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Adapting the Victorians: An Introduction

Kristen Layne Figgins

To start off this special issue, I would like our readers to harken back to the summer of 2023 and its record-high temperatures, relieved for some, at least temporarily, by the July release of two films, an event now known as "Barbenheimer." At this time, as in many times before, journalists and media critics alike welcomed Greta Gerwig's *Barbie* and Christopher Nolan's *Oppenheimer,* hailing them as a welcome departure from the endless stream of remakes, sequels, prequels, reboots, and adaptations that have marked recent years. In a Twitter post, Clare Binns, the managing director of an indie distributor, noted, "Everyone came out this weekend for two ORIGINAL, smart, quality movies. It's what audiences want. Reboots, superheroes and films with bloated budgets that often cover a lack of ideas—time to take stock. No algorithms this weekend." Yet how original were these two films? In the field of adaptation studies, scholars would undoubtedly argue that both stories were adaptations, one of a beloved (and oft-controversial) children's toy, itself an adaptation of Bild Lili, a German fashion doll, and the other of J. Robert Oppenheimer, a theoretical physicist. Adaptation, as a process that both delights and frustrates audiences, is a difficult thing to escape completely. Nor is this a new phenomenon.

The nineteenth century has left an indelible mark upon the field of adaptation. While adaptation of stories is as old as storytelling itself, adaptation in the nineteenth century was remarkable in many ways. First, the Victorians themselves were prolific adapters who took advantage of thriving transmedia marketplaces to recreate stories for different audiences: in illustration, at the theater, and in ephemera. Additionally, at the *fin de siecle,* at the inception of cinema, Victorian literature became a ready source of inspiration for our earliest cinematic productions. Today, virtually all Victorian stories are in the public domain, making them an excellent pool of inspiration for adapters who want to extend, remix, or reboot the works of cultural figures such as Charles Dickens, Jane Austen, or Mary Shelley: these are "prestige" stories that come with no acquisition fees and built-in fandoms that span multiple generations.

This special issue seeks to understand the Victorian era as a site of special interest for adaptation: a nexus where popular culture meets cultural cachet, where high art meets low art, and where the ethereal realm of the "canon" (supervised largely by critics and academics) meets the material realm (overseen by executives, fandoms, and bottom lines). Adaptation, as Kamilla Elliott notes, "does not care if it is true or untrue, ethically good or bad, aesthetically pleasing or distasteful, politically correct or incorrect: it is concerned only with adapting—only with its processes of repetition and variation that adapt entities and environments to each other to foster survival" (*Theorizing Adaptation* 305). In terms of humanities or cultural criticism, then, this special issue provides opportunities for cultural critics across a wide range of disciplines to engage in productive and meaningful ways of using the phenomenon of adaptation as a basis of exploration.

A Brief History of Adaptation

The study of adaptation was largely borne out of university literature departments in the 1970s and 1980s, when literature scholars turned their eye towards film adaptations of their literary research. As with many nascent disciplines, there was understandably a great deal of anxiety and territoriality associated with early adaptation studies, as literature scholars struggled to pioneer methods of studying adaptation, often without any formal training in film or other media studies to root that research. As a result, the foundations of adaptation studies are plagued by gatekeeping from literature departments that find adaptations derivative and unoriginal in comparison to their predecessors (e.g., the book is better than the movie) and from early iterations of film departments, helmed by literature scholars who, according to Thomas Leitch, "had been absorbed in the pedagogical habits of close reading and the aesthetic value of literature" (3). Both types of early adaptation scholarship offered relatively unproductive conversations about what many modern adaptation scholars call "the fidelity problem" or value-based judgments on whether and how an adaptation faithfully recreates the "original" text (Semenza 30).

Therefore, this special issue will eschew what is commonly called in adaptation studies the "case study model," wherein one text (e.g., a book) is compared to its adaptation (e.g. a film). This kind of comparison almost always ends in circular discussions of fidelity that are ultimately unproductive. While it can be useful to closely examine single narratives (especially as the norm in literary studies), contextualizing adaptations gives us a fuller view of not only the narratives themselves but also their

importance within different cultural moments. As new historicists have long noted, contextualization both complements and expands upon close reading practices (Hickling 53). Adaptation studies, in comparison to new historicism, however, provides us with the ability to study select narratives diachronically, thus highlighting the ways in which a singular narrative evolves over time.[1] As Gregory Semenza notes in support of Hutcheon and Bortolotti's evolutionary model, "diachronic histories of adaptation are crucial to illustrating how contingent on specific historical and cultural factors—and therefore how very fragile and mutable—even our most basic assumptions happen to be. Even the most cherished cliches of the field will experience extreme tension when analyzed against the larger currents of history" (64). This special issue will have the potential to engage with scholars, then, across a wide range of specializations. In this special issue, you will see scholars focusing on nineteenth-century authors as adapters of prior work as well as on the more recent iterations of Victorian art.

Today, adaptation studies is a thriving field that crosses many interdisciplinary boundaries, with scholars equally likely to study film and literature as they are to discuss TikTok or comic books. One of the more interesting aspects of adaptation studies is the wealth of metaphors that have arisen to describe the complex relationship of adaptation (as a process) and adaptation (as a product). In the first essay of this special issue, "Adaptive Entropy: The Victorian Birth of Caliban," Glenn Jellenik offers the metaphor of rhizomatic adaptation and adaptive entropy as one way of thinking through how adaptations spread over time. With the example of the character of Caliban, Jellenik shows how adaptations, rootlike, spread their tendrils through history with replications of familiar stories always seeking to fill gaps in spontaneous and continuous recreation.

Adaptation studies has also been positively impacted, like all fields within the humanities, by subdisciplines such as postcolonial studies, queer studies, and gender studies. In the second essay of this special collection,"'The Same Events Revolve in the Cycles of Time': Adapting Imperial Violence in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*," Alycia Gilbert shows how filmed adaptations of *The Moonstone* have repeatedly attempted to alter the story's associations with empire by changing the depiction of Indian and Muslim characters in the narrative. This attempt to confront (or dodge or remediate) problematic subjects is common in adaptations, especially of nineteenth-century texts that are frequently wrought with racist and imperialist imagery and plots.

Kristen Layne Figgins

Playing with/in the Nineteenth Century

The nineteenth century is a layer of the adaptational sediment that is particularly well-suited for excavation. As adaptation scholars such as Kamilla Elliott have noted, the nineteenth century is one of the most highly-adapted periods of literature: "It is not to my mind coincidental that British Victorian novels and novellas have been more frequently adapted to film than any other body of literature, including Shakespearean plays (and Shakespeare is the only author from his period to be so frequently adapted)" (*Rethinking* 3). The nineteenth century is also, as Lissette Lopez Szwydky argues, a period of literature intimately engaged with the art of adaptation in many forms of artistic output, including the stage, illustration, textual forms, and (late in the century) photography and cinema.

All of the narratives within this special issue have been so greatly proliferated that we might call them culture-texts. Culture-text is a term Lissette Lopez Szwydky, Kate Newell, Paul Davis, and Brian Rose each use to describe the process by which a text replicates so profusely that its features are known even to those audiences who have never read the original text. For example, someone who has never read *Dracula* by Bram Stoker (1897) is likely to be familiar with the Count's defining features through his diffusion in mediums as diverse as cereal box advertisements (Count Chocula) to children's television (Count von Count). Each of the narratives discussed in this special issue has penetrated popular culture in a variety of adaptational forms starting shortly after their initial publications in the nineteenth century. The following study examines these culture-texts as they've appeared in a range of staged plays, texts, films, radio plays, theme park rides, and even social media.

Pushing the boundaries in what types of media can be considered adaptations results in very productive ways of thinking about adaptation. In the third essay of this collection, Andrew Bumstead, in "Alice in Disneyland: Power and Subversion in Two Theme Park Rides," shows how even something as innocuous as a theme park ride is part of a wider storytelling effort, highlighting the way that franchise giants create iterations of their own intellectual property to give their audience different experiences. Yet creators can craft immersive transmedia experiences like this even on a much smaller scale than a theme park. In the fourth essay of this special issue, "From Print Novel to Transmedia Storytelling: Adapting Travel in *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography* and *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*," Kate Oestreich explores how @TheAOJaneEyre creates an immersive YouTube and social media narrative adaptation of Jane Eyre's life, giving audiences

a completely new experience of Jane's situatedness in time and space. Oestreich shows us how Jane's geographical experience is more expansive than we might imagine in Charlotte Brontë's version of the story, reflecting Jane's immersion in questions of agency and class, while the YouTube adaptation allows us to think of wandering in even more interesting ways, as the characters of the adaptation show off their travels and desires in influencer-like fashion.

While different forms of adaptation can push the way we think of the limits and scope of adaptation as a process, Gracie Bain asks us to think about adaptation as a broader cultural process. In the fifth essay of this special issue, "Jill the Ripper: Adapting Gender in Jack the Ripper Narratives," Bain asks us to consider historical figures, such as Jack the Ripper, as stories in and of themselves. Citing the sensational proliferation of Ripper in the press, which quickly became a story about Ripper's misogyny (and our own), Bain points to the conflation between Jack the Ripper and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) before pivoting to discuss a subgenre of "Ripperature," which asks the question "What if Ripper was a woman?" This question can be particularly interesting in adaptations such as *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (1971), a Jack the Ripper/Jekyll and Hyde mash-up that involves the transition of Jekyll into a woman, Sister Hyde. Bain situates this film as an exemplar for the potential of adaptation to "queer" texts (Demory 1), especially in bending the way we think about Victorian gender.

Even within the realm of film studies, where adaptation is a more common topic of discussion than in some fields, there are still new avenues to explore. In the sixth essay of this special issue, "What is Said Through the Silence: How Serialized Adaptations of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* Address Female Subjectivity and Implicit Actions," Calabria Turner identifies the way gaps matter within the process of adaptations. Focusing not on what is said, but on what is *not* shown, Turner uses silence to highlight the way different directors empower the protagonist of Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848). Also playing with the idea of sound is Katherine Echols in our final essay, "Radio Adaptations of Victorian Writers During the Golden Age of Radio (1930s-1950s)." Echols discusses the unique challenges that radio adaptations face when transitioning across mediums, which is particularly fascinating when one considers that Victorian texts are, as Elliott notes, incredibly visual experiences with illustrations accompanying almost all major works in print (*Rethinking*). Echols demonstrates the cultural importance of these Victorian texts as they were adapted to radio in the 1930s through the 1950s.

So, in this special issue, readers should attend to some interesting principles about adaptation that hold just as true for Barbenheimer as they do for adaptations of Victorian texts or even Victorian adapters:

> 1. Discourse about adaptation is often most interesting when it's contextualized rather than when it simply compares adaptations to source texts in a one-to-one case study model.
>
> 2. Adaptation can teach us a great deal about the environments from which narratives stem as major and minor changes may reflect changing sensibilities.
>
> 3. It's very likely that adaptation is the first point of encounter for many people who experience Victorian texts; this is an exciting thing and may be something that scholars of Victorian literature and culture (and beyond) might consider embracing in their scholarship and teaching.

Notes

1. Adaptation studies is just starting to move toward the model of transhistorical contextualization that has defined new historicism for decades. Just a few of the scholars working toward historically situated adaptation studies are Lissette Lopez Szwydky, Glenn Jellenik, Katja Krebs, Gregory Semenza, Linda Hutcheon, and Kamilla Elliott.

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Adaptive Entropy: The Victorian Birth of Caliban

Glenn Jellenik

A.O. Scott begins his review of Julie Taymor's 2010 film adaptation of *The Tempest* by evoking the concept of the play as definitive: "Messing around with Shakespeare is the bedeviling vice of directors . . . [and] the story of Shakespeare in our times" (10). Put simply, Scott is wrong. Messing around with his plays is not the story of Shakespeare in our times—it is the story of Shakespeare in all times. That Taymor felt licensed to "mess around" with *The Tempest* (1611) is not surprising; the play has perhaps the most varied and interesting adaptation history of all Shakespeare's plays, which is saying something. It debuted as what critics have long considered the playwright's final bow, but was quickly and completely replaced on London stages by John Dryden and William Davenant's 1667 adaptation, which (mixed and morphed with several musical adaptations) held center stage from the Restoration to the Victorian period.

During that 170+ years, the play led a sort of double life. Because in addition to its adaptive metamorphoses in the theater, multiple critical interpretations of Shakespeare's version (themselves adaptations, in a way) emerged. In his 1733 edition of Shakespeare's works, Lewis Theobald blatantly alters the play, reassigning the "Abhorred Slave" speech from Miranda, to whom it belongs in all versions of the First Folio, to Prospero. Theobald defended his editorial intrusion simply: "I am persuaded the author never intended this speech for Miranda" (Furness 73). Theobald theorized that the speech was assigned to Miranda through a printer's error, but Deanne Williams argues persuasively that Theobald's decision was more about the editor "messing around with Shakespeare" to better accord with eighteenth-century attitudes about girlhood. Many subsequent versions, including Taymor's film, maintain Theobald's alteration. Rather than dismiss it as a vice, exploring and accounting for such play with Shakespeare allows adaptation scholars to expand notions of the act of adaptation, specifically, the possibility of reading adaptations less for what they say about their sources and more for what they say about their own moment.

With that in mind, William Charles Macready's 1838 production of *The Tempest*, which returned to Shakespeare's script, offers a particularly useful case study. In departing from the Dryden-Davenant version that audiences came to consider definitive, Macready's adaptation enacts a return to the past, a claim to recovered originality. At the same time, the production "messed around" with Shakespeare by depicting Caliban as human. Macready's humanization of Caliban plays into his contemporary moment, freeing up the character to feed into nineteenth-century discussions about slavery, abolition, and imperialism. As such, the early-Victorian *Tempest* is productive to scholars on several fronts: literary scholars can explore Victorian rehearsals of Romantic concepts of originality and individuality; historicists can track the ways the play represents shifting Victorian notions of human nature, slavery, and imperialism; and adaptation scholars can rehearse the rhizomatic nature of certain adaptation cycles, and, in the case of this essay, the correlated concept of adaptive entropy.

Adaptive Entropy: A Theoretical Description

Macready's humanization of Caliban functions as an example of what I call adaptive entropy. In a sense, adaptive entropy is the actualization of Linda Hutcheon's concept of adaptation as "repetition without replication" (7), which posits that adaptations don't merely reproduce their sources but rather reproduce aspects of them even as they produce something new in and of themselves. Adaptive entropy traces the ways that some adaptive changes become constituent parts of the culture text going forward, new material for subsequent adapters.

As I'm coining a term here, "adaptive entropy" requires definition and clarification. The word "entropy" fits nicely into discussions of adaptation, considering that its (Greek) root translates roughly to "a turning toward transformation." The term is most commonly used in physics and chemistry, where it signifies "the dispersal of energy in a system, frequently interpreted as representing disorder or randomness in that system" (OED). Figuratively speaking, entropy is the inevitable tending toward chaos or disorder that occurs in all closed systems. Importantly, the more permeable the walls of the closed system become, the more the entropy increases. Further, entropy follows (or even propels) the arrow of time, working forever forward, never back; as Stephen Hawking puts it, "entropy . . . distinguishes the past from the future, giving a direction to time" (145). In *Arcadia*, Tom Stoppard offers an illustrative metaphor for both entropy and this dynamic:

"When you stir your rice pudding, Septimus, the spoonful of jam spreads itself round making red trails like the picture of a meteor in my astronomical atlas. But if you stir backwards, the jam will not come together again" (4-5). Finally, scientifically, entropy actually represents a loss of energy—though I will argue that culturally, adaptive entropy increases textual energy.

For our purposes, the source text functions as the closed system, in that it is complete in and of itself. The act of adaptation renders the source's walls of that closed system permeable, and entropy ensues. Thus, entropy necessarily occurs in any transfer from source to adaptation—changes are inevitable, and disorder results as changes occur, though such disorder can be productive and constructive. Not all changes that result during this transfer rise to the level of adaptive entropy. Specifically, adaptive entropy is the process whereby a change inaugurated by adaptation becomes a constituent part of a text going forward. Examples include the deerstalker cap and the phrase, "Elementary, my dear Watson" for *Sherlock Holmes*, and the cry of, "It's alive!" and the Creature's bolts and flat head in *Frankenstein*. In adaptive entropy, the adjective "adaptive" is less a modifier of entropy than it is a companion in the cyclical process of cultural adaptation: order (closed-system/source) gives way to chaos (permeating adaptation), which creates new order (adaptive entropy) that feeds back into subsequent adaptations as the process begins again.

Adaptive entropy functions as a destabilization and re-stabilization of the source—the "entropy" destabilizes the text, while the "adaptive" re-stabilizes it. During the process of re-stabilization, which constitutes the development of the adaptation as a text in and of itself, the mutation becomes a constituent part of the text. In other words, the process of adaptive entropy is the process of destabilization and re-stabilization that will mutate the text in ways in which some of the mutations carry forward—the process by which some adaptive changes become fundamental parts of the genetic code of the text for future adapters. To return to an earlier example, Kenneth Branagh titled his 1994 film adaptation of *Frankenstein*, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, suggesting fidelity to Shelley's novel. And when it came to the Creature's appearance, Branagh looks to distance himself from Whale's adaptive entropy: "It will be very far away from the squared head and bolted neck of Karloff's monster" (Lovell 14). Yet when the Creature comes to life, Branagh's Victor cries, "It's alive!" an exclamation that has appeared regularly in adaptations since 1823, but nowhere in Shelley's 1818 novel. It's worth noting here that interpretations that begin in the critical/academic realm function as adaptations, and as such can produce adaptive entropy—for instance the critical queering

of a text (ie. *The Illiad* or *Moby Dick*) potentially opens out into any number of subsequent queer adaptations; similarly, Edward Said's postcolonial reading of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) clearly becomes a source in Patricia Rozema's 1999 film adaptation.

The process of adaptive entropy occurs most obviously and productively in what Dennis Cutchins and Dennis Perry call an adaptation "complex," Kate Newell calls an "adaptation network," Julie Grossman calls "hideous progeny," and Lissette Lopez Szwydky (by way of Paul Davis and Brian Rose) calls "culture texts," or sources that are repeatedly adapted across space and time, as is the case with many Shakespeare plays. The idea of the culture text is in some ways a corollary or parallel to the rhizomatic approach to adaptation. First introduced by Douglas Lanier in "Shakespearean Rhizomatics: Adaptation, Ethics, Value" (2014), the approach adapts Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's concept of the rhizome to adaptation studies. Biologically, the rhizome describes nonhierarchical flora that spreads horizontally, as opposed to sprouting vertically—caterpillar grass, with its creeping rootstalks, as opposed to a racinated oak tree. The rhizome presents a system of multiple co-existent nodes rather than a monolithic taproot. Culturally, the rhizomatic approach allows critics to de-center the source. Within a rhizomatic adaptation network, Shakespeare represents one source among many, vital but by no means definitive. This has the benefit of allowing the critical processing of adaptation to account for the complexity of intertextuality. As Thomas Leitch puts it, it is a fallacy to believe that "Adaptations are adapting exactly one text apiece" (164).

The rhizomatic approach is compatible with much recent work in adaptation studies that seeks to shift away from the one-to-one case study to find new critical models that avoid the sort of reductive evaluation that tends to occur when we compare say, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Ten Things I Hate About You*. The concept of adaptive entropy actually works as a suture or graft between the rhizome and adaptation. That is, the rhizome posits, outside of considerations of influence, that multiple versions of a text/story sprout along a horizontal root system that spreads along the cultural landscape. This horizontal system complicates the source/copy binary that still anchors many adaptation studies. Within that decentered system, it would seem to make little sense to focus too sharply on how the shallow root-system spreads. But adaptive entropy tracks precisely that process, because it acknowledges the cultural dynamic of the de-centered rhizome, but also explores the points where variations enter the chain, and specifically, the ways that those variations become a part of the text as it spreads. In essence, adaptive entropy traces influence in

adaptation—not the influence of the source on its retellings, rather the influence of adaptations on one another.

The rhizomatic approach allows for the possibility of multiple sources for an adaptation, which is the very stuff of adaptive entropy. Further, adaptive entropy evidences the ways adaptation perpetually and necessarily revitalizes a text. It is in this way that I view entropy as a vitalizing process in adaptation, as opposed to a loss of energy. And again, texts that become culture texts undergo a perpetual process of renegotiation and reevaluation that produces the most fruitful examples of adaptive entropy.

Which brings us back to *The Tempest*, a culture text that provides an excellent opportunity to explore the rhizome and the process of adaptive entropy. Macready's Victorian *Tempest* evidences a specific consideration of the enslaved/colonized other, an emergence of perspectives on Caliban that could not have existed to Shakespeare or his initial audience. Macready's entropic shift, his humanization of Caliban and association of him with the colonial other, has become a trackable staple of adaptations going forward. The 1838 production of *The Tempest* also functions as a particularly interesting and productive case study, because it represents a return to Shakespeare. That is, it's an adaptation, in the sense that all specific theatrical productions function as adaptations—but it also wrestles the play away from other adapters, Dryden and Davenant. In that way it is, simultaneously, an adaptation and a return to the original—though that return will necessarily be a repetition without replication, an entropic veering away from Shakespeare's closed system.

"What's Past is Prologue": Tracking Caliban Along the Rhizome

While this essay uses Macready's Victorian *Tempest* to flesh out the theory of adaptive entropy, it's important to note that adaptive entropy is an ongoing process, not a singular event. Certain specific changes will carry forward, but those changes take place during the already-existing textual conversation that composes the rhizome. It's like a game of telephone, but rather than coming from mis-hearings, the changes that get passed along the line emerge from socially-driven re-readings. With that in mind, it helps to think about the ways that the changes that constitute Macready's adaptive entropy are situated in an already-existing adaptive conversation that stretches back to Shakespeare.

As Harold Bloom puts it, "Caliban's stage images reflect changing Anglo-American attitudes toward primitive man. Shakespeare's

monster once represented bestial vices that must be eradicated; now he personifies noble rebels who symbolize the exploitation of European imperialism" (192). Therein lies the stuff of adaptive entropy and the rhizome. The story of Caliban's journey from "monster" to "noble rebel" traces the development of western concepts of the individual. As such, in tracking representations and adaptations of Caliban, we chart one of the philosophical pulses of post-Enlightenment society. As concepts of the individual change over time, cultural representations of Caliban shift. And they do so through adaptive entropy.

The character's essential instability is baked in, as noted by Alden and Virginia Mason Vaughan: "Of all the characters in *The Tempest*, Caliban is the most enigmatic and the most susceptible to drastic fluctuations in interpretation. He is Shakespeare's changeling" (7). The Vaughans' phrasing is properly descriptive: Shakespeare writes Caliban as a changeling, or put another way, the play is cagy with regard to Caliban's fundamental nature, making his biological status tricky to determine. The play's "List of Characters" describes him as "A savage and deformed slave," suggesting (crude) humanity. However, the play's first textual reference illustrates a fundamental ambivalence toward Caliban's nature. In speaking to Ariel, Prospero offers exposition of his arrival on the island: "Then was this island / (Save for the son that [Sycorax] did litter here, / A freckled whelp, hag-born) not honored with / A human shape" (1.2.280-283). The "Save for" indicates that Caliban is human. However, the odd syntax of the sentence minimizes what might be a straightforward statement. The containment of Caliban within parentheses and the odd line-breaks allow the original referent ("this island") to drop and the lines to potentially scan: A freckled whelp, hag born, not honored with a human shape. Add to that the double reference to dogs ("litter" and "whelp"), and things become clearly unclear.

Caliban is certainly a son of a witch. But what that means—Sycorax's categorical status—remains undetermined. Which leaves us words words words. Some of Shakespeare's descriptions evoke humanity (Prospero calls him "villain," "subject," and "slave"). Beyond that, Caliban's claim that raping Miranda could have "peopled . . . / This isle with Calibans" (1.2.348-349) suggests his possession of what we understand as human DNA. Of course, it would also be in character for Caliban's plan to rely on a misunderstanding of biology. Miranda labels Ferdinand as "the third man that e'er I saw" (1.2.442), indicating that she recognizes Caliban's humanity, since he and Prospero are the only people she knows. For those few words coding Caliban as human, however, there are dozens of others that code him as not-human and/or sub-human. Trinculo and Stephano refer to him as "monster" twenty-

two times in Act II. He is consistently called "beast" as well as "A devil, a born devil on whose nature / Nurture can never stick" (4.1.188-189). And just to make it all the more complex, he's occasionally accorded hybrid status: "Man-monster" (3.2.11) and "demi-devil" (5.1.272).

While the written text insists on having it both ways, adaptations must make choices. Most early adaptive representations of Caliban, including in the first stagings of the play, skew toward the monstrous and non-human. Edmond Malone's 1821 Variorum notes that the initial actors playing Caliban would do so covered in "a large bearskin, or the skin of some other animal" (13), giving audiences the concept of his animal/monster status. Dryden and Davenant's 1667 adaptation, *The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island*, maintains that bestial Caliban. The "Dramatis Personae" morphs him from Shakespeare's "savage and deformed slave" into "Monster of the Isle." No detailed accounts exist of how Caliban was represented on stage, but Samuel Pepys (who saw the version nine times) refers to him as "monster" (77). Dryden clarifies his interpretation in the Preface to his 1679 adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida*: "[Caliban is] a person which was not in nature . . . a species of himself . . . His person is monstrous, and he is the product of unnatural lust; and his language is as hobgoblin as his person; in all things he is distinguished from other mortals" (256). Thus, Dryden interprets and adapts the character as fundamentally other, fundamentally subhuman, all of which accorded with prevailing notions of the various others that existed beyond the shores of England.

While the "bestial Caliban" reading continued unabated into the nineteenth century, Virginia Mason Vaughan points specifically to the rise of notions of Romantic sensibility as a catalyst for shifting interpretations of the character that represent examples of adaptive entropy. Specifically, as Britain expanded its empire and Britons encountered more and more people that might be considered "other," reconsiderations of Caliban's humanity begin to appear as nodes on the rhizome. In pre-Romantic-period representations, Caliban's "bestial desires without the control of right reason [meant] that he could never be considered sympathetically as a human being (Bloom 196). However, in light of the rise of Romanticism, "the Noble Savage no longer had to be a man of reason. He could be instead a creature of emotion and sensibility" (Bloom 196). The implication here is an interesting one because it suggests a symbiotic relationship between adaptation and Romantic notions of individuality. That is, thanks to Romanticism's reconfiguration of emotion and sensibility, adaptations begin to represent Caliban as human. But also, those emerging redefinitions are shaped by taking characters like Caliban into account.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge participates in this critical adaptive entropy, pointing out that previous iterations of Caliban "lead us to expect the appearance of a foul, unnatural monster" (462). Yet Coleridge notes that, though "[h]e partakes of the qualities of brutes . . . [he] is distinguished from brutes . . . Caliban is in some respects a noble being: the poet has raised him far above contempt: he is a man in the sense of imagination" (462). In the end, Coleridge denies the character's humanity, merely nuancing Dryden's interpretation: "Caliban . . . is all earth, all condensed and gross in feelings and images; he has the dawnings of understanding without reason or the moral sense, and in him, as in some brute animals, this advance to the intellectual faculties, without the moral sense, is marked by the appearance of vice. For it is in the primacy of the moral being only that man is truly human" (61). Thus, in the first decades of the nineteenth century Coleridge applies ideas to Caliban that, when transferred to "others" encountered by British imperialists, parallel the empire's moral justifications of slavery and colonization.

William Hazlitt's interpretation of the character suggests an emerging cultural divide on questions of the colonial "other." He employs some of Coleridge's vocabulary to develop a reading of Caliban as human, a character "whose deformity whether of body or mind is redeemed by the power and truth of the imagination displayed in it. It is the essence of grossness, but there is not a particle of vulgarity in it . . . the character grows out of the soil where it is rooted, uncontrouled, uncouth and wild, uncramped by any of the meanness of custom. It is 'of the earth, earthy'" (239). Hazlitt's parsing of Caliban's humanity, like Coleridge's earlier interpretation, locates humanity in imagination. But he veers from Coleridge's appeal to morality as the signifier of humanity. Both critics consider Caliban's nature as growing up from the earth, but where Coleridge codes Caliban's earthiness as base and brutish, Hazlitt's "of the earth, earthy," references the condition of man in 1 Corinthians (15.47), allowing him to formulate the character more along the lines of Rousseau's hyper-human noble savage. Such nineteenth-century distinctions between noble savage and brute animal had enormous implications within emerging discourses on slavery and colonization.

Indeed, the character of Caliban changes precisely as British culture began to consider both colonization and slavery in new lights, leading to adaptive changes that would carry forward. John Philip Kemble's 1806 hybrid production re-introduces some of Shakespeare's poetry to the stage, using original dialogue, specifically with regard to Caliban's speeches. But the production also maintains many of Dryden and Davenant's alterations. The play's hybrid nature—

caught between Shakespeare, his Restoration adapters, and its own Romantic moment—opens a space for the development of Caliban through adaptive entropy, particularly in light of the contemporary critical interpretations. All these Calibans (Shakespeare's, Dryden and Davenant's, Coleridge's, Hazlitt's, and others) coexist as rhizomatic nodes and potential influences. Rather than choose one, Kemble mixes them all together, producing the character as "a brute, it is true . . . but not a vulgar creation" (Boaden 225).

Thus, by the end of the Romantic period, adaptive entropy had completely destabilized and transformed *The Tempest*. Kemble's adaptation, with its beastly, goat-skinned yet imagination-filled Caliban, is a hodgepodge of adapters and influences. Macready, who appeared as Prospero in Kemble's productions, had grown weary of the version, calling it "a mutilation" of Shakespeare, with "barbarous ingraftings of Dryden and Davenant" (15). Combined with the socio-cultural traction of Coleridge's and Hazlitt's critical interpretations of Shakespeare's version and socio-economic shifts in Britain, the time had come for a new *Tempest*.

Victorian Calibans

By the mid-nineteenth century, with Britain taking its place as the world's foremost colonizer, cultural depictions of Caliban undergo significant renovation. As Vaughan and Vaughan point out in their cultural history of the character, "In modern poetry [Caliban] is a recurring symbol for the victimization of Third World peoples" (3). And the birth of Caliban as a postcolonial symbol can be traced to Macready's early-Victorian revival, produced at Covent Garden. Indeed, that production's humanization of Caliban allows the character to become sympathetically associated with emerging abolitionist views of colonized people.

Again, given his opinion of Kemble's hybrid version, and the building momentum of critical interpretations from Coleridge and Hazlitt, it is no surprise that Macready staged a revival of Shakespeare's original script. In that revival, Macready reprised his role as Prospero. But it was George Bennett's portrayal of Caliban that attracted the most critical notice. Patrick MacDonnell's contemporary *Essay on the Play of* The Tempest (1840) pushes specifically on the nature of Shakespeare's creation in the production, reading Caliban as "a creature in his nature possessing all of the rude elements of the savage, yet retaining in his mind a strong resistance to that tyranny . . . of slavery" (16). MacDonnell returns to Coleridge's mind/body split—but rather than

define the character as ruled by body, lacking "moral being," and thus bestial, he focuses on his humanity, his mind's resistance to slavery, repeating later, "Shakespeare has drawn Caliban, rude as he is, with feelings of strong aversion to slavery" (17).

The abolition movement relied heavily on the recognition of slaves as human. And Macready's abolitionist sentiments extend so far into the production and MacDonnell's reading of it that Prospero's accusation of Caliban's attempted rape of Miranda, a revelation meant to justify the wizard's harsh treatment of his slave, merely leads MacDonnell to conclude, "though it renders Caliban guilty, [it] can never justify the conduct of Prospero, in such harsh and cruel treatment" (18). The critic points out that previous dramatic interpretations treat Caliban harshly, but Bennett's performance "delineate[s] the rude and uncultivated savage, in a style, which arouses our sympathies, in behalf of those, whose destiny, it has never been, to enjoy the advantages of civilization" (18). Again, given the shift in philosophical sentiment with the concept of Romanticism's notions of the individual as coded by his imaginative and emotional capacity, Caliban's "rude" brutality was no longer a disqualifier when it came to his human status. Finally, the critic claims that the "enlightened audience" will recognize "that Mr. Bennett has given a true picture of Caliban" (19). That is, his delineation of the character as human, a man enslaved by a tyrant, is not a new interpretation or re-interpretation according to MacDonnell, but rather a return to Shakespeare's original design. In that way, Macready's multi-directional move—his return to the past by using Shakespeare's 1611 script, and his engagement with a Victorian abolitionist interpretation of that script—is united. The production was an enormous success, running for fifty-five performances in its first year (Vaughan and Vaughan 181).

The configuration of the human Caliban's appeal to an "enlightened" audience's sympathies with an abolitionist ethos, along with the production's popular success, suggest that Macready's adaptation and Bennett's interpretation are results of the force of cultural tides. Shakespeare's play becomes a vehicle for rehearsing cultural change, and the traction of those cultural changes potentially led to social change. In 1838, Bennett delivers the same lines as actors did in 1611. However, Macready's Victorian audience receives them differently. Perhaps the adaptive entropy of the character's humanity is the product of an alchemical process, the combination of shifted details by the production and shifted recognition by the audience. Macready has not "messed with Shakespeare," per se—and yet he has. MacDonnell's altered perception of Bennett's Caliban suggests that a set of valences inform the character for the Victorian audience, valences that

were unavailable to Shakespeare's initial audience. The production has simultaneously returned to Shakespeare's script and created something new. Thus, with Macready's Victorian *Tempest*, we see, as V.M. Vaughan puts it, "Here the modern Caliban, victim of oppression, was born" (Bloom 197). Indeed, Macready's specific alterations, his depiction of Caliban as the overtly human parallel to enslaved and colonized others, constitutes adaptive entropy—a change that takes root as the text spreads along the rhizome.

While the 1838 production offered theater audiences an abolitionist human Caliban, the overall cultural transition from beast to man was far from seamless. Rather, through various Victorian adaptations of the play, the rhizome evidences a representational push and pull on the character. In Samuel Phelps's 1847 production, the role is again more coveted—indeed, the part was acted by Phelps himself. Yet, as the promptbook shows, Phelps portrayed him as bestial: "Enter Caliban [. . .] crawling out on all fours as a beast" (Folger 24) and "Caliban speaks his speeches either kneeling or sitting on all fours like a beast" (Folger 62). And a journalistic description of William Burton's 1854 American Caliban also suggests a non-human depiction: "A wild creature on all fours sprang upon the stage, with claws on his hands and some weird animal arrangement about the head partly like a snail" (qtd. in Vaughan and Vaughan 182).

Yet William and Robert Brough's 1848 parody, *The Enchanted Isle; or, "Raising the Wind,"* heightens the revolutionary capacity of the character, associating him directly with the democratic movement in France. Interestingly (rhizomatically), the Broughs take their title not from Shakespeare but from Dryden and Davenant. The play's "Dramatis Personae" describes Caliban as, "A smart, active lad . . . an Hereditary Bondsman who, in his determination to be free, takes the most fearful liberties" (2). The Broughs' farce focuses heavily on Caliban's slave rebellion, tapping directly into the character's abolitionist valences. Caliban's calls for freedom overtly mirror contemporary abolitionist rhetoric. When Miranda calls him on stage for the first time with "Come here, slave!" Caliban responds, "Slave! Come drop that sort of bother; / Just let me ax, "Ain't I a man and a brother?" (14). The Broughs' parodies were known for their allusive dialogue, and here the play references the banner on Josiah Wedgewood's anti-slavery medallion. The icon of the kneeling enslaved man and the slogan were well known in the nineteenth century. The Broughs' production also associates Caliban directly with democratic movements in France. In Scene V, Caliban enters "with a Cap of Liberty on his head" (19) and marching to the Marseillaise. Worn throughout the French Revolution, the Cap of Liberty functioned as a "symbol of the liberation from all servitudes,

the sign for unification of all the enemies of despotism" as well as "the mark of a slave who has gained his or her freedom" (Censer and Hunt 82). Caliban's lines further strengthen the association with resistance and democracy: "Yes, I'm resolved—I'll have a revolution— / Proclaim my rights—demand a constitution" (19). In the end, such revolutionary resistance is contained by the play's restoration of order; as in the Shakespearean source, Caliban is brought to his knees by Prospero's magic: "Of Liberty it's plain the cap won't fit, / Therefore we'd better quietly submit" (29). Where Shakespeare dismisses the character at this point, the Broughs keep Caliban on stage; he replaces Prospero to deliver what amounts to the Epilogue's appeal for audience applause. Caliban's position on center stage as the play ends testifies to his shift toward a central role.

Daniel Wilson's 1873 essay, "The Monster Caliban," provides a critical interpretation/adaptation of the character that depicts him as a missing link. Indeed, the essay appears in a book called *Caliban: The Missing Link*. Wilson points out that many of the play's descriptions that code Caliban as monstrous filter him through the lenses of the drunken Trinculo and the angry (and frequently sarcastic) Prospero. Thus, the reader can never fully decipher the accuracy of these descriptions. Despite acknowledging the abolitionist valences of the play by pointing to Prospero's overt status as a slaver, Wilson stops short of considering Caliban fully human: "He seems indeed the half-human link between the brute and the man" (139).

Caliban Unbound

By the twentieth century, however, Caliban has transitioned to unambiguous humanity, as well as to perhaps the central character in the play. Beerbohm Tree's 1904 production parallels the Broughs' by focusing the end of the play through Caliban, allowing him to hold the stage for a (wordless) epilogue. In Tree, Caliban emerges from his cave and watches as Prospero and company sail away from the island. As the play ends, "Caliban stretches out his arms toward [the ship] in mute despair. The night falls, and Caliban is left on the lonely rock. He is king once more" (63).

For their part, twentieth-century critics simply assume Caliban's humanity. Further, in 1960 George Lamming races him. In discussing the character's plan to impregnate Miranda, Lamming asks, "Could Prospero really have endured the presence and meaning of a brown skin grandchild?" (102). And that humanization and racing of Caliban is central to Aimé Césaire's seminal adaptation, *A Tempest* (1969). Césaire signals a direct confrontation with race and slavery at the

outset, offering descriptions for only the two characters that he calls "alterations" of Shakespeare: "Ariel, a mulatto slave/Caliban, a black slave" ("CHARACTERS"). From there, Césaire constructs a postcolonial reading of *The Tempest*, gutting the play's non-race engagements to center the relationship between Caliban and Prospero. Césaire's appropriation of Shakespeare fleshes out Caliban as a disenchanted colonized bent on revolution and Prospero as a power-addicted colonizer who, when confronted with Caliban's calls for liberty, doubles down on racism and perversity. The play becomes, essentially, a dialectical debate between Caliban and Prospero, colonized and colonizer. Indeed, in the final scene, Prospero recognizes the structure with frustration: "Well the world is really upside down . . . Caliban as a dialectician!" (63). But unlike the Broughs, Césaire eschews Shakespeare's restoration of order, unwilling to stifle Caliban's rebellion. The play ends with a withered and addled Prospero, who has refused to return to Europe, calling out for Caliban and being answered only by his (off-stage) song: "FREEDOM HI-DAY, FREEDOM HI-DAY!" (68).

Thus, Caliban becomes the play's main character and hero, functioning as an ideal avatar for Césaire's postcolonial philosophy. It is important to note that, as adaptive entropy shifts Caliban, treatments of Prospero must shift, as well. Within Césaire's postcolonial reading, Caliban replaces Prospero as the stand-in for the playwright. Not only can Prospero-the-colonizer not function as the author's surrogate, he must be a villain. In essence, Césaire's postcolonial philosophy, as represented by *Discourse on Colonization* (1955), brings the Dryden/Coleridge reading full circle—or turns it 180 degrees. Césaire's theory tweaks the Hegelian Master/Slave dialectic to center what he calls a "boomerang effect" (41) whereby the colonizer is positioned as savage and monstrous: "[A] civilization which justifies colonization—and therefore force—is already a sick civilization, a civilization which is morally diseased [. . .] [the colonizer] gets into the habit of seeing the other man as *an animal*, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform *himself* into an animal" (39, 41). Playwright Césaire fleshes that concept in his adaptation, with Prospero replacing Caliban as the monster on the island, a monster whose "'white' magic" (63) parallels Césaire's mid-twentieth century reality far more than his Shakespearean source: "I don't give a damn for your power / or for your dogs or your police or your inventions!" (64). Echoes of the French government's reactions to the May 1968 protests and to the freedom movements in France's former colonies repeatedly ring throughout the play.

Conclusion: Adaptive Entropy and the Bind of Adaptation

Césaire's fully articulated postcolonial reading of Shakespeare is an ideal example of adaptive entropy. That interpretation, itself a part of the dialectical adaptive process running back through Macready, becomes so culturally vital and central that its recasting of Caliban becomes essential for future adapters—a rhizomatic source that, even when not overtly acknowledged, must be negotiated. In Taymor's 2010 film adaptation, this emerges to reveal one of the binds of adaptation. By casting Helen Mirren as Prospera, Taymor suggests a feminist reading of *The Tempest*, which necessarily decenters other readings of the text. The film scales back the (now largely dominant) postcolonial reading. From a postcolonial perspective, the details of Taymor's version are potentially troubling. Caliban (Djimon Hounsou) is depicted with his skin cracking, and the black African is seemingly white underneath. Further, the eye on his white side has turned from brown to blue. From a postcolonial perspective, Caliban's layering is problematic, suggesting the black character exists with a core of whiteness.

Fig. 1

Djimon Hounsou as Caliban. Digital frame enlargement.

Of course, this should not matter, because Taymor's is not a postcolonial *Tempest*. The film seeks a return to Shakespeare's dynamic, positing Prospera as a stand in for the filmmaker. Taymor's attempt to pull focus away from the postcolonial reading evokes Robert Stam's liberating question about fidelity: "The question of fidelity ignores the wider question: Fidelity to what?" (57). Stam underscores the concept that a text has many potential centers and access points. If a text could exist as singular, adaptation could be prescribed, but as there are always multiple readings of any text, an adaptation represents a set of enabling interpretations: the adapter makes concrete choices,

and in choosing, interprets. At that point, certain interpretations become fixed and certain interpretations excluded. Yet once we allow that myriad interpretations of the source text exist simultaneously, we see adaptation's bind in the light of adaptive entropy: even if Taymor only wanted to adapt Shakespeare's *Tempest*, she couldn't—or rather, the rhizomatic existence of Césaire's *Tempest* (and Macready's and the Broughs') complicates her task.

Taymor's odd treatment of Caliban's body and character evidences adaptive entropy. Her decision to cast Mirren as Prospera identifies the adaptation as concerned with feminist revision. The problem arises with the fact that this feminist revision requires a heroic Prospera. Yet after Césaire's adaptive entropy, even an adaptation that gender-bends Prospero into Prospera to foreground feminist issues in the text cannot avoid the postcolonial implications of the slaver/enslaved relationship between Prospera and Caliban. Thus, in a post-Césaire world, Prospera's hero-status depends on a revision in the resolution between her and Caliban.

In service of that revision, Taymor edits Shakespeare. During the 5th act restoration of order, after Caliban's plot has been foiled, she omits Prospero's lines that hint at Caliban's future beyond the play: "Go, sirrah, to my cell; / Take with you your companions. As you look / To have my pardon, trim it handsomely" (5. 1. 291-93), as well as Caliban's meek acceptance of Prospero's Master status: "Ay, that I will, and I'll be wise hereafter, / And seek for grace" (5. 1. 294-95). Shakespeare's restoration of order implies that Caliban remains enslaved, and that he will cease all resistance to his slaver's authority. Not only does Taymor omit Shakespeare's problematic moment, she replaces it with a more enlightened and complex one—one whose enlightenment is clearly inflected by Césaire's postcolonial reading.

Taymor's penultimate scene departs from Shakespeare's and follows the blocking of the Broughs and Césaire: all the other actors (the various usurpers from the high and low stories) withdraw, leaving Prospera and Caliban to face off with one another. Taymor adds no revisionist dialogue, but the open gaze between the two characters—the emptying of the stage to offer a moment where each offers a frank recognition of the existence of the other—functions as a revision. A long shot follows Caliban as he exits the stage by climbing a stone staircase, pausing at the top and walking through an M-shaped doorway that gives out into a blue sky. The ascension and the clear open sky suggest liberation. The shot then cuts to an eyeline match of Prospera, no longer watching Caliban's exit, but rather on a seaside cliff at night with Ariel. In this final scene, Prospera frees Ariel (Ben Wishaw) from his servitude and casts away the phallic staff that represents her hold over the island and

its inhabitants. Here Taymor has fused the feminist and postcolonial readings; Prospera, the feminist hero, eschews patriarchal domination in favor of recognizing and liberating the film's Others, a clear nod to Césaire's postcolonial reading of the play, which is necessary to clear a space for Prospera as a feminist hero.

In the end however, Prospera can be the hero only if we are willing to suspend our disbelief in a way that completely erases Césaire's reading, completely forgets the barbarism of colonialism. But the very existence of Taymor's revision suggests that we haven't forgotten the issue of slavery in the text. This is Taymor's conundrum. With regard to adaptive entropy, the implications of Prospera's colonization of Caliban propel the text toward chaos, and the text's restoration of order cannot adequately contain that chaos. Importantly, it is due to Césaire (his adaptation and his philosophical theory delivered in *Discourse*) that we recognize that textual failure. And in fact, Césaire's reading stretches forth along the rhizome from Macready's Victorian *Tempest*, which stretches back to Shakespeare's original script, but also winds through critical interpretations by Coleridge and Hazlitt, as well as other nodes on the rhizome.

Which is all to say that adaptations exist not on a binary (source/copy) but rather in a web, a matrix, a constellation, a rhizome that enacts and is subject to perpetual processes of adaptive entropy. With that in mind, we have to be prepared to follow adaptations both backward and forward along their root systems. Doing so allows adaptation critics a more complex understanding of the dynamics of the act of adaptation, as well as a fuller understanding of the myriad ways that history informs culture, and vice versa.

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“The Same Events Revolve in the Cycles of Time”: Adapting Imperial Violence in Wilkie Collins’s *The Moonstone*

Alycia Gilbert

September 1877: Wilkie Collins eagerly planned an American theatrical run of his most recent play, boasting in his letters that he had managed a great success. *The Moonstone*, an adaptation of Collins’s popular sensation novel, had just opened at London’s Olympic Theater. In part to spite illegal reproductions of *The Moonstone* staged in the late 1860s and 1870s, Collins constructed a theatrical adaptation that flaunted its divergences from the novel: “No paste-and-scissors version of the novel can compete with my version,” Collins wrote triumphantly, “for this plain reason that many of the chief scenes and situations are of my own invention, and are *not in the novel at all*” (Collins, *The Public Face of Wilkie Collins* 171; vol. 3).[1]

October 1877: Collins had resigned all thoughts of an American tour. Though the play’s initial reception seemed promising, indifferent and critical reviews flooded newspapers, their primary target Collins’s proud alterations from the novel. Two lead actors had quit. The London run would end after just nine weeks on the stage, a considerably shorter engagement than Collins’s more successful plays.[2] The curse of the Moonstone had followed its characters onto the stage and, rather than a triumph, the show was another disappointment in Wilkie Collins’s theatrical resumé.

For disgruntled reviewers, the play’s chief disappointment lay in excluding most of the novel’s Indian storyline—from the Brahmin priest characters, who had received glowing praise after the novel’s publication, to the titular diamond’s theft from and return to India, which was all but absent from the staged production. As *The Athenaeum*’s review complained, the novel’s “rich glow of Oriental colour” (“The Week” 381) that had captured Victorian readers’ Orientalist fancy a decade prior was gone. Minimizing its engagement with India, the play offered instead a sort of Victorian cozy mystery: the tale of a dinner party, a romance, and indigestion-induced sleepwalking set in an equally sleepy country estate. Collins’s play not only inspired a pervasive critical disinterest from contemporary

critics, but later twentieth and twenty-first century scholars. Though a large part of its critical neglect can be attributed to a general scholarly disinterest in ephemeral Victorian play adaptations,[3] *The Moonstone: A Dramatic Story in Three Acts*'s avoidance of imperial subject matter has also contributed to its lack of appeal for postcolonial critics who have long debated Collins's novel and its multifaceted attitude toward the British Empire.

Despite the unprepossessing critical reception of *The Moonstone*'s first legal adaptation, later creators have not been deterred from reimagining it in new mediums, and each adaptation has had to interpret and mediate the novel's portrayal of British imperial violence for new audiences. Since its theatrical stint, *The Moonstone* has been adapted to film in 1915, 1934, and 1996,[4] and was adapted for television in 1959, 1972, and most recently in 2016. Though Collins's play has generated little scholarship, that first authorized stage production has provided a template (or prediction) for condensing *The Moonstone*'s multi-narrative text for more concise visual mediums and materials. Many of these adaptations, including the newest iteration of *The Moonstone*, a five-part miniseries aired by the BBC in 2016, incorporate adaptive choices that originated in Collins's infamous play, including the alternative Colonel Herncastle narrative that Collins invented for the stage—a version that simultaneously heightens the religious nature of the Colonel's war crimes but avoids any apologetic, anti-imperialist undercurrents from Collins's original prologue.

Here, I follow that small but resonant portion of *The Moonstone's* story set in India—the prologue, which sees Colonel John Herncastle's theft of the titular yellow diamond during the 1799 Siege of Seringapatam—to explore the adaptation of imperial violence first from Collins's novel to his stage play, then to the miniseries in the twenty-first century. The 2016 miniseries, a production created as part of the BBC's #LovetoRead campaign, attempts to appeal to the campaign's broad audience in its development for daytime television. Similar to Collins's stage adaptation, in generating this appeal, the miniseries softens its depiction of imperial violence; as part of a national campaign intended to kindle viewers' interest in classic English literature, the miniseries leans heavily into heritage marketing tropes and nostalgic whimsy.

Especially evident in the miniseries' original decision to adopt the play's Colonel Herncastle storyline and depict the narrative through paper theater rather than live-action filmmaking, the miniseries, I argue, mirrors the play's depiction of India as exotic and less tangible than England. In doing so, I respond to calls from Renata Kobetts Miller, Lissette Lopez Szwydky, and others to better account for nineteenth-century play adaptations; though, as Kobetts Miller argues

in "Nineteenth-Century Theatrical Adaptations of Novels: The Paradox of Ephemerality," these adaptations "have been criticized both in the nineteenth century and in evaluative criticism, subjected to a more general neglect of Victorian drama, and even identified as a cause of the decline of the theater," early stage adaptations create lasting impacts on the adaptation histories that follow, often profoundly affecting cultural attitudes, understanding, and memory of their source texts (57). By exploring how the miniseries sanitizes its portrayal of imperial violence to situate *The Moonstone* (2016) as a child-friendly heritage piece, I draw out the parallels between the miniseries and Collins's choice to depoliticize his narrative when staging the novel for the Victorian public.

"Who's Got the Moonstone?": Interpreting Imperialism in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*

As "the sole mid-Victorian novel of the first rank that makes England's relation with India the center of its business" (Duncan 297), *The Moonstone* (1868) has been thoroughly scrutinized by nineteenth-century postcolonial criticism; for decades, critics have remained divided on *The Moonstone*'s imperial ideology—does the novel, sympathetic to the Brahmin priests and critical of the bloody behavior of British soldiers abroad, subtly critique British imperialism? Or does the novel's detective plot enforce and patrol national borders as an Indian diamond wreaks havoc on English domesticity? The well-known pitfalls of fidelity analysis aside, by providing a brief reading and overview of the variety of postcolonial interpretations from *The Moonstone*, I stress the impossibility of treating Collins's source text as some sort of ideal historical portrayal of imperial greed to measure subsequent adaptations against.

First published serially in *All the Year Round* from January to August of 1866, then as a novel in 1868, *The Moonstone* frames itself as compiled testimonies and letters that detail the investigation into the theft of an enormous yellow diamond, the titular Moonstone. Violently ripped from a holy statue of Vishnu at the start of the eighteenth century, the Moonstone passed between invading forces until its bloody theft during the 1799 Siege of Seringapatam brought the Moonstone to English soil. Despite a legendary curse that the gem will bring only misfortune, Colonel John Herncastle loots the gem from the armory of Tipu Sultan, and, pursued by three Brahmin priests dedicated to restoring the diamond to the statue of Vishnu, vindictively wills the gem to his estranged niece, Rachel Verinder. The Moonstone's subsequent

disappearance launches *The Moonstone*'s detective plot as investigator Sergeant Cuff, hero Franklin Blake, and butler Gabriel Betteredge race against the Brahmin priests to discover who has taken the Moonstone and recover the diamond.

The Moonstone's reliance on Orientalist intrigue, the supposed threat of Indian "mysticism" to the stability of British modernity, as it builds its mystery plot has been a foundational premise for postcolonial critics. In "English Romance: Indian Violence," Jaya Mehta writes that by the end of the nineteenth century, "England, modern, industrial, and no longer romantic, now imports the raw materials of adventure from its colonies, refining them into domestic romance, as it drains India's resources and manufactures them into English wealth"; the detective novel's formula in late-Victorian England—which was molded by Collins's *The Moonstone*—depends on these "oriental imports," on aesthetics and stereotypes drawn from colonial contexts (611). However, whether or not Collins uses these stereotypes to reinforce or subvert Victorian expectations when portraying English and Indian relations has proven more contentious. While critics including Mehta, Melissa Free, Lillian Nayder, and Yumna Siddiqi have argued, in varying degrees, that the novel provides a nuanced, often critical of view of British imperialism, opposing critics like Upamanyu Mukherjee, Leila Neti, and Ashish Roy have argued that the novel upholds or promotes colonial logic. As Mukherjee asks, can the novel be truly subversive "if its 'anti-imperialism' consists of using stereotypical representations of the colony, to criticize not so much British aggression abroad, but the authority's failings at home"? (177).

The Moonstone's prologue and Colonel Herncastle narrative set the entire tone of the novel through these colonial imports. Opening by foregrounding the novel's geographic scope, the prologue foreshadows the narrative's split between Indian and English interests: "I address these lines—written in India—to my relatives in England" (*The Moonstone* 12). The narrator, Colonel Herncastle's cousin, regales us with the bloody history of the Moonstone, inspired by the real-life Koh-I-Noor and Orlov diamonds: relocated from its original place of worship to avoid desecration by Muslim invaders, the gem is enshrined in a statue of Vishnu, who blesses the diamond and charges three Brahmin priests with watching over the gem. Generation after generation, the Brahmins follow the Moonstone as it is stolen and passed among successive conquerors, eventually placed in the hilt of a dagger by Tipu Sultan. Through Tipu Sultan, who had become a popular villain in Victorian media,[5] as well as through the passivity of the Brahmin priests, Collins's prologue takes up several Victorian

stereotypes about India, particularly in casting Muslims as aggressors and Hindus as passive sufferers.[6]

As the "wildest of these stories" of Indian wealth circulating through General Baird's troops as they eagerly anticipate "the treasure in jewels and gold stored up in the Palace of Seringapatam," the Moonstone's backstory sets a sweeping, dramatic premise for the novel, rooted in Orientalist superstition and resistant British skepticism (*The Moonstone* 13). However, the following depiction of the siege and Colonel Herncastle's theft, though still building up the novel's melodrama, is surprisingly realistic about the disorganized violence that breaks out among the British troops during and after the assault. The advance is described as "a terrible slaughter," and rather than civilized, conquering heroes enforcing British order, the troops and camp followers commit "deplorable excesses" as the fighting devolves into "plunder and confusion" (*The Moonstone* 18). Trying to bring the looting troops to order, the narrator discovers the bloody aftermath of the wicked Colonel's theft of the Moonstone:

> I got to an open door, and saw the bodies of two Indians (by their dress, as I guessed, officers of the palace) lying across the entrance, dead.
>
> A cry inside hurried me into a room, which appeared to serve as an armoury. A third Indian, mortally wounded, was sinking at the feet of a man whose back was towards me. The man turned at the instant when I came in, and I saw John Herncastle, with a torch in one hand, and a dagger dripping with blood in the other. A stone, set like a pommel, in the end of the dagger's handle, flashed in the torchlight, as he turned on me, like a gleam of fire. The dying Indian sank to his knees, pointed to the dagger in Herncastle's hand, and said, in his native language—"The Moonstone will have its vengeance yet on you and yours!" He spoke those words, and fell dead on the floor. (19)

This visceral, highly visual sequence draws out the Colonel's crime; narrative time slows, moving from the narrator's quick summary to linger on the action of this scene, emphasizing its violence as the core of the prologue and setting the tone for the rest of the novel. In Lillian Nayder's analysis of Collins's treatment of imperial subjects across his writings, "Collins and Empire," Nayder argues that *The Moonstone*'s prologue first presents British violence against Indians to contextualize the Brahmin priests' violence against the Moonstone's

thief, characterizing their "later acts of violence against Britons [as] marks of retribution triggered by an original, imperial crime" (139). By vividly portraying the brutality of the diamond's robbery, "Collins casts the Indians as victims of imperial greed and violence and equates colonization with theft" (146).

However, though the narrator condemns the Colonel's looting and murder—and the rest of the novel maintains this attitude toward Herncastle's theft of the diamond—Collins carefully stops short of implicating the British troops as a whole. Though "there was riot and confusion enough in the treasury," Collins's narrator maintains that, other than Herncastle's crime, there was "no violence that I saw," and the men disgrace themselves "good-humouredly" (18). Even the language that disapproves of the troops is fairly ambiguous; when the narrator says that he hesitates to describe the troops as "the men," does he falter because they're acting inhumanely, or because they're acting childishly, their "rough jests" and cries of "Who's got the Moonstone?" no more than a "mischievous joke" (18)?

Collins's choice to begin the novel with British imperial greed and end with Indian triumph with the Moonstone's return is striking considering that the novel was released during the ten-year anniversary of the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a major uprising of Indian sepoys against the British East India Company that inflamed British racism against South Asians. Patrick Brantlinger characterizes the popular Victorian response to the "Indian Mutiny" as "the racist pattern of blaming the victim expressed in terms of an absolute polarization of good and evil, innocence and guilt, justice and injustice, moral restraint and sexual depravity, civilization and barbarism," building "an imperialist allegory" that called for "the total subjugation of India" and often "the wholesale extermination of Indians" (200). Preceding *The Moonstone,* Collins wrote and co-authored several pieces on the topic of colonizing efforts in India, also published in *All the Year Round.* As Nayder argues, Collins, in comparison to Dickens and other nationalist writers, took a more nuanced approach to the causes behind the rebellion: "Collins occasionally mocked the racist language used to vilify treacherous Orientals and rather than simply blaming the sepoys for the rebellion, he suggested that colonial abuses were largely responsible for it" (144-45). While not a rejection of empire, Collins's writing—both in his essays around the rebellion and within *The Moonstone*—reflects both a willingness and ability to criticize as well as defend British imperialism. Ronald R. Thomas claims that the public conversation around the rebellion manifests in Collins's novel as an "uncomfortable sense of guilt about the British imperial project and an effort to justify that project as well" (66). This often-contradictory attitude toward

imperialism will always require interpretation as subsequent adaptors take up the violent theft of the Moonstone and its impact within the narrative, including interpretation from Collins himself.

"An Ornament on One of Their Heathen Images": *The Moonstone*, Staged

When the curtains opened on *The Moonstone*: *A Dramatic Story in Three Acts* in September 1877, the revealed set was decidedly English. Comprised of a staircase that led to a faux hallway, working doors to represent upstairs bedchambers, and a living-room scene on the set's main level, the stage depicted the inner hall of Rachel Verinder's country-house. The contrast between the opening settings of Collins's novel and play encapsulates the separate tones, dramatic conceits, and creative aims of his two texts: a fraught, action-heavy sequence in India versus a tutting Betteredge, who sets the scene by tidying the Verinder house and expositing about the whims of his young employer.

As evidenced through his letters, Wilkie Collins did not prioritize his source material when adapting *The Moonstone*; instead, he rejoiced in these many intentional differences between the two texts, seeing these gaps as spaces for creativity and opportunities to thwart competitors. As an 1877 production, Collins's play exists at the height of what nineteenth-century critic William Archer dubbed the "Adaptive Age"—a period spanning the 1860s to the 1880s in which most Victorian stage productions were adaptions: productions inspired by French theatricals or popular novels, shady commercial imitations duping well-received plays from competing theatres and even dodgier "provincial piracies" where hits from London were reproduced outside the city under new titles (qtd. in Meer 22). With the uneven development and enforcement of intellectual copyright across the nineteenth century, writers were left with few protections to prevent their work from being adapted without their consent and without receiving financial compensation. Popular sensation fiction, a genre that includes many of Collins's works, became a common target for "pirates" and more legitimate adapters alike.

Born out of frustration with these ripe conditions for plagiarism, Collins's approach to adapting his own texts—and his critics' responses—gives us a glimpse into the complex Victorian relationship with adaptations and fidelity. Evolving norms concerning copyright and intellectual property contributed to a certain nebulousness for Victorian audiences on what made an adaptation "faithful" or effective, as seen in Collins's insistence that his adaptations were truer to his source works

than pirated replications. For Collins, any deviations from the original text establish the authenticity of his adaptation, with his adaptations' faithfulness determined by the authority of his authorship rather than by any effort to directly translate the novel to the stage. Treating his adaptations as largely new material also fulfilled Collins's desire to provide an entirely new experience to audiences already familiar with his source novel. This adaptive philosophy, to prioritize newness over replication, can also be seen in his more successful adaptation of *The Woman in White,* which similarly anticipates a knowing audience and reinvents its plot structure to subvert those expectations. In Collins's playbill for *The Woman in White* (1871)*,* he declares his intentions to produce a "work which shall appeal to the audience purely on its own merits as a play" (qtd. in Norwood 227).

Reviewers struggled to reconcile Collins's assumed authority as an author with their assumption that stage adaptations should be faithful to their source novels. While critical responses in *The Theatre, The Athenaeum,* and *Fun* grapple with the inevitable genre differences involved when moving the story of *The Moonstone* from novel to play, acknowledging that the narrative must be condensed for time, their acknowledgement does not prevent their reviews from expressing frustration or open amusement at *how* Collins condenses the narrative. "We cannot accuse Mr. Wilkie Collins of misunderstanding his own story, and of robbing it for the stage of its most important dramatic elements; he, if any one, must know where he intended the chief interest of his plot to lie," writes *The Theatre*, "But the author's fair immunity from criticism of this nature cannot prevent our consciousness that in re-writing his novel for the stage Mr. Wilkie Collins has not done justice to what we may, out of deference to his views, call its non-essential elements" ("IN LONDON" 113). Even a positive review from *The Examiner* (and, contextually, this is praise, though it reads like a snide insult), happily declares that "Mr. Collins has shown great self-control and masterly knowledge of the possibilities of the stage in sacrificing so much of what made his novel interesting" ("'THE MOONSTONE' AT THE OLYMPIC" 1209).

Collins's nontraditional approach to adapting his own work anticipates the now well-accepted sanction against fidelity analysis within adaptation studies, or critiquing an adaptation based on its ability (or inability) to reproduce its source text "faithfully." Rather than replications to be read against his source texts, Collins's adaptations demand to be read, as Richard Pearson argues, as "different and independent; not misreadings, but rereadings or even counterreadings" (212). Collins's decision to drastically reimagine *The Moonstone* for the stage, limiting its imagined geographic scope and

its engagement with Great Britain's imperial past and present, must be read not as a failed attempt to replicate his novel, but as a strategic (if ineffective with audiences) choice. In engaging his stage adaptation through the context of his novel's prologue, I hope to explore why Collins might have made these dramatic shifts in re-envisioning his story, particularly in light of the new genre and political moment for which the play was developed, as well as the effects of those changes within the play's narrative.

As it trades Orientalist intrigue and British violence for domestic banter, the play's opening highlights the main adaptive shift Collins has made from novel to play: as Pearson argues in one of the few studies of Collins's play, to "quite deliberately [shut out]" the novel's "elaborate colonial world around the diamond and the main characters" (215). The stage play does not include any Indian characters and reduces its references to India. For example, rather than arising from an opium-induced haze, Franklin Blake's pivotal sleepwalking, which leaves the diamond vulnerable to theft, results from eating a rich dinner. The only elements of India in Collins's play are the Moonstone's origins and its theft, which, though retained, are told rather than shown to its audience.

Neil Hultgren describes the murders in *The Moonstone*'s prologue as a "detailed, first person, and nearly eyewitness account of the violence of the theft, combining descriptions of movement, setting, and speech with a split-second precision reminiscent of stage directions" (61). Hultgren's analogy highlights the noticeable lack of this theatrical convention in the play's portrayal of Colonel Herncastle's crime. Instead, in the Verinder country-house, Betteredge reveals the diamond's backstory through a paragraph of exposition during the first act:

> *Betteredge.* If you knew how he got this diamond, sir, you would wish nothing of the sort! It was in the Indian wars. The Moonstone was an ornament on one of their heathen images in those parts. The last place they defended against the English troops was their temple. The Colonel was the first of the storming party to get in. He killed the two priests who defended their idol, and he cut the diamond out of the wooden head of the image with his sword. "Loot" they call it in the army; *I* call it murder and robbery. And the curse of murder and robbery goes with the diamond. (Collins, *The Moonstone: A Dramatic Story in Three Acts* n. pag.)

While it seems Betteredge's speech summarizes Collins's original prologue, the text presents a subtly different version of the diamond's history that the BBC miniseries later adopts: Collins eliminates the original attacks on the diamond by a non-British army. Here, Colonel Herncastle steals the diamond from the statue of Vishnu itself, during an alluded-to but unnamed Siege of Seringapatam that climaxes in a temple rather than a palace. This ostensibly minor creative choice, as well as how it's presented to its audience, has rippling effects across *The Moonstone*'s adaptation history, beginning with how it shapes the play's brief allusion to India.

Shifting the setting of Colonel Herncastle's theft from the sultan's armory to a temple of Vishnu, the play emphasizes the religious nature of the Colonel's crime. The shortened history of the Moonstone also renders the British solely and immediately responsible for the diamond's misery; rather than circulating in Muslim, Hindu, and Christian conflicts over the centuries, the Moonstone of the play moves linearly from a Hindu place of worship to the possession of a Christian Englishman. Colonel Herncastle "[cuts] the diamond out of the wooden head of the image with his sword," desecrating the statue of Vishnu with his own hands. The play implicates the British as the sole violators of a sacred object—a heightening of the novel's religious and moral stakes. The image of Herncastle's army sword cutting the diamond from the statue emphasizes the violence of desecrating the temple: the statue is struck like the Indian men Herncastle has killed to reach it. Betteredge's critique of Herncastle's actions also subtly extends to the British army as a whole. What the army sees as "loot," Betteredge condemns as murder and robbery, a rebuke that implies that British soldiers rhetorically minimize the damages they commit.

Ultimately, the brevity of this moment in the script undercuts the importance of the Moonstone's origins to the play's narrative. The Moonstone's glancing origins and its wholly English resolution seem to have perplexed reviewers, particularly those reading the play against the novel. Many see the play's diamond as entirely divorced from its colonial origins. *The Examiner* notes that, stripped of ancient origins, "Here [the Moonstone] is simply a precious stone, worth ten thousand pounds, offering temptation to a charitable hypocrite, and causing misunderstandings in the course of a story of true love in an English household" ("'THE MOONSTONE' AT THE OLYMPIC" 1209). And though the reviewer praises this choice, they conclude that Collins should have perhaps eschewed calling the gem or the play "the Moonstone" altogether: "Any valuable jewel would have served his purpose just as well, and the play would have had the advantage of being judged on its own merits" (1209).[7]

By depicting the scene through spoken rather than visual exposition, Collins chooses not to utilize one of theater's strengths: physical material beyond the page. Through the emotionally affective use of visuals, staging the prologue's inciting violence could have offered a space to illustrate the colonel's villainy, and though such a sequence would have undoubtedly relied on Orientalist stereotype like Collins's prologue, it could have confronted its audience with British violence in the colonies on some level. However, by choosing not to adapt the prologue and epilogue, *The Moonstone: A Dramatic Story in Three Acts* constrains its action—which has also been reduced temporally, from a years-long affair to a twenty-four-hour mystery—within England. The static set never changes, the Verinders' front hall containing the play's three acts. Once the Moonstone arrives in England—and once Betteredge's short discussion of the diamond's origins concludes—the diamond becomes a wholly English concern. Since the diamond is not pursued by Brahmin priests, the Moonstone does not return to India before the curtains close. Instead, once Inspector Cuff successfully identifies the thief, the diamond returns to Rachel Verinder. Deciding the gem is more trouble than it's worth, Rachel has the diamond cut and sold so that the money can be invested in her English neighborhood.

The choice to remain in the Verinder's country estate places Collins's adaptation within a "well-made-play" structure rather than within mid-Victorian theatrical trends that mirrored the novel's global scope.[8] London stages were popular spaces to exhibit and dramatize British empire in the metropole. Marty Gould's *Nineteenth-Century Theatre and the Imperial Encounter* describes the lavish spectacle nineteenth-century productions created—"authentically dressed casts numbering in the hundreds, rifle and cannon fire, full-size replicas of Buddhist temples, live horses, and patriotic music"—to "systematically exploit all available visual technologies in a constant quest to satisfy an English public eager for ever-more elaborate displays of the empire" (2). India, in particular, was a fashionable setting in the mid-Victorian era, and though plays portraying the Mysore Wars were eclipsed in popularity by those depicting the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion, India-centric military plays spanned the entire century. While many of these productions reinforced imperial propaganda, especially mutiny plays, some of these elaborate stagings also challenged British imperialism, making this fashion not incompatible with Collins's more anti-imperialist views: "from the Robinsonade's critique of the civilizing mission to the theatrical nabob's embodiment of cultural contamination, the stage cast an occasionally critical eye on the motives that drove the imperial machine as well as the potential social cost of the nation's global ambitions" (Gould 2).

However, rather than engage in this theatrical craze, *The Moonstone: A Dramatic Story* decides not to stage any scenes in India, both as a creative and political choice. In Collins's playbill for *The Woman in White*, he shows an aversion to "making the interest of his drama dependent on mechanical contrivance," instead claiming that "he has relied in the play, as he relied in the novel, on the succession of incident, on the exhibition of character, and on the collision of human emotion rising naturally from those two sources (qtd. Norwood 227). Expressing a certain disdain for visual spectacle, Collins privileges literary forms over dramatic, despite treating his adaptation as a distinct and new creation.

Despite only a decade apart separating their creation, the novel and the stage play exist in different imperial moments. Though by 1877 twenty years had passed since the Sepoy Rebellion, racialized rhetoric against India had been normalized, sharpened by "scientific" racism that had become fashionable following the popular theories of Charles Darwin (Washbrook). And as historians David Washbrook and John Darwin, among others, have shown, by the 1870s the economic value of India to Great Britain was ever-growing. John Darwin writes that after 1870, India rose as a major producer within the British empire of export commodities, which had weakened British arguments that focused on the cost, both financially and militarily, of maintaining a colonial presence in India (182). Washbrook contributes these factors to "a hardening British 'nationalism'" that gave rise to what he identifies as "a New Imperialism" under Disraeli's government that peaked in the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India in 1877 (n. pag).

The symbolic weight of the proclamation altered the ideological landscape surrounding Collins's adaptation of *The Moonstone*. In the wake of the proclamation, public interest had been renewed in Britain's past conflicts with India, particularly the Sepoy Rebellion and even the earlier Indian Wars. In *The London Journal*'s coverage of the proclamation, for example, the publication includes an image of Seringapatam alongside a lengthy description of the city's geography, writing that "As the last rulers of Mysore, Hyder Ali and Tippoo Saib [Tipu Sultan], were the most formidable and determined opponents of the advance of British power in India, we have thought it to be in keeping . . . to give a view of Seringapatam . . . which, after a series of fierce battles, was taken by storm by the British in 1799" (20), invoking the Mysore Wars to place Queen Victoria within a lineage of Indian rulers. In spite of this rekindled interest, anti-imperial sentiments about the Mysore Wars that may have been more palatable for the Victorian public in 1868 had become less suitable or fashionable for a theatrical production in 1877 (Pearson 219). Shying away from any

substantive critique of imperialism, *The Moonstone* play, rather than indicating a misunderstanding on Collins's part regarding what made the original novel successful, reveals Collins's decision to minimize his allusion to Britain's past violences against India.

From Stages Real to Imagined: *The Moonstone* (2016)

Collins's stage adaptation of *The Moonstone* echoes across the adaptations of the detective novel throughout the twentieth century, from the condensed twenty-four-hour format repeated in early adaptations including the 1934 film, to the specific Colonel Herncastle narrative established by the play, as seen in the BBC's 1996 film and 2016 miniseries adaptation. Developed following BBC 4's audio drama adaptation of *The Moonstone* in 2011, the miniseries production was folded into and released as part of the BBC's 2016 #LovetoRead campaign. Intended to "celebrate the pleasures of reading," the campaign targeted readers of all ages through programming spanning from celebrity author interviews to online personality quizzes ("#LovetoRead: Celebrating the pleasures of reading"). The #LovetoRead campaign also released a slew of classic novel adaptations to generate interest in classic British literature. Lauded as "the birth of an entire genre" by marketing materials and creator interviews, *The Moonstone*'s debated status as the first English detective novel added literary and historical—and even educational—importance to the 2016 adaptation ("BBC and partners launch new campaign…").The miniseries was released daily from October 31st through November 4th, airing in a daytime timeslot traditionally intended for young audiences, though the show's writers Rachel Flowerday and Sasha Hails have stated that the daytime slot didn't impact their approach to content (references to drugs and violence, etc.), and that beyond financial constraints, the pair wouldn't have written the show differently for primetime.

Similar to the play in 1877, in adapting the text to the classic-television format, the miniseries ultimately presents a very minimal and sterile depiction of imperial violence. Though the show's marketing openly references the complex ideologies of Collins's text, the miniseries does not take a critical approach to the content, relying on the "astonishingly modern commentary on Colonialism" that its creators see in Collins's novel and mediating this content through a heritage production lens (Yorke n. pag.). Again, the Colonel Herncastle narrative provides a microcosm of the show's approach to this subject matter. Interestingly, in reimagining Collins's novel for television, the miniseries takes advantage of the genre's format by centralizing the Colonel Herncastle

storyline through its role as the opening credits sequence. Repeated at the start of each episode, the theft constantly contextualizes the story that follows, tying the entirety of *The Moonstone* directly to colonial theft. However, the material constraints of daytime television and the production's prioritization of heritage television aesthetics undermine the effectiveness of the scene's positioning. This choice to stage the opening credits as a paper theatre, lit by tea candles and featuring an ensemble of cardstock players, relegates the crimes of the colonel and the entirety of India to a space roughly the size of a shoebox.

While "heritage adaptation" has become a debated term in nineteenth-century adaptation studies, too often used to treat all period media as one conservative, generic monolith, I feel it appropriately and productively applies to the 2016 miniseries adaptation of *The Moonstone*, largely because the 2016 miniseries so overtly and openly identifies its purpose as part of a national project of building and maintaining English literary culture. In "Heritage and Literature On Screen: Heimat and Heritage," Eckart Voigts-Virchow argues that "the term heritage film is useful in addressing issues of national, ethnic, cultural, class, and gender identities that are crucial in analyses of these films" (n. pag.). Both the textual and paratextual elements of *The Moonstone* miniseries engage with issues of national identity (marketing, interviews with creators, and reception materials are themselves a kind of adaptive work, framing and interpreting both the miniseries and the original narrative). While the #LovetoRead campaign's main mission was generally to inspire new readers, both old and young, and to do so with an inclusive programming list, the campaign's literary adaptations focused on presenting classic literature as a British cultural inheritance to be taken up by modern readers to better understand both the past and present, building viewer's identities as "British" readers. Voigts-Virchow, as well as Julia Kristeva, Homi Bhaba, and others, have argued that the heritage industry reconstructs the past because memory generates an imagined identity. *The Moonstone* miniseries uses historical elements—set pieces, hypertextual links to other "classic" works like Sherlock Holmes, material from the source text, etc.—to build this cultural identity and literary legacy, echoing Voigts-Virchow's definition of heritage as "not history (which seeks knowledge about the past)," but as a "modern-day use of elements of the past" (n. pag.).

Though the 2016 miniseries subtly draws some of its visual and pacing references from modern crime drama—the narrative has been restructured around an interrogation room, of sorts, as Franklin Blake solicits the other characters' accounts of the Moonstone's theft, and the series' color palette dips into more blues and greys than period piece media traditionally tends to—much of its tone and structure

are informed by heritage adaptations, particularly in its opening(s) and ending. As the narrative, again, hinges around British and Indian conflict, translating *The Moonstone*'s depiction of imperial violence into the classic-novel serial is proven to be a loaded task, considering the emphasis on nostalgia, material trappings, and restrained action of heritage media. Rachel Malik's critique of the 1996 television film adaptation of *The Moonstone* resonates with the 2016 miniseries: "But it is fidelity to the conventions and audience expectations of classic period drama and classic detective fiction, particularly as stamped by BBC traditions, which shapes the adaptation, at least as much as the text itself" (n. pag.).

Interviews with the producers and writers of *The Moonstone* (2016) reveal an awareness of the colonial stakes of the material; however, their description of Collins's commentary on colonialism feels too generous a reading of the source text, and the show does little to actively recontextualize or reframe Collins's imperial subject matter for a modern audience, relying on the "astonishingly modern" view toward empire that the producers and writers identify in Collins's work. In "BBC One's *The Moonstone* - Part of #LovetoRead," published on the BBC's #LovetoRead online site, Executive Producer John Yorke unpacks the conclusive anticolonialism he sees in Collins's original prologue:

> The theft of the Moonstone—the crime that incites the novel's action—actually happens twice; it's stolen from our heroine, Rachel Verinder, but long before that, as the prologue relates, it was stolen by her uncle from its home in India. The diamond is a symbol of all Colonial plunder—and we're left in no doubt that Wilkie Collins stands with the dispossessed. (n. pag.)[9]

However, as shown in the breadth of postcolonial readings of Collins's text, the degree to which Collins stands with the dispossessed on an imperial, global level (rather than just as the rightful owners of the Moonstone) isn't unambiguous. Their absolute faith in Collins's perspective is compounded upon by the nostalgic and traditionalist baggage heritage-focused adaptations can be inclined toward; as "a shared cultural memory," Voigts-Virchow writes, heritage is "prone to be abused for nationalist or ethnocentrist purposes unless rendered decentered" (n. pag.).

This nationalist bent is perhaps most evident in the miniseries' approach to the prologue and in depicting nineteenth-century India. Though the miniseries' writers do not cite any familiarity with Collins's stage play, the shared need to condense the narrative results in the same version of Colonel Herncastle's theft. Unlike the play, the miniseries

does portray the scene visually; however, budgetary constrictions typical of daytime television productions affected *The Moonstone*'s (2016) options in reimagining the material. The smaller budget resulted in a narrowing of the source text's settings to a few key locations in Europe. Yorke explained that the budget directly led to the series' inability to recreate India as set-piece location for the prologue. Their solution, which Yorke asserts felt "felt true to the era and tone" of the novel was to stage the scenes set in India through Victorian paper theatre (n. pag.). However, despite Yorke's claims, the tone of a paper theater does not capture a similar tone and instead favors the glossy, nostalgic tone stereotypically associated with heritage adaptations; by reducing the "colonial plunder" to comic spectacle, the puppets' recreation of the prologue undermines the political and religious ramifications of the text to pursue a more sanitized, heritage adaptation aesthetic.

The puppet show literalizes Edward Said's notion that the Orient functions as a "theatrical stage affixed to Europe" (66-67). While a paper England also finds its way onto the tiny, candlelit set, India does not have a live-action counterpart to establish the Indian subcontinent as tangible and realized. England, as the physical set of the story, becomes concrete in a manner that the series doesn't afford to India (but, oddly enough, does afford to Italy, which gets an original, brief live action cameo). Entirely pageantry, the title sequence overtly characterizes India as dramatic and incorporeal, a fantastic and all-too-reductive combination of colors and two-dimensionality. As an elderly British narrator speaks over the notes of a sitar, the paper Colonel Herncastle swats a few Indian men aside with his tiny saber. The British army, or any historical contextualization for Herncastle's presence in India, goes unmentioned in the sequence. The puppets of the three Brahmin priests are instructed by a paper Vishnu to pursue a cartoonishly devious Colonel to England to retrieve the stolen gem.

Stylistically separated from the live-action portions of the miniseries, the opening credits cannot register as equally impactful or affective, as the two settings don't share the same material to construct their illusion of a historical past. The paper theater production, even divorced from the original prologue, fails to capture an act of colonial violence in a substantive way because of the contrast of its material: flesh and paper. Rather than implicate the British in the crimes of its imperialism through the Colonel Herncastle narrative, the miniseries aims for enchantment alongside its intrigue, an altogether different emotional experience.

The paper theater returns at the end of the series' fifth and final episode to depict the epilogue; once again, the sequence replaces a live-action depiction of India to spare budget costs ("BBC One's *The*

Moonstone - Part of #LovetoRead" n. pag.). Three paper Brahmin priests return a metallic-cardstock Moonstone to the shrine of Vishnu, not as passengers on a ship from London, as in Collins's novel, but rather as sailors upon an extravagant little vessel—gilded, brightly colored, "exotic." As the Moonstone is returned to the statue, the miniseries attempts a plot twist, or rather a narrator-twist. While the frame expands past the miniature candle-lit stage, the older voice of the male narrator transforms, first blending with, then replaced by the small, cheerful voice of a British girl. The shot reveals that the puppets have been animated by Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Blake's two eldest children, who have depicted the tale of *The Moonstone* for the story's main characters. Garland hangs upon the mantlepiece, red ribbons dangling festively. Everyone toasts. It's Christmastime.

The addition of a Christmas scene—a holdover from traditional daytime television classic serials, which often end with a Christmas episode—ends the miniseries on a triumphant Christian note, rather than a Hindu celebration at the Moonstone's return. Flattening and sanitizing the wicked Colonel's crimes through the limited understanding of two British children, the Christmas puppet show quite literally infantilizes the series' depiction of imperial violence. As Executive Producer Yorke writes, *The Moonstone* is now "a little girl telling a story that's been handed down through the generations" (n. pag.). The gem's violent theft is now the preface to a children's tale, scrubbed clean of any blood or guilt.

The puppet show frame narrative reinforces the series' entirely European setting, and further reduces the literal setting entirely to England. Just as the play restricts its scope to the Verinder country estate, the miniseries comparably enshrouds itself in a domestic space; it has only upheld an illusion of more far-reaching domains. Like Collins's play, the miniseries constructs the story as a wholly domestic affair. The frame narrative, as well as the insinuation that the events of the series have been performed for us in miniature, indicates that we have secretly been in the Verinder country-house's living room for the entirety of the series. We've never left Yorkshire, not even for the brief shots in Tuscany, and though we've been shown its streets, the story's performance, according to the conceit of its framework, has never even moved to London.

By relegating the entirety of *The Moonstone* to British soil, the story becomes less an account of British colonialism, and even more a British performance of colonialism. Though the original novel relies entirely on the communications of English characters, by setting the writing of the prologue and the final epilogue in India, the original novel grounds its narrative in a space that bears the direct consequences of

British imperialism. The miniseries, grounded only in England, told as a Christmas fireside tale, exacerbates the melodramatic element of the text. Hyperaware of its own performativity, the miniseries becomes a production both for its viewers and for its British characters, rather than an account of colonial guilt and detection.

Conclusion

The Moonstone's epilogue concludes by saying: "So the years pass, and repeat each other; so the same events revolve in the cycles of time. What will be the next adventures of the Moonstone?" (Collins, *The Moonstone* 351). These lines seem to prophesize the text's adaptations: again, the British army loots and plunders, again the Moonstone is stolen from its native land. Repeated but not quite identical, where and how will we experience these "same events" of *The Moonstone* anew?

As a story likely to be immortalized partially through its reimaginings and homages, *The Moonstone* provides a compelling case study for how histories of British imperialism are performed or mediated for new audiences, both Victorian and modern, through the act of adaptation. As the first legal adaptation of Collins's novel, the author's own stage production anticipates not only the adaptive choices that subsequent adaptations—knowingly or unknowingly—adopt as content shifts from written text to visual performance, but the complex ideological negotiations involved in revisiting a Victorian novel whose narrative is rooted in an act of imperial theft. The 2016 *The Moonstone* miniseries will not be the last time audiences are presented with the violence of Collins's text. When we next encounter *The Moonstone*, what treatment of empire will accompany it—a confrontation, an aside, or a spectacle? To echo Collins, "Who can tell?"

Notes

1. Italicized text underlined in original.

2. For comparison, Collins's stage adaptation of *The Woman in White* ran for nineteen weeks; his most popular play *No Thoroughfare* (1867) ran for over twenty-eight weeks.

3. See Renata Kobetts Miller's "Nineteenth-Century Theatrical Adaptations of Novels: The Paradox of Ephemerality."

4. Additionally, a short film adaptation of *The Moonstone* was produced in 1910; however, this text has been lost.

5. As Jaya Mehta writes, up through the mid-nineteenth century, "the fascination with Tipu was played out in high culture and low: he was depicted in numerous paintings, engravings, plays, poems, memoirs, toys, tea trays, and even made an appearance in Walter Scott's novel *The Surgeon's Daughter* (1827)" (618-19).

6. See Neti, who applies the work of Romila Thapar to *The Moonstone*'s depiction of Muslim and Hindu India, and Krishna Manavalli's "Collins, Colonial Crime, and the Brahmin Sublime: The Orientalist Vision of a Hindu-Brahmin India in *The Moonstone*," which argues that Collins's overemphasis of Brahmin priests represents "Indian society as religious and caste-ridden" (52).

7. It's interesting to note that the reviewer's critique resonates with common arguments against adaptations (why not create an "original" story if the goal of the adaptation isn't faithful reproduction?); however, Collins's unique position as both adapter and author of the source text highlights the slipperiness of "originality"—any play Collins wrote about a missing gem, regardless of its name, would have inevitably been treated as a derivative of his popular novel.

8. The "well-made-play" (pièce bien faite) in the manner of Eugène Scribe conforms to the Neoclassical unities of time, place, and action; this structure explains, in part, the reasoning behind Collins's choice to limit—or unify—these elements in his adaptation. However, eliminating his Indian characters and reducing the gem's backstory to a single line of dialogue still reflect Collins's avoidance of imperial subject matter, regardless of theatrical forms.

9. Yorke's article "BBC One's *The Moonstone* - Part of #LovetoRead," was cross-posted to the LovetoRead website under the title "Moonstone: The birth of an entire genre," highlighting the campaign's efforts to frame the adaptation through a heritage lens.

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Alice in Disneyland: Power and Subversion in Two Theme Park Rides

Andrew Bumstead

On the first episode of *Disneyland* in 1954, Walt Disney famously commented, "I only hope that we never lose sight of one thing—that it was all started by a mouse" (*It All Started with a Mouse: The Disney Story*). But the Walt Disney Company, which is currently celebrating its centennial year, did not in fact start with a mouse: it started with a little girl named Alice. Much like how Lewis Carroll's *Alice* novels helped usher in a Golden Age of children's literature, which was marked by "a significant break from the ongoing tendency to use children's literature to instruct" (Hintz and Tribunella 101), the Walt Disney Company also established its reputation—and its construction of childhood innocence—upon an adaptation of Carroll's novel. With its *Alice Comedies*, which ran from 1924 to 1927, the Walt Disney Company built its brand of childhood innocence in the personage of the dimpled, cherub-faced Virginia Davis and later, in the performances of the other actresses who would play Alice: Margie Gay, Dawn O'Day, and Lois Hardwick.

Notably, Disney's version of Carroll's *Alice* books also played a key role in the marketing campaign of the Disneyland theme park, and in particular the publicity for Fantasyland. In "The Pre-Opening Report from Disneyland," the episode of the TV program *Disneyland* that aired a week before the park opened to the public on July 17th, 1955, the narrator provides an overview of the four lands of Disneyland, including Fantasyland, "the happiest kingdom of them all." At the end of the pre-opening report, "Uncle Walt" previews the program for the following week, which includes a shortened television version of Disney's animated *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), to coincide with the opening of the park. Though the Alice in Wonderland attraction was not open to the public in 1955 (it was completed by 1958), Wonderland remained a key feature in the promotion of Fantasyland that, alongside Disney's version of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, anchored that area of the park as a child's arcadian playground.

In a corner of Fantasyland, two rides based on Disney's animated 1951 *Alice in Wonderland* film comprise a mini-Wonderland in their proximity and aesthetic similarities. But as adaptations, these two

rides differ wildly in their interpretation of Carroll's texts and in their construction of childhood innocence. The Alice in Wonderland dark ride dispenses with Carroll's criticism of adult-child power hierarchies and rewrites the novels into narratives of containment that use innocence as a cover for the reification of adult power over children. The ride is warm, colorful, and inviting—trademarks of Disney's brand of innocence—but like the animated film, it perpetuates a dark narrative of control and non-development, particularly in its Foucauldian punishment of Alice for her disobedience and curiosity. Disney uses Alice and Wonderland to fabricate an enchanted realm of childhood innocence that attempts to conceal its reinforcement of the adult-child hierarchy. In contrast, The Mad Tea Party at Disneyland embraces a Bakhtinian carnivalesque approach to Carroll's Wonderland, subverting the power hierarchy between adults and children through a sensorium of what Mikhail Bakhtin calls the "lower bodily stratum" (Renfrew 141) of emotions—laughter, dizziness, butterflies, and the potential for vomiting. In Disneyland adaptations of the *Alice* books in the 1950s, two significant strands emerge: on the one hand, the agonistic world of Carroll's Wonderland is reimagined as a whimsical and innocent fantasy that conceals behind its colorful façade a reinforcement of adult-power hierarchies through its Foucauldian discipline of Alice; on the other, Wonderland is conceptualized as a disorienting, chaotic, and Bakhtinian carnival that subverts power structures and engages the senses.

Amusement parks and theme parks, part of Linda Hutcheon's "participatory mode" of adaptation, are a unique type of adaptation, because unlike books and movies, they place the participant within an interactive physical environment. The highly mediated spaces of amusement parks and theme parks, according to Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, are particularly immersive because they are full of "sights and sounds from various media," combining together the "experience of vaudeville, live theater, film, television, and recorded music" (169). What sets Disneyland apart from other theme parks, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, is its narrativization of physical space, which allows for an immersive experience that goes beyond the participatory mode. Disneyland blends the telling, showing, and interactive modes together into a three-dimensional experience that engages all the senses of the participant, sometimes even simultaneously. Steven Watts explains that

> Walt and his creative staff took his unique brand of sentimental modernism, developed over many years in the studio's fantasy movies, and expanded it in a more sophisticated form. They

> drew on the studio's traditional juxtaposition of imagination and reality, free-flowing fantasy and technology, folklore and rationalized production to create a three-dimensional wonderland in Anaheim that totally enveloped the consumer. (390)

According to Watts, "the park did not tell a story in traditional cinematic fashion but instead made the visitor an active participant in a kind of three-dimensional movie. The creative team tried to blur the line between fantasy and reality by completely immersing visitors in a totally controlled environment" (390). Unlike a novel, a film, or a TV show, the park offers what Bolter and Grusin call "the immediacy of physical presence," which goes beyond the "sound, light, and tactile sensations" of traditional amusement park rides because every element at Disneyland, including the rides, the architecture, the characters roaming the park, and even the "cast member" employees, are all meticulously designed to immerse the participant within a narrative environment. As Heather Birdsall notes, "Disneyland originated as a new kind of media/park convergence, beginning with the very idea of the newly conceived 'theme park' itself," which is invested in "the idea of bridging gaps between media" (81).

This essay takes up Andrew Scahill's call to reconceptualize "*physical spaces* as adaptations," including "museums, fan conventions, and theme park attractions," which "are now a familiar part of the transmedia landscape of adaptation." I also take a cue from Marty Gould and Rebecca N. Mitchell, who acknowledge the challenge that "new and emerging forms of adaptation" bring to the text-to-film paradigm. In their case study of Dickens World as a literary theme park adaptation, Gould and Mitchell make the case that "adaptation theory will need to accommodate these new methods of literary engagement" (164). While I do not claim to be pioneering uncharted territory, I attempt here to introduce a method of engaging with theme park adaptations as adaptations. Through a comparison of two theme park attractions, I focus on the process of adaptation and what it reveals about the revisions of the hypotexts, including the perceived intentionality of Disney's appropriation of these texts. I call this approach "adaptive play," a term Linda Hutcheon briefly introduces in her preface to the second edition of *A Theory of Adaptation* (xix). Instead of seeking to understand individual texts within isolated case studies, adaptive play focuses on "the relationships that exist between texts," acknowledging that "all adaptations are interpretations" instead of transpositions (Cutchins, Raw, and Welsh xiii). Adaptive play, in other words, is most interested in the *process* of moving from one medium to another, which

always results in differences between the hypotext and the adaptation that reveal the interpretation of the adaptation. Those differences are often intentional, as in Disney's revisions of fairy tales and Golden Age children's texts in order to promote its brand of innocence, but at times, they can also be surprisingly unintentional, demonstrating the unwieldy and messy process of adaptation that cannot be completely controlled and maintained—like play itself.

The Alice in Wonderland Dark Ride

Through playful and humorous nonsense, Carroll's *Alice* books critique the adult-child power hierarchy, even if they never completely subvert it. As Hugh Haughton points out, what is most at stake in the *Alice* books is the "relationship between adulthood and childhood" (xiii), in particular the way innocence factors into this power struggle. In *The Hidden Adult* (2008), Perry Nodelman notes that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is "ambivalent about the value of Alice's innocence" (271). Alice is, after all, a precocious and intelligent girl who has adopted many of the Victorian social manners of her Oxford world. In *Artful Dodgers* (2009), Marah Gubar argues that Alice is "not the Child of Nature but the drawing-room child" who "knows the rules of games like croquet and chess" and "how to curtsey and make polite conversation" and subsequently tumbles down the rabbit hole into a world of "social situations, including parties, games, and conversations" (110). In Wonderland and the Looking-glass world, Alice never actually leaves the Victorian world she attempts to escape from; instead, Wonderland is really the inverse of her own reality, an alternate universe in which domineering adults still control her actions but instead masquerade as anthropomorphized animals such as caterpillars, dodo birds, and walruses. Carroll's *Alice* books critique the moral didacticism and progressive narratives in children's literature by casting Alice as a victim of an oppressive social system controlled and policed by adults. Power is, for Carroll, the operating mechanism that keeps Alice fixed in place.

In contrast to the *Alice* books that employ nonsense in order to reject doctrinal imperatives thrust onto children in the Victorian era, the Alice in Wonderland dark ride at Disneyland reinforces adult power over children. The Alice in Wonderland ride debuted in 1958, three years after the park opened to the public, though it was initially planned as an opening-day attraction. The ride was designed as a walkthrough experience that would follow the structure of the animated film nearly scene-by-scene, but it was later reconceived as a traditional dark ride, much like Snow White's Scary Adventures and Mr. Toad's Wild

Ride, with a vehicle moving along a winding track through elaborate cardboard backgrounds and animatronic characters. The attraction has been revised many times over the years, not simply to accommodate advancing technology but to reconceptualize Wonderland for new generations of children and adults. Similar to how the animated film punishes Alice's curiosity and stunts her growth and development, the ride also seeks to suspend children in a state of innocence. But instead of punishing Alice through its narrative as in the animated film, the ride capitalizes on the medium of the three-dimensional theme park attraction—light, animatronics, sound effects, and movement—to frighten its young guests into submission.

While in many ways a close adaptation of the studio's own animated film, the 1958 version of the Alice in Wonderland ride was quite disturbing (Yesterworld). As tourists embarked into the rabbit-hole shaped entrance to the attraction, they were immediately plunged into pitch-blackness, where Alice's voice, specially recorded by Kathryn Beaumont for the attraction, narrated what happened to her when she fell down the rabbit hole. The caterpillar-shaped car then brought guests to a disorienting upside-down room, in which overturned objects such as chairs, tables, lamps, and mirrors played tricks on viewers' senses of perception. After the upside-down room came the oversized room, in which every object was made to look gigantic in comparison with the ride vehicle. Though both these rooms were perhaps a little unsettling or disorienting to viewers, the nightmarish aspect of the ride really began at this point. The Cheshire Cat, laughing maniacally, greeted the guests from a high position on a toadstool. To the terror of young guests, his disembodied head sporadically appeared at eye-level alongside the ride vehicles. The cars then moved through the grotesque, gaping mouth of the doorknob, and into the garden of live flowers. While the garden seemed relatively peaceful, with the flowers singing "Golden Afternoon" from the film, a screaming dandelion popped up at the end of this sequence to frighten viewers who were likely lulled into a false sense of security by the tranquil song. The Tulgey Wood sequence followed, and like in the film, it isolated the child in an enclosed environment. Guests were at once immersed in near-complete darkness, met only with pairs of glowing red eyes. A few of the whimsical bird-like characters from the film were included, but the predominant tone and feel of this section of the ride was decidedly more nightmarish.

The Mad Tea Party comprised the final sequence of the ride, in which giant figures of an angry-looking Mad Hatter and the March Hare towered over guests, shouting "Very rude indeed!" and "Move down! Move down!" As the "Unbirthday Song" played, saucers and

tea-cups spun out of control, nearly colliding with the car vehicles. As the vehicle crashed into a large teapot, a loud explosion rang out and strobe lights simulated fireworks. Alice screamed, "Oh dear, how do I get out? Oh, I've lost my way!" as signs pointed in every direction. Finally, the vehicle crashed into three subsequent doors, each collision accompanied by a Goofy-esque scream at various terrifying pitches. The third door opened to the outside track, where guests emerged from the darkness of the indoor ride as the car wound its way down the vines to the loading platform.

Though the 1951 Disney animated film can be considered a little unsettling at times to young viewers, the traditional animation style makes the characters more silly than actually scary. But the dark ride originally dispensed with much of the cuteness of the animated film and seemed determined to terrify its young guests. Scaring children is a powerful tactic used by children's authors, dating back to Henrich Hoffman's *Struwwelpeter* (1845), the Brothers Grimm, and Elizabeth Turner's *Cautionary Stories* (1897). In *Off with Their Heads!* (2020), Maria Tatar identifies the "cruel and coercive streak" in children's literature from its inception, "which produced books that relied on brutal intimidation to frighten children into complying with parental demands" (8). In the case of fairy tales and cautionary tales, children are often frightened into good behavior. For instance, "Little Red Cap" warns children not to talk to strangers, and "The Three Little Pigs" teaches children the severe consequences of laziness.

But there is no lesson to be learned in the Alice in Wonderland dark ride. Instead, the tactics the ride employs in scaring its young guests intend to preserve their innocence through fear. Henry Giroux contends that Disney strategically "markets the ideal of innocence, presenting itself as a corporate parent that safeguards this protective space for children by magically supplying the fantasies that nourish it" (32). During the Cold War era of the 1950s, which included cultural upheavals due to urbanization, immigration, and civil rights movements, white, middle-class American parents were concerned about their children's premature loss of innocence. What better way to preserve childhood innocence than through fear? Nineteenth-century psychologist James Sully wrote that "fear is one of the characteristic feelings of the child . . . It seems to belong to these wee, weakly things, brought face to face with a new strange world, to tremble. They are naturally timid, as all that is weak and ignorant in nature is apt to be timid" (124). Most parents, at one time or another, have made frightening faces at their child or jumped out behind a doorway to scare them, and when met with anguished cries, immediately comfort the very child they just frightened into submission. The Alice in Wonderland ride performs

a similar strategy, forcing young children to retreat back into their innocent state and cower in the arms of their parents.

Besides the jump-scares, unsettling music and sounds, and the grotesque design of some of the characters of the 1958 Alice in Wonderland ride, darkness plays a vital role in promoting fear in young guests. In the Tulgey Wood sequence, in which guests were plunged into near-complete darkness only to be surrounded by pairs of glowing red eyes, darkness was employed to incite the imagination of young children. Writing about children's fear of the dark, James Sully observes that "Darkness is precisely the situation most favourable to vivid imagination: the screening of the visible world makes the inner world of fancy vivid and distinct by contrast" (138). Borrowing from Rousseau, Sully contends that darkness returns children to "a preternatural activity of imagination," encouraging them to project "into the unseen black spaces the creatures of their imagination" (138). The creatures of their imagination that emerge from the darkness, however, are often monsters that incite fear, and as a result, the child is tormented by their own imagination. Alongside Mr. Toad's Wild Ride, which concludes with a trip to hell, and Snow White's Scary Adventures, which predominantly features a hideous witch who repeatedly terrorizes guests, the Alice in Wonderland attraction uses fear as a tool to arrest children in place, if only for a brief moment. The longing for a return to a state of childhood innocence hearkens back to Wordsworth's Child of Nature paradigm, but instead of merely bemoaning the loss of innocence as Wordsworth does, Disney's Alice in Wonderland dark ride attempts to discipline children to be submissive to adult authority. Dependence on parents and others in positions of authority is one of the major factors in Disney's version of innocence, which demands that children remain in a state of naivete and dependence. In this way, the ride provides a solution to the anxieties of some parents who were worried about preserving their children's innocence in 1950s America.

The exterior of the 1958 version of the Alice in Wonderland ride, in contrast with the dark and terrifying interior, is warm and inviting. Originally planned to resemble the rural English countryside, the exterior was redesigned with a whimsical Mary Blair aesthetic, with sweeping vines, oversized pink, purple, teal, and mint-hued leaves with swirl patterns, and a showcase building resembling a medieval castle to house the attraction. Notably, primary colors (red, blue, and yellow) are absent, replaced instead with an unnatural and surreal color palette. To adults, the caterpillar vehicles, bushes, and vines created an enchanted innocence linked to nature, albeit an artificial nature that exists only in imagination. However, much like how the whimsical and colorful animation style in Disney's *Alice* film masks the disciplinary

methods of the narrative, the exterior of the dark ride is a deception that conceals the nightmarish experience that awaits young guests in the interior.

The caterpillar-shaped ride vehicles are a significant part of the deception because, due to their whimsical and innocent design that seems to have been lifted straight out of a child's nursery room, they erroneously suggest that the ride will follow a natural pattern of development. Originally, Imagineer Claude Coats envisioned the ride vehicles as playing cards, which would have significantly changed the feel of the ride from a child-like, candy-colored vision of nature to an agonistic, more adult-centric world of competitive parlor games. While playing cards are inextricably connected to Carroll's Wonderland (alongside tea cups, croquet, and chess), games are not an essential feature of Disney's version of Wonderland. Walt rejected Coats's idea, suggesting instead that the cars be shaped like caterpillars. Of all the objects in Wonderland that the vehicles could have been modeled after (mushrooms, flowers, rabbits), caterpillars and butterflies are more traditionally linked to children and childhood because their metamorphic cycle has been used as a metaphor for a child's natural development at least since Wordsworth's "To a Butterfly," in which Wordsworth addresses the butterfly as the "Historian of my Infancy" (line 4) and into the twentieth century with Eric Carle's classic children's picture book, "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" (1969). Butterflies also appear in Disney's animated *Alice* film.[1] In the opening shot, yellow butterflies flutter amidst daisies on an idyllic summer day on the banks of the Thames. Later in the film when the flowers sing "Golden Afternoon," the opening lyric links the ideal of childhood with butterflies: "Little bread-and-butterflies kiss the tulips / and the sun is like a toy balloon." All of these texts place the caterpillar or butterfly at the center of a rhetoric of childhood that imagines children as semi-stable subjects within a "natural" developmental framework.

The metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly provides parents with a comforting and reliable frame of reference that fits children within a natural and predictable process of development, but both the narrative of the ride and that of the animated film it is based on repeatedly undermine natural growth: consider, for instance, Alice's unpredictable and seemingly random changes in size whenever she eats something. In addition, the Caterpillar in the animated film refuses to follow the metamorphic cycle by skipping the pupa stage altogether and immediately transforming into a butterfly when he loses his temper. The ride vehicles in the Alice in Wonderland attraction, however, reconfigure the caterpillar as a metaphor for natural development, despite the fact that the Caterpillar in both the

novel and in the animated film do not fit neatly within this model. In particular, the structure of the ride, which begins in an open-air loading booth, progresses into a dark, tomb-like enclosure for the majority of the experience, and then finally exits from that enclosure back into the open air, mimics a developmental growth pattern. The interior of the ride functions like a chrysalis from which young guests emerge, perhaps not physically altered but at least relieved to have survived the ordeal. However, despite the exterior's whimsical design, the caterpillar-shaped vehicles, and the chrysalis-like structure of the ride, the interior of the ride empties out the developmental narrative set up by the facade of the show building's design.

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the 1958 version of the Alice in Wonderland attraction is its near complete erasure of Alice herself. Besides her appearance on the book atop the mushroom-shaped ticket booth and the voice-over narration provided by Kathryn Beaumont, Alice does not appear in the ride as a character. Like the opening-day versions of Mr. Toad's Wild Ride, Snow White's Scary Adventures, and Peter Pan's Flight, all of which were missing appearances from their respective protagonists, the purpose of removing Alice from the Alice in Wonderland ride was to put guests in Alice's place so that they would play the role of the inquisitive heroine. The difference between the other three dark rides and the Alice ride, however, is that the other rides were designed to follow traditional narrative structures. In Snow White's Scary Adventures, for instance, much of the three-minute ride time was spent on the witch terrorizing the young guests, but she is at least vanquished at the end of the ride, allowing for a brief denouement of an open book displaying the words "and they lived happily ever after." After enduring all their "scary" adventures, guests (inhabiting the role of Snow White) received their happy ending of marriage and family, which mimics a developmental narrative. In Peter Pan's Flight, guests passed into Skull Rock, past Captain Hook and the crocodile, and finally returned to the nursery. The ride follows the "return-to-reality closural frame" that Sarah Gilead identifies as a traditional structure in children's fiction, which implies that psychic growth has taken place in the adventure before the return home to reality (278). Mr. Toad's Wild Ride is an outlier because it ends with a trip to hell, where Toad is presumably punished for driving too recklessly. But even in the Mr. Toad ride, there is a lesson to be learned, even if it is tongue-in-cheek. The Alice ride, by contrast, has no lessons, no developmental narrative, and no implication that psychic growth has been achieved along the journey. It is simply non-developmental, even as the exterior of the building and the caterpillar-shaped rides seem to promote a growth narrative.

Unsurprisingly, the prevailing notion for three decades after the ride premiered was that guests did not understand the purpose of Alice's removal and were confused and disappointed by her absence (Yesterworld). Though the strategy did not seem to work, Disney Imagineers' intentions to design the ride as a first-person perspective experience in which guests would not only identify with but actually take the place of Alice underscores a desire on the part of the creators to abstract the young guests' identities. Walt Disney was quoted as saying that he thinks of "a child's mind as a blank book. During the first years of his life, much will be written on the pages. The quality of that writing will affect his life profoundly" (Giroux 17). Disney's Lockean view of the child's mind as a tabula rasa seems to have influenced many of the choices in Disneyland attractions, including Alice in Wonderland. In the animated film, Alice is punished, diminished, and controlled. In the dark ride, Alice is almost completely erased, replaced by young guests who take her place as the child victim in the power hierarchy. By evacuating Alice from Wonderland, the dark ride pushes the disciplinary approach even further than the animated film. James Kincaid's description of Victorian childhood as a "wonderfully hollow category" applies to Disney's version of childhood in both the animated *Alice in Wonderland* film and its dark ride version, which both empty out Carroll's Wonderland in order to create a space for non-developmental innocence where instead of being allowed to enact their own play, children are fixed in place so that they can become the vehicles for grownup play. In *Disciplining Girls* (2011), Joe Sutcliff Sanders explains that "the power that underwrites discipline is at its fullest when it cannot be seen. If the evidence of discipline is tangible, the *techniques by which* a person or institution exercises discipline often struggle to hide themselves, to appear as so good, so natural, that they become invisible to analysis and therefore critique" (1). Disney exercises discipline and power in its Alice in Wonderland dark ride by concealing them under a narrative of childhood innocence.

The Alice in Wonderland ride has been updated many times over the years, including a massive reconstruction in 1984 that finally added an animatronic Alice, a sequence in the Queen of Hearts' courtyard, and a climactic tea party section after the descent down the vines. In 2014, the ride also received digital enhancements that seamlessly blend animated clips from the film, digital projection, and lighting effects. All of these revisions over the decades have nudged the ride away from discipline and power and towards a more playful and whimsical experience. The scarier aspects of the original ride, as a result, have largely been replaced or overshadowed by these enhancements. Because theme park attractions are never finished, they are uniquely positioned

as palimpsests, with each subsequent revision adding another layer of interpretation. As Linda Hutcheon explains, "Seen from the perspective of its process of reception, adaptation is a form of intertextuality: we experience adaptations as palimpsests through our memory of other works that resonate through repetition with variation" (8). The Alice in Wonderland ride not only adapts the animated film, which in turn adapts Carroll's novel, but the ride adapts itself, over and over again, in order to keep up with not only the technological advancements but also Disney's shifting definitions of childhood. Over time, the ride has moved away from the ideological and unilateral indoctrination of children that Carroll himself was trying to critique. However, until the ride was updated in the 1980s, it sought to fix the child in place and keep her suspended in a state of non-developmental innocence.

The Mad Tea Party Attraction

The Mad Tea Party attraction, the second Disneyland ride based on Disney's 1951 animated film, is strategically positioned across from the Alice in Wonderland dark ride. In fact, the rides are so close together that they can be considered extensions of each other. For instance, when guests emerge from the show building in the Alice in Wonderland ride and start their descent down the vines on the outside track, they are treated to a full view of the spinning tea cups and the instrumental music from the "Unbirthday Song" before reentering the show building. The Mad Tea Party was formerly located in the center of the Sleeping Beauty Courtyard, where the King Arthur Carousel now resides, but it was moved in 1983 to its current location in order to facilitate a stronger connection with the Alice in Wonderland ride. Side by side, the two rides comprise a mini re-creation of Wonderland that delights fans of both Carroll's books and the Disney film. However, each ride interprets Wonderland in vastly different ways. While the Alice in Wonderland ride originally reinforced the adult-child power hierarchy, the Mad Tea Party attraction dispenses with power and instead embraces the chaotic, nonsensical nature of Carroll's Wonderland through a topsy-turvy ride experience.

The Mad Tea Party attraction debuted at Disneyland's opening day celebration on July 17th, 1955 as part of the original Fantasyland. The ride seems incredibly simple in conception, but it is actually quite complex in construction. The attraction consists of one main revolving platform and three revolving platforms within the main revolving platform. Each of the three revolving platforms also contain six spinning teacups. According to the *Unofficial Disneyland Encyclopedia*,

"Each teacup's wheel enables riders to spin the cup faster or slower, clockwise or counterclockwise, giving guests three simultaneous spins: the turns served up by the big platter holding all the cups; the rotation of the three small dishes holding six cups each; and the independent spins of the individual cups themselves" (Strodder 292). The result is a wild and disorienting ninety-second experience for guests. The ride is so frenetic, in fact, that Disneyland's website warns riders that it's "best to eat after you spin" and "guests who are prone to motion sickness should not ride" (Strodder 292). Despite (or perhaps because of) the nauseating effect of the ride, it has remained one of the most popular attractions in Disneyland since its debut.

The *Alice* books, and in particular *Wonderland*, are rife with images of revolving, wheeling, twisting, and reeling, to the point that the experience of reading the books is almost like spinning in a teacup of one's own. From the moment Alice plunges down the rabbit hole, the reader is thrown into an upside-down world of disorientation and chaos. In their subversive critique of power, Carroll's books and the Mad Tea Party attraction can be considered "carnivalesque," Mikhail Bakhtin's term for the upending of hierarchies that traces back to the Middle Ages during annual carnivals. During a carnival, Bakhtin explains, real life was temporarily flipped on its head, making way for a "second life" of the people that was "organized on the basis of laughter" (8, 7). As a result of a carnivalesque reordering of society, "all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions" were suspended (10), and life was lived "inside out" (11), symbolized by the prominent role of the comic crowning of the fool (Renfrew 134). The purpose of the carnival was to oppose "all that was ready-made and completed, [. . .] to liberate from the prevailing point of view of the world, from conventions and established truths, from clichés, from all that is humdrum and universally accepted" (Bakhtin 34).

For Bakhtin, carnival in the Middle Ages required bodily participation, particularly because it formed "a special form of free and familiar contact" between people "who were usually divided by barriers of caste, property, profession, and age"; carnival, in other words, was above all "experienced" (Bakhtin 10). As the real carnival became symbolic, finding its way into cultural forms such as literature, the bodily participation became concentrated in what Bakhtin calls "the lower bodily stratum"—specifically, the belly, bowels, and reproductive organs (Renfrew 141). Not only is the lower bodily stratum the location of "renewal and rebirth," but it is also a site for laughter, which for Bakhtin is a natural bodily function, like other functions related to the lower bodily stratum such as "spitting, swearing, eating and drinking, farting and defecating" that reject authority and celebrate "the body's

openness and potential for growth" (Renfrew 143). Consider the sensations typically associated with the Mad Tea Party attraction—dizziness, butterflies, laughter, and sometimes even vomiting—and it becomes clear that the spinning tea cup ride is carnivalesque in its appeal to the lower bodily stratum. Further, the attraction de-hierarchizes the adult-child relationship—particularly if the child gains control of the wheel and spins the cup herself—and subverts the developmental narrative traditionally enforced by authority by replacing it with a non-directional and disorienting experience of ludic play.

While one could argue that the dizzying experience of the Mad Tea Party can still incite fear in its young guests, the potential fear these guests are likely to experience is more akin to the thrilling anticipation and butterflies while riding a rollercoaster than the emotions experienced in a nightmarish ride such as the Alice in Wonderland dark ride. As recent studies on fear have shown (Bloom 2021), fear can be a pleasurable experience when it is in an intermediary state, or when "the arousal dynamics are 'just right': enough arousal to be engaging, not so much to be chaotic or overwhelming" (93). While fear is largely subjective, most guests—including children—seem to find the Mad Tea Party to be a pleasurable and thrilling experience. The Alice in Wonderland ride can also be pleasurable even if it incites some level of fear in its young guests; however, before its reconstruction in 1984, the dark ride was more likely to make children recoil in aversive fear than delight in pleasurable fear.

The topsy-turvy movements of Bakhtin's carnivalesque occur frequently in Carroll's books, most notably with the caucus race, the lobster quadrille, and of course, the mad tea party. The first game Alice participates in is the caucus race, a merry-go-round game with no real purpose except to experience the pleasurable effect of dizziness and disorientation. The Dodo announces the race as a means to get dry, but the relation between getting dry and the structure of the race is unspecified. This race lacks clear rules. The play area is vaguely defined by the Dodo bird as a "sort of circle," but as Kathleen Blake points out, there is no fixed starting point for the runners, they begin at no fixed moment, and they "leave off when they like" (114). Just as with most games in Wonderland, the rules of the caucus race are arbitrary and the outcome meaningless. Alice, of course, thinks the entire race is "very absurd" (27) because she is obsessed with rules and cannot allow herself to enjoy a game that she does not understand. But meaning and purpose do not have to be compatible with the pleasure of play. Like children on swings, carousels, or see-saws at a playground, the pleasure of this type of game is not had by rules and competition but by the delightful stimulation of the senses. The lobster quadrille,

similar to the caucus race, is a circular, pointless activity with no clear rules of engagement. The steps, which involve forming two lines of sea creatures taking lobsters as partners, exchanging partners, throwing them "as far out to sea as you can" (87) and swimming after them, are silly and arbitrary. Blake notes that the quadrille is "more of a here-we-go-round-and-round activity than a getting-somewhere activity" (128), which is certainly true of different types of dances like the waltz. Like the caucus race, the dance will not end until someone decides to end it: there is no "stop rule" as there is in competitive games like croquet, cards, and chess. But when the dance does finally end, Alice feels "very glad that it was over at last" (89). Just as she was uncomfortable participating in the "absurd" caucus race, Alice derives little pleasure from watching the dance because of its pointlessness. Between competitive games that produce pleasure in victory and games that produce pleasure of physical discombobulation, Alice strongly prefers the former. Alice's discomfort with these circular activities is really an anxiety of what Matthew Kaiser calls "a world in play" (1), in which there are no fixed rules and no linearity in time or boundedness in space.

The Mad Tea Party attraction fits within the same chaotic structure as the lobster quadrille and the caucus race, in which circular, dizzying movement is the prime source of pleasure instead of agonistic competition. Much like how the Mad Hatter and the March Hare's tea party in Carroll's book makes a mockery of the Victorian codes of decorum, the ride undermines adult authority in both the *Alice in Wonderland* animated film and the dark ride. Instead of the child cowering in fear in her parents' arms in the Alice in Wonderland ride, both children and adults can laugh together as they spin in disorienting circles for ninety seconds. In addition, the wheel that spins each cup is equally accessible to children and adults, so children can easily take control of the wheel and claim some level of agency over their own ride experience (by either spinning the cup faster, slower, or not at all). Because the ride plunges its adult riders into the dizzying world of the child's playground, mimicking the movements of toys such as seesaws, swings, and merry-go-rounds, the Mad Tea Party can be read as the revenge of the child upon her parents and other grownups in authority. But the ride is also largely democratic because it invites children and adults alike to share in the joy of the sensorial spinning, allowing for a more collaborative exchange between them.

Whereas the Alice in Wonderland attraction imagines Wonderland from an adult point of view as a fantasy world where children are fixed in their place and denied the opportunity for growth or free play, the Mad Tea Party jettisons all meaning and purpose of an innocence

model enforced through power and discipline and instead embraces the madcap play of disorientation and chaos. In the Cold War era of the 1950s, the Mad Tea Party attraction rejected the comfort of Disney's innocence narrative and replaced it with a desire for a free, chaotic, and nonsensical version of childhood. Instead of self-consciously trying to rectify the changing world of the 1950s with Victorian sensibilities, as the Alice in Wonderland attraction initially attempted to do by disciplining the child into a state of non-developmental innocence, the Mad Tea Party embraces the free play of carnivalesque. When juxtaposed together, both rides show a stark contrast in Disney's construction of childhood innocence in the 1950s. In these two adaptations, Disney picks up two different threads from Carroll's text—on the one hand, the scary and unsettling aspects of Wonderland, and on the other, the playful and subversive possibilities of the *Alice* books—demonstrating that adaptive play can reveal divergent and contradictory possibilities within the same corner of Disneyland.

Notes

1. A butterfly also features in a memorable scene in an earlier Disney film, *Bambi* (1942), in which the young deer first encounters a butterfly and mistakes it for a "bird."

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From Print Novel to Transmedia Storytelling: Adapting Travel in *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography* and *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*

Kate Faber Oestreich

In her introduction to the first volume of *The Letters of Charlotte Brontë*, Margaret Smith asserts that the famous nineteenth-century author experienced "security and stability *so long as she remained at home*" (2, emphasis mine), adding another brick to Brontë's reputation as a reclusive writer whose genius was nurtured by her family's tight-knit isolation in remote West Riding of Yorkshire, England. Yet Brontë traveled extensively, repeatedly leaving home for far-flung locations.[1] In 1841, after learning about her friend Mary Taylor's exciting travels in Brussels, Brontë bemoaned, "I hardly know what swelled to my throat as I read her letter—such a vehement impatience of restraint & steady work. such [*sic*] a strong wish for wings—wings such as wealth can furnish—such an urgent thirst to see—to know—to learn—something internal seemed to expand boldly for a minute—I was tantalized with the consciousness of faculties unexercised—then all collapsed and I despaired" (Brontë, *Letters* 266). Brontë's ambition for "wings" emboldened her to appeal to her Aunt Branwell for funds to study French at The Pensionnat Héger in Brussels. In 1842, Brontë set out on the arduous 400-mile trip from Haworth to the capital of Belgium, an experience so enriching that she endured the trials of nineteenth-century travel not once but twice, returning to teach at the Pensionnat after her studies were completed.

Once back at the parsonage in Haworth after her second trip to Brussels, she wrote to her friend Ellen Nussey, "I feel as if we were all buried here—I long to travel—to work to live a life of action" (*Letters* 385).[2] Confined to the home due to her father's failing eye sight, she sublimated into *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography* her fierce desires to soar beyond everyday monotonies and pursue adventures. Jane, for example, notes that her favorite childhood books include "the two volumes of 'Bewick's British Birds' . . . , and 'Gulliver's Travels' and the 'Arabian Nights'" (*Jane Eyre* 205). Her choice of books emphasizes a need to escape—either in bird-like flights or into mythological traveler tales.

In *Atlas of the European Novel: 1800-1900*, Franco Moretti underscores with visual maps that the "protagonists of the *Bildungsroman* seldom embark on long-distance journeys" (67), further arguing that while the young male protagonists' "trajectory towards the capital city is usually very direct," "the journey to the capital . . . does not occur" in *Jane Eyre* (66). While Moretti's reading is technically correct, Jane confesses that she wants to accept a governess position at Thornfield because it is "seventy miles nearer London than the remote county where I now resided: that was a recommendation to me. I longed to go where there was life and movement" (82). Like Brontë herself, Jane is an unusual nineteenth-century woman: she does not just long to experience "life and movement," she boldly strikes out and probes the world beyond her domestic sphere.

In this article, I will contextualize how in both Brontë's *Jane Eyre* as well as Nessa Aref and Alysson Hall's 2013-2014 transmedia adaptation, *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*, each of their Janes physically moves in a variety of ways: they leave and arrive, visit nearby locations, and travel great distances. In "Beyond Myth and Metaphor," Marie-Laure Ryan posits, "narrative consists of a world (setting), populated by individuals (characters), who participate in actions and happenings (events, plot), through which they undergo change (temporal dimension)" (583). I will explore how both texts' narratives represent plot events that take the characters from setting to setting, putting in motion change that can only be recognized in the proverbial rearview mirror. Kamilla Elliott observes in *Theorizing Adaptation* that adaptation "focuses more specifically on changes made to suit new environments . . . not only historical and cultural contexts but also textual and media ones" (34). I will, therefore, conduct close readings of both *Jane Eyre*'s verbal descriptions and *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*'s multimedia texts, as well as use geospatial imagery[3] in order to reflect on the historical and cultural contexts as well as the effects of characters' travel, which significantly is "lasting or existing only for a time" and "of or pertaining to time as the sphere of human life" ("temporal"). Although the definition of temporal places stress on a person's "present life as distinguished from a future existence" and "the material interests of this world," journeys in both *Jane Eyre* and *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* illustrate how present travels impact one's future temporal existence, intellectual growth, and emotional maturity: outcomes that are unknown in the moment of physical movement but eventually revealed as the narratives' timelines unfold. Regardless of whether the trip itself was objectively successful in the moment, these outings—whether two miles or several thousand, physical or virtual—are framed as opportunities for future prosperity.

Jane Eyre: Mythologically Educational Traveling

The first line of Brontë's novel "There was no possibility of taking a walk that day" (9) establishes orphaned, ten-year-old Jane Eyre's involuntary submission to stasis: although she desires to wander outside her aunt Reed's house, she may not. While cooped up inside, Jane quarrels with her cousin, upon which aunt Reed commands the children's nurse, Bessie, to "Take her away to the red-room, and lock her in there" (13). After being confined to this domestic prison, Jane hears a "rushing of wings" and "rushed to the door and shook the lock" (18), screaming to be released. After Jane's emancipation, Bessie brings her a "brightly painted china plate" decorated with a "bird of paradise," which Jane recalls had "stirred in me a most enthusiastic sense of admiration" (21). Jane, like the ancient Roman "bird seers" or "augurs" who observed "birds for the purpose of obtaining omens," especially an "indication of a happy future" ("auspice"), hopes that, like a bird, she has the potential to "take flight" and transcend her current constraints. In the above scene, Jane also "begged [Bessie] to fetch 'Gulliver's Travels'" because "I doubted not that I might one day, by taking a long voyage, see with my own eyes the . . . birds of the one realm" and the "tower-like men and women, of the other" (21). Throughout the novel, Jane repeatedly revisits this desire to, like Gulliver, travel to realms as stimulating and enriching as the fantastical Lilliput and Brobdingnag.

Brontë uses the word "bird" thirty-five times in the novel, alluding to the word's British sense of "a young woman" who is confined in some manner and subject to be "preyed on" or "the target of an attack" ("bird"). This motif deepens when, for example, right before meeting Mr. Brocklehurst, the superintendent of Lowood school, Jane hastens to feed a robin (30). In Brontë's region of Yorkshire, robins symbolized a "helpful sprite or goblin" ("robin"). Jane's urgent desire to feed the robin hints that Jane believes the bird augers well for her desire to escape the Reed's house, Gateshead, by attending the Lowood school, as it "implied a long journey, an entire separation from Gateshead, an entrance into a new life" (25). In Jane's mind, the prospect of an education at Lowood is aligned with the standard nineteenth-century gentleman's, which typically culminated in extensive travel—the aptly named Grand Tour—throughout Europe. Brontë, though, uses fewer than five hundred words to describe Jane's odyssey of "fifty miles" (39) from Gateshead to Lowood, and Jane confesses, "I remember but little of the journey; I only know that the day seemed to me of a preternatural length, and that we appeared to travel over hundreds of miles of road" (40). Even more horrifying, Jane's much dreamed of educational Shangri-La turns out to be charity-school or "an institution

for educating orphans" (47) that subjected its students to corporal punishment and scant, often inedible food. Following a health crisis amongst the students, improvements made at the institution meant that Jane's life for the next seven years were "uniform: but not unhappy" (78). Although Jane dreamed the journey would lead to an improved life, Lowood is not the Elysian adventure she anticipated.

While it is widely accepted that Brontë based her description of the Lowood school on the time she and three of her sisters endured at the Clergy Daughters' School, and Gateshead from her negative experience as a governess to the Sidgwick family at Stone Gappe Hall, it is less widely known that Brontë based the details of Rochester's home on her more pleasurable adventures with one of her best friends, Ellen Nussey. In July of 1845, Brontë traveled from her home in Haworth, West Riding of Yorkshire to stay with Nussey in picturesque Hathersage, Derbyshire. This would not have been an easy trip for Brontë to make, especially as a young woman entirely on her own. In all likelihood, Brontë would have walked or ridden the four miles from Haworth to Keighley, where she would have then paid for a twenty-mile stagecoach ride to Leeds, before buying a ticket for a thirty-six mile trip on the North Midland Railway train to Sheffield, then finally taking a horse-drawn omnibus before alighting at The George in Hathersage, a bucolic village a mere two-miles from the majestic Stanage Edge cliffs in the Peak District of Derbyshire. Once together, Brontë and Nussey explored the surrounding moors and hills in which were nestled several properties owned by the prominent and wealthy Eyre family, such as Moorseats, on which scholars generally agree Brontë based the Rivers's Moor House, as well as the imposing North Lees Hall as Rochester's main residence, Thornfield. Nick Holland asserts North Lees Hall is "unmistakably the inspiration for Rochester's Thornfield Hall," and Smith similarly acknowledges that "it was said, a mad woman had once been kept in an upper room" (15).[4] Brontë channeled what she learned during her travels to this wealthy and wild location—rife with beautiful houses, majestic mountains, and lore about the barbaric treatment of women—into the fictional locations of Jane Eyre's tumultuous love affair with Rochester.

When the now eighteen-year-old Jane craves escape from Lowood's "prison-ground, exile limits" (79), she gazes out her window upon the "hilly horizon" on to the "most remote, the blue peaks; it was those I longed to surmount" and "traced the white road winding round the base of one mountain, and vanishing in a gorge between two; how I longed to follow it farther!" (79). Brontë here alludes to Francis Bacon's aphorism "*If the Hill will not come to* Mahomet, Mahomet *will go to the Hill*" from his essay "On Boldness" (62, emphasis in original). In

short, Bacon's essay asserts that if one wishes something to occur but cannot outright command another to do it for them, then one must go forth and accomplish the task oneself. Leveraging the education she received at Lowood, Jane boldly applies for a governess position and accepts one at Mr. Rochester's estate, Thornfield Hall. Brontë clearly aligns Rochester's residence with her own trip by having Jane end her journey to Thornfield at the "George Inn" (*Jane Eyre* 86), whose name and description minutely adheres to The George's and that, as we know, is located a mere stone's throw from the Peak District's iconic Stanage Edge. Once settled at Thornfield Hall, Jane quickly becomes "tired of sitting still" (102), and—again like a "bold fellow"—goes out alone for a two-mile walk at dusk. On this walk, Jane is almost trampled by Rochester on his horse, Mesrour, whose name Brontë purloined from *The Arabian Nights*. After Rochester falls from Mesrour and injures his leg, Rochester cannot get the horse to come to him, and says to Jane, "I see . . . the mountain [Mesrour] will never be brought to Mahomet [Rochester], so all you can do is to aid Mahomet to go to the mountain; I must beg of you to come here" (106). Jane, Rochester, and Mesrour form a symbolic triangle representing bold adventures and mythical storytelling, hinting that at long last Jane has met travel companions prepared to join her on the grand adventure of life. Yet Bacon cautions that more often than not taking action reveals a certain short-sightedness: "you shall see a bold fellow many times do Mahomet's miracle" for "boldness is ever blind; for it seeth not danger, and inconveniences" (62, 63), and Rebecca Solnit notes that in the nineteenth century "A man of the streets is only a populist, but a woman of the streets is, like a streetwalker, a seller of her sexuality" (176). It is noteworthy that when Rochester meets Jane on her walk, he automatically assumes the role of prophetic agent and relegates her to the role of maidservant, both of which underscore—due to Jane's class and gender—her utter vulnerability at this moment. And there are many more "dangers" and "inconveniences" in store for Jane on her journey toward finding an appropriate mate for her life's journey.

After Rochester tries to trap Jane in a bigamous marriage, Jane finds refuge with the Rivers family at their home, Moor House, which I already mentioned was modeled on Moorseats in the Peak District outside of Hathersage. While the Rivers provide Jane with companionship, employment, and an emotional sense of belonging, she rejects St. John's proposal that she accompany him to India as his wife, as it would be "almost equivalent to committing suicide," before seemingly counter-intuitively averring, "I am ready to go to India, if I may go free" (369). Since Jane is willing to make the still life-threatening trip on the condition that they do not marry, Jane's sticking point is that she cannot

accept St. John as a metaphorical travel-partner in life, i.e., a husband. When Jane confesses that "Letters have proved of no avail—personal inquiry shall replace them" and determines to make the "at least four days" (375) round-trip journey from Moor House to Thornfield in order "to see or hear news of a friend about whom I had for some time been uneasy" (376), Jane reveals not only that she has been trying to reinstate contact with Rochester but also that she has been unfemininely active in pursuing a man who may best be described as a rogue, a philanderer, and a cheat. After finding Thornfield demolished and Rochester "blind and a cripple" (382), Jane's desire for Rochester grows, and the couple marries and establishes their home at Ferndean, Rochester's "manor-house on a farm." While the exact location that inspired Ferndean has yet to be established, it is commonly asserted that Wycoller Hall may have been Brontë's inspiration, as it was located eight miles from Brontë's home in Haworth and, as Jane describes, a "building of considerable antiquity, moderate size, and no architectural pretensions" located in "a desolate spot," "deep buried in a wood." Rochester previously described the residence to Jane as unsuitable for confining his lawful wife, Bertha, as "a scruple about the unhealthiness of the situation, in the heart of a wood, made my conscience recoil from the arrangement" (269); consequently, Ferndean appears an ominous location for the couple's "happily ever after." But by this point in the narrative, Jane has learned that continued travel is not a solution. Significantly, her dedicated, therapeutic service to her husband magically rejuvenates the previously villainous man as well as the insalubrious space, as illustrated by the restoration of Rochester's sight and the live birth of the happily married couple's son. Jane's odyssey ends once she has not only overcome obstacles but also proven herself to be a wise and chaste—not to mention reproductive—asset to her local community.

Starting from the beginning of the novel, Jane takes seven trips: fifty-miles from Gateshead to Lowood (39), seventy-miles from Lowood to Thornfield (82), two-hundred-miles roundtrip to Gateshead (201), a twenty-shilling stagecoach ride (perhaps eighty miles) to Moor House (288), ten miles walking over the moors (289), presumably another twenty-shilling ride back to the ashes of Thornfield (376), and then, finally thirty miles to Ferndean (382), all of which adds up to roughly five hundred twenty fictional miles.[6] To better comprehend the scale of Jane's travels in the real world, I used the digital map tool provided by the Collaborative Organization for Virtual Education (COVE) to create a geo-located map of all of the actual estates that I have discussed above that Brontë used as inspiration for the fictional locations within *Jane Eyre*.[5] As you can see in figure 1 below, markers 1 and 4 indicate the Sidgwick family's Stone Gappe Hall (Gateshead Hall); marker 2

indicates the Clergy Daughters' School (Lowood); markers 3, 5, and 7 indicate North Lees Hall (Thornfield); marker 6 indicates Moorseats (the Rivers's Moor House); and marker 8 indicates Wycoller Hall (Ferdean).

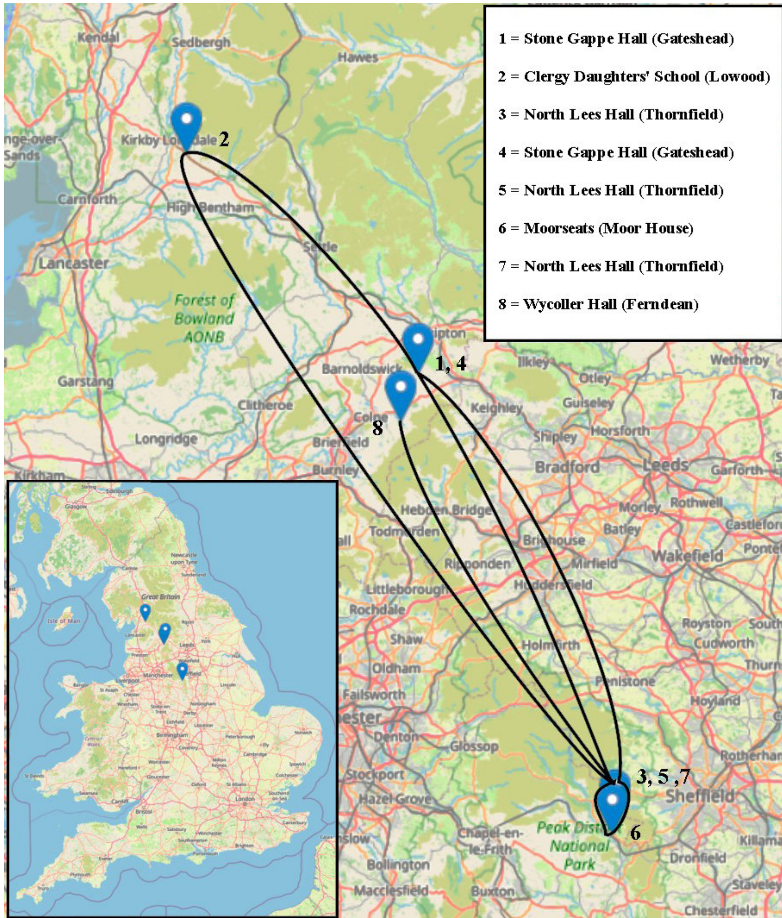

Fig. 1

COVE map of Jane's travels in *Jane Eyre*. COVE Content follows Creative Commons 3.0 licensing protocols. This content was created at covecollective.org and modified in GIMP. Created by Kate Oestreich on 24 July 2023.

My curiosity piqued, I next turned to Google Maps to figure out that if Brontë had followed Jane's itinerary literally, visiting the locations in the same order as Jane, her trip would have amounted to three hundred and fifty-five miles.[7] Though slightly less than three fourths of

the fictional five hundred twenty fictional miles that Brontë sent Jane out to travel, these three hundred and fifty-five real miles that Brontë herself actually covered was an astonishing feat for a "poor, obscure, plain, and little" woman to traverse, mostly alone, in the first half of the nineteenth century. On modern highways, we can drive Brontë's three-hundred-and-fifty-five real miles in roughly seven hours; Jane's five-hundred-and-twenty fictional miles in under eleven. But in *Jane Eyre*'s setting in the late Georgian era, it would have required somewhere around eighty to one hundred hours of bone-jarring carriage rides over unlit and unpaved roads that were frequently rife with highwaymen. Throughout the novel, therefore, Jane is extravagantly bold as she repeatedly strikes out on her own, espousing "that the real world was wide and that a varied field of hopes and fears, of sensations and excitements, awaited those who had the courage to go forth into its expanse, to seek real knowledge of life amidst its perils" (79). Jane is not just a daring woman seeking adventure but a student of life, learning how to give back through positive action benefitting her larger community.

The Autobiography of Jane Eyre: Modernly Exhaustive Travel

In *Film Adaptation*, James Naremore asserts that "The study of adaption needs to be joined with the study of recycling, remaking, and every other form of retelling in the age of mechanical reproduction and electronic communication" (15). Similarly, in "Five Modes of Transtextuality," Gérard Genette posits that transtextuality has five modes that encompass "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts," including quotation, plagiarism, allusion, etc. (1). The mode of hypertextuality or the "uniting a text B [hypertext] . . . to an earlier text A [hypotext]" (5) identifies the basic relationship between the hypo- or urtext—in this case *Jane Eyre*—from which others draw inspiration when creating a hypertext, such as an adaptation, appropriation, fan fiction, modernization, etc. Hypertexts, like *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*, often follow many of the same plot points, revisit the same motifs and themes, and engage in similar types of allusion as their founding hypotext; however, when a hypertext is created not just in one different medium but in several, "intertextuality" or "the need for one text to be read in the light of its allusions to and differences from the content or structure of other texts" ("intertextuality") takes on additional resonance. In this section, I will explore how a twenty-first century transmedia adaptation of *Jane Eyre*,

The Autobiography of Jane Eyre (2013-14), highlights how the scale of travel in the modern world can be more exhausting than educational.

From the very first episode of the Canada-based transmedia adaptation, *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*, Jane's video blogs or vlogs hyper focus on her sense of physical confinement—such as when she shares that "I'm starting to feel trapped by the places that used to make me feel free" (Aref and Hall "Ep. 1"). But since this Jane is not a dependent, orphaned ten-year-old but instead an independent, twenty-one-year-old who lives in Vancouver, she confesses that "When I'm lonely, I go to the rose garden . . . I spend a lot of time on Tumblr." Jane's two destinations—the rose garden and Tumblr—underscore both a nostalgia for her nineteenth-century predecessor's symbolic realm (the quaint idea of an English rose garden) as well as a twenty-first-century equivalency: the virtual domain. In *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*, Jane appropriates some of Jane's interior first-person narration in *Jane Eyre*, stating, "I'm realizing the one thing I've yet to learn in all these years is how to live. The world is wide. Full of hopes, of fears, of sensations and excitements, of adventure . . . If you have the courage to go after it. My name is Jane Eyre. Here goes nothing." But instead of seeking physical travel, this Jane leaps into internet sharing: writing, starring in, editing, and posting her "autobiography" on Instagram, Tumblr, Twitter, and YouTube.

The Autobiography of Jane Eyre emphasizes Jane's multimodal writing in visual, aural, and digital modes for her online audience. After Jane takes a job at Thornfield as a "live-in tutor," Jane breaks the fourth wall as she explores her as-yet-unknown employer's grounds, confessing that she is "catch[ing] up on my photography. You are surprised, aren't you? Like, this chick can't even operate . . . the handy cam, and you mean to tell me she does photography? Well . . . that's not a very nice thing to say, imaginary audience member, But . . . Yes! I do dabble a bit" (Bialik "Ep. 8"). Jane exhibits social media's mania for conflating imposter syndrome with humble bragging: Jane has a past in photography; she owns and uses a handy cam to compose her vlogs; yet Jane pejoratively refers herself as "this chick" who only "dabbles a bit." She continues, "if you're lucky, I'll find something cool to take a picture of! . . . And then hopefully, we'll get some pictures." Jane first addresses her audience with the second-person singular "you" before switching to the first-person plural "we." She, thusly, transfers responsibility to the viewer, who becomes a necessary—if unwilling—partner. She won't get a picture. They all will. Jane switches back to the first-person singular, noting that "I've been trying to get a shot . . . but I keep getting distracted by the ducks." Jane's focus on the ducks in *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* alludes to Jane Eyre's bird motif. While *The Autobiography*

of Jane Eyre's creators are unlikely to have conducted deep research into Brontë's use of Bewick's *British Birds* (1804), this historically influential resource (which was owned by the Brontë family and read by Jane in *Jane Eyre*) notes that ducks are migratory and "In the wild state they pair, and are monogamous, but become polygamous when tame" ("Of the Anas" 334). *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*'s emphasis on ducks foreshadows how Jane will migrate to Thornfield and pair with the "wild bird" E.D. Rochester, as Jane's love interest has been renamed in this adaptation. Jane meets E.D. when she goes out on another walk and he almost runs her over with his car, his modern-day gentleman's horse. After this experience, Jane recklessly decrees, "I should take walks more often if stuff like that is going to happen every time" (Aref "Ep. 10"). Even though E.D.'s careless driving threatened her with serious injuries, Jane returns home elated by their first encounter, portending the dangers of embarking on a relationship with E.D., who will—like a duck, if tamed—tempt Jane with love at a price she is unwilling to pay: domestic bigamy.

In the episode ominously titled "Kidnapped," Jane, who by now knows E.D. well and is obviously smitten with him, is delighted that he has invited her to leave the house: "We'll be going outside! And shopping for groceries, among other things, it looks like" (Hall "Ep. 43"). As the couple zooms along in E.D.'s Lexus, Jane asks Rochester, "Where are we going?" and the non-diegetic lyrics continue, "Shut me out and lock the door / You don't need me." The threat that E.D. will confine Jane like Bertha is further underscored as they play both an oversized chess game in Vancouver's Emory Barnes Park as well as a word game Jane created, called "Sick Dead Buried Ghost." Vancouver's modern freeways, Vancouver Harbor's enormous freight ships, and the North Shore Mountain range form the backdrop of their grocery shopping adventure, but Jane ignores these symbols of adventure along the horizon, gloating instead as E.D.'s illegally parked car is being towed since now "it looks like the kidnappee has become the kidnapper," gleefully forcing the reluctant E.D. to board a public bus, emphasizing the communal over the individual, public over private, going home rather than running away.

After the couple becomes engaged, E.D. takes Jane and Adele—who in this adaptation is the legitimate, mixed-raced progeny of E.D. and his wife, Beth (i.e., Brontë's Bertha)—on vacation to Banff (Bright "Ep. 54"). Shortly after this trip, though, Jane discovers that E.D. is still married to Beth, whom E.D. has confined to a ward attached to his house due to her persistent substance-use disorder (Hall, Bialik, and Aref "Ep. 56"). Jane's opposition to E.D.'s proposal of a non-legal commitment ceremony again underscores her nostalgia for—rather than feminist

rejection of—nineteenth-century mores. Jane chronicles her escape from E.D.'s house for her vlog, first recording an episode while sitting, sobbing in E.D.'s Lexus (Bialik "Ep. 57") then another while standing still in a bus station, declaring emphatically that "this time I have to come to my own rescue" (Babins "Ep. 58"). Her lack of movement in both episodes, though, underscores that despite all of her modern freedoms, Jane is not independent, first "borrowing" E.D.'s car, then waiting for a bus that never comes. Jane's shaky handheld camera work and canted framing mirror her less than stable state of mind. After Jane is mugged at the bus station and knocked to the ground, her now shattered lens—representing her shattered dreams of escape—captures with low-level framing the moment Simon-James (i.e., Brontë's St. John) and Diana Rivers swoop in and rescue her. Jane's story—like Jane herself—is literally laid low. In *Jane Eyre*, Jane daringly uses the last of her money to secure an uncomfortable and relatively dangerous, especially for a single-woman, trip on a stage-coach to carry her scores of miles away from Rochester; in this adaptation, the Rivers simply welcome Jane into their apartment, located in an unspecified but seemingly nearby Vancouver neighborhood. In this twenty-first-century adaptation, Jane seems barely proficient at protecting herself with either modern modes of technological communication or ubiquitous, fast, reliably comfortable modes of long-distance travel.

While *Jane Eyre*'s Jane suffered from recurring nightmares of being burdened with crying babies (hinting at fears that Rochester will abandon her if she agrees to sexual relations outside of lawful matrimony), *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* Jane's recurring nightmares focus on her inability to travel effortlessly. In the episode aptly entitled "Travel," Jane confides that

> Last night I dreamt that I was checking into the Hotel Vancouver. It's this huge, gorgeous hotel in the city. I've always been too intimidated to go inside. But I'm checking in and Mr. Rochester was the hotel clerk and he keeps saying that they're full they have no space, I can't stay there, I just . . . start panicking. [. . .] Finally, I give up and turn away from the desk and I'm on a dock. And only a dock. It isn't connected to anything, just sitting on an empty horizon and . . . suddenly there are boats, cruise ships, there's music and champagne and dancing. I call to them. [. . .] But no one hears me. (Hall, Aref, and Hall "Ep. 41")

The Hotel Vancouver is the nickname of the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, a "neo-Gothic building known as the 'Castle in the City' [which] was

one of a number of elegant château-style properties built by railroads in Canada over the past century" (Cooper). Jane shoots this episode while she is flying back to Vancouver from Montreal after making peace with her dying aunt, and her edited vlog again highlights shaky, handheld camera footage of herself sitting at an airport gate before transitioning to a montage of breathtaking views out of her airplane window—shimmering clouds in a boundless blue sky, majestic mountains, the earth's curvature visible beyond the wing. Jane's specific noting of the Hotel Vancouver while filming an episode of her flying across the continent adroitly connects nineteenth-century railroad travel to modern-day airline travel. Both early modern and ultra-modern travel modes seem uncannily unheimlich to Jane, and Jane may fear that Rochester will reject her because she is neither a frequent nor a confident traveler. Jane's resigned voiceover ironically complicates the majestic images she is simultaneously capturing out her plane window, and as the plane's wheels set down on Vancouver airport's runway, she determines, "I'll just have to enjoy the time I have now [with Rochester]. And figure out where that leads me" (Hall, Aref, and Hall "Ep. 41").

In addition to Jane's YouTube vlogs, *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* team also rolled out seventeen social media feeds, thirteen of which were allegedly penned by specific characters. By expanding *Jane Eyre*'s fictional world across multiple platforms and social media accounts, the writers enabled several supporting characters to step outside of Jane's first-person narration and voice their own perspectives on events, fulfilling Henry Jenkins's dictum that "a simple adaptation may be 'transmedia,' but it is not 'transmedia storytelling' [if] it is simply re-presenting an existing story rather than expanding and annotating the fictional world" ("The Aesthetics"). Henry Jenkins and Suzanne Scott similarly posit in *Textual Poachers* that "Transmedia stories . . . frequently poach a primary text as a fan might, playing in the gaps and margins, exploring ambiguities and minor character backstories through narrative extensions" (xxiv), and *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* extends Jane's first-person narrative by empowering several minor characters to post on their own social media accounts, many of which highlight—unlike Jane—the characters' active interest in the possibilities enabled by physical travel. On Twitter, for example, eleven-year-old Adele posts witty factoids about Canada, Russia, and outer space, just to name a few, such as "Newfoundland: First place in Canada explored by Europeans. Last place to become a province. #Irony. #1949 #VikingsGotThereFirst" (@AdeleCRochester), underscoring how a good education has sharpened her wit and broadened her horizons. Johanna Reed's (i.e., Brontë's Georgiana) Pinterest reveals an obsession with US, British, and European travel destinations on the cheap,

implying that she has aspirational dreams. But her posts' titles, like "10 Most Instagrammable Places in Amsterdam, Netherlands" hint that her wanderlust is more about flaunting her travels on social media than it is about appreciating different cultures or gaining knowledge (@johannareed12). In *Jane Eyre*, everything we know about aristocratic Blanche Ingram, Jane's main rival for Rochester's affections, has been filtered through Jane's jealous, first-person perspective and centers on the time they were both physically present at Rochester's estate. In *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*, though, Blanche has been updated to a "Canadian model and public relations executive" who attended Harvard ("Profile") with E.D. By experiencing Blanche's perspective, viewers of the transmedia narrative are enabled, in the words of Thomas Leitch, "to be more self-critical about the deployment of gaps" and in a "meta way" consider "whether the task of adaptations is to disclose gaps in their adapted texts, to fill in these gaps, or to emphasize their openness" (66-67). *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* attempts to fill the gap of Blanche's perspective via her Twitter account, and her profile picture highlights how much she is at home in the twenty-first century, as she leans forward welcomingly toward the camera, wearing a form-fitting tank top and aviator sunglasses. Blanche does not see herself as either a scheming rival or sidekick, but rather as the all-knowing, all-seeing pilot. Additionally, Blanche's Twitter header image features the soaring skyscrapers of the Toronto skyline, her hometown.

In *Jane Eyre*, the only trip that we know Blanche Ingram has undertaken is the twenty miles separating her home, Ingram Park, from Rochester's Thornfield (*Jane Eyre* 222), yet a quick scroll through Blanche's feed reveals photos that chronicle her far-flung travels to recognizable North American and Western European landmarks, perfectly in keeping with Deborah Cartmell's observation in "100+ Years of Adaptations, or, Adaptation as the Art Form of Democracy" that "adaptation studies . . . is still dominated by Anglo-American texts, the adaptations of which tend to fetishize their nationalistic features. . . . obsessively visualized in their seeking out and sharing panoramic and touristy views" (7). Blanche posts pictures to document that she is spending June in New York City, visiting Broadway, MOMA, and the 5th Ave Subway (a blend of high and low culture) before flying to Paris for the Summer Haute Couture Fashion week, highlighting her upper-class sophistication and hyper-mobility. A couple weeks later, she posts that "It's good to be back home #missedyoutoronto" (@RoyalBlanche). While in Toronto, she visits the Art and Letters Club and takes E.D. to the famous CN tower. In less than two months, she has visited the chicest city in three separate countries: the United States, France, and Canada. But Blanche is not finished. By August she arrives in

Vancouver, Canada's most fashionable city on its Western coast, where the main portion of *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*'s narrative is set. Blanche immediately starts posting pictures of fabulous Vancouver destinations: riding up the ski lift in order to gain spectacular views from the top of Grouse Mountain, watching the sunset with friends at the beach, running on the Stanley Park Seawall, eating pastries at Granville Island, and dining at Bella Sushi, all before a night out at Bar None that was still going strong at 3:09 AM.

Like the PR agent that she is, Blanche courts likes and retweets by solipsistically and ostentatiously leveraging Twitter's platform to fashion *herself* through images and text. For Blanche: *To tweet is to be*. *And to be is to travel*. Blanche's own face, though, is rarely in her posts. For example, when Blanche posts an extreme low angle shot of the Eiffel Tower and then a god's eye shot of the Parc du Champs de Mars, she is nowhere to be found in the frame, highlighting how an actor in a transmedia series does not need to be flown to Paris in order for the audience to believe that her character traveled there. She simply needs to post a photo of the Eiffel Tower. Since social media is meant to be driven by users' desire to visually communicate being the heroines of their own adventurous lives, it is off-putting that Blanche's face is absent in almost all of her posted images. Indeed, the single most characteristic shot of social media is the selfie. The recognizable landmark without the traveler's face is not social media; it is propaganda.

What are we to make of the differences between the original Jane Eyre's and Blanche Ingram's travels and those of their modern-day counterparts? In *Jane Eyre*, Jane tackles an astonishingly arduous five hundred miles in pursuit of a home and happiness, whereas the more feminine Blanche was limited to a less-inspiring forty miles of travel, both within the confines of northern England. In *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* modern Jane lives in Vancouver; her only major trip is to her hometown, Montreal, for her aunt's death, amounting to 4,575 air miles. Jane's personal travel is severely limited: only a day trip with E.D. to Granville Island (roughly 5 miles) and their short trip to Banff (about 720 miles roundtrip, if they flew). While Blanche also lives in Vancouver, she spends her time flitting back and forth to prestigious events, locales, and establishments in NYC, Paris, and Toronto. Blanche's airline flights in just a couple of months amount to 12,824 air miles. Additionally, Blanche is a Harvard alum, implying that these trips made over a few weeks represent a lifestyle, not a once-in-a-lifetime aberration. I once again turned to COVE's geo-locational tools, which visually confirm the stark contrast between the women's travels:

figure 2 illustrates how Blanche hits three countries on two continents; figure 3 shows that Jane remains within Canadian borders.

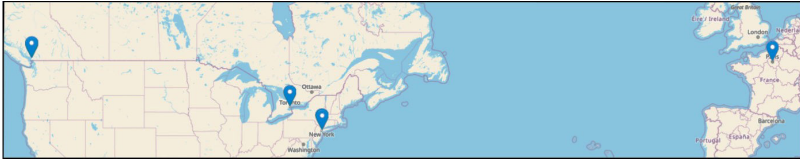

Fig. 2

COVE map of Blanche's travels in AoJE. COVE Content follows Creative Commons 3.0 licensing protocols. This content was created at covecollective.org. Created by Kate Oestreich on 24 July 2023.

Fig. 3

COVE map of Jane's travels in AoJE. COVE Content follows Creative Commons 3.0 licensing protocols. This content was created at covecollective.org. Created by Kate Oestreich on 24 July 2023.

These contrasts are not irrelevant, as illustrated in the final scenes of E.D. Rochester and Jane's "happily ever after" ending. Tellingly, in the adaptation, Rochester is not injured while rescuing his wife from a fire; instead, he simply crashes his car. After E.D. is released from the hospital, the camera retreats, capturing a blurry full shot of the couple from behind, as they gaze out together at the North Shore Mountain range (Hall "Ep. 93").[8] Tellingly, *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*'s ending does not highlight a woman's ability to restore a sinful man, produce his heir, and rejuvenate his insalubrious estate. *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre*'s ending also refuses to promise that Jane and E.D. have a romantic future. In the final episode, Jane states, "I don't need to press record to start my day anymore. So. Thank you. Thank you for staying with me. Dear viewer, I made a home" (Hall and Aref "Ep. 95"). This Jane is a helpful yet independent woman with her own apartment. End of story.

Conclusion: Remediating Travel's Message for a Modern Audience

There is a long tradition linking travel, even in its most pedestrian forms, to creative inspiration. Kerri Andrews shares that "Since Jean Jacques Rousseau's *The Reveries of a Solitary Walker* appeared in 1782, walking has been acknowledged as central to the writing of many famous male authors" (17).[9] Raised by a father who aspired in many ways to live according to this Romantic creed, Charlotte and her sisters were easily recognizable around town by their eccentric habit of wearing boots so that they could at any moment strike out walking across the wild moors that they in turn transcribed into their literary masterpieces. Brontë's *Jane Eyre* reflects this Romantic ideal in many ways, in no small part due to the revolutionary manner in which Jane "moves through the world like a boy," suggesting "that the female protagonist actually can develop 'like a man'" (Locy 107). Jane then channels her peripatetic masculine education into the writing of her own first-person narrative, which is itself Brontë's novel, *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography*. Brontë's novel was an instant success, and her newfound financial freedom meant that Brontë could indulge in her desires to travel, frequently utilizing the newly established national trainlines that helped her to travel more quickly to the Lake District and London, as well as Scotland and Ireland. Yet Brontë specifically set *Jane Eyre* in the time period before Great Britain's major investment in its railway system, which made her revolutionary female protagonist less threatening to current English society yet paradoxically more daring in her willingness to travel alone under early-nineteenth-century travel conditions that were both socially and physically dangerous.

Less than two hundred years later, *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* set its narrative in the immediate present, and Blanche can comfortably fly the five thousand miles from Vancouver to Paris in roughly the same amount of time it took Brontë's Jane to travel fifty miles from Gateshead to Lowood by stagecoach. By contrast, modern Jane Eyre appears atavistically nostalgic in her lack of desire to travel, finding pleasure in creating vlogs about her interactions with persons already in or near her own home. Nevertheless, the allure of easy travel pervades the adaptation, with multiple characters utilizing subways, cars, buses, and planes (as well as the internet) to travel physically (and virtually). Even the Rivers prominently display a map of the world and air mail envelopes on the wall behind the kitchen table in their low-rent apartment. Jenkins emphasizes that transmedia extensions "show us the experiences and perspectives of secondary characters" in order to "tap into longstanding readers [*sic*] interest in comparing and con-

experiences of the same fictional events" ("Revenge"). Blanche seems to have it all, ticking every box on the twenty-first century feminist checklist: Ivy league degree, successful business career, jet-setting lifestyle, social media influence. The only thing she does not have is E.D.'s love, and after he breaks up with her, barely halfway through the transmedia series' run, Blanche suddenly stops posting to her social media account. She is no longer a part of the narrative. Surely the lesson we are to take away from Blanche's perspective is not that a woman becomes irrelevant without a man?

I would argue that Blanche, instead, reflects modern culture's unease with our own insatiable appetite for notching up just one more trip, just one more tweet, just one more like, constantly seeking affirmation and affection from not just one person, but from an endless array of virtual followers. Perpetually pursuing to #goviral. Significantly, the aspiring actor who plays Blanche, Alissa Hansen, started leveraging Instagram in 2011 to help establish her professional career as a poet, model, and actress, and on June 23, 2014 posted a "couple selfie" of herself and influencer Ryker Gamble, co-founder of the controversial Canadian social-media collective High on Life (@alissa.hansen). High on Life, in an extreme version of Blanche's behavior, became famous for documenting themselves performing dangerously daring feats in multiple countries, resulting in public outcries, jail time, thousands of dollars in fines, and a banishment from "all U.S. public land for five years" (Siler). High on Life's attention-seeking behavior paid off in the short term, attracting 502,000 YouTube subscribers and 1.1 million Instagram followers, "apparently allowing at least some of the members to call it their full-time job" (Siler). The group's penchant for documenting dangerous stunts for their joint YouTube and Instagram channels, though, resulted in the tragic deaths of three members in 2018, when they were swept over British Columbia's Shannon Falls' ninety-eight foot drop. One of the three killed was Gamble, by then Hansen's boyfriend of five years. Through both Hansen's character's travels and the tragic death of her real-life boyfriend, the allure and risk of pursuing extreme travel in order to promote oneself on social media becomes apparent, begging the question: is being daring enough to embark on and then document extreme travel escapades sexy or suicidal? Perhaps *The Autobiography of Jane Eyre* reflects a modern dis-ease with both the niche trend of extreme travel and the more prevalent pressure for everyone to aspire to influencer status. Instead, like Jane, we should re-focus on the sometimes banal yet significant work of improving ourselves and healing our local communities.

Notes

1. In 1824, when Charlotte was eight, her father enrolled her in the now infamous Clergy Daughters' School at Cowans Bridge, forty miles from Haworth. In 1831 and 1832, Brontë chose to move twenty miles away to study at the Roe Head boarding school, returning to the school as a teacher from 1835 through 1838. Her first, and much hated, governess job in 1839 was at the Stone Gappe estate, a mere four miles from her home; her second position in 1841 was fifteen miles away at Rawdon.

2. Even once safely back in Yorkshire, Brontë frequently traveled sixteen miles to stay with her friend Ellen Nussey at Birstall Smithies and fourteen miles to visit Mary Taylor at Gomersal. After gaining fame and financial independence from *Jane Eyre*, Brontë frequently traveled even farther abroad around England, as well as to Scotland and Ireland.

3. Geospatial is defined as "relating to geographical distribution or location; esp. designating data associated with a particular geographical location; relating to or involving such data" ("geospatial").

4. Holland also notes that in Hathersage "Charlotte would have seen the Eyre memorial, and in the graveyard she would have found the Eyre graves, including one for a Jane Eyre herself." I traveled to Hathersage in June 2023 but could not locate the Jane Eyre headstone. I, therefore, emailed the current Vicar of St Michael and All Angels' Church, Paul Moore, and he confirmed that this story is apocryphal: there is not a Jane Eyre buried in the church's graveyard.

5. For just $10, you can try all of COVE's digital tools here: editions.covecollective.org/. All BAVS and NAVSA members get free access.

6. In "Stage-Coach Services in the West Riding of Yorkshire between 1830 and 1840," G.C. Dickinson reports, "a rough average fare . . . was 3d. to 4d. per mile for inside passengers, with outside passengers paying about one-half to two-thirds this," and notes that "Fares seem to have varied remarkably little over long periods," such as the seventy mile "Leeds—Scarborough fare [which] stood at 18s. in 1754 and in 1839" (4).

7. You can see the Google map of directions to each location here: http://bit.ly/43lngou.

8. Adam J. Wright opted not to return to finish filming, so this framing also minimizes the fact that E.D. was now being played by Eric Bruce.

9. Andrews aims to correct this gender imbalance by highlighting several female writer-walkers, yet Brontë is not one of them.

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Jill the Ripper: Adapting Gender in Jack the Ripper Narratives

Gracie Bain

> There is no one true version of which all the others are but copies or distortions. Every version belongs to the myth.
>
> -Claude Lévi-Strauss 436

In the East End of London in 1888, five women, Polly Nichols, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, Catherine Eddowes, and Mary Jane Kelly, were murdered and mutilated. Their killer, known as the Whitechapel Murderer or Jack the Ripper, was never caught. The violence was widely discussed in London's streets, at home, and worldwide. Most newspapers reported that the victims were sex workers. This fact is highly debated; however, the crimes are widely believed to be motivated, or at least influenced by, a hatred of women in sex work.[1] Because the police never caught the killer, the public considered them incompetent. *The Galveston Daily News* describes the rampant mistrust of the police from across the pond:

> Denizens of Whitechapel are in a state of terror to-night [*sic*] owing to the horrible butcheries, the fourth of which it was hoped and quite generally believed would be the last of the ghastly series. The police are positively helpless and their tacit admission of failure to find any clue whatsoever to the perpetrator of the terrible crimes only serves to add to the consternation of the unfortunate creatures whose calling has manifestly made them objects of the inhuman butcher's fury. ("The Denizens Doomed")

The lack of any resolution in the case has since been a source of contention and theories.

In addition to being widely publicized in the news, these violent murders quickly led to many fictional transmedia versions of the story, including dime novels such as *The Whitechapel Murders; Or, On the*

Track of a Fiend (1888) or penny dreadfuls such as *The Curse Upon Mitre Square* (1888). These adaptations of the story are a subgenre of neo-Victorian fiction called "Ripperature." Other early examples include short stories such as *The Lodger* (1913). Adaptations such as the film *A Study in Terror* (1965), graphic novels such as *From Hell* (1989-1998) and its film version in 2001, and television series such as *Ripper Street* (2012-2016) continue in popular entertainment. Tourists can even take a Jack the Ripper tour in London or grab a bite at Greenwich's "Jack the Chipper" fish and chips shop.

Though scholars have previously explored the fictionalization of these crimes and their gendered politics, few have examined the "Jill the Ripper" subgenre of Ripperature, specifically.[2] A theory in 1888, still espoused by some, argues that a woman killed the canonical five victims out of revenge, desperation, greed, or something else. This version of the Whitechapel Murderer is often called Jill the Ripper. Jill has been a fruitful site for fictionalization for many reasons, such as our belief that women do not commit that kind of murder and our obsession when women do commit that kind of violent and serial murder. Most important for this essay is what a female-presenting murderer would mean for the Ripper mythology that so clearly accepts hatred of women as a motivation for murder.

In this article, I explore how one of the most (in)famous Victorian figures, Jack the Ripper, is sometimes fictionally presented as a woman and how that figure can be a possible place for gender play. I argue that the Jill the Ripper figure can attempt to queer, bend, or complicate Victorian gender. In addition to briefly discussing a Victorian example of a text with Jill the Ripper, this essay explores how a more modern text, the film *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* (1971), exemplifies this possibility. Adaptation as a form offers us queer potential because, as Pamela Demory explains, "To identify something as an adaptation is to recognize it in relation to something else—something prior, something that for at least some people is more original and more true. Similarly, to identify something as queer is to place it in relation to something that seems to have been already established as 'normal' or 'straight'" (1). In this definition, queering something is, as Linda Hutcheon argues, to repeat it with a difference (7). Queer adaptation is a helpful framework for texts with a Jill the Ripper figure that repeats Victorian gender ideology with a difference. These texts repeat the traditionally accepted mythology of the Whitechapel Murderer but are differentiated with a nontraditional killer. A Jill the Ripper figure can be said to attempt to "[resist] a source text's conventional narrative structure or normative ideologies" (Demory 5). I say "attempt" because these texts are not necessarily successful in subverting the traditional

gender narrative. The "Jill the Ripper" subgenre of Ripperature is one of the most exciting sites for gender crossing and reinforcing because, on the face of it, it asks us to consider what happens when someone does not behave how mythology tells us they will and how the mythology adapts to that difference.

Altering or adapting the Jack the Ripper script with a female murderer has complicated implications for potential subversion. Helen Davies writes, "*Performativity is the process of historical repetition*. Even the most 'subversive' of performances—whether in the forum of gender or neo-Victorianism—is necessarily dependent on the prior 'script' on which it attempts to alter. This raises a crucial question: how can we tell if a re-citation is enacting a subversion of the prior script, or if it is mere repetition" (10, emphasis original). The difference between reinforcing or questioning a problematic narrative by altering it is important. On the one hand, the Jill the Ripper figure gives Victorian or neo-Victorian women more control over a narrative that intentionally removes power from women. On the other hand, Jill is still a violent murderer. Ripperature attempts to toe the line between subversion and reinforcement of gender narratives.

The Victorian era, or the nineteenth century more broadly, is an especially ripe site for (mis)reading. The Victorians are everywhere in modern-day media, whether it be the countless film adaptations of Charles Dickens's texts or Sherlock Holmes fanfiction. The Victorian era's racial, economic, gender, and political legacies are felt today. As "eligible sites for theorizing such [cultural] emergence," these legacies are the jumping point for many neo-Victorian authors (Kucich and Sadoff xv). The Victorian era is both a site of nostalgic longing and a critical distancing. In many ways, we praise ourselves for removing many blatantly racist, sexist, and classist Victorian policies. Still, this kind of work always houses the deeper question of the difference between them and us.

Like the neo-Victorian genre, Ripperature is a palimpsest, combining myth, history, and fiction. Most of what the average person "knows" about the case is from popular cultural media texts. Lissette Lopez Szwydky argues that cultural texts, like *Frankenstein* (1818) and Charles Dickens's novels, exist outside of their "original" form: "There is no 'outside' of adaptation because the culture-text we have inherited is composed not only of Dickens's novels, but also of all of their respective adaptations [. . .] Similar claims can be made for most famous authors, culture-texts, or popular genres" (138). Similar to how the life of canonical nineteenth-century literary texts like *Frankenstein* or *A Christmas Carol* (1843) extends beyond the first published manuscript, the nineteenth-century text that is Jack the Ripper has been adapted

and built on since 1888. As Szwydky argues, for the contemporary reader/viewer, there is no "outside" of adaptation with Jack the Ripper. Because we were not there in 1888 with Jack the Ripper, our knowledge of the crimes comes from popular culture and its adaptations of the "facts." Texts with a female Whitechapel Murderer are an important part of this palimpsest process.

Combining Storyworlds

Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde combines the Ripper narrative and its mythology with Jekyll and Hyde's character and storyworld. Contemporaneous Ripperature and newspaper reports constantly referred to the story of Jekyll and Hyde. The themes of duality, corruption, violence, sexuality, and gender in Robert Louis Stevenson's novella gave Victorians a vocabulary for the Ripper's crimes. Victorian critic Judith Walkowitz explains the frequency of Hyde in the Ripper myth: "The Jekyll and Hyde model represented the most accessible 'explanation' of psychopathology for English newspapers to exploit" (207). It is impossible to separate Jekyll, Hyde, and the Ripper from the Victorian imagination because the language of a hidden sinister side hiding behind a respectable veneer explained the Whitechapel Murders.

In *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, Dr. Jekyll discovers a way to prolong life, thus, giving him more time to cure diseases. His special serum is made from female reproductive organs and hormones, turning the swallower into a woman. Jekyll calls this sinister side Sister Hyde. Initially, Jekyll's lackeys, Burke and Hare, procure female bodies for the serum until they are caught and blinded (Burke) and hanged (Hare).[3] Then, Dr. Jekyll does the killings. He becomes the Whitechapel Murderer, the killer described in a poster in the film's opening scene. He believes his victims to be sacrifices for the greater good. Eventually, it is too dangerous for Jekyll to murder as himself, so he transitions into Sister Hyde to kill because the sex workers trust her as a fellow woman. However, Sister Hyde has too much power over the weaker Dr. Jekyll when the transformations happen without Jekyll's consent or the serum. After more murders, Jekyll finds an antidote, only to fall off a ledge accidentally in the middle of a transformation.

Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, published in 1886, is as famous as the mythology of the Ripper. In the novella, Dr. Jekyll invents a potion, allowing him to hypothetically split the good of the human psyche from the bad. His friend and lawyer, Mr. Utterson, functions as the narrator. Unfortunately, the bad part of Jekyll's psyche,

Hyde, inconveniently commits several crimes. Eventually, Jekyll and Hyde fight for dominance of their shared body, and Jekyll destroys himself to destroy Hyde. Unlike the seductive yet evil Sister Hyde in *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* and unlike the way he is often portrayed in Hollywood, Stevenson's Hyde is characterized as grotesque:

> [Hyde] was pale and dwarfish, he gave an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation, he had a displeasing smile, he had borne himself to the lawyer with a sort of murderous mixture of timidity and boldness, and he spoke with a husky, whispering and somewhat broken voice; all these were points against him, but not all of these together could explain the hitherto unknown disgust, loathing and fear with which Mr. Utterson regarded him. (19)

The readers find out Jekyll is not the "good" to Hyde, he is the "upright Victorian gentleman" who has repressed his "darker nature."

Jekyll and Hyde's story influenced how Jack the Ripper was reported and fictionalized. For example, in 1888, the *Daily Evening Bulletin* claimed to have interviewed Jesse Pomeroy, who told them it was the case of "Jekyll and Hyde" ("Latest Telegraph"). [4] In *The Whitechapel Murders: Or, On The Track of the Fiend*, a dime novel published in December of 1888, the detective follows a suspect to a building next to a theater that "was in the vicinity of a large theater where a popular actor was playing an exciting drama, which depicted the life of a man who was possessed of a dual character" (11). By the time of the Whitechapel Murders, transatlantic newspaper reports and fiction, to varying degrees and with varying styles, linked the monstrous Hyde to Jack the Ripper.

The famous Victorian actor Richard Mansfield, who played Jekyll and Hyde on stage from 1887 until 1907, played the character so well that he was considered a suspect in the Ripper murders. An anonymous author sent a letter to the City of London Police accusing Richard Mansfield, citing his terrifying ability to convincingly transform into Hyde in front of the audience ("Anonymous Letter"). This acting ability was taken as proof of the actor's real-life perversion. Though Mansfield is not seriously considered a suspect, the accusations show that the interweaving of Hyde and the Ripper had very real consequences.

Gracie Bain

The Jill Theory and Victorian Gender

There are many theories about the Whitechapel Murderer, ranging from a missionary killer motivation–someone murdering women to cleanse streets of their sin—to a coverup for a royal affair. The crimes are still being discussed on podcasts, message boards, and other forms of entertainment. These theories engage with Victorian and modern ideas of women, sex work, and violence. William Stewart in *Jack the Ripper: A New Theory* (1939), proposed that a woman named "Jill the Ripper" committed the murders. Multiple internet sources posit that Inspector Abberline, one of the lead investigators on the case, apparently believed it was a woman.[5] In addition to Inspector Abberline, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the *Sherlock Holmes* books, thought the killer might be a woman, according to a popular Ripperologist website ("Jill the Ripper," *Casebook*). Stewart argues that a woman, likely a midwife, could travel at night without being questioned, could move through the streets with bloody clothing, could have the anatomical knowledge to perform the mutilations, and could have an alibi if caught next to a dead body. Stewart argues, "Not Jack but 'Jill the Ripper' can be the only satisfactory answer to the mystery" (207). Regardless of the truthfulness of these "facts," the Jill the Ripper theory is available to the mass public without them having to access microfiche and archives themselves.

The Jill the Ripper figure complicates traditional gender demarcations because she performs in a way contradictory to established gender "norms" as a violent female killer. Feminist critic Lyn Pykett defines the Victorian separate spheres ideology: "The development of the middle-class home and family in the nineteenth century involved a new kind of division of labour: the moral and reproductive labour of the wife and mother within the private domestic sphere, and the competitive, economic, productive labour of the husband in the public sphere of industry, commerce and politics" (12). In this formulation, appropriate femininity is domestic and proper masculinity is public. Victorian gender codes were much more complicated than such a binary, but they served well as an ideology. As organizing mythology or ideology, gendered expectations permeated all Victorian institutions, even if they did not appear how they were meant to in practice. I contend that Ripperature attempts to bend these demarcations in our understanding of gender ideology. Perhaps not always successfully. Victorian gender ideology crept into every existing institution, just as our contemporary gender ideology does.

Before examining a twentieth-century example of Jill the Ripper, it is useful to discuss how those traits are either exemplified or complicated

in a text from the period, a dime novel published by the fictional A. F. Pinkerton called *The Whitechapel Murders; Or, An American Detective in London* (1889). In this story, Ogden Richards, a detective from the U.S., is in London for an unrelated case when he solves the Whitechapel Murders. His best friend and partner with the problematic name, Gyp Servosse, joins him. Through his investigation, Richards suspects Servosse of being Jack the Ripper after Servosse has brief blackouts in which he returns with bloody clothing. Eventually, Richards discovers a beautiful indigenous woman, Princess Wahconta, has mesmerized Servosse into either performing the murders or setting him up as a dupe. She can briefly mesmerize Richards, but he proves too manly and too strong for it to last long. The story ends with Richards losing the Princess and Servosse in a crowd after the Princess attempts to murder Richards. There is no closure to the narrative, just as there has not been closure to the Whitechapel Murders.

One common theme in Jill the Ripper fiction is the sexualization of the murderer which does not occur in the same way in fiction with a Jack the Ripper. Most of Ripperature that includes a Jill the Ripper killer discusses the killer's body at length. In Pinkerton's text, the Jill figure is doubly exoticized and sexualized by Richards because she is indigenous. Richards, the detective and the policing agent, fetishizes her:

> Never before had my eyes been dazzled by such regal, barbaric beauty. She entered the room like a queen; a head well poised on a beautiful throat, and adorned with the glory of green-black hair, brilliant in its ebony texture. The hair fell nearly to her eyebrows, and beneath them flashed a pair of velvety eyes, black as the shadow of a moonless midnight. Her umber face betrayed the East Indian's swarthy complexion; but, with her, it was living bronze, and the face was unworldly in its beauty. (60-61)

During the Whitechapel Murders, many racist rumors speculated that the murderer could not possibly be an Englishman.[6] Pinkerton's text sets the precedence of male characters both desiring and being disgusted by a female murderer because of her appearance.

In modern-day Jill the Ripper fiction, Jill does the violent killing herself. However, other older texts, including *The Whitechapel Murders; Or, An American Detective in London*, have Jill's violence enacted by a third party. Princess Wahconta may be violent, but she is a "murderess by proxy" as Ogden Richards describes her (125). In *The Female Offender*, written in 1895, just a few years after Mary Jane Kelly's

death, phrenologist Cesare Lombroso and criminologist William Ferrero write:

> The female born criminal does not always commit her crime herself. Often [. . .] her courage fails [. . .] Moral shrinkings there are none; the woman simply has recourse to instigation. For the born criminal is especially to be recognised by the fact that in a joint crime the part played by her is that of an *incubus*, to use an expression of Sighele's: she eggs on her accomplice to the deed with an extraordinary refinement of wickedness. (178, emphasis original)

Lombroso and Ferrero describe the female criminal as lacking bravery but not "refinement of wickedness." The female offender may be physically, but not mentally, weak. Her power, according to the authors, comes from her ability to convince men. In *The Whitechapel Murders*, Richards explains why Servosse would do her bidding: "The princess was a mesmerist. Servosse had the temperament which made him peculiarly sensitive to her mesmeric influence, and, when in this state (if *he* did commit the murders), he was doing her bidding, and she, the instigator, wielding her terrible power" (125, emphasis original). Richards uses the word "instigated" just as Lombroso and Ferrero, around twenty years later use "instigation." In Pinkerton's text, however, Princess Wahconta being an indigenous woman adds an extra layer to this formula. Mesmerism by Princess Wahconta points to the Victorian's fear of the "Other" as having dangerous, supernatural powers. Richards, and the reader, must blame Princess Wahconta because it is unfathomable that someone like Servosse could do something as heinous as the Whitechapel Murders.

In most Ripperature with Jill the Ripper, her uncontrolled violence is surveilled by a male detective. But, Jill the Ripper texts often question the extent of the male detective's power. In *The Whitechapel Murders*, Richards alternates between being obsessed with Princess Wahconta because of her beauty and being disgusted at her actions. One such moment occurs when she kidnaps him: "Whether the distraction caused by the noises of the street weakened the hypnotic influence, or whether my mental will power [*sic*] reacted against it [. . .] as the coupe hurried over the stones, I gradually overcame the spell by which the princess had charmed me, and, before we had driven much of a distance, I was again mentally independent" (95). Good, moral masculinity still prevails over racialized femininity, but there is a moment when readers are invited to think that maybe it will not. In the next sections, we will

continue to see policing of what the patriarchy deems as "Other" and the continued questioning of that power.

The Proper Feminine

Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde reinforces Victorian and contemporary gender boundaries and binaries. There are almost a hundred years between the Whitechapel Murders and *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, and there are certainly differences in how women were treated in 1888 and 1972. However, there are also similarities. Victorian gender ideology crept into every existing institution, just as our contemporary gender ideology does. Scholars such as Lyn Pykett identify as central to the Victorian espousal of separate spheres or the belief that women should be regulated to the home. Inappropriate femininity, or the "improper feminine," does not perform emotions as she should (Pykett 27). Pykett uses the example of sensation fiction heroines such as Lady Audley in *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) to point to the ways fictional Victorian women behave outside of "normal." I argue an additional way Victorian women did not perform emotions correctly is through violence. Victorian gender codes were much more complicated than a binary, but they served well as dogma. Philippa Levine argues, "If [gender ideology] was effective in dismissing unmarried and working women alike as society's failures, if it was effective in polarizing the traits of masculinity and femininity in the popular imagination, then surely its effects were palpable" (12-13). An organizing mythology, gendered expectations permeated through all Victorian institutions, even if they did not always look how they were supposed to in practice. Separate spheres ideology is important because it is the one Jill the Ripper is conversing with.

Ripperature often juxtaposes "appropriate" and "inappropriate" femininity—even going so far as making it a life-or-death difference. In Stevenson's novella, there are both female and male victims. In *Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, every victim but one is a female sex worker. Many canonical victims of the actual Whitechapel Murderer were noticeably sick and unhealthy. This is possibly why the murderer chose these women; they were vulnerable with their work, lack of housing, and potential illnesses. However, in most Ripperature, the women are young and beautiful. They are beautified to garner sympathy in a culture that elevates beautiful victims over plain victims. In *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, Jekyll specifies that the bodies Burke and Hare get for him need to be "female. No more than twenty years old." He never explains his reasoning, but the assumption here is that this is the peak

reproductive age for fertility. At one point, Jekyll looks through the dead bodies at the morgue before he employs Burke and Hare, and the morgue worker stops him from taking one woman's body because the worker had "grown fond of her." The implication here is that the morgue worker is a necrophiliac that violates dead bodies. None of the victims are given any sort of history or backstory because they are not Susan.

Upper-class masculinity polices femininity. In the film, Professor Robertson represents the single bachelor with money to spare and women to flirt with. At the beginning of this film, Robertson teases Jekyll for his scientific study and brags about his sexual exploits. In fact, it is Robertson's libido that Hyde uses to distract him before plunging a knife into his back. Robertson is comfortable not voicing his suspicions that Jekyll is a murderer until he deems it the right time. In Stevenson's novel, Utterson, Jekyll's confidant, is the perfect wingman because he allows things to happen. The novella describes him as follows:

> But he had an approved tolerance for others; sometimes wondering, almost with envy, at the high pressure of spirits involved in their misdeeds; and in any extremity inclined to help rather than to reprove. "I incline to Cain's heresy," he used to say quaintly: "I let my brother go to the devil in his own way." In this character, it was frequently his fortune to be the last reputable acquaintance and the last good influence in the lives of downgoing men. And to such as these, so long as they came about his chambers, he never marked a shade of change in his demeanour. (5)

The irony, of course, is that Utterson's name is a derivative of the word "utterance," to give an audible expression. Utterson spends most of the novella never speaking his suspicions out loud. Instead, he believes things are best settled for the upper classes by ignoring them. Both Utterson and Robertson represent one of the ways men police women's bodies by deciding who is worth intervening for. However, the last murder, Robertson's, in *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* offers the possibility of the uselessness of this policing. Because even though Robertson considers himself above Jekyll's other victims, he is still murdered by someone he only views as a potential sexual partner.

In *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, the upper-class or respectable woman is Susan Spenser, Dr. Jekyll's young, pretty neighbor. She cares for Jekyll when he does not care or seems incapable of caring for himself. She notices and scolds him when he has not left his rooms for five days. She knows he has not been eating, so she brings him a tray of food and

makes him eat. She, of course, does not know that Jekyll is murdering young women. But, she does seem to validate his misdeeds when he asks her if it is ethical to sacrifice a small group of people for a larger group. She tells him, "If the end result is worthwhile and important enough, then you have no alternative." Susan is unaware that he takes her words as permission for his crime. Susan, though, is safe from Jekyll's violence; she is too special or good to be one of the few sacrificed for a worthwhile end.

Susan Spenser, who represents the so-called "proper feminine," is a rival of Hyde's for power, just as the sex worker, or the so-called "improper woman," is a rival for the proper woman's power. *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* even compares the victims—the sex workers— and Susan—the lady. When Hyde decides to kill Susan because she is getting in the way, Hyde says, "There will be a different kind of victim tonight. Not a street walker. A fresh young virgin. And then the tug-of-war will be ended between us." Susan's lack of sexuality makes her a more "innocent" victim than the sex workers. The audience is never reminded more of this difference than in her attempted murder. Jekyll and Susan decide to go on a date. Jekyll, however, cannot control his transitions, so he ignores their appointment. Frustrated, Susan walks the streets of London alone at night. It is unclear if she plans to go to the theater to see if Jekyll is there or if she is just taking a walk to clear her mind. Regardless, the scene is visually similar to the earlier scenes where sex workers are murdered because the scenes are all accompanied by dramatic music, shadows and fog, and flashes of a knife. After stalking Susan from the shadows, Hyde approaches Susan from behind. She is about to kill Susan by bringing the knife down on her back, but Hyde's transition to Jekyll stops her. Jekyll deems Susan fit to save. Susan's murder is the only death that he prevents. Susan is consistently compared to the victims, and the comparison is in her favor each time. The Ripper figure moves through the city landscape reasonably easily because he is both a part of it and controls it. Sex workers are viewed as being too mobile and restricted to certain areas. The respectable woman's mobility is limited to the home or more private places. In many ways, *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* provides an uncritical view of Victorian gender. However, the film also complicates it.

Transforming into Sister Hyde

Queerness is central to *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, and many theorists argue it is inseparable from Stevenson's tale. In the novella, Jekyll

and Hyde's relationship is dangerous and intense. For example, Jekyll describes Hyde as "knit to him closer than a wife" and "caged in his flesh" (84). Hyde is bound, or "knit," to Jekyll in both body and spirit. He is caged in Jekyll's body. The relationship between the two, or one, is intimate and non-consensual. Hyde acts somewhat like a scorned ex-lover to Jekyll. Their intimacy is the starting point for many adaptations.

Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde queers, or bends, gender dichotomy and performance. Pamela Demory argues that to queer something is to repeat it with a difference. This is an incredibly useful framework for a text like *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* that repeats Victorian gender ideology with a difference. In this particular instance, this difference is focused on queer possibility. The definitions of "appropriate" femininity and "inappropriate" femininity seem to ignore the case of Sister Hyde or a Jill the Ripper figure. Elaine Showalter claims, "According to Freud's theory, we cannot recast Jekyll and Hyde with female protagonists, because a female Dr. Jekyll with a repressed Sister Hyde is more likely to be agoraphobic than to be picking up (or beating up) men in the street [. . .] Jill the Weeper, home with her migraines, depressions, and breakdowns" (120-21). Showalter argues that the popular Victorian view of women as hysterical negated the possibility of a Sister Hyde that enacts male violence as Jill the Ripper. But, in *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, Jekyll and Hyde invert the traditional gender narrative. Hyde is dominant and stronger. She tells Howard and Susan, "But of course, I have the stronger personality. I always have. Ever since I, ever since the moment I was born. My poor brother is far too weak" (*Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*). Doctor Jekyll describes being overtaken by the demonic force that is Hyde, but what is really eclipsed is not his identity but his desire to fight the gender transition. The Jekyll and Hyde myth offers us queer possibilities in the film through the dual gender identity of a Whitechapel Murderer.

In most film adaptations of Jekyll and Hyde, close-ups of hands trigger the queer blending of identities. Critics such as Janice Doane and Devon Hodges argue, "The hand cannot be maintained as a stable sign of distinction, certainty, and identity. Increasingly, it becomes a sign of collaboration, a place where identities merge" (71). In Stevenson's novel, Hyde can mimic Jekyll's handwriting, which makes hands even more sinister. In Stevenson's novella and most adaptations, Jekyll's physical and mental change to Hyde is depicted through a visual change in the features of the hand. In Stevenson's novella, Jekyll's slender and unblemished fingers change into the gruff hands of Hyde:

> I was still so engaged when, in one of my more wakeful moments, my eyes fell upon my hand. Now the hand of Henry

> Jekyll [. . .] was professional in shape and size; it was large, firm, white and comely. But the hand which I now saw, clearly enough, in the yellow light of a mid-London morning, lying half shut on the bedclothes, was lean, corded, knuckly, of a dusky pallor and thickly shaded with a swart growth of hair. It was the hand of Edward Hyde. (75)

Hyde's hands are noticeably different from Jekyll's because they seem to represent a backward descent (or a less-evolved species) on the evolutionary chain. According to Judith Walkowitz, in "Murder and More to Follow" (1888), "with repeated allusions to Stevenson's story and to evolutionary anthropology, [William] Stead characterized the 'real-life' murderer in Whitechapel as an evolutionary throwback and sadist" (206). Stead championed the popular theory that Jack the Ripper was atavistic like Hyde. Fears of a hidden monster informed both Jekyll and Hyde and Ripper discourse.

In *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*, hands do not show a readable switch between Jekyll and Hyde. In Baker's film, hands are important, but their reliability as identity indicators is a little less obvious. In the first transformation scene in the film, Jekyll grabs his own face before looking in the mirror to see that she transformed into a woman. Susan's brother, Howard, interrupts her. Opening the door, he sees her exposed breasts as Hyde studies and touches them herself. I would argue that Jekyll and Hyde's hands are not that visually different, and it is only when Hyde examines her own hand next to other parts of her body that there seems to be a minuscule difference. Hands are not reliable sources of gender indicators in this film, which is one of the ways *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* attempts to bend these tropes.

Gender and queer possibilities culminate in Robertson's murder. After several Jack the Ripper killings, Robertson finally confronts Jekyll with his long-held belief that Jekyll is the Ripper. Robertson goes to Jekyll's apartment to challenge him, only for Hyde to be there. Hyde convinces Robertson to go somewhere "quieter, more discreet," and it is clear Robertson expects something sexual to happen with Hyde. As Robertson tells Hyde about his suspicions and his "public responsibility" to expose Jekyll, Hyde undresses. Instead of questioning why Hyde removes her clothes while learning her brother is a murderer, Robertson embraces her. As they kiss, she grabs a knife and stabs Robertson in the back. As she stabs him, the camera shows her face, but after focusing the frame on Robertson, the camera shows Jekyll doing the murder. The shots of the stabbing intermingle with images of Jekyll lying down, struggling in his sleep. When he wakes,

he is upset—not because he killed someone, but because he killed his friend. The previous female victims are not shown the same remorse.

Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde, like the mythology of Jill the Ripper, offers us the possibility of gender play and queer possibility. In this film, the separation, or lack thereof, between the male Jekyll and female Hyde additionally complicates the relationship between violence and sexuality frequently seen in Ripperature. During Robertson's murder, Hyde becomes Jekyll and turns into Hyde again. When Jekyll appears, he is wearing Hyde's underwear; he is in drag.[7] Though he does not speak, Robertson seems to have a glimmer of recognition that his friend, Jekyll, is murdering him. While Jekyll killed as himself earlier in the film, this is the only murder in which it looks like he is enjoying himself. The images on the screen shift from the prevalent Ripperature image of the knife stabbing someone repeatedly to Jekyll in his study having a nightmare. Only when he comes to, in his gender-appropriate clothing, does he feel guilty. Jekyll wakes up, realizes what he has done, and is immediately hysterical, both because he enjoyed committing the murder and because Robertson is too "good" to be killed. His murder was purposeless because he was not a young woman with harvestable reproductive organs.[8] It is not the purpose of this paper to suggest that drag or gender play produces violence. I do not argue that the film tells us that, either. However, we see in the murder of Robertson that Hyde can escape Jekyll's restrictions by controlling the transformations. I argue Jekyll can use the freedom of Hyde to escape his gendered restrictions.

In addition to Robertson's murder, there are also several other moments of non-normative possibility, particularly between Jekyll, Hyde, and Howard, Susan's brother. Hyde and Howard have an affair throughout the film, but there are moments when Jekyll seems interested in Howard. In one example, Howard sees Jekyll exit a corset shop. Jekyll tells him, "I'm in excellent health," before caressing Howard's face. He seems to realize what he is doing and snaps out of it, but a look of longing stays on his face. Hyde and Howard's relationship blurs the lines of separation between Jekyll and Hyde. So, when Hyde and Howard are kissing, how much of Jekyll is there? The audience may never know, but the fact that we are invited to ask the question points to the possibility of the text.

Conclusion

In 1888, five women were killed in and near Whitechapel. Their murderer(s) was never found. Many theories were put forth without

an arrest and continue to be speculated. The most popular one—that the murderer was a man who hated women, particularly female sex workers—has been fictionalized since the nineteenth century. Adaptation has, however, been a site for complications of this mythology. We can see this in the male Jekyll and female Hyde characters in *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde*. To return to Pamela Demory's argument about adaptation as queer potential, Jill the Ripper is a site where gender play can "[resist] a source text's conventional narrative structure or normative ideologies" (5.) The source text of Jack the Ripper is a misogynistic narrative in which women who perform sexual labor are punished by a man who hates women. The figure of Jill the Ripper and *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* complicates this mythology by suggesting gender play as a possibility for critique. Ultimately though, sex workers are still punished in this film, which limits any subversive potential in the film. Their murders are not given a second thought. It is only Susan's attempted murder and Robertson's actual murder that Doctor Jekyll truly has qualms about because they are not the appropriate kinds of victims. The story of the Whitechapel Murders has become a narrative of possibility because it has not been solved. It has become a myth that is continually adapted and built on. It is a frame of reference for many, including internet sleuths, podcast listeners, and Netflix subscribers. Its popularity is significant because it can tell us how we think about true crime today and possible sites of complications for gender.

Notes

1. In her recent book, Hallie Rubenhold argues that it cannot confidently be said that all five women were sex workers. She argues that instead of targetting sex workers, the murderer chose vulnerable women sleeping outside.

2. See Warkentin (2011) and Romero Ruiz (2017) for gender analysis in Ripperature.

3. William Burke and William Hare were convicted of murder in 1828 in Edinburgh, Scotland. A local doctor employed the two men to dig up corpses for research, and eventually, they resorted to murder to get the bodies. The allusion to another historical crime in this film further references Ripperature's intertextuality or reliance on previous texts to tell a new story.

4. Presumably, the newspaper refers to the murderer Jesse Pomeroy, convicted in 1874 at age fourteen.

5. For example, the blog entry by Sherrye Richardson and the "Jill the Ripper" entry on a popular Jack the Ripper tour around London argue Abberline suspected a female killer.

6. For an in-depth analysis of Jack the Ripper and English nationalism, see Elizabeth Ho.

7. According to the "Trivia" page on the film's *IMDB* page, Ralph Bates, the actor who played Doctor Jekyll, reportedly thought he should have played Sister Hyde in drag the whole film.

8. It is almost as if being in drag allows him to enact some of his "immoral" fantasies.

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What is Said Through the Silence: How Serialized Adaptations of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* Address Female Subjectivity and Implicit Actions

Calabria D. Turner

Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) addresses cultural ideology that feeds domestic abuse and silences women: her novel shows how dichotomous Victorian gender roles reinforced a culture that shamed women for their husband's ills. As Elizabeth Langland notes, Brontë's work explores how "the myth of domestic heaven often concealed the reality of a domestic hell" (24). Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* is a framed narrative following Gilbert Markham's retelling of his wife's, Helen Graham's, experiences with domestic abuse and her attempt to save herself and her son by escaping to a quiet village. Using issues of addiction and alcoholism, Brontë highlights the secrecy around domestic abuse that only made the "domestic hell" cyclical. Victorian gender ideology often led to socially enforced secrecy. Feminine gender roles—such as wife, mother, and daughter—were infused with a domestic ideology that created a system in which women were to blame if their homes were unhappy. In response, women would censor or silence their experiences. Helen Huntingdon (pseudonym Graham) and Milicent Hattersley, characters in Brontë's novel, exemplify such actions. Their stories reveal how women's silence is founded in a cultural ideology that iterates spousal abuse. Furthermore, the framed narrative—Gilbert Markham provides Helen's story—is problematic as it implicitly values the male over the female voice and expresses a Victorian cultural standard: women may speak under their husband's authority, and it takes male supervision to legitimate women's expressions of their experiences. Nonetheless, Brontë uses the framed narrative to elaborate on the cultural ideologies that subordinate women's voices, demonstrating how they lead to cycles of domestic abuse.

Director Mike Barker's *Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1996) series, adapted by Janet Barron and David Nokes, also finds male-mediated female voices problematic. Barker realigns subjectivity and narrative authority to address female agency and a woman's ability to tell her story with-

out male mediation. Additional scenes, such as Helen walking through the marketplace and explicit depictions of Huntingdon's abuse, further increase Helen's voice and subjectivity. Barker also favors female subjectivity through positive and empowering portrayals of Helen as a sexually desiring woman. In addition to analyzing Barker's series, I first briefly consider the 1968 BBC serialization, directed by Peter Sasdy and adapted by Christopher Fry, which attempts to empower Helen through stage direction and voice-over.[1]

Women's silences and self-censoring in the novel are revealed as typical amongst its Victorian characters and these silences do a disservice to younger generations of women in the novel who would profit and gain stronger internal agency through a broadened awareness of women's married experiences. This self-censoring and its consequences, which expose the need for married women to share their experiences with younger women, is set in the novel through three generations: Aunt Maxwell, Helen and Milicent, and Esther Hargrave. For example, prior to Helen marrying Arthur Huntingdon, Aunt Maxwell provides specifics on how Helen should act, but leaves the "misery that would overwhelm you" if she were to marry a "worthless reprobate or even an impracticable fool" a vague mystery (Brontë 150). In response, Helen "asked no more impertinent questions," for "[Aunt Maxwell] spoke [her warning] *so* seriously that one might have fancied she had known it to her cost" (150). How those regrets may appear in reality were then left to Helen's nonexistent world experience. Meghan Bullock has also noted Aunt Maxwell's lack of details, saying, "She is full of advice, but strangely reticent on the subject of her own treatment by her husband" (136). Bullock credits abused women's silences as learned behaviors. Aunt Maxwell's behavior creates uncertainties and holes in Helen's understanding of marriage. However, Aunt Maxwell's silence, as well as Helen's, is more than a coping mechanism passed on from one woman to another. That Helen feels impertinent for wanting to know more speaks of a taboo in Victorian culture—a taboo that silences Aunt Maxwell, Helen, and Milicent.[2] This taboo then furthers domestic abuse by inhibiting women from sharing their experiences.

Cultural ideologies that shame women are so ingrained in Helen that she does not often provide specific details of Huntingdon's sexual abuse even in her diary. She discusses her complaints of this abuse as unwanted caresses or moments of Huntingdon's yelling. Doreen Thierauf concludes that Helen's dislike of Huntingdon's physical touch "indicate[s] that Helen has little to no control over their physical contact and, at minimum, suggest[s] unwanted intimacy, if not sexual abuse" (5). Helen's own description is limited, "I could do with less caressing and more rationality: I should like to be less of a pet and more

of friend, if I might choose—but I won't complain of that" (215). With "but I won't complain of that," Helen silences herself and leaves off before she provides specific details. Helen's writing is private even with no expected audience. Yet, she refrains herself from complaint and detail. That Helen feels the need to self-censor implies she holds an ingrained sense of guilt—guilt at not internally accepting her husband's desires and shame for his actions and even her own inability to restrain his touch. Furthermore, her "but I won't complain of that" reveals guilt for her inability to influence her husband's better actions. As Theirauf also notes, "Arthur further uses physical intimacy to resolve the disputes [. . .] 'he tries to kiss and soothe me into smiles again—never were his caresses so little welcome as then!'" (Brontë qtd. in Theirauf 5). Huntingdon's empty actions and their repetition tell Helen that her moral teachings are falling on deaf ears. Helen gives vague details, and any further action must be read between what is said and how Helen feels.

To further understand Helen's self-censoring, we must review Helen as the subject of Huntingdon's verbal abuse. Helen's self-censoring expresses her sense of indecency or shame in sharing his actions in vivid description. Helen records, "His injustice and ill humour towards his inferiors, who could not defend themselves, I still resented and withstood; but when I alone was their object, I endured it with calm forbearance" (271). Helen does provide an example of Huntingdon hungover and yelling at a servant for causing a loud noise. Helen also notes when Huntingdon throws a book at the dog, which hits Helen's hand, but she provides few specifics on how Huntingdon's anger physically manifests against her other than with these brief moments that provide little detail. Helen mentions she remains calm until she loses her temper, but this only further incurs "fierceness, cruelty, and impatience" (271). Again, the reader must read between the lines to imagine the abuse Helen endures. Though Helen feels capable of rebuking Huntingdon for harming their servants, dog, and son, she finds herself even unable to defend herself in her diary by providing an exact description of circumstances. This falls in line, though, with Helen's domestic duty in which servants and children would fall under her domain and tending to her husband's wants would take precedence.

Furthermore, out of shame and a sense of duty, both Helen and Milicent refuse to directly state the abuses they receive from their husbands. When Huntingdon and Helen are discussing her and Milicent's letters—a rough conversation with Huntingdon angry with the wives for discussing their husbands—Helen notes, Milicent "never speaks a word against him [Hattersley]; it is only anxiety *for* him that she expresses" (270). When Huntingdon accuses Milicent of being "a little traitor"

and both Helen and Milicent "heartening each other up to mutiny, and abusing each other's partners," Helen replies with a further negative that speaks to her sense of duty: "both of us are far too deeply ashamed of the errors and vices of our other halves, to make them the common subject of our correspondence. . . . we would willingly keep your failings to ourselves—even *from* ourselves if we could, unless knowing them we could deliver you from them" (270-71). Huntingdon's rebukes bespeaks a social condemnation of women for sharing abusive domestic experiences. Huntingdon's reaction infers Helen and Milicent are mutinous against the patriarchal system that places Huntingdon and Hattersley above their wives. Both terms "mutiny" and "traitor" elicit a power system that women were punishable for breaking. Furthermore, Helen's response supports Huntingdon's assumptions of power. Her response, too, reveals her own sense of guilt for Huntingdon's actions. As if she has failed her duty to her husband, she does her part to keep his abuses private. Ian Ward argues there was a "'fortress of privacy' within which Victorian marital relations were set" (154).[3] It makes sense then that this "fortress of privacy" would hinder women's willingness to share their experiences even amongst other women in similarly abusive marriages. And so, Helen and Milicent are silenced through a lack of clear speaking from Helen's aunt, Helen's minimal education—being unable to "profit by the experience of others"—and their sense social duty.

Analyzing the narrative's structure shows a pattern of female silence and male outspokenness, for a male perspective narrates Helen's framed narrative, which reinforces a nineteenth-century hierarchy of male over female voices and privileges the male over the female experience. Scholars such as Langland and Clara Poteet have noted the power of the female narrator in *Tenant* and her position "to shape and revise a reader's expectations and values," (Langland, *The Other One* 58) and "the potential for women's writing [as Helen does in *Tenant*] to facilitate reform" (Poteet 255). Also, Brontë's novel is often lauded for Helen's "radical ability to tell her own story, and thus to challenge the structures of patriarchal society" (Quirk 232). The male narrator, Gilbert Markham—Helen's second husband—shares the tale of the most important moment in his life. In sharing the private details of her journal from her marriage to Arthur Huntingdon, he maintains power over Helen's narrative and even uses it to focalize his life at that time. Catherine Quirk notes that including Helen's diary within Gilbert's story is "in fact limiting [Helen's] self-narrating ability" (232). Rather than empowering Helen, the tale encloses her power. Quirk elaborates: "Much as her narrative voice is enclosed, allowed for, and made authoritative only by way of its inclusion in her second husband's text, Helen

herself remains under the control of nineteenth-century patriarchal social structures" (232). While Brontë's subject matter is radical for the nineteenth century and does promote feminist issues—such as women's legal rights to money and child custody, as well as legal protection from physical abuse—the framed narrative encloses Helen within patriarchal limitations. Berg even goes to say that "Helen's diary functions as 'coin,' an oblation to appease a family member" (24). Though Gilbert releases her story, Helen is still silenced because it is not Helen who within her own agency publishes her experiences. Rather, Gilbert appears to maintain the patriarchal authority as speaker.[4] Many of the issues within Helen's narrative could have been avoided had older women in her life openly shared their experiences rather than giving vague, patronizing warnings to their unmarried female family members and friends, but Brontë's use of the enclosed narrative demonstrates the patriarchal limitations on women's experiences.

Permission: Script Directions and Voice-Over as Means of Realigning Power and Revealing Trauma

The BBC2's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1968-1969), directed by Peter Sadsy and adapted by Christopher Fry, is a straightforward retelling of Brontë's novel due to its apparent focus on plot fidelity and through fewer scenes used to interpret silences or vague moments Brontë's source text. This serialization favors Gilbert's subjectivity while subtly giving power back to Helen through body movement and voice-over that provides Helen with her own subjectivity. With Helen's voice-overs, audiences are more capable of identifying with her, rather than Gilbert, as viewers enter Helen's time at Grassdale. Michael Chion "points to the privileged relationship that voice-over has . . . in its ability to foster audience identification" (qtd. in Hanson 101). For example, Sadsy and Fry insert Helen's voice overplaying Gilbert reading in his bedroom as the scene cuts to Helen's experiences at Grassdale. As Han argues, Sadsy and Fry's serialization "ensures the dissolution of Helen's marriage is told from her 'ex-centric' perspective" (42). Though Gilbert possesses her diary, Sadsy and Fry give Helen's voice-over power to open and close her story, as Helen's narration covers each cut from the present to the past. Furthermore, script direction consistently directs Helen to "(turn into shot)" (Fry). The script's direction often frames Helen either at an angle to the camera or with her back entirely to the scene's main action. Helen's refusal to show her entire self to others is another means of self-protection deriving from her trauma. The script direction empowers Helen by hiding her facial expressions from the

camera, which gives Helen the choice to decide who has access to her emotional responses. Her power of choice to reveal her emotions directly aligns itself with Brontë's Helen who becomes more and more discreet with her shows of emotion. In Sadsy and Fry's adaptation, Helen's discretion evolves to protect her internal self from the trauma she experiences at both Grassdale and Linden-Car, for, as in the novel, Helen is subject to the gossip and condemnation of the townspeople. The voice-over and script direction empower Helen, while those like the vicar, Huntingdon, Annabella, and others would disempower her for their own vanity.

The few added scenes, which are often between Milicent and Helen, address problematic silence by giving Helen and Milicent verbal dialogue, rather than written letters, to discuss their marriages. Analyzing the novel shows how Milicent, Helen, and Aunt Maxwell are each silent and how this silence only reiterates the cycle of domestic abuse. However, the serial provides a scene that addresses women's silence and their own continuation of a culture of abuse. Milicent is home from London just after her engagement to Hattersley. In the novel, this scene plays out as a letter. However, the second episode, "Marriage," places Helen and Milicent together. While much of the scene's dialogue plays out as Milicent's letter describes, there is one moment where Helen is able to directly warn Milicent against marrying Hattersley and in which Milicent directly asks whether Helen is happy in her marriage. Helen argues, "I beg you, with all my heart, I beg you to make a stand now. Don't make a lifetime of regret for yourself" (Fry). In the novel, Helen only warns from her diary, whereas in the episode, Helen vocally protests Milicent's wedding. Milicent also asks directly, "you love him [Huntingdon], and seem to be happy and contented . . . are you not?" to which Helen replies, "Would it dissuade you from your course, to know that I am not?" (Fry).

Their discourse creates a two-fold message: the first being that Helen projects a false sense of domestic happiness, which implies Helen's shame in her marriage, husband, and self. The second implication is that Helen's momentary break in silence is a means of attempting to break the cycle of abuse. Regarding Helen and Milicent's relationship in Sadsy and Fry's series, Han argues, "Helen seizes her limited opportunities to challenge the structural inequalities that oppressed many nineteenth-century women" (42). Helen's challenge, though, dissolves as she blames Huntingdon's time in London as the sole reason for her unhappiness. Though Helen self-censors her reason for unhappiness, her attempt to speak and save Milicent is a moment of verbal action. Ultimately, the attempt to create a stronger female space evokes the

need for open conversation on matters of abuse and how silence feeds abuse culture.

Empowerment: Making the Implicit Explicit and Expressing Subjectivity and Feminine Desire

Director Mike Barker's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1996) ensures Helen's voice and subjectivity are the primary focus. Barker promotes the novel's protofeminist themes without the problematic mediation of the male narrator, which is accomplished by showing how events in the town affect Helen, rather than how what happens to Helen affects Gilbert. Barker further responds to the novel's problematic mediation through Helen's consistent voice-over while Gilbert reads her diary and Lawrence reads Helen's letter. As Chion claims, the voice-over has power over who is/is not permitted into a flashback and further "emphasizes the way in which the voice-over that is connected to a flashback controls the images which it introduces" (qtd. in Hanson 101). Although theorists like Mary Ann Doane and Kaja Silverman have noted that women's films of the 1940s often undermined the power of the female voice through their use of "'male-coded' narrative linchpins," in Barker's adaptation, these narrative linchpins are subverted by Helen's remastering of the gaze, her personal sexual desire, and the effective use of her voice to regain ownership of her writings (Sjogren 27).[5] Barker and the adaptors ensure Helen's voice, not Gilbert's, Lawrence's, nor even the voice of Anne Brontë is provided with that authority.

Barker also uses additional scenes that reveal how the gossip Gilbert hears in the novel actually affects Helen's day-to-day life. Furthermore, Barker expands on aspects of the novel that have vague descriptions, such as Huntingdon's influence on Arthur, by creating scenes where Helen's abuse—physical, sexual, and verbal—is made explicit. Though we still live in a society whose members can shame and silence victims of domestic and sexual assault, Barker's series has fewer impediments—perhaps due to being produced during the third wave of feminism—allowing the serialization to show what Helen would not or could not tell. What Helen in the novel leaves implicit or vague, Barker makes explicit. In doing so, Barker's serialization promotes women's agency and subjectivity.

Barker's use of sound and rearrangement of the novel's narrative order gives immediacy to Helen's subjectivity and agency. Discussing the novel, Langland claims "By initially making Helen Graham an object of Gilbert's narrative and not the subject of her own, the text enacts what it also presents thematically: women's objectification and

marginalization within patriarchal culture" ("The Voicing of Feminine Desire" 115). Barker attempts to rectify Helen's objectification in the opening scene. For example, the first episode opens with Helen taking a sleeping Arthur from his bedroom as they escape Grassdale, Huntingdon's family manor. Non-diegetic women's vocals play as she ascends a staircase, often furtively looking over her shoulder. Their chant-like song and increasing volume possess urgency, panic, and warning. Throughout the serialization, these female vocals are part of Helen's subjectivity as they often bespeak her anxiety, trauma, and sense of unease. By building Helen's subjectivity in opening with a powerful moment of female agency—her leaving her husband and taking her child to provide for them by her own skill—Barker sets a pattern of placing Helen as the mover of her own story. Barker still shows Helen's marginalization but removes the problematic narration that engulfs Helen in Gilbert's objectification. The opening scene resituates Helen as the subject of her tale, rather than the object of Gilbert's.

By showing how Helen is affected by the gossip in Linden-Car, rather than focusing on how Gilbert is angered by the village's gossip, Barker's adaptation further prioritizes Helen's subjectivity. In the novel, Helen's time at Wildfell is filtered through Gilbert's perspective. Because of this, readers are unable to visualize the literal and emotional effects the village's gossip and mistrust have on Helen. Inserting scenes that show these effects on Helen rather than on Gilbert further promotes Helen's subjectivity while addressing the problematic use of Gilbert's perspective to narrate Helen's experiences. In three scenes—Helen greeted after church, Helen reacting after the vicar's visit, and Helen walking through the marketplace—the audience receives Helen's emotional responses to the gossip and condemnation (many in the village have assumed Arthur's father is Frederick Lawrence). As Helen departs the church, the camera movement and framing reveal her annoyance in being accosted by townspeople eager to introduce themselves: the camera swivels in a close-up on her face frozen in a polite, yet taxed expression, which leaves viewers worried for Helen's health and emotional security. Catherine Paula Han analyzes these camera swivels and notes moments both of slow and quick circles around Helen, arguing that "the quickness of the movement creates the sense that she [Helen] is either losing control or being entrapped" (48). In this moment at the church, Helen is experiencing both as she is presently incapable of ignoring social decorum, which makes her feel without control and unable to escape.

While the novel's male narrator has limited knowledge that obscures Helen's mindset in the source text, Barker creates scenes in the marketplace and at Wildfell after the vicar's visit that prioritize Helen's

perspective and responses. In the novel, Gilbert's perspective shows Helen "slowly pacing up and down her lonely room," at Wildfell and he assesses, "She seemed agitated" (Brontë 118). Little else is given about Helen's inner thoughts, and this is due both to Gilbert's limited insight and his greater concern with how Helen's inner turmoil affects his own emotions. Rather than using Gilbert's perspective, Barker empowers Helen by filming the scenes or adding scenes in Helen's subjectivity: viewers see Helen crying in her art room, attempting to return to her painting, and angrily dashing her art and tools to the ground as she emits sobs (ep. 1 40:30-40:55). In realigning with Helen's perspective, Barker dramatizes the emotional damage of Helen's encounter with the vicar by showing Helen's indignation and persecution close-up. The marketplace scene does likewise as the townspeople give Helen side glances and comment on her seeming hypocrisy. In both scenes, the female vocals return. The first, soft and somber, is expressive of Helen's depressed spirits. The second, more urgent and expressive of danger. Both imply Helen is anxious, but the second particularly connects Helen's sense of danger or fear to her escape from Grassdale. The adaptive liberty of taking a novel to film here provides space to engage Helen's subjectivity with responses through her time in Linden-Car.

But perhaps the simplest and most effective manner of asserting Helen's subjectivity or agency is Barker's use of the female voice-over to remove male-mediation from her narrative. The voice-over takes the story away from Helen's second husband and away from her brother Frederick Lawrence. In the novel, men who read her diary and letters mediate Helen's narrative; these men have the sole power over expressing and releasing Helen's story. The voice-over, though, resituates Helen's power over her narrative, as well as provides an insight into her development. This is done by utilizing Helen's voice-over to open and close flashbacks of her time before Linden-Car. Helen's voice overplays scenes where Gilbert is reading or in possession of Helen's diary. This overlap of aural and visual gives creative power to Helen as sound takes precedence to create, rather than Gilbert's pen. The same applies when Helen writes to Lawrence. Though each man is in possession of her work, which places them in a position of power to protect or release her tale, the voice-over gives power back to Helen by making the men's reading beholden, and secondary, to her voice.

Voice-over also gives Helen the power, denied in the novel, to consent to the reading of her letters and diary. With each transition from Gilbert to Helen's past, her voice-over signifies permission for both Gilbert and the audience to hear her story. That her voice covers the cut, a cut delineating our transition from present to past, means Helen, not Gilbert, is taking us through time. The same remains true when Helen

is back at Grassdale tending Huntingdon. Helen's voice-over covers her time there and her letter to Lawrence, which permits both audience and Lawrence to travel with her. Without her voice, the problematic male-mediation of Helen's narrative would remain. The female voice-over reaffirms Helen as author/creator, for she in a position of power over Gilbert and Lawrence and provided the power to bring audiences forward and backward in her story, thus prioritizing her subjectivity and agency in a way the novel has not done.

Furthermore, the series openly showing Helen's traumatic stress through flashbacks and scene mirroring expands on Helen's subjectivity. The second episode begins with Helen's diary, which opens on a ball where she first meets Huntingdon as an adult.[6] Huntingdon and Helen dance together, and as the camera tracks their movement, it takes an overhead view of the couple with Helen's head back and arms out wide while Huntingdon spins her around. This scene foreshadows Helen's relationship with Huntingdon by mirroring the action and camera angles of a flashback scene with Arthur. During one of Helen's many flashback scenes in the first episode, Helen flashes to Arthur with blood on his face as he holds Helen's dead pet canary, its wings extended, in both hands and spins in circles. While Arthur spins the dead bird, the camera takes on a similar overheard shot that shifts to spinning with Arthur and the bird held lifeless above his head (ep. 1, 15:45-15:53). This scene echoes Helen's ballroom dance with Huntingdon, giving warning about Huntingdon's future behavior. Just as young Arthur killed and used the bird as his own plaything, so will Huntingdon abuse Helen.[7] As *The New York Times* reviewer Caryn James observes, "When Arthur dances with Helen, he swirls her around the room, suggesting how completely she is losing her balance." The scene also does more than reflect Helen's blindness to Huntingdon's true character; it contrasts the joy Helen finds in dancing with Huntingdon with the mental trauma Huntingdon causes. Discussing the novel, Thierauf argues, "Helen reacts like a typical trauma survivor," as when Gilbert sees Helen give an "electric start" when he appears behind her unannounced (6). Carol Senf agrees that "Brontë's portrait of Helen reveals her awareness of the long term effects of psychological stress" (450). Where the novel only reveals the lingering effects of Huntingdon's abuse, filtered through Gilbert's observations, Barker uses flashbacks and scene mirroring to illustrate Helen's mental state without a male character's point of view and to even express Helen connecting early warnings of Huntingdon's behavior to her marital experiences.

The series explicitly showing Helen's reactions in moments of unwanted physical touch and how Huntingdon's anger toward Helen manifested also amplifies Brontë's feminist themes and provides space

to discuss both Victorian women's issues and feminist issues present in the 1990s onward. Julianne Pidduck looks at 1990s costume films as a means of exploring "creative juxtapositions between 'presentist' sensibility and past iconography" (Vidal 92). Showing specific moments of Helen's abuse then becomes a means of combining early-feminist and twentieth-century feminist themes by breaking through the Victorian ideology that influenced Helen's censorship. Three scenes provide an interesting contrast between what is said in the novel and what is shown on screen. The first scene—Huntingdon's departure for London—is seemingly small but dramatizes early on how Huntingdon uses physical touch to appease Helen. In trying to soothe her, he says, "Oh, you do worry about me. Well then, in that case"—here he pauses to kiss Helen (ep. 2, 25:20-25:34). She happily receives his kisses, believing he will stay. He continues by assuring her that since she cares, he will not stay away long. Helen rebuffs Huntingdon's next kiss, as she has realized Huntingdon only used physical touch as a means of assuaging her displeasure, not as a means of showing genuine care. The scene is typical of Huntingdon's narcissism and the mind games he plays that are small examples of his emotional abuses. This scene is reminiscent of Brontë's Helen and her desire for "less petting," and in the series, it is the beginning of making explicit what Helen censors in Brontë's narrative.

Helen's request for less petting is a relatively vague one, but one that harbors hidden depths that Barker utilizes to further dramatize sexual abuse in marriage and Helen's self-censoring in the novel. Two scenes in particular, both involving Huntingdon's infidelity, dramatize how Huntingdon's caresses become sexually aggressive. In one scene, Helen observes Huntingdon and Annabella—Helen's rival—openly flirting with one another at Grassdale. In response, Helen goes to bed early. Aware of Helen's unhappiness, Huntingdon retires for the evening, and as he does, he wakes a sleeping Helen while apologizing and kissing her face. His attentions lead into Huntingdon turning Helen on her back and straddling her, and the scene cuts to him having sex with her (ep. 2, 23:29-24:32). In the moment, the lines between rape and consensual sex are blurred as it is clear Huntingdon began their sexual intimacy before she fully wakes, and what is evident is that Huntingdon uses physical intimacy as a means of controlling and dominating Helen. He proves to both of them his ability to emotionally manipulate and physical use Helen even when he has displeased her.

The next example, and notably the scene that takes the most liberties from the source text, combines both Huntingdon's anger and his sexual abuse, further exploring the depths of Huntingdon's unwanted touch. Yet unlike in previous scenes, this one ensures that by the end, Helen

will not accept herself as a victim. With Helen aware of Huntingdon's affair with Annabella, she requests his permission to leave. What follows is the physical manifestation of Huntingdon's anger and desire for control: grasping Helen by the throat, he slams her into the wall, spreads her legs with his knee, throws her to the floor with himself on top, while his hand moves up Helen's leg and disappears under her skirt (ep. 2, 47:46-48:39). The scene, though, refuses to end with Helen's victimization. The camera provides a close-up of Helen's face, and in a moment of power—though clearly traumatized—her eyes open in shock as she says, "I never want you to touch me again" (ep. 2, 48:40). Closing the scene on Helen's refusal to bend to Huntingdon's sexual abuse emphasizes her power rather than her physical weakness. Her words attest to her internal strength. Barker uses adaptation to show what the novel will only imply about the depth of Helen's internal strength and the extent of Huntingdon's abuse. These visual manifestations of Huntingdon's touch make explicit what Helen's diary only hints at. Explicitly showing Helen's rebellion after Huntingdon's abuse, rather than implying the abuse, progresses Brontë's themes, as showing these moments is a rejection of silence for the sake of duty and propriety. Showing, rather than implying Huntingdon's abuse, also prioritizes Helen's rebellion and connects Barker's work with ongoing feminist conversations. Courtney Lehmann claims, "Adaptation is about inheriting—and inhabiting—the 'remaines' of history with a difference; an act of insistence in the face of non-existence, it is, finally, the very condition of justice." Explicitly showing the implied sexual assaults and refusing to linger on Helen's victimization are Barker's means of refuting nineteenth-century and present-day victim-blaming, while also refusing to ignore social injustices that Brontë's novel shows were often silenced.

Barker further empowers Helen with moments of received and desired physical touch that portray Helen as a sexually desiring woman. Throughout the novel, Helen consistently guards herself against sexual affronts. These affronts are translated to film through physical action and moments where Barker and the adaptors purposefully use the male gaze to reflect Helen's objectification. This objectification is then flipped when Helen is empowered as a sexually desiring woman. Aleks Sierz views the series' camerawork during the sexual assaults as an "invas[ion] of Helen's privacy, turning her into a defenseless object of a prying gaze," further claiming that "However 'tastefully' done, such voyeurism negates the feminism of the novel by subjecting its heroine to the male gaze" (25). What Sierz fails to see is that the series does not endorse male objectification, just as Brontë does not endorse male mediation of women's stories despite her use of a framed narra-

tive. The male gaze reveals what Helen endures, but later Helen's gaze as a sexually desiring and artistic woman empowers her as a desiring woman. Just as Helen's flashbacks are connected to her present time at Wildfell/the trauma she is working through or experienced, there is a contrast between her negative sexual experiences and the positive ones she experiences as an empowered woman.

A common theme in period or costume dramas of the more modern film era is iterating the female protagonist as desiring, not just desirable. As seen in both film versions of *Northanger Abbey* (1986 and 2007) and in Cary Fukunaga's *Jane Eyre* (2011), filmmakers mitigate the male gaze through the female protagonists' gaze. These films often toe the line of modern adaptation and false stereotypes of Victorian prudery. Barker's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* finds itself in a similar position, as it expands Helen's agency by defining her within the sexual realm. Two scenes—Helen's first bedroom scene with Huntingdon and her painting on the moors with Gilbert—use the male gaze to show how Helen has been sexually traumatized and contrast this abuse with her own empowered and creative sexual desire revealed through the female gaze. Expanding Helen's agency while showing (in the first scene) how Huntingdon's gaze will later harm her, and (in the second scene) how Helen's gaze is predominant on screen, provides a healthy role reversal between Huntingdon's objectifying sexual gaze and Helen's creative sexual gaze.

Helen's first bedroom scene with Huntingdon shows her both as desiring and desirable, but Huntingdon's words and the shot cuts of Helen's body show her primarily objectified and imply her future danger. In bed together, Huntingdon says to Helen, "I'd like to keep you in a museum. I'd come and look at you. My work of art" (ep. 2, 15:01-15:53). As Huntingdon kisses Helen's body, the camera cuts to close-ups of her body, which give the illusion of her body being cut in pieces each time Huntingdon speaks. Through this scene, both the camera cuts and Huntingdon objectify Helen as a sexual object. Though the scene cuts once to her face to show her desire and her reciprocity of his actions, she is more objectified than shown as equally desiring. Han argues this scene's assembly "introduce[s] a note of menace that foretells the abuse that Helen will later undergo at Huntingdon's hands" and "make[s] Helen's limbless, white-clothed abdomen look like a Classical marble torso in a gallery" (43-44). By claiming Helen as his own creation, Huntingdon implies he knows he is manipulating Helen into loving and marrying him. His manipulation and desire for her body overall invokes him as master artist and Helen as object-creation.

But Helen's is not the only body that will be cut and desired. As Helen is set up as the object of Gilbert's sexual desire, a reversal occurs

as viewers see Helen's sexual desire for Gilbert (ep.1, 26:00-28:19). In the second episode, the scene opens on a sensual close-up of Helen's nape and slowly pans across to cut to a close-up of Helen's face. We soon see this is providing Gilbert's point of view, as he comes into focus behind Helen. If Helen was meant to be constructed solely as a sexual object, audiences could expect a similar recreating of Huntingdon's cut view of Helen in bed. Instead, Barker pointedly takes Helen out of the moment of being desired and into a moment of desiring. While she also reciprocates Gilbert's desire, she steadily avoids gazing back. In avoiding his gaze, Helen expresses both her sense of duty—she will not commit adultery—and pleasure in desiring Gilbert.

As Gilbert stands beside Helen, who is painting on the moors, the camera focuses on Helen's reactions while audiences only see Gilbert's torso from groin to mid-chest (as with Huntingdon and Helen in bed). Though Gilbert is fully clothed, the scene remains sexual, providing a contrast to Helen's first sexual experience. As with Helen and Huntingdon's scene, the camera momentarily focuses on Gilbert to show his pleasure in the experience, just as momentary shots with Huntingdon highlighted Helen's pleasure. Likewise, the camera shot/reverse shots of their conversation gradually create a frame of both Helen's and Gilbert's faces in one shot that implies the possibility of a kiss.[8] By resituating Helen as sexually desiring, Barker proffers a positive moment of sexual reciprocity that emphasizes Helen's sexual agency rather than her victimization. This overall extends Helen's agency beyond the novel's ideological limitations. The scene also goes beyond Helen objectifying Gilbert as she was objectified by Huntingdon. For, in this scene, Helen is literally creating her own artwork that stands in as her economic independence and success. And overall, Helen's sexual desire is elevated beyond Huntingdon's narcissistic wants and expands Helen into a more complex character who both desires and receives desire through her own sexual agency.

By visualizing Huntingdon's corrupting influence on Helen's son, Arthur, the series both elucidates Helen's experiences and explores how Huntingdon corrupted Arthur to punish Helen. Brontë uses vague terms to describe Helen's concern with Huntingdon's "contaminating influence" on Arthur, but Barker creates scenes to explore how Huntingdon's influence impacts both Helen and Arthur. Barker films Arthur's introduction to alcohol, sexual limericks, and hunting in such a way as to ensure audience members know Arthur is following his father's path. For example, the hunting scene, which ends with Helen scolding Arthur for killing her pet canary, provides a strong link between Huntingdon and Arthur's future. The scene initially provokes trepidation for Arthur's safety as he walks a landscape full of armed

men shooting. As he is the only child there, and no other men appear concerned with Arthur's presence, the audience and Helen are left to trust Huntingdon with Arthur's safety. The audience then sees Arthur under Huntingdon's tutelage as he instructs his son, "The Lord God gave man dominion over the fowls in the air, the fishes in the river, and over every other creeping crawling thing that creeps and crawls on the face of the earth. It says so in the Bible . . . Today we make war with a pheasant" (ep. 3, 18:22-18:34). Huntingdon follows this with putting the blood of a dead fowl on Arthur's face and telling him, "I'll make a sportsman of you yet boy. Now, go on in and show your momma that" (ep. 3, 19:24). Huntingdon is teaching Arthur, who passively accepts his father's instruction, multiple lessons in this moment: some that he realizes immediately and others, should he follow his father's debauchery, that he would later come to realize as an adult. The first is that he has a God-given right to kill and use for his amusement all life on earth. The second is that killing is a sport for men's amusement, and the third, that he would likely learn as an adult, would be to rule women, whom viewers can infer Huntingdon considers part of the "creeping crawling things." Huntingdon uses his twisted interpretation of Christian scripture to justify his mistreatment of Helen and his taking pleasure in whatever he desires. That these lessons did take root is evidenced firstly when Arthur returns inside and kills his mother's bird—the flashback of the spiraling camera from the first episode that connects his mother's abuse with his own actions—and secondly as he abuses a crow at Wildfell.

In the novel, Helen's agency soars beyond that of a typical Victorian woman when she inverts the gender traditions of marriage proposals by proposing to Gilbert. Noting Gilbert's problematic assault of Lawrence and his childish temper, readers and critics have questioned whether Helen is simply replicating a kinder version of her first marriage. In Barker's adaptation, Helen's agency and her problematic marriage to Gilbert warn about such marriages to the '90s audience. In the series, Gilbert visits Helen and Arthur after they return to Wildfell and proposes to her there. As in the novel, playful banter ensues as they kiss and walk away together with Arthur. Calm, but joyful and triumphant music overplays the scene until Helen, though holding hands with Gilbert, is moved out of frame, leaving only Gilbert and Arthur on screen. The moment Helen is out of frame, the women's vocals—a consistent voice of Helen's trepidation, anxiety and urgency—return, and shortly after, the credits role. As experienced by many readers of the novel, there is a sense of trepidation in the adaptation in Helen marrying a second time to a man who has proven himself violent. To emphasize his propensity to violence, Barker intensifies Gilbert's attack of

Lawrence by turning it into a full nighttime horse chase where Gilbert tackles Lawrence from horseback and beats him until Helen interferes. Whereas in the novel, Helen receives no notice of who attacked Lawrence, Barker ensures Helen's full and undeniable awareness. Therefore, viewers feel uneasy when Gilbert's violence is dismissed as a lover's passion and Helen willingly agrees to marry again.

By removing Helen's proposal and by pushing her out of frame as she and Gilbert walk away and the female vocals return, Barker is not, I argue, attempting to remove the agency he and the adaptors spent three episodes negotiating, but instead is acknowledging Gilbert's problematic behavior and the implications therein. Ultimately, viewers must envision whether Helen and Gilbert finally meet Helen's marital expectations. Through this ending, Barker creates a "gap": omitted details or unanswered questions—in any narrative—caused by a lack of information, access to a character's thoughts, or, as in Barker's adaptation, ominous endings. As Leitch has astutely argued, "audiences read and watch and listen to texts not despite the challenges gaps raise but because of those challenges," and Leitch also questions the political ramifications of gaps "by asking who decides how much freedom we have in filling particular gaps" (59, 62). The gap Barker creates pushes audiences to question Helen's new marriage alongside 1980s and '90s discussions of equal partnership in marriage often played out in pop culture sitcoms (for example *Cheers* [1983-1993], *Home Improvement* [1990-1999], and *Everybody Loves Raymond* [1996-2005]). By pushing audiences to acknowledge the problematic features of Helen and Gilbert's partnership, Barker's ending for *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* engages in an already popular pop culture discussion on what constitutes equal partnership in marriage.

Throughout the three-episode miniseries, Barker and the adaptors explore and dramatize the problematic silences in Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. The emotional and sexual abuse that Helen endures, which is often only alluded to due to Victorian gender ideology and Helen's own self-censoring, are given full dramatization. In doing so, Barker's adaptation continues present-day discussions on feminism and domestic abuse. Furthermore, the voice-over resituates Helen's control over her tale, while the series also attempts to actively negate the male gaze by empowering Helen as a sexually desiring woman.

In the novel, Helen's self-censorship stems from her acceptance of social ideology. Her safety at Wildfell is also contingent on her silence as the Linden-Car villagers' knack for gossip—coupled with their acceptance of Victorian cultural ideology—imply that her story would reach Huntingdon if she shared it with others. Therefore, Helen's safety from Victorian English law and domestic abuse is contingent on her secrecy.

Brontë's novel has increasingly been lauded for its feminist representation of women's domestic and legal abuse. The novel's feminist themes go even deeper. Helen's acceptance of her gender role is part of a larger social problem that feeds into women's domestic abuses and that both shames and silences its victims. Helen's shame and silence are iterated in the fuller details she leaves out: Huntingdon's undesired touch, the manifestations of his anger, and his tutelage of Arthur. Furthermore, Helen's silence is trebled through her Aunt Maxwell and dear friend Milicent. Together, the three women participate in an understood silence that unwittingly aids each other's abuses, showing each woman complicit in the cycle. Barker's television serialization takes Helen's silences and reveals the actions and abuses behind them. Visually showing events increases Helen's subjectivity and the added scenes expand on Helen's active agency as a sexually desiring woman. As much as an adaptation can when considering a director's and adaptor's influence (their own cultural biases and gender expectations), Helen's voice goes unmediated as Helen's subjectivity and voice are prioritized. Barker addresses problematic issues in the novel by permitting the audience to see how events at Wildfell affect Helen (not how reactions to Helen affect Gilbert) and by giving Helen a voice-over to narrate her time at Grassdale. Sadsy and Fry's serialization also utilizes the voice-over to resituate Helen's narrative power. Furthermore, body movement and camera angles show Helen's trauma-induced regulation of emotions and her power to choose if/when she will disclose her inner-self. Sadsy and Fry also address women's problematic silences by attempting to create a space for women to speak openly, but show that for the space to be effective, voices must speak out on difficult issues of abuse. Together, the television serializations of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* recognize the need for voices who have experienced abuse to not be censored.

Notes

1. The television serialization is presently unavailable for viewing without visiting the British Film Institute. A further viewing issue is that the BBC has lost the first episode in the series. My analysis will cover the scripts provided by the British Film Institute Archives.

2. Though Berg does not focus on silence and self-censoring, her analysis of abuse in *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* does argue that women, such as Mrs. Markham and Aunt Maxwell, "aid and abet" in "conditioning the younger women to regard themselves both as objects and as fair game" in the marriage

market/hunt (26). Berg's analysis shows how cultural ideology pervaded generations and cyclically affected women's position in marriage.

3. As Ian Ward notes, James Hammerton coined "fortress of privacy" in *Cruelty and Companionship: Conflict in Nineteenth-century Married Life* (1992).

4. For an interesting conversation on Gilbert as a problematic character see Berg's work, as well as a direct response to Berg's article by Janina Hornosty in which she argues Gilbert's enlightenment: "Let's Not Have its Bowels Quite so Quickly, Then: a Response to Maggie Berg."

5. See Mary Ann Doane's *The Desire to Desire, The Woman's Film of the 1940s* and Kaja Silverman's "Disembodying the Female Voice."

6. The serialization has Helen in the same circles as Huntingdon since childhood.

7. Many of the scenes involving men and animals in this series are reminiscent of Berg's discussion.

8. Han's work notes Jane Campion's *The Piano*'s (1993) influence in this scene and argues *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* fails to empower Helen as it shows "the objectification of the female artist" (53-54). Rather, I argue this scene empowers the sexually desiring woman by cutting from the male gaze to the female gaze, which, in this scene, expresses Helen's sexual desire and artistic creativity.

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Radio Adaptations of Victorian Writers During the Golden Age of Radio (1930s-1950s)

Katherine Echols

Radio plays adapted from literature were the radio scriptwriters' "bread and butter" in the three decades considered the golden period of American radio (Weaver 563). From the 1930s through the mid-1950s, listeners heard radio adaptations of classic literature spanning centuries and continents. Among the favorites for scriptwriters were the Victorian writers Charles Dickens, Charlotte and Emily Brönte, Lewis Carroll, Oscar Wilde, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot, and, of course, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Orson Welles claimed Dickens to be one of the greatest writers of all time and as a radio actor portrayed Dickens's characters in radio adaptations of *Oliver Twist*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *The Pickwick Papers* in the 1930s. Adaptation was material made readily available to a harried scriptwriter writing under tight deadlines and at least an assumption that listeners were likely familiar with these and other classics, thereby sharing "a generally circulated cultural memory" of the original (Ellis qtd. in Grant 57, Hand 344). Mention radio adaptation and the most famous radio play that comes to mind is Orson Welles's 1938 *The Mercury Theater on the Air* production of "The War of the Worlds." Welles's performance earned him a place in radio broadcasting history and the radio play a secure place in American cultural memory. As an adaptation, "War of the Worlds" is exceptional but not the only radio play or radio adaptation worth noting. Apart from "War of the Worlds," radio, radio drama, and radio adaptations are typically sidelined in studies of adaptation that favor discussions of more traditional media or are part of conversations focused on popular culture and media studies. Radio adaptation is the study of aural performance dependent upon listening, both an "art" and a learned "skill" (Hand 341). Roland Barthes describes listening as "a psychological act" that associates words "with visual and acoustic images" (245, 257).

Among the scholars and critics writing about radio adaptation and radio's cultural role are Harry Heuser, Elke Huwiler, Michele Hilmes, Susan J. Douglas, Tim DeForest, Andrew Crisell, Neil Verma. Heuser

and Lars Elleström agree that radio as a medium and the radio play as a cultural artifact call for a "model for analyzing media transformations [. . .] applicable to all conceivable media types" including scripts (9, 131). Because radio dramas are meant to be heard, access to the radio script is unnecessary, although it can be useful to get some understanding of the process of bringing a text to the air. The script, too, brings something to a discussion of the process of adaptation and even of fidelity, with consideration given to how scriptwriters, directors, sound effects crews, voice actors, networks, and their sponsors shaped the radio production. Heuser calls for an "aesthetic revaluation" of radio adaptation that is "aware of the conditions" of production and the "interconnectedness" of those involved in the production and consumption of the piece (11). Heuser and Huwiler see little difference in radio adaptation from "any performance media" based on this same "interconnectedness" and the script and scriptwriters' ability to "set up . . . and create" the audience's "psychological/emotional engagement" (Hutcheon qtd. in Huwiler 130-31). To consider the radio play as an "artistic expression" invites discussions of the "relations between narrative structure, its verbal, visual or more broadly semiotic realization, and the contexts in which it is produced and interpreted" (Huwiler 129; Hermann qtd. in Huwiler 131). By 1939, "adaptation represent[ed] a large part of radio's most effective shows" (Wylie 4). The radio writer crafted the words, but the combined efforts of the directors, the voice actors, the sound effects artists, and the music composers—and the listener's imagination—brought the story to life. Jonas Ingvarsson advocates for approaching the radio play as a "media archeological object" and favors "reading in reverse—literature through radio" while maintaining a "media archaeological perspective" that "achieves a more complex level of the fidelity discourse" (279). Consequently, combining the tools of literary analysis and adaptation and sound studies allows for evaluating both the "audible and technical features" of radio drama (Huwiler 130, 132).

Radio's cultural influence was equal to that once held by television and now by the computer with an Internet connection. Radio brought news and entertainment to millions of American homes suffering economic depression, war, and social unrest. By the 1940s, reports estimate that approximately eighty-five percent of American homes owned at least one radio set (Weaver 22). Not all radio was good radio, and writers and broadcasters would be the first to agree. At its best, radio programming elevated ideally and specifically American moral and cultural values. At its worst, radio programming reinforced gender and racial stereotypes or pandered to low tastes. Despite the criticism, scriptwriters were once called the "pioneers" of the airwaves (Weaver 563), the men and women writing within the constraints of

tight deadlines and sponsors for "multitudes" of listeners (Wylie, *Best Broadcasts* vi).

Writing from the perspective of 1941, Sherwood Gates, the representative of the National Recreation Association in New York City, foresaw radio's potential as a "responsible cultural agency acting in the public interest" and a "cultural medium" as important to society as the printing press (9). Contrary to the esteem some believed was due radio, critics raised concerns about audience preference for low-brow programs—comedies, soap operas, true crime series, and thrillers. Even some children's radio programming in the 1930s drew criticism for failing to meet the standards of the National Association of Broadcaster Code of Ethics. The demand was to "clean up" programs that failed to reflect respect for authority—parental, adult, and law enforcement—clean living, high morals and fair play (Boemer 12-13). Educators, politicians, network executives, and individuals would continue to police content even as they advanced a moral agenda to ensure radio's social and cultural role of moral improvement (Hilmes 17). Radio remained one of the "strongest weapons" in wartime and in the service of the "common good" (Weaver 562-63). Given the cultural importance of radio within the United States and around the world, it is surprising that the medium is a side note in American history and culture. One approach to radio is to consider the purpose and approaches that were taken to bringing content to radio and then narrow the focus to adaptation.

The publication of radio play anthologies into the 1960s attests to radio as the "greatest" media since Gutenberg's printing press and the radio play's "literary value" for the general reader (Matthews 40). Radio was considered pedagogically valuable for teachers. CBS picked up the idea of a radio-based educational program launched by The University of Ohio in 1929 when it produced *The American School of the Air* broadcast in classrooms from 1930 until 1945. Radio brought to millions of schoolchildren current events and programs on music, science, geography, history, and literature, including "well-done" thirty-minute adaptations of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (Boemer 58-59). English and social studies teachers were encouraged to incorporate radio listening and radio performance into their classrooms to improve active listening and to strengthen analytical thinking. F. H. Lumley, a champion of the medium's pedagogical promise emphasized radio's positive impact on both speech and general taste in an article published in 1934 in *The English Journal* (478). Five years later, Walter Ginsberg followed with his energetic support of radio's educative value, writing that in addition to movies and photoplays, radio was a "modern wonder" that brought

life to such literary classics as *Robin Hood*, *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and *David Copperfield* (440-42). Anthologies of short radio play script published a decade apart indicate that the classics remained in favor with adapters hopeful that radio performance would continue as a craft. Walter Hackett's *Radio Plays for Young People* (1950) and Lewy Olfson's *Dramatized Classics for Radio* (1965) feature abbreviated versions of H. G. Wells's *Invisible Man*, Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, and Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. According to the cover flap of Olfson's anthology of radio scripts intended for "radio-style" reading for amateur actors and students, Olsfon considered his role to be that of a transcriber who remained faithful to the language and to the "spirit" of his sources.

Radio offered a multitude of possibilities for listeners, from stimulating the imagination to teaching literary appreciation and active listening (Lumley 482). Olfson's script of "Oliver Twist" (1965) is the first of the twelve short radio plays in Olfson's anthology, which also includes the works of Homer and Jules Verne. Although no recording exists, reading the script provides insight into how directors, actors, and the audience should interpret the adaptation. Moreover, Olfson assumes for the audience a familiarity with Charles Dickens and the novel *Oliver Twist*. Dickens's role in the play is that of narrator. The plot and action hinge on Oliver's moral development through his interactions with Fagin, the Artful Dodger, Nancy, and his benefactor Mr. Brownlow. An important incident in the play occurs when Oliver is beaten and robbed of the money entrusted to him by Mr. Brownlow. Oliver interprets this as just punishment for being too happy and begs Nancy to take him "home" to Fagin's dingy attic (Olfson 14). Stage directions cue "unhappy theme" music to emphasize their dramatic exchange before switching to a conversation between Brownlow and Mrs. Bedwin about their concern about the boy's unexplained disappearance. When Bedwin shares her doubts that Oliver will return to Brownlow, the musical cue calls for "hopeful" music to emphasize Brownlow's confidence that Oliver is a "changed boy" (Olfson 15).

Dickens, as narrator, concludes the radio play with a brief statement of encouragement to the audience to read the novel *Oliver Twist* for themselves because this "story is there for all men to read" (Olfson 16), a similar line to that spoken by Welles in 1938 in his introduction to the radio play "A Christmas Carol" discussed below. Other than cuing music to establish the appropriate mood for each scene, guidance for the scene's performance is intentionally absent. This lack of director's notes, such as the placement of sound effects and bolded or capitalized words or phrases to signal emphasis or exclamatory statements of the typical radio script, allows for creative freedom. As a radio script

"Oliver Twist" means to deliver an uplifting message in the assuring words that even Brownlow "believes in Oliver . . . with all [his] heart. Whatever he was, whatever he has been in the past, he is a changed boy now" (Olfson 15), suggesting that everyone has the potential to change for the better.

Transitioning a text from page to script to oral performance was a challenging process. Scriptwriters had to cut complicated plots to emphasize what they assumed to be the most familiar events in the source while retaining the original tone of the story with an awareness of pacing and timing. Scriptwriters were advised to remember that as adapters they were "merely the transcriber, not the author, and it is [their] job to keep as much of the original as possible" (Niggli 32). Radio's format limitations required uncomplicated and engaging scripts dramatized by voice actors who were expected to deliver clear narrative descriptions of characters, scenes, and events, often supported by sound effects and music. These narrators and characters delivered invaluable information that helped listeners imagine the action. For instance, when Alice and the Gryphon in the 1937 radio adaptation "Alice in Wonderland" make their way to the kangaroo court, listeners imagine through "acoustic images" (Barthes 257):

> great crowd assembled, all sorts of little birds and beasts . . . The Knave stood before the court in chains, The White Rabbit, dressed in the livery of a herald, was near the throne where the King and Queen of Hearts were sitting. (Robson)

Likewise, hearing the 1938 radio play "A Christmas Carol" influenced how listeners experienced Scrooge's unease with the spectral visit of his colleague Marley and the dread accompanying the Ghost of the Christmas Yet to Come. Dickens proved to be a staple of radio.

The Campbell Playhouse (CBS 1938-19) presented two adaptations of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* in 1938 and in 1939, with the latter featuring Lionel Barrymore as Scrooge. Rich descriptions accompanied both versions. The Ghost of Christmas to Yet to Come in the 1938 radio play is a haunting figure, a Phantom standing in front of Scrooge, described spreading "its dark robe for a moment like a wing before [. . .] withdrawing [. . . and . . .] reveal[ing] another place" ("Christmas"). Later, when listeners accompany Scrooge down the "foul and narrow" streets of London, they imagine the "wretched" shops and houses and "drunken," "slipshod, ugly" inhabitants living in the reeking, crime infected "filth and misery" of this "obscure part of [London]" ("Christmas"). Such scenography created the environment and established space and time. These "keynotes" indicated positioning,

just as "background sound," either constant or timed, helped to identify location (Verma 34). Both versions are entertaining, though the 1938 version's production sets it apart. Barrymore's Scrooge is convincing but dominates the production and despite his overconfident delivery seems to stumble over his lines at times.

Welles opens the 1938 dramatization with a five-minute introduction that includes the story of the Nativity supported by the fading in and out of singing carolers. Curiously, he emphasizes the tradition of the American Christmas and alludes to the allegory of the melting pot seasoned with a dash of patriotism:

> Every nation, according to its character and its taste, by some gift of gaiety has enriched the tradition of this, our solemnest festival. And because America is what it is, we are the fortunate heirs of the accumulated customs of almost 2,000 years of keeping Christmas. The best songs that have been sung are sung by us. The best games that have been played we play, and the best stories ever told are ours to tell. ("Christmas")

Welles claims that the best stories told are American stories with this Victorian novella to be the "best of them all" and meant for "everybody" ("Christmas"). Dickens's famous first line is here delivered by Welles as a matter of fact. The dramatic first line sets the overall mood with these three words: "Marley was dead" ("Christmas"). Welles's somber tone conflicts with the singing of Christmas carolers establishing a holiday mood. Soon musical chords and sound effects capture and convey sounds meant to create unease in the listener. For instance, simultaneously Scrooge and the radio audience hear tolling bells. As the sound grows louder, one tolling bell is joined by others ringing out of sync. Adding to this cacophony is the sound of heavy chains dragging along the floor announcing the arrival of Marley's ghost in Scrooge's bedchamber. The overall effect is metallic disharmony.

Radio writing was a viable profession and future scriptwriters sought out books on how to break into the field and how to write a sellable script of the quality produced for *The Mercury Theatre on the Air* and *Favorite Story* (1946-1949). Radio producer Max Wylie guided novice writers through the rules believed to be important to the process of adapting literature for radio, or what is referred to as transplanting. Wylie directs novice scriptwriters to be mindful in the process of "transplanting from one medium to another" the "series of sympathies and antipathies already established in the original" because they had to get it right (*Radio* 179). Fidelity does not become an issue of debate

but a natural consideration when writing for the ears of a wide listening audience. According to Wylie,

> What this means in one sentence is simply this: no adapter, for any cause, may tamper with the feelings or the prejudices of the original or with those of any characters created by the author [. . .] If the adapter has independent partialities, he had better forget them. Anything else is literary grave-robbing [. . .] The adapter's privileges are many, his responsibility is to recognize that he [. . .] is the protector of the author's interests and the custodian of his literary valuables. (*Radio* 179)

With the freedom to adapt a source text and, in fact, "do anything with any piece," radio writers were charged with "maintaining the integrity of the work" and "eliminating all but the most essential scenes" (Wylie, *Radio* 178; Niggli 45). A good example of retaining a source's spirit is the earlier discussed "A Christmas Carol." The intent was to entertain a wide body of listeners who may or may not be familiar with the text but would find the radio play entertaining.

As Heuser suggests, Victorian melodrama made good radio but could be a challenge to adapt for radio's restrictive format given the extensive cast of characters and complex relationships, which forced scriptwriters to extract a "single notable incident" or "synopsize overarching plots" (69-70). Bringing to radio scripts based on novels and short stories, such as *Great Expectations*, *Jane Eyre*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and "The Lifted Veil," might raise the question of fidelity with listeners if the adaptation fell short of the original by failing to convey the "correct 'meaning'" or being perceived to have "in some sense" violated the original (McFarlane 8). Moreover, if as Wylie suggests the listener's "aural memory is not as strong as his visual memory," radio adaptations must then retain "important material and significant events" that the listener could easily recall while listening to the radio play (*Radio* 179).

Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and *The Pickwick Papers*

Favorite Story (1946, 1949), a nationally syndicated program sponsored independently by Ziv, was a transcribed, or pre-recorded, dramatic anthology series featuring dramatizations of classic novels and short stories. According to DeForest, *Favorite Story* was especially adept at presenting faithful adaptations but failed to capture Dickens's "extraordinary prose or characters" in the 1948 radio play "Oliver Twist"

(DeForest 200). Four years later *NBC University Theater* (1948-1951) presented a more convincing and entertaining adaptation of "Oliver Twist." The *Lux Radio Theater* (Blue Network 1934-1935, CBS 1935-1954, NBC 1954-1955) and *University Theater* were two programs with distinctly different purposes. *Lux*, sponsored by Lux soap, was purely entertainment, and as suggested in the signature line, "*Lux* Presents Hollywood," a vehicle for promoting recent film releases. *University Theater*, both entertaining and educative, was an extension of a correspondence course for earning college credit from participating colleges across the country. Productions were better quality than most commercial programs though the program never reached beyond its "targeted academically motivated audience" (Dunning 482).

Lux Radio's 1946 adaptation "Great Expectations" featured Rock Hudson voicing Pip, who narrates his own story. This production falls short. The acting is flat and unconvincing given the poorly imitated British accent adopted by William Conrad and the American accent Hudson is unable or unwilling to overcome. In fact, the *University Theater* production proudly acknowledges that British actors featured in its adaptation. Both radio dramatizations of "Oliver Twist" are divided into two parts and feature familiar characters and scenes: Joe Gargery and Mrs. Joe, Uncle Pumblechook, Abel Magwitch, Miss Havisham, Estelle, Mr. Jaggers, and Herbert. The opening scene between Pip and Magwitch in the graveyard is fully imagined in the 1938 production. Pip's physical abuse at the hands of Mrs. Joe and Estelle is uncomfortable to hear when it is signified in the sharp sound of a slap. This and other sounds produce "acoustic images" of abuse and violence.

Dickens's serialized novel *The Pickwick Papers* is limited to a few scenes and characters resulting in a confusing but entertaining sixty minutes. Welles, called the "Shakespeare of radio," produced and directed the 1938 adaptation for *Mercury Theatre*, the year of the program's initial broadcast (Porter 63). By December the program was renamed *The Campbell Playhouse* with Welles continuing in the starring role. Two of the best 1938 radio dramatizations remain "Dracula" and "War of the Worlds."[1]. *Mercury Theatre* also treated fans to adaptations of *Treasure Island*, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Les Misérables*. DeForest is correct in his evaluation of the 1937 radio play "Les Miserables" as an example of a "riveting piece of drama" that exploits and integrates "as a whole" the most important elements of radio aesthetics (163).

Mercury Theatre's "The Pickwick Papers" ignores what William Axton identifies as the "fundamental issues raised in the main

narrative [. . . for example,] the necessary subjectivity of all experience, and the injustice that arises out of limited vision" (15). As a radio play, "The Pickwick Papers" is character driven and a vehicle for Welles's talent. Welles voices Alfred Jingles and Sergeant BuzFuz, with Jingles reappearing in both acts of the two-part performance. Sam Weller, Pickwick's companion and an important character in the novel, on radio has limited scenes. Both acts are connected through theme and conclude with similar breach-of-promise marriage lawsuits for which Jingles and Pickwick face prosecution, though with different outcomes. Jingles's suit is handled within the family and is resolved with a cash payoff, and the second between Pickwick and Mrs. Bardles involves a trial and concludes with Pickwick's release from a brief prison stay.

Pickwick, lauded as the "genius of observation," is accompanied by his companions, Nathaniel Winkle, Tracy Tuchman, and August Snodgrass on the journey to Dingley Dale. Welles, as Jingles, speaks rapidly without pausing for breath and narrates his anecdotes in a series of disjointed fragmented thoughts. Jingles's first anecdote is inspired by his description of a low archway reminding him of the sad story of a family that "lost its head," pun intended. As the coach with Jingles and the Pickwickians approaches the archway, Jingles warns his companions to "take care of [their] heads" because archways can be "terrible places, dangerous work" and proceeds with his tale:

> "Other day five children, mother. Tall lady, eating sandwiches, forgot the arch. Crash [. . .] Children, look around, mother's head off. Sandwich in her hand [. . .] Head of a family, off. Shocking, shocking. Makes you think, hey."[2] ("Pickwick")

Hearing Jingles's narrative is more entertaining than reading it in the text as the overall comic effect is lost in translation; however, the same could be said for a listener unfamiliar with Dickens's novel. Unlike the privilege of reading a book that allows for re-reading for better understanding, restricted by the aural demands of radio, listeners risk missing the punchline. Unlike our ability today to freely "rewind" or "fast forward" a podcast or archived radio play, radio listening then required listeners to actively listen to and grasp for understanding in the moment. Another of Jingles's strange anecdotes is a conflated, confusing story about a Spanish woman, a missing father-in-law, and a stomach pump ("Pickwick"). Welles is ideal as Jingles. He is in true Wellesian style energetic and entertaining; however, his rapid speech and fragmented style of storytelling may leave some listeners experiencing the same confusion as his companions. Perhaps that was the point.

Katherine Echols
Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*

According to Neil Verma's study of radio aesthetics in his book *Theater of the Mind* (2012), scenography is the use of sound effects as code and signifiers to present "scenes and vicinities," such as "background sounds linked with certain locales [. . . meant to] draw on cultural memory to counterfeit cliché sets" (33). *Columbia Workshop*, the pioneer of radio sound effects, produced exceptionally well-written and dramatized original scripts and literary adaptations. Even now these ambitious productions are praised for "modernizing and invigorating radio broadcasting aesthetics and extending highbrow culture to the masses" (Verma 18). Adaptations spanned genres and authors—Lewis Carroll's fantastic tales *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice's Adventures Through the Looking Glass*; Rudyard Kipling's short stories set in India, such as "Brushwood Boy"; and Thomas Hardy's *Dynasts*. Max Wylie critically reviewed the radio play of Hardy's *Dynasts* for failing to satisfactorily adapt "formidable epic" and for the writer's apparent unfamiliarity with the subject (*Radio* 218).

"Alice in Wonderland" was produced for two twenty-two minute fast-paced episodes in 1937. Both are narrated by two distinctly different character voices adopting distinctly different tones, one gloomy and irritated and the other patient and kind. The second voice is identified as that of Lewis Carroll. Carroll narrates his "fairy story," "peopled with human beings, animals that talk like men" and teases the idea that his characters "mirror men who act like animals" but leaves listeners to decide for themselves ("Alice," part one). In his defense "Carroll" explains that he "wrote a simple story about a little girl for a little girl" regarded as "childish nonsense for the last seventy-two years" or read "as a 'significant social satire,'" though for him it is simply "Alice's Adventure in Wonderland" ("Alice").

Radio was sound and sound alone with scripts written and produced for the "ears of the people," literally "reshap[ing]" how they heard the story (Weaver 15, 21; Douglas 34). William N. Robson and Irving Reis created "Alice in Wonderland" as an experiment that sought to exploit the possibilities of sound through music composed by Leith Stevens and Paul Sterrett and fulfill the two main functions of music described by Andrew Crisell. According to Crisell, music in radio plays functioned as an "object of aesthetic pleasure in its own right" and "either by itself or in combination with words and/or sounds [. . .] performed an ancillary function in signifying something outside itself" (48). As Robson explains, the "function" of the experimental music in "Alice in Wonderland" was to go beyond "setting scenes and moods" ("Alice"). Music replicates and enhances Alice's yawns to suggest her level of

sleepiness, the White Rabbit's hurried movements are conveyed in instrumental musical notes punctuated in the sounds "hippity-hop," and later the music's volume and Alice's tone of voice—first squeaky and then hollow—signify her smallness and then rapid growth in height. Music announces characters' entrances and exits.

Listening to this radio dramatization now is an exercise in active listening, a necessary skill in order to follow the rapidly changing scenes and entrances and exits of various characters. Robson assumed that most, if not all, of his audience knew the story or might grow "curiouser and curiouser" and read *Alice in Wonderland* for themselves.

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and George Eliot's "Lifted Veil"

Radio adaptations of Victorian literature were not reserved for serious radio drama *Campbell Playhouse* or *Lux Radio Theater*. *Weird Circle* (NBC 1943-1947), a syndicated horror program, produced entertaining adaptations of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* in 1943 and George Eliot's "Lifted Veil" in 1944. *Weird Circle* also treated listeners to radio adaptations of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, Elizabeth Gaskell's "The Nurse's Story," and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Radio adaptations of *Jane Eyre* typically focused on the romance of Jane and Rochester with little time given to Bertha, except for *Weird Circle*'s version. *Campbell Playhouse* presented "Jane Eyre" in 1943 and *Lux Radio Theater* in 1944. Both featured Welles in his reprised film role as Rochester. Both offer more than a mildly entertaining aural experience, with the exception of Bertha's scenes. Rochester directs the listeners to Bertha. Based on narrative description and sound, Bertha is a monster. *Weird Circle* treats listeners to a caged woman or imprisoned wild woman whose vocal sounds mimic those of a growling dog and hissing cat as she uses her nails to scrape the wood door while she laughs hysterically. According to Heuser's experience listening to "Jane Eyre," *Weird Circle* only managed a "truncated" sensational overplayed thriller that fell short of being "faithful" to the novel because of the audience's inability to enter "Jane's intimate thoughts" and to only hear her "emotional responses in fragmentary dialogue and melodramatic action" (74). Jane narrates her diary entries, which operate as an introduction to significant events, such as seeing gloomy Thornfield Hall and meeting the standoffish housekeeper Mrs. Campbell, who replaces the novel's Mrs. Fairfax. Jane's and the listener's first indication that a mystery exists behind the doors of Thornfield is Mrs. Campbell's

warning that many governesses have fled, suggesting a sinister history. Transitional bridges are few. Disembodied moaning and approaching footsteps anticipate Bertha's presence, though she remains unseen until Rochester reveals her existence behind the locked door. When Rochester succeeds in his proposal of marriage, Mrs. Campbell is a threatening figure who "can do a lot" in four days to stop the wedding, foreshadowing the interrupted marriage ceremony ("Jane," *Weird*). Mason's disruptive presence is Rochester's opportunity to share his secret and the source of the midnight cackling and nonsensical mumblings. As he unlocks the door, Edward reveals the mad Bertha. His tone is unsympathetic and suggestive of a carnival barker:

> Do you know what that is? Wait till I open the door, and you can see for yourselves. You'll see a woman running around a room like a caged animal, something on all fours, like a beast with hair on her face [. . .] You'll see. All of you. ("Jane," *Weird*)

Rochester orders listeners to turn their gaze on Bertha, a "congenital idiot" ("Jane," *Weird*). The action quickly shifts again to Jane's attempt to leave Thornfield and Rochester. Only a few seconds pass between the sound of the shutting door and the narrative description of the last seconds of Bertha's life as she "slip[s] from the edge of the roof and f[a]lls into the flames below" ("Jane," *Weird*). The episode ends with Rochester's burns being treated in the hospital and the couple's marriage. Heuser is correct. *Weird Circle*'s adaptation of *Jane Eyre* lacks depth, if it were supposed to be an abbreviated version of the novel; however, Heuser neglects to consider the genre of the program. Fans expected thrills and chills, and a little romance, not a literary classic.

Mercury Theatre on the Air, "Dracula" and "The War of the Worlds"

"Dracula" and "The War of the Worlds" succeed as highly entertaining radio dramatizations of Victorian novels because of Welles's ability as a voice actor. For both radio productions, Welles exploits voice, narrative description, and sound, comprised of both realistic sound effects and music, to create an atmosphere of horror. Welles plays convincing dual roles as Dracula and Arthur Seward, who is John Seward in Bram Stoker's 1897 novel, and Count Dracula. Welles's 1938 "Dracula" was the inaugural broadcast of *Mercury Theatre* and a stellar fifty-four-minute radio adaptation of the 400-page novel. Suspense and horror are conveyed in the shrill, discordant musical notes that punctuate

scenes and interrupt silences, thus building on the listener's anxiety. Authenticity is the result of sound effects: for instance, the click of telegraph keys, rolling carriage wheels on a cobblestone street, noises associated with a busy village, echoing interiors, creaking boards of a ship at sea, and the last gasp of a staked vampire. Dracula's presence exists in vivid narrative descriptions of the physical manifestations experienced by his victims. Lucy's feelings of "sinking into deep water" contrast with the vampire's emotionless yet seductive tone indicative of danger when he warns that she "shall be flesh of my flesh, blood of my blood" ("Dracula").

Arthur Seward narrates segments of Jonathan Harker's journal recordings describing his travel to Burkovia, near Transylvania, his arrival at Castle Dracula, and his weird encounters with the Count. Excerpts from the log of the *Demeter* bring listeners onboard the ship to aurally experience shipboard events. Telegram exchanges between Arthur Seward and Professor Van Helsing discuss and describe for listeners Lucy's failing health. After Lucy's vampirism is confirmed, Seward and the radio audience accompany Van Helsing into her tomb:

> Now, we're in the tomb. There is the coffin, the thing lay. Like a nightmare of Lucy—the pointed teeth, a bloodstained mouth [. . .] From his [Van Helsing's] bag he took out a book, his operating knives, a heavy hammer, and a round, wooden stake—two or three inches thick, sharpened to a fine point and hardened over a fire. ("Dracula")

Lucy's piercing shriek, a combination of anger and pain, and her final gasp of breath succeed as acoustic images of the staking of the vampire. As the radio play concludes, listeners are there when Van Helsing and Seward kill Dracula and then are directed to "see" the aged face and paper-thin skin "sprawled out stiff and twisted in the smear of his own holy earth" ("Dracula").

"The War of the Worlds"

Among the many novels and short stories written by H. G. Wells that were repeatedly adapted for radio, in addition to "The War of the Worlds," were "The Country of the Blind," "The Man Who Could Work Miracles," and *The Time Machine*, and these aired on CBS's dramatic programs *Mercury Theatre*, *Lux Theatre*, *Favorite Story*, and the adventure and crime drama anthology series *Escape* (1947-1954) and *Suspense* (1940-1962). The much written about radio play "The War of the Worlds" is a legend in radio history and is still regarded as the best-

known and "most astounding" and "controversial" radio dramatization ever produced (qtd. in Heuser 248). Welles received credit as the genius behind the production, but radio writer Howard Koch had a hand in this and other radio scripts. Koch modernized the setting of Wells's novel for the Halloween eve radio play by moving the invasion to a post-Depression, pre-war United States rather than leaving it in its original setting of Victorian England. Just as he had done in "Dracula," Welles's success bringing "War of the Worlds" to radio resulted from the combination of a well-crafted and technologically exploitive broadcast that rendered a timely tale. The outcry following Welles's 1938 radio broadcast would initiate discussions over tougher broadcast standards, including the banning of fictional news bulletins successfully adopted by Welles (Barnouw, *A Tower* 88). Neil Verma writes that as a radio play it renders an atmosphere of reality because it

> aggregate[d] not only voices, but also program categories, offering material that would be found in typical dramatized news at the time: weather reports, science updates, orchestral concerts, even switches between specialized radio bands, such as military and amateur channels. (71)

Events happen in real time and unfold within the one-hour live *Mercury Theatre* broadcast narrated by Welles. The likelihood that listeners might fall for what Welles cheekily considered a trick is not surprising given his talent for creating a sense of intimacy with individual listeners, effectively bringing them into the story, as he had in "Dracula."

Welles voices Carl Phillips, a radio reporter and eyewitness to the Martian invasion. News of the invasion and attack is sandwiched between a fictional live music concert broadcast from the Meridian Room of the Park Plaza Hotel, New York. Time moves rapidly. The program is plagued by frequent interruptions comprised of fictional reports increasing in intensity and frequency, enlivened by sound effects associated with war, and interviews with scientists and experts located at an observatory in Illinois, and with the Secretary of the Interior in Washington. Verma suggests that the imagined chaos created the sense that "nobody was in charge of the broadcast—or the world" (71). Phillips's fear is palatable. Listeners can "see" the Martian emerge from its vessel. Its description is faithful to its literary counterpart with its wriggling tentacles, beady eyes, and rimless, pulsating lips ("War"). Following a Martian attack, Phillips fills in the gaps with a vivid graphic description of the human victims lying in a field "burned beyond recognition" ("War"), recalling descriptions of

the Hindenburg disaster that occurred one year earlier. Discussions and analyses of "War of the Worlds" has, by now, been exhausted and the radio play remains secure in American cultural memory.

CBS Radio Mystery Theater presents "The Picture of Dorian Gray"

Although the following radio play was broadcast some twenty years after radio's heyday, *CBS Radio Mystery Theater* (1974-1982) was an attempt to reprise the radio play and it produced adaptations of American and British authors. In addition to Oscar Wilde, discussed below, other Victorian writers adapted for the program were Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Wilkie Collins, and Edward George Bulwer-Lytton. E. G. Marshall was its host. The 1974 radio play "The Picture of Dorian Gray" was adapted by George Lowther and represents how a radio play can be informed by cultural and social shifts. In fact, Marshall frames the story with a commentary that draws curious parallels between Dorian Gray's immorality and the profound social shifts of 1970s America. "The Picture of Dorian Gray" repeated twice in 1974 and again in 1978 and 1979.

Marshall's monologue introduces the plot of Wilde's novel but takes a surprising turn when he connects Dorian's lifestyle with what he defines as the "anything goes" decade of the 1970s. According to Marshall,

> Nothing is new under the sun. Women's lib is as old as the Greeks, and the vaunted liberality of our times, you know "do your own thing," "live today, pay tomorrow," "whatever is pleasurable is right," was more than anticipated by a certain Victorian named Oscar Wilde. ("The Picture")

Here he connects Dorian's debauchery with the women's lib movement, which sounds like a veiled warning that individual freedom, even sexual freedom, and the shrugging off or loss of perceived traditional moral values, not only corrupts the individual but the community and nation at large, thus supporting the point that radio plays were the products of their times.

Act one introduces the novel's primary characters, Sir Henry (Harry) Walton, Dorian, and Basil, the artist, with the action closely following the events in the novel. With Marshall's lecture fresh in their minds, listeners, especially the more conservative (small c) members of the audience, might connect the characterization of Sir Henry

with the "wicked [and] depraved" lifestyle Marshall is describing ("The Picture"). Moreover, Sir Henry may represent a society that has embraced individuality but possibly "group think" and questionable morals. For instance, speaking in his own defense, Sir Henry warns Dorian that "when one person influences another, your individuality would to that degree be destroyed" ("The Picture").

Dorian blames Sir Henry for leading him astray, but it was Dorian who made a pact with the devil to remain young. Despite Basil's warning, they continue their "escapades" even as Dorian's portrait degenerates, showing the "ravages of his dissipations" ("The Picture"). Dorian pursues "every form of vice and sin," even opium, an addiction only suggested in his "mood for a pipe" ("The Picture"), though his drug habit is fully developed in Wilde's novel. Dorian's immorality also is highlighted in his cruel treatment and neglect of his fiancée Sybil, thus causing her suicide. Dorian is indifferent, preferring to avoid the disagreeable subject of death in his preference for pleasure. Dorian, blaming Sir Henry for his dissipated lifestyle, murders his friend whose final words warn Dorian and listeners that the "only way to overcome temptation is to fight it" ("The Picture"). For Dorian, Sir Henry's murder demonstrates "a good deed well done," though he sounds remorseful and seeks solace in his portrait when he tearfully asks the degenerating portrait if he was right in "rid[ding] the world of this creature [Sir Henry]" ("The Picture"). In the delirium brought on by his guilty conscience, Dorian evokes Lady Macbeth when he sees the blood of both Sybil and Henry on his hands and wonders if this is sufficient payment for his sins.

Marshall interjects another comment, though this time brief. Speaking in a paternalistic tone, he warns listeners that a minute of pleasure is paid for with hours and repeats the adage: "Sow your seeds. Reap what you sow" and warns that "the wheels of the gods grind slowly, and fine, as they do for Dorian Gray" ("The Picture"). In the attic stands a "portrait of his soul," a picture capturing his dissipated lifestyle, again evidence of Dorian's "sowing [his] wild oats," again repeated by Marshall at the conclusion of the radio play ("The Picture"). Dorian's portrait with the "face of a monster," with its "green structures on the cheeks" and "cancerous growths of the nose" is, according to Marshall, proof that a "life of pleasure does exact revenge" and he shares his reaction to reading the novel:

> As I read *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, I couldn't help but wonder at our penchant for doing your own thing might not be leading some of us, at least, to the same end as poor Dorian. I don't know. What do you think? ("*The Picture*")

With that final statement, listeners might wonder if the degenerative image of Dorian Gray, now the image of a monster, personifies the immorality in the U.S. so concerning to the narrator.

Signing off

This paper touches on a limited number of radio adaptations of Victorian authors on American radio between the 1930s and 1950s, as well as the reprised *CBS Mystery Theater* in the 1970s, considering the challenges scriptwriters as adaptors writing for the ear met bringing novels and short stories to radio listeners. Not all radio adaptations were sophisticated or well done and many seem dated. Nevertheless, they are entertaining. For instance, radio plays based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* and *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* with Basil Rathbone in the title role and Nigel Bruce as Dr. Watson and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* are timeless and still entertaining. Studying radio adaptations does provide some idea of the adaptation process for a particular medium during a particular time. The adaptation or transplantation of text to the aural medium of radio was guided by a set of rules or expectations that would please a wide range of listeners, and also network sponsors. The short stories and novels of many Victorian writers aside from Dickens, the Brontë sisters, and H. G. Wells were produced as radio plays for programs across genres, such as *Mercury Theatre on the Air, Columbia Workshop*, *Lux Radio Theater*, *Favorite Story*, *NBC University Theater*, *Weird Circle*, *CBS Mystery Theater* and many other American radio series. Radio plays remain accessible online through Internet archives and websites hosted and sponsored by individuals and groups of radio fans, and even a radio satellite channel is dedicated to old time radio. During the COVID lockdown, individuals and theater acting groups sought out and reprised the radio broadcast in the form of podcasts. Even though these reprised radio plays retain some features of those aired in the 1930s and 1940s, they were neither written nor produced within similar circumstances or constraints with respect to the radio industry. Not all radio adaptations made good radio, but they are worth our consideration as artifacts of American culture. As Elleström and Huwiler suggest, the radio drama and the adaptation are worth further study as media artifacts and forms of artistic expression (113, 129) deserving of our attention.

Notes

1. I explore how the aural medium of radio evokes horror in listeners through narrative description in "The Monster's Transformation on American Radio (1930s-1950s)," *University of Toronto Quarterly*, vol. 87, no. 1, Winter 2018, doi: 10.3138/utq.87.1.42.

2. No transcription exists, so I have guessed where to place the punctuation based on Welles's natural pauses.

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Story Revolutions: Collective Narratives from the Enlightenment to the Digital Age. By Helga Lenart-Cheng. University of Virginia Press, 2022. xi + 231 pp. $32.50 (paper).

Helga Lenart-Cheng's new book, *Story Revolutions,* examines collective narratives, a prevalent but understudied form of life writing. Lenart-Cheng defines "assembled stories" as compilations in which "many stories get assembled, arranged, and aggregated into a single collection" (22), a form that any contemporary reader familiar with StoryCorps or #metoo will immediately recognize. This focus on collaborative rather than individual narratives allows the book to explore the political and ethical implications that are raised by such efforts through questions of community, intimacy, agency, and the economics of aggregation. Attentive to context and materiality, the book is necessarily interested in how contemporary media forms, such as databases, social media, and artificial intelligence, foster and even accelerate this desire to share our stories. But the book does not succumb to presentism, instead using a genealogical approach to illustrate the long history of collective story sharing and how it informs our present practices.

From the memoir boom to blogs to hashtag activism, the ways in which life writing is produced and circulated has undergone significant material changes. Lenart-Cheng makes an important contribution to the fields of narrative theory and life writing by focusing on the long history and political potential of collective narrative, a topic that has received very little scholarly attention until now. The book explores not just how authors, aggregators, and readers have a desire to understand personal stories in relation to one another, but also how this impulse is reflected in forms of datavellience and algorithmic culture that seek to understand the individual in the aggregate. Lenart-Cheng confronts the complicated ethics of the collective intimacy that is produced by these aggregating impulses. She is clear-eyed about the persistent romanticization of "community" that often allows participation in story collections to replace other forms of collective action, and she engages with the murky ethics of the data double produced and utilized by the surveillance economy that encourages and benefits from these forms of shared storying.

The six chapters move the reader from the past to the present and into our potential future. The introduction and first chapter provide a grounding in the theoretical issues at play in these archives. The most contested issues that Lenart-Cheng untangles are the theories of community that arise from the movement from the individual to the collective, and the force of communicative capitalism. These chapters

illustrate Lenart-Cheng's familiarity with the debates animating the field as well as her interventions. Throughout her analysis Lenart-Cheng focuses on the tensions inherent in these projects: "Collections of personal stories can create new ways to imagine our connections to others and our communities, but only if we are attentive to the deep complicity between these various forces" (36). Rather than arguing for the resolution of these tensions, however, Lenart-Cheng suggests that reflexively engaging them is the most important potential of these story collections.

Moving from the theoretical to the historical, the second chapter takes the reader from StoryCorps to the Enlightenment, fulfilling the titular promise of a long view of collective story telling. As the chapter makes clear, the Enlightenment was a time of renewed attention to the power of autobiography and its connection to the development of the rational individual, but Lenart-Cheng highlights perhaps lesser-known contributions to this general movement through her focus on two eighteenth-century German author-aggregators, Karl Philipp Moritz and Johann Gottfried Herder, who produced, respectively, the first journal of experimental psychology and philosophical treatises and narrative collections. These examples, Lenart-Cheng argues, helped shape the role of the public sphere in civic society. Building on this relationship between story collections and the public sphere, chapter three examines how large-scale projects, such as memoir contests, Mass Observation in England, and the contemporary Human Library project all conceptualize collective story telling as an important form of knowledge generation and transfer. This chapter grapples with the tension between how these story libraries sift and shape the collected narratives while also maintaining a positivist narrative about their aggregation of "raw" stories. This issue becomes most pressing in the case of the contemporary Human Library project because of how it stages knowledge and empathy production through its organization of its stories into "highly restrictive, one-dimensional categories that often reflect current and potentially limiting conceptions of identity" (77).

The book then moves to a paired consideration of time and space and how they structure forms of collective narrative. First, chapter four considers story collections based around the unit of a single day. From contemporary projects such as the 2010 and 2020 *Life in a Day* crowdsourced films to older book projects, such as the 1935 *A Day in the World and* the 1936 *One Day in China*, Lenart-Cheng looks at how these story collections use a sense of *simultaneity* to evoke a feeling of intimacy from the perception of sharing the same *now* as all of the other storytellers. Lenart-Cheng reads this as one of the productive

aspects of the single day story collections, in that they create a space "alongside the homogenous time created by temporal coincidence for a heterogenous *time in the making*" (100). The analysis considers how these layered temporalities create forms of agency and complex belonging by manifesting a simultaneity of unfulfilled potential. Building on the thematic organization of collective narratives, the fifth chapter considers collective story maps as "a positive alternative to the segregating dynamics of Cartesian geographic traditions" (105). The chapter focuses on New York City because it has been the site of so many mapping projects, from the popular digital project *Humans of New York* to the lesser-known analogue project, "A Pedestrian's Guide to Leaving Manhattan and Exploring the Rest of the World" from Becky Cooper. Lenart-Cheng is more optimistic about the potential of collective mapping, perhaps because the epistemological investments of cartography have been incredibly well theorized. The potential of these maps is their "intertextuality," a term Lenart-Cheng uses to describe how "stories within these maps talk to each other, as well as the cartographic conventions and past mapping practices that inform each new, current use of these story maps" (122). Mapping is also, of course, a key function of contemporary technology; from the development of Google Maps to the pinpointing of the location of users and devices, mapping has become a crucial form of data production, lending a sense of urgency to intertextual practices.

The relationship between stories and data continues in the sixth chapter, which explores the Quantified Self (QS) movement through the framework of aggregation. Self-quantification is the practice of tracking and recording specific behaviors, such as hours of sleep or caloric intake, and then analyzing that data to glean insights about oneself. As Lenart-Cheng notes, this kind of self-accounting is foundational to the history of autobiographical expression, and she sees potential in this turn toward data as an engagement with the ways in which our lives and our stories are being mined for data at all times by what Shoshanna Zuboff calls *surveillance capitalism*. By understanding data as narrative and narrative as data that can be collected and collectively examined, Lenart-Cheng argues that "aggregation and self-aggregation, us being collected and us gathering ourselves into collectives, are deeply interwoven, inseparable processes" (140), reading the potential in the QS movement in its use of self-aggregating to "imagine ourselves into new communities that have *not been thought yet*" (147). The potential, however, is dependent upon a bottom-up practice of aggregation rather than the top-down aggregation to which we are so often subjected.

The postscript speculates about the impact of technology and our posthuman future. The chapter begins with an examination of how

collective storytelling became a significant practice that sustained many people during the COVID pandemic, creating a real-time record of the experience that was largely absent from the Spanish Flu pandemic from a century before. This experience, Lenart-Cheng asserts, is one that allowed us to realize that "community is not a deeper or more meaningful mode of being together. Instead, community is a kind of co-exposure, a condition in which we are all together in being alone" (157). But rather than understanding this as a cynical vision of community, this chapter asserts that being together is a practice rather than a state. By understanding that being part of a community means engaging reflexively with that community and its assumptions and boundaries and how those align with an individual sense of identity and agency, these critical practices allow for forms of community that aren't romanticized, but that offer valuable and productive forms of "*with-nessing*" as Lenart-Cheng calls it. These kinds of self-aware, observational practices become even more urgent and complex with the introduction of AI co-authors and forms of gathering, the final turn in the book. By exploring how these new algorithmic partners will gather and co-author future collective narratives, the book ends by gesturing toward the ongoing implications of its analysis.

One of the strengths of the book is its broad archive. Although Lenart-Cheng acknowledges that the examples heavily favor the Global North, the book is deliberate and thoughtful in not also limiting its analysis to Western culture or to the present. This exploration across time and space helps strengthen the assertions about our ongoing impulse to gather together and share our stories, even as those modes of gathering become increasingly mediated by screens and algorithms. In keeping with the breadth of her archive, Lenart-Cheng employs a mode of analysis that dives deep into the methodology and purpose of these collections, rather than offering close readings of individual examples. This is a bit of a departure for the field of autobiography studies, which, perhaps by the nature of its object of analysis, is often focused on the close reading of the individual story. By foregrounding this mode of analysis, Lenart-Cheng stakes a claim for the collective autobiography and for the value of new approaches to the study of life writing. For this reason, this book will be of particular interest and benefit to scholars of autobiography and narrative. But in its careful engagement with medium and data, this book should also appeal to media and internet studies scholars for its analysis of the relationship between forms of mediation the narratives produced within it. By giving voice and shape to this important archive while also clearly articulating the many complicated issues it fosters, *Story Revolutions*

offers scholars a refreshingly frank assessment of this important form of storytelling.

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Literary Mathematics: Quantitative Theory for Textual Studies. By Michael Gavin. Stanford University Press, 2023. x + 266 pp. $30.00 (print).

Interdisciplinarity for literary studies, in recent times, has meant several things for several scholars. With the cultural studies turn, it means looking at everything as text and connecting literary discourse to larger socio-political phenomena. Similarly, with the digital turn, it means turning to technology and digital tools and methods to understand texts. The field of computational humanities, popularized through "counting culture" as enabled by Google Books's n-gram viewer and other tools that make it easy to understand distribution and repetition of words in a text, has found in such tools a different lens to analyze texts: not as sites of hermeneutics but as corpus and data. Franco Moretti's idea of "distant reading" in the sense of looking at a wide range of texts in terms of graphs, maps, and trees has thus acquired a wider acceptance in the form of "cultural analytics" that applies to film, images, and social media. Amidst this rush for turning to computational methods in order to arrive at different insights into texts, scholars of literature studies have felt the need to turn to coding as a skill that they need to acquire to substantiate and supplement the pre-digital—for the lack of a better term—research methods. It is as if there is nothing between the two extremes of reading for (subjective) meaning and counting words for what seems to be an (objective) claim.

In *Literary Mathematics: Quantitative Theory for Textual Studies*, Michael Gavin presents a bridge between these two approaches toward texts. His argument is simple: "similar words tend to appear in documents with similar data" (22). It is an idea that seems rather too obvious and even an assumption on which the edifice of computational textual studies stands. But it is an idea that needs to be internalised thoroughly before researchers find themselves exhausted on research questions on the one hand and fixated on the tools on the other. Gavin

brings a refreshing, dazzling angle to the idea by demonstrating that cutting-edge work in textual studies requires scholars to work with quantitative domains such as discrete mathematics, matrix algebra, and statistics rather than with mere coding skills. His case for turning to quantitative reasoning is at its strongest when he points to the usual research practices in digital humanities:

> Many aspiring digital humanists first encounter literary mathematics when they draw their first network graph or their first map of historical data. However, in graph theory, a graph isn't something you look at. A *graph* is a particular kind of topological structure that organizes objects, called *nodes* or *vertices*, into pairs connected by *links* or *edges*. (italics original, 185)

The same holds true for other aspects of computational investigation: one ought not to think of a graph as an output or as a result of running a code on an object. The method requires one to be conversant with the logic behind the production of such output. Expect the book to be full of gentle chastisement if you put the tool before the organizing question. For instance, one might feel foolish if one has been fixated with learning the tech rather than getting the question right. Gavin's words come as a whack on the head: "If you're trying to understand topic modeling, the worst place to start is with topic modeling" (191). Turn instead, he suggests, to matrix factorization rather than accept a graph or a chart as the gospel truth. It is these quantitative concepts that can refresh one's understanding of textuality itself.

To mention one example—Gavin's case studies are based on the corpus of Early English Books Online (EEBO)—let us consider the word "slave." The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "slave" in terms of property and power relations. A look at the seventeenth-century corpus in EEBO reveals that the use of the expression is in the context of abuse (as in "coward," "wretch," and "villain") or flirtation (as in declaring the lover as a slave of the beloved). The "semantic field" of the word "slave," Gavin shows, is literary and not that of the social institution of slavery.

Approaching texts—and the ideas of corpus as data and words as data—through "semantic decomposition" is, according to Gavin, not an end in itself. It helps explore different connections within texts and with theory of language, in this case as put forth by Mikhail Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva. What Bakhtin called dialogism and Kristeva hailed as intertextuality can be seen at work in the way words are perceived by researchers in computing: because computers do not understand contexts of words, they consider all senses of words as parts of structures of relations with other words. The insight into the usage and meaning

of "slave" as discussed above manifests out of this larger framework of engaging with textual computing. Literature scholars ought to be a lot more curious about fields such as vector semantics for the common ground the field shares with structuralism.

Another example is from "conceptual topography"—or "lexical production of space" after Henri Lefebvre's "social production of space" (115)—as relating to geographical semantics. Gavin points out that words associated with scripture such as "mankind," "world," and "earth" appear in descriptions of the eastern Mediterranean region but not in those of India or China. This suggests that to the writers as included in the EEBO the world and God were located somewhere between Greece and Asia. The "geosemantic space" as can be discerned in this corpus mentions England, London, Scotland, Ireland, and Britain more than Rome, Egypt, Israel, and Jerusalem in the seventeenth century. This world of the seventeenth century is "(slightly) more secular" than that of the sixteenth century (134).

The idea of network models, another element one can draw on from information science to see structuralism at work, and especially as demonstrated by Gavin through EEBO, has fascinating implications for literary history. In engaging with production of literature in terms of who wrote what and when (and so on), scholars can work with bibliographical metadata to reveal

> how literary history relates to other kinds of cultural phenomena. By stripping away prior qualitative knowledge and treating each element as a simple part of a larger complex system, network models expose the underlying structures of bibliographical data to reveal deep commonalities between our object of study (the literary past) and the kinds of social and physical systems studied in other disciplines. Literary history, it turns out, enjoys no immunity against the fundamental laws of social life. (58)

Gavin puts it at its simplest when he says that what things *are* and what they are *among*—texts and contexts—constitute the essence of thinking quantitatively in humanities scholarship. In this sense, the task humanists face is that of innovating upon the models from information science (rather than applying them blindly to texts). But this task can fulfill an interdisciplinary mission in a larger sense: imagining and creating data structures can invite contributions from other disciplines too and participate in conversations about what is knowable and how it is known. Textual studies cannot afford to stay out of this conversation merely by claiming a separate or superior plane for subjectivity

as a frame of reference for knowledge. Indeed, it is in such moments of interdisciplinary reflection that Gavin's argument about the shift to corpus thinking is at its most stimulating. Reading his discussions of meaning in terms of similarity and difference and the way it is captured through distribution, one gets inspired to think of new concepts of inquiry. For instance, his discussion of measurements of similarity bring to mind questions of how one can conceptualize comparative aesthetics itself!

Detractors of computational literary studies find empiricism and statistical modes of inquiry very problematic when used to make quantitative claims about texts. They may not take very kindly to Gavin's suggestion of the distributional hypothesis—the idea that language and mathematics share the property of operating on the principle of regularities. They may also find the book to reinforce the numbers-language equivalence that needs to be resisted in the first place. However, Gavin's approach will be of great value to those who have been witnessing the debate about digital humanities as a set of methods. It might help them understand what questions to ask of metadata and how to frame them:

> Scholars too often argue *about* quantitative methods without being able to distinguish *among* them in even the most rudimentary ways. If we hope ever to advance the interdisciplinary project of learning to learn from corpora . . . this will have to change. (italics original, 166)

This reflection on the quantitative methods enriches the debate on how to "read" as a human and through numbers or algorithms. Literary mathematics, not just in the sense of a title, is very likely to be seen as a concept that anchors contemporary debates and trends in digital humanities in replacing computers and digital technology with math as a site of meaning making.

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