Interesting Journal

Editors
Bella Nina Horlor and Susanna Collinson

The editors would like to thank all those who supported them during this journal journey. Special thanks to Alex Calder, Helen Ross, and English, Drama and Writing Studies, Jaimee Young, and the George Fraser Gallery, Kim Ellis and the Elam School of Fine Arts, Callum Rooney, Mark Taylor, Serif, Anna Boswell, and everybody who submitted.

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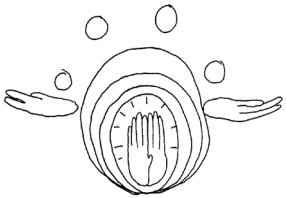
Early Texts: Pilgrims to Players



Julia Robinson

Popularising God: Problematic Playfulness in England's Medieval Cycle Plays

England's medieval Cycle Plays found their power in a paradox: away from the sanctity of the pulpit, in the very secular setting of the village streets, common Bible stories became didactic, emotive and popular. William Tydeman attributes this popularisation of the Cycle Plays to "downmarket" literary and dramatic techniques. Certainly the plays' popularised representations of God and the Bible are potentially problematic – blasphemous, over-simplified to the point of misrepresentation, or irreverent. However, this casual, secular approach to Bible stories through "playfulness" and simplification affords the medieval Cycle Play a purpose beyond the powers of sermonising. "Playfulness" popularises the cyclic collection of Bible stories describing human life from Creation to Domesday so that medieval audiences may understand the means to live a Christian life.

Much of the successful popularisation of medieval Cycle plays can be attributed to their narrative and performative "playfulness". There existed no separate category for "drama" in medieval thought: rather, drama fell within "play", a general category of recreation. In the context of the Cycle plays, "playing" utilised the attitude of recreation to make accessible these already well-known tales. Chester's Noah encourages a form of playful proto-slapstick in its stage cue, Et dat alapan vita – "[Mrs Noah] gives a lively blow."[1] The slap Noah receives from his stubborn wife demonstrates the humour frequently associated with "play" and its integral role within the Cycles, despite their commonly sober themes.

Playful episodes were also often interwoven with converse solemnity. Tony Harrison's adaptation of The Nativity captures well the juxtaposition of humour with the more serious message of the

1 Peter Happé, ed., "Noah," in *English Mystery Plays* (Penguin, 1975), 127.

play.[2] At the cradle of baby Jesus, the Shepherds' humourous offerings of "a bob of cherries" and a ball to "go to the tennis" are offset by the solemn reverence displayed by the three Kings: "I hope without dread today / To see that child and his array."[3] The humour of "play" establishes the audience's interest, thus enabling the true solemn message of the scene to permeate the collective audience conscience.

Literary techniques also contribute to the Cycle plays' performative "playfulness", including sound devices, rhyme and irony. The Death of Herod frequently uses gruesome and dramatic language to contribute to a popular sense of "playfulness".[4] The tyrannical Herod of the Ludus Coventriae[5] Cycle speaks in free verse, frequently adopting a metre reminiscent of spell-like chanting:

> Knyghtys wyse,
> Chosyn full chyse,
> A-ryse, a-ryse,
> And take youre tolle,
> And every page
> Of ii. yere age,
> Or evyr ye swage,
> Sleyth ilke a fool. (41-48)

The drama of the passage manifests foremost in the rhyme scheme – AAABCCCB' – and the use of assonance and internal rhyme: "Knyghtys wyse"; "every. . . yere. . . evyr. . . Sleyth. . ." The effect of the condensed repetition of sounds and a quick, short metre is not dissimilar to Macbeth's Witches over two centuries later; Herod's

2 Tony Harrison, "The Nativity," in *The Mysteries* (Faber, 1985).

3 Harrison, "The Nativity." This edition omits line numbers; the quotations can be found on pages 77 and 78.

4 Peter Happé, ed., "The Death of Herod," in *English Mystery Plays* (Penguin, 1975).

5 Previously thought to belong to the Coventry Cycle, it is now believed the Ludus Coventriae originated in East Anglia.

rhetoric is chillingly reminiscent of a chanted curse.

Humourous language is also a popularising factor in productions of medieval Cycle plays. York's Crucifixion becomes the surprising platform for humour through the play's show of irony. [6] The narrative focuses on four soldiers struggling to affix Jesus to the Cross and their uselessness becomes a source of irony in a scene usually approached with sombre reverence. The soldiers are arguing over their work, having just discovered that the holes for the boring of hands and feet have been drilled in the wrong place. Bickering – ". . . thou commands lightly as a lord" – and snide asides – ". . . full snelly as a snail" – create a sense of relaxed humour at the soldiers' inadequacy (113-120). The situational irony is also entertaining in its paradox: the soldiers are quarrelling and joking about whilst preparing Jesus for torture and death. As Jesus is raised on the cross, however, the audience realises they have, in their laughter, condoned the act of crucifixion. The sudden, contrasting horror of the moment proves the effectiveness of formerly depreciating the sacred crucifixion of Christ through comedy. The editorial introduction to Noah notes the careful use of the Cycle plays' humour: "The comedy here is kept under strict control."[7] Comedy is rarely used flippantly in the Cycle plays; there is always room for sincerity despite moments of entertaining levity.

Characterisation in medieval Cycle plays also tends to adopt a "playful" sensibility. Biblical figures are simplified into two basic lineages: those orientated on God's will juxtaposed with those orientated on willful self. The simplification of Biblical characters could be interpreted as demeaning – a two-dimensional binary denies character complexity and creates a typecast – however character binaries prove effective in communicating Biblical morality.

6 Richard Beadle and Pamela King, eds., "The Crucifixion," in Y*ork Mystery Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

7 Happé, "Noah," 118.

The exploration of this dichotomy is notable in the Chester Noah. Noah is the devoted individual – "That righteous man art as I see" (God, 18) – while Noah's wife fulfills the role of the opposing binary, the self-centred individual. As Noah prepares tirelessly for the coming flood, his wife is stubborn and unhelpful: ". . . For, without any fayle, / I will not out of this towne" (199-200). The humourous tension between the two plays out in an extended argument, and the audience is invited to work through their own perspectives from Mrs Noah's resistance to her eventual submission. As such, the two-dimensional character binaries, although potentially misrepresentative of more complex figures, allow a simple contention to play out over and over again across the breadth of the Cycle play literature. In this "playfully" engaging conflict between piety and self-absorption Noah and his fellow devotees of Christ eternally champion.

The role of the actor in "play" – that is, the "player" – is also problematic within the sacred context of medieval Cycle plays. Actors must frequently embody characteristically sacred and untouchable figures – God and Jesus – despite the blasphemous connotations of such imitation. A disparity emerges between popularisation through "playfulness" and the potential satanic diversion of worship connoted with "playing" God.

Likewise, the antithesis of "playing God" – "playing bad" – also poses problems for actors. York's The Fall of the Angels features God, Lucifer, Cherubim, Seraphim, Angels and the Devil, all of which potentially pose problems of embodiment.[8] God's opening speech is particularly contentious when considering the character and words must be embodied and delivered by a human actor: "I am gracious and great, God without beginning, / I am maker unmade, all might

8 Richard Beadle and Pamela King, eds., "The Fall of the Angels," in *York Mystery Plays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 1–7.

is in me" (1-2). The use of the first-person, singular pronoun, "I," traps the actor in the position of imitation: there is no denying that the stage is an arena for imitation and "play", and that God has been placed within it. Lucifer's evil poses a similar issue: does the actor's imitation condone Lucifer's evil? These may be issues of the Christian conscience; however, by allowing the embodiment of sacred and antithetically evil figures in the presentation of Cycle plays, the audience can react directly with these figures of power to comprehend God's championing of evil.

"Playfulness" may have popularised the medieval Cycle play, yet the resulting pageants are problematic. Tydeman interprets this recreation as "downmarket", perhaps too harsh a word to describe the issues of blasphemy, simplification and irreverence surrounding the popularisation of Biblical texts. However, in their secular context, the extravaganza of the cyclic pageants, and the festivity of the committed audience, the plays seek accessibility unattainable from the pulpit. "Playfulness" in comedy, literary devices, characterisation and the liberty of embodying God contribute more to the plays' messages as opposed to demeaning their sanctity. Rather, England's medieval Cycle plays offer a "playful", popular reimagining of God's word.

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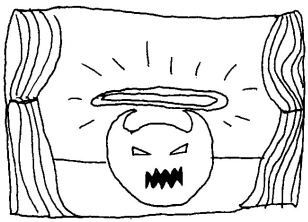
Middle English Popular Literature



Andrew Dawson

Morality plays, a key form of religious theatre in late medieval England, were allegorical dramas that enacted the moral life of the soul on earth. Unlike the mystery cycle plays, which used largely Biblical characters, morality plays personified abstract notions such as the soul, virtues, vices and demons to stage the human struggle to achieve salvation in a medieval Christian paradigm. Morality plays largely represented medieval religious orthodoxy and served a didactic purpose aside from entertainment, sometimes even engaging with contemporary theological and moral controversies. Their popularity in fifteenth-century England suggests a high level of lay interest in the religious, moral and linguistic debates going on at the time.

Et Verbum 'Exemplum' Factum Est – Mankind and the Spiritual Politics of Language in Mediæval England

Thys ydyll language ye shall repent.

\- Mercy in Mankind[1]

And I seie to you, that of every idel word, that men speken, thei schulen yelde resoun therof in the dai of doom; for of thi wordis thou schalt be justified, and of thi wordis thou shalt be dampned.

\- Matthew 12 : 36-37[2]

John Wycliffe's translation of the Vulgate (quoted above) perhaps more than any other text of its time, embodies the tensions surrounding language and religion which enveloped the medieval English world in which *Mankind* was produced and performed. The translation represented the culmination of one wave of the shift away from Latin, and a desire among the literate classes to access and engage in exegesis of the Scriptures in their native tongue. Yet the translation, and Wycliffe's religious ideology, was highly controversial for this very reason, since he rejected the medieval Church's claims of authority, preferring the authority of Holy Scripture as the ultimate-guarantor of truth.[3]

Accordingly, the Council of Constance declared Wycliffe a heretic in 1415, ordered his books to be burnt, and his remains were exhumed

1 *Mankind,* 147.

2 Quotation taken from Wycliffe Bible

3 Peter Biller, "Wycliffe, John – Oxford Reference"

and burned in 1428.[4] These events further solidified the heretical status of the Lollards, Wycliffe's supposed followers,[5] and it is in this religio-political context that the linguistic focus of *Mankind* ought to be considered.

Mankind is a play which enacts the struggle between the established Church, with its Latinate vocabulary and centralised dissemination of religious doctrine, and dissident heretics who promoted a vernacular expression and a decentralised model of faith. The play embodies this struggle in the character of Mankynde, whose modulating vocabulary and rhyme mimics the registers of Mercy on the one hand, and Titivillus (a demon) and his assistants on the other. While the play contains much subversive material which critiques the linguistic obtuseness of the "Englysch Laten" of Mercy, these critiques are voiced by demonic characters, and thus cannot be considered as the final argument which the play supports.[6] Instead, *Mankind* is a type of parable, or 'exemplum', of the soul's descent into heresy through Titivillus and his helpers, and its redemption by Mercy, a figure of the Church, ultimately privileging the "louely words"[7] of Mercy over the "ydyll language"[8] of the demonic characters. There is however, a spiritual politics inherent in this opposition, since the demons' mockery of Mercy's speech can be linked to the Lollard preference for the vernacular and the sect's disdain for Latin.[9]

By suggesting this link, the play attempts to silence heretical discourses of anti-ecclesiastical thought, and to re-inscribe traditional

4 Ibid.

5 Peter Biller, "Lollards – Oxford Reference." The term, in reality, encompassed a wide range of heterodox views. Nevertheless, 'Lollards' were united, among other things, in their belief that the scriptures ought to be available in the vernacular as the primary religious authority, over and above the power of the medieval Church.

6 *Mankind,* 124.

7 Ibid., 225.

8 Ibid., 147.

9 Biller, "Lollards – Oxford Reference"

attitudes of "humbyll obeysyance" to the Church, by whose 'Word' alone the medieval soul could be saved.[10]

In approaching a text like *Mankind*, it is important to consider the eschatological teleology which drove the medieval world. Medieval life was, above all, directed towards an eternal goal – salvation – and this perhaps explains why religious plays and texts were so popular at the time. In this eschatological context, arguments surrounding matters of faith had great pertinence, and in a Christian – *Logos* centred – paradigm, a major battle ground of these arguments was the realm of language. *Mankind* therefore, appropriately embodies the struggle of its time, between Catholic orthodoxy and Lollard heterodoxy, as a linguistic battle between Mercy and the demons, who each try to convince Mankynde (and the audience) to adopt their respective modes of expression, and by extension, to inhabit their worldviews. While it may seem odd to link the Lollard heresy to the Demons in the text, close analysis of the play reveals an ultimately 'orthodox' paradigm which inheres in the text, and the use of binary oppositions to transfer negative associations from the Demons to the Lollard position.[11] To see this opposition at work, I turn first to the figure of Mercy, who opens the play with a verbally rich *exhortatio*.[12]

Mercy is given pre-eminence as an uninterrupted voice for the opening forty-four lines of the play. In these lines, what is most striking is the vast, multisyllabic, and often Latinised, vocabulary he uses to 'preach' to the audience. Words such as "creacyon," "indygnacyon," "obsequyouse," "condycyons," "remocyon," "lauatorye," "restytucyon" and others of similar length and origin abound in these first lines,

10 *Mankind,* 817.

11 As opposed to 'heretical.'

12 Exhortation, a form of direct address to the audience (most commonly by a clerical figure such as Mercy)

and often occupy the privileged rhyming position.[13] This opulence of words firmly establishes Mercy's "elevated style" as part of his duty to represent God, and the Church, in the play.[14] While this style may seem pretentious to a modern reader, G. A. Lester notes that "[t]here is little doubt that in the fifteenth century, the richly aureate diction exemplified in Mercy's speeches had status."[15] Here, it should also be noted that Mercy's style follows a four lined *a.b.a.b.* structure, and refuses to admit any vulgarities or base topics to enter into his speech: such as when he silently refuses to translate Nowadays' scatological rhyme "I haue a dyschfull of curdys/And I haue schetun yowr mowth full of turdys" into Latin (the privileged tongue).[16] All of these factors engender a sense that Mercy's speech is privileged, due to him being, as Mankynde says, "approxymatt to Gode and nere of hys consell."[17]

Mankynde is the pivotal figure of the narrative, and his language in these first scenes indicates an attempted assimilation of Mercy's message into his soul. This is the beginning of a sustained allusion to the Parable of the Sower present throughout the text. The parable depicts the sower sowing the seed of God's word into the heart of man, but many temptations prevent a full flowering of the Gospel message in Mankynde's heart:

> "Hear then the parable of the sower. When any one hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart; this is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but

13 Ibid., 1-44.

14 G. A. Lester, *Three Late Medieval Morality Plays: Mankind, Everyman, Mundus et Infans.* (London: A & C Black, 2002), xxiv.

15 Ibid.

16 *Mankind,* 131-132.

17 Ibid., 223.

> endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is he who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."[18]

But at least in this first section, Mankynde's temporary acceptance of Mercy's message – in the mode of the seed sown on rocky ground – is shown by his use of Mercy's rhyme scheme:

> Her wyll I sytt and tytyll in this papyr
> The incomparable astat of my promycyon.
> Worschypfull souerence,
> I haue wretym here
> The gloryouse remembrance of my nobyll condycyon.[19]

We also see in this passage a mimicry of Mercy's Latinised English, further solidifying the idea of verbal 'imitatio' as the marker of the state of Mankynde's soul.[20]

The language of New Gyse, Nowadays, Nought, and Mischeffe, conversely, all mock Mercy's style: entertaining and simultaneously seducing the audience to accept their representation of Mercy.

Myscheffe takes over from Mercy after his initial exhortatio, and mocks his vocabulary by imitation: "calcacyon," "dalyacyon" and

18 Matt. 13: 18-23 (Revised Standard Version)

19 *Mankind,* 315-318.

20 Imitation of virtuous behaviour and speech. *Imitatio Christi* was a key medieval form of devotion.

"predycacyon"[21] all being used to chastise the "worschyppull clerke"[22] for his overly 'homiletic' style towards the audience. In doing so, the play introduces a counter rhyme scheme of *a.a.a.b/c.c.c.b.* into the text, which gains significance when Mankynde later appropriates this style into his own speech. The trio of New Gyse, Nowadays and Nought continue this mockery by attacking Mercy's use of "Englysch Laten"[23] in his introduction to them: "Mercy is my name by denomynacyon,/I conseyue ye have but a lytyll fauour in my communycacyon,"[24] They taunt him by asking for Latin translations of vulgar phrases, and when he remains silent, they themselves appropriate the 'sacred tongue' for bawdy use: "osculare fundamentum."[25] While all these instances are clearly intended to add humour to the play, they have a more important purpose of drawing the audience away from Mercy and towards his demonic adversaries, while also connecting a devaluation of Latin with evil intentions.

Mankynde, who fights these tempters off with his spade, the symbol of the "labure" which partly protects him from spiritual attack, does not manage to remain free of their influence in spite of this protection.[26] As soon as Mercy departs from the stage, Mankynde immediately adopts the rhyme scheme of his adversaries, even as he says he will not associate with them:

> "I her a fellow speke; wyth hym I wyll not mell.
> Thys erth wyth my spade I shall assay to delffe.
> To eschew ydullnes, I do yt myn own selffe.

21 Ibid., 45-47.
22 Ibid., 129.
23 Ibid., 124.
24 Ibid., 122-123.
25 Ibid., 142.
26 Ibid., 300.

I prey Gode sende yt hys fusion!" [27]

The unintended mimicry at this first moment of temptation shows the weakness of Mankynde's will, and the imminent fall into sin foreshadowed in his final words of the scene: "Ryght son I shall reverte."[28]

However, these *minor* tempters do not manage to draw Mankynde away from his "milicia" against temptation. [29] It is the figure of Titivillus who succeeds in this, and interestingly, it is this character who also develops most strongly the linguistic link between the adversaries of Mankynd and the Lollard heresy. The word Lollard etymologically means "mumbler", and it is this that links them to Titivillus. [30] As a figure inexorably linked to language, the demon was thought to record the vain chatter of lay folk and the bad Latin of priests at Mass.[31] In this play however, the demon takes on a new role, not only as an auditor of "ydyll language"[32] but as a sower of doubt and "lesyngs"[33] in the heart of Mankynde. He tells his audience:

I shall menge hys corne wyth drawke and wyth durnell;
Yt shall not be lyke to sow nor to sell.
Yondyr he commyth; I prey of cownsell.
He shall wene grace were wane.[34]

Titivillus here speaks back to his double, Mercy, who warns the audience at the beginning of the play that "the corn shall be sauyde,

27 Ibid., 327-330.

28 Ibid., 412.

29 Ibid., 228.

30 Kathy Cawsey "Tutivillus and the "Kyrkchaterars": Strategies of Control in the Middle Ages." in *Studies in Philology* 102, no. 4 (Fall 2005): 446.

31 Ibid. 437-438.

32 *Mankind,* 147.

33 Ibid., 387.

34 Ibid., 537-540.

the chaffe shall be brente."[35] It also highlights the hitherto unfounded link between agriculture (Mankynde's activity) and language (the focus of the play). The 'drawke' he sows in Mankynde's mind are evil thoughts whispered to him while he sleeps, which make him question his faith in the 'good seeds' of religious sentiment, planted in him by Mercy earlier in the play. Similarly, Mercy's admonition to Mankynde, "Be ware of New Gyse, Nowadays, and Nought./Nyse in ther aray, in language thei be large [vulgar],"[36] is completely forgotten, and increasingly, Mankynde becomes susceptible to the language of the three tempters, 'incarnating' their designs in his life. The evil 'word' of the demons, in this sense, gains 'flesh' in Mankynde's fall from grace.[37] The seed of Mercy's preaching fails to take hold in Mankynde's life, while the weeds of doubt and worldliness take root in him with little effort.

Returning to the "Parable of the Sower", which remains ever present in the subtext of the play, it is clear that *Mankind* has thus far dramatized the seed of 'the word', which, planted on rocky ground, lacks the soil required to take root.[38] The play now employs the image of the seed planted in thorns, in which the worries and cares of the world finally choke the 'word' planted by Mercy. Mankynde responds "I wyll, ser"[39] to a series of oaths, perhaps a parody of baptismal creeds, requiring him to commit adultery with other men's wives,[40] "robbe, stell, and kyll"[41] and to drink in the ale-house instead of attending Mass on Sundays.[42] This completes Mankynde's initiation

35 Ibid., 43. Cf. Matt 13 : 24-30.

36 Ibid., 295-296.

37 In a parody of the Incarnation of Christ, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1: 14)

38 Cf. Matt 13: 20-21 (Revised Standard Version)

39 *Mankind,* 706, 709, 713, 718.

40 Ibid., 702-704.

41 Ibid., 708.

42 Ibid., 710-712.

into the 'world', and his complete separation, in a Christian sense, from God's grace. Of course, none of these oaths were, in reality, tenets of Lollard faith. Nevertheless, in an attempt to vilify opposing positions, the text links the "mumbling"[43] of the Lollards to the sinful whisperings of Titivillus.[44] In so doing, the play suggests that leaving the bosom of the Church, under the influence of the murmurings of evil thoughts, can only ultimately lead to a loss of Salvation – the final goal of Medieval life.

The power of the play however, does not lie so much in Mankynd's seduction by the language and thoughts of Titivillus, which the audience can only relate to by allegory, but by the subtle creation of a conspiracy between the audience and the adversaries of Mercy which the play builds from the moment that Mercy leaves the stage. Nowadays, Newgyse and Nought first trick the audience into singing a bawdy "Crystemes songe," cleverly involving them in sins of language from this early part of the text.[45] From this relatively venial transgression, the three antagonists coax the audience into paying money to see the chief demon of the play, Titivillus.[46] When he appears, the demon tempts them with the desire to see Mankynde fall from grace, asking them to remain silent on "peyn of forty pens" about his existance and his designs for Mankynde.[47] Here the text directly alludes to the 'Judas' position the audience takes up by assisting with the downfall of Mankynde.[48] In a sense, the play allows the audience a space where, in 'jest', they can indulge in desires to be freed from the strictures of Church discipline, and it is precisely at the moment when all Mankynde's darkest desires are about to be fulfilled that

43 Cawsey, "Tutivillus and the 'Kyrkchaterars'", 446.

44 *Mankind,* 589-606.

45 Ibid., 331-343.

46 Ibid., 457-470.

47 Ibid., 590.

48 Cf. Matt 26: 15 "and [Judas] said, 'What will you give me if I deliver him to you?'"

the audience receives a catechesis by 'exemplum' of the dangers of straying outside the bounds of Church law.

The comic revelry which characterises the play from the first departure of Mercy until his reappearance is balanced very effectively by the high drama which surrounds the frantic attempt to make Mankynde hang himself before Mercy can arrive to save his soul.[49] Just at the moment when he is about to do so, his '*fratres*'[50] leave the stage, and Mercy arrives to save him from the eternal damnation which accompanies suicide.[51] Even at this point, Mankynde remains caught in the deadly sin of despair, and it is only the words of Mercy which restore him to a state of grace. [52] Mankynde's language reverts back to Mercy's rhyme scheme:

> O Mercy, my suavius solas and synguler recreatory,
> My predilecte specyall, ye are worthy to have my lowe;
> For wythowte deserte and menys supplicatorie
> Ye be compacient to my inexcusabyll reprowe.[53]

This return reinstates the power of Mercy as the first and final 'word' of the text, and in so doing, restores the power of the Church in Mankynde's life, and in the audience, who have in some ways enacted the sins of the play in their minds. The test is here a parable against any temptation to not offer "humbyll obeysyance" to God and the Church. [54] It also completes the enactment of 'the Parable of the Sower', by indicating, through trial, that the soil of Mankynde's mind is now truly capable of receiving the "mellyfluose doctrine" of

49 Ibid., 790-810.
50 Brothers, especially in a spiritual sense.
51 Ibid. 812-813.
52 Ibid., 814-834.
53 Ibid., 871-874.
54 Ibid., 817.

Mercy.[55]

As if to highlight the importance of the spiritual politics of language in the play, the final scene's dialogue reinstates the power of the Latin language as a sanctifying force in the text. Unlike the beginning of the text, where there are only Anglicised Latin words, the final lines re-inscribe the power of the Church, and the 'magic' of the "Word" as a vessel of mystery – the proper object of awe as opposed to curiosity – something to be accepted with communal faith and prayed in a communal liturgy, and entirely opposed to the personal and decentralised notion of the spiritual life promoted by Wycliffe. Perhaps it is fitting, then, that Mankind reinforces medieval orthodoxy by reproducing verbatim the final words of the Apostles Creed:

Vitam Aeternam. Amen.[56]

55 Ibid., 312.

56 Ibid., 914. Cf. Apostles Creed.

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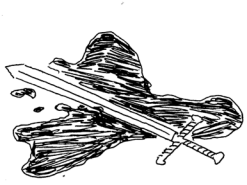
Age of Shakespeare: Tragedy



Rebecca Jamieson

Othello and the Revenger's Tragedy

Vengeance is said to be "tenant to Tragedy," occupying the tragic with its terrible need to repay and multiply every evil that is done to it.[1] The Revenger is the stock character around which this kind of tragedy is centred, his all-consuming agenda for revenge driving him to do whatever it takes to get it. Through the Revenger, the playwright is able to negotiate the "unstable relation of revenge to justice;" challenging the audience's moral convictions as they watch him wrestle with the often discordant notions of repayment and rightness.[2] Vindice from *The Revenger's Tragedy* and Iago from Shakespeare's *Othello* are two such characters. Their treatment in the plays directs the course of the action around them; liaising with the audience's reception of the action and causing us to make decisions about what, or who, to believe.

The Revenger is completely engrossed by his desire for revenge which isolates him and establishes him as an outsider from other characters in the play. From this position he is able to generate a social commentary which can critique issues such as the ambivalence towards what qualifies as justice. The Revenger is subject to "changing [or conflicting] notions of honour and shame" and the audience will use his motivation to assess whether he is justified.[3] The motivation often takes place before the play begins, yet despite its physical absence from the stage, the motivation acts as a cata-

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1 "The Revenger's Tragedy" in *Six Renaissance Tragedies*, ed. Colin Gibson (New Zealand: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), 157 (line 40).

2 Willis, Deborah. "'The Gnawing Vulture': Revenge, Trauma Theory, and 'Titus Andronicus.'" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 53, No. 1 (2002), 23. Accessed 20 Sept. 2014. http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/stable/3844038?seq=2

3 Ibid., 23

lyst for all of the subsequent unfolding action. In his first soliloquy, Vindice denotes that he wants revenge on the Duke for poisoning his "betrothed lady"[4] Gloriana after she "would not consent/unto his palsy-lust.[5] Vindice angrily demands "has no heaven an ear? / is all the lightening wasted?" [6] As is typical with Revengers, he believes that the institutions of justice like God and the law have failed him, and he resolves to take vengeance into his own hands. Iago's motivations are somewhat more perplexing for critics of the play. He claims that Othello passed him over for a promotion and alternatively that Othello had an affair with his wife. It is not made certain how much truth there is in this, as Iago's manipulative nature makes his true intentions difficult to decipher even for the audience. He does appear to have a wounded ego which drives him to seek revenge on Othello. Through this the character encourages us to assess whether pride is an adequate reason for vengeance. It even is possible to argue that Iago reveals hurt pride to be the underlying drive for the Revenger stock character.

The Revenger's plan for revenge reflects the nature of the crime committed against them, as does what happens to the Revenger at the end of the play. This means that their actions on stage to bring about this revenge foreshadow an irony in which the audience experiences a balancing of the dramatic scales. Each character, including the Revenger, must be held accountable because "when he bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good."[7] Vindice wants to get his revenge by using the Duke's insatiable sexual appetite to bring about his own demise, poisoning him with the very skeletal lips of whose life he took. While gruesome, the scene makes use of black humour

4 "The Revenger's Tragedy," 157 (line 16)

5 Ibid., 157 (line 34)

6 Ibid., 208 (line 150-151)

7 Ibid., 197 (line 199)

by which Vindice shows he is perfectly aware of the irony of the situation. He puns that the disguised skull has a "grave look,"[8] and says that Gloriana's bones are "sufficiently revenged"[9] because "those that did eat are eaten."[10] However, he is not fully satisfied after he kills the Duke in Act 3; his actions becoming increasingly convoluted as he turns his attention to Lussurioso. This points to the view that revenge, while "nearly irresistible"[11] is also "a source of escalating violence and new wrongs."[12] In keeping with the idea of the Revenger's irony, Iago plans to use Desdemona and Cassio to make Othello feel the same insane jealousy that Iago had felt. Unlike Vindice, Iago generally does not commit violent acts himself when executing his revenge, but instead manipulates other characters into doing violent acts to each other. The conventions of the tragedy require that the Revenger will inevitably face death himself to account for his actions, like Vindice. Shakespeare thwarts this in the case of Iago, with Othello instead saying that "I'd have thee live/ For in my sense 'tis happiness to die."[13] The decision for Iago to only be arrested at the end functions as a suggestion about the value of being able to die on one's own terms, as Othello does when he commits suicide. For all his manipulation of the lives of others, Iago's control over his own life is taken away from him. For Iago, it must be a fate worse than death; suggesting that Shakespeare gives him the most fitting punishment possible.

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8 Ibid., 196 (line 133)

9 Ibid., (line 151)

10 Ibid., (line 158)

11 Willis, 23

12 Ibid.

13 William Shakespeare, "Othello" in *The Oxford Shakespeare Tragedies,* eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press Inc, 1987) 1203 (line 196).

The Revenger is able to be measured not only by his actions toward the goal of revenge, but also by his treatment of other characters in the process. In the case of Vindice and Iago, it is the way they treat women that is of particular interest. Vindice sums up both of the two attitudes the Revenger holds about women when he says that "if not for gold and women, there would be no / damnation."[14] Iago and Vindice express a certain degree of contempt toward their female counterparts, often assigning blame to them or involving them in their revenge. Despite being horrified when Lussurioso unwittingly employs him to coerce his sister into bequeathing her virtue, Vindice decides to test Gratiana and Castiza's honour regardless. He deceives the two women who should be closest to him in the world. He "becomes the tempter,"[15] and pressures his mother until she is "overcome."[16] Iago shows his own disregard for women when he tricks his wife Emilia into becoming a tool in his revenge. To her horror, the handkerchief that she brings him becomes the 'proof' which ultimately leads to the murder of her beloved mistress Desdemona. One of the only violent acts which Iago commits in the play is the murder of his wife, calling Emilia a "villainous whore" after she defies him and exposes his plan.[17] The other characters are horrified that he would draw his sword "upon a woman."[18] The Revenger relies on his ability to fool the other characters, and Iago is so skilled at deception that the violence appears completely atypical to them. He is so maddened by being exposed that he loses control, and consequently divulges his

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14 "The Revenger's Tragedy," 179 (line 251)

15 Lillian Wilds, "Revenger as Dramatist: A Study of the Character-as-Dramatist in 'The Revenger's Tragedy." *Rocky Mountain Review of language and Literature* 30, no. 2 (1976), 117. Accessed 20 Sept. 2014. http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/stable/1347702?seq=5

16 Ibid.

17 Shakespeare, "Othello," 1202 (line 237)

18 Ibid., (line 32)

own guilt.

A prominent aspect of the Revenger is that they recognise the attributes of other characters which have the potential to benefit them in their revenge. Despite their somewhat unhealthy attitudes toward women, Vindice and Iago both recognise the power of female sexuality, and use it skilfully to bring about the downfalls of their targets. Iago uses the intense jealousy which female sexuality can inspire to drive Othello into bringing about his own undoing. Similarly, Vindice employs Duke's lecherous sexual appetite to get revenge, easily tricking the Duke into kissing his Gloriana's poison laced skull. A vivid parallel between death and desire is created, with the "impotent and lust-provoking"[19] Gloriana as "an image of death" despite her chastity.[20] She died for her resistance to the Duke's advances, but ironically Vindice forces her bones into the sexual encounter anyway to 'avenge' her. This shows the way that the Revenger can be so blinded by his desire for revenge that he ends up facilitating further maltreatment.

The success of the Revenger depends largely on his ability to hoodwink the other characters. The tongue plays a particularly important role for Vindice and Iago, who use it to blind those around them about their true motives. Vindice uses his tongue to weave various disguises for carrying out his plan, until he is eventually employed to assassinate himself. He shows how deep he is in his own precarious web of lies and personas when he says "my brain/ shall swell with strange invention: I will move it/ till I expire with

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19 Simmons, J. L. "The Tongue and its Office in the Revenger's Tragedy."*PMLA* 92, no 1, (1977), 58. Accessed 20 Sept. 2014. http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/stable/461414?seq=2

20 Ibid.

speaking."[21] Iago employs his tongue as his main weapon throughout the play, manipulating people like pawns while consistently feigning innocence. In the wealth of dramatic irony, the audience is privy to the truth about Iago's bad intentions despite Othello's insistence that he is "most honest."[22] Iago makes every effort to perpetuate this perception of his innocence with his constant reverse psychology, telling Othello "not to strain [Iago's] speech"[23] or it might "fall into such vile success / which [his] thoughts aimed it not."[24] The privileged view that the audience is given leaves them free to applaud or oppose the Revenger as they will. However, knowing his deceptive nature the audience must in turn wonder if Iago is manipulating them with his nimble tongue too. We are left with a sense of uncertainty about whether our judgement of the Revenger can be founded on anything substantial or if we are really just as bewildered as the other characters. The Revenger also serves as a warning in the play, showing the way that "degeneration [can be] set in motion by the defiling power of the corrupt tongue and its corruptible office."[25] As it is necessary to balance the scales of justice, in the end the Revenger's tongue betrays him for his lies. Vindice proudly announces to the Antonio that it was he and Hippolito that killed the Duke, and Antonio immediately orders their execution. Vindice acknowledges that "we are ourselves our foes,"[26] saying that if not for this slip of the tongue, "this murder might have slept in tongueless brass."[27] Iago's arrest serves to question what purpose the Revenger has in the play once he can no

21 "The Revenger's Tragedy," 168 (line 120-121)

22 Shakespeare, "Othello," 1177 (line 7)

23 Ibid., 1184 (line 222)

24 Ibid., (line 227-228)

25 Simmons, 56.

26 "The Revenger's Tragedy," 225 (line 106)

27 Ibid., (line 109)

longer use his tongue to seek revenge. He says "from this time forth I never will speak word" and disappears from the closing action.[28] Iago's silence is more dramatically powerful than his execution would have been, because it brings an end to the constant lies and revealing asides which punctuated the action.

Ultimately the audience is left in ambivalent tension, encouraged by the Revenger into a moral discussion about ideals of justice and the way we ourselves act toward those who have wronged us. We are also unable to completely trust the role of the Revenger because his deception may extend beyond the boundaries of the stage to reach us. It gives a double edge to all of his speeches as we are forced to look on every word with suspicion or risk falling into the very same trap that Othello does. Similarly, the Revenger's way with words could be compared to that of the playwright himself, with his power in the theatre to sway what the audience believes about characters and even moral issues.

28 Shakespeare, "Othello," 1203 (line 310)

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Shakespeare: Comedies and Tragicomedies

Hannah Crosswell

Shakespeare the Feminist

Gender roles and expectations are notions of extreme relevance to many of William Shakespeare's plays; competing versions of masculinity and femininity can be seen as vying for dominance within the plays. Although Shakespeare's writing can be seen to reflect the official ideology of the Elizabethan era in terms of gender, it also portrays a writer who calls these stereotypes into question, confronting and challenging dominant Elizabethan ideology. In this light, Shakespearean comedy can be read as disrupting sexual difference, with ideology often challenged by social practice, an idea of great importance to both *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Twelfth Night*.

The way in which Elizabethan society viewed gender roles differed vastly. Defining what a woman was supposed to be was a commonplace act of Elizabethan Renaissance culture. Whilst men assumed a patriarchal role, the role of a woman was inherently passive; her duty was to be obedient to her husband, and to possess sexual chastity, the defining characteristic of a woman's worth. Virtues such as silence, humility and patience were also thought to be characteristics inherent to females. The idea that these characteristics of gender are socially constructed lends itself to the fact that many characters in Shakespeare's plays possess both masculine and feminine characteristics, thus blurring the distinction between genders.[1] Defining characteristics that were said to be male or female afforded Shakespeare the opportunity to create male characters that possessed feminine traits and female characters that possessed masculine traits. Shakespeare subverts the commonplace stereotypical Elizabethan view of gender

1 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, (New York: Routledge, 1990), 10.

roles and portrays women within his plays as more than simply passive vessels for exchange amongst men.

The characters of Viola in *Twelfth Night* and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* reflect this crossing over of masculine and feminine behaviours and characteristics, what Catherine Belsey identifies as "disrupting sexual difference."[2] These two women occupy the role of a 'strong female' as shown through their divergence from the stereotypical norms of gender roles prescribed to them under Elizabethan ideology. These characters control much of the action that occurs in both plays, displaying a level of self-awareness not reached by their male counterparts. For example, by assuming both a male and female role Viola earns the marriage of the man of her choosing. The notion of identity itself is seemingly "disrupted to display a difference with subjectivity and the singularity that resides in this difference" through Shakespeare's depiction of these two strong female characters who show that dominant ideology can differ from actual social practice. [3]

Whilst Shakespeare can certainly been seen to be examining and challenging the common conventions of Elizabethan England in terms gender roles, it does however seem that this contestation cannot be sustained. The conclusion of each play seems to favour the heroines abandonment of her values – and in Viola's case, her disguise – and her assumption of the role of wife, which seems to reaffirm a sexual polarity or as Belsey states a closing off of "the glimpsed transgression and reinstating a clearly defined sexual difference."[4] This idea is

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2 Catherine Belsey, "Disrupting sexual difference: meaning and gender in the comedies" in *Alternative Shakespeares*, edited by John Drakakis, (New York, USA: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1985), 191.

3 Belsey, "Disrupting sexual difference" 192.

4 Ibid.

further supported by Jean E. Howard, whereby the endings of Shakespeare's plays are seen to reaffirm social order.[5] Indeed, *Much Ado About Nothing's* ending performs a vastly recuperative function as it vies to eradicate the contradictions that have arisen throughout the play. As Howard notes, the ending seems to "affirm the 'naturalness' of a hierarchical, male-dominated social order and to treat challenges to that order...as mere illusions."[6] This notion can be seen clearly in the fact that the once hostile relations between male characters and female characters simply seem to dissipate in light of Borachio's confession in Act 5 Scene I, where he professes "I have deceiv'd even your very eyes" (V.I.232). We forget that Hero has had her name tarnished and that majority of the male characters – her own father included – were so quick to believe these allegations. This seems to undermine any progressive work that Shakespeare's examination and apparent challenge to stereotypical conventions of the Elizabethan era could have accomplished, and begs the question as to whether Shakespeare really was attempting to perform any progressive work or rather was simply afforded the frivolous freedom of the genre of comedy.

The potential for progressive work is hindered further by the cuckoldry jokes that we see during Act V of *Much Ado About Nothing*, such as Benedick's remark that "there is no staff more reverent than one tipp'd with horn" (V.IV.123-124). As Howard notes, although Hero's name is cleared and her honour restored, "the antifeminism which caused her original denigration surfaces again in the horn jokes that feature so prominently in the play's final moments."[7] The presence of such jokes highlights the misogynistic attitudes and extreme fear of cuckoldry

5 Jean E. Howard. *Shakespeare Reproduced*, ed. Jean E. Howard and Marion F. O'Connor, (London: Routledge, 2005), 180.

6 Howard, *Shakespeare Reproduced*, 180-181.

7 Howard, *Shakespeare Reproduced*, 181.

held by men of the Elizabethan era. These jokes – although paradoxically serving to create a sense of male bonding – are always made at someone's expense, most often that of a woman. This highlights the potency of slander against women, showing the consequences of a woman's 'failure' to live out her preordained gender roles, specifically the role of a chaste woman. In this light, Shakespeare could simply be seen to be parroting the views of Elizabethan ideology, or alternatively, to be interrogating the devastating repercussions of slander on a woman's reputation.

In *Much Ado About Nothing* we see the once highly esteemed and honourable Hero turned upon – even by her father – in light of the revelations of her supposed indiscretions. This underpins the idea of gender roles and the notion that Shakespearean culture was one that valorized virginity and viewed women as a commodity, whose value was dependent upon their reputation as chaste. Shakespeare's treatment of this idea displays competing versions of masculinity and femininity as we see the women of the play banding together in order to clear Hero's name, in retaliation against the men of the play. This showcases the idea of official ideology being challenged by actual social practice, as the women are straying from the gender roles prescribed to them by Elizabethan ideology.

In *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare complicates the gender roles present within the relationship between Olivia and Viola by disguising Viola as a male. The majority of the play sees Viola's identity as double-gendered, affording Shakespeare the opportunity to push boundaries in terms of the role of females in courtship. On one hand, we see Viola's evident feelings for Orsino and her inability to act upon them due to her position, whilst on the other we see the reverence and camaderie she feels as a fellow woman for Olivia, in her attempt to create the illusion of a potential courtier. Through this couple, Shakespeare works

to challenge the system of heterosexual courtship that was the norm to Elizabethan ideology, as well as the audience's attitudes to females being in a position of power, due to the obvious subversion of male dominance evident in this pairing. Shakespeare could thus be seen as providing an alternative to the system of heterosexual courtship, one in which love ceases to be bound by the constraints of gender roles under Elizabethan ideology. The ending of the play does however, seem to undermine this notion, as both Olivia and Viola ultimately end up in the role preordained to their gender by Elizabethan ideology; indeed, "what is their destiny within that order is made to seem their choice."[8] Although this could undermine any progressive work Shakespeare may have been attempting to accomplish, there is still a sense that the implications of this – if only fleeting – is that female empowerment lingers long after the conclusion of the play.

Shakespearean drama showcases numerous instances of what Traub terms "resistance to social discourses"[9] in terms of gender roles, in particular the character of Viola, who not only engages in cross-dressing, but also elicits multiple erotic investments.[10] Valerie Traub identifies gender as a set of culturally prescribed roles and behaviors available to the two sexes, "its ideology freighted outcome is a "masculinity" and "femininity" correlated with "males" and "females", but its instability is underscored by the cross-gendered presence, for instance of "effeminate" men and "butch" women."[11] Traub proposes that the purpose of having such precise definitions is to refute the idea that "each sex has a necessary gender (e.g., to be male means to be "masculine") that each gender has a corresponding, "natural" sexuality (e.g., that "femi-

8 Howard, *Shakespeare Reproduced*, 182.

9 Valerie Traub, *Desire and Anxiety: Circulations of Sexuality in Shakespearean Drama,* 16.

10 Ibid.

11 Traub, *Desire and Anxiety,* 21.

ninity" implies passivity) and that the purposes and functions are confined by biology."[12] This notion is corroborated by Juliet Dusinberre, who claims that Shakespeare viewed women and men as equal in a world that deemed them unequal; indeed, to talk about Shakespeare's women is to talk about Shakespeare's men, as he refused to separate their worlds physically, intellectually or spiritually.[13] This can be seen in the presence of cross-dressing in *Twelfth Night*, which serves to deconstruct the binary opposition of gender, making the heroine's gender ambiguous. The revelation that Sebastian is alive and his subsequent appearance showcases this ambiguity, as he and Viola share the same appearance, something which is noted by Antonio, "an apple cleft in two is not more twin / Than these two creatures" (V.i.223-4). This works to highlight Shakespeare's treatment of gender, as in creating this ambiguity, he displays the idea that they both encompass masculinity and femininity, effectively deconstructing gender binaries and challenging patriarchal Elizabethan ideology.

There is no doubt that early modern England was a culture of contradictions, particularly in regard to gender, with dominant ideology often challenged by social practice, an idea that is recorded in Shakespeare's plays, particularly *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Twelfth Night*. Within these plays we see the deconstruction of gender binaries through the Shakespeare's treatment of the subject of gender roles and expectations. Shakespeare can certainly be seen as performing progressive work in terms of gender roles and expectations, however the extent to which we as an audience are supposed to read into this discourse is unclear. Whilst Shakespeare portrays many strong female characters who break free from the constraints imposed upon them by the laws and social codes of dominant Elizabethan ideology,

12 Ibid.

13 Juliet Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (London: Macmillan. 1975), 308.

the endings of the plays seem to advance the proposition that "while illusion is everywhere, good fictions merely reveal a preexistent truth of nature."[14]

That said, we are left to beg the question, was Shakespeare really attempting to achieve progressive work on the subject of gender roles; or does his work actually reinforce dominant ideology through its rather stereotypical conclusions?

14 Howard, *Shakespeare Reproduced*, 182.

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Age of Shakespeare: Poetry

Betty Davis

Know God: George Herbert's poems as conversations with a god known

Not always is it necessary to be aware of the life of a writer in order to read their work. In George Herbert's case, his life as a priest of a small parish in the rural village of Bemerton, though only for three years, is inseparable from his poetry. As T. S. Eliot determined, despite having lived much of his life outside the parish, Herbert's 'whole source of inspiration was his religious faith.'[1] This essay will focus on three poems, 'Love Unknown,' 'The Collar,' and 'Love (III),' and demonstrate how, when read as conversations, the poems make manifest Herbert's relationship to God. The poems are conversations between two voices familiar to one another: Herbert and his god, a god who is close and known.

A 'conversation' is defined as an 'interchange of thoughts or ideas; familiar discourse or talk.'[2] A conversation, then, requires two agents in order for 'interchange' to take place. The poems 'Love Unknown,' 'The Collar,' and 'Love (III)' all contain two voices. 'Love Unknown' most explicitly takes the form of a conversation with this kind of interchange, and is recorded in the present: 'Dear Friend, sit down, the tale is long and sad⋯'[3] As the narrator recites his 'tale,' there are comments made by an italicized, decidedly other voice, that of the addressed 'friend,' Jesus. After hearing how the persona's 'heart' was thrown into a 'font' (fountain) of 'blood' and 'washt, and wrung,' the listener reflects that this action may have been justified: 'Your heart was foul, I fear.' Other trials receive the same, slightly tailored, response, 'hard,' and 'dull' in place of 'foul.' In each instance the nar-

1 T. S. Eliot, *George Herbert* (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1962), 18.

2 "Conversation, n.," *Oxford English Dictionary, accessed May 8, 2014,* http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/Entry/40748.

3 George Herbert, "Love Unknown" in *The Poems of George Herbert,* ed. F. E. Hutchinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 121, line 1.

rator agrees with the observation made, conceding 'Indeed it's true.' The poem concludes with the listener's response to the narrator. He gives an evaluation, '⋯your Master shows to you / More favour then you wot of...' He explains each trial in turn, such as 'The font did onely, what was old, renew.' Finally, He offers consolation, 'Wherefore be cheer'd, and praise him to the full. . .'[4] In 'Love Unknown,' Herbert imagines a conversation with Jesus in which he complains and He consoles.

'The Collar,' and 'Love (III)' are conversations of a different kind. In 'The Collar,' the second voice has only one word, 'Child!'[5] This voice is perceived at a remove, 'Me thoughts I heard one calling,' distinct from the immediate address in 'Love Unknown.' Despite its' brevity, the power and weight of the voice is enough to halt the narrator's spiraling, tumultuous, and wild revolt, '. . .Child! / And I reply'd, My Lord.' Here the conversation comes in an unexpected form, but two voices (Herbert's and his god's) interchange.

'Love (III)' describes a back-and-forth exchange with God that is not only given verbal representation, but also physical representation. The beginning of the poem, '*Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,*'[6] exemplifies the back and forth movement at the physical level. This occurs with language too: God ('Love') 'sweetly question[s]' and the narrator 'answer[s].' Here, more than 'Love Unknown' and 'The Collar,' the two voices commune to and fro, and are balanced. Every second line is indented, giving the visual sense of a musical round in which one voice starts a moment later, but progress in harmony together, circulating back and forth.

In 'Love Unknown,' 'The Collar,' and 'Love (III),' Herbert, in imagining

4 Herbert, "Love Unknown, 121, line 60-66.

5 George Herbert, "The Collar" in *The Poems of George Herbert,* ed. F. E. Hutchinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 144, line 35.

6 Herbert, "The Collar, 144, lines 35-36.

a conversation with God, creates a dialogue of sorts whereby God's speech is scripted. This act of scripting, the clarity of the voice Herbert imagines and can 'write,' lends an understanding of the strength of his religious faith. Helen Vendler talks about the 'palpability' of the 'invisible listener's presence on Herbert's page' in 'A True Hymne,'[7] and Herbert's ability to create a 'credible human presence on the page' in 'Love Unknown.'[8] This kind of 'presence' that is created with language indicates the closeness of Herbert to his god. In these poems, as in many of his poems, the second voice is present, and the two commune with familiarity.

The 'intimacy' of Herbert's relationship with God is apparent in the characterisation of the divine in these three poems. In 'Love Unknown,' Jesus is a 'Deare Friend;' in 'The Collar,' God is as a 'father;' and in 'Love (III),' he is simply, benevolently, and wholly, 'Love.' In her treatise on Herbert's address to God in *Invisible Listeners,* Vendler writes how Herbert found the relationship to God offered by the church, in prayer and other means, inadequate and lacking in intimacy.[9] In his poems, as in these three, the exploration of how to appropriately address God is evident in his adoption of different models of intimacy.

Herbert brings God closer by adopting the father-child relationship. The father-child model retains the distance of hierarchy, but is a recognizable, human relation. In response to the call '*Child!*' in 'The Collar,' however, Herbert does not use the address 'father.' Instead,

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7 The poem 'A True Hymne' ends, '*O, could I love!* and stops: God writeth, *Loved.*' Vendler writes, 'the presence of the invisible listener is made palpable on Herbert's page by God's participation in their jointly written poem.' The 'listener' is given an action, amending the persona's expression, and so becomes present. Helen Vendler, *Invisible Listeners* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005), 15-16.

8 Vendler likens the second voice in 'Love Unknown' to 'the modern notion of the ideal therapist – suggesting what a credible human presence Herbert can create on the page.' Ibid, 20.

9 Ibid, 3-4.

the persona seemingly falls back on the well worn 'my Lord' as a signal of submission. After behaving badly, Herbert's persona hesitates to assume the familiarity of 'father.'

God is brought even closer still with 'Love Unknown,' nearing the equal relation of friend to friend. This cannot be entirely equal because he is conversing with the divine, and there is the sense of advice being handed down. Yet the second voice does reciprocate the address of 'friend,' and the tone of their advice is gentle, with soft 'f's and 'w's, 'I fear,' 'Wherefore,' 'Who fain···'

In 'Love (III),' the poem that comes last in *The Temple* sequence, the relation is beyond human definition. This model of intimacy is perhaps the most intimate yet. Here, Herbert uses verbs to characterise God in terms of his benevolence. 'Love's' actions are directed towards the narrator, and are supremely gracious in feeling, 'bade me welcome,' 'observing me,' 'drew nearer,' and 'took my hand, and smiling...' The epitome of the considerate host, God gently insists with the imperative invitation, 'you must sit down.'[10] The narrator calls God in this manifestation by the intimate, 'my Deare.' This address is repeated twice, and is seen as more appropriate than the singular, more formal, address 'Lord.' Herbert can be seen to, as Vendler argues, 'revise the conventional vertical address to God until it approaches the horizontal address to an intimate friend.'[11] In doing so, God is brought closer through poetry than church prayer, and the relationship becomes more personal than institutional.

Herbert's style is notable for his use of simple language. Eliot comments how in his religious career as 'the shepherd of a little flock of rustics,' Herbert educated 'in a language they could understand,'[12]

10 George Herbert, "Love (III)" in *The Poems of George Herbert,* ed. F. E. Hutchinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 180, line 17.

11 Vendler, *Invisible Listeners*, 9.

12 Eliot, *George Herbert*, 26.

and so this simplicity has a functional purpose. The poems are made accessible to Christians, so that they could, as Herbert hoped, 'turn to the advantage of any dejected poor Soul.'[13] The poems are 'true to the poet's experience'[14] and by extension universal Christian experience, and are crafted with a register of language found in the everyday. Insincerity is addressed with honesty in 'Love Unknown,' '...when I pray'd, / Though my lips went, my heart did stay behind,'[15] and spiritual struggle with frustration and straightforward physicality in 'The Collar,' 'I struck the board.'[16]

The simple language conveys an immediacy of feeling, appropriate for religious verse. In 'Love (III),' a profound communion with God is placed in the domestic sphere, made both intimate and universally recognisable. The reader is oriented into a space they have been before, and where God is now present, too. The poem proceeds between a first person 'I' and responding 'Love.' This is an 'I' that can be anyone's and everyone's, and as 'Love' implies, 'Who made the eyes but I?' Guilt, sin, worthiness, and ungratefulness are addressed in turn, and 'Love' reminds 'I' that it was he who 'bore the blame' (voluntarily) and died at the cross. With utmost simplicity 'I' pledges faithfulness to God, 'then I will serve,' and is welcomed, 'So I did sit and eat.' Here, as in other poems, Herbert weaves together monosyllables to encapsulate faith with brevity and weight: 'Speak not at large; say, I am thine,'[17] 'With but foure words, my words, Thy will be done,'[18] and, of course, 'My God, My King,'[19] There is no wading through meaning,

13 Hutchinson, The Poems of George Herbert, xvi.

14 Eliot, *George Herbert*, 25.

15 Herbert, "Love Unknown," 121, lines 55-56.

16 Herbert, "The Collar," 143, line 1.

17 Herbert, "The Quip," 101, line 23.

18 Herbert, "The Crosse," 156, line 36.

19 Herbert, "Jordan (I)," 49, line 15.

deciphering, or 'catching the sense at two removes'[20] with Herbert.

The characteristic simplicity of Herbert's language witnesses a particular kind of relationship with God. When compared with one of John Donne's religious poems, 'Holy Sonnet XIV,' the steadiness with which Herbert lives with God is highlighted. Instead of a polite 'knocke,' Donne appeals to God for a violence of action in claiming him back from his 'enemie' to whom he is 'betroth'd.' The verbs come one after the other, 'o'erthrow,' 'bend,' 'breake, blow, burn,' 'imprison mee,' 'enthrall mee,' and finally, 'ravish mee.'[21] These verbs are highly descriptive, imperative, and full of force. When compared with 'Love (III),' and the verbs involved in that conversation, it seems that there is no intimacy in this address to God. The honesty and immediacy of expression found in the simple, unembellished language used by Herbert, demonstrates how, as Richard Baxter comments, 'Herbert speaks to God like one that really believeth a God, and whose business in the world is most with God.'[22]

In a letter accompanying *The Temple* sent to Nicholas Ferrar, Herbert wrote that the work held

> '. . .a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have past betwixt God and my Soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master: in whose service I have now found perfect freedom.'[23]

As such, in exploring the 'many spiritual conflicts,' Herbert's poems in *The Temple* take many different forms, but all evidence a tight control and come back to Herbert's faith in his 'Master.' 'Love Unknown,' 'The

20 Ibid., line 10.

21 John Donne, "Holy Sonnet XIV," in *John Donne: A Selection of His Poetry* ed. John Hayward (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1972), 171-172, lines 3-4, 10, 12-14.

22 Hutchinson, *The Poems of George Herbert,* xvi.

23 Ibid., xv-xvi.

Collar,' and 'Love (III),' are demonstrative of this: they are different in structure and voice, yet end aligned with God's will. 'Love Unknown,' progresses as a conversation does, and the relaxed stanzas are loosely separated by an aside, '(I sigh to say).' The first voice, sighing, wronged, relays their tale, 'And,' 'Then,' 'When,' 'But...' and the second voice, the critic, is thoughtful. In contrast, 'Love (III)' is comprised of three stanzas of six lines each, alternately pentameter and trimeter, and regular rhyme scheme (ABABCC). There is a tender voice and a timid voice. Both end with God's will, 'Who fain would have you be new, tender, quick' and 'So I did sit and eat.'

Different again, 'The Collar,' an episode of 'spiritual conflict,' is tumultuous in form as it is in temper. The lines are carefully crafted to enact a wildness of freedom, as the poem's persona declares, 'My lines and life are free.' The lines vary in length, and Herbert resolutely resists any regularity in rhyme (ABCDAEFAE...), until the final four lines, (PQPQ). The many questions betray a sense of confusion, 'What? Shall I ever sigh and pine?' and there is a constellation of negations, signaling misconduct, 'No more,' 'not restore,' 'Have I no...,' 'Not so, my heart,' 'wouldst not see...' Following this 'raving,' all the more pronounced is the power of those final four lines in which Herbert is pulled into instantaneous submission to God's will. Martz comments on the way in which, 'The Collar,' like 'The Crosse,' and 'Affliction,' explores a spiritual struggle 'in all its ramifications.' And yet, these poems end the same: 'all concluding...in a whiplash of self-control and conformity.'[24]

The endings of Herbert's conversations with God are, as Louis L. Martz suggests, 'predetermined.'[25] This is because of the sometimes wavering, but ever-present assurance in God's love that Herbert

24 Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), 133.

25 Ibid., 135.

possessed. In another poetic conversation with God, Donne's 'A Hymne to God the Father,' such assurance is absent. Donne's poem is centred around the question, repeated four times, 'Wilt thou forgive that sinne...?' Donne has 'a sinne of feare,' that after death he will not be accepted into Heaven and will 'perish on the shore.' He entreats of God, 'Sweare by thy selfe, that at my death thy sonne / Shall shine as he shines now.'[26] Though Herbert experienced 'spiritual conflicts,' and these formed his poems, unlike the doubt present in Donne's poems, Herbert's are rich with the undercurrent of assurance.

Herbert knows God. By reading Herbert's poems as conversations with God, the strength of Herbert's religious faith and his close relationship with God is witnessed. The centrality and constancy of God's will to Herbert's being emanates from their multifarious forms, from the interplay of his voice and his god's, from the intimate 'horizontal address,' and from the language free of distractions. In 'Love Unknown,' 'The Collar,' and 'Love (III),' Herbert imagines, hears, and speaks with his god. 'Perfect freedom' is found, 'So I did sit and eat.' The endings of these conversations are present from their beginnings:

> 'While we never know how a true conversation will develop in end, in Herbert, as we sit down and read, we are uncertain only of how the conversation with God will develop; we always know how it will end.'[27]

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26 John Donne, "A Hymne to God the Father," in *John Donne: A Selection of His Poetry* ed. John Hayward (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1972), 176-177 lines 1,3,7,9,13-16.

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Nineteenth-Century Fiction

Celia McRae

The Prison of Perception

In the novel *Wuthering Heights* Emily Brontë has drawn two opposing entities in the Grange and the Heights. Both are shown to be environments which can destroy as well as nurture their inhabitants. The Grange supports the personality type Linton Heathcliff possesses, and the Heights supports that of Catherine Earnshaw. This creates the theme that individuality is an essential part of nature, and someone can only be supported by the environment suited to their personality. They cannot be made to fit into someone else's. I will discuss how Brontë illustrates this by showing the positive and negative affects the Heights and the Grange have on diametrically contrasting personalities, and the ultimate consequences of attempting to force a soul into an environment it cannot exist in.

Both the Grange and the Heights are powerful figures and have distinctly individual qualities; these qualities are opposed to each other, but wholly nourishing to the kind of individual aligned with them. Catherine Earnshaw and Linton Heathcliff are examples of two such opposite individuals, who find support from opposite establishments. The Heights is a dramatic, "strong", structure, whose corners are "defended with large jutting stones"[1] Emphasis is mainly placed on its exterior, emphasising its proximity to the elements. It co-exists with the "power of the north wind", architectured to incorporate its "pure, bracing ventilation...at all times" (2). It is a place where a "wild, wicked slip...singing, laughing...{with} the bonniest eye, and sweetest smile" (49) can be free, her song and laughter echoing the constant wind. The Heights has great physical access to the outdoors, especially unconstrained expanses of moor. It is an extension of the raw 'power' of nature, and Catherine is nurtured by this. She develops into a

1 Charlotte Brontë, *Wuthering Heights,* London: Chancellor Press, 1985, 2. (N.B. All further references to this work will be marked by parentheses included in the text.)

creature of this wild place, one who runs barefoot through bogs (58), one who is, like the moor itself, "hardy and free" (155). Her suitability for a place such as this can be seen in her bonny eyes, and the happiness of her smile while she resides there. Her spirits are naturally at "high-watermark" (49), and she needs a place with the resources and unenclosed space to cater for them. The Heights, with its close affinity with the harsh Yorkshire environment, and its fortified structure, provides this for Catherine, and gives her a place where her spirit can develop and nest itself.

The Grange is the opposite of this, and is supporting for an opposite spirit. It is in its own way "a splendid place" (56). Rather than the exterior emphasis given to the Heights, The Grange's interiors, "carpeted with crimson" (56), are described. The Grange is not illustrated with the long descriptive passages of the Heights; rather it is developed indirectly until it is established in the back of the reader's mind as somewhere one could curl up "feeble as a kitten" and "enjoy the cheerful fire" (37). It is a place whose proximity is with a "flower-plot" (56) rather than a moor. This is somewhere appropriate for a "pale, delicate, effeminate boy" (247) such as Linton who has "a grace in his manner" which resembles the Grange's master, Edgar (247). Edgar embodies the "refinement" of the Grange (55) and notes that Linton "will do well" at the Grange (147). Edgar is a version of Linton as he could be, given the right environment. The Grange's influence can be seen in Edgar's calm, controlled treatment of his nephew, which begins to instil "new spirit in him" (247). It is necessary for this to be instilled, for Linton has a "sickly peevishness in his aspect" (247). This sickly peevishness is that of someone who lives too much on the inside, with no supporting walls to guide them. Linton needs the guidance to be found in a flower-plot. Like the Grange, Linton has a delicate and potentially beautiful interior. He needs 'splendid' interior walls to protect the 'grace in his manner'. Through him and Catherine it can be seen that two different environments are needed to support two different

kinds of people.

Having seen the strength of the support given to those who are kin to themselves, it follows that the Grange and the Heights are equally destructive to those to whom their nature is opposed. Catherine and Linton are constrained within the establishment that least supports them, and through this is shown the destructive power of the Grange and the Heights. The Grange tends to flower-plots, while the Heights gives rein to Moors. Catherine, who holds an unbridled nature in her chest, cannot be contained in a flower bed. When she is removed to the Grange, she is a "sea" attempting to be contained in a "horse-trough", and her passion literally starts to overflow the Grange's physical boundaries. She thrusts her torso out of her room into freezing air as if, like the vines clawing her home, she is "craving alms of the sun" (2/155). She burns while she is at the Grange, with the power of her spirit confined unnaturally. She yearns to be outdoors, and wishes she "were a girl again" (155). The Grange, with its beautiful interiors and cultivated gardens leaves her "burning" (155) with nowhere to expend the flame. Both Heathcliff and the Heights, all "bleak hilly coal country" (84) are metaphors for Catherine's soul and she is alienated from them both. As a child "she was much too fond of Heathcliff" and "the greatest punishment" that could be invented for her "was to keep her separate from him" (49). She is given Edgar, a "beautiful fertile valley", over Heathcliff, and concurrently the Grange over the Heights. Catherine herself is much closer to coal country, and there is no place for her in Edgar's beautiful valley. She regards flowers brought to her with tears (160). They are flowers from the Heights, mementos of what she has lost, but they are also symbolic of her imprisonment in the Grange which grows and controls flowers. Her tears are a sea leaking through the cracks of its horse-trough. The Grange has unwittingly inflicted the 'greatest punishment' possible for her, and given her a

horse trough over an ocean, a flower-plot over a moor. It is true that "the Grange is not a prison" (299), but for a half-savage girl who needs to be out of doors to feel free, that is exactly what it becomes. This kind of constraint, so negative for Catherine, has a different effect on people like Linton. It helps to support him, like a flower-bed, where he would have otherwise gone to seed. This is illustrated by his placement in the Heights, and environment without the Grange's enclosing walls, where he founders violently. It has the effect of releasing his inner vices. The Heights, as Nelly notes, is no place for a "weakling" like Linton (249). Nelly is correct in noting that Linton cannot possibly live at the Heights, however, it is not so much that Linton is weak, but that he needs a great deal of support from his environment in order to feel safe, and to direct his tendencies to shut-down under duress. The line: "Linton lay on the settle, sole tenant, sucking a stick of sugar-candy, and pursuing my movements with apathetic eyes" (345), indicates that he has allowed his lazy, self-indulgent streak to smother his finer qualities. However, what it actually shows is that he has retreated from his environment deeply into himself in order to cope. He has a genuinely sickly disposition (295) and the Heights brings him too near the "salubrious air and genial sun" (266). He begins to loath and fear the outdoors and associates it with physical danger. The "open lattices" of the Heights give him no protective walls between what he fears and himself, so he must create these walls in order to cope, and he retreats into "languid movements", and "uneasiness" (266-7). His apathy is a maladjusted coping mechanism, developed to protect him from an environment he does not fit in to. The Heights is a place of terror for him, where it would be freedom for Cathy. For Cathy, the Grange is a prison, whereas for Linton it would be a sanctuary. This emphasises how vastly different two kinds of people can be.

Above, I have looked at how Brontë uses the Grange and the Heights to portray two different personality types, and the ways in which these kinds of people can be nurtured and damaged. Bronte then goes further, and depicts the extinguishment of two opposing natures. Death ultimately brings the dichotomy of Catherine and Linton, and the Grange and the Heights into concord, by showing that once these contrasts have reached their separate zeniths, they arrive at the same plateaux. Her point here is that despite our differences, we are all human. Death does not discriminate. Death comes to Catherine, or perhaps she comes to death, when she, "an exile and an outcast from what had been {her} world" (154), can no longer exist. There is no bodily cause for her death; her "brain-fever" (140) is not a physical ailment. Yet Heathcliff knows she is "fated, sure to die" (195). Cathy's death is not caused by the Grange, or any external force, but by the displacement of her soul. This pain kills her from the inside out. Death is her fate because death is her only path left to freedom. The Grange is home to her heart aching "with some great grief" (154) just as it is home to the happiness of others. She tells Heathcliff that "you have killed me" (196), but it is "being alone" she is "afraid of" (152). She is afraid of what is inside her, and after being taken from her "home" (154) she is left with nothing but herself. She is the "abyss wherein {she} grovels" (154). This abyss is what lies inside all of us, and we find it when we are pushed to extremes.

This abyss is seen by many characters in the book when they feel as though all their earthly ties are being severed. When Isabella, someone who has the gentleness of Linton and some of Catherine's backbone, realises she has lost her brother, her husband, and her home, her words are: "kill me! The single pleasure I can imagine is to die" (188). At this moment her life has lost anything worthwhile about it, and she sees, briefly, the abyss into which Catherine and Linton have fallen. Heathcliff, who has lived on the edge of this abyss his entire life has a "frightful, lifelike gaze of exultation" (415) on his face when he

finally welcomes death. However, Linton does not wish for death. He self-destructs through the "self-absorbed moroseness of a confirmed invalid" (322). He dies a slow death by giving in to sickness. He does not have the fire of Catherine. He is not immolated in an excess of passion, he drowns in a dearth of it. He is constantly reminded that his life "is not worth a farthing" (360), and he develops the mind-set that he is "a worthless, cowardly wretch" who "shall be killed" (328).

Despite the differences in his and Catherine's decline, they both end up in the same place. They both self-destruct because they are given no other way to escape from their environments. Linton's isolation at the Heights corners him in a place of "powerless fury" (310) and he "cannot bear it" (328). His maladjusted coping mechanisms escalate to take him out of this unbearable situation; he no longer needs to cope, but to escape. For Linton, as for Cathy death is escape. The result of placing them in unsuitable environments is that they must find a way to un-place themselves. Linton slowly cuts his ties to the physical world, "slight" figure lessening, becoming bedridden (379) until his death comes and at last "he is safe" (380). Cathy isolates and starves herself and when death comes she goes "quietly as a lamb" (206). Both of these exits show that Cathy and Linton find the same peace in death. It does not snatch them away, it leads them by the hand from the prisons the Grange and the Heights had become, away to a "benign sky" where they can slumber "in the quiet earth" (417).

Brontë has depicted in *Wuthering Heights* the consequences of inappropriate environments. The Grange and the Heights are shown to be sanctuaries for certain types of people, and need not have been turned into prisons. What this argument bleakly portrays is the stark reality of human delicacy, and the necessity of appreciating and caring for each type of person with what is needed for their nature's to thrive. The Grange and the Heights are nourishing, positive places when inhabited by those whose qualities align with the nature of the

space around them, and destructive prisons when inhabited by those opposed to them. I have discussed the fate of those who are trapped in an environment they are opposed to. Brontë has created a situation with no "hero and villain," both the Heights and the Grange can be just as supportive and destructive as each other. Brontë shows that the only evil is what comes of ignoring the needs of separate individuals. The tragedy of Catherine and Linton show the manifestation of this evil, and yet in their lives they also show the brilliance of the two environments in the novel, and this promise of life is not extinguished with their deaths.

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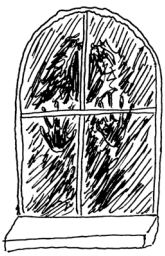
Victorian Literature



Josephine Thomas

Woman against Woman: Racial Segregation and Gender Essentialism in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

Within Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*, themes of colonialism are tightly bound up with representations of gender, giving particular focus to the body of the female colonial other. Brontë's characterisation of her titular protagonist, and that of the key antagonists, reveals an ethnocentric didactic that associates the body of the colonial other with an innate inability to uphold Victorian social mores. The text acts as a celebration of domestic English life, establishing non-European cultures as being uncivilised and animalistic. Some twentieth century feminists have argued that the text is a seminal proto-feminist work, drawing parallels between depictions of the enslaved racial other and the plight of Victorian women through the figures of Jane Eyre and Bertha Mason. However, such readings by Western feminists fail to acknowledge an essentialism within the text about gender roles. Brontë's work espouses a didactic that firmly positions women as belonging in the domestic sphere. The depictions of the colonial other parallel that of the domestic English woman not to draw similarities between their struggles, but to construct an ideal femininity that lies in direct opposition to the body of the racial other. Any autonomy and subjectivity of the female protagonist is absolutely dependent on the oppression and rejection of a racialised colonial other. *Jane Eyre* is a text that engages with a nationalist agenda, in which the characters seek an idealised "Englishness" that is ethnocentric and permeates the entirety of the narrative. Colonialism in *Jane Eyre* is addressed predominantly through the body of the woman as racialised other, and through the body of the woman as the idealised English housewife. [1]

1 Angelia Poon, *Enacting Englishness in the Victorian Peiod: Colonialism and the Politics of Performance*, [Aldershot, England: Ashgate], 13.
N.B. Poon defines Englishness as the "hegemonic cultural construction of an overarching nation-

As *Jane Eyre* is a text written by a Victorian woman it is impossible to engage with the novel without taking into account the context in which it was written. Published in 1847, the novel reflects a society that is dominated by a patriarchy that espouses segregation between men and women: an arrangement in which the women are thoroughly subservient.[2] England's society at this time was dominated by essentialist gender roles that dictated that men were to be active, travelling workers and women were to be passive and confined to the home. These restrictive gender roles were "shaped and promoted within the most privileged sphere of society," with even the ruling monarch, Queen Victoria, expressing the belief that good women were amiable, domestic and fundamentally averse to wielding power.[3] Because of this wider societal context, Charlotte Brontë's characterisation of a subjective female protagonist was considered radical in that it offered a depiction that was conceived through a powerfully female gaze, in which a woman had both agency and complexity. However, as inferred by Gayatri Spivak in her essay "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," specialists of nineteenth century fiction often make the mistake of not engaging with the fact that all British texts written in this era, including but not limited to Jane Eyre, were born out of a culture that constructed itself around its status as a colonial empire.[4] Spivak further argues that the dominant feminist readings of *Jane Eyre* that ignore the England's status as an imperial power are forms of criticism that themselves reproduce "the axioms of imperialism."[5] In a critique of earlier theorists' lauding of the novel

al identity that performed in the nineteenth century the strategic labour of eliding differences." Throughout this essay the term will be used to refer to an ideal cultural identity.

2 Joseph Laurence Black, *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature*, [Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2006], 59.

3 Ibid.

4 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1985/1986): 247.

5 Ibid, 243.

as being positive due to its depictions of powerful female characters, Spivak notes that the autonomy of women is isolated only to Anglo Europeans.

In examining the narrative and language of *Jane Eyre* through a post-colonial lens it is made clear that the contemporary Victorian social views surrounding imperialism are clearly demarcated, and engaged with contentiously, throughout the novel. The text engages with a distinctively orientalist vocabulary that exoticises and degrades the colonial and racial other through the characterisation of non-English characters. This vocabulary is structured around the man-made distinctions of Western, particularly Anglo European, peoples as superior and non-European, particularly non-white, people as being inferior.[6] The descriptions of Bertha Mason in particular, and parallels drawn between her and Blanche Ingram, work to construct the racial other as subhuman.

Jane Eyre's construction of Bertha Mason serves to establish the Creole woman as both inferior and subhuman. The introduction of Bertha images her as a "clothed hyena,"[7] directly hailing the woman as animalistic. This characterisation of Bertha as the 'other', a white Jamaican, works to emphasise Jane's superiority as an Englishwoman. The ideal woman is constructed in the novel as being "a useful, productive body, retiring and averse to eye-catching display."[8] Jane's absolute plainness, "not anymore pretty than I [Rochester] am handsome"(132) works constructs her as this ideal middle-class domestic woman. Jane is repeatedly characterised as seeking some kind of external fulfilment, initially expressing that "for liberty I [Jane] uttered

6 Edward Said, *Orientalism*, [New York: Pantheon Books, 1978], 8.

7 Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, [New York: Oxford World Classics, new edition published 2000], 293. N.B. All further references to this work will be marked by parentheses included in the text.

8 Poon, *Enacting Englishness*, 22.

a prayer."(85) This desire for autonomy leads to Jane moving from one domestic space to another. Yet, despite her repeated, often highly defensive, proclivity for freedom, Jane ultimately wishes to fulfil the role of the Victorian woman as capable, useful and confined to the domestic sphere. Jane views the role of the housewife as offering "the best things the world has,"(390) and it is this idealisation of the role that sanctions Jane's rejection of Rochester when he proposes that she be his mistress.

Jane's acquisition of this ideal role is wholly reliant on Bertha's dual marginalisation. As both a woman and a racial other, Bertha is at the bottom of the societal hierarchy. Though white, she is constructed through racialised language that implicates her as "dark"(293) and therefore animalistic. Already in a subservient role to men, Bertha as a non-Anglo European is demonised through her physical difference and made secondary to Jane. Bertha as an "unproductive female [body] of questionable and excessive sexuality"[9] is a foil for Jane's ideal Englishness. This angel/monster dichotomy works to expose the text as being in line with patriarchal texts that deny the autonomy of women.[10] Bertha must fail absolutely, through self-eradication, in order for Jane to take up her position within the domestic sphere. The initial characterisation of Bertha as subhuman positions her as inferior to Jane, and "weakens her entitlement [to Rochester] in spirit if not in law."[11] Through her animalistic appearance and behaviour, Bertha is degraded spiritually and positioned as inferior due to her racial otherness.

Bertha and Jane are directly paralleled in their relationship to Rochester, each playing the role of wife or potential wife. This charac-

9 Ibid, 39.

10 Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "The Madwoman in the Attic," in *Literary Theory: an anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, [Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1998], 596.

11 Spivak, Three Womens Texts, 249.

terisation of both women as supplementary to Rochester reflects a literary history of male anxiety about female agency.[12] The dependency of Jane's success as a character rests wholly on her attaining a husband and household, undermining her autonomy as a subjective individual. Furthermore, the fact that Jane's success relies upon the failure of Bertha, the racial other, demonstrates that any success she can achieve would be fully complicit with the manoeuvres of imperialism and empire.[13] As such, the conflation of the struggles of Victorian women with that of colonised peoples is a highly problematic and discursive move. Such attempts fail to acknowledge the comparative privilege that Anglo European women possessed, and erase the subjectivity of marginalised, colonised people. While the ideal woman was confined to the domestic sphere, she was also the master of the household and empowered through this position.[14] Jane's coveting of this role is not only an expression of idealised femininity, but it actually emphasises, rather than undermines, her subjectivity. Undertaking the roles of domestic mother and wife would indubitably grant her significantly more autonomy than staying unmarried, due to the Victorian legal status of women as non-citizens with few career options.[15] Bertha is unable to live up to the position of Victorian wife and mother because she is constructed as narrow minded and maniacal. This characterisation of Bertha as mentally incapable is attributed to being a direct result of her Creole blood. "Incapable of being led to anything higher,"(306) Bertha is unable to maintain a "quiet and settled household,"(306) which is her duty as Rochester's wife. Through these descriptions of Bertha as the inept and unstable racial other it is made clear that "white women were not the hapless onlookers

12 Gilbert and Gubar, "The Madwoman in the Attic," 604.

13 Spivak, *Three Womens Texts*, 251.

14 Nancy Armstrong, "Some Call it Fiction: On the Politics of Domesticity," in *Feminisms: an anthology of literary theory and criticism*, ed. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, [New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1997], 921.

15 Black, *The Broadview Anthology*, 49.

of empire."[16] Jane, as the narrator of the text, explicitly engages in colonial discourse by characterising Bertha as "some strange, wild animal,"(293) Drawing attention to her "swelled and dark lips"(284) Jane demonises and dehumanises Bertha, stating that "whether it was beast or human, one could not, at first sight, tell."(293) This description of Bertha's physical attributes as being non-Anglo European and animalistic work together in order to denigrate Bertha as antagonistic, brutish and subhuman.

The aforementioned characteristics of racial otherness are extended to other antagonistic characters, as a means of establishing their inferiority and lack of civility.[17] While it appears that all of the primary characters are of Anglo European stock, Jane often ascribes the physical characteristics of the racial other to her adversaries. Jane's abusive aunt Mrs Reed is repeatedly described as having skin that is "dark and opaque,"(35) a physical feature shared by her brutish son who "reviled"(15) his mother for this colouring. This instance of son ridiculing mother serves to emphasise the dual oppression of the colonised woman, dehumanising the woman further through her racial otherness. Colour is used in the text as a means of signifying difference, as with the "dark as a Spaniard"(173) Blanche Ingram who is "stamped with the seal of the Racial Other."[18] As an aristocrat, Blanche Ingram is overtly decadent in dress and adornment, already in opposition to the ideal plainness of Jane. However, this "spectacle"[19] is further exaggerated by the descriptions of Blanche as having the physical attributes of a racial other. By positioning the racial other and the aristocrat as both being overtly decadent, the ideali-

16 Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, gender and sexuality in the colonial context*, [New York: Routledge, 1995], 6.

17 Poon, *Enacting Englishness*, 37.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid, 39. Poon characterises "the idea of spectacle, with its connotations of visual excess and extravagance, is almost inevitably about waste." N.B. All further references to this work will be marked by parentheses included in the text.

sation of the English woman is constructed as being directly related to both class and whiteness. Blanche's introduction to Jane is as the daughter of a Dowager Lady adorned with a "shawl turban of some gold-wrought fabric."(172) Instantly parallels are drawn between the Ingram family and the racialised other, and between the decadence of the aristocracy and non-Anglo Europeans. Blanche and Rochester's later enacting of orientalist tropes during the charade games furthers this connection as the pair appear "attired in oriental fashion,"(183) with Blanche being imaged as "some Isrealitish princess of the patriarchal days."(183) The casting of Blanche as being reminiscent of a racial other emphasises the parallels between her and Bertha. This characterisation is cemented when Rochester finally speaks to Jane of Bertha, likening her appearance to that of Blanche: "tall, dark and majestic."(305) Rochester himself is constructed as an immoral character through language that draws on racialised oriental tropes. While Rochester appears to celebrate Jane's English domesticity, directly contrasting her to the flamboyance of Blanche, her acquiesce to his marriage proposal has him showering her with decadent gifts, much to Jane's disapproval. During this section of the novel, Rochester is likened alternately to a slave owner and to a racial other. Rochester's decadence, and inferred ambiguity of cultural association, causes Jane to experience "a sense of annoyance and degradation" at his lavish attentions. By signifying a hybridity between East and West, Rochester is more threatening to Jane's Victorian ideal than any racial other.[20] The implications of this hybridity is a questioning of English authority, which would have been absolutely reviled in Victorian society. Rochester's final disfigurement and newfound admiration for Jane as a domestic body signals his humanisation, implicating his expressions of decadence and idealisation of orientalist tropes as subhuman. [21] Jane is positioned in this relationship as the

20 Homi K. Bhaba, *The Location of Culture*, [London: Routledge, 1994], 160.

21 Poon, *Enacting Englishness*, 41.

authoritative figure, engaging Rochester with the Victorian ideal by instilling a sense of Englishness through her steadfast dedication to societal mores.

Jane's construction as the ideal Englishwoman is further emphasised through her relationship with her cousin St. John Rivers, and her steadfast decision to not marry and join him on his colonising mission. While St. John imagines Jane as being a suitable missionary's wife, her response is that her existence is not one to "be long protracted under the Indian sun."(404) Fundamentally Jane is opposed to a life with St. John not only because of her dedication to the English cultural ideal, but also because the travelling life of a missionary does not offer her the autonomy and power that a settled relationship confining her to the domestic sphere would. Following her discussion with St. John, Jane reveals sympathetic, almost anti-imperialistic leanings that are at odds with her ethnocentric constructions of character throughout the text. Through the aftermath of the interaction between Jane and St. John, the text introduces a different kind of ethnocentricism, one that disparages colonialism as being the cause of hybridity. The idea of English culture being contaminated by colonised peoples leads to this offshoot of ethnocentricism, as expressed by Jane when she describes St. John's mission as one that "forgets, pitilessly, the feelings and claims of little people, in pursuing his own large views."(416) Here Jane is implicitly inferring that the colonial mission is dangerous as it upsets the balance and order of domestic English life.[22] This call for segregation is a more extreme take on the implicit separation between the Anglo European and racial other that dominates the text. Jane's anti-imperialist views against colonialism are most apparent following the discovery of Bertha Mason. At this point in the text, colonisation can be seen as fully to blame for Rochester's lack of English propriety, and Jane's lack of romantic

22 Bhaba, *The Location of Culture*, 160.

prospects, as figured through the racialised body of Bertha. The body of Bertha physically poses a threat to a domestic Victorian ideal being achieved by Jane and Rochester, just as the colonial agenda poses a threat to the sanctity of English culture.

Bertha's relationship with Rochester is solely constructed around her racial difference. The marriage was arranged on the basis of Rochester being "of a good race"(305) and Bertha being the heiress to a small fortune. Rochester's descriptions of the courtship and subsequent marriage is rooted in colonial discourse and an underlying anti-imperialist message. Rochester is described as being "dazzled"(305) and "flattered"(305) by Bertha's extravagance during the courtship. Following the marriage, Bertha is portrayed as "coarse and trite, perverse and imbecile,"(306) and tellingly, as "alien."(306) This equating of decadence with a lack of civility pervades the whole text, but in the case of Rochester's West Indian marriage it reveals a xenophobic distaste for the colonial mission. The very "alien" nature of Bertha, as a colonised woman, is what leads Rochester to return to England. Rochester directly contrasts the "sweet wind from Europe"(308) with the "fiery West Indian night,"(307) that has "air like sulphur-steams."(307) In his recounting of his time in Jamaica, Rochester engages in ethnocentric discourse that is anti-imperialist in that it exhorts distinction. There is no positive English influence, for Rochester, in Jamaica. Rather, the peoples of colonised areas having become degenerate spectacles through hybridity. There is a notable absence of people of colour in the text, an absence that is figured through the displacement of racist stereotypes on to colonised others. As the colonial other Bertha is degraded from woman, to maniac, to beast, to simply "the thing."(310) Rochester's anti-imperialist view of colonisation is innately racist and ethnocentric, belying an underlying belief that the non-white races were lacking their own culture

and civilisation.[23] As a colonised woman, and a person of hybrid culture, Bertha becomes non-white in the text, signifying a threat to English culture and to the achievement of an English ideal for Jane and Rochester.

The effects of Rochester's xenophobia and Jane's idealisation of English culture are to produce a nationalist view of colonialism. St. John's pro-colonial stance and Jane and Rochester's anti-imperialist views are two sides of an ethnocentric coin that degenerates the racial other to the status of animal. There is no definitive character voice within Jane Eyre that argues against this ethnocentricism, with both the explicit and implicit morals of the text encoding an ideal domestic scene for the Victorian Englishwoman and a brutish animal quality to the racial other. Jane's final acquisition of this ideal comes at the cost of losing her friendship with her imperialist cousin St. John, the colonial other Bertha Mason losing her life, and the sensuous, amoral Rochester losing his sight. The dominant romantic narrative of the novel is dependent on the realities of colonialism and of Britain's status as an empire. As such, the autonomy of Jane is dependent on colonial discourse, as her resolute English morals are what give her authority and agency when she finally acquiesces to marriage with Rochester. Without colonial discourse there would be no Bertha Mason, and no amoral Rochester for Jane to engage with. Jane's agency is completely dependent on her being positioned as superior first to the racialised body of Bertha, and then to the corrupted hybrid psyche of Rochester. Without an engagement with the colonial undertones of the text, the reader is neither able to grasp the ideals and morals put forward by Victorian society, or to examine the character of Jane as a subjective female entity.

23 Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, [London: Vintage, 1994], 22.

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Literary Theory and Critical Practice

Lizzie Blair-Finlay

Mere Originality

"Even in literature and art, no man who bothers about originality will ever be original: whereas if you simply try to tell the truth (without caring twopence how often it has been told before) you will, nine times out of ten, become original without ever having noticed it." (C.S. Lewis)

It is important to note that this comment is not a part of a sustained theory of originality. Rather, it is a single line, used as an analogy, in a theological work titled Mere Christianity. In examining the problems and paradoxes of 'originality,' Lewis's quotation is immediately suspect, because a single sentence cannot be expected to encompass all the issues surrounding the concept of originality. Lewis was, of course, a literary critic, and the quotation may express a carefully thought out theory about literature, however it may equally be merely an analogy decided upon because it fit with Lewis's theological argument. In either case, we must out of necessity attach to Lewis's comment a theory—such as that proposed in this essay—with which it is broadly compatible, while acknowledging that it is unlikely that this is what Lewis had in mind as his own theory of originality, if indeed he had one at all. This essay will first consider the relationship between the canon and a larger literary tradition; I will then examine the extent to which canonical works are such because they express truth, and how familiarity with the canon provides an opportunity to write originally about the truth oneself.[1] The essay will conclude with a consideration of issues not adequately addressed by Lewis' conception of Originality.

In 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', T.S. Eliot argues for the influence of tradition in producing new literature.[2] Eliot claims that

1 "Canon" here refers to the core texts which are said to be the best or most important literary products of a given culture.

2 T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry*

this 'tradition' is not confined to the 'Great' writers, or to any particular conception of the canon: "the poet must be very conscious of the main current, which does not at all flow invariably through the most distinguished reputations."[3] However, restricting the most important influences on the new writer to the canon does not seem far-fetched. Eliot states that to "take the past as a lump, an indiscriminate bolus··· is inadmissible," indicating that we cannot consider all literature as a part of 'tradition.'[4] Furthermore, when Eliot invokes "the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer,"[5] he calls upon the start of the great Western tradition in literature, the canon. Eliot speaks of "the whole of the literature of Europe," then, much as Hegel speaks of the importance of knowing 'all of history.'[6] Only the key pieces, the pieces that mark an upward trend of getting closer to the truth, count as literature for Eliot, and as history for Hegel. Rather than really rejecting the notion of the canon in favour of all past works being considered an equally influential part of the tradition, Eliot seems merely to be quibbling about which texts should be found in the canon. "The main current" may not consist solely of "the most distinguished reputations," but the "main current" does nonetheless exist and is the most significant part of Eliot's 'tradition.' This restriction to the canon may be seen as a response to Eliot's fantasy of the poet who has read everything; which parts of "the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer" does Eliot's hypothetical writer actually have behind them? What have they read, and what have the authors of those texts read? It is these works that form the influential tradition behind the author in question, and the most influential works in such a group will most likely be works that are considered canonical, as they will have been

and Criticism (London: Methuen, 1960), 47.

3 Ibid.

4 Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent,"51

5 Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," 49.

6 Ivan Soll, "Hegel as a Philosopher of Education," *Educational Theory* 22, no. 1 (1972): 28, doi: 10.1111/j.1741-5446.1972.tb00541.x

read by the most people and thus have the widest sphere of influence.

There are, of course, a number of possible criteria that can be used when defining a canon. Works may be selected because they are aesthetically superior, or because they are considered 'representative' by whichever group is dominant in the selection process. Some works may be considered 'great' for various and contradictory reasons.[7] An important factor that determines which texts have a place in the canon, however, is whether or not they express truth. It is noteworthy that the first use of the word 'canon' in the sense meant by literary critics is in regard to the Bible, as it became essential to decide which texts provided the truths of Christianity.[8] Like the selection of biblical truths, the inclusion and exclusion of particular authors from the canon makes a statement about which truths matter.[9] Truth, then, has been an important criterion for inclusion since the canon since the beginning of the concept of the canon.

It is significant, that tradition and the canon have often been paramount in considerations of originality. Eliot contends "not only the best, but the most individual parts of [a poet's] work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously."[10] In Eliot's view, the pervasive influence of others is not only compatible with originality, it is what causes a text to seem original. This ties back to the concept of the fantasy of idealised communication: we hope in reading a text to look directly into the mind of the author, but also into the minds of all the authors that

7 John Guillory, "Canon," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study,* edited by Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) http://search.credoreference.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/content/title/uchicagols?tab=overview

8 Guillory, "Canon."

9 Ibid.

10 Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," 48.

came before them. We also like to think of each voice in the ongoing conversation to which all texts contribute as originating singularly in the mind of a particular author. However, the very existence of this conversation prompts our own contributions, and so the conversation is inevitably made up of various conflations and interpretations (or, according to Harold Bloom, misinterpretations) of various contributions to it, and so to be influenced is inescapable.[11] In some cases, particularly canonical authors are attributed with being detached from past influences, or at least more than most. For instance, Bloom names Shakespeare as being an author from "the giant age before the blood, before the anxiety of influence became central to poetic consciousness."[12] In response to this claim, Thomas McFarland calls upon Greene's attack on Shakespeare as an "upstart crow, beautified with our feathers."[13] Nietzsche also has doubts about the advisability of taking on a large amount of influence: "The scholar who actually does little else than wallow in a sea of books···finally loses completely the ability to think for himself."[14] Lewis's comment asks the writer to write the truth, which one might expect to require thinking for oneself. It is, of course, possible to question if taking on 'too much' influence from others might dampen our ability to decide what we think the truth is.

It is therefore clear that tradition, in the form of the canon, is an important part of creating truthful, and so by Lewis's criteria original, texts. Lewis's comment, however, is less concerned with the canon, which has been our main focus thus far. We therefore turn next to a more subjective form of truth. In Eliot's view, personality and per-

11 Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 3.

12 Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 11.

13 Thomas McFarland, *Originality and Imagination* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 17.

14 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Werke in drew Bänden*, ed. Karl Schlecta, 3 vols (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1954—56), vol II, 1094, quoted in McFarland, *Originality and Imagination*, 17.

sonal context are not relevant in the production of good literature. Instead, the artist's mind acts as a catalyst for tradition: "the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates; the more perfectly will the mind digest and transmute the passions which are its material."[15] McFarland challenges Eliot thus: "as personality is the experienced entity in which such abstractions as individuality inhere, Eliot is here purchasing his insistence on tradition by sacrificing the paradox [of originality and influence by tradition] whose recognition he sought to renew."[16] Eliot appears to eradicate the role of personal truth in his eagerness to affirm the importance of the canon. Lewis's comment leaves room for a dialectical synthesis of personal truth, and the multifarious truths found in the canon.

There is one problem of originality, however, that Lewis's comment cannot adequately solve. In 2000 BCE, the Egyptian scribe Khakheperresenb left an epigram that reads:

> Would I have phrases that are not known, utterances that are strange, in the new language that has not been used, free from repetition, not an utterance which has grown stale, which men of old have spoken.[17]

Lewis's comment does not address the concerns of writers who, like Khakheperresenb, fear that there is nothing new left to say and no new way to say it. Bloom sees this tension as paramount: "the covert subject of most poetry for the last three centuries has been the anxiety of influence, each poet's fear that no proper work remains for

15 Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," 54.

16 McFarland, Originality and Imagination, 10.

17 W. Jackson Bate, *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 3.

him to be done."[18] Lewis's comment may seem to address this directly by acknowledging the author's concern that what they have to say has already been said before; however, given the important input that the influence of the canon has into truth, aiming to "tell the truth··· without caring twopence how often it has been told before" is clearly likely to produce unoriginal work much of the time. This is a problem of originality for which Lewis's comment is inadequate.

Lewis's comment on originality fits well into a framework that considers not only the possibility, but also the desirability of creating original work informed by the writer's experience of the canon. A significant reason why some texts are canonical is because they, like the hypothetical original work posited by Lewis, express truth. Influence by the canon, combined with the influence of one's own experiences and beliefs, allows the writer to produce original work of literary value. While Lewis's comment is not a comprehensive answer to questions of originality, it does provide a starting point that is compatible with the view outlined above.

18 Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, 148.

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Contemporary Drama on Stage and Screen

Susannah Whaley

From Stage to Screen: Double Trouble in Buster Keaton's *The Playhouse*

In a theatrical sense, a 'gag' is a joke, intended to make people laugh. Gags abound in Buster Keaton's film *The Playhouse.* The Vaudeville stage, where Keaton learnt the craft of entertainment, necessitated rapid shifts of action to hold an audience's attention, and the Playhouse uses gags similarly.[1] In particular, the film explores doubling both in small scale gags, and as an overarching comic theme.

The first gag, roughly the first six minutes of screen time, begins with the double entrance of Keaton as an audience member and from backstage as the conductor. The gag is developed as Keaton takes on the parts of everyone in the theatre: musicians, audience members, performers, etc. Finding a way to film himself in multiple roles concurrently, a secret he did not share with anyone until much later, enabled Keaton to use doubling in the film. The humour of the gag is derived both from seeing a man play multiple roles, male and female, while also delivering a stab at contemporary film-maker Thomas H. Ince, who was known to give himself excessive credit in his work. Seeing the programme in which Keaton's name appears overwhelmingly (there are no other names), an audience member remarks 'This Keaton fellow seems to be the whole show.'[2] This mocks Ince's tendency to portray himself as the 'whole show' which the original audience would have responded to, and Keaton cleverly reinforces his own name without the same danger of seeming pretentious.

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1 Robert Knopf, *The Theater and Cinema of Buster Keaton* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 13.

2 Buster Keaton, *The Playhouse.* Silent Film. Directed by Buster Keaton, Edward Cline and Joseph M. Schenck. New York: Synergy Entertainment, 2007.

Laleen Jayamanne writes, 'mistaken identity as a comic gag is as old as Greek new comedy...'[3] Doubling is present in *The Playhouse.* as a case of mistaken identity. The twin girls are an extended gag throughout the film; the trick is that one likes Keaton and the other does not, and he can never tell which one is which. This gag is established as the audience sees two girls arrive on stage, whereas Keaton only sees one, allowing for his comic confusion, especially when he finds both girls looking in mirrors – doubles of doubles. At last he realises, and the gag is then developed into one of mistaken identity. He goes from kissing the wrong twin's hand, to kissing the wrong twin, to eventually dragging the wrong twin off to the justice of the peace presumably to get married, at which point he draws an 'x' on the right twin's back so he doesn't get confused again. Charlie Chaplin, a contemporary of Keaton, similarly uses the concept of mistaken identity in his film Idle Class, playing the parts of a tramp and a millionaire who are mistaken for one another.[4] The concept of mistaken identity was clearly one audiences at the time responded to, perhaps in fitting with the strict class structure of the 1920s which allowed little room for people to move away from their assigned place in society. The concept of mistaken identity was a rare release from this structure.

Finally the gag involving the human monkey (the stagehand) doubling as the real monkey he has let escape shows an example of double reality. Although the stagehand is dressed up, pretending to be a monkey, he 'is' the monkey, a classic example of the mischievous ste-

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3 Laleen Jayamanne, *Toward Cinema and Its Double: Cross-Cultural Mimesis* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2001), 202.

4 Arthur Rankin, "Tendentious Innocence: Chaplin's Use of Doubling in City Lights and The Idle Class," *Senses of Cinema* no. 45, (2007): accessed September 3, 2014, http://sensesofcinema.com/2007/feature-articles/charlie-chaplin-doubling.

reotype, as he's the one who's caused all the trouble. Chaplin wrote in his Principles of Comedy, 'One of the things most quickly learned in the theatrical world is that people as a whole get satisfaction from seeing the rich get the worst of things.'[5] The gag functions as the 'poor' stagehand succeeds at making the 'rich,' important performer look silly. The human monkey ruins the performer's act.

A film driven by gags is very different structurally from one which is narrative driven. *The Playhouse* doesn't have time for complicated narrative development, and seeks to hold its audience's attention another way; the doubling gags accumulate 'vertically' as one gag follows another. [6] The multiple Keatons are followed by the twins, interspersed with other gags, including the human monkey. Robert Knopf states a gag 'need not advance the story,' but provide only a 'theme and variation.'[7] Gags are confined to a part of the film, such as the human monkey and the doubling of Keaton, or stretched out as a 'running gag' as the twins are. [8] All three gags contribute to driving the action of *The Playhouse* and are linked by doubling.

The film contains numerous other doublings, including two one-armed men and the name 'Zouaves' referring to both guards and a brand of cigarettes. Keaton himself plays the double part of the actor. His face doubles for both himself and his character in the dual reality of acting. However in Keaton's case his character also has his name, largely because he was already famous on the Vaudeville stage. Hence the Keaton in *The Playhouse*, characterised as always by his clownish white make up is the Keaton the audience knows from

5 Rankin, "Tendentious Innocence."

6 Knopf, *The Theater and Cinema of Buster Keaton*, 12.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., 13.

this era, as well as his previous films. [9] This character is a double of the real Buster Keaton. However it is the three aforementioned gags which are especially important in driving the film.

William Shakespeare's theatre often involved one actor playing multiple parts, as is done in *The Playhouse's* introduction sequence (though Keaton's doubling is more extreme). Shakespeare's was due to performance necessity, but could also suggest parallels in characters' roles.[10] In *The Playhouse's* introduction sequence, Keaton plays all the roles as a metaphor for the common purpose all the characters have in contributing to the running of the theatre. The orchestra, the stagehand, performers and audience members are all needed for the theatre to function successfully. It could also reference the myth of show business, that Hollywood would guarantee fame.

Doubling can hold such theatrical meaning, and contribute to theatricality, says Janis Balodis cited in 'Different Kinds of Doubling.'[11] For example in Carol Churchill's *Cloud Nine*, doubling of the actors roles occurs across acts. However the function of doubling for Keaton is simply to add humour to *The Playhouse*. But why is doubling funny? A universally known truth in theatre comedy is that humour is driven by the fact the audience is aware of what has taken place while characters are not. Today, this arguably accounts for the popularity of some New Zealand comedians overseas, such as Flight of the Conchords. Like *The Playhouse*, The Flight of the Conchords showcase

9 Susan E. Linville, "BLACK FACE/WHITE FACE: Keaton and Comic Doubling," *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 5, no. 3 (2007), 269-28,. doi: 10.1080/17400300701670618.

10 Giorgio Melchiori, "Peter, Balthasar, and Shakespeare's Art of Doubling," *The Modern Language Review* 78, no. 4 (1983), 777-792, doi: 10.2307/3729489.

11 Elspeth Tilley, "Different Kinds of Doubling: Comparing Some Uses of Character Doubling in the Ghosts Trilogy, by Janis Balodis, and The Captive, by Ben Ellis," *Australasian Drama Studies*, no. 60, (2012): 56-70.

'gags' in which actors approach ridiculous situations very seriously. They do not appear to realise what they are doing is silly or funny. Therefore, it is. This truth was clearly just as relevant for Keaton in the 1920s. The gag with the twins introduces itself as humorous because though the audience can see there are two identical girls standing on the screen, Keaton does not, and is utterly confused. The human monkey doubling as a real monkey is humorous because although the screen audience knows they're watching Keaton in a costume, the theatre audience is utterly unaware, and a lady faints to find the 'monkey' so close to her. Keaton identified the success of doubling, reusing it in another of his films *Seven Chances*.[12]

Furthermore, to hold the audience's attention, every time a gag is revisited it must change or develop in order to surprise. This is clearly seen as Keaton's continual misidentification of the twins becomes more ridiculous – from grabbing the wrong one, to kissing her, to going off to marry her. Likewise the first gag of Keaton's multiple roles develops as one by one the roles become more diverse – even including women. The humour is developed further when the different Keatons begin to interact, little boy Keaton dropping his lollipop on fancy lady Keaton. The human monkey becomes more ludicrous as he becomes increasingly out of the control of the performer.

The fact that the film takes place in a theatre is emphasised repeatedly. *The Playhouse* shows all the workings of a stage drama while being a film – the foyer, auditorium, orchestra pit, backstage and stage. This makes the playhouse itself an important double. 'Playhouse' was the Shakespearean term for theatre, a place set aside specifically for make believe, a place where reality is something else. At the theatre things are not what they seem. As such, the audience discovers Kea-

12 Susan E. Linville, "BLACK FACE/WHITE FACE: Keaton and Comic Doubling," *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 5, no. 3 (2007), 269-28,. doi: 10.1080/17400300701670618.

ton's dream is a dream, and the house he wakes up in is not a house but a set. The cumulative effect of all these smaller doubling gags draw the audience's attention to the illusionary nature of the theatre and its ability to create alternate realities.

Doubling contributes to the overall dramatic shape of the film by reinforcing the illusory nature of the theatre, the place that The Playhouse is in fact all about. Doubling itself is about the audience seeing something the performer doesn't, creating confusion onstage while allowing the audience to remain smugly aware. Additionally, the way these gags are employed is a clear reflection of Keaton's Vaudeville roots, but the film uses doubling as it couldn't be used on the Vaudeville stage to create a whole new level of illusion, therefore contributing to the idea of *The Playhouse* as a part of his comedic legacy.

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Theory and the Gothic

Rachel Berryman

Triangulations of (Gendered) Desire: Gothic Mirroring in Rouben Mamoulian's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

I want to be clean, not only in my conduct, but in my innermost thoughts and desires.

Henry Jekyll, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*[1]

Desire has long been central to the Gothic canon, as well as to the narrative conventions consolidated by Hollywood cinema.[2] For Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, the concept of 'desire' describes not "a particular affective state or emotion, but [an] affective or social force ⋯ [which] shapes an important relationship," thus expanding upon the term's colloquial usage to implicate desire as fundamental to the structure of social relationships.[3] In this capacity, desire plays a prominent role in Rouben Mamoulian's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931), motivating a number of relationships in the film. Often, these relationships are introduced using physical or stylistic mirroring, acknowledging the Gothic canon by repeatedly 'doubling' characters on-screen. While such moments of filmic mirroring establish a bilateral relationship between subject and reflection, Mamoulian's repeated emphasis on desire complicates, and contextualises, the linearity of this structure. My analysis of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* incorporates schemas proposed by literary theorists Jacques Lacan and Eve Sedgwick to explore the role of desire in the initial transformation of Henry Jekyll to Mr Hyde,

1 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, directed by Rouben Mamoulian (1931; Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2004), DVD.

2 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," in Issues in Feminist Film Criticism, ed. Patricia Erens (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 30.

3 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 2.

as well as in Mamoulian's visual doubling of Ivy and Muriel. Lacan's mirror stage and Sedgwick's theory of homosociality, in particular, illuminate how Mamoulian's use of mirroring in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde both recalls traditional instances of gothic doubling and implicates the characters in more complex structures of desire, revealing social imbalances explicitly linked to gender.

Through an emphasis on reflections and repeated utilization of subjective camerawork, Mamoulian quickly establishes a doubled—and quite literally mirrored—relationship between Jekyll and Hyde. At the beginning of the film, Jekyll theorises about the true properties of the human soul, confidently declaring "that man is not truly *one*, but truly *two*."[4] He also claims that "certain chemicals have the power" to separate the dual selves he believes simultaneously reside, in a state of "eternal struggle," within the individual. Of course, Jekyll's theories prove correct. As he prepares to drink a concoction to "separate [his] two natures," subjective camerawork conflates the audience's point of view with Jekyll's. We see an extreme close-up of the glass containing the transformative potion from Jekyll's perspective before, a beat later, it is removed to reveal a mid-shot of Jekyll's reflection as he stands in front of a mirror. Jekyll steps closer and the camera tracks forward, reframing his face in close-up while he stares at his reflection and, through Mamoulian's subjective cinematography, the audience. A moment later, Jekyll drinks the potion. As the transformation ends, the camera—once again, subjective—reorients itself, tracking forward and panning right to, again, look into the mirror. It is here that the audience, Jekyll, and the man himself are first introduced to Mr Hyde, both through his eyes and his reflection.

Though not the first instance of mirroring in the film, the Jekyll-Hyde transformation sequence most overtly exemplifies the usefulness of the mirror to the Gothic canon. Whether literary or cinematic,

4 Emphasis added.

mirrors "haunt [Gothic] tales as metaphors of the double, the *Doppelgänger* and the divided self."[5] As the mirror image quite literally divides the self into two—subject and reflection—mirrors are often used in Gothic texts to represent a character's psychological unease or, as in this case, the splitting of their identity.[6] Such a reading recalls the work of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, who argued that the constitution of one's ego—and the "formation of the I"[7]—*relied* on the identification of the subject and the self presented in their mirror image.[8] This theme is exemplified in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde's transformation scene, where mirrors prove instrumental to the formation of the Hyde's sense of self. Upon first seeing himself in a mirror, Hyde's obvious glee—his exaggerated grin and rapid breathing—immediately signals his identification with the reflection and his new physical persona.[9] Hyde's hand gestures and exaggerated stretches also aid this process of self-identification, solidifying the relationship between his body and the reflected imago by testing "the relation between the movements assumed in the image and the reflected environment."[10] While *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* primarily utilizes mirrors to symbolically represent Jekyll's 'two natures,' Mamoulian also, as in Lacan's theory,

5 Kirsten Møllegaard, "Haunted by Shadows: Poe and Andersen's Tales of the Divided Self," *International Journal of Arts and Sciences* 4, no. 14 (2011): 117

6 See Joyce Carol Oates, "Jekyll/Hyde," *The Hudson Review* 40, no. 4 (Winter, 1988): 607; Caroline Ruddell, Virility and Vulnerability, Splitting and Masculinity in *Fight Club*: A Tale of Contemporary Male Identity Issues," *Extrapolation* 48, no. 3 (Winter, 2007): 493; Michael Sevastaskis, "The Stylistic Coding of Characters in Mamoulian's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*" *Journal of Film and Video* 37, no. 4 (Fall, 1985): 20.

7 Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock Publications, 1977), 1.

8 Ibid., 2.

9 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 31.

10 See Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection*, 1. There are, however, some obvious discrepancies between Lacan's theory and the mirror stage presented in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Importantly for Lacan, the mirror stage occurred in infancy, before the acquisition of language, and involved a process of *misidentification*, whereby the infant mistook the wholeness of their reflected image as an accurate depiction of their own motor abilities and capacity. The reflected image thus presented an unobtainable "Ideal-I" which the individual was thought to strive towards throughout their lifetime. Despite these discrepancies, however, both Lacan and Mamoulian prioritise the role of mirrors in the process of self-identification, and the formation of one's identity.

presents them as integral to Hyde's process of self-identification.

In his doubling of Jekyll and Hyde, Mamoulian introduces a linear relationship between the two protagonists, representing Hyde as an embodiment of the urges society forces Jekyll to repress.[11] Indeed, throughout the course of the film, Hyde—Jekyll's 'indecent self'—is characterised by his displays of sadomasochistic violence and vulgar behaviour, qualities forbidden to Jekyll, whose reputation as a gentleman renders him "very careful" in his outward conduct.[12] In Mamoulian's initial mirroring of Jekyll and Hyde, therefore, the role of desire remains affective, relegated to motivating Jekyll's frenzied scientific ambition and Hyde's animalistic behaviour but not (yet) the relationship between the two characters.

It is during the montage sequence which bridges the Jekyll/Hyde transformation that desire, in its capacity to organize social relations, is introduced. Here, Mamoulian emphasises the 'innermost thoughts and desires' Hyde embodies as being intrinsically linked to Jekyll's sexual repression. Utilizing a kaleidoscope effect and double-exposure, the transformation montage begins with a two-shot close-up of Jekyll and his fiancé, Muriel, to whom he begs, "Marry me now, I can't wait a minute longer."[13] However, the sequence ends with a mid-shot of Ivy, a local barmaid, covering her naked body with sheets as she perches on the edge of a bed. The shot lingers on-screen—and, it is implied, in Jekyll's mind—as she seductively whispers, "Come back soon, won't you? Come back, come back..."[14] Tilting downwards, the camera refocuses on Ivy's swinging leg before fading out, signalling the end of the transformation. Mamoulian's inclusion of these two vignettes highlights erotic desire as fundamental to the Jekyll/Hyde

11 Kirsten Møllegaard, "Haunted by Poe," 118.

12 See Joyce Carol Oates, "Jekyll/Hyde," 604; Michael Sevastakis, "Stylistic Coding of Characters," 21.

13 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Directed by Rouben Mamoulian. 1931. Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2004. DVD.

14 Ibid.

transformation: the montage is prefaced with a moment of sexual frustration (implied in Jekyll's anxiety to be wed) and ends with an erotic invitation.

By occupying Jekyll's thoughts during the final moments of the montage, Ivy's tantalizing offer is extended to Hyde, introducing a trilateral relationship of desire which will pervade the remainder of the text; united in their lust for her, Jekyll and Hyde are positioned as desir*ing* subjects and Ivy as their desir*ed* object, forming, between them, a triangular "schematiz[ation of] erotic relations."[15] Analysing literature's reiterations of this model,[16] Eve Sedgwick comments upon the role of similar "potentially erotic"[17] triangular structures in promoting rivalry—typically between two men—over a desired (and usually female) love object.[18] Within these structures, Sedgwick claims, "the bond that links the two rivals is as intense and potent as the bond that links either of the rivals to the beloved."[19] For Sedgwick, the passion which fuels male rivalry within these structures involves a combination of both nonsexual *and* sexual—or to use her terms, *both* homosocial and homosexual—desire.[20] Hyde's renunciation of Jekyll as "the man [he] hates more than anyone in the world," as well as Jekyll's promise to ensure Hyde "never come[s] back" before the film's climax, characterises the protagonists' antagonism as similarly complex.[21] In Sedgwick's estimation, Ivy's position as desired-object situates her, not as the centre of the triangular structure, but as a surrogate for the negotiation of male desires; it is only through Ivy's

15 Eve Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 21.

16 Sedgwick's conceptualisations of this structure are based upon the works of René Girard—specifically, his book *Deciet, Desire and the Novel*—who originally traced, and analysed, this triangular structure throughout European fictions.

17 Eve Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 1.

18 Ibid. 21.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid., 23.

21 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Directed by Rouben Mamoulian. 1931. Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2004.

inclusion that the implicit desires between (and shared by) the two male characters may be explored.[22] The triangular structure of desire present in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, therefore, is inherently asymmetrical, highlighting imbalances in the respective agency of Jekyll, Hyde and Ivy by privileging male desire and, consequently, subordinating (and excluding) the desire of women.

Mamoulian's mirroring of Ivy and Jekyll's fiancé, Muriel, further accentuates the gender disparities which underline the characters' relationships. In an early scene, Jekyll and Muriel are shown sharing an intimate moment in the garden outside her home. A close-up two-shot of Jekyll and Muriel presents the couple staring into each other's eyes, as Jekyll professes his love for her: "You've opened a gate for me into another world. Before that...I was drawn to the mysteries of science, to the unknown. But now, the unknown wears your face."[23] The camera then assumes a subjective position, cutting to an extreme close-up of Muriel's face as she looks at Jekyll—and, by extension, at the audience. Later, the same technique is used in an exchange between Hyde and Ivy. As Hyde looms over her, he proclaims, "I hurt you because I love you. I *want* you."[24] The camera, once again, cuts to an extreme close-up, now capturing Ivy's (frightened) expression as she stares at Hyde in horror. By repeating the same shot to frame the two female characters, Mamoulian effectively mirrors "the socially and economically inferior mistress [with] the socially and economically superior fiancée."[25]

The moments, however, in which Muriel and Ivy are doubled serve to emphasise their— potentially singular—role as objects of desire for Jekyll and Hyde. In both instances, the women are framed reacting to

22 Sherry D. Lee, "A Florentine Tragedy, or Woman as Mirror," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 18, no. 1 (2006): 49

23 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Directed by Rouben Mamoulian. 1931. Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video, 2004.

24 Ibid.

25 Michael Stevastakis, "Stylistic Coding of Characters," 21.

men's declarations of love for them. That Jekyll and Hyde's dialogue continues during the close-ups of Ivy and Muriel, too, prioritizes male desire over female autonomy, utilizing "the silent image of the woman [to reinforce] her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning."[26] Furthermore, as film theorist Laura Mulvey points out, the "pleasure in looking [in Hollywood cinema is] split between active/male and passive/female:" it is through the cinematography itself that Ivy and Muriel are rendered passive.[27] The appearances of Ivy and Muriel are coded "for strong visual and erotic impact" through the stylization of the characters extreme close-ups—a technique which, in itself, fragments the female body—using high-key lighting and soft-focus.[28] Immediately, Ivy and Muriel's physical appearance positions them as "erotic object[s]"[29] on-screen, connoting a "*to-be-looked-at-ness*"[30] which is reinforced by the subjective camerawork: by conflating the perspective of the audience with that of the male characters, the gaze of the camera is gendered masculine, relegating the female characters' role on-screen, and within the narrative itself, to a "traditional exhibitionist role" subservient to the 'male gaze.'[31]

The passivity forced upon both Ivy and Muriel through Mamoulian's use of these techniques negates any serious complications a fourth participant poses to Sedgwick's model: we may either uphold Sedgwick's triangular structure, conflating the mirrored Ivy/Muriel into a singular, female object of desire for Jekyll and Hyde, or consider the characters' relationship as a quadrate, connecting the mirrored Jekyll/Hyde to their respective objects of desire, the doubled Ivy/Muriel. In any case, it remains the female characters who are assigned a passive, desired role, subordinated by the agency of male desires,

26 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 29.
27 Ibid., 33.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasures and Narrative Cinema," 33.
31 Ibid.

illustrating how "the status of women, and the whole question of arrangements between genders, is deeply and inescapably inscribed."[32] *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde's* erotic triangles by privilege the agency of, and the relationship between, male characters, and conversely subordinate the role of women. The film's triangular structure perpetuates the gender imbalances which informed social ideologies at the time of its production.

Eve Sedgwick's conceptualisation of desire thus offers a new perspective on the relationships which structure Rouben Mamoulian's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. While Mamoulian's envisaging of the Jekyll/Hyde transformation scene exemplifies the process of self-identification intrinsic to Jacques Lacan's mirror stage; introducing a bilateral relationship of desire between subject and reflection. The introduction of Ivy as a sexual object for both Jekyll and Hyde—as well as a double for Jekyll's fiancé, Muriel—introduces a triangular structure which is explicitly informed by desire. By analysing the privileging of male subjects over female objects within this framework, we come to see how desire, in its structural capacity, also functions to perpetuate social ideologies, particularly in gendered terms.

32 Eve Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 25.

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Finn Teppett

"The naughtiest girl at school"
Sarah Kane's *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love*

No recent playwright has achieved anywhere near the infamy in such a short stretch of time that Sarah Kane did with the premiere of her play *Blasted* in 1996. The play's representations of both physical and sexual violence were extreme, brutal and without precedent. But critical and popular responses to this violence have always divided between those who cannot (or choose not to) see past the immediacy of the disturbing scenes of violence and dismiss them as 'shock tactics'; and those who see through to the intellectual discussion to which Kane puts her violent images to work. A consideration of her first two plays, *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love*, will shed light on why initial reactions to the plays were so spiteful. Kane made a clear dramatic choice to unsettle her audience, and thinking about the various treatments of rape in her plays will explore the reasons behind making that choice.

When Kane's first play *Blasted* premiered upstairs at the Royal Court Theatre in London, the immediate critical reaction was of great shock and disgust at the content of the play. Many reviews simply read as catalogues of the atrocities that occur in the play (indeed even now, much academic writing on Kane's plays cannot help itself from doing something similar), as an attempt to convey the horror of the spectacle. Understood by perhaps only a handful of directors and playwrights- creatives close to the heart of theatre- the public found it hard to take her seriously. Ken Urban called Kane "the most-talked about, least-seen British playwright" for good reason: her notoriety quickly spread to more people than the upstairs studio at the Royal Court could hold.[1] People's reactions to the play were largely limited

1 Ken Urban, "An Ethics of Catastrophe: The Theatre of Sarah Kane," *PAJ: A Journal of*

to the tabloid sensationalism of the time, any deeper importance in the play was otherwise obscured. It is clearly evident though that "criticism has tended to soften over time," perhaps a function of the tabloid's monopoly giving way to more thoughtful considerations of Kane's themes and approaches.[2] Criticism since has also had to take into account the emergence and popularity of other contemporary explicit writers, fellow proponents of "in-yer-face" theatre, notably Mark Ravenhill and Anthony Neilson. Much of the outrage at the time was a response to Kane's "staging of violence that violates rules of representation and convention within what is designated as theatrical space."[3] The theatre space for the *Blasted* audience is no longer safe, but upsetting and disorienting when stripped of its "insulated interiority."[4] Just like Cate (by Ian) and then Ian (by the soldier) in their comfortable hotel room, the audience feels their safe, comfortable space violated by the extent of Kane's violence. The play begins in a mode of conventional social realism, in "a very expensive hotel room in Leeds,"[5] a familiar and anaesthetic scene that "lures the audience into a false sense of naturalistic security, eclipsed behind the invisible fourth wall."[6] But after being hit by a mortar bomb that leaves a gaping hole in the room, the play loses the safety of its initial realism and is taken over by the dread of its impending violence. This "deliberately unusual and provocative form"[7] is a function of both "the rejection of a unity of space and the unflinching representation of corporeal suffering."[8] One of the methods Kane used to blast the audience was a rejection of the Aristotelean unities of time, place

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Performance and Art 23, no. 3 (2001): 36.

2 Ian Ward, "Rape and Rape Mythology in the Plays of Sarah Kane," *Comparative Drama* 47, no. 2 (2013): 225.

3 Christopher Wixson, "'In Better Places': Space, Identity, and Alienation in Sarah Kane's Blasted," *Comparative Drama* 39, no. 1 (2005): 79.

4 Ibid., 86.

5 Sarah Kane, *Complete Plays* (London: Bloomsbury, 2001), 3.

6 Wixson, "In Better Places", 77.

7 Aleks Sierz quoted in Wixson, "In Better Places," 76.

8 Wixson, "In Better Places", 76.

and action- in this case it is time and action that have been displaced: the hotel still stands but finds itself in the middle of a warzone. The representation of human suffering speaks for itself; it is not coincidental that the entrance of the war into the hotel room comes so soon after Cate's rape (a personal violent violation) by Ian. *Phaedra's Love* contains even worse violence and had it happened to premiere before *Blasted*, it no doubt would have come under similar fire for its explicit representations of violence but, as it was, the legacy of *Blasted's* vitriolic response was difficult to overcome. The violence and rape Kane uses in *Phaedra* is just as brutal as *Blasted*, but they are "far from mere shock tactics," instead, her "dramaturgical maneuvers are calculated to provoke a complex response."[9] Kane wants to snap the audience out of an idle complacency and force them to reconsider ways of thinking. Britain's lack of intervention in the Bosnian crisis; the rationality behind rape myths; or even more abstract ideas like hope, and love, and what it means to live an 'ethical' life are all up for re-examination.

It is an uncomfortable audience that watches a Sarah Kane play. Each play pushes against the viewer's beliefs of what is acceptable or possible on stage, with the result being the transference of these reconsiderations onto their own lives. The critic Christopher Wixson wrote:

> By creating the same alienated sensibility in her audience from which her characters suffer, by disorienting conventional interpretive cognition and engendering audience discomfort with representations of violence, Kane is able to formulate a more powerful examination of identity and politics, launching a severe indictment of ethical apathy.[10]

9 Ibid., 85.
10 Ibid.

This "alienated sensibility" is clear in many of Kane's characters. Through brute force, Ian learns something of a "lesson" in ethics after his ordeal. In a similar way, the intensely apathetic Hippolytus finds a way to finally connect to the world. Ian begins the play as a forceful, patronising, insensitive hypocrite. He refuses to acknowledge the similarities between his own sex crimes and the horrors committed by the soldier, and is readily willing to reinterpret his own job title as a "home journalist" as it pleases him.[11] He phones in a story about a serial killer operating as far away as New Zealand, but snubs the soldier's plea to write about the vicious war that is happening literally all around him in Leeds. Yet as vile as Ian gets, Kane never paints him as a purely unlikeable character, she had a soft spot for him herself, in an interview she admitted "I really like Ian; I think he's funny."[12] The play has a hopeful ending, the now entirely helpless Ian is looked after by Cate, and he is grateful.[13] He is stripped of his ability -and desire- to control, manipulate, possess. In this way, Ian's arc is not a simple matter of moving from bad to good, rather his characterisation is another example of "Kane's continual collapsing of the simple binary oppositions that provide an audience with a comforting moral assurance."[14] Hippolytus has another complex development but instead of an ethical shift his is an emotional one; from "a posthuman being alienated from human feelings, spoiled by the decadence that Western life has drowned him in"[15] to "an emotionally struck human being holding the value of honesty very dear."[16] The violence that shapes both of these characters is the same

11 Kane, *Complete Plays*, 48.

12 Sarah Kane quoted in Aleks Sierz, ed., *Modern British Playwriting: the 1990s* (London: Methuen Drama, 2012), 206.

13 (Ian: Thank you) Kane, *Complete Plays*, 61.

14 Urban, "An Ethics of Catastrophe," 43.

15 Laurens De Vos, *Cruelty and Desire in the Modern Theatre* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011), 92.

16 Ibid., 91.

violence Kane hopes will affect the audience in a similar way. It is important to note that many of the particularly violent instances of Kane's plays are sourced from life. The sucking out of Ian's eyeballs was taken from an incident at a football game, the pole that gets pushed up into Carl's anus in Cleansed is the same pole used by Serbians to crucify hundreds of Muslims in Bosnia.[17] By extracting bits of violence like these from the world around her and reframing them, Kane makes us examine violence in a way that we usually do not. She fairly points out that "Blasted is pretty devastating. But the only reason it's any more devastating than reading a newspaper is that it's got all the boring bits cut out."[18] As an audience, we are so far removed from natural emotional reactions that the only way we can recognize something as worthy of feeling is if it gets compressed and transplanted into a more familiar space: the stage. The violence and violent emotion of *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love* are "a counter-cultural response to the difficulty of genuinely being able to feel."[19] In too many ways we are just like Hippolytus, who only eats junk food and has sex "as a substitute for the personal involvement he is unable to feel," it takes a really violent shock to be made to feel. [20] At Hippolytus's death -a peak of emotional sensation and investment- he says "if there could have been more moments like this."[21] This is exactly why Kane is so unreservedly confrontational to her audience, it is infinitely more than just 'shocking.'

Kane has opened up the gates to our emotions, but how does she make use of this emotional disturbance? As an example of the intellectual work that Kane requires the critical reader to do, a

17 Sarah Kane quoted in Sierz, ed., *Modern British Playwriting*, 205-7.

18 Ibid.

19 Elaine Aston, "Feeling the Loss of Feminism: Sarah Kane's Blasted and an Experiential Genealogy of Centemporary Women's Playwriting," *Theatre Journal* 62, no. 4 (2010): 581.

20 Christopher Innes, *Modern British drama: the twentieth century* (Cambridge: Univeristy Press, 2002), 531.

21 Kane, *Complete Plays*, 103.

consideration of rape in the light of the two plays of hers at hand will be illuminating. Since it has been noted that "when Kane sought to intensify the violence of her plays she turned repeatedly to rape," we can see the role of rape in these plays as both an extreme extension of the pervasive violence already present; but also in its own terms, as a shockingly common act of violence surrounded by myth and misconception that is often ignored.[22] The complex landscape of treatments of rape is clearly present in writing about Kane's work. Some writing can betray certain conceptions of rape in the writer's bizarre use of language, for instance when the critic Biçer writes that the *Blasted's* initial rape "was, as usual, male to female. Here Ian has raped Cate during the night. But the second rape was, unusually, male to male."[23] This dismissive notion, that rapes are only "unusual" if they are homosexual, is one of the myths that Kane fights against. While Ian's rape by the soldier, with a gun to his head, is disturbing to see or read, it is actually an echo of earlier in the play where Ian simulates sex with Cate with his own gun pointed at her head. Here it is the force and brutal violation that are sickening, not the genders of the victims or perpetrators. Similarly, the soldier tells Ian that other soldiers "buggered" his girlfriend Col.[24] Victim gender here is never less relevant- it is powerless people who are being anally raped, not just either men or women. A step further from Biçer might be Christopher Innes who, in an otherwise insightful chapter on Kane's plays, makes no mention at all of Cate's rape. He details the rape of Ian and his forcing of Cate to masturbate him, and Ian's "simulated sex" with a gun, and yet fails to raise the point at all that Cate was raped overnight.[25] The overnight rape acts as something of a fulcrum in the structure of the play, it signals the unleashing of real,

22 Ward, "Rape and Rape Mythology in the Plays of Sarah Kane," 225.

23 Ahmet Gökhan Biçer, "Sarah Kane's Postdramatic Strategies in Blasted, Cleansed and Crave," *The Journal of International Social Research* 4, no. 17 (2011): 77.

24 Kane, *Complete Plays*, 47.

25 Innes' recounting of *Blasted*, in *Modern British drama*, 530-1.

relentless violence, so it is hard to imagine its absence in the article as a simple oversight. The lack of this important detail has parallels with Blasted and Ian's rejection of a possible story over the phone, when he dismisses an apparent rape story as a case of a "Scouse tart" who "spread her legs," and is therefore not worth the paper space. [26] Cases like these highlight the work Kane was trying to do in opening people up to re-examining ways that they think. In *Blasted* Kane is battling rape myths, challenging people to consider what they think of as "legitimate" or "realistic" rape in order to assert its reality. In *Phaedra's Love* however, Kane works with the idea of rape to expand its reach. Here she is not fighting old connotations of the word "rape," but asking us to consider new ones. Much of the anxiety in the play concerns how the "innocent" Hippolytus (in the conventional sense of "rape" as unconsensual sex) fares under the accusation from his stepmother of raping her- her interpretation of her act of oral sex on him, while he apathetically watched television.[27] In regards to the use of the word "rape" in Phaedra's accusation, Kane said:

> There was something about the inadequacy of language to express emotion that interested me. in Phaedra's Love, what Hippolytus does to Phaedra is not rape- but the English language doesn't contain the words to describe the emotional decimation he inflicts. "Rape" is the best word Phaedra can find for it, the most violent and potent, so that's the word she uses.[28]

Here Kane expands the notion of rape, so that it includes more than physical violation. We are dared to accept as a valid definition something more akin to an emotional violation- intense, unpleasant, brutally forced love. Hippolytus goes on to be violently executed:

26 Kane, *Complete Plays*, 13.
27 Ibid., 81.
28 Sarah Kane quoted in Ward, "Rape and Rape Mythology," 235.

strangled, dismembered, and disembowelled. The question remains for the audience, was it fair? Is Phaedra's accusation valid? In this way, Kane's shocking scenes have a great intellectual and cultural depth to them, far beyond the merely sensational.

The violence in Sarah Kane's plays does a lot of work. The shocking images and scenes unsettle us, and recovering from them means coming to terms with difficult intellectual and moral questions. Without the disturbance that the violence causes, we would not have the same imperative to examine and reconsider the parts of life that Kane wants us to. Reducing the violence to simple 'shock tactics' is a way to stay comfortable in a world filled with unnecessary violence and brutality, where our own solipsism and self-indulgence comes at the expense of the safety and comfort of entire communities. Kane's aim was to get us to see the violence around us that we are in the habit of ignoring. The vehemence of the vitriol misdirected at the playwright, as a scapegoat for the authorities actually in charge of the official apathy towards Bosnia for instance, is evidence that at least in some small part she succeeded.

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The Modern Novel

Owen Connors

Madness and Men

The portrayal of madness within Haruki Murakami's novel *South of the Border, West of the Sun* takes on a complex and gendered rendering. The gendering of madness as feminine in this novel is a process that articulates the madness of the male protagonist. This will be argued through an analysis of the association of female characters with 'non-normative' psychology and the rendering of these figures, through objectification, as hysterical. This objectification will be read through the Lacanian concept of 'The Gaze' and will subsequently show how male non-normative psychology and desire is articulated through projection onto the other. Ultimately an altering of conventional perception of the 'lost' object will render key aspects of this text as fantasy, within the reality of the text.

The three major female figures of Shimamoto, Izumi and Yukiko all express or perform attributes which pertain to psychological states which run counter to a conception of normative psychology. Shimamoto is associated with the colour blue through repetition in attire, such as her "light blue turtleneck sweater and a navy blue shirt" of their second encounter,[1] and Hajime's recollection from childhood that "[s]he owned a fair number of blue sweaters; blue must have been her favourite colour."[2] This colour is conventionally associated with melancholy and is clearly used as a euphemism for sadness in the text; such as the Nat King Cole song, "pretend you're happy when you're blue", which associates Shimamoto's physical appearance to a psychological feeling.[3] In an equally conventional manner Shimamoto is explicitly associated with rain as "strangely enough she always appeared on quiet,

1 Haruki Murakami, *South of the Border West of the Sun*, trans. Philip Gabriel (London: Vintage, 2003), 91.

2 Ibid., 11.

3 Ibid., 11,156.

rainy evenings," entrenching this association with melancholy through recurrence within setting of a weather system conventionally viewed as depressing.[4] Izumi's articulation of a mood of depression can be seen as she transforms from a figure that presented themselves as "always outgoing, always smiling" to someone who "if you say hello to her as you pass in the corridor she ignores you [and who] doesn't answer the bell when you ring."[5] This transformation can be associated with depression in its disassociation and discarding of a desire for relations to those around her, which marks a shift in the characters mental state from both Izumi's normative, and sanctioned normative, mental health. When Hajime see's Izumi's face at the end of the novel he describes it as "like a room from which every last stick of furniture had been taken, anything you could possibly call an expression had been removed, leaving nothing behind."[6] This emptiness can be associated to a loss of the will to live, and links to the suicidal tendencies of the other female characters; Hajime is informed by his father-in-law that "Yukiko tried to commit suicide once. Took an overdose of sleeping pills,"[7] whilst Hajime concludes that Shimamoto's disappearance signifies that "[s]he was planning to die."[8] Ultimately the actions and description of these female characters appearance or associated symbolism suggest psychological states which run counter to a normative conception of mental health.

The association of the feminine presence in Murakami's text with madness can be articulated further through intertextual referencing to Freudian case studies of hysteria and the predominance of 'the gaze' that accompanies the diagnosis of female madness. The presence of hysteria within the text, although explicitly referenced in the form of

4 Ibid., 145.
5 Ibid., 68.
6 Ibid., 178.
7 Ibid., 117.
8 Ibid., 171.

"hysteria siberiana," comes to the surface with greater complexity in the bodily signifiers of female characters and their similarity to specific case studies.[9] Shimamoto, due to the fact "she caught polio, [would] drag her left leg."[10] This bodily action becomes a signifier for Hajime as he follows this sign when he notices a female body expressing the same motion, such as on the streets at the end of the novel with the woman who "dragged one leg as she walked"[11] or the fact he "couldn't refuse" to go on a blind date when he heard that "something's wrong with one of her legs." [12] This focus upon the dragging of the leg links Shimamoto to the Freudian Case study of Dora, whose hysteria showed through in the "dragging of one leg."[13] This connection can be claimed to be coincidental; yet the emphasis upon the language structures of the body as the symptomatology of hysteria also shows through with Izumi. The locus of illness in Izumi is reduced purely to the face, as Hajime's school acquaintance explains how "most of children who live in [Izumi's] block of flats are afraid of her...face" specifically,[14] and Hajime's close interaction with this area of the body when "suddenly [he] looked up and saw Izumi's face" and drew a diagnosis of her psychosis in the "infinite blank."[15] The focus on the bodily semiotic of Izumi is in part due to her voicelessness, yet another symptom of hysteria that links her to the case study of Anna O. and her bouts of Hysteria Aphasia: her speechlessness.[16]

The aphasia of Izumi also draws attention to 'the gaze' that dominates the reader's perception of these female characters. Shimamoto and her

9 Ibid., 156.
10 Ibid., 5.
11 Ibid., 176.
12 Ibid., 46.
13 Sander L. Gilman, "The Image of the Hysteric", in *Hysteria Beyond Freud,* ed. Elizabeth Knoll, (Berkley, USA: University of California Press, 1993), 423.
14 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun*, 69-70.
15 Ibid., 177-178.
16 Gilman, "The Image of the Hysteric." 419.

accompanying psychology is described and diagnosed for us through the protagonist Hajime, her voice and the expression of self through language is explicitly absent as she claims "I just don't want to talk about myself."[17] Furthermore it is not a corpse that informs us of Shimamoto's death but rather Hajime's sensing the "smell of death" and his tenacious conclusion "she was planning to die."[18] Izumi's appearance and ensuing diagnosis as well as knowledge of Yukiko's attempted suicide are also made visible through perception and recounting, which also function as objectifying these female characters; Hajime's acquaintance's contributes to the conversation that Izumi is "no longer attractive,"[19] and Hajime's father-in-law switches to a discussion of his "eye for the ladies" he gained as he "played around a lot" and ensuing has an aptitude for understanding the quality of women, following the discussion of Yukiko's suicide attempt.[20] The gaze therefore belongs, at this point to the male subject, and through it's objectification of female characters contributes to the rendering of them as hysteric as perception of them is reduced to corporeal or objective forms. In other words, the denial of a subjectivity and resultant disavowal of access to the psyche through voice renders the female as object, a position which is relied upon for diagnosis.

Through a reading of Lacanian psychoanalytic principles pertaining to the gaze however, the distinction between object and subject becomes charged as the image of these females are seen to represent Hajime's own psychology and desire. Miran Božovič in her chapter "The Man Behind His Own Retina" describes the gaze through Lacan as "the form of appearance of the object a – petit a- within the visual field, which functions as the object of the appetite."[21] Therefore the aforemen-

17 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun*, 79
18 Ibid., 171
19 Ibid., 69.
20 Ibid., 118.
21 Miran Božovič, "The Man Behind His Own Retina", in *Everything You Always Wanted*

tioned objectification, which renders the female characters as images in Hajime's visual field are seen no longer to be expressive of their own psychosis but rather Hajime's. We know that Hajime shares the same melancholy as the female character as seen through his sharing of metaphors with female characters such as the repetition in the lines of dialogue between him and Izumi, "I feel like a snail without a shell," "I feel like a frog without webbed feet,"[22] and the sharing of metaphors pertaining to the architecture of the mind as Shimamoto, "constructed a much taller defensive wall around herself that [Hajime] ever built."[23] Yet when Hajime recognises being gazed at; he, although noting his psychology, constructs an object of the self, which counters the expression of melancholy. He focuses upon his body "going to the pool every morning [to swim] two thousand metres" and constructing an image of himself through commodity owning, "a four bedroom apartment condo in Aoyama, a small cottage in the mountains of Hakone, a BMW, a Jeep Cherokee" so that an "outsider would probably have said [he] had an ideal life."[24] The irregularity of psychological presentation, suggests that Hajime projects his melancholy upon the female characters as his inability to comprehend psychosis in his 'imaginary' image, it requires it's presence elsewhere for the conception of self to remain intact. A fine example of this projection lies within the alluding to the Koulechov effect when Hajime sees Izumi's face near the end of the novel. [25] Within this effect the gazer projects their reaction to images

to Ask Lacan (But Were Afraid to Ask Hitchcock), ed. Slavoj Žižek, (London, UK: Verso, 1992), 161.

22 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun*, 24.

23 Ibid., 7.

24 Ibid., 134-136.

25 The "Koulechov effect" is described by Žižek as a cinematic device used by Hitchcock to develop suspence, in his introduction to *Everything You Always Wanted to Ask Lacan (But Were Afraid to Ask Hitchcock).* Lev Koulechov experimented and developed this technique through editing a neutral actors face and cutting to images to suggests his looking upon them; a bowl of soup, a child in a coffin and a woman reclining on a couch. The audience perceives this face as changing relationally to the images presented, however the multiple shots of the face are in fact only one and the perceived change comes about due to the audience through their gaze imparting upon the actors face their own reaction to the images.

onto the image of the actors face. When Hajime sees Izumi's face "right in front of [him]" where "anything you could possible call an expression had been removed,"[26] the portrayal is identical to this effect with it's use of close up and "expressive neutrality."[27] Furthermore when Hajime "stroke[s] the surface of the glass with [his] fingertips" the link to the cinematic format is reinforced. Hajime's recognition of "an infinite blank" and seeing "her lips, motionless, sp[eak] of an infinite nothingness," is therefore nothing but seeing what he desires within this 'actors' face, that is seeing his own feelings of melancholy. [28]

The projection of Hajime's melancholy alone upon these female figures however is insufficient for a Lacanian interpretation of these females as the object (petit) a. Although the melancholy is associated with the lost object, as melancholy is "significantly occupied by the loss of the mother," and ensuing places the projection of melancholy in relation to object (petit) a, it is Hajime's enacting of repetition in relationship with these female characters that articulates the projection of desire.[29] The female characters express sameness in Hajime's attraction to them "as some people have a secret love for rainstorms, earthquakes, or blackouts, [Hajime] liked that certain undefinable something directed at [him] by members of the opposite sex."[30] This repetition of the "image materialised at and over another body,"[31] shows through in this constancy of attraction yet too, in Hajime's constancy of comparison

26 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun*, 177-178.

27 Slavoj Žižek, "Introduction: Alfred Hitchcock, or, The Form and It's Historical Mediation", in *Everything You Always Wanted to Ask Lacan (But Were Afraid to Ask Hitchcock),* ed. Slavoj Žižek, (London, UK: Verso, 1992), 3.

28 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun*, 177-178.

29 Elisabeth Bronfen, "Risky Resemblances: On Repetition, Mourning, and Representation", in *Death and Representation*, eds. Sarah Webster Goodwin, Elisabeth Bronfen, (Baltimore, USA: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 107.

30 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun, 37.*

31 Bronfen, "Risky Resemblances: On Repetition, Mourning, and Representation", 107.

of female characters with the "prototype"[32] of Shimamoto which will see Shimamoto positioned as the traditional mother figure in Hajime's psychology, that is Shimamoto and Hajime as "the lovers, their original unity."[33] As aforementioned, Hajime fetishizes the lame leg of and pursues this in female characters due to its association with the lost Shimamoto. When he begins dating Izumi he draws attention to her difference to Shimamoto. "[s]he couldn't understand the books I read or the music I listened to, so we couldn't talk as equals about them. In this sense, my relationship with her differed dramatically from that with Shimamoto."[34] Although the differences assume a distancing from the lost object, the drawing attention to it enacts recognition of Hajime's desire for Shimamoto through highlighting Izumi's 'inadequacy.' In regards to Yukiko, repetition of the lost object can be seen in the repetition of the attraction to melancholy the 'something' which is also relevant with Izumi, as well as the meeting of Yukiko when it "suddenly started raining," a symbol which comes to be associated with Shimamoto.[35] More directly, however is the moment when Hajime imagines Shimamoto during sexual intercourse with Yukiko, as "all the time [he] was inside her, it was Shimamoto [he] saw. [He] closed [his] eyes and felt [he] was holding Shimamoto."[36] This repetition of relations to attempt to fulfil 'the object of the appetite' is the foundational desire for return to 'original unity' in psychoanalytical theory. Yet it is the moment of seeing this unity, that is through gazing "into her eyes [and seeing his] face reflected in them",[37] that the object/subject distinction is dismantled through the plurality of presence in the gazing, that is both Shimamoto and Hajime are gazing subjects and gazed at,

32 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun, 37.*

33 Samuel Weber, *The Legend of Freud*, (Minneapolos: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 150, quoted in Bronfen, "Risky Resemblances: On Repetition, Mourning, and Representation", *Death and Representation*, (Baltimore, USA: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 104.

34 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun, 27.*

35 Ibid., 58.

36 Ibid., 120.

37 Ibid., 162.

dismantling self and other and the associating of this moment with the "face of death" that Shimamoto as the original lost subject is articulated.[38] Drawing again upon Bronfen and Weber, "all repetition repeats an original identity that it seeks to restore: the lovers, their original unity; life, it's original death."[39]

Ultimately it is the positioning of Shimamoto as 'original unity' that implies her association with 'the real' and subsequently renders their later relations as fantasy. The reconstitution of the moment of unity seen through the meeting with Shimamoto in later life is an impossible situation. Recreation of the (pre)"mirror stage," that is the return to the real is not possible due to this stages severing of this through entry into the symbolic/imaginary realm.[40] Therefore as Shimamoto has come to represent the original lost object; not as a repetition, but rather as 'the real,' her existence must be a fantasy as "the only point at which we approach this hard kernel of the Real is indeed the dream."[41] This idea sits somewhat ambiguously with the text as Shimamoto as a fantasy is both offered and denied by the author and protagonist. Hajime suggests multiple times throughout the text that Shimamoto is a "delusion", "imaginary", "another reality" (Italics mine), yet this is also discounted both by the protagonist and through this fantasies co-existence with the reality, sharing spaces such as Robin's Nest and the holiday home at Hakone.[42] This sharing with reality comes too with the symbolism attached to Shimamoto, the color blue and rain, whose

38 Ibid., 161.

39 Samuel Weber, *The Legend of Freud*, (Minneapolos: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 150, quoted in Bronfen, "Risky Resemblances: On Repetition, Mourning, and Representation", *Death and Representation*, (Baltimore, USA: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 104.

40 Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as formation of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience" (1949), in *Écrits: A Selection*, Trans. Alan Sheridan. (New York, USA: Norton, 1977.) 1-7. Note an explanation of this text is avoided due to focus falling on subsequent readings of Lacan, however the language of this sentence and positioning of the 'the real' I draw from attention to this text in particular.

41 Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, (London, UK: Verso, 1989), 47.

42 Murakami, *South of the Border, West of the Sun, 56,92,176.*

persistency is to the symbolic structure of dreams, yet the everyday nature of color and rain counters its significance, as does it application to symbolic use associated with melancholy within the literature context. Furthermore, Hajime becomes reliant upon objects to justify the reality of his encounter, such as the "the white envelope with ten-thousand-yen notes inside, proof it wasn't a dream."[43] Yet the disappearance of this object at the end of the text causes "existence and non-existence [to trade] places,"[44] however "crushed cigarette butts" with the "faint color of lipstick" are repeated and remain, unlike the envelope, to signify Shimamoto's existence after departure.[45] The proposition that Shimamoto is in fact a product of the mind is therefore put forward with the same hesitant language associated with these moments, like "probably" and "for a while."[46] This ambiguity of fantasy therefore becomes integral to the rendering of the real in this novel, and when considering that desire within reality's foundation lies in the Real, that is in "wakening reality we are nothing but a consciousness of this dream" ensures that the real, the lost object can remain integral to reality whilst remaining unattainable. [47]

Haruki Murakami's novel *South of the Border, West of the Sun* has been argued to associate non-normative psychology with female figures both due to the prevalence of melancholy, both symbolically and in the lives of female characters, and through their association to Freudian hysterical figures. I have then argued that this rendering as mad is closely tied to the denial of female subjectivity enforced through the gaze that is enacted upon them. This gaze, when interpreted through a Lacanian psychoanalytic theory implies that the gendered distinction between subject and object allows for the projection of male melancholy and

43 Ibid., 56.
44 Ibid., 176.
45 Ibid., 86,96.
46 Ibid., 146.
47 Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology,* 47.

desire for 'lost unity,' of object (petit) a, onto the female characters. This reading has lead to an assertion that Shimamoto represents in this text the object that is lost, and resultantly her later appearance as fantasy is proposed yet ambiguously supported by the text, enacting the integral importance of the real to reality.

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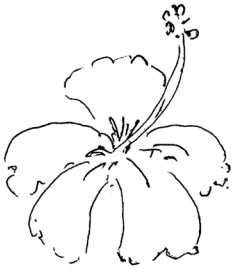
Global Literatures: Contested Spaces



Livné Ore

Language is inextricably linked to the formation of power relations, and hence, resistance. In *Purple Hibiscus: a Novel*, written by Chimmamanda Ngozi Adichie, language articulates tensions present both on a meta-level, as the novel itself can be seen as an act of resistance, and within the microcosm of the Achike family. Resistance is demonstrated by the negotiation of power between the Igbo and English languages, the shift from silence as complicity into the development of a defiant voice, and finally, debate as multiplicity. This debate acts as a form of literary resistance, as affirmed by Bill Ashcroft's emphasis upon the ability for one to resist non-violently through the refusal to be absorbed into the colonising culture.[1]

Adichie's choice of diction creates linguistic hybridity throughout *Purple Hibiscus,* as English, the language of the colonisers of Nigeria, is contested via the use of Igbo, one of the traditional Nigerian languages. The imposed superiority of the English language and suppression the indigenous language can clearly be seen through Eugene Achike, who plays the role of the mimic man, and represents the desire to conform with the colonising culture.[2]

When Kambili, her brother Chukwuka (henceforth Jaja) and her mother Beatrice speak in Igbo, they are actively resisting Papa Eugene, who wishes them to "sound civilised in public, he told us; we had to speak English" [13]. This is an example of the internalisation of the colonisers' "deliberate undervaluing"of the culture and language of the native people, and its "conscious elevat[ion]" of the language of the coloniser in order to create an atmosphere of domination.[3] Eugene dominates his household through punitive love, which is an act of mimicry that stems from his Christian upbringing.

1 Bill Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* (London:Routledge, 2001), 18-32

2 Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o, 'The Language of African Literature', *Colonial Discourse and Post- colonial Theory,* ed.Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (London:Harvester Wheatsheaf,1993), 442

3 Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o, 'The Language of African Literature', 442

He unconsciously "burst[s]" [102] into Igbo whenever he is angry, reaffirming that however civilised he tries to be, his veneer of English and is only a façade, which drops whenever he is not controlling himself. Eugene's use of Igbo correlates with his descent into uncivilised violence, as he "[swings] his belt" [102] at his family while he "[mutters] that the devil would not win." [102]

Comparatively, the characters of Aunty Ifeoma and Father Amadi offer a different perception of English. Father Amadi is regarded as a contemporary priest, who speaks "English laced Igbo sentences" [135] and "[breaks] into Igbo song" [241] during Mass. He has amalgamated his languages into one, promoting positive hybridity as he successfully integrates the practises of both cultures; he gives communion and consecrates the host as other priests do, but promotes a more community-orientated approach to his sermons. He resists the dichotomy of the language, culture and religion of the pagan traditionalists and the Christians by contriving to blend them into a cohesive whole.

Aunty Ifeoma takes a more direct path to resisting the colonisers' oppression as she tries to publish articles that criticise and resist the Nigerian dictatorship. Chinua Achebe's belief that native writers should be "fashioning out an English which is at once universal and able to carry his [or her] personal experience" is particularly applicable here, as Aunty is also sending her articles for publication in America, using English to resist the muzzle which the Nigerian university tries to place on her by suppressing her works.[4] Thus, English is being reclaimed by Aunty as she inverts the power relations between herself and the language that has been imposed upon her.

4 Chinua Achebe, 'The African Writer and the English Language', *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory,* ed. Patrick Williams and Laur Chrisman (London:Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), 431

Adichie uses debate as a form of active resistance, incorporating the perspectives of people other than her narrator for the reader to access, as well as giving examples of 'live' debates between characters in Nsukka such as that between Amaka and Father Amadi about the necessity of English confirmation names. [171-172] Later, Father Amadi's question of "Why...?" [175] to Kambili's proclamation that sleeping in the same room as her "heathen" [175] grandfather "is a sin" [175] encourages the reader to questions such assumptions as well. The multiplicity the text thereby generates is a form of resistance in itself, which according to Homi Bhabba is "not necessarily an oppositional act of political intention, nor is it the simple negation or exclusion of the 'content' of another culture ⋯ " but rather, a discourse which is embedded in ambivalent hybridity. [5]
Thus, multiplicity subverts the dichotomy of coloniser and colonised cultures, as the latter is no longer clearly defined.

Adichie's use of non-chronological narrative and the hybridisation of sentences by interspersing them with Igbo phrases such as "nne, ngwa. Go and change." [8] and "Nna anyi, I want to see you swallow them ..." [156] is another form of literary resistance. Her inclusion of Igbo endearments and terms, rather than translating them, means that the text gains a measure of authenticity, as characters talk about "cooking moi-moi" [21], "orah soup" [170], and call each other "biko" [9]. The emphasis placed upon each Igbo word is evident, as it stands out on the page because of its italicisation, and thus the reader is drawn to each small example of Nigerian culture that is embedded in the novel. Additionally, on a meta-level, by defying the traditional linear form of story-telling, Adichie's story becomes an act of resistance as a whole. The structure which Adichie employs, situating the climax of the story; what happened on "Palm Sunday"[1], as the

5 Homi K. Bhabha, *Postcolonial Transformation* (London:Routledge, 2001), 140-141

beginning of the text, then backtracking to "Before Palm Sunday" [17], jumping to "After Palm Sunday" [255], and finally presenting a coda in the form of "The Present" [293], clearly shows that this novel is a re-creation: a re-imagining of the events which occurred. Kambili's narration, which is an inversion of traditional form, is thus suggestive of her new-found resistance as she recasts her memories into a retrospective account in order to identify the development of her agency and to give certain episodes of her life significance as she reflects on them. Hence, *Purple Hibiscus* can be seen to echo Kambili's thought-processes, which resists the idea of chronology present in traditional Western literature.

In the cases of Kambili, Jaja and Beatrice, silence is a form of denial and an expression of fear, as seen in the aftermath of Jaja's spoken rebellion and Eugene's resultant violence; "the silence was broken only by the whir of the ceiling fan." [7] Kambili's lack of voice is regarded as complicit to Eugene's violence, as she succumbs to his strict Catholic ideology and overlooks the brutality of Beatrice's abuse as if it were the consequence of an accident, imagining that "the door had gotten stuck and Papa was trying to open it." [32] Kambili's misplaced sense of duty renders her mute, and this extends to her censorship of her thoughts. Language is used as a form of resistance and agency in *Purple Hibiscus*, and thus Kambili's absence of agency is symbolised by her early inability to speak. As Michel Foucault asserts, voicing opinions gives them power that is perpetuated through discourse.[6] This can be seen in the tension between Kambili and Amaka at the beginning of their relationship, wherein Amaka's ability to speak for herself gives her an edge over Kambili's silence, and casts her as intimidating and the dominating persona. This power dynamic shifts in the turning point of the novel,

6 Michel Foucault, trans., *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf)

as Kambili speaks out and comments, after Aunty tells her to "talk back to [Amaka]!" [170], that "you don't need to shout." [170] Moreover, Kambili's literal journey to reclaim her language also correlates with the development of her resistance to Eugene's patriarchal power. She inverts her silence into laughter to create agency, as her ability to have discourse defies her oppression.

Purple Hibiscus depicts the relationship between language and resistance in several ways. Adichie's careful construction of the contrasts woven into the novel encourages a reading of multiplicity, which engenders ambivalence. This is manifested by Eugene's mimicry of the colonising culture, which contrasts with Father Amadi's biculturalism and Aunty Ifeoma's reclamation of the English language. In the novel, thoughts attain power through language, enabling Jaja, Kambili, and later, Beatrice to resist the authority of Eugene. In particular, Kambili's transformation from a silent and shy girl into an independent woman acts as a metaphor for her journey into resistance and adulthood. This evolution is re-imagined through Adichie's non-linear narrative and the linguistic strategies that form a multi-layered text laden with meaningful tensions.

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Writing and Settlement

Makyla Curtis

Facing down the hegemonic order: the role of art as a record of counter histories

Fine art offers possibilities of acting outside bureaucratic functions of state and government and can be adapted to indigenous ways of thinking and remembering; it has the potential to house experiences and histories. It is these characteristics of art which opens it up as a medium for indigenous peoples to assert their histories, their version of events, and to challenge recognised historiographies guarded by the hegemonic order. Settler colonial hegemonies value written histories which enables them to censure indigenous stories in favour of colonial rewritings. Artists can utilise the visual arts to write and record their political voice and substantiate their position as counter to that of established history: "Telling history makes history."[1] The recording of their histories acts to question, displace or destabilise the settler version of history; if "there remain strong indigenous objections the nature of the [settler] claim will shift."[2] With substantial objection, a hegemonic order will adapt to incorporate counter histories in order to maintain supremacy. Therefore, art is a platform from which indigenous peoples can alter hegemonic historiographies which otherwise work to oppress them. The paintings *Carnarvon Collision (Big Map)* (Figure 1) by Vincent Serico of Jiman descent[3] and *Te Uri o te Ao* (Figure 2) by Emily Karaka of Ngāi Tai[4] descent are exam-

1 Stephen Turner. "Reenacting Aotearoa, New Zealand." *In Settler and Creole Reenactment,* ed. Vanessa Agnew and Jonathan Lamb (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2009),246

2 Ibid.

3 Vincent Serico is 'officially' of Wakka Wakka and Kabi Kabi decent. His lineage to the Jiman people is through his father's links to Carnarvon.*

*Jeremy Eccles. "Vincent Serico" *Aboriginal Art Directory.* Accessed May 17, 2014. http://news.aboriginalartdirectory.com/2013/07/vincent-serico.php

4 There are conflicting records as to which iwi Emily Karaka is affiliated with. One exhibition pamphlet lists her iwi as Ngāti Whātua, the Auckland Art Gallery website claims she is of Waikato and Ngā puhi decent,* Karaka's dealer gallery website, Orexart† claim she is from the Tāmaki Makaurau hapū of Ngāi Tai. The exhibition pamphlet for Karaka's exhibition *Claims Wai 423 and 357‡* describe her heritage as "a member of the Ngāi Tai and Waiohua Confederation of tribes." When I spoke to Karaka personally, the only iwi she mentioned her affiliation with was Ngāi Tai: she said she was a "direct decedent" of a Te Tiriti o Waitangi signatory

ples of how indigenous voices can be heard through painting. This essay will examine what stories these paintings are telling; how they are counter factual to established history and hegemonic 'facts'; and how they function as historical records and the ways in which they act to destabilise or amend historiography to better represent indigenous people and their interests.

History paintings depict a narrative or provide knowledge pertaining to an event, time or place. Vincent Serico's painting locates the site of interest geographically through the title *Carnarvon Collision*. Carnarvon is a National Park in central Queensland. This painting, with the linear advance of the white figures with their cattle and wagons moving down from the top right hand corner, places us at the site in the 1850s when the Hornet Bank Station homestead was established in the area by the Fraser family. The Bidjara and Jiman inhabited this area before the Fraser family arrived.[5] The Jiman people are depicted as the black figures in the painting. The second component of the title, *(Big Map)*, offers a way of reading the painting cartographically. A river runs horizontally through the image with a blue and white rimmed formation which frames the image and cuts through from the top left into the painting. The white and blue denotes the height of these formations and locates the image more specifically in the Carnarvon Gorge, the area in which the Fraser family grazed their animals.

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from Ngāi Tai.

* "Emily Karaka," *Auckland Art Gallery.* Accessed May 17, 2014.
http://www.aucklandartgallery.com/the-collection/browse-artists/357/emily-karaka

†"Karaka, Emily," *Orexart.* Accessed June 4, 2014.
http://www.orexgallery.co.nz/artists/karaka_emily/default_karaka.aspx

‡Norris, Nanette. *Emily Karaka: Claims Wai 423 and 357*. Manukau City: te tuhi – the mark, May 2001

5 Arguably the same people, the terms are used interchangeably. Jiman seems to denote the people, bidjara the language.*

* Jackie Huggins, Rita Huggins, and Jane Jacob. "Koormindanjie: Place and the Postcolonial." *History Workshop Journal* No. 39 (1995): 164-181.

The painting can be read as a narrative: the story can be traced compositionally following the movement of the cattle. The proliferation of black figures in the gorge suggests both population size or movement and use of the land over time. *Carnarvon Collision* depicts a contact zone, a changing point in the history of the people of this place; their number was greater before settler arrival; their people had been on the land for thousands of years. All of the action of the Aboriginal people before the arrival of the Fraser homestead is depicted within the one frame. The sense of time is not linear but rather all moments of time are shown concurrently. This demonstrates how Serico has adapted the canvas surface to record events in the manner his culture views and remembers them: how time is understood directly relates to how time is recorded. An important part of recording an aboriginal history is to incorporate the way in which the events are remembered and retold. *Carnarvon Collision* was painted in 2006 but there is nothing to suggest this is not how Serico would paint the area today as a representation of the land. Aboriginal relationship to the land is often described as people belonging to or being owned by the land, rather than land as owned by people.[6] Therefore any representation of this land would include its people.

Karaka's painting *Te Uri o te Ao* functions in a similar way in relation to time. The owl's wide wing span embraces the land beneath. The owl, a ruru, is a kaitiaki, a guardian of the land. In his feathers he holds all the knowledge of that land in the form of scrawled labels, place names, hapū and iwi, treaty tribunal claims and legislature relating to the land; this includes the bureaucratic numbers and codes attributed to the land by the Crown as well as the older histories of the land buried beneath. The whole history of place is displayed not

6 *Our Generation*. Documentary Film. Directed by Sinem Saban and Damien Curtis. Australia: 2010.

as a linear sequence but by the way it is viewed from the present: the land written over and over, a palimpsest with every layer showing through. Karaka says her paintings are about "describing the landscape."[7] The artwork was painted in 1995 specifically for the opening of the 'New Gallery' in the old telecom exchange building opposite the Auckland Art Gallery.[8] "This land is Māori land" refers to the land right where a gallery patron stood to view the painting. The land was owned by the government. Under the State Owned Enterprises Act of 1986, section 27A[9], before the land can be sold, the sale must first be offered to Māori in order to be returned to Māori ownership in accordance with Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975. "Ngāi Tai were not consulted. [The land] should have been protected under Section 27A."[10] "SOE 27A" is blazoned across the owl's wings as a statement of the crown breaching their own legislature against the land.

The title of the painting *Te Uri o te Ao*, which translates as The Seed of the World, is the name of the hapū that genealogically links Ngāi Tai to this land and asserts their Mana Whenua. Other legislation also written into the land in the painting is the Resource Management Act 1991 which stipulates the act "shall take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Tiriti o Waitangi)."[11] This is government legislation that dictates the ownership and use of the land outside mana whenua and self-determination. Indigenous labels of place can be seen beneath the legislation acronyms such as place names "Tāmaki Makaurau," iwi "Tainui," hapū "Te Uri o te Ao," and so on. It is through these inclusions in "overt quotation"[12] that Karaka paints a

7 Emily Karaka (via telephone), interview by author, June 2, 2014

8 The New Gallery was a component of the Auckland Art Gallery and was closed when the revamp of the main gallery was completed.

9 "State-Owned Enterprises Act 1986" *New Zealand Legislation*. Accessed June 3, 2014. http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1986/0124/latest/whole.html#DLM98092

10 Karaka, interview.

11 "Resource Management Act 1991" *New Zealand Legislation*. Accessed June 3, 2014. http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1991/0069/latest/DLM230265.html

12 Overt quotation is an attribute specific to indigenous post-modern art. The full quote

'complete' history of the land, encompassing both the 'long' history of Māori occupation and the 'short' history of pākehā settlement.[13]

These two artists have indigenised the canvas in order to better convey their histories as timeless, or rather to convey all time at once. *Te Uri o te Ao* layers time as text and texture which demonstrates the history of the land; to look at the land and the painting is to view its whole history at once. Carnarvon Collision does this differently in that while it shows a full history of place for the Jiman people, it halts time to point emphatically at the cultural collision that occurred in the 1950s that ultimately decimated the Jiman people. The Carnarvon Gorge was a site of extreme cruelty against the Jiman people and other aboriginal groups whose homes bordered on the gorge. Jackie and Rita Huggins describe the invasion:

> Their quest was to tame the 'natives' and possess the land. [···] There was one thing they could do with us – get rid of us completely [···] Then our tranquil home could become their fortresses and their recreational areas. They did this through force and theft, by poisoning flour and waterholes, burying Blackfellas alive, tying them to trees for shooting practice.[14]

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is as follows: "These [indigenous] artists are frequently concerned with questions of identity, yet reject restrictive affirmations of tradition, and critically reframe representations of indigenous peoples. Their works often reproduce colonial images and elements of indigenous culture through the practice of over quotation."*

*Nicholas Thomas "Hierarchies: From Traditional to Contemporary"

13 This concept of a long and short history relates back to Stephen Turner's concept of New Zealand as having a "short" or shorter, settler history that displaces "long" or longer, Māori histories of the same place."†

† Stephen Turner. "Reenacting Aotearoa, New Zealand," 246

14 Huggins, Huggins and Jacob. "Koormindanjie: Place and the Postcolonial." PAGE

In 1957 the Jiman people retaliated; they attacked the Hornet Bank Homestead and killed the occupants. William Fraser, a surviving member of the family, initiated a full scale revenge attack. It is estimated that at least 300 Jiman people were killed in retaliation for the attack on the Fraser family.[15] It is generally regarded that Fraser and his supporters completely exterminated the Jiman people and their language, succeeding in what Huggins described as the invaders' aim to 'get rid of us completely.' It is these events that Serico's painting precipitates.

That the Jiman people of Carnarvon Gorge are extinct is a hegemonic fact.[16] The term hegemonic fact is used in the sense of a widely held understanding or belief perpetuated through social literatures and media production, i.e. texts produced to inform the public, which is not necessarily factual when juxtaposed against other perspectives. In the case of the Jiman people, hegemonic fact refutes that they exist at all, that they have been exterminated. The article *Kooramindanjie: Place and the Postcolonial* was written to record a return journey of two aboriginals, Rita and Jackie Huggins, with genealogical links to the Carnarvon area. Rita herself was born in the Carnarvon Gorge; "during the late 1920s Rita and her family were rounded up by the troopers and sent on the back of a cattle truck" to a reserve later known as Cherbourg.[17] Jackie and Rita Huggins and their friend Jane Jacobs journeyed through the gorge in 1995. At the time of their visit, "official brochures mention the 'passing' of local Aboriginals but not the local massacres."[18] Today brochures about the Carnarvon

15 Bruce Elder, *Blood on the Wattle: Massacres and maltreatment of Aboriginal Australians since 1788*, (Sydney: New Holland Publishers, 2003), 94.

16 The concept of a 'hegemonic fact' was born out of Stephen Turner's discussion of a 'social fact.'* The 'hegemonic fact' is bound up in the historiographies and accepted truths of a society, in this case, a colonial settler society.

* Stephen Turner. "Reenacting Aotearoa, New Zealand," 249

17 Huggins, Huggins and Jacob. "Koormindanjie: Place and the Postcolonial." 169

18 Ibid., 173.

National park[19] are similarly dismissive of aboriginals who associate with the land. Each reference to aboriginals implies a long lost culture preserved in rock art.[20] This social fact of their 'disappearance' from the land has ongoing ramifications:

> Any claims we Bidjara [Jiman} people make to this country under the provisions of the new Native Titles Act with have to counter the myths that there are no Aboriginal people for this place. The claims we as Aboriginal owners of this land can make are tainted by dispossession and its violence on our memories.

It is this myth that Serico is confronting in *Carnarvon Collision*. The painting is a reminder of the circumstances of the downfall of an indigenous group, emphasising that moment in the Jiman history that caused such irreparable damage to their population.

The two Waitangi claim numbers on *Te Uri o te Ao* are Wai 423 and Wai 357. These claims were submitted to the Waitangi Tribunal on behalf of Ngāi Tai and refer to the lands in Tāmaki Makaurau,

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19 "Carnarvon Gorge Section, Carnarvon National Park: Park Guide" *Queensland Government, Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing.* Accessed May 30, 2014. http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/parks/carnarvon-gorge/pdf/carnarvon-gorge-vg-bp044-lr.pdf

20 There are 9 instances of the word. Eight are as mentioned above. The ninth mention is problematic in a
different sense. The text in full reads:
"Traditional Custodians have a long and ongoing relationship with the area that falls within Carnarvon National Park. The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing acknowledges the connection Aboriginal people have with this cultural heritage place, and asks that you treat the country through which you walk with respect and care." The term 'traditional custodians' seems to refer to the list of government departments. This text, which is in a separate, emphasised text box in the brochure, does very little to acknowledge the aboriginal heritage of the site and rather reiterates that the land belongs to governmental departments. I may be wilfully misinterpreting the message, but the alienating and dismissive tone is unavoidable.*
* Ibid.

asserting Ngāi Tai as mana whenua of the area. The only iwi in the general public view that is widely associated with Auckland, however, is Ngāti Whātua. This in itself shows the adaptability of the hegemonic order to subsume contradictory truths in order to maintain supremacy. The hegemonic fact of Auckland as a settler colonial space has altered over time to include Ngāti Whātua as the local iwi, thus altering settler perspectives of their 'home.' Karaka refuses the settler truths and hegemonic facts of the land, asserting her whakapapa to the land through her painting. In fact Karaka says that Ngāi Tai have a significant claim to the land as the original people of Tāmaki Makaurau: "our history is inscribed in the landscape. The footprints of my ancestors are inscribed in the rock of motutapu. [...] We are pre-fleet people; we've been here since before Rangitoto blew."[21] The exhibition pamphlet for Karaka's exhibition *Claims Wai 423 and 357* states that her "whakapapa extends back to the Tainui canoe, and in terms of traditional narratives, even before."[22] In contrast, Ngāti Whatua settled in the Tāmaki Makaurau isthmus in the 1700s. Te Uri o te Ao stands in opposition to a hegemonic order which has already given a place to an indigenous iwi. This holds that there is potential for the hegemony to be expanded to include her voice.

According to Karaka, alongside Ngāti Whātua and Ngāi Tai, there are eleven other iwi who claim mana whenua in Auckland.[23] With so many conflicting voices over the land it is important for each iwi to assert their whakapapa. The Waitangi Tribunal and the claims process is in some ways an opportunity to do this, however "the process is negligent, [the Crown is] relying on the dirty deeds from when they first colonised"[24] partially in neglecting to speak to the appropriate kaumātua of each iwi and hapū and in many cases overriding iwi

21 Karaka, interview.
22 Nanette Norris. *Emily Karaka: Claims Wai 423 and 357*, 3
23 Karaka, interview.
24 Ibid.

choices of who should be at the negotiating table: "It's their game. If they don't want you there, they'll get you out." Karaka, as a kaumātua for the Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki hapū, found herself and her daughter excluded from the negotiation table from March 2010 to April 2013. Their exclusion was overruled in the High Court, but by that time the Agreement in Principle had been signed (November 2011). Back at the negotiation table with the Crown, Karaka is now fighting for rohe at Mt Wellington which has significant history for Ngāi Tai who have been "retracing the past and rewriting the land," but the current settlement agreement has this area of land going to another iwi. The growing reputation of her art work, and the latest exhibition at The Auckland Art Gallery, Five Māori Painters, which includes *Te Uri o te Ao*, means Karaka has a "voice outside the negotiation room."[25] It is less likely that she will be ousted from negotiations a second time.

Despite having been side lined by the systems that control the treaty negotiations, Karaka has been able to circumvent the power structure to be heard by the wider public through her artworks. *Te Uri o te Ao* is one of many paintings that deal critically with the treaty claim process as well as biculturalism as a platform for New Zealand's growth as a nation, a concept fast becoming accepted by the mainstream. One review of Karaka's earlier works states "Karaka's paint-based European-style written language shows blending of two cultures. Through one she manages to further the cause of the other."[26] Karaka's whakapapa and roots to the land are heard and acknowledged through the treaty of Waitangi claims procedures. Her people's history will be written into the publication produced once the claim has been finalised. Her iwi is likely to receive compensation and return of lands towards losses suffered due to Crown breaches of The Treaty of Waitangi. But her voice as an artist producing

25 Karaka, interview.

26 "Pikato by Karaka: An Art Review". *The Press*. 30 November 1989. http://search.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/?itemid=|library/marc/supercity-iii|b1495967

art works which record and assert counter-factualities and counter histories will have a greater impact on the hegemonic logic of wider society into the future.

The impact of Serico's artwork is less optimistic. His statement in *Carnarvon Collision* is at a fundamental and basic level of self-assertion than *Te Uri o te Ao*. Karaka's people have recourse to legislation and tribunals, and earlier changes to wider societal attitudes demonstrate that further changes are possible within New Zealand. But the Jiman people are struggling just to be acknowledged as still living. Until they can assert their existence, they have no recourse to compensation of any kind. *Carnarvon Collision* draws a direct parallel between the Jiman people's demise with the arrival of colonial settlers. The massacres and poisonings of the aboriginal people are not acknowledged by Australian society. The local recreation guides omit any discussion on what happened to the aboriginal people of that area; the hegemonic facts of the Carnarvon Gorge and surrounding Queensland assert that the Jiman people became extinct through no direct relation to colonial invasion of the area. The outright rejection of their own history means that indigenous voices in Australia are not being heard.

In both paintings, *Te Uri o te Ao* and *Carnarvon Collision*, the artists have indigenised the canvas in order to tell the stories of their people on their land. The canvas was chosen as a medium that could be adapted to depict concurrent and overlapping time, which Serico and Karaka demonstrate is an integral component to knowing and understanding the history of a place. And yet the potential for these paintings to destabilise hegemonic facts is based on the context of settlement in the artists' respective countries. Karaka's voice is integral to the force of an increasingly vocal indigenous objection to the current hegemonic facts and government legislature in New Zealand.

*Te Uri o te Ao*is more brightly coloured and is adorned with peace signs and heart forms. It is a fundamentally optimistic painting. *Carnarvon Collision* faces a hegemony that will not acknowledge the existence of the people who belong to the Carnarvon Gorge. It insists "the true meaning of the gorge to the Aboriginal people may never be explained," since there are no survivors to remember the massacres and the poisonings and no one to tell the stories of Carnarvon.[27]

27 Huggins, Huggins and Jacob. "Koormindanjie: Place and the Postcolonial." 178 – Quoting a brochure.

Figure 1.

Carnarvon Collision (Big Map) Vincent Serico, 2006

203 x 310cm

Figure 2

Te Uri o te Ao Emily Karaka, 1995

300 x 380cm

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Reading/Writing/Text

Bhavin Parshottam

The Poetics of Antagonism

Should we seek to recognize an antagonistic figure for the sake of categorisation or seek further understandings of the poetics of the villainy at play that inform our constructions of an antagonist? The function of interpretive communities, discussed within the text "Is There a Text in This Class" by Stanley Fish, can be applied to analysing the poetics of antagonists within fictional texts. Fish's ideas of the ways in which humans recognise poems and the interpretive communities within which we exist can be adopted and used to explore our interpretations of the poetics of antagonists and their villainy; acts that we interpret as hostile. By using Fish's interpretive strategies, we can create a framework which can be used to categorise antagonists and naturally, by convention, protagonists. In doing this, the subjectivity and/or objectivity of good and evil is questioned and the different lenses that we use to identify various antagonists encourages further discussion.

Fish discusses acts of recognition and construction, aspects that form part of the interpretative lens that we developed from childhood, upbringing and experiences; a tool that we then use to create interpretative meaning.[1] In using this lens to identify an antagonistic figure, we associate characters with particular behaviours and classify them accordingly. For example, the traits of abuse of power, willingness to sacrifice innocent people for the success of a conspiracy plan and selfishness of oneself can be linked to the fictional United States President Charles Logan in the TV series *24*. By holding the highest political position in America, President Logan would popularly be perceived as a figure of protection, betterment and honesty. However,

1 Stanley E. Fish, "How to Recognise a Poem When You See One." in *Is There a Text in This Class?* (United States of America: Harvard University Press, 1980), 327.

by applying our interpretive lens we see Logan's affiliations with assassins, terrorists and his involvement in a conspiracy, as acts of evil.[2] He is therefore interpretively constructed as a villainous character. A convention of fictional work, which applies to Logan, is that antagonists act as an obstacle in our real world aspiration of a peaceful, secure and predictable society who will be eventually overcome by the protagonist. Our perception of how a country's President should perform, as discussed above, is violated by Logan's acts of evil. The application of the convention of good overcoming evil can be seen in Logan's case. This convention fits into the interpretive framework within which we interpret an antagonist; the overcoming of evil and our desire for a harmonious society.

President Logan (right) conspiring with former Head of Counter Terrorist Unit Christopher Henderson (left).[3]

In order to understand and interpret different types of antagonists, a variety of interpretive strategies are required. For example, with the supervillain character of Loki as seen in Marvel's *Thor* and *The Avengers*, we cannot use the same lens by which we interpret President

2 Gregory Itzin, *24: Season 5*. 20th Television. Directed by Jon Cassar. Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox Television, 2006.

3 "Day 5: 11:00pm-12.00am," *Wiki24,* accessed October 9, 2014, http://24.wikia.com/wiki/Day_5:_11:00pm-12:00am.

Logan. Loki is differentiated as he portrays villainous characteristics of pure selfishness, disregard for human life, deception, oppression and willingness for genocidal mass destruction to achieve personal gains.[4] In applying our interpretive strategies of connecting poetics of villainy to an antagonistic figure, we interpret these traits as sinful and categorise him as an antagonist. Loki's methods and morality causes the destruction of order; a reality that we do not desire. Because Loki does not perform in a way that aligns with normative morals and values, Loki is automatically categorised as an antagonist. Loki's dialogue such as "satisfaction is not in my nature" illustrates the greed and arrogance of the character; traits that we interpret as a divergence from an ideal world.[5] Fish discusses anything that becomes available inside an institution can become subject to characterisation.[6] This is the exact process by which we categorise villains and heroes; based on what we subjectively see as right or wrong. The poetics of villainy that Loki portrays are again detrimental to our dream of unflawed society, and therefore we classify him as an antagonist.

Loki forcing innocent people to kneel before him.[7]

4 Tom Hiddleston, *Thor: The Dark World.* Film. Directed by Alan Taylor. California: Marvel Studios, 2013.

5 Taylor, *Thor: The Dark World.*

6 Fish, *Is There a Text,* 332.

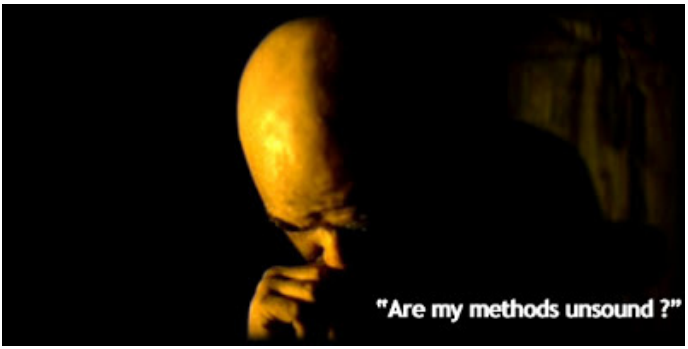
7 James, "The Avengers: where Loki is right?" *Cinemagogue,* accessed October 9, 2014,

When a good character turns evil, are all the good actions done by them negated by one evil act and should they then be interpreted as an antagonist? Antagonists are identified through "acts of recognition" but as Fish argues, we are embedded within an institution, which informs but limits our interpretation.[8] The interpretive strategies that we employ quickly categorise and oversimplify the poetics of an antagonist. For example, through the lens of the film "Apocalypse Now" and the character of Kurtz, who is popularly seen as an antagonist, we are made to question our interpretive framework. The film portrays the journey of the supposed protagonist, Captain Willard, to execute Colonel Kurtz, a renegade American soldier who has been gravely and mentally scarred by the insanities of war and has set up his own civilisation within a compound surrounded by corpses.[9] Apocalypse Now highlights the hypocrisy of American war efforts, which makes us reconsider who we interpret as an antagonist, and why we do so. By making us question our own interpretive processes, the film confirms the fact that there is framework within which we make assumptions and models about good and bad characters. By seeing the psychological effect of war upon Kurtz, we are given reason for his insanity and provided insights such as that audiences should look beyond the hero and villain convention and carefully examine our assumptions of the poetics that form a villain.

http://cinemagogue.com/2012/05/08/the-avengers-where-loki-is-right/.

8 Fish, *Is There a Text,* 326.

9 Marlon Brando, *Apocalypse Now*. Film. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola. San Francisco: American Zoetrope, 1979.



Colonel Kurtz. The quote makes us reflect upon whether Kurtz is an antagonist or the victim of the mental effects of war.[10]

Colonel Kurtz in an insane state.

10 "Apocalypse Now/Heart of Darkness: Ch. 16," *The Philter*, accessed October 9, 2014, http://thephilter.com/2014/05/apocalypse-nowhearts-of-darkness-ch-16/.

A loss of persona and innocence is illustrated here because war, the driver of his insanity, is the only place where he can belong; the mental and inner turmoil has made him inadaptable to societal norms.[11]

We identify an antagonist through the interpretive strategy of associating acts of villainy, which are usually against society's values, with a specific character. As audiences, we bring an interpretive framework that is based on our culture, upbringing and values. It is this framework leads us to conceive villains as evil and antagonistic. The subjectivity of our interpretations due to the conventions and institutional setting prevent us from forming a proper objective judgement about what appear to be antagonistic characters. Conventions are embedded assumptions within society that hinder our understandings of the true poetics of antagonism as they oversimplify the deepness of a character. As audiences, we should desire to seek further insights to fully master the skill of interpreting the poetics of antagonism.

11 Eugenio Sanchez Bravo, Charity M. Perera Rodriguez: Nietzsche in Apocalypse Now," *Classroom Philosophy Eugenio Sanchez Bravo*, accessed October 9, 2014, http://auladefilosofia.net/2012/04/09/caridad-m-perera-rodriguez-nietzsche-en-apocalypse-now/.

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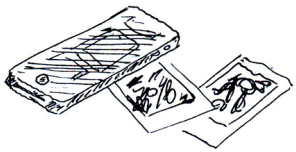
Writing Selves



James Anderson

Anticipated Memory in the Postmodern Age: The Instagram photo as a "pastiche" extension of the "remembering self."

"The authenticity of the photographic image lends to it an ontological authority" -Roland Barthes.

"The 'Instagram Generation' now experiences the present as an anticipated memory" (Kahneman *YouTube*), proposes psychologist Daniel Kahneman in a 2010 TED talk. Kahneman argues that Instagram users no longer experience the present as the time frame through which they experience 'everyday life', due to the perception of the "remembering self" (the mode through which an individual reflects on past experiences and memories), having developed to the extent that it now dominates over the perception of the "experiencing self" (the mode that an individual inhabits in the 'lived' present). The social media age, and online applications such as Instagram, have profoundly influenced this shift in time perception, through the self-documentation that these social media applications facilitate, enabling users to reflect upon 'present' memories at a later date.

This essay will explore the concept of "anticipated memory" through comparing the function of Instagram as a metaphysical object that embodies an extension of the "remembering self" mode of perception, to the function of Polaroid snapshots, as physical objects that are extensions of the "remembering self" (Kahneman *YouTube*). Fredric Jameson's theory on "pastiche" cultural forms in postmodern society (1853) will be used to argue that Instagram photo snapshots eradicate the self's existence in the present, transforming the present into an "anticipated memory" built on "pastiche" aesthetics that aim to convey these photo-memories as "authentic" (Barthes 20). In turn,

it will be argued that Instagram users' increase in self-documentation has therefore come to reflect an existential crisis in the self, with users incessantly producing visual documentation for online consumption, so as to affirm their existence in the present. Furthermore, the metaphysical space that Instagram photos occupy will be discussed in relation to Roland Barthes' theory in *Camera Lucid*a, so as to argue that the metaphysicality of this online space disseminates the meaning imbued in Instagram photos. A secondary case study of Spike Jonze's *Her* (2013) will also be discussed in relation to the existential crisis born out of the tension between both selves.

Instagram, as an online application that allows users to upload and edit photographs in 4:3 aspect ratio, facilitates photo-sharing between others social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Fans of the application celebrate the application's photo editing software e.g. photo-filters, that 'improve' the aesthetic quality of a photo, lending photos a 'retro' or 'vintage' quality. In a YouTube clip from "Shots of Awe" on anticipated memory, presenter Jason Silva responds to Daniel Kahneman's aforementioned quote on the Instagram generation, praising Instagram as a medium through which users can "'italicise' the present" (Instagram *YouTube*).

However, this proposition, that Instagram enables users to "italicise the present", is problematic with regards to the "remembering self", for two reasons. For example, this proposition either implies that through "designing" the present by editing and uploading a photo on Instagram (Instagram *YouTube*), the user emphasises, (as italics are often used to do), the emotive qualities of the image for future reflection; or, by "italicis[ing] the present", Silva suggests that photos edited on Instagram should not be taken literally, thus future reflection on these images should also be viewed through an "italicised" lens. To reiterate, just as italics are often used to connote an ironic personal voice, edited Instagram photos cannot considered "ontologi-

cal" (Barthes 20) reflections of 'lived' experiences. Both of the aforementioned points therefore highlight the falsity of Instagram as a tool for documenting the present "ontologically"; thus Instagram arguably alienates users from their actual 'lived' experiences. However, the process through which users edit their photos, which Instagram delivers to the user in template form, seemingly seeks to convince it's users that their photos, and thus memories, are indeed "ontologically" "authentic" (20).

This template, the medium through which Instagram users are coerced into engaging with so as to 'improve' their photos, is one based on "pastiche" aesthetics. Fredric Jameson's theory on postmodern "pastiche", although proposed before the rise of Instagram, effectively pre-empts the "nostalgic" function of Instagram for its users (1853). For example, Jameson argues that in postmodern society, "we have become incapable of achieving aesthetic representations of our current experience" (1853), thus postmodern society attempts to capture the historical past in a state of "nostalgia", despite the fact these historic representation are created "through our own pop images and stereotypes about that past, which [...] remain forever out of reach" (1853).

Indeed, Instagram's photo-filter editing functions through a "nostalgic" mode of cultural production for "pastiche" aesthetics. For example, the array of filters provided for users (Figure 1) are "pastiche" forms of Polaroid or Kodak photos from the early-mid 20th century (Figure 3 & 4), as is the "Square" photo template that Instagram uses, which similarly, is a "pastiche" aesthetic from 'old' photographic mediums. Instagram seemingly satisfies a fantasy on the part of the postmodern subject, fulfilling a "nostalgic" (Jameson 1853) desire, despite being far removed from the actual process by which these photographs were created e.g. dark room photography. The effect therefore, is that Instagram affirms for its users a sense that

their photos are "authentic" (Barthes 20), in the way that a variety of 'old' technological forms have come to be viewed in the postmodern age e.g. the typewriter as an authentic writing tool. However, as aforementioned, the reality is that users are becoming increasingly alienated from their "experiencing self", and thus their 'lived' experiences, through using Instagram as an extension of the "remembering self" (Kahneman *YouTube*).

In response to "digital technologies" such as Instagram being used to document the self, art historian Geoffrey Batchen writes that "this kind of photography has now taken on an extra memorial role, 'not of the subjects it depicts, but of its own operation as a system of representation'" (Batchen 137). As such, despite the aforementioned lengths that users go to in an effort to present their memories as "authentic" e.g. applying "pastiche" photo filters so as to imbue their digital photos with the "authenticity" of past photographic forms (Figure 1), photos uploaded to Instagram are essentially just "representations" (137) of Instagram as an online photo application, and thus "represent" the process of cultural production by which the photo came into existence and not the subjects they display.

This form of cultural production seemingly reflects an existential crisis of the self, through Instagram users engaging in a cycle of positive reinforcement to confirm their existence. For example, Instagram allows users to show their appreciation for particular photos by 'favouriting' a particular image. As aforementioned, the process these photos have undergone through their production e.g. being subject to photo editing software, has rendered these photos so far removed from the 'real' experiences they seek to represent, that by receiving praise for these photos, the user is essentially entering into a process of gratification for fictional experiences. Thus, due to Instagram users now experiencing the present as "anticipated memory" (Kahneman *YouTube*), Instagram renders the self as increasingly

alienated from its 'lived' present, through users propagating a process of fictional gratification so as to reaffirm their present existence.

French post-structuralist Roland Barthes, in *Camera Lucida*, writes on the metaphysical space that photographs occupy; a space that is further amplified in relation to Instagram photos of the digital age. Barthes outlines a history of photography, specifically describing the emotion he experiences when viewing a photograph of his deceased mother (Barthes 40). However, Barthes refuses to visibly describe the photograph in the text, instead, leaving the reader to mentally project their own loved ones into an "imaginary vortex" of "textual space" (Batchen 137) that this refusal facilitates. The effect of Barthes' "textual space" is that, as Batchen argues, "the entire history of the snapshot can be funnelled [into it] without a single picture from that history having to be displaced into the public realm[,] thereby chang[ing] into something other than itself" (137).

The "imaginary vortex" that Barthes opens, functions in effect, on a similar level to Instagram's "timeless" (Castells 45) 'photo newsfeed' (Figure 2). For example, Instagram's continually changing 'photo newsfeed' seemingly displaces the very content of the photos that it hosts, through these photos representing their "own operation as a system of representation" (Batchen 137). Thus through Barthes, Instagram becomes a 'digital void' into which users upload their highly edited photos, (complete with "pastiche" photo-filter that instantly displaces any "authenticity" it was intended to create), whereby the "timeless time" (Castells 45) of 'cyberspace' transforms the semantic significance of photos e.g. a family snapshot (Figure 1), into a hetero-normative collection of blank signifiers when viewed by a online, 'virtual' community e.g. Instagram users who do not personally know each other (Figure 2).

However, in contrast to Instagram's intrinsic inability to

"authenticate" memories of the present via digital photographs, the existence of Polaroid and Kodak photographs as physical objects functions to create a more sincere form of "authenticating" present memories, (yet inevitably still function as an act of anticipated memory due to photography being an extension of the "remembering self"). As Batchen outlines in relation to physical photographs:

> over the years they've been stained, weathered, and scarred. One of them even has a crease all the way across it (and yet someone still treasured this photograph enough to keep it). It's a reminder that snapshots could potentially be reproduced in large numbers but in reality they are often unique images. Such deformities are also a reminder that these pictures were once regularly touched by their original owners (137).

Here Batchen specifically refers to the physicality of the object as a defining factor of its existence as "authentic". In Figure 3, a photograph depicting a woman of European origin and another woman from Maori or Pacific Islander origin, Batchen's argument regarding "authenticity" is strikingly accurate (Barthes 20). The photo has visibly been "weathered [...] over the years", the "crease all the way across it" suggesting that "someone still treasured this photograph enough to keep it" (Batchen 137). Thus, the 'vintage' aesthetic of the photo, an aesthetic that Instagram seeks to reflect through its "pastiche" photo-filters, lends this 'original' physical object an "authenticity" that Instagram photos do not have, affirming this photo as an extension of the "remembering self" that seemingly does not alienate the self to the same degree as Instagram photos do.

However, despite the "authenticity" (Barthes 20) of this physical object, ultimately it was created out of normative process of production, just as Instagram photos are normativised through being

subject to a template form of photo editing. Thus, the very process of attempting to capture the present, "italicizing" the present as "anticipated memory" so as to "authenticate" one's existence, is one that is fundamentally flawed, due to the aforementioned inherent tension that lies between the "experience self" and the "remembering self". Spike Jonze's *Her* (2013) provides an example of another medium in which this tension in manifest, through protagonist Theodore Twombly's (Joaquin Phoenix) attempts to deal with his impending divorce revealing tensions between his "experiencing self" and "remembering self". Theodore's "nostalgic" (Jameson 1853) romanticizing of past experiences with his wife, despite having since developed negative feelings towards her, is born out of his inability to deal with divorce. Thus, his existence is displaced between his historical past, "which remain[s] forever out of reach" (1853), and his present 'lived' experience, highlighting his alienation in the present due to the domination of the "remembering self".

Self-documentation as solution to an existential crisis of the self through Instagram, immediately sacrifices the autonomy of the self through engaging in a normative process of cultural productions built on "pastiche" aesthetics (Jameson 1853). Perhaps the attraction of such applications lies in Jameson's argument that postmodern society is so "incapable of achieving aesthetic representations of our current experience" (1853), that society has resorted, through digital mediums such as Instagram, to "seek the historical past", or indeed our own past memories via the "remembering self", "through our own pop images and stereotypes about that past". Yet this argument renders the efforts of the 'Instagram generation' futile, as this past "remain[s] forever out of reach" (1853).

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Appendix

Figure 1: Instagram photo featuring 'vintage' photo-filter

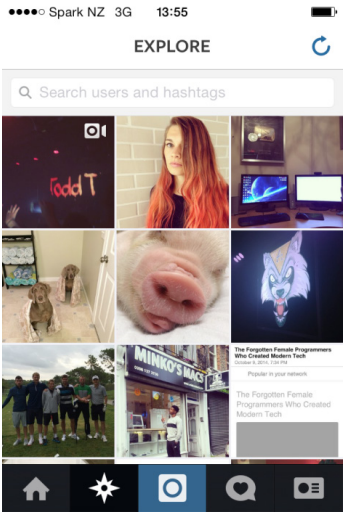

Figure 2: Instagram 'photo-newsfeed'

Figure 3: Original Kodak photo, featuring two women, dating approximately from the early-mid 20th century

Figure 4: Original Kodak photo, featuring a cat, dating approximately from the early-mid 20th century

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Writing as Critical Discourse

William Zhang

From Close Reading to 'Critical Thinking': Examining the Learning Outcomes of Our English Courses in an Age of New Capitalism

What is it that an English course, here at the University of Auckland, is aiming to teach? What are the sort of skills that a student is expected to learn from such courses, inside and outside the English Department? In this essay, I answer these two questions through examining texts circulated both inside and outside the Department, ranging from our course syllabi to career brochures. In short, I argue that the age-old close reading skill that English studies have used since the 1920s, has now been rebranded as a 'soft, transferable skill'.

The essay shall be organized as follows. In the first part of the essay, I argue that that the technique of close reading is the common skill English courses aim to teach. In the second part, I analyze the same question from an outside perspective, arguing that 'critical thinking', 'analytical skills' and 'soft, transferable skills' are currently marketed as the learning outcome of not just English studies at the University of Auckland, but the Arts in general. In the final part of the essay, I explain the discrepancy between these two answers, arguing that under what James Paul Gee refers to as the 'new capitalism,' the age-old skill of 'close reading' has been rebranded to increase a graduate's employability.[1]

1 James Paul Gee, "New People in New Worlds," in *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures*, ed. Bill Cope & Mary Kalantzis (New York: Routledge, 2000), 46.

The Inside Perspective

Inside the English Department, the course syllabus is perhaps the text most used by instructors and students. The syllabus is an information summary about a particular course. The syllabus tells the student what to read, when to attend lectures, who's teaching, and so forth. A syllabus also usually includes an 'Aims and Outcomes' section that describes what a course is trying to teach.[2] For example, the English 112 syllabus (semester one, 2012) states the following as part of its 'Aims and Outcomes':

> -Sound close reading skills as demonstrated in lectures and practised in tutorials
>
> -Ability to engage with multiple genres
>
> -Ability to think critically about texts.[3]

The English 219 syllabus (semester one, 2013) states:

> The course should also guide students towards appreciating the distinctive qualities of each text. The lectures are generally thematic in orientation, but in tutorials and in the assessed work, there is some focus on close analysis of particular passages and poems.[4]

2 The four syllabi chosen here are all from courses I attended here in the past three years. However, I believe that their methods of assessments, aims and outcomes, and teaching styles are sufficiently similar to most other courses in the English Department, that they can be used as generalized examples.

3 Jan Cronin, "English 112 Syllabus" (lecture, English 112, University of Auckland, February 27, 2012).

4 Joanne Wilkes, "English 219 Syllabus" (lecture, English 219, University of Auckland, March 13, 2013).

English 210, taught in the same semester as 219, states:

> The aim of the course is to provide students with a range of skills for reading early modern poetry.[5]

Finally, the syllabus of English 364 (semester two, 2013), states:

> You will learn how:
>
> -to read novels closely (creatively and critically), and to test the value of your close readings in weekly group discussion[6]

Of course, the content of the courses differ widely. English 112 was a course on postcolonial literature. 219 centered on Victorian literature, 210 discussed Shakespearean poetry while 364 discussed modern novels. Regardless of their content, however, there is one striking similarity between those 'Aims and Outcomes': the importance placed on close reading. Of course, close reading is not just one aim out of many. Close reading also makes up an important part of how these courses are assessed. For English 356, the close reading assessments were worth 40%.[7] For 219, the close reading assessment was worth 20%.[8] Similar percentages also applied for the other two courses.

The technique of close reading is not unique to our English Department. Nor is the technique a recent invention. According to Terry Eagleton, the technique originated from the works of English critics F. R. Leavis and I. A. Richards in the 1920s.[9] To read a literary work closely

5 Claudia Marquis. "English 210 Syllabus" (lecture, English 210, University of Auckland, March 4, 2013).

6 Eluned Summers-Bremner. "English 356 Syllabus" (lecture, English 356, University of Auckland, July 25, 2013).

7 Summers-Bremner, "English 356 Syllabus."

8 Wilkes, "English 219 Syllabus."

9 Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: an Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 26-37.

is to understand it in isolation, and the attention of the reader ought to be focused at the 'words on the page' irrespective of the literary work's context.[10] Close reading, for Eagleton, involved a 'limiting as well as focusing of concern', so that we can treat the literary work as an object in itself.[11] Simply put, close reading is slow, careful, and deliberate.

To be sure, Eagleton's definition of close reading refers to an era long past. But the characteristics of close reading we see in his remarks can be seen even today, in our Department's 'Essay Writing Guide.'[12] The guide is a manual that gives instructions on grammar, essay writing, and style. An entire appendix is also devoted to the instructions for close reading.[13] First and foremost, we are told to read the poem slowly and carefully:

> You must pay the poem the same kind of attention you would give to an important conversation. The poem is an invitation to attend. Read it through several times; if possible read it aloud.[14]

In addition, we should also pay attention to the details of a poem, such as rhythm:

> How does the poem move, what sort of rhythm does it have? Does it flow or jump, and does this have anything to do with its subject matter? [15]

10 Ibid., 38.

11 Ibid.

12 "A Guide for Writing Essays," *CECIL*, accessed October 23, 2014, https://cecil.auckland.ac.nz/resources/a3da09fc-310f-4dcf-86f0-5e3f6c327022.pdf?CourseID=0460089b-6f6e-45e0-842e-1fb5c824eb9a.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

Beyond poems, texts in general ought to be given a similar treatment. For example, the guide urges us to look at the details of a text when writing an essay:

> Are there noticeable changes (turning points) in approach, language, mood, direction, styles; are there switches from one aspect to another of the subject matter?[16]

Close reading, as a taught skill, is a common motif across the syllabi I have analysed. Close reading is an integral aspect of the course assessments. Moreover, close reading is also a set of instructions taught in our manual, the 'Essay Writing Guide'. What we have analyzed so far pays testimony to the important role close reading plays in our English education. What, then, is the common skill that an English course here at the University of Auckland, is attempting to teach? My answer is that the crucial skill being taught at English courses here, regardless of course content, is the technique of close reading.

The texts analyzed so far are all circulated from within the English Department. Our attention will now be turned towards texts that circulate outside the Department, texts that connect the study of English with employment. And as we shall see, they give us a very different idea of what the 'Aims and Outcomes' of an English education actually is.

16 Ibid.

The Outside Perspective

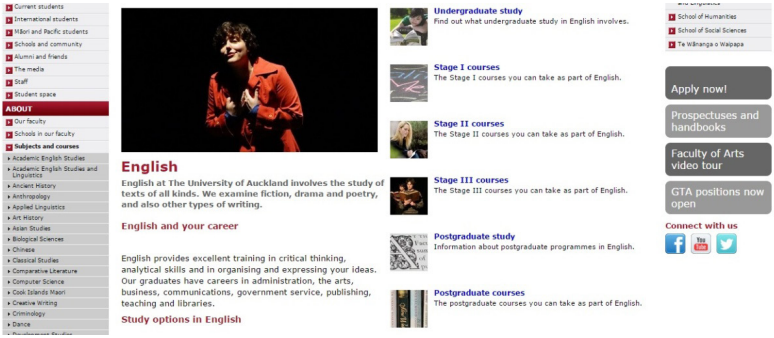

Figure 1

On the course syllabi, we see that the 'Aims and Outcome' section unanimously present close reading skills as an outcome of attending English courses. The Department website, however, provides a somewhat different answer. Under the heading 'English and your career,' it states:

> English provides excellent training in critical thinking, analytical skills and in organising and expressing your ideas. Our graduates have careers in administration, the arts, business, communications, government service, publishing, teaching and libraries.[17]

Two aspects of this short passage are worth noting here. First, a different vocabulary is being used. In the course syllabi, we see that English courses aim to learn close reading skills to read literature. The new vocabulary uses different words, employing phrases such as 'critical thinking', 'analytical skills' and 'training'. In addition, the purpose of

17 "English: The University of Auckland," The University of Auckland, accessed October 23, 2014, http://www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/subjects-and-courses/english-1.html.

attaining these skills has changed. The aim attaining skills is no longer to read but to attain employment. Of course, it is not only just on the Department website that we see this vocabulary being employed. As we shall see, this vocabulary is used to market not just the study of English, but the Arts in general.

Figure 2

The example above is taken from the online brochure 'Careers for Arts Graduates', created by the CDES (Career Development and Employment Services) of the University of Auckland.[18] Here, we see a repetition of the same vocabulary. For we see that what employers want are 'people with a range of 'soft or transferable skills', skills that include 'think independently, critically and creatively' and 'problem solve'.[19] In response to a world that is 'rapidly changing' one would need 'new,

18 "Careers for Arts Graduates," The University of Auckland, accessed October 23, 2014, http://ebooks.arts.auckland.ac.nz/2014_careers_brochure/.

19 Ibid.

transferable skills' since people have become more 'flexible.'[20]

The same rhetoric is rehashed in a talk hosted by the CDES earlier this year, titled 'What's a BA worth to employers?'[21] The talk provides an opinion piece by two Massey professors, Richard Shaw and Paul Spoonley who addressed the so-called 'skill shortage' in New Zealand's job market.[22] It was claimed that:

> Rather than presuming that we know what business wants from our graduates, we also specifically asked employers what sorts of skills they are currently looking for. The four most frequently cited skills were critical thinking, writing, oral communication and research skills.[23]

Shaw and Spoonley go on to state that:

> Problem-solving, independent thinking and an ability to research issues are all highly valued by employers in this changing labour market. These 'soft' or transferable skills are at the heart of a modern economy. And they are at the core of the BA.[24]

In all three examples, we see a repetition of the same motif: the marketing of education as a way of providing skills that leads to employment in a fast-moving world that demands flexibility.

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20 Ibid.

21 What's a BA worth to employers?" The University of Auckland, accessed October 23, 2014, https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/career-development-and-employment-services/news-blog/news-2014/05/23/what-s-a-ba-worth-to-employers-.html.

22 Shaw, Richard and Paul Spoonley, "Opinion: We need to talk about the BA," Massey University, accessed October 23, 2014, http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/about-massey/news/article.cfm?mnarticle_uuid=C1EDE7A0-B6C6-745C-B92E-F8F847CF80D1.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

Recall the question I posed at the beginning of the essay. I asked: 'What is it that an English course, here at the University of Auckland, is aiming to teach?" The inside and outside perspectives gave us very different answers to that question. Our readings of the English syllabi and the 'Essay Writing Guide' suggest that the close reading is the common skill an English education aims to teach. On the other hand, our readings of the Department's website and publications by the CDES suggest that 'soft, transferable skills' like 'critical thinking' is the end result of studying English (or Arts in general, for that matter). In the next section, I shall explain why the two answers are so different.

From Close Reading, to 'Critical Thinking'

As noted earlier, Terry Eagleton associated the birth of close reading with the English critics F. R. Leavis and I. A. Richards.[25] For both, English served a moral purpose. For Leavis, English was seen as 'not only a subject worth studying, but the supremely civilizing pursuit.'[26] The study of English was viewed as 'an arena in which the most fundamental questions of human existence' was answered, and Leavis was devoted to making morals a 'centrality of English studies.'[27] Literary criticism is, in a way, an antithesis to the outside world, a world described as a 'modern, commercial society.'[28] Similarly, the study of literature served a social purpose for I. A. Richards. For Richards, historical change and scientific discovery had 'devalued the traditional mythologies by which men and women have lived.'[29] Hence, literature is advanced as an ideology, responsible for reconstructing the social order of England when its society was 'economically decaying, politically unstable' and 'socially disruptive.'[30]

25 Eagleton, *Literary Theory: an Introduction*, 26-37.
26 Ibid., 27.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid., 28.
29 Ibid., 39.
30 Ibid.

As a technique that 'stressed the centrality of rigorous critical analysis' and 'a disciplined attention to the 'words on the page,' close reading remains relevant to our English education today.[31] It is part of our syllabi, our manual, and our assessments. The technique itself has not changed much. But the purpose it served nearly a century ago is different to the purpose it serves today. Back then, the outcome of English studies was to achieve a moralistic purpose, whether it be restoring social order or answering questions about humanity. And close reading was the tool used to achieve that purpose.

Inside the English Department, the same technique is still being used to interpret, understand, and write about literature. But the purpose of learning the skills of close reading is much more different from the days of Leavis and Richards. For close reading has now been rebranded as 'critical thinking' and 'analytical skills,' part of a new vocabulary that aims to connect English studies with employment. The Department website, the CDES brochure and the Shaw and Spoonley talk all portray a graduate with 'critical thinking' and 'soft skills.' That individual is the 'portfolio person.'[32]

The Emergence of the 'Portfolio Person', and the New Capitalism

The term 'portfolio person', a term coined by James Paul Gee, refers to an individual with an 'ever changing 'portfolio' of rearrangeable skills.[33] These skills, according to Gee, are acquired via their 'trajectory through 'project space' – that is, all the projects they have been.'[34] The reason why I'm using Gee's term here is because the 'portfolio person' resembles a sort of ideal BA graduate portrayed by a text like the CDES brochure. The ideal BA graduate would have lots of 'soft, transferable skills' like 'critical thinking' and 'analytical skills,' seemingly relevant

31 Ibid., 27.
32 Gee, "New People in New Worlds," 43.
33 Ibid., 47.
34 Ibid.

for just about any career. There are many similarities between the 'portfolio person' and the ideal Arts graduate. To keep things short, I shall list two here:

-For Gee, the portfolio person operates under the 'new logic of the new capitalism.' In the context of a 'fast changing world,' Gee observes that it is smart to 'design learning to be adaptive and flexible.'[35]

-As Shaw and Spoonley would claim, the BA graduate is 'adaptable,' 'intellectually nimble' and valuable in a 'fast-changing' world.[36] The CDES brochure claims that the BA develops 'soft and transferable skills.'[37] Like the brochure, the English Department website states that the skills it teaches are applicable (seemingly) just about anywhere: business, the Arts, government service, and so on.[38]

Observing that old-style capitalism, with its authoritarian forms of control is departing, Gee argues that the new capitalism is more fluid, more dynamic, and more flexible.[39] In the 'emerging world of the new capitalism,' Gee notes, security arises not from 'employment' but to one's 'employability.'[40] Employability is defined by the diversity of the skills and experiences one has had,[41] a matter of 'how adaptably and flexibly one can arrange and rearrange one's skills and experiences' to a particular job.[42]

The CDES brochure tells us that the workforce has become 'increasingly mobile.'[43] Shaw and Spoonley's talk tells us that the 'flexibility and breadth of the BA' are the 'very things many modern businesses val-

35 Ibid., 46.
36 Shaw & Spoonley, "Opinion".
37 "Careers for Arts Graduates".
38 "English – University of Auckland".
39 Gee, "New People in New Worlds," 47.
40 Ibid., 61.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 "Careers for Arts Graduates".

ue.'[44] They also tell us that the BA gives one a 'broad knowledge base' and 'open and positive dispositions to learning and using knowledge in innovative ways.'[45]

In this new world, Gee claims, there are no longer 'discrete individuals,' only 'ensembles of skills stored in a person.'[46] To put Gee's remarks in our context, I shall say that there are only 'ensembles of soft, flexible, transferable skills stored in a BA graduate, ready for any job.' From this perspective, learning's end goal appears to be a matter of simply becoming employed, with the English Department, accordingly, claims to supply those 'critical thinking' and 'analytical skills,' the sort of attributes that an ideal BA graduates should have. In this crude model of supply and demand, we see Gee's remarks becoming true: 'the new capitalism is a siren song attracting other sorts of organisations, not the least of which are schools, to its value and perspectives.'[47] The school is now looking more and more like a business.

In 'Postscript on the Societies of Control,' Gilles Deleuze observes that in a society of control, 'perpetual training' tends to replace the school, which is the 'surest way of delivering the school over to the corporation.'[48] Twenty years later, Deleuze's remarks are still relevant today. As Shaw and Spoonley's rhetoric (of employability) tells us, 'the illiterates of the future will be those who cannot relearn everything,'[49] that we are to 'quickly adapt to changing needs.'[50] By marketing those 'soft, transferable skills,' English and Arts education now attains a new value; a value for employers. These skills are valuable because they allow 'relearning' or 'perpetual training', to occur.

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44 Shaw & Spoonley, "Opinion".
45 Ibid.
46 Gee, "New People in New Worlds," 47.
47 Ibid., 46.
48 Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," *October* 59, Winter (1992): 5.
49 Shaw & Spoonley, "Opinion".
50 Ibid.

For Deleuze, the capitalism of 'higher-order production' is about selling services, that marketing 'has become the "soul" of the corporation.'[51] On the inside, the English Department teaches close reading, and the study of literature. But on the outside, it is deeply connected with employment prospects, providing 'analytical skills' and critical thinking' as its services, which CDES markets as part of the BA degree. What used to be close reading, the skills of reading literature, is marketed, 'commodified' into a valuable asset. 'Critical thinking' now resembles a marketable, sellable commodity.

Concluding Remarks

Of course, I do not intend to invoke nostalgia. Nor do I suggest that returning things back to how they were done in the 1920s is necessarily better or worse. My primary intention is to show how the purpose of English studies, for Leavis and Richards, is different to how that same question is addressed today, at the University of Auckland. Obviously, close reading skills also serve different purposes in different times.

The sort of 'portfolio people' (or the BA graduate, for that matter) envisioned by the CDES brochure are certainly capable of thinking critically. Someone with 'soft, transferable skills' is certainly capable of solving problems. What is, perhaps, a little worrying, is the possibility for us as English students to think 'critiquely.'[52] Gee refers to 'critiquely' thinking as a way of critiquing 'systems of power and injustice.'[53] Critical thinking, I think, is more akin to the sort of 'problem-solving skills' employers appear to be fond of. That is one way of thinking, for sure. But it is not the only way of thinking. And perhaps it shouldn't be.

51 Deleuze, "Postscript," 6.
52 Gee, "New People in New Worlds," 62.
53 Ibid., 63.

At the end of his essay, James Paul Gee argues that students have a right to know where in "the overall system of knowledge and social relations" they stand, as well as their right to consume and transform knowledge.[54] The question I posed at the beginning was to ask: what is the common skill that an English course here is attempting to teach? In light of Gee's remarks, perhaps this question needs to be reframed. In this age of new capitalism, perhaps we need to ask: What is the common skill that an English course here ought to be teaching?

54 Ibid., 68.

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