

The Sexualization of Wartime Femininity in Abu Ghraib

War and its subsequent wartime rape have circulated through collective human consciousness since wartime's literal inception. It has become a near-erotic phenomenon, portrayed in heavily disseminated pornography and propaganda media whereby the masculinized figure penetrates, non consensually, the feminized figure. However, via the nexus of war-on-terror rhetoric, the 'womanization' of females in war is no longer bound to historicized gender roles. Women, particularly within the Abu Ghraib gaze, assume quasi power and authority to be perpetrators of violence in sexual contexts. At its outset, woman-as-aggressor appears an alteration of classic wartime dichotomies, perhaps even a testament to increasing gender fluidity in wartime context. But in lieu of power in autonomy, women with strong media presence in active duty are sexualized pawns, wielding *NOT* raw strength as a weapon but instead operating via eroticized labor. Particularly via the lens of Lynndie England, Sabrina Hermann, and Megan Ambuhl, a wartime discourse is made prevalent regarding women willing and able to execute episodes of mass destruction: their violence is not dangerous, but is instead *sexual*.

Traditional wartime milieu suggests a phallogentric ideology: it is inherently hostile, masculine by nature. Subsequent behavioral propensities link warring men to violence and warring women to peace, further structuring state legislature and international relation rhetoric in a gendered manner. In this patriarchal logic, the masculine protector (state leader) looks after its subordinate, 'feminized' citizenry, legitimizing aggressive war outside of the state itself. Perhaps most analogous to racketeering via fear mongering, the state equates masculinism with protection wherein the feminine is adoring of 'her' protector and happily defers to 'his' judgment for security. In other words: the security state is facilitated; thus the citizenry trusts its government to ensure safety. This phenomenon is central to the logic of masculinist protection, as it assumes the government's 'good man' status, whereby the protector is benevolent and holds the interests of his inferior at the forefront. The imagination of the state as 'bad masculine' is not acknowledged; the citizenry should not consider its protector to reside within a totalitarian military state. Of course, the description of 'bad man' is fundamentally counterintuitive: even via the Hobbesian lens of power politics, states of nature are explosive if left unchecked. But if the armed power is held via a sovereign (instead of a single masculine actor), the *Leviathan* is engaged, putting the power within the state to wield military prowess as a protective (and successful) measure. Since 9/11, this security state has been inevitably realized; following September 2001, the largest military budget was approved with virtually no debate, and congress waived a prior mandate forcing debate before entering war. This, coupled with fear-inducing war on terror rhetoric, alludes to aforementioned protection racket: freedom is foregone, along with the right to hold leaders accountable, and in return, these masculinized leaders ensure safety via amplified, overtly militaristic protection rhetoric.

This male-female dichotomy stands, even within the interpersonal microcosm of the current security state. The condition of postmodern war subsequently manifested, whereby post-9/11 discord allowed for improvements of technological efficiency. In essence, the difference between postmodern and premodern warfare is representational: videotaping of rapes, hijacking, and hostage-taking are sensationalized to create a theatricalization of violence, becoming a *media event* instead of an act of war. This brings into question the notion of *bad masculinity*, indicated previously in the context of the state. When placed in the context of the individual, *bad masculinity* is a volatile output of 'normal' masculinity, which emerges as defensive misogyny under wartime conditions. The primary rationale behind heinous acts of violence against women, including incising pregnant stomachs, inciting rape, and other forms of

assault, is (and has been) due to hypermasculinity (Theweleit et al, 1993). And while immoral, this behavior is encouraged from men to persevere the uber aggressive wartime sphere. Psychoanalytic feminists explain this burst of combat aggression as a means to rival women's power to give birth, perhaps even a form of sexualized genocide (Schott et al, 1996). This phenomenon is closely linked with pornography, eroticizing the environment of torture, and nullifying these Hobbesian ideals of masculinist protector as an impermeable do-gooder.

However, when the feminine is the primary perpetrator of violence in global politics, it is not simply an exertion of power, contra res-publica or elegantly aggressive. While these women are not outright excluded from demonstrations of violence, they are placed outside the masculine realm by a more insidious subordination: a surrounding discourse of sex. Women are stripped of agency within actions of militancy via a double transgression. The first: erotomania, the second: erotic dysfunction. In the former, a violent woman is only capable of committing violence because she is sex-crazed or in a sexual relationship with a male terrorist, indicating perceived biological abnormalities preventing the woman from assuming status as a mother or wife. Erotomania is blamed on the woman's need for attention due to neglect on a father's behalf, indicating a failure to please male romantic interests (Sjoberg et al, 2008). In other words, a female terrorist is NOT autonomous, but commits violence because she is a sexual slave and a victim, driven by a desire to appease her male voyeur.

This All-American whore archetype manifests itself in the events at Abu Ghraib, particularly via the lenses of Megan Ambuhl, Lynndie England, and Sabrina Harman, three of the seven military police officers involved in the prison sex-abuse scandal. These women fall under the 'erotomaniac' category, whereby tales of their sexuality formed the breadth of Abu Ghraib media coverage. These women were no longer female protagonists in a masculine profession, but were instead pacified via a sexualized framework. The incongruencies with a typical, masculine war hero are made grossly evident: without the concept of women as social inferiors from whom the male soldiers must differentiate, there is no further masculinized protector, neither within the state nor the militarized institution. So thus emerges the fallen woman. Classically, the Victorian fallen woman is a feminine actor unable to meet the moral and material expectations of their time. Therefore, when England, Ambuhl and Harman deviate from caregiver/wife to embrace masculinized roles of service in war, they have ipso facto failed at being a woman. They are, regardless, returned to this subordinate sphere when they are sexualized and demeaned in the face of exerting power. England, in particular, served as point d'appui in Abu Ghraib media dissemination, whereby critics pointed to her feminine, petite figure to facilitate ideological and practical ease of objectification.



(Dao, 2008)

England, Ambuhl, and Harman's pseudo power *was* leveraged to some degree, albeit not in the counter-hegemonic masculinized way that feminine wartime presence *should* imply. The stories of white American women overpowering their Arab male counterparts creates a chain of sexualized power, feminizing Arab men's masculinity. This inherently sends the message: *our 'weaker' sex can dominate your 'stronger' sex*, compounded only further by the fact that American feminine violence is purported to cater to the white male voyeur. And, on the basis of the *Whore Narrative* as discussed within *Naber, 2006*, the domination of Arab men on the American woman's behalf becomes the ultimate torture device via culture-based extensions of gender roles.

Because of the rapid dissemination of women's sexualized violence in war via media platforms, consumption of violent pornography has seen a major uptick since Abu Ghraib. As a result of the incident, England, Ambuhl, and Harman received an astounding amount of attention on pornography sites; within a month of the scandal's break, 200,000 sites featured re-enactments of the Abu Ghraib abuse. With the increase in streams of violent porn, consumers have grown further desensitized to rape and assault (Boeringer, 1994). This cultural discourse only serves to perseverate the notion of 'woman-as-victim', as vulnerable, and needing a masculinized protector to prevent any degree of violence. Again, in place of autonomy comes this rhetoric of protection, something that England, Ambuhl, and Harman evaded, albeit momentarily, in their quasi successful entrance to a masculinized wartime sphere.

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The SLOSH Model

Hurricanes pose one of the most significant natural threats to coastal community wellbeing. This, coupled with increasing global and tropical oceanic temperatures, upticks mean hurricane flood elevation projections to 0.3m by 2030 (Mousavi et al, 2009). Anthropogenic emissions are ultimately responsible for said sea level rise, concurrent with the GMST increase of approximately 0.87 degrees centigrade. The anomalous heat activity specified within the parameters of GHG-propelled warming is also responsible for an increase in wind speed, rainfall, and catastrophic-type hurricane events. Onsets of further extreme storm surge events will lead to growing hurricane flood risk, thereby increasing coastal flooding. While the only long-term solution to mitigate sea level surge is to hold GMST at a low threshold, there are other, temporary solutions: evacuation plans have been enacted in U.S. coastal areas to reduce the risk of storm surge fatalities. Aforementioned zones are developed via the National Weather Service's numerical storm surge simulation model: the Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH).

The SLOSH model is a hydrodynamic model capable of predicting storm surge events in real-time (Jelesnianski et al, 1973). The storm surge forecast performed by SLOSH engages a concurrent 'simulation' method, in lieu of its pregenerated composite counterpart; the former implements real-time wind/surge variables to storms based on prior forecasts. Primarily, the model quantifies replications of height, timing, evolution and extent of water that is driven ashore by storm surge modulations, which are subsequently used in determining the wind field strength. The Navier Stokes method (in description of viscous fluid) is employed, adhering to the given ocean area in grid form. This grid mesh demonstrates indications of momentum along the edges and indication of wave height at the midpoint, engaging Arakawa-B grid quantity sets in

description of two variables. This is not simply a depth averaged model, but is based on a vertical velocity profile employing the principles of Ekman drift via wind and surge components (Jelesnianski 1970, Kim and Chen 1999). These two components are simultaneously utilized to define both momentum and mass conservation when operating model protocol within the simulation method framework.

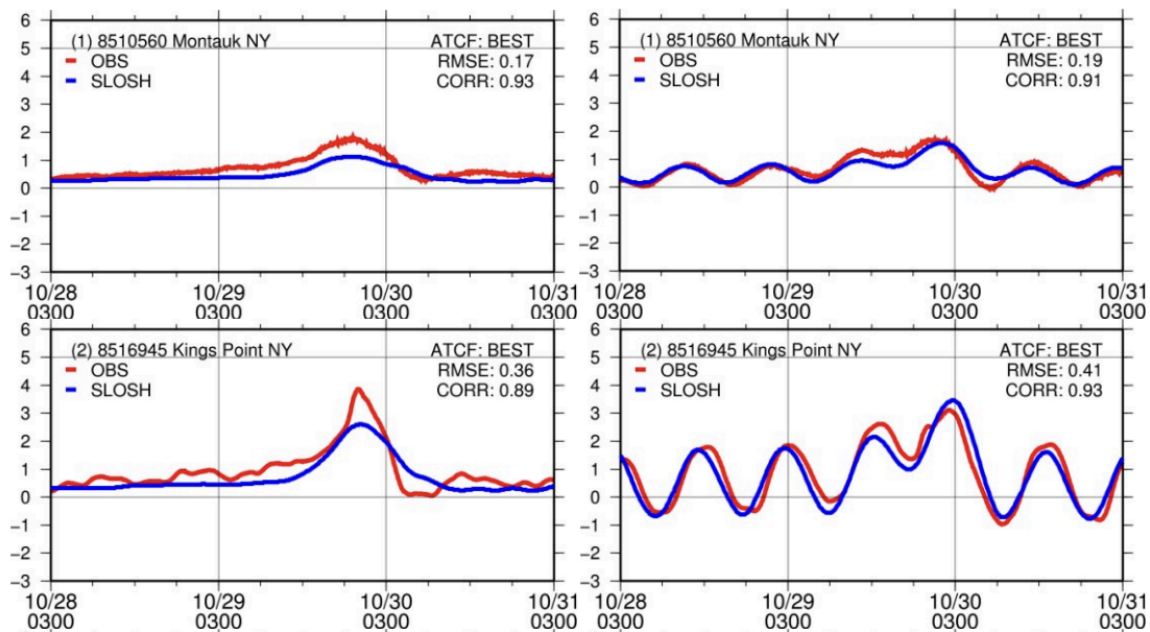
Regarding wind stress, the model relies upon a series of driving forces to monitor storm location, pressure, size, and speed synchronous with the momentum of the concurrent storm surge (Jelesnianski et al, 1973). State variables are indicated by storm surge height and standing sea level. Wind is the primary forcing/ boundary condition in the sense that surface wind stress and subsequent pressure drop play a large role in model-simulated hurricane power. In doing so, two composite products are produced to condense the data breadth; Maximum Envelopes of Water (MEOW) and Maximum of the MEOWs (MOM) determine storm surge strength and power as an approach to estimating surge. Wave run-up and river/rain flow are ignored.

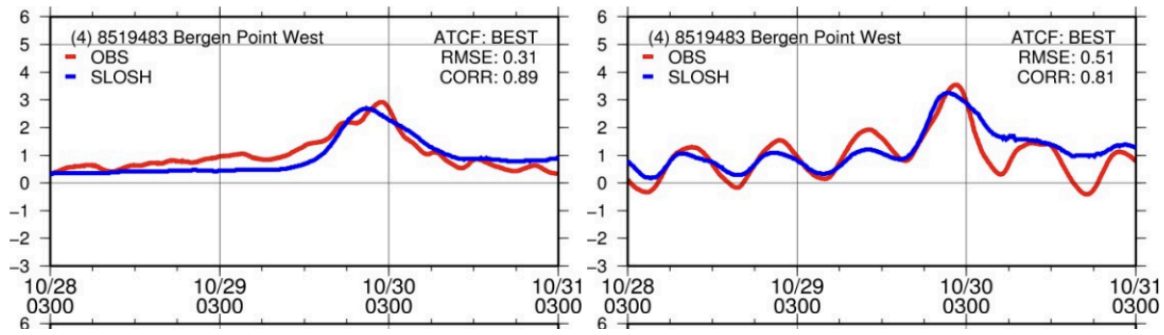
When considering the model's applicability to Hurricane Sandy, this paper will focus on SLOSH simulation regarding the devastating effects of Sandy's peak storm surge (2012). The hurricane was monitored in its entirety along the Atlantic Coast, from its inception off the African West Coast on 11 Oct 2012, a region notorious for low wind shear, low pressure, and warm water. These conditions, while not entirely applicable to classical climate model 'initial conditions', are indications of Sandy's climactic traits at timestep = 0, making them, arguably, the most analogous to traditional initial conditions. As the storm progressed, a blocking over the North Atlantic prevented Sandy from moving out to sea, accelerating the storm's forward speed to 20 kts. This wind-speed intensification prompted northwest movement and its subsequent interaction with cold water. On 29 Oct 2012, it sustained status as a post-tropical cyclone with

maximum winds of 70 kts, reaching its highest observed water levels of 12.65 ft at Kings Point in Long Island Sound (Forbes et al, 2014). Model estimates predicted storm surge threat at 16.2 ft, a modular deficit of 3.55. These are best compared to traditional boundary conditions, indicating the hurricane's topmost speed and power via model computations. The model simulation for Sandy amassed a time period of 18 days, or, the time in which the hurricane reached peak power output.

Model estimates highlighted in figure 4 exhibit similar data; hydrographs of surge (left panels) and surge and tides (right panels) at NOAA stations (red) vs SLOSH simulations (blue) are represented in the subsequent panel. Time is indicated in a month/day format and hours in UTC along the horizontal axis. Water elevations are indicated in meters along the vertical axis.

fig 1





Stn ID		Station Name	Long	Lat (deg)	Obs Peak		Model Peak		Obs Max		Model Max		RMS Error		CORR	
			(deg)		Time (h)	Time (h)	Elev (m)	Elev (m)	S	ST	S	ST				
					S	ST	S	ST	S	ST	S	ST	S	ST	S	ST
1	8510560	Montauk, NY	−71.9600	41.0483	67.2	69.2	65.83	69.50	1.79	1.69	1.11	1.57	0.17	0.19	0.93	0.91
2	8516945	Kings Pt., NY	−73.7633	40.8100	68.1	71.1	68.16	71.50	3.85	3.11	2.61	3.47	0.36	0.41	0.89	0.93
4	8519483	Bergen Pt., NY	−74.1417	40.6367	71.0	70.4	68.83	69.16	2.91	3.54	2.69	3.24	0.31	0.51	0.89	0.81

fig 2

In the above data, maximum water levels are displayed for surge and surge/tide, as well as time-of-arrival (hours) for peaks of aforementioned measurements. The water levels for surge and surge/tide at the NY stations are in fidelity with the observations, indicated by root mean square errors (RMS) of 0.17–0.36 m for surge and 0.19–0.51 for total levels (Forbes et al, 2014). This deficit, while not negligible, showcases a dissonance between real time and model data points. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) indicates that SLOSH simulated water levels have less than 20% relative error, indicating a relatively strong data average and model reliability. Modifications of SLOSH, particularly regarding addition of tide plus surge simulation to ALL results, would likely improve further simulations.

In a similar vein, the aforementioned measurements depict difficulty in assessing storm surge threat on the basis of two uncertainties:

1. Water level values might be referenced to different vertical datums, indicating a storm surge differential between datums of different heights (SLOSH currently engages the North American Vertical Datum of 1988, but has used and subsequently retired the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929)
2. Water surface elevations may represent only partial components of total water level (eg. employment of JUST surge in lieu of tide AND surge).

The analyses of Hurricane Sandy via SLOSH models show that the storm surge model is a veritable means of simulating extent of shore-driven water flux. Adhering to Hurricane Sandy observational data, SLOSH demonstrates a high degree of fidelity with real-time metrics. SLOSH basins are also being updated at an average rate of 3-6 additions per year, as per the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Hurricanes. Supplemented by HURREVAC data analysis systems, hurricane predictions are becoming more accurate and rapidly disseminated.

The SLOSH model likewise has implications for greater hurricane climatology. When examining the large-picture implications of hurricane intensity, storm surge will increase along with global warming metrics (Tebaldi et al., 2012). Coastal inundation as a direct consequence of anomalous storm surge activity is expected to increase by an average of 36%, indicating a significant increase in precipitation as it relates to tropical storms (Camelo et al., 2020). In an adjacent study, maximum flood heights simulated were approximately double Hurricane Sandy's recorded levels in NY, indicating further the increasing severity of storm surge (Mayo et al, 2022). SLOSH is critical, not only in the prediction and mitigation of hurricane fatalities, but

also regarding the development of storm climatology GCMs. Especially in high-risk areas like the American northeast, SLOSH's simulator capacity can be used to supplement data from GCMs like: Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory Model, Hadley Centre Global Environment Model to assume preventative measures regarding disaster preparation/mitigation. In other words, hurricane reduction efforts via climate modeling are vital to ensuring that anthropogenic safety standards are enforced.

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Below is a collection of all-original poems, written over the course of my Spanish 139 course. Spending six weeks together in discussion, I realized that *IDENTITY* was one of the course's most pervasive themes. That motif is one that traverses through each and every piece written below.

I can't understand a damn
Word of what comes out of
Their mouths

Gibberish! They mumble
In a language so foreign
So muted

I can't understand a damn
Word!

Yet they look like me
Grabbing onto metro handrails as
Thirty slows to zero.

I can't understand a damn
Word. these people look just like me but are
Slightly better dressed
Steeped in culture.
Something that has evaded me
My entire life.
Unable to understand a damn
Word and never knowing when to
Put in my airpods and stop
Fucking listening.

—

August is the sourest month. my grandfather has a birthday on the thirty first and my mother on the twenty eighth.
My stepfather on the thirtieth but i seem to forget that one. Summer nights to colder autumn days and that's why I
love California because the weather never changes. Already sinewy ties grow thinner and I am nowhere to be found.
Except for via phone call, but that's not real interaction because no voice to voice can substitute for face to face,
hand in mine. I like to say I have homes in two regions at once but I know that's not true. August is the sourest
month.

—

BrownsSkinNotQuiteBrownEnoughtoBeBROWNsoiScreamAsLoudasIcaninthefaceofRelativesonBothSidesthatIamnotanOutsiderIamfromtheIndianSubcontinentontheAsianLandmassonthePlanetEarthintheMilkyWayjustLikeaAllofYou.andidon'tWEARaSariDay-to-daybecause...i'mnotreallysure.maybeit'sbecauseinelementarySchooliwastoldthatit'sweirdthati'mUnabashedlyIndianintheSoulbutUnabashedlyWHITEintheFace.

-

My Ajji has recently taken to making
Quinoa. Pretty native american indigenous cuisine,
Almost seems like her indian culinary chops
Dating back to the 1940s
Couldn't handle it.

Grains laced with
Masala and green chilis
Dal and mustard seeds
Makes it taste just like the saru
She stirs together every time she
Comes over to my place.
It's just a rice substitute, she
Tells me. Easy enough, I
Respond back.

-

name. What's really in a name.
Is it years and years of
Passed down blood sweat tears and
age wrought hands caressing the face?
My family of women with beautiful brown skin and colorful
Lehengas and i hold that legacy in my features but not enough.

-

Teachers. And i've grown accustomed to this look so i swear to you i'm not bullshitting.
Teachers look around for the brown kid in the classroom.
Lee-kuh? Lahay-kuh? Lick-uh? I raise my hand. And Mutter Lay-kuh, it's pronounced
lay-kuh.
They look at me like i have three heads. You're white. No, I'm not.
I am lay-kuh surra-you say-purrs *cursed* with the tongue of my ancestors and the
Scowl painted on my face when it's not obvious.

-

i'm amphibious because i belong to no where and no one, although sometimes i wish i did (to the latter, and the
former, of course). i envision myself - only at low, low points in my deepest darkest throes of loneliness - hand in
hand with some arm candy, some ten out of ten who enjoys surfing and house music, perhaps tanned, perhaps not.
but every time my mother asks if i am coming home with a boyfriend. I guess i don't know what to say. The men at
ucsb aren't quite ... good enough.

-

airports are just so
Transient
sometimes they make me feel transient, too.
In between two places, perhaps more if i'm unlucky with a connection. Once i got stuck in texas.
I have no roots in texas.

-

There's something nice about being in familiar airports. on the way to
Santa barbara i stopped in DC,
where i spent the summer and i became pretty in tune with ronald reagan (the airport). It's small and there's baseball
merchandise everywhere and even though i hate baseball it's just so familiar. The metro to the left, bathrooms to the
right. Like my airport where i grew up. And now i'm on the way to santa barbara and thinking about all the places
along the way that put me here. From providence to dc to vegas (where i stopped for just a moment, almost missed
the connection!) and i have finally returned, back to the sea.

-

now that i'm back in isla vista it's different from where i'm from

Not in a bad way, except for a temperature difference of 25 degrees

There's a man who always sits by the 7/11 that i frequent. I like my slurpees half coca-cola and half

Pina colada even though the pineapple flavor of the latter is so stringent, stings of chemicals and not an iota of coconut. The man sits by the 7/11 in the sunshine and smokes a blunt. His hair is a mess and reeks of seawater. Skin looks like it's spent decades upon decades in the sun, worn by natural causes but not eroded just yet. He's got that look where you can't tell if he's homeless or if he comes from a dynasty of professional surfers. Blunt in hand. I like my slurpees half coca-cola and half pina colada. I guess this is the epitome of the california dream; when i came across the country, i knew there'd be men like this. It was kind of something i looked forward to, you don't get your washed-up *smack the lip*-pers in Rhode island. Well, you do, but they're missing an air of authenticity that the 7/11 man embodies through and through. Blunt in hand. I like my slurpees half coca-cola and half pina colada. But when my buddy tells me how he likes his: strawberry, extra large, i fill mine with strawberry too. I'm a rhode islander through and through, missing that air of authenticity. I like my slurpees half coca-cola and half strawberry.

-

It's hot

And when i say hot i mean

HOT

sweat dripping on flesh i think my

Armpits smell so bad even though i reapplied deodorant

at least twice today. showers are futile because sweat comes and goes so no amount of

Vanilla body wash can remove that sweat dripping

On flesh. I wipe it off

Scrubbing almost violently i have no intention of remembering

how the nights get cooler and there's no longer a need for two, three

Four showers a day.

Sweat drips down flesh, even in the cold evening. But then it gets warm again, and

The bed is empty.

-

It's been a while since i'd been away from

Eye luh vee stuh

Eye lov the vee stuh

Sitting by the water sunsets are frankly

Stunning and i sit by you and you are frankly

Stunning.

Eye lov the vee stuh and i love

Sitting right

next to you.

-

I miss the winter.

My east coast old soul longs for the

frozen leaves on ground barren trees and

blankets on bodies and covering the

pavement in

White.

i wear a jacket. it's black and lacks a fur
lining because i'm an environmentalist who
cares about everything and everyone but
myself i

miss the winter. although i hate the cold I
want to shroud my too much body for too young a girl
in a loose black jacket

and so finally eye contact is made. nice rack
let me hit that to nice day outside, huh?
hear it's gonna be above freezing this
afternoon.

and not to mention. lack of california
january sun makes me paler than i already
am. My grandmother appreciates that.

—

Writing about other people because i will never understand them the way i think i understand myself. I'm not a
psych major but there's a woman who walks her dog around my 67 block and she often seems (chronically) anxious.
There's a man who puts his cat in a backpack and a twenty-something i've seen get into a car with anime stickers all
over it. There's also another person who drives a pink truck. Bright pink. Haven't seen the truck yet this year but i'm
looking forward to it. Unnamed-
All of them. Yeah, sure, i could approach them and introduce myself and encourage them to do the same. But i like
to speculate because everybody gets boring once you know them for a day.

The anxious woman who walks her dog: Suzanne, she likes ravioli and hiking. Taking meds to prevent freak-outs re:
the divorce.

Backpack Cat man: Peter, goes by Pete. Named his cat Cyrus because 'we're both huge persian history buffs'

Anime dude: Craig. Exactly how you'd expect him to look and act.

Pink Car: unsure. Never got a glimpse of the face outside of tinted windows.

Everyone is so form-fitting and neat within the dimensions of my head. Names are easier to remember, as well.