Lynchburg, VA, USA
Lelia Pendleton in Richmond, VA, USA
Jane Rosecrans in Richmond, VA, USA
Shane Watkinson in Sedley, VA, USA
Alison Beach in Williamsburg, VA, USA
Daryl Kenny in Bennington, VT, USA
Marcia Daoudi in Brattleboro, VT, USA
Kelly Thomas/Ruth Wallman in Burlington, VT, USA
Dr. Kirk Andrew Everist in Colchester, VT, USA
Brian Macdonald in Colchester, VT, USA
Addy Smith-Reiman in Hardwick, VT, USA
Janice.Lloyd in Lyndonville, VT, USA
Cheryl Faraone in Middlebury, VT, USA
Pattie Williams in Montpelier, VT, USA
Nora Jacobson in Norwich, VT, USA
Keith H. in Poultney, VT, USA
Tatiana Abatemarco in Poultney, VT, USA
Ethan Bowen in Rochester, VT, USA
Becky Eno in Rutland, VT, USA
Rick and Holliday Rayfield in Waitsfield, VT, USA
Vassie Sinopoulos in Woodstock, VT, USA
K. Horsley/J. Baily in Bainbridge Island, WA, USA
Luanne Napoli in Bellingham, WA, USA
Margaret Gude in Bellingham, WA, USA
Amy Lamanuzzi in Cheney, WA, USA
P. Miles/E. Van Beuzekom in Chimacum, WA, USA
Sherry Reynolds in Everett, WA, USA
Jan Thomas in Friday Harbor, WA, USA

Phyllis von Miller in Newport, WA, USA
C. Peake/D. Siemens in North Kitsap County, WA, USA
Marla Beth Elliott in Olympia, WA, USA
Jordan Hughes in Olympia, WA, USA
Deborah Sparks in Orcas Island, WA, USA
Betsy Wharton in Port Angeles, WA, USA
Deb Donahoe in Richland, WA, USA
David Hsieh/ReAct Theatre in Seattle, WA, USA
L. Worthen/H. Hawkins in Seattle, WA, USA
Aimee Bruneau in Seattle, WA, USA
Sean Ryan in Seattle, WA, USA
Muriel Montgomery/Mary Springer in West Seattle, WA, USA
AngelArmsWorks in Snohomish, WA, USA
Rita Saling/Kim Antieau in Stevenson, WA, USA
Suzy Willhoft in Tacoma, WA, USA
Rachel Permann in Tacoma, WA, USA
Carolanne Steinebach in Twisp, WA, USA
Kate Lanigan in Vashon Island, WA, USA
Vashon Bookshop in Vashon Island, WA, USA
Teri Zipf in Walla Walla, WA, USA
Laura Boram in Whidbey Island, WA, USA
Alexandra Clark in Woodinville, WA, USA
Gina Bloom in Appleton, WI, USA
Beth Ernst/Jefford Vahlbusch in Eau Claire, WI, USA
Tara Reed in Green Bay, WI, USA
J. Detert-Moriarty/J. Kinnaman in Janesville, WI, USA
A. MacLeish in LaCrosse, WI, USA
Debra Nathans in Madison, WI, USA
Kristin Hunt in Madison, WI, USA
Colleen Madden in Milwaukee, WI, USA
Robin Murray in River Falls, WI, USA
Kathryn Wodtke in Shorewood, WI, USA
Aikyo Toyozumi in Stevens Point, WI, USA
??? in Lewisburg, WV, USA
Kathleen Ryan in Morgantown, WV, USA
J. Andrew Clovis in Parkersburg, WV, USA
Margie Anich in Thomas, WV, USA
Eric Schuyler in Gillette, WY, USA
Gigi Jasper in Rock Springs, WY, USA
Clare Walsh in Wright, WY, USA

(Yes, there are more than 1,029 readings listed here -- some came on board after 03/03/03.)