

## Chapter 1 : The Ironies of Freedom : Thu-Huong Nguyen-Vo :

*"The Ironies of Freedom is a path-breaking effort to document the explosive growth and evolving character of commercial sex in contemporary Vietnam and to explain the.*

Despite this link to a successful industrial past, the continued value of Winthrop as a name for the town has recently been questioned. Lucky wants to rename the town New Prospera, and when he brings his proposal to the three-person town council on which he sits, they vote two-to-one in favour of change. But Regina Goode, the African American town mayor who has voted with Lucky, now demurs on the new name. As Albie recounts to the protagonist: The result is that the protagonist, a corporate expert in naming, has been brought in to have the casting vote. Alongside Winthrop and New Prospera, the third name being touted is the original one given to the town by its first settlers, a group of former slaves. They just dropped their bags here. They called it Freedom. It made his brain hurt. Must have been a bitch to travel all that way only to realize that they forgot to pack the subtlety. While his first and most recent novels—*The Intuitionist* and *The Underground Railroad*—are historical fantasias that take place earlier than or in an alternative reality to the classic civil rights decades, the four novels in between—*John Henry Days*, *Apex Hides the Hurt*, *Sag Harbor*, and *Zone One*—are all set in the late twentieth and twenty-first century, yet each features a protagonist whose relationship to civil rights is either ambiguously hazy, broadly ignorant, or instinctively hostile. On the religious side, as conveyed most memorably in the rhetoric of Martin Luther King, Jr. The era saw the advent of freedom songs, freedom schools, freedom rides, and the freedom summer of 1968. This essay positions the fiction of Colson Whitehead as an important engagement with ideas of freedom in the wake of both civil rights and the neoliberal turn. In the next section, I examine the post-civil rights period in more detail, juxtaposing developments on the black left with the rise of the neoliberal and neoconservative right, and tracking the role played by discourses of freedom in the US over the final decades of the century. This novel, arriving a decade after *Apex*, shows Whitehead responding to changes in American society and culture—particularly the advent of Black Lives Matter and a growing public awareness of the implications of mass incarceration policies for African Americans—that seem to call for a more sincere reckoning with the notion of freedom. In *The Story of American Freedom*, Eric Foner traces this popularity, conveying the scholarly consensus that the postwar period witnessed a rebirth of conservatism in the United States. This latter strand of conservatism is generally now referred to as neoliberalism, and its ascent to power from the 1970s onwards was a precipitous one. But neoliberal policies began to gain serious influence in the 1980s, when the Keynesianism that had underpinned the postwar management of capitalism proved insufficient to address the stagflation crisis of that decade. The increasing prominence of neoliberal discourses of freedom after 1980 was also abetted by a change of rhetorical emphasis on the left, with developments in the civil rights movement in the vanguard. Released from jail only minutes before, Carmichael announced that the time had come to reject the tactic of peacefully inviting arrest that had defined the movement under the leadership of Martin Luther King. What we gonna start saying now is Black Power! New genealogies of freedom written during this period thus began to emphasise the embeddedness of enslavement at the root of democratic and liberal cultures—Morgan, ; Patterson, ; Foner, *The* newly minted departments of Afro-American Studies and Black Studies—“institutional products of the civil rights and black power movements”—took up the question of American slavery with tenacity from the late 1960s onwards. What appears more certain is that the rising New Right of the period could all too easily abjure or ignore this tainted and ironic conception of freedom in its quest for political and cultural control. The powerful alignment of religious conservatism, neoconservatism, and neoliberalism across the 1970s and 1980s culminated in the 1980s presidency of Ronald Reagan, whose regime of tax cuts, privatization, and deregulation was twinned with attempts to roll back the legislative social gains of the left over the postwar period. This was a freedom that drew on the inspirational language and images of the counterculture alongside the neoliberal idea of the free, disembedded, spontaneously acting, and naturally self-regulating market. The market, conceived no longer as a site of domination and power but as a forum for voluntary and equal exchange, became the much-touted vehicle by which freedom could be attained and instantiated in the life of the individual. The dominance of

this new vision of the market heralded a sea change in economic policy. This was as much the case for African Americans as for other groups: One answer is that by the end of the century the appeal to freedom had come to look to many like little more than a cover story for a series of ideological projects, alternatively of the left and of the right. It is here, at the close of the twentieth century, that Colson Whitehead enters the scene. This is nowhere more evident than in *Apex Hides the Hurt*. The fictive present of the novel is made up of a series of meetings the protagonist holds with various residents of Winthrop, as he conducts his research into the most appropriate name for the town. The protagonist thinks of these people not as his racial brethren but as passengers on a ship he is naming. Time was, you christened something, broke the bottle across the bow, and gave a little good-luck wave as it drifted away. You never saw the passengers. But there were always disgruntled passengers out there, like Muttonchops. United in polychromatic harmony, in injury, with our individual differences respected, eventually all healed beneath Apex. The comic and even flippant irony in these passages comes at the expense of a ubiquitous multiculturalist discourse that Whitehead evidently sees as hiding rather than healing the present-day inequities that stem from past injustices. None of these names is finally the one chosen by the protagonist, however. The human condition, with its echoes of Hannah Arendt, seems by contrast to point to a role for struggle specifically in the realm of political action. To give yourself a name is power. They will try to give you a name and tell you who you are and try to make you into something else, and that is slavery. With an apparently new faith in the meaningfulness of language beyond its manipulative power to attain corporate ends, the protagonist finds himself imagining the effect of his new name on the inhabitants of the town: As he fell asleep, he heard the conversations they will have. Ones that will get to the heart of this mess. The sick swollen heart of the land. I was born in Struggle. I live in Struggle and come from Struggle. I work in Struggle. We crossed the border into Struggle. Before I came to Struggle. We found ourselves in Struggle. I will never leave Struggle. I will die in Struggle. But in the short final scene, the reader is brought back to more immediate realities. The badness come undone. With this reminder of the stark limitations of symbolic action—the action of naming and renaming—in a world of class disparity and corporate hegemony, the novel places in ironic relief its own postmodern aesthetics, wherein action on language is conceived as the primary action a text can perform. Whitehead thus suggests that when the name is the thing that is taken to matter most, we can easily overlook the material realities of class, race, privatisation, and even the body—all of which are touched on in the brief closing scene. We can now see that ambiguities remain here. Despite its allusions to slavery and its turn to Struggle at the finale, *Apex Hides the Hurt* refuses to endorse an answer to this set of questions. Because Whitehead gives us bemused skepticism rather than tragedy, and irony not political engagement, he may fail to satisfy readers long accustomed to seeking a solid stance for progressive social action. But the division between these two terms is ultimately unsustainable in existential and political terms, since freedom depends on struggle and struggle on freedom. In doing so, he leaves behind a postmodern concern with naming in favour of a surprisingly direct and substantive political aesthetic. Two events stand out, both of them bearing significantly on the lives of African Americans. This moment of promise for black Americans contrasted with the tragic events of the second term of the Obama presidency, events that contributed to the formation of the Black Lives Matter movement. The killings of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice and numerous other black citizens by white law enforcement officers brought renewed attention to the precarious status of African American lives in US society. This is the context into which *The Underground Railroad* was published in August. The novel tells the story of Cora, who begins life as a slave on a Georgia plantation in what appears to be the mid-nineteenth century, and escapes via an elaborate yet secret system of underground tunnels that have been constructed by black hands. On the bed of damp earth, her breathing slowed and that which separated herself from the swamp disappeared. She had to go back. The girl was waiting on her. This would have to do for now. Yet the irony here is no longer rhetorical, cynical, or postmodern; it is structural, dramatic, and tragic. Embodied in the railroad itself, therefore, is another vision of freedom in *The Underground Railroad*: This form of free activity is not the overcoming of struggle—after all, building an underground railroad in secret must be no easy task, either physically or mentally—and yet freedom lies in recognizing oneself in the means and ends of the task undertaken. As a result, the journey to self-ownership as well as property ownership has typically been a

crucial trope of the slave narrative and novel of slavery. Elsewhere, in the Indiana section, the notion that the black community might be able to move directly from enslavement to a form of utopian socialism is floated in the many debates held on the Valentine farm concerning the future of black freedom. Yet it is also here that the inescapability of the capitalist system asserts itself most tellingly. Moreover, *The Underground Railroad* shows this capitalist world to be fully global, and to be underpinned by the cotton trade. The money came in as never before. Cotton connects all the characters in the novel: Were slavery and the antebellum South capitalist, precapitalist, or even anticapitalist? The position the novel takes in this debate seems very clear. These opening paragraphs adopt a matter-of-fact narrative tone that highlights the economic underpinnings of the vast global network that allowed and allows for the circulation of property and people, and people as property. As Ajarry adapts to her new life in the US South, she internalises the market conception of her value, and learns to manipulate it as best she can. In an earlier scene, Cora and Caesar likewise imagine themselves responsible for the capture of their fellow fugitive, Lovey: In *The Underground Railroad*, by contrast, we have the decision tree, a neoliberal figure that imagines the chooser as abstractly responsible for all the consequences of their actions, since the calculation of risk is axiomatically understood to be within the province of the rational subject. If we understand literary genre, after Fredric Jameson, as the sedimentation of social contradictions, then a self-conscious engagement with genre forms part of the work of reframing those contradictions. Perhaps the most striking example of this approach comes in the Tennessee chapter, where the fiction of Cormac McCarthy offers a clear intertext. The burned-out landscape that Cora and the slave-catcher Ridgeway pass through cannot help but bring to mind *The Road*, while the key literary precursor for Ridgeway himself is the figure of Judge Holden in *Blood Meridian*. In the parallel scene in *The Underground Railroad* the inflection is significantly different. Couples coming together to hold each other, to sway and twist. The operative logic throughout *The Underground Railroad* is not metaphysical but materialist: It is in fact the oppressions of capitalism—particularly in its neoliberal manifestation, where the adoption of a market morality replaces questions of right with cost-benefit analyses of interest—that constitute the nightmare to which Whitehead is asking the reader to awake. What, then, would freedom after neoliberalism look like for Colson Whitehead? Despite the contemporaneity of this question, it nonetheless resonates with earlier moments in the black literary tradition when the issue of freedom was placed centre stage. Trade-union struggles and issues began to grow meaningful for me.

**Chapter 2 : University of Washington Press - Books - The Ironies of Freedom**

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Not a costume to be donned or discarded at will, style, for Alison, is the outward manifestation of an inner self, as solid and unchangeable as we might wish our selves to be: Style is the product of art, but it is just as often treated as the mark of nature. It is what distinguishes the individual from her surroundings, but it also indexes her membership in a group. Too much, we might think, and also too little. How can a concept so riven in its senses manage to mean anything? *Senses of Style* is the antidote to this question. The other, meanwhile, is a figure of constant disjunction, delighting in breaking the rules of poetry and personal relations. Across these poets, Dolven charts a common concern, a concern that his book may be thought to share. By differing poetic strategies, each poet works to resist style as much as to attain it. But all is turned thorough my gentleness Into a strange fashion of forsaking; And I have leave to go of her goodness, And she also, to use newfangledness. On the other hand, the repetition of those infelicities turns them into something more. In this drive to disjunction, Dolven reads a double lesson about style. To speak of style is to speak of the potential for something “a gesture, a line, a turn of phrase” to happen again in another shape. We get it when the exquisite brutality of a Rei Kawakubo dress bares its teeth in an overlarge jacket. We get it when Kendall Jenner stares out from a looming billboard and invites us to imagine every item we own attaining her easy luster “so long as we buy the lipstick she is selling. This last example points to the ease with which style aids our cheapest fantasies, or at least gets absorbed by them. On this point, Dolven is typically deft: Practically speaking, however, style, the word, helps make it possible to live in that middle ground without having to declare oneself once and for all, helps make a human space in between the stringency of our thinking categories. They refuse the easily commodified sense of style as continuity, but their cheer comes from making a style out of such resistance. The ingenuity that would be required for an efficient, inclusive paraphrase, let alone explanation, would be extreme, and alien to the cheerful sprezzatura of the object. At times, this formulation leads to rather cryptic pronouncements, but its central intuition feels right: Think of the speed with which we recognize a Rodin sculpture versus the extra seconds it takes to determine what it depicts. Interpretation pushes this primal experience of style to the margins, since interpretation is a form of judgment that steps back from the object in order to understand it. It is this critical, meaning-making distance that *Senses of Style* resists. Sustaining that primal moment of recognition, attending to how rather than what, the judgment of style produces knowledge of a very particular kind: Throughout his reflections, Dolven will hail imitation as the secret essence of style and with it, of human nature. It makes a certain sense that a poet and a scholar of the Renaissance “a period when learning style meant imitating style” should gravitate toward imitation so ardently. But the virtues of imitation, of reading for the style, are at times uncertain. Is know-how all that the judgment of style can grant us? And so the question remains unanswered. Dolven is on firmer ground when it comes to the ethical implication of style, and once again, imitation is key. If this claim seems like an affront to our most cherished dreams of autonomy and originality, Dolven is quick to urge the opposite: Freedom might seem to represent merely one of these extremes, but in practice, it emerges within the same poles. The ironies of style are also the ironies of freedom: As with the ironies of style, freedom is functional because it gives recourse at need to both of its limits, to the freedom of the law and the freedom of anarchy, and to the space in-between. And indeed, we freely interchange the idioms of will and determinism from moment to moment of an ordinary day. So much more with the ironies of style. Dolven is in good company here. No less a thinker than Hannah Arendt has similarly identified improvised aesthetic skill as the pinnacle of political freedom. Fashion is her word for the style “edgy, current” that those around her have chosen to imitate. Alison is free to follow this fashion as she pleases, as we all are, but that is not where things get interesting. The moment is instructive, because it suggests that our desires to imitate a style are inextricable from the effects we read a style to have. In which case freedom is just the start of the story. If style is freedom to imitate as we choose, what happens after the choice has been made? Nature is exemplary in

this regard, for it leads Dolven straight to imitation. Anyone who has been seduced by the charisma of a well-wrought sentence or an elegant ensemble can recognize the imitative impulse he diagnoses. It seems undeniable, therefore, that imitation is essential to style; not only is imitation how we practice a style, but it is also how we recognize a style as a style, even how we turn something into a style. But anyone who has been caught miming their models too closely has also been instructed in a contrary desire, the desire not to follow but to oppose – to distinguish ourselves from our models. We might read this desire for distinction as an imposition of social life rather than a definitive feature of style itself. Certainly this was the case for Pierre Bourdieu, whose magisterial sociology text *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* treated style as a weapon to be wielded in our bids for social dominance. Presumably, this is because in that primal scene of reading for the style, in that moment before we interpret, imitation is at the fore. But it seems significant that our imitative desires are spurred most often by figures who seem hardly to be imitating anything at all. If imitation is one way of thinking about style, it seems just as right to say that distinction is another. *Senses of Style* proposes a range of antitheses along which to consider style: Still, distinction is important to this study as the equal and opposite of its most central concept. Perhaps it is sociability, rather than imitation, that makes it so hard to talk of style in nature. Streams do not distinguish themselves from streams. This social bearing has consequences for the judgment of style. It means that style acquires its full force only after it has been attached to a body or a voice as something that comes between persons. It means that the story of any style is the story of how, but more than that, of how I relate to you. Lyrical, sweet, intimate, brutal – adjectives like these do a double service. They describe, in one and the same breath, a style and the relations a style establishes between the wearer and her world. But they are also imprecise, and their imprecision is where interpretation begins. How do we bring together reading for style and reading for interpretation? If style is what we get before interpretation, how does the concept reshape the interpretation that comes in its wake? How, for that matter, do our exemplars of style – poems, paintings, novels, plays, people – invite us to interpret the styles they tempt us to make our own? By the conclusion to *Senses of Style*, they remain no less true, and the book is richer for it.

### Chapter 3 : There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America - Vincent Harding - Google Books

*"The Ironies of Freedom is a path-breaking effort to document the explosive growth and evolving character of commercial sex in contemporary Vietnam and to explain the complex social, cultural, economic, and political significance of this well-known but poorly understood phenomenon. But it operates, as well, as a remarkably sophisticated, lucid, and ambitious attempt to mobilize insights.*

We have a ton of really funny examples of irony lurking right in our history books. Take a look at funny examples of irony in history: Today, The New York Times is regarded as the gold standard for crossword puzzles, and publishes a new one every day. Bush and his administration handled the problems in the Middle East using the U. Kennedy, said this to him just before he was shot by a sniper and killed. It appeared that perhaps not everyone in Dallas loved the charismatic man. They recommended everyone plant the vine. However, instead of helping, the Kudzu chokes trees and plants that it grows near, climbs buildings, and destroys foundations. Consumer Product Safety Commission ordered that lapel buttons be printed to promote toy safety. However, those buttons were recalled for a number of safety concerns, including: Plus, it was just a prelude to the deadlier WWII. I became necessary to amputate his leg, after which he died from gangrene. Bullock was killed by his own invention before he saw the results of all of his hard work. However, his invention did indeed change the world. Instead, they started a whole new infestation: That infestation did more damage than the cane beetle ever did. Famous producer of the time Mike Smith said that they were nothing special, and flat out refused to sign them. The group was signed at the next audition they played, and went on to become The Beatles. James Dean Heartthrob James Dean made many political and professional statements about the trouble with driving cars fast, mostly aimed at his teenage fans. However, James Dean was killed in a car crash while driving too fast.

**Chapter 4 : the ironies of freedom | Download eBook PDF/EPUB**

*The Ironies of Freedom. While 'freedom' was manifestly the keyword of the civil rights movement, it was also a highly popular term with the rising New Right of the same era.*

The Agendas Behind the Monuments: Tracing the Paths of Our Lady Liberties. The hypocrisy doubles over on itself: Blood-chilling events in Springfield, Missouri on the evening of April 14, also emphasize the ironies. That night three black men were lynched, hung from a light tower, and burned. At the top of the tower, lifelessly observing the scene, stood a replica of the Statue of Liberty. The thousands of cheering bigots in the crowd below may not have ever absorbed the irony, but a cartoonist for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch captured the moment with this drawing. May ; The lynching was instigated by reports that a white woman from out of town had been raped by two black men. Two young black men were picked up as suspects and held in the county jail. Later that evening, as police and city officials stood by, a mad mob raided the jail. Dozens of already convicted criminals were let free as the leaders of the mob took the two black men, not yet given an indictment or trial, out of the jail and out to the light tower. By this time, one of the two men may already have died from blows to the head. Both were strung up, hung and then burned. Later that night the mob went back to the jail and found one more African American--a man who was unable to escape from his cell because of a jammed lock. He too was strung up and burned. At dawn the next day, Easter Morning, townspeople visited the embers, some taking photographs that they would later sell as souvenirs. The two black men were later found to be innocent of the supposed crime, and the tale of the rape was determined to be a hoax. A few members of the mob were brought to trial; all were acquitted. Blacks fled Springfield by the hundreds; any evidence of the improved race relations that had existed before the lynching was completely destroyed. Even symbols of freedom, it seems, could not mask American injustice any longer. For a well-documented account of the lynching and its effect on Springfield, see Katherine Lederer, "And Then They Sang a Sabbath Song," a three-part series published in the magazine, *Springfield!* Women and Lady Liberty While racial hypocrisy within the symbolism of the Statue of Liberty requires some background, the gender implications of the Statue are inescapable. Men, Babcock argues, have not only excluded, ignored, or otherwise rendered women invisible, they have, for centuries, appropriated woman as a semiotic object and made her female form highly visible to represent their established order and to redress it. In an effort to heighten momentum for their own projects, lady liberty can be seen as little more than a tool used by leading men to better their own situations. Undoubtedly, there are times throughout history when this point can be proven true. The layers go deeper, past semiotics where images of women become objects of utility, to lifetimes of socialization in which images of women register feelings of desire and comfort. Bartholdi admits readily that the face of Liberty Enlightening the World is the face of his mother, Charlotte, a woman who endured Prussian occupation in her own home and whom Bartholdi forever tried to please Trachtenberg, Bartholdi modeled the arms after "the beautiful arms" of his wife Babcock, He designed Liberty to radiate the strength of the women around him, a far reach from ignoring the powers of women. Without doubt, Liberty today can be appropriated in a myriad of ways that render women mere objects. The above cartoon plays on a quote by Jimmy Carter in in which he disclosed to *Playboy* that he had "lusted in [his] heart for many women," but it also symbolizes some of the idealization of women that comes with female representations of American freedom. Another image, a pin-up for a calendar takes this idealization a step further, marketing America through the form of the female body.

### Chapter 5 : Ironies of Freedom | Thu-Huong Nguyen-vo (E-bog, PDF)

*The Ironies of Freedom has 3 ratings and 2 reviews. In the late s, Vietnam joined the global economy after decades of war and relative isolation, dem.*

President Woodrow Wilson and the wide boulevard itself. This particular building, in its severe communist style, actually forms a link between Radio Free Europe, the CIA, the dissident movement Charter 77, and the current political and economic state of the Republic. The connection is meandering, but there is a common thread that ties them together, which I stumbled across literally whilst visiting Prague a few weeks ago. In the Czech netherworld Radio Free Europe RFE began broadcasting to countries behind the Iron Curtain in , and was designed to promote democratic values and institutions in the communist bloc. PWE had been headed by Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, supporter and confidant of the Czechoslovak Government-in-exile in London, which itself had produced some of the best propaganda of the war. The Charter had at its launch a grand total of signatures and around at its height. Charter 77 was THE dissident movement in Czechoslovakia, but it was one that was probably better known and had more effect abroad than it did domestically, not least due to its heavy promotion by western intellectuals, the press and RFE. Its ringleaders were regularly tortured, imprisoned and persecuted by the secret police, the StB, as was Havel. Indeed, his continued ill health is probably a result of his imprisonment in the late s and early s, facts that seem to generate little sympathy for the man these days. Today the Charter seems to have been largely forgotten in the Republic. It is, after all, twenty-five years on. The work of the Chartists is now largely ignored and the current Helsinki Commission a direct descendant of the agreement has recently criticised the attitudes of certain Czech politicians towards freedom of speech in the Republic. As PWE once knew full well, and many a government still does today. Part 1 , Part 2. A delicious example of that central Cold War myth that Fascism and Communism were basically one and the same thing. After 11 September, however, many Czechs have become increasingly nervous at the thought of having such a juicy terrorist target in their midst. Quite where to has yet to be agreed. Which is about as far away from the capital as you can get, and also happens to be the birthplace of the first Czechoslovak President, T. In one hilarious incident, gleefully replayed on the evening news, a tank got stuck in a snow drift whilst clearing a road during the storms in December and had to be guarded by local villagers until the army could come and rescue it. Perhaps as a result of these humiliations, the government is now in the process of trying to buy a batch of modern fighter aircraft for the military Saab JAS Gripens , to replace its ageing Warsaw Pact planes, at a cost of 50 billion koruna EUR 1. The Czechs revel in their anti-militaristic heritage when it suits them; The Good Soldier Svejk has always been far more than just a richly comic novel. We encourage anyone to comment, please consult the.

### Chapter 6 : The Ironies of Style - Los Angeles Review of Books

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### Chapter 7 : Ironies | Define Ironies at calendrierdelascience.com

*The Ironies of Freedom Nguyen-vo Thu-huong Published by University of Washington Press Thu-huong, Nguyen-vo. The Ironies of Freedom: Sex, Culture, and Neoliberal Governance in Vietnam.*

### Chapter 8 : The Ironies of Freedom: Sex, Culture, and Neoliberal Governance in Vietnam by Thu-Huong N

*The Ironies of Freedom. Average rating: 0 out of 5 stars, based on 0 reviews Write a review. Walmart #*

### Chapter 9 : 13 Thought Provoking Examples of Irony in History

*The Ironies of Freedom examines an aspect of this new market: commercial sex. Nguyen-vo offers an ambitious analysis of gender and class conflicts surrounding commercial sex as a site of market freedom, governmental intervention, and depictions in popular culture to argue that these practices reveal the paradoxical nature of neoliberalism.*