

5-2018

Media Cognizatti: Critical Frames for Free Speech and New Interpretations

Brian T. Lynch
St. Cloud State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/engl_etds

Recommended Citation

Lynch, Brian T., "Media Cognizatti: Critical Frames for Free Speech and New Interpretations" (2018). *Culminating Projects in English*. 118.
https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/engl_etds/118

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of English at theRepository at St. Cloud State. It has been accepted for inclusion in Culminating Projects in English by an authorized administrator of theRepository at St. Cloud State. For more information, please contact rswexelbaum@stcloudstate.edu.

**Media Cognizatti: Critical Frames for Free Speech
and New Interpretations**

by

Brian T. Lynch

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in English Studies

May, 2018

Thesis Committee:
Judith A. Dorn, Chairperson
Constance M. Perry
Joseph M. Melcher

Abstract

The First Amendment creates a space where new readings in media (new knowledge and understanding) can be assessed through qualitative research and content analysis of contentious topics found in liminal zones. The truth (critical thinking) needs to be born in this arena and vetted through this adversarial process. Speech should never be suppressed. Without total freedom of speech, many truths are restricted, hidden, considered subversive, pushed into the dark corners of the internet, or lost to history. At a time when people are actively calling for colleges and governments to restrict and censor speech, it is not surprising that many people get their information from sources once considered to be on the fringe of society, and they are using technology as their guide to reach it. This study comprises research into transgressive literature in chapter one, the male gaze in film in chapter two, class warfare in chapter three, suicide in chapter four, censorship in chapter five, monsters in chapter six, and dictatorships in chapter seven. This thesis argues that the First Amendment protects individuals in these liminal areas of discourse, and it is in the arena of adversarial dialogue that new and dominant arguments surface. The arguments that prevail are appropriated by the group through media cognizatti (the experience of media culture) that guide and allow for more accurate critical world views to be assessed and expressed by individuals, groups, and organizations about what is comparatively true.

Keywords: freedom of speech, media cognizatti, transgressive literature, liminal zones, heterology, cognitive poetics, film criticism

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the committee.

Recommended Citation

Lynch, Brian T., “Media Cognizatti: Critical Frames for Free Speech and New Interpretations”
(2018). *Culminating Projects in English*.

Table of Contents

	Page
List of Figures	5
Chapter	
Introduction	7
I. Heterology is a Two-Way Street	10
II. The Close-up: Challenging the Male Gaze	19
III. Competition as Social Control: Marx vs Marx	32
Creating “The Unlikable Class,” or <i>New Grub Street</i> vs. The People.....	46
IV. The Unknown Sacred Object.....	55
V. The Perversion of Law leads to Truth.....	61
VI. Locating the Other: Werewolves and Monsters	76
VII. Utopia is a Sexually Transmitted Disease	92

List of Figures

Figure	Page
I.1 <i>The Elder Brojo Studies the Great Mystery</i>	9
I.2 <i>The Shaman Smartphone Model SC6820</i>	9
2.1 Word Count	20
2.2 The Crowd	21
2.3 The Close-up	22
3.1 <i>Coronation of Queen Victoria</i>	33
3.2 <i>19th Century England Social Hierarchy</i>	34
3.3 <i>Thomas Hardy</i>	35
3.4 <i>Charles Darwin</i>	35
3.5 <i>Frederick Nietzsche</i>	35
3.6 <i>J.R. Ewing</i>	50
3.7 <i>Karl Marx</i>	50
5.1 <i>Scarface</i>	61
5.2 <i>The Great Gatsby</i>	61
5.3 Sex and Power	63
5.4 The Loving Gangster	63
5.5 Behind the scenes	64
5.6 The Big Phony	64
5.7 Blonde	65
5.8 Blonder	65
5.9 Drug Lord	67

Figure	Page
5.10 Booze Hound	67
5.11 Promises	69
5.12 More Promises	69
5.13 Movie Poster	70
5.14 Book Cover	70
5.15 Tony's Ride.....	71
5.16 Gatsby's Wheels	72
5.17 Scarface Death Blow.....	73
5.18 Gatsby's Last Plunge	74
5.19 The Voyeur	74
6.1 <i>A General Model of Attention-Resonance</i>	78
6.2 <i>Good Attractors</i>	79
6.3 <i>Young / Old</i>	80
6.4 <i>Face / Vase</i>	80
6.5 <i>Basic elements of Force Dynamic patterns</i>	83
6.6 <i>Example of Force Dynamics</i>	83

Introduction

Within the sociological construct of the in-group of the homogenous vs. the out-group of the heterogenous, cognizatti permeate every aspect of culture acting as modern-day substitutes for the tribal shaman. Media content and devices guide people and help them determine what is in and what is out. A newspaper (or smartphone) acts as a ritual shamanistic guide but is not viewed that way by modern contemporary society. So, a new word is necessary that establishes the link between modern media, technology, and shamanism. As an extended metaphor for this media milieu, the term cognizatti (to coin the expression) is defined as the totality of 1) all creators of media content 2) all groups and individual interpreters of media and 3) all media, content, devices, and technologies. All acting as modern-day substitutes for the tribal shaman regulating the health of themselves and the community. The media devices (smartphones, TV, video games, books, film, and newspapers), along with the content and the individuals in the group, are the new form the shaman has taken in the age of high technology and media culture.

This gives a lot of power to the media to control, persuade, define, and persecute in the name of protecting the in-group from dangers from within and from outside the group. The border between what is in and what is out is the liminal zone (a threshold not yet crossed), and the media cognizatti, like the shaman, establish stability in the ideological arena through appropriation and expulsion. The First Amendment creates a space where new readings in media (new knowledge and understanding) can be assessed through qualitative research and content analysis of contentious topics found in liminal zones. The truth (critical thinking) needs to be born in this arena and vetted through this adversarial process. For example, this study comprises research into transgressive literature in chapter one, the male gaze in film in chapter two, class

warfare in chapter three, suicide in chapter four, censorship in chapter five, monsters in chapter six, and dictatorships in chapter seven.

The shaman is the healer of the in-group, and the shaman is also the exorcist of the bad medicine from the tribe. The comparison between 21st century media cognizatti and the rituals and tools of the shaman is justified due to the shared ability of the cognizatti and the shaman to see beyond what others see, to tell people what others won't, and because they communicate using symbols (historically, utilizing whatever symbols and presentational media are at their disposal. This includes everything from kachina dolls to social media posts read on a smartphone). The mythological pretense, that civilization no longer abides by or needs a shamanistic interpreter of culture is a mistake. Nothing in the technological world precludes the atlas grip of the shamanistic encounter in continuing to present itself in new and different forms throughout history as guides for humanity.

Although, the rights of the individual are constantly being challenged by the ideological rules of the group that protect established boundaries using expulsion and repression, I argue that the First Amendment protects individuals in these liminal areas of discourse, and it is in the arena of adversarial dialogue that new and dominant arguments surface. The arguments that prevail are appropriated by the group through media cognizatti (the experience of media culture) that guide and allow for more accurate critical world views to be assessed and expressed by individuals, groups, and organizations about what is comparatively true.

The truth needs to be born in this arena, and freedom of speech should never be suppressed. Without total freedom of speech many truths are restricted, hidden, considered subversive, pushed into the dark corners of the internet, or lost to history. At a time when people are actively calling for colleges and governments to restrict and censor speech, it is not surprising

that many people get their information from sources once considered to be on the fringe of society, and they are using technology as their guide to reach it (see fig. 1 and 2).



Fig. 1. *The Elder Brojo Studies the Great Mystery*. Painting. Frizzell Studios.

Pintrest:Frizzellstudios Photostream.



Fig. 2. *The Shaman Smartphone Model SC6820*. Photograph. Plusbuyer. *Plusbuyer.com.*

Chapter I. Heterology is a Two-Way Street

Five Easy Pieces: Transgressive Fiction, Heterology, and the BBS Style

The opening image of *Five Easy Pieces* sets the stage for the introduction of the main character, creates a framework for the development of the story, and creates an unambiguous visual illustration of how the movie exemplifies films made under BBS Productions, the innovative company which produced movies for a short period of time from around the late-1960s to the mid-1970s. BBS contributed several notable films during the period and gained a reputation as main players in the Hollywood Renaissance. The scene combines Classic Hollywood filmmaking, learned in film schools by young first-time directors given total control of their films, with experimental techniques for storytelling and editing inspired by the French New Wave Cinema, along with the financial backing and distribution of major studios and given the mandate to target the youth market.

In her essay “BBS: Auspicious Beginnings, Open Endings,” Teresa Grimes writes, “Columbia (through BBS) thus financed a series of films designed specifically for the youth market” (54). The opening moment of a film is of critical importance to filmmakers and it is often used to set the tone for the rest of the film. *Five Easy Pieces* has a lot to prove. It was the first film produced by BBS under their agreement with Columbia. David Cook, author of “*Auteurs Manque and Maudit*,” *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam, 1970-1979* called *Five Easy Pieces* “an off-beat character study in the form of a road movie but with the pacing of a European art film” and later adds, “It nearly perfectly fulfilled the BBS mission to inspire a ‘Hollywood New Wave’ whose métier would be artistically ambitious, low-budget films involving new talent” (109). In the opening moments of *Five Easy Pieces*, Director Bob Rafelson (one of the Bs in BBS Productions) puts the BBS style

to the test. In those first frames of the film, he aggressively depicts America as a man and machine, yet, he does so with a decidedly French attitude.

The film opens with a close-up shot of something that is at first unrecognizable. It appears to be something dark and grey with scars or slashes. This establishing shot opens the movie without providing any information about where the film is going (except for providing the audience with a clue early on that they can expect the unexpected in the New Hollywood, BBS style production, something unknown), yet quickly revealed an instant later as the camera pulls back slightly to reveal it is inside of the bucket of a front-end loader filled with rocks, sand, and debris. Almost immediately the bucket is dumped, and its contents hurled out along with the camera directly at the viewer. Before the dust even has a chance to settle, Bobby Dupea is shown on the tractor as the one doing the dumping.

The introduction of Jack Nicholson's character in this way stands in stark contrast to the more heroic way classic Hollywood's leading men have traditionally been introduced in movies, usually with a close-up and golden-hued backlighting. Instead, Dupea is a tool working for 'the man' in shitty and dangerous working conditions riding a big powerful American earth moving machine. He represents the big American machine, progress, war, industrial production, homogenous society, and a global hegemony. The bleak filthy industrial setting of the oil rigs and the loud pounding noise are like a horrible musical soundtrack for the brutal existence of the oil workers. However, it is an introduction just the same (a technique borrowed from the Classical Hollywood movie making style) that introduces the character and the film's main themes through a single dominant image of the male hero. Yet, *Five Easy Pieces* opens on a very unheroic vision of the protagonist and his world. Dupea's rapid deployment into the film and the concreteness of his actions-his comings and goings- literally and figuratively- signify a certain

style, a new style. The symbolism of the opening scene can be interpreted in numerous ways and the significance of the act endlessly debated. BBS Productions was clearly influenced by Classic Hollywood as the film school generation closely studied film production and learned enough about the rules to know when and how to break them, in this case by incorporating French New Wave style and French philosophy into American film.

Five Easy Pieces is an example of transgressive fiction, “a genre of literature which focuses on characters who feel confined by the norms and expectations of society and who break free of those confines in unusual or illicit ways” (Soukhanov). Popular French philosopher Michel Foucault's essay “A Preface to Transgression” (1963) uses the *Story of the Eye* by Georges Bataille as an example of transgressive fiction. In complete contrast to the homogenous world created by classic Hollywood films, Georges Bataille gives his assessment of the heterological point of view in his classic work *Heterology*. In Bataille's assessment, “[the world is divided] on how it differentiates its “social facts into religious facts (prohibitions, obligations, and the realization of sacred action) on one hand and profane facts (civil, political, juridical, industrial, and commercial organization) on the other.” Bataille further contends that the sum of these functions can be “polarized [into two] human impulses: EXCRETION and APPROPRIATION” (273). When Dupea is shown in the opening scene carrying a heavy load and dumping it is a moment of excretion. Dupea is taking a symbolic cinematic shit on the audience in the opening moment of the movie and establishes Dupea and BBS Productions as rejecting societies rules and conventions. It also represents the overwhelming cultural impact American culture has and its overwhelming heterogeneousness. Like the excrement of the American culture being dumped onto the world. “Bataille was also interested in liminal experiences [where homogenous meets the heterogeneous] ...that outside [the heterogeneous] was

conceived of as being a realm of madness, sexual excess, and non-utilitarian and wasteful behavior” (273). This is practically a description of how Dupea brings different worlds together throughout *Five Easy Pieces*. An example from the movie is when Dupea’s brother Carl tells him that when Dupea left the family home on the island he was doing stupid wasteful things. He says, “[He didn’t want to force him to come home] No matter how nonsensical your adventures might be.” Bataille’s views also closely parallel what Grimes writes about director Bob Rafelson and the BBS style saying:

Rafelson’s films, in particular, represent a distinct withdrawal from a ‘Hollywood’ projection of the world—a beautifully ‘unreal’ universe, a set of glamorous, fabricated images of an essentially inaccessible world—which is replaced by a desire to make films that are determinedly uneasy, embodying contradictions without necessarily resolving them. His films want to draw attention to the often difficult, abrasive, and discordant nature of ‘life as it is lived’, as opposed to the logical, homogenous conventions of the Hollywood model of illusionist narrative, with its stereotyped assumptions about character and motivation. (60).

The assumption that Dupea is blue collar is challenged later in the film when we learn more about his higher-class background, family, and status as an elite musical talent. He has excreted his former life completely (or has been excreted from it by his father) for reasons he doesn’t express explicitly. The implication is made that he isn’t good enough, in one or more ways, in the eyes of his father. He later tries to reconcile with his father, unsuccessfully, marking another obvious failure to Dupea’s long list of unresolved issues and this also resonates with the BBS style of having unresolved storylines.

Some of the reasons for his problems in life are obvious. He drinks, fights, insults, and is rude to almost everyone he encounters. He is very confrontational and doesn't hide his insensitivity and he feels comfortable lying to women, sleeping around, sexually assaulting Catherine, and ultimately deserting his pregnant girlfriend. The assumption that Dupea is capable of dumping everything, or anyone, at any time, remains intact from the first initial moments of the film until the end.

This follows the literary path of the hero in transgressive fiction, "a literary genre that graphically explores such topics as...violence against women, drug use, and highly dysfunctional family relationships, and that is based on the premises that knowledge is to be found at the edge of experience and that the body is the site for gaining knowledge: "Subversive, avant-garde, bleak, pornographic -- and these are compliments. Such words are used to describe transgressive fiction, books pitched to young adults" (*New York Times* qtd in Soukhanov). This description of transgressive fiction closely matches the style and feel of *Five Easy Pieces* and demonstrates how BBS created material closely aligned with the genre of transgressive fiction and that lived up to its mandate to cater to the youth market.

The first act, one of three, follows the Classic Hollywood three-act formula, and follows the Hollywood trend of the road movie, e.g. *Bonnie and Clyde*, and *Easy Rider*. However, the story of Bobby Dupea does not follow Classic Hollywood storytelling in other ways, especially in the tone and symbolic scatology contained in the introduction of his character and the unresolved way the movie ends. The BBS style, as part of a departure from Classic Hollywood style, was "inspired largely by films of the French New Wave (Nouvelle Vague) of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Many of these films undermine the aspects of classical narrative such as clear motivations of the actions of the hero" (King 4). Dupea's class mobility (and his constant

mobility throughout the movie in cars, boats, the back of trucks, and tractors across California and up to Washington state on the road trip) means that wherever he is he represents the intersection of class structures that ultimately form the basis for a critique of American culture throughout the film. By comparing different people's taste in music, their choice in occupations, and level of education (country music vs classical, oil field worm vs a piano teacher, and college educated vs no formal education respectively) he rejects all these homogenous groups and instead prefers to be the individual. The outsider/outcast to be more specific. This adds another new twist on Hollywood conventions by depicting a man striving for freedom and identity through rejecting upward class mobility which is a more traditional American value related to living the American dream.

Palm Apodaca, the hitchhiker who thinks the world needs to throw all the stuff ever made by man into a big hole and get rid of it all, is clearly describing a massive act of excretion. In fact, her entire monologue is about excretion. Purifying herself from filth. Even after going on and on about her rejection of the world and everything in it, she breaks the fourth wall (a BBS style technique) and tells the audience "she doesn't even want to talk about it" which is itself another act of excretion. Excreting her own thoughts and feelings about the extensive list of things she just said was most important to her. This touches on the discontent some Americans were feeling at the time about how the counterculture revolution failed to produce many tangible improvements and that all the protests of the 1960s and the cultural dissent may have been futile.

The BBS era of filmmaking immediately preceded the age of *Jaws* and the big blockbuster, and it is interesting to note how just a few years later a road picture like *Five Easy Pieces* essentially evolved into, and was retold as, the huge blockbuster franchise *Smokey and the Bandit*. "A road movie is a film genre in which the main characters leave home on a road trip,

typically altering the perspective from their everyday lives” (Danesi). While *Five Easy Pieces* is a movie about a male anti-hero searching for meaning on a trip to reconcile with his dying father and in the end, discovering that he hates his life and deciding to leave everything behind and start a new journey on the road (one going in the opposite direction he was previously heading), a complete reversal of direction. He takes a turn that could either signal a brand-new day for Dupea or the beginning of the end for him. Based on the significant amount of negative energy that circles Dupea throughout the film, his 180 degrees turn around at the end is either exactly what he needs to turn his life around, or he is repeating exactly the same mistakes he has made previously, (i.e. ditching his responsibilities when things get hard) which seem to have landed him in similar situations. He is clearly at a crossroads, even if the reasons why are not entirely made clear or resolved for the audience. The uncertainty creates a mystery that continues to keep the audience wondering what is going on in Dupea’s mind.

On the other hand, *Bandit* is a movie about a meaningless road trip that celebrates its meaninglessness in the fact that at the end of the movie they just simply start another meaningless trip. Both movies seem to have a similar message about a rebellious main character flaunting convention against a father figure, being reckless with their lives, and being reckless with the lives of others. However, with the *Bandit* the audience finds comfort in that, ultimately, the meaning of the road trip lies in the thrill of the ride and does not care about much more than that. Dupea suffers from the same type of intractable oppositional relationship with his mute father and brother Carl that the *Bandit* faces with the loud mouth father/authority figure Buford T. Justice and his sycophant son Junior (the latter two being the object of ridicule throughout the movie as nothing more than comic relief for *Bandit*). This is in stark contrast to Dupea whose father breaks him down to tears for his rebelliousness with just a look and his less than stellar

brother (unlike the lady-killer Bandit) gets the girl Catherine Van Oost. When Dupea leaves everything behind, it is not to start the same ride over again like the Bandit, (the Dupea character transposed into the smirking certainty of the infallible hero Bandit) it is not even certain what his chances for survival are on his new journey. Dupea, and the audience, understand he has left on a very bad note. This is not the feel-good ending typical of Classic Hollywood or Blockbuster movies. Uncertainty was, however, a defining characteristic of the BBS films.

Shot on the road, on location, and off the studio soundstages and with rebellious characters and storylines that are unresolved in the end. Seth Cagen and Philip Dray nicely sum up how *Five Easy Pieces* exemplifies the BBS style in their book *Hollywood Films in the 70s*. They write, “Rafelson’s *Five Easy Pieces*, was like *Easy Rider*, an expression of a potent sixties theme (self-realization) within the context of a popular B genre (the road movie), invigorated, perhaps, with an additional fillip of European artiness” (81). Ultimately, the BBS Style could be called contemporary and classical, American and European, made for the youth culture and yet made (financed) primarily by old studio bosses, (“Hollywood’s old boy network had opened the door to a few kids, but grudgingly” (Hendershot), and it would not be a contradiction, in fact, it could be called the mise-en-scene of the BBS Style.

Works Cited

- Bataille, George. "Heterology." Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan editors. *Literary Theory, an Anthology*. Blackwell. 1998, pp. 273-277.
- Cagin, Seth and Philip Dray, *Hollywood Films of the Seventies: Sex, Drugs, Violence, Rock n Roll, and Politics*, Harper & Row, 1984, pp. 76-89.
- Cook, David. "Auteurs Manque and Maudit," *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam, 1970-1979*." David Cook editor. Charles Scribner's Sons, 2000, pp. 98-119.
- Five Easy Pieces*. BBS Productions, 1970.
- Grimes, Teresa. "BBS: Auspicious Beginnings, Open Endings," *Movie 31/32*, pp. 54-66.
- Hendershot, Heather. "Losers Take All," *The Nation*, 30 May 2011.
- King, Geoff. *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction*, Columbia UP, 2002, pp. 11-48.
- Smokey and the Bandit*. Universal Pictures, 1977.
- Soukhanov, Anne H. "Word Watch." *The Atlantic Monthly*. vol. 278, no. 6, December 1996, Theatlantic.com, p. 128.

Chapter II. The Close-up: Challenging the Male Gaze

The Close-up as Literary Technique: Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage* and Herman Melville's Civil War Poetry *Battle-Pieces*.

The male gaze is often the focus of film studies constructing gender and race in American films from the point of view of the dominant white male. However, the close-up creates an uncertain scenario. It is a gaze upon something offscreen and often on something unknown. A discussion of the close-up allows films to be understood as more democratic than the discussions on the male gaze imply. In the documentary *Mule Skinner Blues*, the first-time filmmaker, 60-year-old Beanie Andrew, reveals how, like Henry Fleming in *The Red Badge of Courage*, he always sought acclaim and recognition, he always wanted to make something of himself, and he always thought he had a shot at the big-time. Holding on to his newly acquired camera, like the inexperienced Youth holds his rifle in the novel *The Red Badge of Courage*, Andrews enthusiastically explains his filmmaking process in his thick twangy southern accent, "I want to get the true expression in your face. How you're feeling. I want to get how you're feeling. I might want to feel the way you do." In *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895), author Stephen Crane zooms in and takes a close-up view of the faces of the Civil War, and makes the audience feel much like Andrews does with his movie camera.

In *Film Criticism*, Paul Tieson places Crane, as a successful novelist, at the forefront of the cultural and historical moment in film history where the novel intersected with film in both story and technique. He describes the world Crane inhabited as having, "a sense of the unique potency, for the modern novelist, of what was for all novelists very much "in the air" after 1895: namely, film" (Tieson). In *The Red Badge of Courage*, a novel with over twenty-five thousand

Notable for being on the cutting edge of artistic expression, Crane had a fondness for blurring the line between realism and impressionism. His use of the close-up, a technique that shifts the perception of the reader (or spectator) from an objective (and realistic type of perception of the crowd, fast and automatic) to a subjective (and intuitive type of perception of the individual, slow and artistic discernment of the unknown.) was ahead of its time (see fig. 2.2 and 2.3).



Fig. 2.2. The Crowd. *Luncheon of the Boating Party*. Painting. Pier-August Renoir. Wikipedia.

Wikipedia.com.

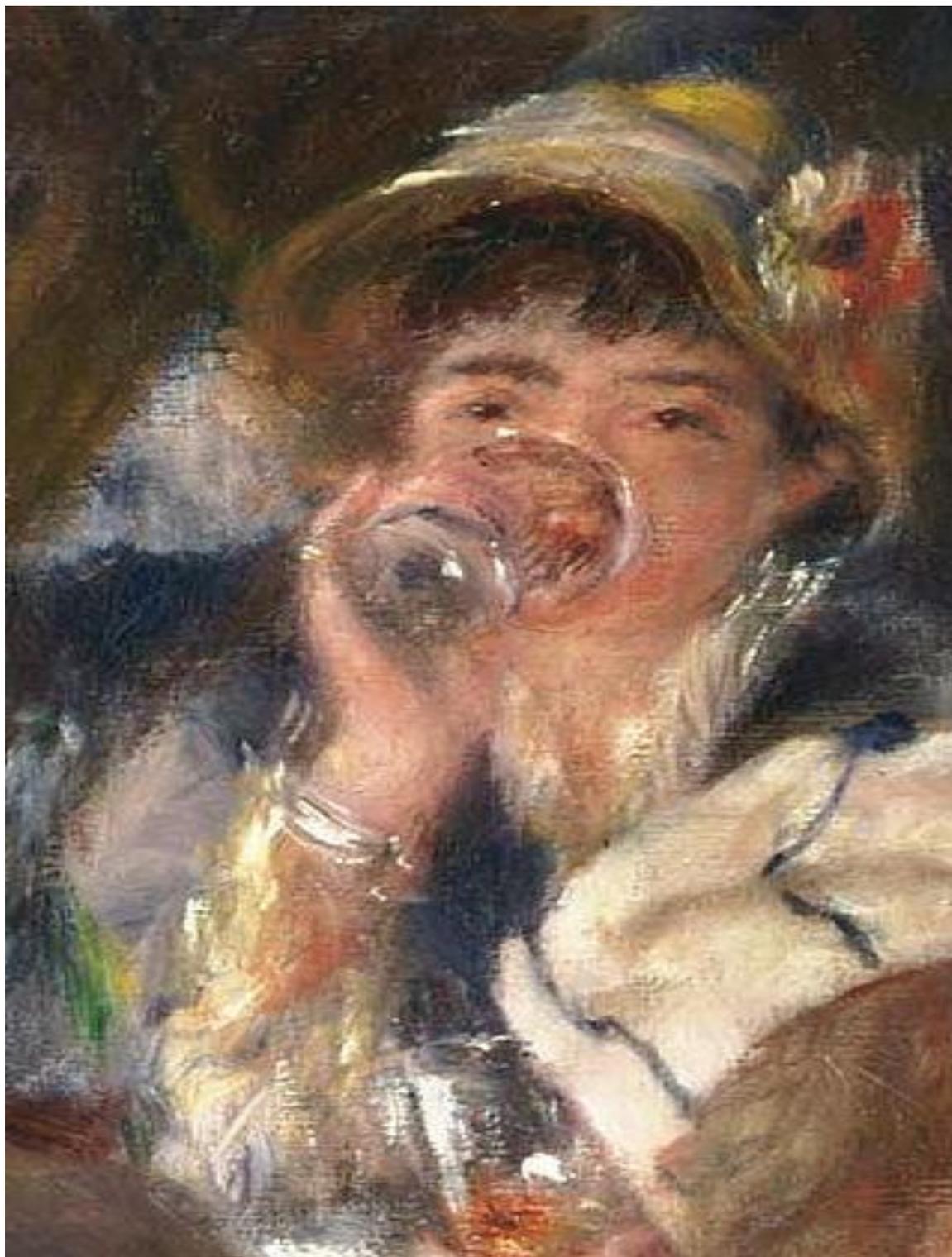


Fig. 2.3. The Close-up. *Luncheon of the Boating Party*. Painting. Pier-August Renoir. Wikipedia.

Wikipedia.com.

The close-up, as a literary technique soon became a powerful cinematic tool. Johnathan Foltz describes the close-up process in the journal *Modernism/modernity* in an essay titled “The Laws of Comparison: H. D. and Cinematic Formalism.” He discusses Hilda Doolittle’s insight into the close-up effect in *The Passion of Joan of Arc* saying:

[H.D. recognized] the close-ups in the film reflect on this tangled relation all the more acutely. The close-up models the film’s reliance on its textual foundation because it arrogates itself as a technique of intimacy and direct address while showing us with startling clarity the limits of such knowledge and the remoteness of Joan’s consciousness. For despite all the time that her face spends at the center of the frame, or just for this reason, the close-up images reveal that her eyes are always looking somewhere else (20).

In the first part of *The Red Badge of Courage*, the eyes of the living, the dead, and the near dead are the source of and the constant object of Henry’s gaze as he seeks direction within chaos and ultimately finds himself seeking the answer to “the question of the dead.” What direction are they looking? What lies beyond the “Thousand-mile stare”? Conversely towards the end of the story, after all his battles, he proclaims “He had faced the great death, and found that, after all, it was only the great death. He was a man” (123). He has confronted death and faced it like a man, a thing that is knowable, which he then rationalizes to mean that man is greater than death because it is simply unknowable. With this confidence, he begins to have a new regard for the army and its operations and has an even greater sense of objectivity in viewing the battlefields.

In his essay “Art as Technique,” Viktor Shklovsky reasons that when things in our environment become so commonplace and predictable, so infused with a familiar realism, we no longer require a subjective engagement with the experience. A shorthand of symbols for fully

experiencing the mundane tends to arise; shortcuts to thinking about what does not affect us tends to shut our brains off. The perception of life can become “unconsciously automatic.” After facing death Henry now sees his surroundings, troop movements, and battles in this unconscious and automatic way. This familiarization is part of a symbolic “big picture” thinking (very objective and broad) that Henry creates for himself based on repeatedly looking into the faces, and by facing others. This is what allows Henry to begin to justify his circumstance. The war has become familiar through repeatedly facing the experiences of battle.

“We behold them as they are when we are not there. We see life as it is when we have no part in it. As we gaze we seem to be removed from the pettiness of actual existence,” Virginia Woolf wrote in her 1926 essay “The Cinema.” In the case of Henry Fleming, while he knows almost nothing about why he is doing what he is doing, or the circumstances surrounding him, he can still recognize the familiarity of the faces of men around him. Even though he is in an unfamiliar situation he feels comfortable enough making quick evaluations about his situation and the characters around him simply based on looks alone. He condemns, admires, stereotypes, and judges them all, but the judgments he makes are superficial. He recognizes their form, “the tall soldier,” the “loud soldier,” or “the dead soldier,” (17) what Shklovsky calls, “[just a] silhouette. The object...in the manner of prose perception” (15). Henry is literally “reading” the faces of others like a book according to Shklovsky’s explanation. Henry is assigning definitions to what he finds familiar. The objective of having this point of view is that it enables Henry the comfort of being an outside observer. By killing his subjectivity, which would force him to acknowledge his own miserable circumstances facing almost certain death and the dehumanizing living conditions he is in. Now, he can have a feeling of control in an uncontrollable situation.

The close-up was effective as a technique of art even before Crane and the close-up in Cinema came to be. The invention of the close-up photograph forty years earlier created similar responses from spectators viewing close-up pictures of Civil War generals: the sense of being able to subjectively interpret the men themselves. The opening lines of Melville's "On a Photograph of a Corps Commander" describes the scenario, and the concept of the close-up is literally in the title of the poem. The narrator invites the reader to take a close-up look at the warrior saying, "Ay man is manly. / Here you see / The warrior-cage of the head / And brave dilation of frame" (Melville). The initial implication is that all can be deciphered from the photograph itself; the history of the battles fought, the true spirit found in his countenance, his lineage, and his affiliations. "Nothing can lift the heart of a man / Like manhood in a fellow man." This only scratches the surface of how much information the close-up face can inspire. It is as limitless as the subjective imagination of the viewer. Or in Henry's case what he sees in the faces of the men around him in battle.

"The thought of heaven's great King afar / But humbles us—too weak to scan / But manly greatness men can span, / And feel the bonds that draw." The narrator points out that man is closer, in close-up, not distant and unknowable like the mysteries of faith. This is almost the exact conclusion Henry makes after facing death and finding it to far removed, not close enough, not knowable, and finding man the superior quantity. Man is close, and he is closer. In the close-up, he is knowable. Even if the truth were to come out and the close-up had somehow deceived the audience (promotes a lie, or that it is revealed to be an untrue evaluation of an image, the message that the close-up originally sends still provides a strong motivation for the audience to continue the lie because it has essentially become a subjective experience for the viewer at this point, it would be a cause for some embarrassment to reverse a previous assessment.

The narrator's initial objective point of view of the photograph reveals that it contains a lot of details known to be inspirational, but it also shows that unless a person is willing to face the unknown (what the picture is not revealing) they will be left spiritually empty and misguided because they are not actually learning anything about the true feelings or character of those depicted in the close-up instead they are only getting a certain type of solipsistic wish - fulfillment for the benefit of their own egos and for the benefit of those whose interests the image represents and serves.

“A work of art is created “artistically,” Shklovsky says (meaning it becomes a personal subjective experience that is not immediately knowable to us), “so that its perception is impeded and the possible effect is produced through the slowness of the perception. As a result of this lingering” (19). When Henry looks at the dead man lying in the road he looks at his face, but he does not immediately question what he sees. Instead he describes what he sees. When he sees the dead man's eyes he questions what the dead man sees. When the reply is a mystery, Henry begins to look for himself, as if by imagining himself behind the eyes of the close-up face of the dead man and asking what unknowable thing the man is looking at just outside of Henry's reality. “Another had the gray look of death already upon his face. His lips were curled in hard lines and his teeth were pressed together tightly. ...He walked along, his eyes staring into the unknown” (74). And again, “Once they encountered the body of a dead soldier...The Youth looked keenly at the ashen face...He vaguely desired to walk around and around the body and stare... to try and read in the dead eyes the answer to “the question of death” (17). Henry is not looking at the familiar face of the tall, the short, or the loud soldier, but instead, he is now staring at the completely unfamiliar, the dead soldier. The soldier's dead body literally impedes the flow of the marching soldiers who are forced to confront it even if only in having to walk around

it. Crane's description of Henry encountering the unknown, and the lingering, closely parallels Shklovsky's definition of the technique of art. However, Crane takes it a step further and adds the close-up, as the technique of art, that makes it possible for the audience to share in the subjective experience of Henry's lingering.

The prose perception Shklovsky discusses, is the objective, routine experience of unconscious engagement with routine forms that a person is familiar with and disengaged with. "The eye licks it all up instantaneously and the brain, agreeably titillated, settles down to watch things happening," wrote Woolf in "On Cinema." This pattern of perception matches Henry's world as the outside observer as he gets acclimated to his life in the Army. The boredom of waiting around, the familiar faces of his comrades, and the familiar countryside and natural surroundings of the camps become to him like impressionistic background material. Similarly, Shklovsky points out how the technique of repetition, rhythm, and song, a familiarization routine used by laborers creates a group experience, and a numbing effect that leads to a totally detached experience that permits workers to...groan together because it eases the work by making it "Automatic" (20). Part of the Army's ideology is based on the principles of conformity, group think, and repetition of symbols so this stands alone as another example of the concept of the automatic beginning to be incorporated into Henry's world. (This is in contrast to the engaging subjective experience of the extreme close-up.)

Prior to the break out of the close-up in Hollywood, Virginia Woolf wrote about the difficulties filmmakers were having converting novels to cinema, and she noted that literature cannot really be translated to film because it provides an interior response that cinema lacked. However, she hoped that some new way of expressing thought could be introduced to the process. "So much of our thinking and feeling is connected with seeing, some residue of visual

emotion which is [of] no use to either the painter or poet may still await the cinema--something abstract, something that moves with controlled and conscious art" (3). This could easily be a description of Crane's use of the close-up as a technique of art, and if a film adaptation of *The Red Badge of Courage* is ever to be successfully made, Crane left all the screen directions for what the establishing shots should be and what the close-ups shots should be throughout the novel. Crane predominantly switches between scenes with extreme close-ups on the face (and the entailing subjective experience produced by it) on one hand, and the wide frame establishing shots that border on the impressionistic on the other.

Unlike the prose perception of the familiar, poetic perception -the extreme close-up- is not meant to be understood in an objective or disengaged way. "The brain... behave[s] like a competent nursemaid until the brain comes to the conclusion that it is time to wake up" (Woolf). In a poem, the spectator is confronted with something not immediately revealed, information is missing, or it may be completely unknowable altogether. "Sharp words we had before the fight;/But—now the fight is done---/Look, here's my hand," said the Victor bold," wrote Herman Melville in "Magnanimity Baffled." In the poem, the Victor as 1st person narrator is utterly confident in his descriptive narrative assessment of the situation. He is the Victor offering his hand to the defeated soldier, monologuing and taking a completely unexamined point of view. "Nay I'll have this stubborn hand!" he says, in the final lines before he realizes the other soldier is dead. All his magnanimousness is turned on its head when a new narrator takes over (one that is 3rd person omniscient) leaving the first narrator in stunned silence as he ponders what he now sees (that which he couldn't see moments earlier). As he takes a closer look at the dead soldier, the poem demonstrates the power of the extreme close-up has for creating subjective experience. In this case, for both the reader and the character in the poem at the same time.

At this point, the Victor and the reader are left wondering more about what's in the mysterious dead man's gaze than anything the Victor had been talking about previously. Therefore, to discover the meaning of Melville's poem, readers (and the first narrator-Victor) are forced to engage their own minds and participate in actively discovering what that unknowable thing is. The close-up works by creating a sense that the spectator's subjectivity naturally arises from not knowing what is outside the frame. This is one of the ways film and texts like *The Red Badge of Courage*, create "Shock Value" by dramatically shifting the reader/ Spectator consciousness from an objective to a subjective experience using the technique of the extreme close-up.

To Shklovsky, there is little intellectual and emotional involvement required from the spectator, until they are shocked into a confrontation with the "unfamiliar" (15). In *The Red Badge of Courage* Crane does this by making the reader/spectator shift their perspective, often through a forced perspective. In the text, when the focus on Henry shifts from looking at the faces of others to having his own face become the object of the reader's / spectator's gaze, the reader's vantage shifts from the objectively disengaged outsider watching the action to one who now stares at a close-up of Henry. Henry is now the focus. This creates uncertainty about what Henry now gazes at outside the frame of the close-up. In this moment, the device of the close-up has "impeded" the norm created by the preceding narratology of the text / film where you have all the information you need to make judgements about what you observe as an outsider and now has "shocked" the viewer into waking up to "impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known" (16). According to Shklovsky, and as demonstrated by Crane, this is where art happens.

In his book, *Film and fiction: The Dynamics of Exchange*, Keith Coen writes, “The filmic image becomes the retinal image...but at moments of high affective participation, the filmic image replaces the mental image... the filmic image becomes indissolubly mixed with the subjectivity projected by the spectator into that same image” (75). The close-up, as a technique of art, requires that the viewer experiences a more intense subjective experience. The close-up forces the voyeur to abandon their detachment, and instead, begin to emphatically witness themselves lingering through the eyes of others and, trying to feel the way they do.

Works Cited

- Cohen, Keith. *Film and Fiction: The Dynamics of Exchange*. Yale University Press, 1979.
- Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*. American English, 1895, AmericanEnglish.State.gov.
- Foltz, Jonathan. "The Laws of Comparison: H. D. And Cinematic Formalism." *Modernism/Modernity*, vol. 18, no. 1, Jan. 2011, pp. 1-25.
- Melville, Herman. *Battle-pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems*. Prometheus, 1995.
- Andrews, Beanie, performer. *Mule Skinner Blues*. Bean-Tyle Productions, 2001.
- Scott, A. O. "Film in Review; 'Mule Skinners Blues'" *New York Times*, 2 Apr. 2002.
- Shklovsky, Viktor. "Art as Technique." Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan editors. *Literary Theory, an Anthology*. Blackwell, 1998. pp. 15-21.
- Tiessen, Paul. "The Shadow in 'Caligari': Virginia Woolf and the 'Materialists' Responses to Film." *Film Criticism*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1980, pp. 1-9
- Woolf, Virginia. "The Cinema." *The Nation and Athanaeum*." The British Library, 3 July 1926. Bl.uk.

Chapter III. Competition as Social Control: Marx vs Marx

Survive and Perish: Examining Economic Viability in Victorian Literature

The novel *Jude the Obscure* (1895) begins in the fictional rural country town of Marygreen, and Jude is described as a young orphan boy. He works in the field scaring birds out of the freshly seeded fields with a noisy wooden clacker, but Jude decides to break the rules and allows some chickens to eat the farmer's seed planted in the field. When he is caught, he takes a beating at the hands of Farmer Troutham. Soon after, he goes home where he reflects on life while wallowing next to a stinking pigsty, wishing he had never been born.

The narrator describes Jude, "Feeling more than ever his existence to be an undemanded one," who decides to, "lay down upon his back on a heap of litter near the pigsty" (16-17) and think about life. The scene is critical because it is not only a dramatic visual and visceral description of the physical location of Jude's origins and his place in the universe (at the bottom of Victorian society's class system, see fig. 3.1 and fig. 3.2), but it also shows that he is a character who has a conscious thought process that begins to actively engage in questioning, and answering, fundamental questions about the nature of survival in the world.

Not only is Jude an orphan, but he is also an unwanted child. He is told by his guardian Drusilla that he would be better off dead. The question of whether Jude would be better off dead, or not, is the question that probably lurks the deepest in Jude's subconscious throughout the novel, although, he is too naïve for this to ever affect his firmly held belief that people are good, and they don't need to step on each other to survive.



Fig. 3.1. *Coronation of Queen Victoria*. Painting. George Hayter. *Royal Collection RCIN*
401213.Commons.wikimedia.org.

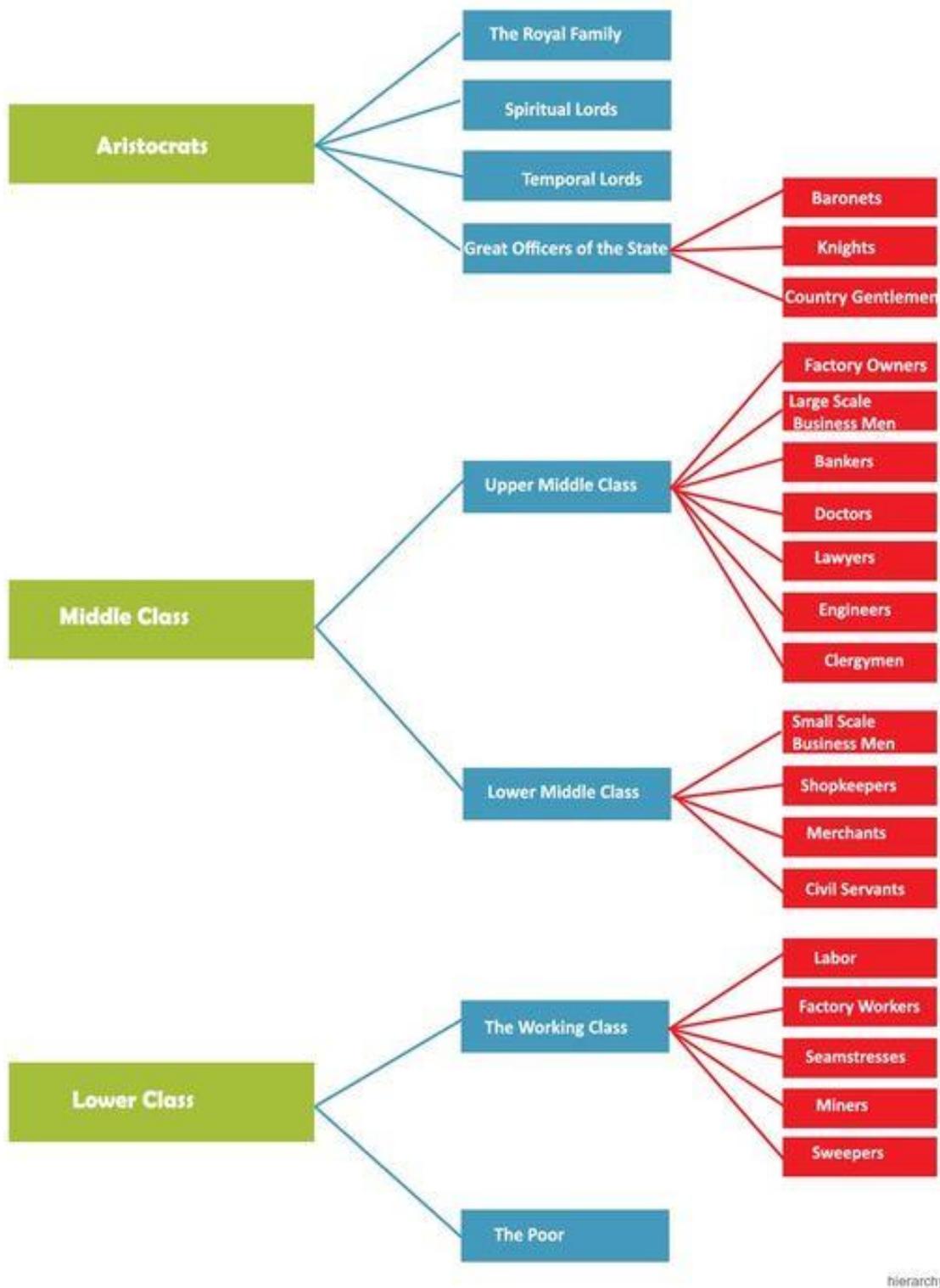


Fig. 3.2. 19th Century England Social Hierarchy. Graph. Hierarchy structure. *Hierarchystucture.com*.

Jude feels like rebelling against the injustice he sees in the world and wants to protect the weak and less fortunate. In the scene described above, he concludes that he stands against the world because he sees it as too violent and competitive. Jude rejects the Darwinian idea that life is nothing more than a struggle for existence and a fight for the survival of the fittest (and producing the most offspring), and he similarly rejects the Nietzschean model, the idea that life is a “will to power,” a belief that man’s primary motive is the desire to be on top.

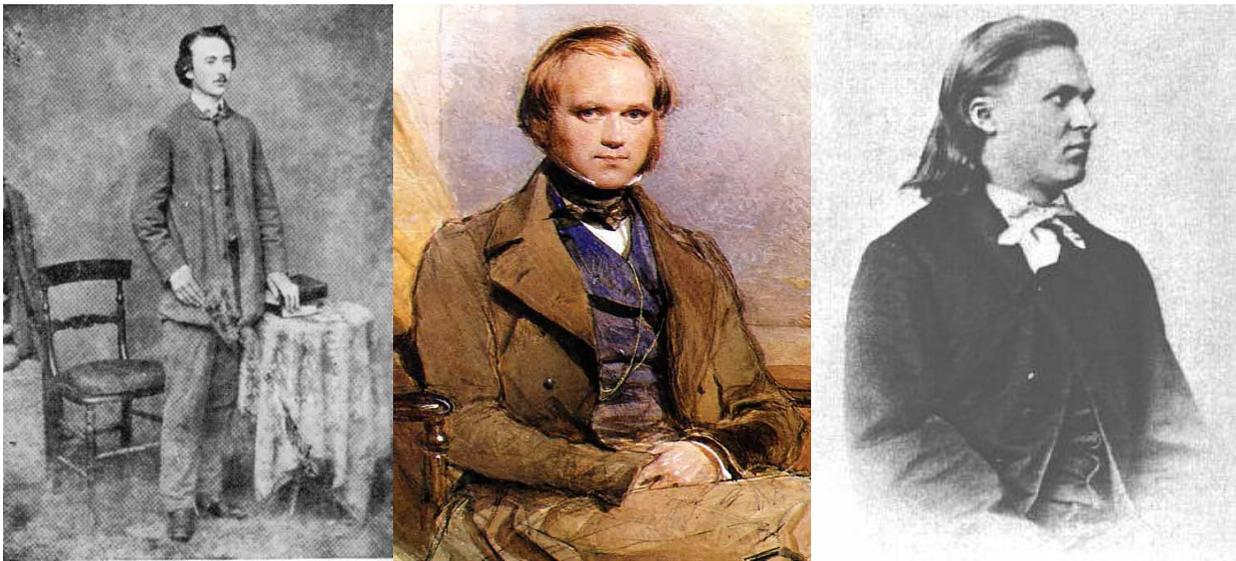


Fig. 3.3. *Thomas Hardy*. Image. RodneyLegg/BNPS. *Dailymail.co.uk*.

Fig. 3.4. *Charles Darwin*. Portrait. George Richmond. *Opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com*.

Fig. 3.5. *Frederick Nietzsche*. Image. 1862. Ferdinand Henning. *rompedas.blogspot.com*.

The two schools of thought are cited here primarily because they correlate directly with the text as Jude thinks about his own survival, the survival of all living things, and since these two philosophical viewpoints were at the height of critical debate within the Victorian culture at the time Hardy wrote the novel. The images in fig. 3.3-3.5 depict Thomas Hardy, Charles Darwin, and Frederick Nietzsche in their youth. These authors and cultural icons, seen in their younger and more unsettled stages of their lives, are reminiscent of young Jude still searching for

answers and looking for opportunities. All three authors went on to become world famous personalities (each eventually settling on the iconic facial hair of their choice), with firmly set ideologies, but here they are like Jude, young men struggling to survive in the world. At this stage of their lives they were still questioning the world, challenging conventions, and open to facing the unknown. However, eventually, all of them came to vastly different conclusions about how they pictured the nature of humanity and its future.

When Hardy wrote *Jude*, he was actively engaged in the cultural debate over Darwin's book, *The Origin of Species*. According to The Modernism Lab at Yale University, "Hardy moved to London in 1862 where he attended King's College... and began to read deeply in the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer." Hardy attended Darwin's funeral and spoke about his intense interest in Darwin saying, "[he was] among the earliest acclaimers of *The Origin of Species*" (Hardy 153). While he lies next to the pigsty, young Jude also questions his place in the universe. The narrator reveals, Jude is determined to follow a humble egalitarian path in life saying, "Though...Farmer Troutham had just hurt him, He was a boy who could not himself bear to hurt anything." Jude wants to live his life doing everything he can to avoid hurting others, however along with this choice comes the knowledge that this limits the probability of his own survival and he may face more punishments at the hands of people like Farmer Troutham. The conscious decision by Jude to turn against the popular way of thinking and behaving makes Jude a more three-dimensional character, one with a complete psychological profile that is involved in making ethical decisions. This sets the standard for the reader to be able to measure the results of his struggles throughout the rest of the novel. Jude's decision to be a pacifist, and the non-competitive nature of his character, foreshadows, for better or worse, many of the events to come.

The Victorian age is when the concept of “the survival of the fittest” was first introduced, and it had fundamentally changed the fabric of Victorian culture. Jude represented someone trying to survive in a brutal world and he attempted to do it in the most civilized way possible. Yet, from the standpoint of Hardy, the lesson in *Jude* is that in the face of extreme competition, if you are not prepared to compete at the highest level, you are probably not going to survive. If Jude is not willing to get his hands dirty, (the figurative slaughter of the pig for his next meal, as an example from the text), he could never succeed at Christminster even without the disadvantages he was born with. Jude is blind to the fact that he is not really giving 100%. He lacks the strength to survive, let alone succeed at Christminster. Jude wanted all the symbols and benefits of moving up in the world, but he wasn't willing to pay the full price. If given a choice after reading the novel, with its theme of striving for class mobility, and its unflattering depiction of the country life, with the swine and the butchery, and the equally unflattering depiction of how life in the big city is like a giant door of opportunity being slammed in the face of the poor, most people would probably choose to stay in the comfort and security of living among their own class.

The consequences of being an outsider are extreme in *Jude*. The suicide and murder of the children by Little Father Time near the end of the novel is a reminder of the interplay between the hostile environment and the thoughts and actions of the characters. In the beginning of the story, it is Jude as a young boy who contemplates life when he is the outcast, however Jude envisions a hopeful future for himself despite the evidence in his surroundings to the contrary. At the end of the story we have another young man, Jude's son who is approximately the same age as Jude when he was in the pigsty (his child, however, doesn't have the bright dreams of Christminster flashing in his mind's eye like Jude did. In fact, Little Father Time tells

Jude, "I don't think I like Christminster" (255). Instead of being blessed with bright dreams, he instead is an unchristened child with the face of an old man. Sue Bridehead even gives him the nickname Little Father Time and says, "His face is like the tragic mask of Melpomene."

Appropriately, Melpomene is the Greek Muse of Tragedy. Before the murders, Little Father Time, like Jude, also has time to contemplate the nature of the world. The nihilism of his thoughts and the murderous actions he takes are in direct contrast to Jude's peaceful resolution to carry on with life and try to make the best out of every bad situation. Jude and Little Father Time are different, yet they are similar in many ways with each other to create a counterpoint. These characters double each other in many ways. However, the contrasting parts of their identities and actions raise the question, which is worse, the fate of the nihilist or the life of the pacifist?

Little Father Time's decision to kill the children and then commit suicide is such a repulsive decision that it makes the horrors of living an ostensibly pathetic life like Jude seem all the more bearable and relatable. The author of *On Suffering and Sympathy: Jude The Obscure, Evolution, And Ethics*, Caroline Sumpter, a Professor of English at Queens College in Dublin, Ireland, also links Hardy to an intense study of Darwin and claims that *Jude* isn't so much about how humans respond to biological evolution as it is about how humans are capable of "Moral Evolution." When the book reaches a large audience of readers, ones who feel empathy towards Jude at the end of the novel, the more this novel is a victory for Hardy. Something Sumpter called, "Hardy's conception of the author as enlarger of "social sympathies."

Through Jude, the reader partners with a conscious mind engaged in questioning the way the world works. The result of his decision to live against the grain ultimately spells disaster for Jude. More than likely, the same decision would spell disaster for anyone with Jude's

background who tries to live a life of conscientious objection against the culture they are born in, must live in, and must survive in. Even though Jude left his hometown to go off into the world and become a success, his failure to do so brought a life of tragedy upon himself. His decision to move away from his peers rather than join a group he doesn't identify with, other than through similar finances and geographic proximity, comes back to haunt him. Jude is only being true to his own nature, but this leads to him losing the respect of his friends and family later when he inevitably returns to his former stomping grounds, in poverty, to live among them again.

The concepts of social, scientific, and evolutionary thought that are introduced to the story through the characters created by Hardy, and the effect that these characters and social constructs have in restricting or rewarding Jude on his unconventional journey, shows how his character traits come into conflict with customs, and challenging them will ultimately either make him or break him. When Jude runs into his former acquaintances, the stone cutters, they ridicule him in the streets for thinking he could ever leave his social class and make something more of himself in the ultra-elite academic world of Christminster. This riles Jude up, and he makes a strong and eloquent statement declaring himself victorious in his adventures—even in defeat.

Before he speaks, Jude thinks to himself that he is, “Not inclined to shrink from open declarations of what he had no great reason to be ashamed of; and in a little while was stimulated to say in a loud voice to the listening throng” everything that he had built up to say for all those years (255). Jude's speech is short and to the point. He pronounces his position on upward mobility directly to the people who derided him, and tells them that upward mobility, self-education, or personal improvement are a reality for those who simply take the chance. They may fail, but they may also succeed. Jude's gives us his rationale for the decisions he makes

throughout the book in his own words. First Jude addresses the reasons why he feels that it was right for him to try and succeed *above* his position in life (probably something he has asked himself many times before considering he was essentially raised in a pigsty). He says:

It is a difficult question, my friends, for any young man—that question I had to grapple with, and which thousands are weighing at the present moment in these uprising times—whether to follow uncritically the track he finds himself in, without considering his aptness for it, or to consider what his aptness or bent may be, and re-shape his course accordingly. I tried to do the latter, and I failed. But I don't admit that my failure proved my view to be a wrong one, or that my success would have made it a right one; though that's how we appraise such attempts nowadays—I mean, not by their essential soundness, but by their accidental outcomes. If I had ended by becoming like one of these gentlemen in red and black that we saw dropping in here by now, everybody would have said: 'See how wise that young man was, to follow the bent of his nature!' But having ended no better than I began they say: 'See what a fool that fellow was in following a freak of his fancy! (255-256)

He goes on to make an argument blaming the economic disadvantages he has faced for keeping him from being able to accomplish his goal. He states:

"However, it was my poverty and not my will that consented to be beaten. It takes two or three generations to do what I tried to do in one; and my impulses—affections—vices perhaps they should be called—were too strong not to hamper a man without advantages; who should be as cold-

blooded as a fish and as selfish as a pig to have a really good chance of being one of his country's worthies. You may ridicule me—I am quite willing that you should—I am a fit subject, no doubt. But I think if you knew what I have gone through these last few years you would rather pity me” (256).

Since Jude has no money, he really isn't in a position to afford the luxury of living a life of quiet contemplation and instead must work with his hands and not his mind.

Although Jude's *ignoble* beginning in the pigsty could be interpreted as a sign, by an audience from an earlier part of the century, one still attached to a more romantic age, that indicated to the reader that after starting at such a low point in life there was nowhere to go but up for Jude and somehow, he would fulfill his dreams of success at Christminster. His lowly beginning would have been an indication that as the story progresses the right inheritance and family connections would somehow miraculously appear at the climax and end the story on a happy note. However, despite the reader's best wishes, the introduction of Jude as a person of low status during its time of publication near the end of the 19th century more than likely indicates the curiosity of the times of seeing a protagonist whose low position in life could *actually* change (due to the promise of the institutions like academia, churches, and the literati to create class mobility through skilled jobs for the working class), but one that, according to Hardy, is not likely to change. The stain of poverty, the smell of pig shit, and the capacity of Jude to accept defeat and failure follow him into adulthood. In the opinion of Andrzej Diniejko, a Senior Lecturer in English Literature, *Jude the Obscure*, “depicts a ruthless Darwinian world in which protagonists fail to survive because they cannot adapt to the changing social environment”

(Diniejko). Regardless of this message, Jude stays true to his belief in self-improvement, charity and helping others, often at his own expense.

The word *ignoble* correctly defines Jude's status as low born, yet it is debatable as to whether the term would accurately describe Jude's ethical socio-political-environmental-religious stance. Jude is self-educated, and his high-minded ethical stance would hardly be considered ignoble, or shameful by today's standards. He is ultimately too low born to ever be accepted by the upper-class society that was holding onto past cultural traditions of class, religion, and formalized education as the standard. Jude never gets the right opportunity in life to gain a foothold in these areas. Jude is a character who spends his life locked in a stalemate between rejecting institutions (because he is an outsider) and on the other hand, hoping that he will be given a chance to attend Christminster to cultivate his mind and improve the viability of himself and his family. Even when he conforms to their standards, he is continually blocked from ever finding any success. Since his birth, he was thrown into the lot with the lowest class, the underclass of the poor, the very bottom of society. He is, purely based on the limitations of his low birth, not economically viable.

Hardy's work criticizes the standards of late 19th-century England by showing how, even with Jude's high-minded ideals and steadfast commitment to the institutions offering the working class the most promise for advancement, Jude never gets ahead. As much as he tries, throughout the novel, to change the stars of his birth Jude is just overlooked, unseen. Jude represents the unwelcome mouth of the poor underclass, not only just begging at the table of the rich but trying to take a seat at the table. Yet, the rich don't see him, because he is so far beneath them that he is invisible. He is obscured from their sight. The antagonists in Jude's life (Arabella, Little Father Time, Sue Bridehead, Christminster College, Drusilla, the Masons, the boarding houses)

wouldn't even notice if they stepped on him or his dreams. They don't ever really see him, reward him, love him, marry him, divorce him, accept him, etc. He was Jude the Obscure. A man who never left a mark on the world, or any offspring. A man whose own son killed his progeny and himself.

Jude's low status in society and correspondingly high expectations could be what Hardy wanted to focus on to indicate that a lot worse is in store for Jude. His very survival depends on his ability to take care of himself. From the start, Jude is not given much encouragement that he will amount to anything or succeed in life. Jude's great aunt Drusilla not only makes her feelings for Jude and his circumstance in life known to him when he overhears her tell a complete stranger that "It would ha' been a blessing if Goddy-mighty had took [Jude], wi' they mother and father [when they died], poor useless boy" but also forewarns him about his bleak chance of finding a better life in Christminster when she tells him, "It is a place too good for you" (16). Jude's just a boy of eleven at this point in the story, and his chances of survival are clear to Drusilla, even if they are not clear to Jude.

Jude does nothing to help himself by wishing to never grow up and be a man. Jude's relative comfort and acceptance of his living conditions near the pigsty, his decision to give the farmer's seed to the birds, and his inability to support himself financially, shows that Jude's words match his actions. "If he could only prevent himself growing up!" Jude says, "He did not want to be a man" (17). Although the sentiment behind Jude's statement appears to be a wish to avoid responsibility and stay young forever, when the situational double of this scene, along with Jude's figurative double, Little Father Time, contemplates his own future, the sentiment of never growing up takes on a new meaning when Little Father Time kills his siblings then himself.

According to Barbara T. Gates, Professor of English at the University of Delaware, in Victorian

England suicide was even more horrible than murder. She writes, "Self-murder, was a personal challenge to the will of God." Killing someone is a crime against a person but killing yourself is a crime against your creator. By this standard, Little Father Time commits a crime against his siblings by killing them for being "too menny" but when he commits suicide, he is committing a crime against his father for making him think he needed to do it.

Jude opposes growing up and opposes being responsible. He is a misfit who survives despite his opposition to Charles Darwin's "natural selection" theory (which was later re-named "the survival of the fittest"). The narrator in *Jude* seems to address Darwin directly when he says, "Natures' logic was too horrid for him to care for. His moral sense that, "mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony" (17). As the main protagonist in the story, Jude represents a rebellion, one not entirely against God, but instead, against the way creatures must kill to subsist. Jude opposes the idea that only the strong should survive. He is uncomfortable with the realization that of many of the world's living creatures depend on the suffering of other living creatures to subsist without giving much consideration to the fact that it involves taking the life of another. Questioning the way God provides for his creatures, (or how they are meant to provide for themselves) strongly parallels the same questions many Victorian people began to ask about the social, political, scientific, and religious institutions of their day because of Darwin's book. If there is no God? Who is taking care of the sparrows? When Little Father Time kills, it is in the mistaken hope that he is helping Jude and Sue to survive. If the law of the jungle says that life is "kill to survive," then what Little Father Time did was morally o.k. according to the laws of nature. However, there is a serious flaw in this way of thinking and with trying to live by those rules.

Jude is a commentary on the topic of evolution and institutional thought in British society at the end of the 19th century when people began to examine what institutions could do to establish a role in helping the poor. Darwin took God out of the scientific examination and philosophical discussions about creation which left the burden of compassion squarely on the shoulders of men and not gods. Most institutions in Victorian society relied on God, the creator, with imbuing them with the authority to maintain cultural validity and the authority of the institutions themselves. Jude is a misfortunate character who can barely survive on his own. Jude's hope is that the people he loves and the institutions he loves care enough about him to help him survive. In *Jude*, Hardy tells us that they don't, "Somebody might have come along ... who would have asked him his trouble and might have cheered him ... But nobody did come, because nobody does" (31). By the end of the book, Jude gives up his faith in Victorian cultural institutions, however he never gives up his hope in them. Jude is certain that even though his dreams will never be realized there is still a chance that others will find a way to live theirs.

In late Victorian society, the concept of God had been replaced with the idea of evolution. One reaction to this change came in the form of nihilism. In the whirlwind of changing views about God, man, and society many people lost their faith in God, and many people lost their faith in humanity. After reading *Jude*, the tragedy of his story creates the effect of building a more sympathetic society because most readers cared about Jude, were saddened by the loss of his family, and wished to improve the lives of real life people in the world, those who are as helpless as Jude. This interpretation shows that Jude (and Hardy) reject the nihilistic stance existing in the vacuum left behind in the wake of Darwin's revelations.

The age of Romance had come to an end by the time *Jude* was written, but the ideas of a more cynical world had been approaching for some time. In fact, by the year *Jude* was published,

the ideas of Freud, Marx, Nietzsche and Darwin were already widespread, and the British population of the age may have felt uncomfortable giving up the stability of the ideas of the past for new ones. By this time the era of Modernism was gaining ground on the Victorians. New ideas flourished, and soon even modernism would be rejected and quickly be replaced by the postmodern world. Darwin's idea of evolution, the beacon of science that spoke of the biological process of survival and adaptation, has seemed to have similarly effected change within major institutions and major schools of thought around the world. For cultural organizations to continue to be culturally relevant, they too have had to adapt to survive. Today, society and institutions are more closely aligned with Jude's way of thinking.

Victorian novels like *Jude the Obscure* helped society see beyond just survival. The concept of evolution itself began to evolve into something more than just a biological based theory, and it began to be applied to many other social theories over the past 150 years. In contrast to the Victorian age, contemporary society has evolved to the point where most people don't judge a person (or country) by how rich they are, but instead by how well they treat the poor, work to include them, and advance their economic prospects. If the world can continue to evolve in this positive direction, then even the small, the weak, and the obscure can still hope for survival and maybe even more than that.

Creating "The Unlikable Class," or *New Grub Street* vs. The People.

The way publishing is presented in *New Grub Street* (1891), written by George Gissing, reminds me of the way the legal profession is presented on TV. Although based on the premise that they represent a gritty behind the scenes look at the legal profession, shows like *The Practice*, *Law & Order*, or *Ally McBeal* (OK not so gritty), along with all the other spin-off legal dramas created by David E. Kelly, ultimately portray the entire profession as an amoral

occupation. However, in reality, the legal profession is quite boring, and typically ethical, with very little drama. The heightened nature of the fast-paced, witty dialogue and implied "realism" is an illusion, an effect to create drama. The portrayal of an entire occupational field as an unethical venture is a fiction. A fiction that is intended to heighten the drama for the audience. It has not much of a basis in reality. Yet it does, because it does a disservice to an uneducated public.

When Jasper describes the current nature of the publishing industries' lack of ethics he says, "Grub Street of to-day is quite a different place...it knows what literary fare is in demand in every part of the world, its inhabitants are men of business, however seedy" (5). Stories with this outlook disrespect people striving to work in a professional field like law, journalism, medicine, and advertising.

In 1835, Karl Marx (Figure 7) wrote *Reflections of a Youth on Choosing an Occupation*. He wrote, "We must seriously ask ourselves, therefore, whether we are really inspired about a vocation, whether an inner voice approves of it, or whether the inspiration was a deception." The negative image of corporate industry portrayed by the media since *NGS* has kept the lower working class, the unskilled and the poor from wanting to act to better their station in life because their inner voice can never approve of it as it is presented to them by the media. These shows are built upon the fear and anxiety of failure, the fear of being punished for being perceived as too ambitious, and the fear of having little chance of succeeding. This creates the perception that to move up in class they will have to become unethical (like the anti-role models presented in the literature and other media) and that means they would have to give up who they truly are. The dream of living a more luxurious lifestyle may be a deceptive one, but the presentation of a completely distorted view of hard-working individuals is even more deceptive.

As strange as it sounds, the negative publicity against the rich works to serve the needs of the rich. Creating this negative perception elevates the upper-class, the publishers and their cronies even higher because they gladly take the money from the poor and, in return, tell them a story they want to hear.

The hypocrisy is that the writers of these shows and books (and characters in books like *NGS*) all rise in their own careers based on denigrating skilled occupations like the legal profession. For example, writers of newsroom dramas like Andy Sorkin, and writers of legal dramas like David E. Kelly got rich digging in this dirt. Kelly practically created a cottage industry out of writing legal dramas for Hollywood studios. These newsroom, courtroom, and political dramas resemble the structure of *NGS* in many ways. Always with a negative bent against the industry it is focused on, against skilled professionals, and against capitalism in general while making the writers themselves rich and famous.

The underlying message is aimed at the poor and creates further division between the classes by promoting the idea of “The Unlikable Class.” The negative sentiment aimed against this group validates the lower class’s values and biases, and it unites them with their group of low-status social cohorts by denigrating the higher status class of economically advantaged people. In his book *Grundrisse*, Marx wrote that the Capitalist is in control of public perception. He wrote, “general social knowledge has become a direct force of production, and to what degree, hence, the conditions of the process of social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect and been transformed in accordance with it” (Notebook VII, The Chapter on Capital, p. 626). The creation of a fictional “Unlikable Class” gives the rich and powerful a social control mechanism that separates the lower classes even further from the people they

would like to share advantages with. This is a stumbling block to the poor that prevents them from chasing their dreams of moving up and out of poverty.

In the 1980s, the big "behind the scenes of a big money-making industry" show was called *Dallas*, with J.R. Ewing (see fig. 3.6) as the greedy oil man who represented the oil industry workers as a bunch of cut-throat villains. It is still currently popular to denigrate the oil industry today because of that show. J.R. was hated so much that the show created a national media storm by airing an episode where someone shoots J.R. and leaves him for dead. Viewers from around the world asked, "Who shot J.R.?" Nobody stopped to ask why J.R. was shot, it was just assumed he had it coming simply because he was a Texas oil man. It is an insult to the people who work in the oil industry that they are considered environmental traitors by some in the world due to the bias created by a fictional TV show (it would be an insult except for the fact that it is hypocritical to denigrate those who we rely on for oil and energy). So how does the complete denigration of capitalist characters like JR Ewing or Jasper Milvain, and their respective industries, work to promote the capitalist elite?

When the band Rage against the Machine sells out a concert arena and sings songs against "The Man," who really wins? The ticket holders are herded together in a mass huddle to express their anger at the people whom they only wish they had more in common with economically and probably wish they could share in the perceived sense of social approval that the upper classes enjoy. Going to the communal group, framed as a cultural "sour grapes," rally creates the experience of bonding with social equals. Unfortunately, that experience is achieved at the potential expense of personal, economic, and social growth; identity, independence, and empathy; and transformation, success, and all the benefits of civilization.

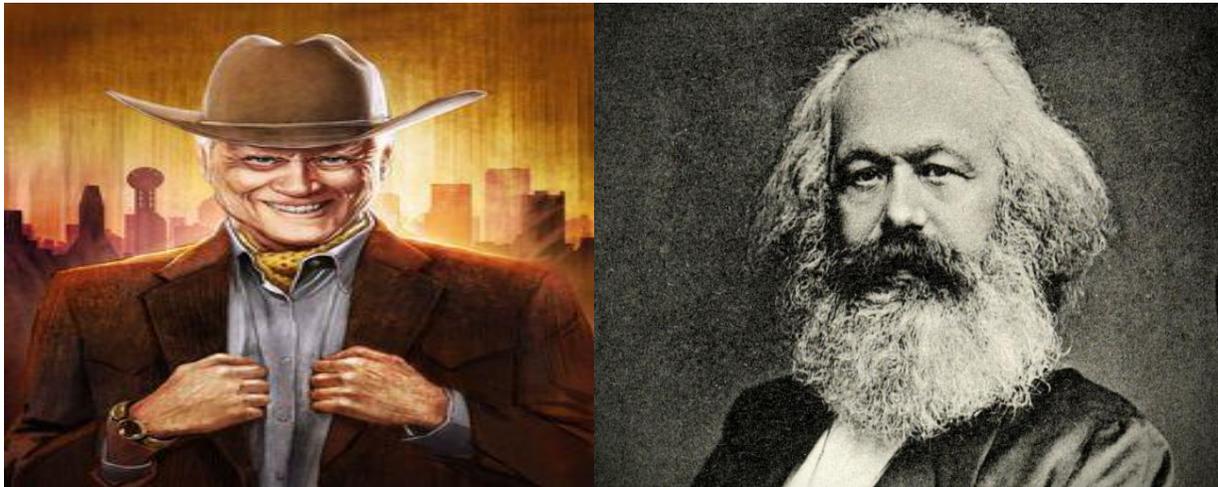


Fig. 3.6. *J.R. Ewin*: Fictional Capitalist. Painting. Kenneth Larsen. kennethlarsen.tumblr.com.

Fig. 3.7. *Karl Marx*: Actual Communist. 1875. Image. John Jabez and Edwin Mayal.

International Institute of Social History. Wikipedia.

There is a destructive element lurking behind the scenes in *NGS*. There is an anti-capitalist sentiment woven into the material which appeals to and influences a large audience of underprivileged consumers. Novels, Television, and music are cheap entertainment. However, this entertainment does little to serve anyone's actual economic needs if it is embedded with distorted messages. The poor people who were gaining an interest in literacy as a way to better themselves in the Victorian Age, and in the present day, are presented with characters that are caught between either being good (by staying within their own class and not striving for a better life) or being bad (the status seekers corrupted by materialism). This is a false dichotomy. But not surprisingly, readers are both discouraged to discover that the occupation of their interest appears to be morally bankrupt and discouraged to find that they no longer think it is worth the effort to try and pursue a job in this field. Yet, they are comforted by the fact that they are still considered good and noble just the way they are, safely within their own economic class.

Marx might agree with this perspective and agree that the work of the publisher's novels is intended to keep the class structures static. George Gissing adds this argument into the story of *NGS* itself. (Quite possibly *NGS* itself functions as a mechanism of the elite.) The upper classes have many reasons to keep and maintain the class system, and they use rules, laws, and institutions (including the publishing business) to protect themselves and their money from competition. In *The Communist Manifesto* Marx (see fig. 3.7) wrote, "Law, morality, religion, are...so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests" (Section 1, paragraph 47, lines 7-9). The novel works on several levels to introduce the concept of the unlikable class into the public forum. First, this is achieved on a meta level by describing the publishing business and denigrating it. Second, the novel works on a dramatic level by describing individual characters, the unethical materialists striving to reach the top, who denigrate themselves. Third, the novel works on the level of the actual readers, where society and class structure exist in the real world, who now have the perceived ammunition to denigrate each other.

The popular memes on Facebook (and Tweets on Twitter) that antagonize all corporate capitalist entities, because they are perceived to be the natural enemy of the people, find their roots in books like *New Grub Street*. The social media format is like the one proposed by Whelpdale for a magazine he intends to start called *Chit Chat* where he says, "No article in the paper is to measure more than two inches in length." He goes on to describe his concept for feeding news to the barely-educated masses who are craving sensationalistic entertainment to amuse themselves with throughout the day. He continues:

Let me explain my principle. I would have the paper address itself to the quarter-educated; that is to say, the great new generation that is being

turned out by the Board schools, the young men and women who can just read, but are incapable of sustained attention. People of this kind want something to occupy them in trains and on ‘buses and trams...what they want is the lightest and frothiest of chit-chatty information—bits of stories, bits of description, bits of scandal, bits of jokes, bits of statistics, bits of foolery... Even chat is too solid for them: they want chit-chat
(491-492)

The fact that Jasper and Whelpdale are debating over how much and what kind of information to give to the poor and uneducated and how they can make the most money doing it, says a lot about, the influence they had as publishers in the novel, but also the impact that publishing has on society today. This scene establishes how the publishers decide what info to disseminate, (a subject currently under debate regarding Facebook and Twitter’s manipulation and control of their newsfeeds), and equally important, is the revelation that the process is for personal gain at the expense of the uneducated underclass.

Marx argued that the, “Labourer lives merely to increase capital [for the rich], and [is] allowed to live only so far as the interest to the ruling class requires it” (Manifesto). When the average person handed their money over to read *NGS*, they were probably from the lower class, not upper-middle-class skilled laborers and publishers, and it is natural that they probably held some resentment towards the people who made a better living than them. Nevertheless, even if the poor were resentful, they still wanted to live as comfortably as the upper classes did. However, the establishment of such an Unlikable Class of people in *NGS* provides evidence to common people that they are morally superior to those in the classes above them. Books like

NGS and TV legal dramas seem to be written with this lower-class bias in mind, and in effect create confirmation bias in their audience. This system works for the elites as a defense against competition from below. By creating the Unlikable Class and catering to the sensibilities and insecurities of the largest population of people in the world, the poor, more and more people now see the accomplished as corrupt, self-serving, and thoroughly dislikable, and find it more comfortable to stay within their own class.

Works Cited

- Diniejko, Andrzej. "Charles Darwin's Theory of Evolution and the Intellectual Ferment of the Mid- and Late Victorian Periods." *The Victorian Web*, 11 May 2010.
- Domestico, Anthony. "Thomas Hardy." *Modernism Lab Essays*, Yale University, 2010.
- Gates, Barbara T. *Chapter Three: Cases and Classes: Sensational Suicides and Their Interpreters*. Victorianweb.org
- Gissing, George, and Harry Hansen. *New Grub Street*. Modern Library, 1926.
- Hardy, Thomas. *Jude the Obscure: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Sources, Criticism*. 2nd edition, Norton, 1978.
- Marx, Karl Frederick, and Friedrich Engels. *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.
Marxist.org, Section 2, paragraph 20, lines 9-13.
- . *Grundrisse*. Penguin Books, 1939-1941, Marxist.org.
- . *Reflections of a Young Man on the Choice of a Profession*. Libcom.org.
- Sumpter, Caroline. "On Suffering and Sympathy: Jude The Obscure, Evolution, and Ethics." *Victorian Studies*. Vol. 53, No. 4, Indiana UP, pp. 665-687. DOI: 10.2979/victorianstudies.53.4.665

Chapter IV. The Unknown Sacred Object

“The crime of suicide lies rather in its disregard for the feelings of those whom we leave behind.” — E.M. Forster

When a person commits suicide, the great ritual of togetherness is broken. The homogeneous state of the living (the known) meets the irresolvable difference of the heterogeneous state of the dead (the unknown). Forster’s quote above raises an interesting question. Is the crime he refers to the fallout from the act; the heartbreak, and the raw feelings of those left behind? Or is the crime the disregard itself? In “The Other Boat” by E.M Forster, Lionel’s suicide not only shows a disregard for feelings, but it also shows a brutal contempt for the opinions, beliefs, and rules of institutions. In a single moment, the bonds between them have been abruptly severed by an individual in revolt. Lionel chooses to blindly jump onto the other boat, of death and the unknown, rather than stay on the homogeneous course that has been set out for him.

Georges Bataille’s “Heterology” permits the issue of suicide to be studied in a context other than one based on its risk factors, prevention, social implications, rates, or (to state the issue plainly) whether it is right or wrong. Lionel’s suicide is justifiably an implicit cause of mystery and wonder and is a subject bordering on taboo. In Bataille’s assessment, “[the world is divided] on how it differentiates its “social facts into religious facts (prohibitions, obligations, and the realization of sacred action) on one hand and profane facts (civil, political, juridical, industrial, and commercial organization) on the other.” Bataille further contends that the sum of these functions can be “polarized [into two] human impulses: EXCRETION and APPROPRIATION” (273). Lionel’s suicide shows that the people on the boat have functionally excreted him from among their midst because of his rejection of their codes and rules and rejection of their rewards and punishments. Ultimately, Lionel’s life is swept under the rug after

his death and he is forgotten. Even though Lionel was the one who decided to jump off the boat, it was the people on board who let him sink, (excreted by the world) and it was the sharks that ate his body (appropriated him into a million different pieces and then into oblivion).

This is the resolution to the story, for those in the story, but it in no way restrains the meaning of the act and the significance of Lionel's death for the literary critic. The alternative view that Lionel has his own homogeneous body, and that through his suicide he has excreted the world, (and not the other way around) would be a great subject for another paper. (Whose reach was excessive? Whose boundaries are too large?) Was Lionel expelled from the homogeneous or does his suicide prove his agency and that he was, in fact, excreting the world from his own homogeneous sense of self?

Were societies' standards so excessive that they needed to be excreted by Lionel? Or was Lionel's rule breaking, and ultimate sin of suicide, so excessive that he was excreted by society? Without having any insight into the unknown quantity that is death, there is too much missing information to build a solid argument that Lionel excreted the world, yet it remains a unique proposition. Bataille defines this problematic variable as a "barely... sufficient identification of an endless world...the unknowable (noumenal) world" (274). When people seek out the answers to the mysteries of the world, when they tap the unknown for spiritual purposes, and when they seek out sacred objects, and texts, they need to go outside the homogeneous and into the unknown. Through the lens of heterology, this is the place where Lionel resides as an object of mystery, a sacred heterological object that lives forever in a highly admired text.

In a story embraced by the Academy as one infused with social commentary on colonial hegemony, racial conflict, parental authority, and sexual boundaries, heterology changes the definition of Lionel's place in the conversation about suicide and takes it beyond simply opinions

about negation or approval. The characters in “The Other Boat” buzz and circle each other, defining their boundaries, in a state of territorial panic that constantly reverberates throughout the story. The stiff, take-away at the end of the story swims with lacuna (the effect of a felt absence, or in this case the loss of identity) and heterology as Lionel (like excrement) fades away into a swift current of dark oblivion. A horror never to be seen again or spoken of again by his mother, a horror that stirs up contentious debate over the many different meanings assigned to the act by the different groups of people on the boat). His shipmates do not attempt to save him or even recover his body. He is gone, but there needs to be more to Lionel’s story, “When one does away with oneself, one does the most estimable thing possible: one almost earns the right to live” Nietzsche wrote in *Twilight of the Idols* (36). I think the same can be said for Lionel.

Yet, the concept of Lionel being excreted by the world, as a heterological interpretation of Lionel’s suicide implies, isn’t as bad as it may at first sound. “[People] most often envisages these waste products in abstract forms of totality (nothingness, infinity, the absolute), to which itself cannot give a positive content” (274). His excretion from the system he rejected lets us examine that system and allows us to revive a literary sense of him that doesn’t have the negative stain and limited framework that contemporary conversations about suicide in popular culture allow for. “Only an intellectual elaboration in a religious form can...put forward the waste products of appropriative thought as the definitively heterogeneous (sacred) object of speculation” (274). Bataille’s definition of the sacred as heterological creates a definition of Lionel that treats him with the regard of the “sacred object of speculation.” An object that, “betrays the needs that it was not only supposed to regulate but satisfy...” In many ways, his literary suicide satisfies every reader’s desire (whether conscious or subconscious) to know what it is like to give up the struggles of life. “[Lionel] burst out of the stupid cabin onto the deck, and

naked and with seeds of love on him he dived into the sea” (196). The social situation that Lionel found himself in was almost certainly disagreeable to almost every aspect of his nature, so defining where the homogeneous overstepped its limits and caused Lionel to split from, or separate from, the system is revealed in the text. In the essay “Peuchet: On Suicide,” Karl Marx may provide a clue to what Lionel found so disagreeable with this world. He writes, “The most cowardly, unresisting people become implacable as soon as they can exercise their absolute parental authority. The abuse of this authority is, as it were, a crude compensation for all the submissiveness and dependence to which they abase themselves willy-nilly in bourgeois society” (Marx). Basically, the text implicitly shows it was this overbearing person, his mother, who was to blame.

There is more than one way to interpret Lionel’s suicide, but as it stands, without a more informed way to define his suicide the reader may choose to look no deeper. Lionel’s self-destruction and his negation by the world seems to preach against suicide, the homogeneous code stands only for what it can comprehend. Incomprehensible acts like Lionel’s not only get excreted but also tend to be punished (which at the very least acts as a preventative measure). The worst part of Lionel’s punishment is that he isn’t even worth remembering. At the end of the story he is blotted out of the picture. His actions are viewed with either revulsion or morbid curiosity by the surviving characters in the story to ruminate over and even by many of the readers. However, if his suicide can be defined as an act of excretion, by acknowledging the fact that his suicide is, in fact, excessively meaningful and too divisive to be considered either good or bad -and that it is imponderable- which thereby allows him to take on the form of the symbolic where a richer and fuller understanding of the lessons learned from nihilistic acts like Lionel’s suicide can unfold.

In their essay “Attitudes Toward Suicide; Past, Present, and Future,” Judith Stillion and Bethany Stillion trace the history of cultural attitudes towards suicide and “calls for new types of research in the area of attitudes towards suicide that will permit finer grained analyses of this most complex human behavior” (77). Heterology provides a new set of criteria to understand suicide. One that creates a new space for dialogue about a subject that has become disconnected with its cultural value and instead is framed by an almost total cultural negation. The act of suicide in literature, or anywhere else for that matter, is not to be defined by the results of an approval poll or by public health statistics. Instead, by conceding that the meaning is beyond the capability to comprehend (too excessive) and is missing (has been excreted) from our lives “*heterogeneous* existence can be represented as something *other* as incommensurate, by charging these words with the *positive* value they have an *affective* experience” (276). Through his excretion from the system, Lionel regains form and structure as a symbol, a ritual device for touching the unknown and experiencing a taste of the forbidden desire to break the rules.

Works Cited

Forster, E. M. (Edward Morgan). *Howards End*. Knopf, 1951.

---. "The Other Boat." *The Life to come*. W.W. Norton. 1972.

Marx, Karl. "Peuchet: On Suicide." *Marx & Engels Collected Works*: Vol. 4. MECW.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Twilight of the Idols, or, How to Philosophize with a Hammer*. Lexido, 1889, Lexido.com.

Stillion, Judith M. and Bethany D. Stillion. "Attitudes toward Suicide: Past, Present and Future."

Omega: Journal of Death & Dying, vol. 38, no. 2, 1998/1999, p.77.

Bataille, George. "Heterology." Rivkin, Julie and Michael Ryan. *Literary Theory, and*

Anthology, Blackwell, 1998, pp. 273-277.

Chapter V. The Perversion of Law leads to Truth

Scarface vs. The Great Gatsby

It wouldn't surprise me if you are reading this and find the title somewhat baffling. Is this title a reference to a new movie? A movie in the style of a classic Hollywood mash-up film like *Dracula vs. The Wolfman*, or *King Kong vs. Godzilla*, or more recently *Alien vs. Predator*? Maybe you are just wondering, "why *Gatsby*? why *Scarface*?" What is the connection between these two? The differences between these two characters may at first seem vast, but I maintain the only real differences between the two is in the presentations of their stories.



Fig. 5.1. *Scarface*. 1932. Poster. Everett Collection/Rex Features. Dailymail.co.uk.com.

Fig. 5.2. *The Great Gatsby*. 1949. Poster. Paramount Pictures. Wikipedia.org.

Most of us remember the character, Jay Gatsby, from reading the book *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald in high school or have seen one of the movie adaptations. Regardless, most are likely to remember Gatsby as a gentleman with strikingly different characteristics than Tony

Montana of *Scarface* fame. Observers casually remember Gatsby fondly as a wealthy, suave, and mysterious businessman (bootlegger) who is hopelessly in love with Daisy Buchanan. In vivid contrast, Scarface has literally become an American icon who is recognized as one of the most violent and the most profane drug-dealing gangsters in modern fiction. Is this the case? In this paper I will put the perceived differences between the two characters to the test. I will argue that Scarface and Gatsby are cut from the same literary cloth, how their origins, struggles and aspirations are parallel, and how these shared attributes contribute to their eventual downfalls. In the end, who is truly the ultimate gangster, Scarface or The Great Gatsby?

The story *The Great Gatsby* takes place in the “Roaring Twenties.” The book was published in 1925. The Internet Movie Data Base (IMDB) details that the first movie adaptation was released in 1926 with the tag-line “This PICTURE is the Dramatic Thunderbolt of the Season!” The movie was silent and filmed in black and white. No copies of the film exist today. In 1932, the studios released the movie *Scarface*, (also known as *Scarface: The Shame of the Nation*). It was produced by Howard Hughes, directed by Howard Hawks and Richard Rosson, was shot in black and white, and had fully synched sound (IMDB). Copies of this movie are still available.



Fig. 5.3 Sex and Power. *Karen Morley & Paul Muni in Scarface*. 1932. Image. AF archive / Alamy Stock Photo. *Alamy.com*.

Fig. 5.4 The Loving Gangster. *Macdonald Carey and Betty Field in The Great Gatsby*. 1949. Image. Paramount Pictures. *2014.filmfestival.tcm.com*.



Fig. 5.5. Behind the Scenes Action. *Scarface*. 1932. Image. Paramount Pictures.

Brooklyndaily.com.

Fig. 5.6. The Big Phoney. *The Great Gatsby*. 1949. Image. Paramount Pictures.

Everyourslightofmylife.wordpress.com.

These movies share the theme of self-destruction. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote himself into his art and the Gatsby story is highly autobiographical and the merits of his work have been celebrated as literary achievements. *Scarface*, on the other hand, smacks of a sensationalistic Hollywood pulp fiction trying to sneak under the radar of the Hays Board. The film censorship committee enforced the Hays Code was in effect from the middle of 1933 until 1968 setting strict on-screen rules for morality for all films Americans could see in the theaters. The censors ensured that no sin shown on film go unpunished and that the public was never given any reason to feel sorry for the “criminals.”



Fig. 5.7. Blonde. *Michelle Pfeiffer in Scarface*. 1983. Image. Universal Pictures. *Pinterest: Photostream.*

Fig. 5.8. Blonder. *Carrie Mulligan in The Great Gatsby*. 2013. Image. Warner Brothers Pictures. *Pinterest: Photostream.*

The aim of Hollywood producer is to create a spectacle, to tantalize, and entice. In short: to be able to show the most sex, violence and general debauchery they can get away with in order to fill the seats. Most producers soon figured out that they could use the code to their benefit. By keeping to the Hays Code, they knew what lurid topics they could show just if they also showed horrific consequences for the participants of these moral indecencies. Fitzgerald's book has proved to be a successful formula for Hollywood gangster movies and following that formula probably made things easier for producers of the day to get their films past the censors. Considering the usefulness to producers like Howard Hughes, the precedent setting literary

merits inherent in Fitzgerald's work, and the continued use of this formula by writers, it is possible Fitzgerald created the mold for the entire genre of gangster thrillers. Even until the present day.

The fear of poverty drove both protagonists mad trying to "Make Good" by living up to the expectations they have of themselves in response to having both been rejected by beautiful rich women and chasing the women that are now on their pedestals just out of reach. They both worship money and represent a maniacal pursuit of The American Dream to overcome their perceived shortcomings. The ultimate symbol of that dream for both is the "Golden girl." The girl that all men desire but cannot get. In the journal *Literature Film Quarterly*, Marilyn Roberts reports how much has been borrowed from *Gatsby*:

The screenwriters [of *Scarface*] adapted key passages from *Gatsby* to help convey Tony's ambitions through memorable cinematic signs. The main signs the screenwriters adapted from Fitzgerald are those of shirts as symbol of wealth and an advertisement that is misread as an omen. This use of signs in both works helps to establish that the central characters believe in an American Dream that offers them limitless freedom, wealth, and power, and enables them to buy the love of a woman who personifies their aspirations (3).

Gatsby and *Scarface* both lost their first loves because "rich girls don't marry poor boys" (*The Great Gatsby*. 1974 Film). Young *Scarface*, living in abject poverty, loses his virginity and has an affair with the beautiful and wealthy wife of a high-ranking Colonel. *Scarface* falls in love and when they are caught in the act, the Colonel cuts his face with a razor blade leaving him scarred for life. *Gatsby* was a virgin until he met Daisy and, like *Scarface*, fell deeply in love. He too was scarred for life when he was dumped because he didn't have any money.



Fig. 5.9. Drug Lord. *Al Pacino in Scarface*. 1993. Image. Universal Pictures.

Escapistmagazine.com..

Fig. 5.10. Booze Hound. *Leonardo Di Caprio in The Great Gatsby*. 2013. Image. Warner Brothers Pictures. *Businessinsider.com..*

The top search words associated with each of these old classic film titles are recorded on the IMDB and can be useful to highlight the perceived differences between these two works by a large sample of people. The movie or key word analyzer is described as “a fun new tool for finding and discovering film and television titles within our large catalog. It lets you find titles that have a particular keyword and then presents a tally of all keywords from the titles that matched your initial key word set” (Keyword). At the time of this study, the top IMDB key words for *The Great Gatsby* are “tragedy, mansion, and society,” the top key words for *Scarface* are “murder, bootlegging, and gangster”. The storyline of *Scarface* is derivative and imitates the rise and fall of *The Great Gatsby* in his ruthless pursuit of the American Dream. In the article *Scarface, The Great Gatsby, and the American Dream*, Roberts writes that *Scarface* was a”

commentary about the central character's pursuit of material success. [*Scarface* screenwriter] Hecht seems to have provided the screenplay with... material about the American Dream, derived in part from F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*" (1). However, clearly the producers of *Scarface* focused on the menace gangsters pose to society and not on their broken hearts. "The Hays Office, concerned that Tony's death would be too heroic, persuaded Hughes to shoot new endings: one depicting the disarmed Tony running from the police and being gunned down, the other showing Tony tried and hanged for his crimes" observes Roberts (3).

The moral variances between key search terms that seem relatively similar shows another pattern of polarized perceptions people have about these two characters. When searching for *The Great Gatsby* the key plot search term is "Jazz Age" when searching for *Scarface* the key plot search term is "Prohibition." You can find Gatsby searching for "lost love" but you will need to search for "secret love" if you are looking for *Scarface* (Keyword). Clearly, with *Scarface*, the movie producers had built themselves a better bad-guy, but did they build a better gangster? That is yet to be determined.



Fig. 5.11. Promises. *The Great Gatsby*. 2013. Image. Warner Brothers Pictures.

Stanforddaily.com.

Fig. 5.12. More Promises. *Scarface*. 1983. Image. Universal Pictures. *Lowlifemagazine.com*.

In 1983, fifty years after the first version, the modern adaptation of the film *Scarface* came out to horrible reviews following a bitter battle with the ratings board. Excess violence, over 218 F-words, and replacing liquor with cocaine seemed to be more than enough reasons for the Motion Picture Association of America's (MPAA) to give the first three cuts of the movie its X-rating. The MPAA was determined to see the *Scarface* died in a way that did not show him heroic in any way. The buzz (no pun intended) surrounding the release of the movie was a mixture of fear and anticipation. I remember being a teenager at the time the movie came out and couldn't wait to see it. Television newscasts, magazines and newspapers were continually talking about the controversies surrounding the making of the film.

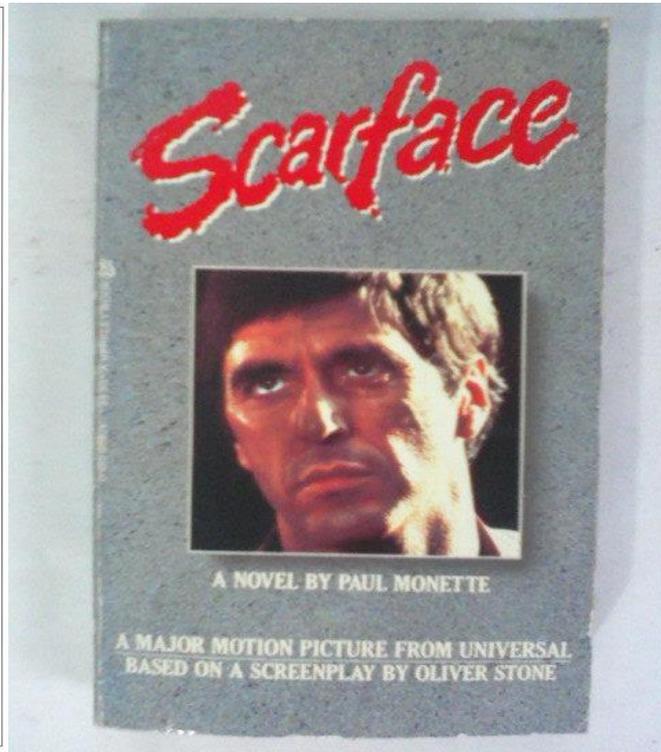


Fig. 5.13. Movie Poster. *Scarface*. 1983. Image. Universal Pictures. *Cultprojections.com*.

Fig. 5.14. Book Cover. *Scarface (novel)*. 1983. Image. Berkley Publishing Group.

Paperbackswap.com.

While I eagerly anticipated the movie's release, my parents were against the movie and banned me from seeing it. Considering the momentum building prior to the movie's release I had a moment of pure inspiration. I realized that if I was not going to be allowed to see the movie then I would buy the book, (in consideration of how my parents had always encouraged me to read as much as possible.) Reading the book satisfied my prurient interest but at the same time pissed off my father who insisted I was trying to be a "wise-ass." The next year he caught me watching the movie at my house with a group of friends after it came out on video. In an instant, my father unplugged the VCR from the wall, took it away, and later sold it for disobeying him. In my own defense I look back and think that I obviously was aware that the movie was a huge

cultural phenomenon of the time and I obviously felt that missing it would have been like missing out on *King Kong*, or *Jaws*, or *Star Wars*. Thirty years later *Scarface* is currently ranked number seventy-five on IMDB top movies based on number of votes and user reviews. *Jaws* was at number one-hundred, and *The Wizard of OZ* is ranked number one hundred twenty (IMDB).



Fig. 5.15. Tony's Ride. *Scarface*. 1983. Image. Universal Pictures. *Complex.com*.

Both *Gatsby* and *Scarface* come from low pedigree and poverty. “[*Scarface*] seems to lack social graces and taste because he is the Child of lower-class immigrants” (Roberts 2). There is a sense of the poor living among the rich.



Fig. 5.16. Gatsby's Wheels. *The Great Gatsby*. 1974. Image. Archive Photos/Getty Images. *Imdb.com*.

Both men were in the military during war and they seem to share a certain shell-shocked madness about themselves that is related to the wars. The nature of that mental illness is shown with wild abandon in *Scarface* but held closer to the vest by Gatsby. “[Indulging] in gaudy displays of wealth.... expensive cigars; a lavishly furnished urban home; and a flashy wardrobe” (Roberts 2). Of course, the lost love they hope to reclaim through ambition and success is eventually destroyed by their blatant illegal pursuits and causes their downfalls as well. Fitzgerald’s epigraph page has a poem attributed to Thomas Parke D’invilliers (Fitzgerald writing under his nom de plume (Wikipedia)). The path and the pursuit is clearly laid out for his characters as he advises:

.... wear the gold hat, if that will move her;
 If you can bounce high, bounce high for her too,
 Till she cry “Lover, gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover,
 I must have you!

In the pursuit of success, ambition often means sacrificing a sense of self to pursue goals, but “what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (KJV Mark 8.36).

In the end both Gatsby and Scarface go down in a hail of gunfire with their bodies left floating in pools of water. Gatsby in his swimming pool and Scarface in his water fountain. This resolution is symbolic of a “baptism” and is a redeeming moment for each of them. Gatsby and Scarface gave up their true selves in order to live their dreams, in effect, “selling their souls.” However, they had enough of a thread of dignity remaining in the end that both sacrificed themselves for something more important. Gatsby lies for Daisy and takes the blame for the hit-and-run car accident and Scarface refuses to detonate a car bomb during an assassination attempt because there are children in the car. They both died clinging to the last remnants of humanity they had within themselves, finding in death the peace and redemption they sought all along.



Fig. 5.17. Scarface Deathblow. *Scarface*. 1983. Image. Universal Pictures.

English11yellowclass.blogspot.com..



Fig. 5.18. Gatsby's Last Plunge. *The Great Gatsby*. 2013. Image. Warner Brothers Pictures.
Electricliterature.com.

In conclusion, I am impressed with the long-storied history that these two works have had on the American culture. The theme of a reckless pursuit of the American Dream and the consequences of that recklessness had been established in *The Great Gatsby* and later personified and magnified in *Scarface*. The continued popularity and commercial success of these works is a testament to the fascination people have at being spectators at a grand catastrophe. All the glamour and glitz combine to grab the eye's attention. However, Gatsby and Scarface were both seeking that attention and all around them flocked to see them in all their glory knowing all the while that a crash is about to happen just around the next corner.

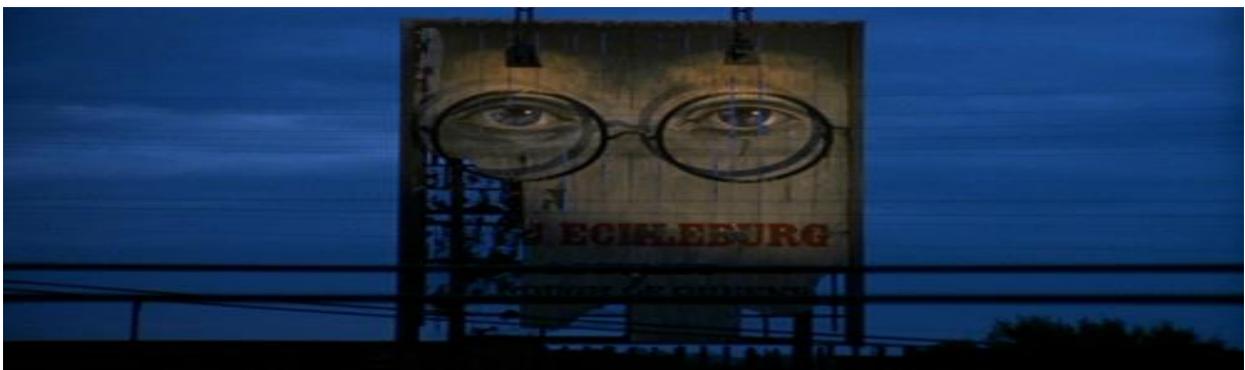


Fig. 5.19. The Voyeur. *The Great Gatsby*. 2013. Image. Warner Brothers Pictures.
Scoopnest.com.

Works Cited

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. New York, NY: Scribner, 1953.

Holy Bible. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984.

Monette, Paul, and Oliver Stone. *Scarface: A Novel*. New York: Berkley, 1983.

Key Word Analyzer. Internet Movie Database. imdb.com

Roberts, Marilyn. "Scarface," "The Great Gatsby," And the American Dream." *Literature Film Quarterly* 34.1 (2006): 71-78. Academic Search Premier.

Scarface. Warner Brothers Pictures, 1932.

----. Warner Brothers, 1983.

----.Imdb.com

"Siskel & Ebert Sneak Previews: Scarface (Year 1983)." *YouTube*. YouTube, 03 Mar. 2010.

The Great Gatsby. Paramount Pictures, 1926.

----. Paramount Pictures, 1974.

----. Paramount Pictures, 2013.

----.Imdb.com

"Thomas Parke D'Invilliers." *Wikipedia.com*

36-Minute Interview on *Scarface* with Pacino, De Palma & Stone pt. 3." *YouTube*.

YouTube, 05 July 2013.

Chapter VI. Locating the Other: Werewolves and Monsters

Resonance, Force, and Lacuna as Aspects of Werewolf Identity: Cognitive Poetics of the Werewolf in the High Middle Ages

Werewolf stories like *Bisclavret* (written in the 12th century) and *Melion* (composed around the start of the 13th century) are good examples of how the concept of transformation and change was emphasized in the textual and cultural framework of the High Middle Ages. In Carol Walker Bynum's essay "Metamorphosis, or Gerald and the Werewolf," she calls Ovid's work as defining the cultural landscape of the time saying, "These were the years of the revival of Ovid...of shape-shifting and...new kinds of transformations miracles and alchemy—in short, the era of greenmen and werewolves" ("Gerald" 991). Bynum claims the emphasis on change during this period is the effect of the reemergence and interest (theological, philosophical, and secular) in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (along with its ancient werewolf story *Lycaon*).

Understanding the medieval werewolf tales may help define the cultural context of change and transformation of the age, however, the definition of a werewolf is an elusive one. Is it a monster, a wolf, or a man? The relationship between man and wolf in the werewolf Lais of the Middle Ages is a question that Bynum has studied extensively, and in her book *Metamorphosis and Identity* she concludes, "It is seldom a matter of either or. Nor does the move to 'both... [or]... and' help very much" (*Identity* 187). She further suggests that werewolf identity is so fascinating because it is within the inherent nature of humans to continually question identity asking, "how can we [or they] change and yet be the same thing [?]" (*Identity* 189). A characteristic view of the medieval werewolf stories like *Bisclavret* and *Melion* is that they have a very fluid nature because they both have the ability to change into a wolf and then back into a man. A claim can also be made that the werewolves in the stories written during this period retain their human minds while in wolf form and that this distinguishes them from Ovid's

Lycaon who is transformed permanently into a wolf. The focus of the medieval Lais of *Melion* and *Bisclavret* is on how the beast, “having performed like a well-behaved dog at court, becomes a well-beloved knight to a just and wise king” (*Identity* 172). This defining aspect of the medieval werewolves is in stark contrast with *Lycaon* which focuses on the punishment of Lycaon for breaking the taboo of anthropophagy (cannibalism) and attempted deicide (killing a god). Evidence that can determine, or further prove such a claim can be revealed by applying the theoretical lens of the school of cognitive poetics.

This study concurs with Bynum’s definition of werewolves as being a perpetual series of questions succeeded by new questions, a process repeated by the defining then re-defining of the werewolf that is reflected back upon ourselves through the persistent study of werewolves in literature. However, it is also possible to explore some other conceptually different aspects of the literature to uncover further evidence that highlights and focuses the results of the power dynamics of these stories. In order to see these conflicts in a new light, this study will apply the interpretive lens of cognitive poetics to the medieval werewolf texts, with an emphasis on Peter Stockwell’s application of the effect of resonance and lacuna (resonance defined as the intensity of the effects that literature has on a person during and often even long after reading, (this definition also includes defining what gets higher or lower levels of attentional focus; the aspects of the wolf aspects or the aspect of the man), and lacuna is defined as the effect of a felt absence, an effect created by the negation of the aspects of either the wolf or the man). Along with Stockwell the theories of professor of linguistics and philosophy Leonard Talmy’s use of force dynamics will also be used to help summarize the results of the literary conflict created by the werewolf. Through a cognitive poetic lens, the dynamics of the werewolf, the struggles within himself as wolf and as man, and the interactions of the werewolf with those around it allow a

picture to be taken of the werewolf, a snapshot of the sum of all strong, weak, or neutral actions created situationally within the texts and how they resonate between man, wolf, and reader. A chart depicting the correlation between attention, figure and background and resonance is shown in fig. 6.1.

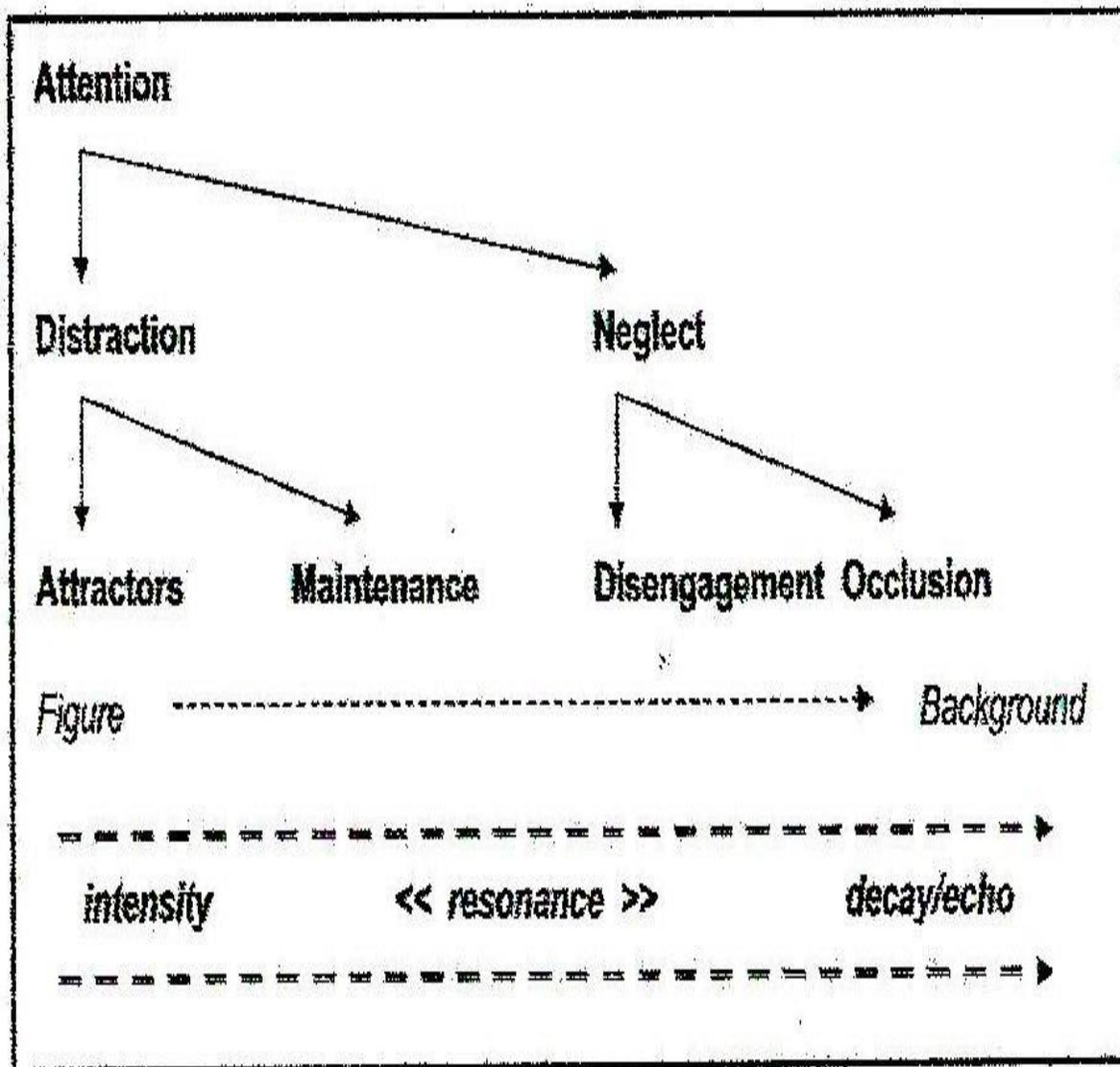


Fig. 6.1. *A General Model of Attention-Resonance*. 2009. Peter Stockwell. *The Cognitive Poetics of Literary Resonance*. Neurohumanitiestudies.eu.

Stockwell goes on to list categories that his model of attention-resonance can be applied to (see fig. 6.2).

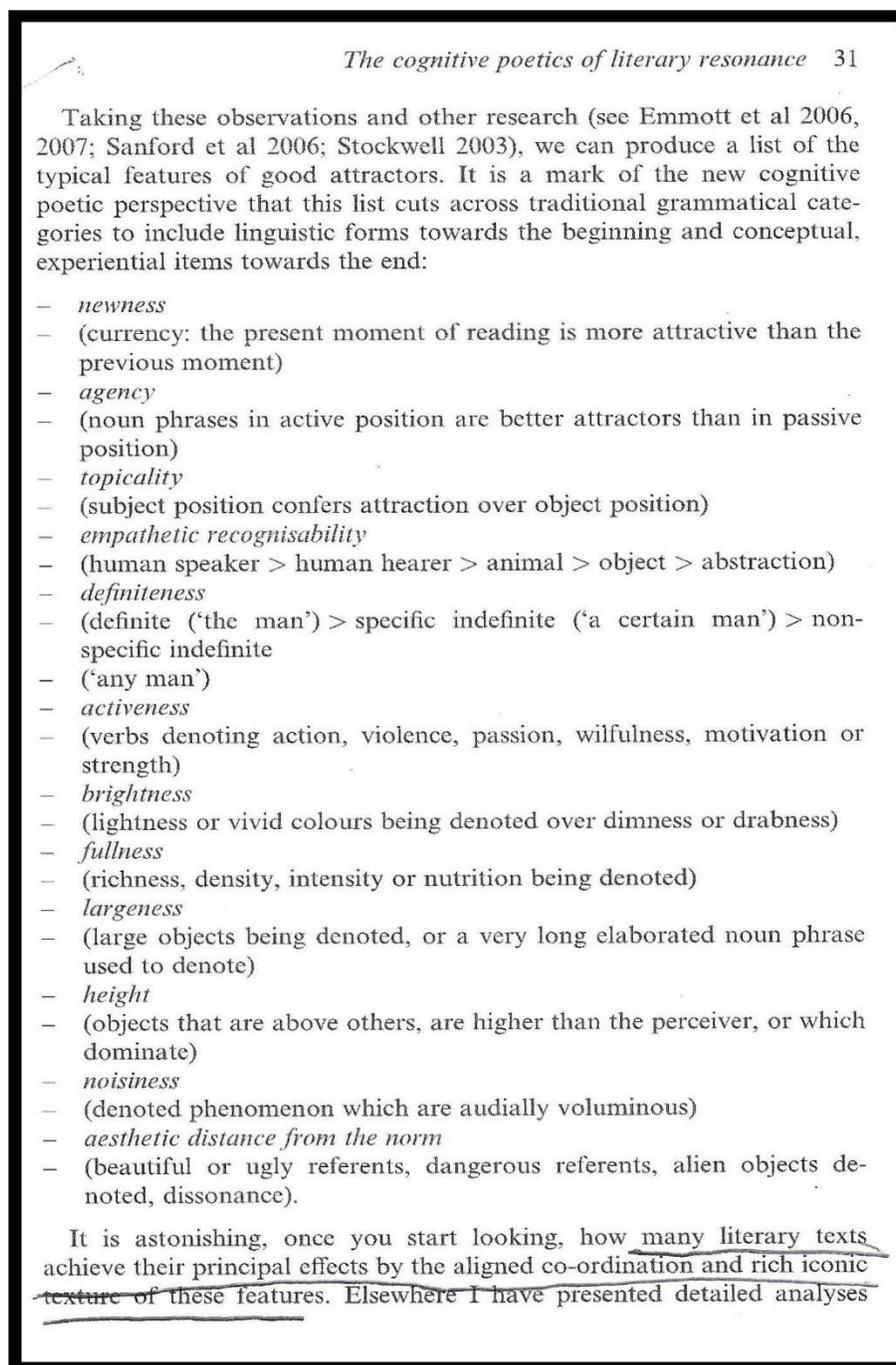


Fig. 6.2. *Good Attractors*. Stockwell, Peter. "The Cognitive Poetics of Literary Resonance."

Language and Cognition, 2009, *Neurohumanitiestudies.eu*.

The word transformation relies on a shifting from one identity to the other. You can only focus on one aspect of the werewolf hybrid monster at a time similar to how cognitive processes allows for attention on only one thing at a time or one figure at a time (demonstrable in the classic figure-ground ambiguity of the “young/old woman” and “face/vase” image (see fig. 6.3 and 6.4).

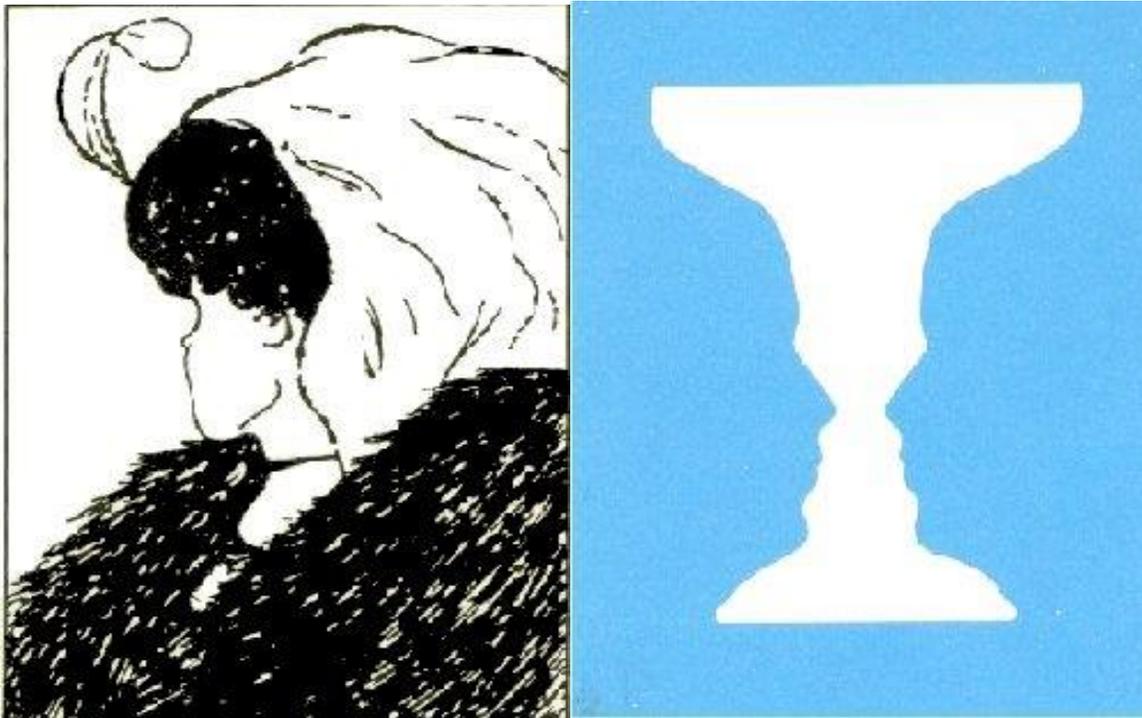


Fig. 6.3. *Old / Young*. Image. *Scaryforkids.com*. Fig. 6.4. *Face / Vase*. Image. *Oocities.org*.

Men cannot change into wolves, yet, the story of a transformation of a man into a wolf is described in the first book of Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*. When a tyrannical king named Lycaon is punished by Zeus. Lycaon, “Runs off...howls aloud...his arms turn into legs, and he, to wolf” (8). Clearly the shape-shifting man who turns into a wolf is alive and well in fiction, even if it does not exist in the real world. Using Peter Stockwell’s technique to analyze the transformation of Lycaon focuses on what attracts our attention (strong attractors), what our attention shifts to --

other strong attractors (as a shift), what we zoom in and focus on (as a zoom), and what gets negated (things lost, and if the effects can still be felt, lacuna).

In this example from *Lycaon*: “Frightened, he runs off to the silent field/and howls aloud, attempting speech in vain.” As per Stockwell, the initial attentional attractor most prominent is the fight or flight reaction of fear followed by and replaced by the verbal response to fear that in this case is zoomed in on “the utterance” to see that the results of that utterance as the successful howl of the wolf and the unsuccessful utterance of human speech by Lycaon. The loss of human speech would typically be a sign of an impending state of lacuna, or a felt absence, yet with the dual nature of the werewolf that lacuna is both felt (as silence) and at the same time replaced by the howl of the wolf. The location of where this takes place “the silent field” could be a latent attractor that cements the concept of the silencing of Lycaon as the establishment of a new environment for the new Lycaon, the howling wolf.

An example from *Lycaon*: “His arms turn into legs, and he, to wolf.” The focus is on the part of himself changing and ultimately his own self becoming a wolf. The dominance of the wolf is evident in its prominence as the former self becomes the background. The effect of the negation of the man is in direct contrast to the foregrounding of the wolf. Which causes a sense of lacuna in the loss of the identity of the man and differentiates *Lycaon* from the werewolf tales of the High Middle Ages where the sense of man is still available as an identity within the wolf.

An example from *Bisclavret*: “My lady, I turn Bisclavret; I plunge into that great forest. In thick woods I like it best. I live on what prey I can get.” The subject seems at first to be the lady, but it could also be his address to the lady that is to follow. The revelation is that he turns from man to wolf. The control of this shift occurring from one attentional figure to the other, in this case from man to wolf. Establishing a shift in attentional focus and resonant intensity.

However, the thick woods are established as a dominant focus that is reinforced by the exclamation that it is what is liked best by the Bisclavret the man. Recognizing that finding prey is the first order of survival (the word choice of prey and its implications of the word “pray” for the wolf’s survival could be another critical point because werewolves remain a point of contention between man and the gods like the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, the origin of giants, and other monsters.

According to Leonard Talmy in his paper, “Force Dynamics in Language and Cognition,” he says, “An entity is understood to exert force because of the intrinsic tendency towards manifesting it” (Talmy). Talmy (along with Stockwell and others in the school of cognitive poetics) points out, that the brain can only process one thing at a time, and all of these “concepts” compete for our attention— creating a foreground and a background effect. Each of these entities exerts force. According to Talmy, the agonist— is typically the subject, foregrounded, singled out for attention in the text (exerting force: high, low or neutral). The other, the antagonist, (Competing for attentional focus) is considered for the effect it has on the agonist (opposing strength: high or low or neutral). Both have different relative strengths. According to their relative strengths the opposing forces yield a resultant. An example of how this can be represented as symbols can be diagrammed (see fig. 6.5 and 6.6). Here is an example of force dynamics applied to *Lycaon*: “Frightened, he runs off to the silent field/and howls aloud, attempting speech in vain” The subject of the sentence (Lycaon) begins by reacting to a force acting upon him and the result is him running away in fear. The fear also causes a reaction of howling and attempting speech which is not strong enough to overcome the obstacle the forces acting upon it, Zeus’ wrath.

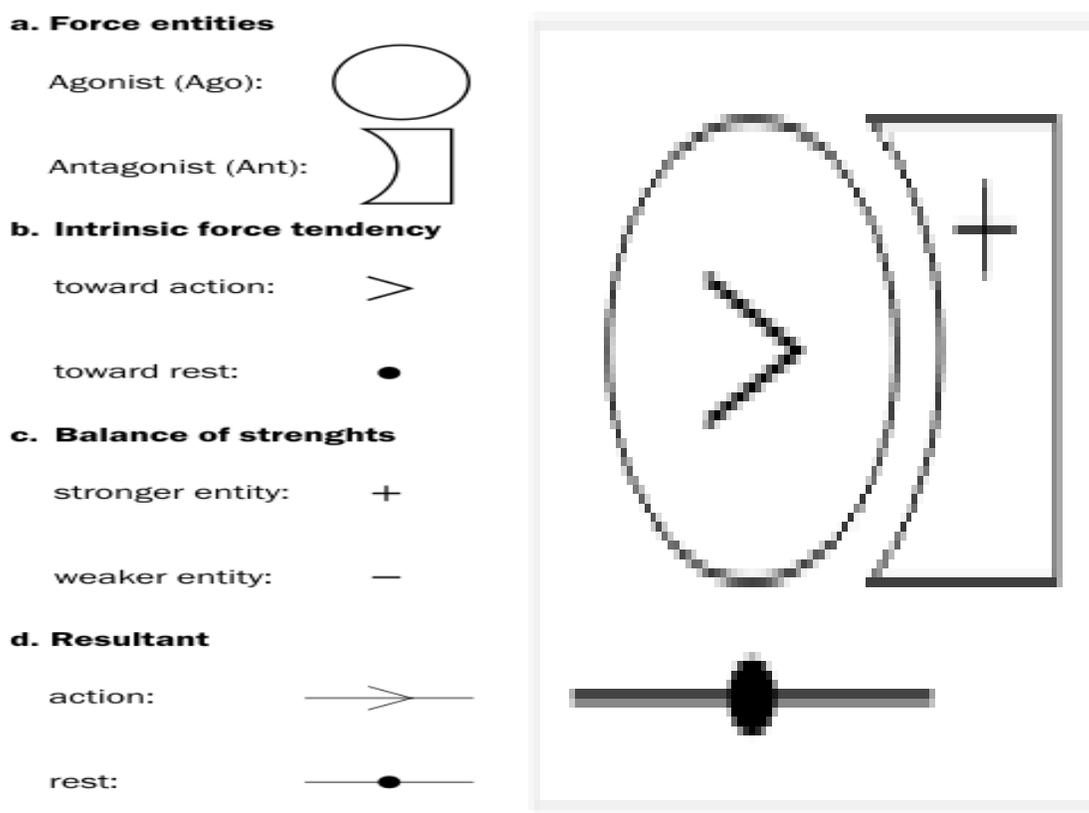


Fig. 6.5. *Basic elements of Force Dynamic patterns.* Leonard Talmy. *Wikipedia.org*.

Fig. 6.6. *Example of Force Dynamics.* Leonard Talmy. *Wikipedia.org*.

Here is another example from *Lycaon*: “His arms turn into legs, and he, to wolf” A force is acting upon the subject in this sentence. “Turn” is a force outside of, and stronger than, the internal locus of control of Lycaon. Lycaon is not in control of the shift from man into wolf.

This is an example from *Bisclavret*: “My lady, I turn Bisclavret; I plunge into that great forest. In thick woods I like it best. I live on what prey I can get.” The locus of control is in Bisclavret’s own hands. The self (Bisclavret) is the subject of each declaration. My lady. I turn, I plunge, I like, I live, I get. These are all situations where Bisclavret is the attentional subject and his will is executed according to it.

This is an example from *Melion*: “He let himself fall at the king’s feet.” The king is in no way commanding or demanding this. The subject in the sentence is Melion who controls the action, the action “he let” indicates the behavior is self-directed and the word “fall” a descriptor that not only defines the action but also indicating lowness. The results of the falling action lead directly to the creation of a new subject: There is a state of change that occurs in being (arriving) at the king’s feet. But is not caused by the normal force of overcoming an obstacle in this situation the action of Melion letting himself fall to his knees seems to be a very passive low energy type force, however the power of “letting” himself fall was enough to get him to achieve his goal. The act of “letting” himself fall at the king’s feet shows that the intellect of the man in the wolf is still in control and seeks to transform back into a man.

In another example from *Melion*: “Melion attacked him in the hall: He would have soon killed and destroyed him. Had it not been for the king’s servants.” The subject Melion is clearly full of force dynamic with the word “attacked” practically attached to the subject. The attack on “the man his wife had taken away with her”- he doesn’t even get a formal name- would have killed the man had it not been for the intervention of those who serve the king. Melion as the agonist faces two opposing forces both the man and the king’s servants are the antagonist with Melion apparently losing the two battles but only due to the opposing force of those who follow the king.

In the 12th and 13th century the distinction between a real monster and a supernatural one is an important one because as Bynum points out, “Church lawyers continued to employ the famous *Canon episcopi* of ca. 900 that prohibited the belief in the metamorphosis of body exchange” (qtd. in “Gerald” 990). By the standards of St Augustine’s definition of monsters in *City of God* the werewolf would not fit into the category of a monster because werewolves “have

no existence at all” (City). The werewolf category itself is, in effect, a baseless category. Nevertheless, Augustine’s point remains an important one in demonstrating why the church would want to influence define and control the potentially blasphemous werewolf stories. Applying Augustine’s concept of the monstrous would result in a determination that the werewolves in *Bisclavret* and *Melion* are disfigured men, regardless of the monstrous fictional representation as metamorphosis and body exchange. Bynum notes that the lack of an expression of complete body exchange in *Bisclavret* and *Melion* is depicted in recent scholarship a “Warping or repression of the idea of metamorphosis” and that the depiction of Bisclavret changing back into a man as “Waking from a dream” shows that the wolf-to-man transformation was only a psychological one (Identity 95).

In *Monsters* by David Gilmore, one of the reasons a werewolf is a monster is because it is supernatural. In *Monsters* Gilmore says, “A formal definition of monster would include human metamorphoses like werewolves... [And] shape-shifters “(6). Gilmore identifies monsters like werewolves as supernatural, and states, “For our purposes...monsters are imaginary, not real, embodiments of terror” (6). Yet, even with the werewolf’s existence defined (however correctly) as an impossible reality by Augustine and Gilmore the connection between the man and the wolf has been made—through what Gilmore here calls the “embodiment” of the werewolf in fiction. In the medieval texts (*Melion* and *Bisclavret*) and with the notable exception of that in the revival ancient Greek text *Lycaon* in Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* show that regardless of how complete the physical transformation is from man into a wolf, aspects of human intellect are still present in the werewolves of the High Middle Ages, to some degree. Augustine argues that all of these creatures were men because regardless of the physical deformations they were born human so remain human. But what kind of men? We can use Gilmore’s definition to determine the relative

nature of man to wolf that controls the werewolves' personality, actions, and behaviors requires that Gilmore's approach, be expanded to include monsters that are not supernatural but instead real life human beings behaving monstrously. Considering that the full title of his book is *Monsters: Evil beings, Mythical beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors*, Gilmore seems to be very closely aligned with his position on the issue.

Due to the shape-shifting nature of werewolves, and the insistence throughout the stories that the transformation is physically real, the werewolves must ultimately remain in a metaphorical / allegorical context. The opinion that many people think that the werewolf stories are simply a metaphor for man is confirmed by Gilmore, who is interested in defining monsters (but not necessarily religious doctrine on monstrosity or define human deformity like Augustine). Gilmore writes, "For most Western observers the monster is a metaphor for all that must be repudiated by the human spirit" (12). This claim seems to offer evidence of monsters that come into conflict with his other criteria. The monster here is defined as the embodiment of all that is forbidden, which, allows for inclusivity for non-supernatural beings. This is an area where Gilmore's definition is more useful than his other position on the necessity for monsters being supernatural as a condition of monstrosity.

Even though the werewolf literature makes it clear that the men physically change shape into that of a wolf, how would Augustine critique a fictional monster? Augustine used two other criteria to identify monsters which can be applicable to the discussion of fictional werewolves. According to Augustine, if the individual in question is human, then they are not a monster. "If they are [born] human they are descended from Adam" and therefore, they are not monsters. Instead they are "embraced in that definition of man [as] rational and mortal animals" (Augustine). (It is notable that he uses the word "animals" to describe man here, It seems to

point to the hybrid state of man's animal nature in the very same statement he defines the forms of monstrous hybridity. His answer ultimately justifies human hybridity, and in the process points out that we are, in fact, animals).

Monstrosity according to Augustine is not all or nothing. It is all or something. Since there is only one condition required, of being born human, that leaves a lot of room for shared space with the monstrous in hybrid situations, Werewolves for example. Even though he claims to "conclude[s] this question cautiously and guardedly" (Augustine), he makes no bones about his beliefs. No matter how transformed or disfigured, if a creature is born human it cannot be a monster. This allows for an interpretation of the werewolf as one of varying degrees of man, and not one of varying degrees of wolf.

In order to determine whether werewolves are monsters or humans, St. Augustine may have missed out on a chance to explore the monstrousness of deplorable acts. Joseph Campbell remarks, "By monster I mean some horrendous presence or apparition that explodes all your standards for harmony, order, and ethical conduct" (Campbell qtd in Gilmore). This definition allows for the monstrous to include "ethical conduct" where Augustine's does not. Campbell's definition allows for the analysis of werewolves' levels of embodiment and the states of monstrosity in terms of the type of physical transformation they make, what causes them to shift from one to the other, (is it a total shift or hybrid partial), what type of psychological transformation takes place, (is it a total transformation or hybrid / partial), and how permanent is the shift, (is it stable or unstable). Also, critical to determining whether a werewolf is human or not (according to Augustine) would be determining which entity "shifts *into* the other." Which came first the man or the wolf? Which is dominant and what is the outcome of this conflict?

Information on the werewolf's birth parents is, unfortunately, not always available, but the lines of inquiry stated above are a good place to begin to ascertain the ways that werewolf stories show how humans cross the line into monstrosity and where monsters cross the line into humanity. The study of the werewolf requires that the measurements and parameters for determining labels for hybrid monster types need to be adjustable, defined over time, in accordance to fluctuating state of being of the werewolf.

Ovid wrote *Metamorphosis* in the first century CE. Descriptions of the werewolf icon has changed over the historical span that ranges from ancient Greece to the Middle Ages. English translations caused a surge in the popularity of the tales and interest in werewolves remains strong today. The werewolf stories in the High Middle Ages; *Bisclavret*, and *Melion*, and in the ancient Greek story *Lycaon*, the wolves walk on four legs. Except for *Lycaon*, they also show signs of human cognition, the ability to communicate, and forms of non-verbal communication self-directed agency as demonstrated with the cognitive poetic techniques. The werewolves of the Middle Ages play an important function as a prototype for the unstable hybrid werewolf. A werewolf type found in the medieval texts of *Bisclavret* and *Melion* and one that differs from the story of *Lycaon* in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*.

The werewolf is embodied differently in each of the three versions of the werewolf story that are being discussed. Embodiment of the wolf in the tale of *Lycaon* by Ovid takes place when *Lycaon* is punished by Zeus. After which, *Lycaon* now in wolf form, attacks a flock of sheep. This appears to be 100% wolf-like behavior. It is important to note that a distinguishing feature of *Lycaon* is that he also behaved like a beast before he was transformed into a wolf. *Lycaon* did not have control over his shift into the wolf and there is no evidence that *Lycaon* can shift back into man form. His actions are primarily that of a beast although He does make attempts "at

human speech in vain,” He is described as “frightened,” and still retains traces of the “visage” of Lycaon. There are very few indications that Lycaon remains human.

Bisclavret turns himself into the werewolf by removing his clothes and the change is permanent if his clothes are lost. As a wolf *Bisclavret* hunts prey in the woods. However, *Bisclavret* claims to “Likes it best” running through the woods and hunting. (Enjoyment is a human emotion which would indicate that *Bisclavret* retains a sense of humanity while in wolf form.) The King even says, “Behold this winder, how this beast bows down to me! Its sense is human. It begs for mercy” (*Bisclavret*). He later shows even more signs of being human while in beast mode as he supplicates himself to the king, then recognizes and outsmarts his foes like a man.

Melion changes into a werewolf when a ring is touched to his head. He needs the touch of the ring to change him back, or else his condition remains permanent. Like *Bisclavret*, he removes clothes. Although “he was a wolf and could not speak, he travels to Ireland and is fully aware that he is a man trapped in the body of a wolf. He is clearly acting like a wolf when he goes on a killing spree in Ireland, but he can behave in a way that is civil and stays at the feet of the king who says, “Know that this wolf is mine.”

Oswald reminds us that werewolf literature should be read with the understanding that it does more than simply “provide delicious terror for their viewers.” Any determination of the monstrosity of the werewolf should be based on more than just its physical existence (St. Augustine), more than just its super naturalness (Gilmore), and more than just an “X is Y” metaphor for human nature (humanist context). Historically, the monster (including werewolves) are blank slates that others splatter and paint with their own fears and insecurities. However, a careful study of monsters reveals that defining them is not an easy thing to do. This study hopes

to answer more questions than it raises. However, werewolf literature walks a fine line between the literal and figurative, concepts that, even though binary, can share the same space and can be embodied in text. Some may conclude that balance will ultimately be found in a grey, or middle area. This is just another stagnant state of being similar to on or off. Never the less, this study argues that it is the resonance, force, and lacuna that determine the meaningful and significant differences between states of being. And they are negotiable, not static.

Ovid's poem about the werewolf is about creation, identity, and transformation. The werewolves of the Middle Ages show how the psychological and physical natures of werewolves are in conflict, very much like humans. The story is about transformation and identity in conflict. The embodiment of that conflict—the result—not only defines what is human and what is monstrous, but also determines the rewards and consequences that come with being cast as one or the other. The addition of cognitive poetics to this argument gives the discussion a new perspective that allows different aspects of the text to be uncovered and interpreted in a new way.

Works Cited

- Augustine, St. *St. Augustine's City of God and Christian Doctrine*. Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Translated by J. F. Shaw, Calvin College, 13 July 2005.
 Ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.iii.html.
- Bynum, Caroline Walker. *Metamorphosis and Identity*. Zone Books, 2001.
- . "Metamorphosis, or Gerald and the Werewolf." *Speculum*, vol. 73, no.4, 1998, pp. 987–1013.
- Cuddon, J. A. *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. Penguin, 1992.
- Gilmore, David D. *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors*. U of Pennsylvania, 2003.
- Hardie, Philip R. *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*. Cambridge UP, 2002.
- Hopkins, Amanda. *Melion and Biclarel: Two Old French Werewolf Lays*. Translated by Amanda Hopkins. U of Liverpool, 2005.
- Talmy, Leonard. "Force Dynamics in Language and Cognition." *Cognitive Science*, vol.12, no. 1, January 1988. *Wiley Online Library*. doi.org/10.1207/s15516709cog1201_2.
- De France, Marie. *The Lais of Marie de France*. Translated by Judith P. Shoaf, University of Florida at Gainesville, People.clas.ufl.edu/jshoaf/marie_lais.
- Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Translated by A. D. Melville. Oxford UP, 1986.
- Stockwell, Peter. "The Cognitive Poetics of Literary Resonance." *Language and Cognition*, 2009, *Neurohumanitiestudies.eu*.

Chapter VII. Utopia is a Sexually Transmitted Disease

George Orwell's *1984*: Sex and Subversive Language

George Orwell's novel *1984* is an act of war. That is, the text is purely political and is an attack on the men who were dividing up the world after the Second World War; dictators who oppressed millions of people under their authoritarian rule. However, as much as the novel is a direct attack on the totalitarian leaders of Orwell's day, it is also a subversive attack on them as well. This raises the question about how Orwell chose to use his most powerful weapon, his language skills, against his hated enemies. Does he write a manifesto spewing out hate and insults at them? No, he writes a novel about a sexual tryst between a man and a woman in the woods. He writes about the freedom they experience together, post coitus, without any concern for their master, Big Brother. Before Winston meets Julia, he writes in his journal about his experience with a prostitute and he says, "The sex act... was rebellion" (68). However, he continues, "[although] He had written it down...it made no difference. The therapy, had not worked" instead he is left with "the urge to shout filthy words at the top of his voice" (69) to vent his rage at Big Brother for the lack of "rebellion" in his life. We know what word he wanted to shout.

The story is set in the context of a Negative Utopia that mocks the world's dictators every political move, is anti-establishment at its core, and is aimed at inspiring the rebellious youth in Orwell's London. Orwell wrote, "The average man is not directly interested in politics, and when he reads he wants the current struggles of the world to be translated into a simple story about individuals" (All Art). Orwell's novel is graphic and filled with sex and violence. Nevertheless, while he outwardly takes a radical pro-vice stance throughout *1984*, as an extended metaphor for revolt against authoritarianism, he also delivers, under the guise of the restraint of

the language, rhetoric, and sensibilities of his British culture, a subversive dose of his grand wit. Today, *1984* is seen as symbol representing the conquest of Orwell's understated English bravado over truly dangerous men.

The message Orwell sends to Stalin, and others like him, is that sexual freedom will eventually overcome their oppressive dictatorial rule. This sex motif occurs overtly in the story through Winston and Julia's dialogue, motivations, and actions throughout *1984*, and can also be detected by the notable absence of one unstated subversive word, —the word fuck. Orwell must have at least uttered the phrase (or something like it, like 'bloody') to himself, if not out loud at one time or another during his lifetime of angry sentiment and vitriol directed against "the man." However, in *1984* he never uses the word. Orwell read, and was friends with, American writer Henry Miller who used the word extensively; Orwell was not unfamiliar with the literary uses of the word. He even mentions the word in his book *Down and out in Paris and London* writing, "The current London adjective, now tacked onto every noun, is 'fucking'. No doubt in time 'fucking', like 'bloody', will find its way to the drawing room..." (*Down*). In a book steeped in vice, why did Orwell choose to not use the most rebellious, subversive, anti-establishment word in the English language against his mortal enemies?

By his own admission, it is within the cultural standards of usage and could easily have been spoken by the characters in *1984*. (Or he could have used profanity outright against the people Orwell held responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of people.) However, Orwell's character Winston in *1984* uses language according to party lines and does not use profanity (except possibly during the Two Minutes of Hate when screaming hate are the norm.) Orwell's language and rhetoric similarly adheres to a code of ethics, the very British ethic of "keeping a stiff upper lip." According to phrases.org, "The phrase is similar to 'bite the bullet', 'keep your

chin up' ...It has become symbolic of the British ... school system during the age of the British Empire (The Meaning). Consequently, the subversive message of *1984* is never stated outright, but instead only alluded to. Under the subterfuge of British decency, Orwell prefers (requires), that his enemies spell the message out for themselves. Imagine Stalin reading *1984* as he begins to get the message loud and clear—that Orwell is subversively telling him that he is “fucked.”

This reading may be unexpected, but the groundwork was laid (no pun intended) by Orwell and the unfolding conclusion of this message is not without context. The book is subversive, it is about censorship, and it is about cutting words out of the English language for the sake of politics. The exclusion of the word “fuck or fucking” conflicts with the overt display of “it” when the actions of Winston and Julia, the message of Goldstein’s fake book, O’Brien’s outright attack on Winston, and Big Brother’s implied territoriality all send the same message of rebellion. In *1984*, “fucking” is the unstated action verb and state of being expressed forthrightly and without subterfuge. The exclusion of the word creates an absence that is palpable in light of the overwhelming significance that Orwell has placed on the combination of sex and revolt against a system of censorship of language that he warns against in the book. The absence of the overt proves the presence of its opposite, the covert or subversive. Orwell, writing about the subversive nature of political writing in his book *Politics and the English Language* said this:

The inflated style itself is a kind of euphemism. A mass of Latin words falls upon the facts like soft snow, blurring the outline and covering up all the details. The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish spurting out ink. In our age there is no such thing as ‘keeping out of politics’.

All issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred, and schizophrenia (Politics).

Subsequently, the language of politics is not based on truth, but deceptions. Using language to hide a stated intention or evade the facts is, according to Orwell, unavoidable.

Sexual freedom is not only anti-establishment, but it appeals to the youth. Orwell's call for sexual liberation is not only a poke in the eye of his enemies, but *1984* also serves as good advertising for his cause. In Orwell's war against the, Fascist, Communist, Colonialist, or Ultra Nationalist propaganda his dispatch is dirty, free, and popular with the masses. The study of human sexuality had begun to take on a more accepted role in society around the time Orwell wrote *1984*. Post-Modernist scientific theories about sex ranged from mainstream to revolutionary, Orwell chose the latter. In *1984* the government only exists based on its ability to maintain a state of never-ending war, and not just between the world's governments, but also between the sexes. In Oceania sexual freedom is considered a revolt against Big Brother who voyeuristically watches, then punishes, sexually active offenders (ironically in the Ministry of Love) for the crime of misdirecting their sexual energy on themselves and their own pleasure, instead of using that energy to serve Big Brother, the war effort, industrial production, or to be spent at state sponsored hate rallies.

Orwell's message of sexual liberation has outlived his adversaries and there is a good reason why. If given the choice between either obeying a homicidal hierarchal narcissist dictator in a never-ending war against peace or making love, who is going to choose war? When Winston and Julia have sex, they destroy Big Brother, "its grace and carelessness...seemed to annihilate a whole culture, a whole system of thought" (125). It is Orwell's clearest victory, and to put it briefly, Orwell's work anticipated the Sexual Revolution that occurred in the 1960s.

In order to situate Orwell in his historical and cultural setting, Orwell had seen firsthand how The Nazi propaganda machine had nearly conquered the world by plastering Hitler's face ubiquitously around Germany, and every other country he trampled on. Orwell knew firsthand how Stalin was a megalomaniacal dictator who strictly controlled Russia with absolute violence. In light of this "Will to Power," Orwell instead relied on sex to persuade his audience. Choosing to serve pleasure over power by promoting Freud's concept of the "Pleasure Principle" of sex over the "Death Drive" of mastery. Orwell wrote *1984* to warn against the fascist propaganda that could turn England into a dictatorship. Orwell wanted his book to reach the largest audience possible, and when it comes to marketing to the youth— sex sells. Orwell's contemporary, Walter Benjamin writes in *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility* that the mass reproducibility of art serves only "politics" (1057). Both Benjamin and Orwell were familiar with Hitler's ubiquitous face, moustache, and the swastika (the intersecting lines that symbolize sexual intercourse) that served to mark his dominance. These are the territorial pissings of the false patriarch, and what Orwell saw as the pecking order of Hitler, and other fascist, that effectively establish *who is going to be doing the fucking*.

Orwell, however, ignores the territoriality of the self-proclaimed "masters of the universe," and his novel creates an entirely new world around them where they are rendered powerless by the joy of sex. Orwell's novel goes further than mere mass reproduction of an image of power. Thus, Winston and Julia become a part of an extended simulacrum, the novel, which is more texturally rich and engaging than a poster of a patriarchal face on the wall. Orwell's language of sex, vice, and subversion create an enthusiasm and desire in the reader for freedom of speech, sexual liberty, and privacy. Something a slogan ordering a person to "obey" just can't measure up to.

It is important to note that in *1984* Orwell included the section about how Big Brother uses a similar book, the *Book of the Brotherhood*, to embed the ideology of their thought control into Winston by pretending that it was written by the subversive, Goldstein. (Remember that this book was created by the Party and not Goldstein as Winston had been told.) This may be another warning from Orwell (or possibly a clue to the subversive subtext of his own work) about the danger of another form of subversive propaganda to watch out for— propaganda masquerading as subversive literature.

As an aside, I must mention a relatable moment that occurred while discussing the Goldstein’s “book within a book” contained in *1984*, a conversation that has affected my opinion about the work itself. In the conversation, I mentioned that I was interested in the subversive nature of the “book within a book” that Orwell insisted on including before publication. The response that I received was that it was important and subversive, because it was actually written by INGSOC, not Goldstein, and therefore Winston was learning the truth. There was something about that comment that I interpreted differently than had been intended and my opinion about how it was subversive changed. I realized that the book, in fact, wasn’t the truth at all but just more propaganda serving as truth, regardless of whether the writer is Goldstein or INGSOC. In *Politics in the English Language* Orwell notes that when the government’s brutal actions do not match with their stated intentions, the politician uses language to shape the perception of events. Orwell writes:

In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible.

Things like the continuance of British rule in India, the Russian purges and deportations, the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan, can indeed be defended, but only by arguments which are too brutal for most people to face, and which do not square with the professed

aims of the political parties. Thus, political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness (Politics).

Orwell's warns that if people are unwilling or unable to face the truth, the government will create it for them out of the thin air.

It needs to be stated that Orwell made a concerted effort to bring *1984* under the umbrella of the literary tradition of the Utopian novel. Orwell includes language that can only be construed as having a direct connection to Thomas More and other Utopian writers. In comparison to More's work, there are recognizable motifs that arise between *Utopia* and *1984*. For instance, in both works it is impossible to locate where Utopia (or Big Brother) is because they are both an illusion actually created by language and belief, both novels involve state sponsored euthanasia (called self-destruction in *Utopia* and vaporization in *1984*), and both novels have a class of subalterns whose voices are unheard (the slaves in *Utopia* and the proles in *1984*). Contemporary, 20th century, Renaissance, and even Classical Utopian literature are similar in form and have become an established literary tradition. In *1984*, George Orwell takes the real life cultural and political realities of his life in the mid-20th century and uses the fictional Utopian format to house his story. Living through World War II, and writing in the aftermath, he witnessed governments hiding behind euphemistic ideologies, and establishing dominance. Orwell felt that, as a writer, it was possible to challenge this authority by satirizing these governments as Negative Utopias and giving a voice to the unheard.

The Utopian genre allowed Orwell to create the fictional Utopia Oceania that warns of the dangers of government oppression. In Orwell's real-life people like Stalin and Hitler had hit-lists of people that they considered threats and wanted to kill. Orwell's novel is personal and *1984* makes an emotional connection with his readers. Orwell saw how euphemism was used as

propaganda by authoritarian dictators, and in *1984* Orwell uses his originality combined with his British sensibilities to create an extremely subversive subtext and metaphor that is shocking and unexpected. He explains his writing style in his essay “All Art Is Propaganda” saying, “Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print” (All Art). The trick, it seems, is to be inventive.

As the penultimate point, and in order to allow for a contemporary historical perspective on the subject of sex and the subversive language in Orwell’s *1984*, Quentin Tarantino—Co-owner of Grindhouse Films— would be interested to know that there is a literary connection between the films he produces; the word “fuck,” which he loves to use so frequently in his films; and the name of his company. In *1984*, Orwell uses the term “Muckhouse,” recalling Julia’s description of the pornography division where she works, which is a newspeak party term, and most likely a euphemism for “Fuck house.” This is likely what the party members really meant but were prohibited from saying outright because profanity was not allowed. Much like how Orwell was discouraged from using profanity due to the British Imperial cultural norms he conformed to.

Lastly, Tarantino’s production company (which makes violent sexploitation films) is called “Grind House.” Named after the notoriously “Orwellian” place where people used to go to escape from the modern world and have sex—the dark theater— ironically, under giant tele-screens filled with scenes of death and violence; the simulacra of hate from above fueling the fires of rebellious passion below.

Works Cited

- Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility." *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. 2nd edition. Edited by Vincent B. Leitch, W.W. Norton, 2010. pp.1046-1071.
- Orwell, George. *1984: A Novel*. Signet Classic, 1961.
- . and George Packer. *All Art Is Propaganda: Critical Essays*. Harcourt, 2008.
- . *Down and Out in Paris and London*. May 2012. Gutenberg.net
- . "Politics and the English Language." *Fifty Orwell Essays*. January 2010. Gutenberg.net
- "The Meaning and Origin of the Expression: Keep a Stiff Upper Lip." *Keep a Stiff Upper Lip*. Phrases.org.