The Incredible Nineteenth Century: Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Fairy Tale

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The Incredible Nineteenth Century: Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Fairy Tale (*I19*) seeks to publish the finest scholarship on the century that was, in many ways, the time period in which the modern genres of science fiction and fantasy began, and in which the academic study of fairy tale and folklore has its roots. *I19* interprets "the nineteenth century" broadly, using the dates of "The Long Nineteenth Century"—roughly, from the beginning of the French Revolution to the end of World War I—but even these dates are just notable historical markers as they approximately coincide with Romanticism and Modernism, respectively. Scholarship on works from the eighteenth century that anticipated or influenced writers in the nineteenth century or ways in which nineteenth-century literature influenced later authors both fall within the interests of this journal. *I19* also publishes scholarship on Neo-Victorianism, Steam Punk, or any other contemporary genres that react to the time periods contained within The Long Nineteenth Century. Genres such as horror and mystery, though not strictly within the realms of the fantastic, are also welcome, due to their close affinity with science fiction and fantasy. Scholarship on early film is also welcome. Additionally, *I19* is dedicated to maintaining a scope that is both multicultural and global, and encourages submissions on works from marginalized communities and from around the world.

In addition to literary scholarship, *I19* also publishes works on pedagogy. These pieces may be personal reflections, strategies on course design, innovative assignment sheets with commentary, or anything else that educators teaching nineteenth-century literature may find useful.

Finally, *I19* maintains a robust Book and Media Reviews section. Reviews on recent scholarship, as well as period fiction and film, are featured in every issue.

Queries and submissions may be sent to i19@mtsu.edu. We accept submissions on a rolling basis, and there are no author fees.

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From the Editor

The Eloi, AI, and Ruskin

One of the texts I most frequently teach is H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895), and one of my favorite episodes from this book to discuss with my students is when the Time Traveller meets the Eloi. The accomplished man of science wanders into their world, expecting to find advancement and achievement, only to be disappointed by their mental degeneration. I talk with my students about how new technologies are often trade-offs—you get something great, but you typically must give up something in return, and how the Eloi evolved because of their preference for ease and comfort over doing things for themselves. By now it's a familiar trope in sf—the society that has grown lazy because of its over-reliance on technology, but it is a powerful scene nevertheless. And even though this scenario is now a familiar idea, humanity has not always heeded its warning.

We now face a new technology that may change our lives much like the Industrial Revolution altered human society in the nineteenth century. When ChatGPT burst onto the scene in November 2022, some tech experts voiced concern and called for a halt to the development of AI until its dangers could be assessed. However, these protests were largely ignored and grew ever fainter as our society became more and more enamored with AI: It's fun! It helps corporations make money! It writes my papers for me! Yet it may well be that we are entering into a Faustian bargain with AI, and we stand to lose far more than we will gain.

You don't have to be a luddite to be wary of AI—many risks have been well documented by experts. Even if a doomsday, Skynet-like event never happens, there are many other serious concerns that have already come to fruition: the theft of intellectual property, the borrowing of celebrities' images and voices without their permission, the creation of deepfakes to spread misinformation and propaganda, and academic dishonesty. To be fair, there are surely upsides to this technology as well. For instance, AI holds great potential in assisting doctors to diagnose medical problems and treat patients. However, from my perspective as an educator, I am troubled by what this technology may mean to my students' education.

I understand that there was never a golden age of academic honesty. Some students are always going to do as little as possible to get by (and I have found this type of student to be in the extreme minority), and they will no doubt find a way to plagiarize, whether by using AI, buying a paper from the internet, or asking a friend if they can "borrow" one of theirs. Educators have dealt with these types of cheating for a long time. What worries me is the gradual decay of students' writing ability by the normalization and institutionalization of AI. Already I have heard professors in multiple disciplines (even English!) say words to the effect of "AI is here, so we might as well teach students how to use it." This is a sentiment I will never endorse.

Why do we write? Why do we assign essays to students? Why do we spend years and years training them to write at the college level? Because when a student writes, they take in information, process it in their minds, and then express their own ideas through language. This is how students learn, how they make information their own, how they produce new knowledge, and how they critically think about the world around them. We don't assign essays to give students busy work or to be gate keepers of some ivory-tower community; we assign writing because the struggle with words and ideas that accompanies all writing is at the heart of education. Students need instructors to guide them on how to conduct academic research, how to test the ideas of others, how to organize information into a logical order, how to choose words that will effect an appropriate tone and appeal to a particular audience, and to see how their work fits into the broader conversation of an academic discipline. To sacrifice this type of education and substitute it with instruction on how to work a search box until the system gives the student the essay they want is a woefully misguided notion. Firstly, students don’t need instruction on how to use generative AI—it’s easy enough to learn in five minutes. Secondly, teaching students how to produce texts with AI so they may then replicate this experience in the corporate world is an abandonment of education in favor of job training. There is of course nothing wrong with teaching skills for particular trades, but what I mean by “education” is the ability to think for oneself, and offering students instruction in AI instead of in how to write robs them of the opportunity to learn how to think for themselves.

My own institution has already purchased a subscription to AI software for the coming academic year. This software boasts several features: it can paraphrase an assignment, produce a research plan, “help” brainstorm, generate an outline, change the tone (with just the click of a button!), give feedback (without the hassle of interacting with a human by talking to a professor or visiting the writing center), and generate citations. Now that my students will have access to this university-sanctioned technology, how will I ever persuade them to write without it? How do any of us make administrators see that making sense of an assignment sheet, creating a research plan, organizing information, or carefully choosing words to achieve the right tone for a particular audience *is* the assignment? This technology robs our students of an education. AI may create more polished writing, but at what cost?

In *The Stones of Venice* (1851-1853), John Ruskin writes, “To banish imperfection is to destroy expression, to paralyze vitality. The purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love color the most. Imperfection is in some sort essential to all that we know in life.” The past half-century of composition theory has said something similar, that process is more important than product, because process is what causes intellectual growth. Ruskin again:

> Understand this clearly: you can teach a man to draw a straight line, and to carve it; and

> to copy and carve any number of given lines or forms, with admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind: but if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks, and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man[1] of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool.

If we are going to continue to offer a liberal arts education in our universities, if we are to provide experiences that teach our students to be humans and not “animated tools[s]” or mindless Eloi, then we can’t allow AI-generated texts to replace writing. It is a betrayal of everything higher education stands for.

I hope I’m wrong. I hope that future generations will look back on people like me and smile at our unfounded fears. But I worry that we are at the edge of something destructive, something that will accelerate the already decades-long decline of the humanities. AI may one day give students access to flawless (if soulless) writing, but if our universities continue to sanction its use as a “tool,” then we will be producing graduates who resemble the Eloi, unable to think for themselves, prey to whatever predators may be lurking in the dark, and liable to be swept away by even shallow streams, with no one capable of doing anything about it.

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[1] Substitute “human” here.

Articles

The Male Gaze and Masochism: The Construction and Penetration of the Phantom Automaton in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*

Nat Steenbergh

Many Victorian classics have been read within the vein of approaching the “Woman Question” of the time period. That is to say, Victorian authors were concerned with the idea of women's economic, social, and political liberation. More than this, I would suggest that Victorian reflections on women’s issues, identities, and changing social roles in fact prefigured some of the questions and concerns that contemporary fiction takes up today in relation to posthumanism and the broader question of “being human.” The Victorian woman was one of the key and most important figures in the early discourses of posthumanism. Victorian literature uncovers the embodiment of what it is to be a human-like subject who is somehow less than, inferior, or objectified (disassembled) into various parts and sensations for the use and pleasure of others.

Many authors before me have explored a similar connection. William Cohen in his work *Embodied: Victorian Literature and the Senses* (2009) argues that it is through the senses that Victorians tackle the question of what it means to be human. Cohen states that “sense perception enables embodied subjects to experience themselves as objects, and objects reciprocally to function as subjects, so as permit a mutual perviousness between self and world” (Cohen 6). Cohen rightly points out the use of the body as a central site for the experience of humanness. But what Cohen overlooks in his analysis of the Victorian senses is how this framing of humanness can be extended in specific relation to the Victorian “woman question” as an early formulation of today’s posthumanism. This project seeks to extend Cohen’s examination of the senses through the lens of the posthuman to include and disassemble women characters in Victorian Literature as the original site of an ongoing investigation into what it means to be human.

In her work *The Victorians and Visual Imagination* (2000), Kate Flint is concerned with the Victorians' interest in how the senses paved the way for new modes of perceiving the world around them. Flint outlines the various technology, psychology, and art influenced how non-material aspects of being human became prevalent in Victorian culture:

> Victorians ways of seeing, in broad terms, were both modelled upon and effectively legitimated by, certain dominant physiologists, and of natural scientists, whose work with the microscope in particular provided an endless source of comments filtering into popular culture about how the invisible could be brought to view, and how knowledge and control over the natural world could be thus be obtained. (8)

Flint is concerned with how Victorians deepened their understanding of the human experience through the new discoveries of the time period. However, Flint does not extend her argument to consider how these Victorian scientific advancements have implemented gender bias that continue into modernity. Megan Ward in her book *Seeming Human* (2018) explores the idea of contemporary rhetoric being applied to Victorian novels. Her work divulges that characters in Victorian realism can be read as representations of automated intelligence (AI) (2). Ward is particularly interested in how these characters behave as scripted, programmed subjects similar to modern representations of AI. But what Ward overlooks is how Victorian sensationalism is both at the heart of AI and Victorian characters. Ward addresses how the Victorian mind portrays these characters as AI, whereas this project looks at the physicality of the gendered body as the center of both its social construction and its disassembly.

This project focuses on the set of sensory, affective, and embodied phenomena Victorians associated with the emergent genre of sensation and the complicated relation sensation has always had with realism. I will say more about these genres below. For now, it is worth clarifying that when I say "senses" I mean what is generally concerned with how it feels to be human, especially in terms of sight, sound, touch, and inner affective feeling. The essence of humanness is not just something ethereal or vague but a set of affects, drives, and social relations (being seen, being felt, being recognized by others as well as oneself) that has material properties. Humanness is not located internally in the body or psyche but can be observed and felt on and in the body at the level of touch, sight, and contact. How humanness can be observed in the literary world is through the representation of emotions, feelings, and actions of characters within literary works. The body itself becomes the narrative, social, and epistemological center for defining and interrogating humanness. Through the body's senses subjectivity is not just about the soul or the mind, but rather the physicality of being human. It is through the senses that subjectivity is challenged and becomes undone. Subjectivity is not bound by the ethereal but includes the fleshy existence of humans. Having the body as the center of human experience allows for a closer examination of what makes a subject. This disassembly of subjectivity is not bound by the material but becomes porous, taking on new meanings of what it entails to be human. I am not only concerned with subjectivity, but how the social construction of gender affects that subjectivity. "The Woman Question" is not just centered on the individual woman but on the social depiction of their interactions with others. We see that the Victorians not only question the economic, political, and social roles of women, but what womenness and humanity mean such that one can contend "a woman is a human." The Woman Question raised in sensational and realist novels retains an emphasis on feeling, sight, and touch that in this way disassembles the human.

To solidify the connection between the Posthuman and the Victorian, I turn to Thomas Huxley's 1879 article titled, "On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata," which describes how the mind works. Writings from the era suggest that Victorians had acute anxieties about the human mind and human subjectivity in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. Suzy Anger points out that Huxley's theory that "humans are conscious automata" had a "profound hold on the Victorian cultural imagination" (50). The idea of conscious automata was born out of the industrial revolution and the production of machinery to perform tasks brought into question the relationship between the mind and the physicality of human actions. Huxley interrogates the idea of how the mind and the body act in ways that have no "motive" and even goes so far to compare humans to "machinery" (Anger 51). As Anger also points out, Huxely's article was summarization of cultural ideas that had been accepted by Victorian society for many (51). Huxley theorizes that human impulsiveness leads to the mind being more akin to machinery. Huxley's argument rests on the idea that human "consciousness" plays little role in the actions of humans. Instead, he surmises that "reflexes," devoid of emotion, account for human actions, thus making conscious actions harder to define. Huxely articulates the comparison of the machine to human action, stating "as the steam-whistle which accompanies the work of a locomotive engine is without influence upon its machinery" (50). The knowledge that the comparison between machine and human action was relevant to the Victorians plays an integral role in my analysis. However, I complicate this comparison by bringing in the concept of gender and how gender may play a role in the automaton we see in Brontë's work.

Posthuman theories often presume the self-evident asexuality or liberated, post-gender queerness of AI. For example, in her now famous "Cyborg Manifesto" (1985), Donna Haraway asserts that "the cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; it has no truck with bisexuality, preoedipal symbiosis, un-alienated labor, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts in a higher unity" (2). Haraway explains that cyborgs do not have a gender and are in fact part of the world free from the confines of the male and female, ultimately blurring gender dichotomies. However, Haraway's statement is ambiguous and warrants unpacking and perhaps pushing back against. This article asks if it is really possible for new technologies to exist outside of the sex/gender structure.

Judith Butler in her analysis of gender in "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" (1991) offers another approach to gender, and I make use of her understanding of gender's relation to being throughout this project:

> If gender is drag, and if it is an imitation that regularly produces the ideal it attempts to approximate, then gender is a performance that produces the illusion of an inner sex or essence or psychic gender core; it produces on the skin, through the gesture, the move, the gait (that array of corporeal theatrics understood as gender presentation), the illusion of an inner depth...The psyche is not "in" the body but in the very signifying process through which that body comes to appear it is the lapse in repetition as well as its compulsion, precisely what the performance seeks to deny and that which compels it from the start. (728)

Butler asserts that gender is not just an internal expression but is apparent by the "signifying process" of performance (728). There is a physicality to the perceived reality of gender, that which is produced "through the gesture, the move, the gait" (728). Butler continues to insist that the performance of gender is the very act of who we are, and thus part of our identity (or how we "come to appear"): "In opposition to theatrical or phenomenological models which take the gendered self to be prior to its acts, I will understand constituting acts not only as constituting the identity of the actor, but as constituting that identity as a compelling illusion, an object of *belief*" ("Performative" 520). In other words, gender performance and identity are intertwined. It is not that gender comes before the gender performance but rather the performance constitutes the "I." Butler continues analyzing the interior and exterior of gender performance, stating "I am suggesting that this self is not only irretrievably 'outside,' constituted in social discourse, but that the ascription of interiority is itself a publicly regulated and sanctioned form of essence fabrication" (Performative 528). Butler insists that there is no performance of gender if there is not an interior embodiment of that gender. There is both an internal and external regulation that motivates gender performance and thus the identity of the performer. This article seeks to establish a link between posthuman theories and gender/queer studies. Using Brontë's novels (*Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Villette* (1853)), I look at instances where the Victorian automaton emerges. I argue that, as Huxely's article establishes, the Victorian automaton is not a physical being but rather the result of Victorian ideals and established moral code that creates the "Victorian Lady." For this reason, I dub this automaton the "phantom automaton" because it quite literally exists only in the consciousness (or lack of consciousness) of the mind. However, similar to modern technologies of today (Siri and Alexa), a gendering of this automaton occurs. It is not just an automaton but rather a woman automaton. In order for Brontë's characters (Jane and Lucy) to resist the reflexive automaton of the mind, they must first combat the Victorian social structure and male gaze that forces them to become the "Victorian Lady."

Charlotte Brontë's use of heroines in *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* provides an intimate look at women's experiences in the nineteenth century. In both novels, Brontë is concerned with images of power structures and how these women maneuver and find pleasure within those power structures, particularly in relation to technologies of the gaze and the panopticon. Both heroines, Jane and Lucy, are outsiders within their world—Jane as a governess and Lucy as an English teacher in a French school. The othering of these two characters, I argue, allows them to be precursors for today's othered posthuman characters. Jane famously asks Rochester, "do you think I am an automaton?" (292). Not only does Jane signify the otherness she feels but also demonstrates that this idea of automated intelligence was not just a vague concept in the nineteenth century but a concrete idea and image. It is through Brontë's exploration of the psychological process of surveillance that she reveals to the reader the use of observation and how humans change their behavior according to the surveillance of them. Jane and Lucy both participate in putting on artificial personalities to placate the power structures, i.e. the patriarchal systems of power within the novel. Both Jane and Lucy consciously curate their behavior, and both heroines use observation as a way to both see the power structures within the novel and to enact their own humanity, which emerges in *Villette* as the female heroine's queer and deeply human masochism.

The scene halfway through *Jane Eyre* when Rochester and Jane finally confess their love for each other is one filled with passion and anger. Jane, who is under the impression that she and Rochester are spiritual equals and in love despite the differences of their class and gender, is disturbed by Rochester's uncouth teasing when he tells her that he indeed will have a bride but implies this bride will not be Jane. Rochester knows that Jane thinks he is referring to Blanche Ingram and pursues this joke intentionally: "My bride! What bride? I have no bride! ... Yes,—I will!—I will!" (292). Faced with the sudden revelation that Rochester has chosen another woman more fitting of his noble status, Jane is caught off guard. She reacts in anger ("something like passion") giving voice to one of the novel's most memorable statements on women's equality:

> "I tell you I must go!" I retorted, roused to something like passion. "Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? *Do you think I am an automaton*?—*a machine without*

> *feelings?* and can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong!—I have as much soul as you,—and full as much heart! (292; emphasis added)

In this moment Jane knows that if Rochester marries Blanche, she cannot allow herself to stay at Thornfield because the only way she could do so would be to become "an automaton" or "a machine without feelings" (292). Her banter with Rochester and the equality she has sensed between their two souls will be forgotten, forcing her to hide her emotions and affect permanently becoming a "soulless and heartless" machine (292). In processing her passionate emotions at the prospect of becoming the automaton, we might say that Jane *creates* the automaton. By *creates*, I mean not a literal construction of another person but rather the construction immaterial persona. That is, the automaton becomes a stand-in for Jane in the hypothetical situation that Rochester will withdraw his love and marry someone else. This machine is Jane or at least an *aspect* of Jane—the specter of Jane that she thought she was moving beyond or transcending in becoming Rochester's equal soulmate before what she interprets as a cruel return to reality.

In this nineteenth-century reference to artificial intelligence, Brontë imagines a double of the Victorian heroine, one that is provocatively artificial or robotic. Doubles, of course, are nothing new in feminist criticism of Brontë's novels. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in their seminal work *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979)*,* first point out the prevalence of the double in the repression of Victorian women in Victorian literature. This seminal work culminates in the revelation that Bertha Mason—the eponymous madwoman in the attic—acts as the dark double of Jane and represents the pure emotion and anger that Victorian women cannot express. Bertha, as they suggest, is "Jane's truest and darkest double: she is the angry aspect of the orphan child, the ferocious secret self Jane has been trying to repress ever since her days at Gateshead" (360). Bertha, as Gilbert and Gubar surmise, is the phantom of Jane's own feelings. This phantom trapped in the attic of a mansion, crying out in the night, and setting Thornfield Hall on fire is a metaphor for Jane's need to escape her own environment through anger and affect. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in her article "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism" (1985), analyses Bertha Mason not just as a double of Jane but how Bertha functions in novel "to render indeterminate the boundary between human and animal and thereby to weaken her entitlement under the spirit if not the letter of the Law" (249). Spivak's argument is that Bertha demonstrates how "the politics of imperialism" determine both human identity and the human soul (250). Bertha Mason also offers another look at how this phantom automaton is constructed. Rochester does not want Jane to be his *bride* but rather a machine *without* feelings. He wants Jane to continue her work as his employee, but to lock away her own emotions and feelings. In other words, Rochester wants Jane to be the "white" version of Bertha Mason. Blanche Ingram, as an example of an accomplished Victorian lady, later emphasizes this whiteness.

Who is this other being, this other double—the automaton? Critics have not yet addressed the Victorian automaton and the questions of artificiality the automaton puts on the table. I suggest that the automaton arises not as the Victorian woman's taboo excess of emotions but as an equally horrifying emotion*less* phantom, a kind of uncanny sister of the "madwoman in the attic." This phantom is not locked in the attic; rather, it is the hypothetical reality of drudgery that Jane imagines living when Rochester rejects her yet retains her as his machine-like employee.

Jane Eyre is also a novel that allows us to recognize the importance of the male gaze in the social construction of gender and the deconstructive process I am calling the disassembly of the human. The reason Jane responds with anger in the passage above is because she believes she has misunderstood Rochester's affections. She suddenly sees herself not through her own desire but through his eyes, and the refocusing of this gaze brings her back down to earth, rendering her not the bride but the automation. Jane, and the reader through her, are forced to consider the possibility that Rochester has all along conceived of the Victorian governess as society has constructed her: a loveless, unfeeling servant rather than a feeling woman capable of equal emotion and passion. Jane's explosive response to this realization is less a reaction of the jilted woman than a revulsion to the implicit power structure that determines her social relation to Rochester at this moment—at stake, in other words, is Rochester's perception of the working woman and the broader social framework from which this perception springs. To be a working Victorian woman, as Jane implies here, is to become sexless, emotionless, and cold.

Yet as Jane's explosive rhetoric indicates, this is a role she rejects. She knows that to be a full human—one with a soul and heart—she must resist the automaton that Victorian women represent in the eyes of others. Brontë calls attention to power structures, the male gaze, and the construction of women's subjectivity within disciplinary structures in order to embody and interrogate what it means to be a woman and to be a human. Power structures and the ability to observe and react to those structures are one of the encoded aspects of human existence within the world. A woman can become an automaton just by the way she is seen by others. To what extent can the Victorian woman resist becoming the automaton? This is what Brontë seems to ask through Jane.

This article delves deeper into the disassembly of the human in Victorian novels by offering a compilation and analysis of key close readings and examples of the figure of the pre-posthuman female automaton as it appears in both Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and later novel *Villette*. Although this is the only passage in which Brontë uses the specific word "automaton," automatic, artificial, and unreal figures of women's living lifelessness linger on the margins of both of these texts. The automaton is a shadow monster, a looming figure that threatens to annihilate not just Jane but also her humanness: "Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless?" (292). The automaton is a foe formed by society and power structures and recognized and brought into existence by Jane's own perception of herself. It is thus difficult to contend with, even as it reflects an aspect of the Victorian heroine's own self.

Throughout *Jane Eyre,* we see Jane confronted by characters who embody the automaton figure both in her childhood and adult life. Although Jane's tendency towards shyness, repression, and quietness has been read as shame by previous critics of the novel, I assert that Jane's hard exterior and hesitancy to express herself with "something like passion" for most of the novel speaks to the looming threat of the automaton.[2] Miss Temple, Jane's admired instructor, known for her kindness towards Jane and Helen, becomes the prime template for what Jane believes to be a properly behaved Victorian woman (automaton). Gilbert and Gubar rightly point out that Miss Temple is a character constructed "by Mrs. Sarah Ellis ... conduct book for Victorian girls" (344). This conduct manual emphasizes the religious duty of women in the household and that these women had an obligation to instill moral values in children. Miss Temple feeds the hungry and—as her name implies—shows God's quiet kindness to all; Miss Temple is Jane's example of the perfect Victorian woman. As Jane states after her encounter with Miss Temple: "I resolved, in the depth of my heart, that I would be most moderate—most correct; and, having reflected a few minutes in order to arrange coherently what I had to say" (84). This is the moment when Jane leaves behind her childhood outburst to turn to emulate the quiet demeanor of her teacher and role model. Like Miss Temple, she will "be most moderate." As Joan Perkins observes, the religious education of young girls in the nineteenth century centers on "the subordination of women" (31). Miss Temple not only exemplifies this kind of teaching, but her influence on Jane's own construction of her shadow automaton emphasizes the social construction of the automaton. Jane sees Miss Temple put on the mask of womanhood to suppress her emotions, performing the decorum expected of her as a Victorian human who is gendered female.

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[2] Jane's hard exterior has also been read as a residual effect of shame from her childhood. Ashley Bennett in her article "Shameful Signification" (2010) discusses that shame rather than anger works within the narrative of "contours of gendered interiority and social relations" (300). Similar to Gilbert and Gubar's argument, Bennett argues that shame, not anger, suppresses Jane's self-expression (300-01). The crux of Bennett's argument is that we as readers are introduced to Jane's childhood shame especially Lowood. Though Jane subdues her anger through the shame implemented in her life, there is another childhood experience that informs Jane's perception of the automaton.

This is the first instance of Jane beginning to recognize and construct the double person that will become her own automaton phantom, one who is quiet and careful about what she says. Yet, the automaton is sustainable neither for Miss Temple nor, ultimately, for Jane. Despite having a quiet demeanor, Miss Temple still has flashes of rage under her quiet exterior. These are exposed, for example, by her hatred of Mr. Brocklehurst (the cruel headmaster): "Mr. Brocklehurst is not a god: nor is he even a great and admired man: he is little liked here," she tells the girls angrily (82). Miss Temple has suppressed her rage at the male overseer of her school, and she has become the quiet automaton that is required of her, but Brontë calls attention to the difficulty of this suppression. As Gilbert and Gubar suggest, this tension is a common feature not just in this novel but across Victorian literature and culture.

Whereas Miss Temple is an example of an automaton that follows the religious education typical for young Victorian girls, Jane, later in the novel, encounters another automaton that represents an "accomplished" Victorian woman: Blanche Ingram. The beautiful Blanche Ingram, clothed in white, is docile and "greatly admired" (185). As her name and clothing implies, she is a Blanche, white, or "Blank" canvas on which Rochester can paint his image of the perfect

Victorian lady.[3] Mrs. Fairfox, the housekeeper, discloses to Jane that the reason Blanche is so greatly admired is not just her good looks, but because she is "accomplished" and wealthy (187). The suggestion here is that Blanche performs as a Victorian lady should, singing songs and playing the piano for the pleasure of others (185). Like a robot reproducing the written script, Blanche is able to mimic the songs of others. Blanche, then, is not dissimilar to Miss Temple; she is another example of the automaton that Jane fears becoming: a blank canvas that can reflect and mimic in the ways expected of the ideal woman without ever creating or feeling for itself. We cannot ignore the fact that Blanche's name and status positions her as a white Victorian lady. The horror of the automaton is not just the lack of emotions but also the implicit whiteness of the automaton. Blanche Ingram is the docile white accomplished woman, whereas Bertha Mason (as previously stated) is the emotional Creole woman.

Blanche becomes one of the obstacles that Jane must overcome in her courtship with Rochester. In the passage above, Blanche is the hypothetical bride, the woman who threatens to displace Jane and render the Victorian heroine a machine without feelings. When we explore the specific aspects of the automaton that Jane fears, a paradox emerges in relation to the figure of the other woman, Blanche. Jane fears that if Rochester marries Blanche, she will be turned into a bland, "blanche[d]," or boring character similar to Blanche. In other words, Jane fears she will become the well-mannered meek Victorian woman that society expects her to be. *Jane Eyre* cannot accommodate this nightmare any more than it can accommodate the angry Bertha Mason. Yet Blanche is herself a kind of automatic woman. Like the shadow image of the automaton itself,

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[3] Rochester's male gaze defines how Blanche interacts with him. Laura Mulvey in her seminal work *Visual and Other Pleasures* (1989), describes the psychoanalysis of the male gaze in film. As she explains, "The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on the female which is styled accordingly" (62). Mulvey, to explain this gaze, relies on film shots that pan over a woman mimicking a gaze that objectifies women. The male characters in Brontë's novels project their own image of how a woman should behave onto their female counterparts. It is through their gaze that these men not only reflect their own fantasy but also exert their power over others. What makes Brontë's work distinct is that Jane is aware of the male character's surveillance.

Blanche is a side character within *Jane Eyre*—we rarely hear her voice and she does not have a prominent place in the novel's conclusion. For this reason, Blanche fades into the background of the plot when Jane ascends to the role of true "bride." Yet, like the automaton who emerges in the scene above, Blanche still casts a shadow over Jane's own heart. The threat of the looming automaton is removed from Jane's courtship by attaching Blanche more firmly to this undesirable role.

Art and the male gaze are crucial in the distinction the novel draws between Jane and Blanche. After feeling jealous of the attention that Blanche receives from Rochester, Jane reflects on her feelings towards Rochester, stating, "*You* [are] gifted with the power of pleasing him?" (186). The reason for Jane's jealousy is that she feels that Rochester's attention and surveillance are nothing more than an employer observing his worker. Whereas Blanche is capable of satisfying the desire of Rochester's male gaze and thus pleasing him, Jane feels that she herself cannot adequately imitate the "accomplished" Victorian woman that Rochester wants. To suppress her emotions and so "moderate" her passions, as she has learned from Miss Temple, Jane paints two portraits that represent the male gaze of the novel: one of the paintings is titled "Portrait of a Governess, disconnected, poor, and plain" and the other is of Blanche "an accomplished lady of rank" (187). The purpose of these paintings in the novel is worth considering in relation to the theme of the double. Jane vows to compare these portraits in order to remind herself that she does not resemble the Victorian woman that Rochester is expected to marry. The title of Jane's portrait of Blanche signifies yet again that Blanche's performance of an accomplished, wealthy lady is what Jane sees as attractive to Rochester. Yet, whereas Jane is indeed plain on the outside, it is Blanche who becomes the automaton. She lacks depth and a complex humanity. Unlike Blanche—whom Gilbert and Gubar deem the "denizen of Vanity Fair"—Jane is able to *create*, not just mimic

(350). In preferring Jane over Blanche, both Rochester—and the novel itself—confirm the desirability of the heroine who *is* rather than merely acts the part of the real, feeling, creating Victorian woman.

As previously mentioned, Jane's cold exterior hides a tumultuous storm of emotions. Jane herself frequently recognizes this inconsistency:

> Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts, as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. (129-30)

In this passage Jane emphasizes that "women feel just as men feel," indicating to the reader once again that what the Victorian social construction of women as unfeeling machines lacks is emotional expression, which causes them to become "too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation" (129). What Jane is concerned with here is the equality or fullness of humanity between men and women. Jane herself understands that women are not just the "rigid" beings but are capable of complex feelings and emotions (129). Jane even calls this kind of thinking "narrow-minded" as she advocates for the same equality she feels with Rochester. This stagnation and restraint is the figure of the automaton that Jane repeatedly encounters and actively tries not to become. She knows that women in general copy the pre-molded version of an accomplished Victorian woman. Brontë calls attention to scenes of women's sensation (creative expression and art-making/experiencing) as the determinative site of being and acting as "the human" who has a soul equal to others (men, non-clones). In this way, the novel positions "being human" in opposition to “being a woman,” even as it questions that division. The Victorian human is the woman who is not the “accomplished woman” but something else, something more.

Unlike Blanche, Jane does not perform or mimic, but creates and provides glimpses of an autonomous and creative “inside”—which is what Rochester comes to see and love as her “soul.” It is shocking for Rochester to realize that a seemingly emotionless automaton is capable of creating something that grows out of her own emotional expression. The novel’s proto-feminist message emerges not from Rochester’s politically progressive views on women’s equality, (he is not just an unlikely feminist), but more specifically from Rochester’s perception of this inward quality of the working, machine-like woman. At first, Rochester is dubious of Jane’s artistic capability. While evaluating her paintings to see if Jane is an accomplished governess, Rochester questions, “Where did you get your copies?” to which Jane replies, “Out of my head” (146). Rochester is surprised to learn that Jane does not just mimic or copy images that she has already but is able to produce something and something that is a part of her. It is through her creation—Jane’s art— that Rochester catches glimpses of Jane’s feelings and comes to recognize that she is more than an automaton. Jane demonstrates to Rochester that she is indeed not an automaton—“soulless and heartless”—but a complex human being not just defined as a Victorian woman. Brontë is still conceding to the power of the male gaze; however, the novel constructs Rochester into a kind of man who sees the soul within the Victorian automaton.

Blanche and Miss Temple are representations of the shadow automaton that are kept at bay in the novel. However, after her marriage is interrupted by the revelation that Bertha is already Rochester’s wife, Jane is forced back into the role of the automaton when she begins teaching poor orphans at the school in Morton. During this time, when Jane seems to have fully embodied the automaton templated by Miss Temple, she feels another aspect of her life tugging on her:

> At this period of my life, my heart far oftener swelled with thankfulness than sank with dejection: and yet, reader, to tell you all, in the midst of this calm, this useful existence—after a day passed in honourable exertion amongst my scholars, an evening spent in drawing or reading contentedly alone—I used to rush into strange dreams at night: dreams many-coloured, agitated, full of the ideal, the stirring, the stormy—dreams where, amidst unusual scenes, charged with adventure, with agitating risk and romantic chance, I still again and again met Mr. Rochester. (423)

The stormy dreams represent the anger and feelings Jane has chosen to ignore. The "stirring" sensation she feels is not just a sexual sensation but the reality that she has given up part of herself in order to perform in a socially acceptable way for someone of her rank. Again and again, Jane's mind wanders to Rochester, the one who has recognized her status as more than the working machine. More than romantic longing, her desire for Rochester in this part of the novel is thus her desire to be the non-automaton.

In this reading of the novel, I argue that Jane fully rejects the shadow automaton once she rejects St. John Rivers's marriage proposal. Jane realizes that St. John can never truly know her when she reveals to him one of her portraits. When Jane shows St. John her painting, his reaction is to refuse to look at Jane: "he shunned [her] eye" (428). The revelation of Jane's soul through her painting is too much for him to understand. By ignoring her gaze (shunning her eye), St. John also ignores not only Jane's desires and feelings but her capacity as a feeling and desiring human subject. At Thornfield Hall Rochester and Jane become part of the same soul through their mutual understanding of Jane's paintings. The novel gives us reason to believe this has much to do with their shared vision or gaze of a woman's equality as defined as her inner expressive depth. However, this shared vision is only achieved by Rochester's loss of sight (male gaze) in order to truly “see” Jane. Rochester and Jane are equals on a deeper emotional and almost spiritual level. But St. John cannot feel what Jane feels. St. John’s reaction to her painting even prompts her to anger: “he almost started at my sudden and strange abruptness: he looked at me astonished” (428). The same anger from her childhood outbursts begins to resurface in this rejection.

The automaton is no longer in control of Jane. After Jane rejects St. John Rivers’ proposal of marriage, she finds herself happily “quite rich” due to her uncle’s death (501). She travels to the rubble remains of Thornfield Hall and finds a blind Rochester. All monstrous automatons are removed from her life. She is no longer in the shadow of Miss Temple or Blanche Ingram and thus Jane and Rochester are free to live out their lives with no threat of the monsters—whether in the attic or in the shadows— to interfere. This conclusion to *Jane Eyre* is both simplistic and overly happy. Jane no longer has to fight the automaton within—as if by rejoining with Rochester the monstrous double of the automaton ceases to exist. This conclusion seems to imply that the automaton can be vanquished. However, Charlotte Brontë’s later novel *Villette* (1853) offers more complex examples of the monstrous automaton. In this novel, Lucy Snowe discovers other, more convincing solutions to deal with the threat posed by the soulless working machine known as the Victorian woman. Within *Jane Eyre* the monsters fade away when Jane becomes an independent woman and finds a marital partner whose gaze grants her human equality and fullness of being. Lucy Snowe is granted neither excessive riches nor a happy marriage; instead, she takes masochistic delight in penetrating her own automaton.

Jane’s conflict with her own automaton and the automatons around her disappears at the end of novel, leaving the conflict of the automaton unresolved. But in *Villette* the main heroine tackles her own automaton by taking masochistic delight in her own and others' automaton. Lucy participates in the non-human characteristics of women in order to gain pleasure from being seen or treated as less than. Jane seems to ignore the automaton within, but Lucy finds agency by relating, perversely, to her own automaton. Masochism, as I will demonstrate, is not just a sexual desire or proclivity but the emergence of a kind of humanness or strategy of being human available to the Victorian woman. As a queer sexuality and social positioning against a repressive and heterosexual norm, masochism becomes a way for Lucy to work outside the bonds of feminine gender roles that would render her the automaton. Lucy subversively embraces the artificial persona of the automaton, thereby disassembling notions of reality and being human.

Lucy's double life is often read as possessing a queer subtext, both in relation to masochism and Lucy's homoerotic desire for other women. In *Between Women* (2007), Sharon Marcus observes that, "Lucy is constantly stymied in female friendships she constructs as obstacles rather than conduits to marriage" (107). To Marcus, Lucy is a repressed lesbian who is stifling her chances of marriage with her attraction to her female friends. In this queer reading of the novel, Marcus dismisses Lucy's masochistic tendencies as part of her "feelings for women and men" that "take shape as suffering, pain, and privation" (107). I argue that Lucy's queerness stems from these self-harming and violent fantasies that are driven by degrading scenarios. In broadening the definition of queer beyond same-sex attraction, Lucy not only exhibits desire for other women but also an interest in kink pleasures, namely her affinity for sadomasochistic thoughts, imagery, and actions. Within this context, Lucy discovers a new and queer mode of relating to the shadowing monster of the automaton.

Even more than Jane perhaps, Lucy is well aware of her double life as a woman—not just the double life that the construction of the shadow automaton creates, but also the double life of her own masochistic fantasies. First, I will establish the basis for Lucy's masochistic sexual fantasies before close reading passages that I argue represent the shadow automaton. After Lucy is interviewed by Madame Beck, her new mysterious employer in Rue Fossette, she contemplates her own thoughts: "I seemed to hold two lives—the life of thought, and that of reality; and, provided the former was nourished with a sufficiency of the strange necromantic joys of fancy, the privileges of the latter might remain limited to daily bread, hourly work, and a roof of shelter" (140). Lucy's double life, her "life of thought," is often read as a representation of this repression (140). For example, Mary Jacobus sees Lucy's confession of a double life as a means to guide the reader to "misread it [the narrative]" (43). Even if Lucy is misdirecting the reader, she is well aware of her secret desires; aware enough to feed them with "necromantic joys" (140). Throughout the rest of the narrative, Lucy divulges to the reader these dark and violent joys. Lucy actively feeds these desires, causing them to grow. Thus, Lucy's doubleness is evident not just in her repression, but in the queerness of the sexual pleasure she seems to derive from her maintenance of a double life. Jacobus asserts that Lucy's double life is represented in the novel by "ghostly subtext" (43). I argue that Lucy is aware of these "ghostly" desires and "nourish[es]" her desires through masochistic fantasies of her own powerlessness. This process at once sustains the automaton (feeding it), while creating the space for Lucy to be a real human in her secret doubleness and distance from the maintained necromantic fantasy.

Walter D. Mignolo makes a similar observation about humanness in his article "Sylvia Wynter: What Does It Mean to be Human?" Mignolo asserts that Wynter's work demonstrates that humanness is not independent from the categories and concepts that create it, stating that

> [t]he problem of the Human is thus not identity-based per se but in the *enunciations* of what it means to be Human –enunciation that are concocted and circulated by those who most convincingly (and powerfully) imagine the "right" or "noble" or "moral" characteristic of Human … [t]he human is therefore the product of a particular

> epistemology, yet it appears to be (and is accepted as) a naturally independent entity existing in the world." (108)

The regulation and curation of the "human" through morality and nobleness is seen through the manufacturing and creation of the "Victorian Lady." However, Lucy indulges in the immoral and thus creates her own humanness outside of the scripted, automated human that Victorian morals create. Lucy actively seeks out masochistic delights to break free of the phantom Victorian automaton.

In various scenes throughout *Villette*, Lucy takes masochistic delight in violent biblical stories. For example, while the Catholic students and teachers discuss the "tales of moral martyrdom," Lucy sits nearby listening (Brontë 184). The stories turn violent, discussing "trampling to deep degradation high-born ladies … the most tormented slaves" (184). These stories of ladies subjected to slave treatment causes Lucy to become "burning hot" and her wrist begins "throbbing" (184). Lucy is clearly agitated and arguably sexually excited by these stories to the point where she "could sit no longer" (184). The image of a lady forced to be humiliated and tortured causes Lucy's imagination to come alive. Lucy acts out violently, "breaking off the points of [her] scissors by involuntarily sticking them somewhat deep in the worm-eaten board of the table" (184). Lucy's action of "sticking" is both sexual and a sign of frustration. Her reaction to these stories shows a glimpse of her "necromantic" pleasures and the type of thoughts that feed them (140). Lucy explores two fantasies of power in her mind: firstly, her masochistic desire as she envies the ladies in the martyr stories and wishes pain upon herself, and secondly she envisions herself as the inflictor of the pain, inhabiting the male role of penetrator. Lucy's phallic act of aggressively stabbing the table is, in this regard, a role reversal enabled by her double life. Indeed, this masochistic doubleness—both receiving and inflicting pain—becomes the model for how

Lucy deals with her own inner monster—her automaton. Through masochism, Lucy finds agency by taking pleasure in the scripted behavior of Victorian women. By participating in the passionless, sexless aspects of Victorian culture that would prevent her from expressing her true desires, Lucy finds humanness through the sexual pleasure she has from the script of the automaton.

As Jack Halberstam argues in *Skin Shows* (2006), gothic sexuality is represented by the gothic monsters defined as "a body haunted by a monstrous sexuality and forced into repressing its Gothic secrets" (20). It is through the repression of sexuality that the gothic monster emerges. Lucy's monsters take the form of a pupil—that Lucy calls a cretin—and a phantom nun who has broken her vow of chastity. During school vacation, Lucy is left alone at the school and becomes the impromptu caretaker of "a poor deformed and imbecile pupil, a sort of cretin" (228). The cretin not only represents Lucy's loneliness but also the automaton. Lucy sees the cretin as the Victorian monster that represents what she fears most: a representation of the dead living. While alone in the school, Lucy is forced to face her loneliness. She is forced in this lonely moment to reevaluate her life, stating that "[she] found it but a hopeless desert: tawny sands, with no green fields, no palm-tree, no well in view" (228). Brontë imagines this existential episode in opposition to the happy cretin who, by virtue of her lack of desire and imaginative inner life, can survive this deprivation. The cretin becomes the face of an emotionless female figure. This figure represents the fear of a woman who cannot "feel" human.

Once Lucy becomes an English teacher, she discovers that Madame Beck's house was previously a convent that had the "inheritance of a ghost-story," a tale in which a "black and white" nun haunts the garden (172). This detail of the nun being both "black and white" mirrors the double nature of Lucy herself—the automaton and Lucy. The nun is the pious image of a Victorian woman, but once the nun breaches her holy vow she is no longer permitted to live. The nun dies, according to the legend, by a live burial for “some sin against her vow” (172). As Eve Sedgwick suggests, the Gothic “live burial” (22) is a metaphor for repression of homosexuality: “A prison which is neither inside nor outside is self-evidently one from which there is no escape” (26). Just as the automaton is buried within the psyche of Lucy and Jane, the nun is buried alive for her deviant desires. The ghost nun in this way can be read as another double, another figure of the automaton monster that lurks inside of Lucy. Like the nun, Lucy is threatened with a living burial. For this reason, perhaps, after coming face to face with the “snowy-veiled woman” in the garden, Lucy comes to the conclusion that, “she came out of my brain” (330). Lucy believes the phantom is literally inside her, an extension of her own imagination.

The ending of the nun’s haunting is mildly underwhelming. The nun of the mind changes into the nun of reality when it is revealed that the specter is actually Ginevra’s lover who has donned the costume to gain access to her at the school (574-75). In a cruel joke, Ginevra gifts Lucy the nun costume with one last fright: “I saw stretched on my bed the old phantom” (569). Spreading the nun across Lucy’s bed becomes a mockery of Lucy’s supposed lack of sexuality. It also lays bare the social construction of the sexless nineteenth-century woman—the nun, as it turns out, is a mere costume or set of clothes. Yet this does not mean that the ghost is not “real.” On the contrary, as Jacobus states, “natural and supernatural are brought ambiguously into play; the nun is at once solid, material, and capable of bringing about changes in the weather” (50). The nun’s supernatural abilities and, as I argue, her sexual significance in relation to Lucy, should not be disregarded. Even the nun costume being placed on Lucy’s bed has queer implications. When Lucy first enters the room, she does not realize it is the nun’s clothing but thinks the nun herself is “stretched on [her] bed” in an almost seductive manner (569). The death of the nun stretched out on Lucy's bed metaphorically represents how Lucy deals with her own internal nun (or automaton): she uses queer sexual pleasure to kill her internal pious Victorian woman.

Whereas the nun and the cretin are physical manifestations of the internal automaton, the automaton reappears in the novel in paintings that Lucy observes in a museum. Jane as an artist uses observation to create art and thus interprets life through art. As a spectator of art Lucy offers a reading of a few different types of painting in the museum. In a gallery, Lucy is particularly taken by a painting of large, voluptuous women "half-reclined on a couch" (275). However, her observation of the Cleopatra is interrupted by M. Paul*,* who asks, "How dare you, a young person, sit coolly down, with the self-possession of a garçon, and look at *that* picture?" (277). Here we see another instance of men trying to control women through the power of surveillance. M. Paul is appalled that Lucy should be interested in a half-clothed woman, and wishes to orient her towards what he considers a more appropriate line of sight. Despite the fact that M. Paul himself is looking at the painting, he wishes to control where Lucy casts her own eyes. It is also worth noting the name "M. Paul" sounds similar to the word "impale." His very act of observing Lucy while she observes the paintings becomes a voyeuristic endeavor with all the sexual undertones that "impale" implies. However, he is wary of the impact the Cleopatra could have on Lucy' own perception of women. Trying to avert her gaze away from a painting that blatantly portrays the female body, M. Paul turns Lucy towards another painting of four "flat, dead, pale, and formal" scenes of women (277). As Margaret Shaw points out, this episode casts Paul as an "exaggerated figure of male censorship" (819). While Shaw is correct in asserting that this is M. Paul censoring Lucy's gaze, Shaw ignores that Lucy herself is also unimpressed by all the images of the women presented to her at the museum, the sensual and the flat alike. Upon observing the four maids in the latter painting, she notes:

> The first represented a "Jeune Fille," coming out of a church-door, a missal in her hand, her dress very prim, her eyes cast down, her mouth pursed up—the image of a most villainous little precocious she-hypocrite. The second, a "Mariée," with a long white veil, kneeling at a prie-dieu in her chamber, holding her hands plastered together, finger to finger, and showing the whites of her eyes in a most exasperating manner. The third, a "Jeune Mère," hanging disconsolate over a clayey and puffy baby with a face like an unwholesome full moon. The fourth, a "Veuve," being a black woman, holding by the hand a black little girl, and the twain studiously surveying an elegant French monument, set up in a corner of some Père la Chaise. All these four "Anges" were grim and grey as burglars, and cold and vapid as ghosts. What women to live with! insincere, ill-humoured, bloodless, brainless nonentities! As bad in their way as the indolent gipsy-giantess, the Cleopatra, in hers. (277-78)

Lucy states it best by saying these women represent, “brainless nonentities” (278). The four maids and the Cleopatra display to Lucy the artificial selves that are available to women; they are mere shells. The word “brainless nonentities” echoes Jane’s feelings about Rochester’s fiancée, Blanche Ingrahm, suggesting that Lucy again perceives the monster of the automaton. Yet, in this novel, Brontë would seem to turn the male gaze inside out. While M. Paul is caught up in the chasteness of the four maids, Lucy penetrates its artificiality, the captured images of what women *should* be in society: chaste virgin or sexual sinner.

This scene between M. Paul and Lucy has flirtatious undertones. As previously discussed, Lucy finds pleasure from Catholic images of religious suffering, particularly “tales of moral martyrdom” (184). The images of the “Jeune Fille" perhaps conjure the same amount of excitement from Lucy, in a different way—not stimulating, but still rousing Lucy to a heightened emotion. M.

Paul likewise is excited by Lucy's bold glances at the other painting of the Cleopatra, the image that borders on pornographic. In *Jane Eyre*, Brontë concedes the determining reality of the male gaze—Rochester can glimpse Jane's soul, which elevates her to full humanity—but in *Villette* Lucy is the gazer; the pleasures and desires are all generated by her. Just as she takes on the male role of sexual penetrator in her masochistic fantasies, Lucy becomes the penetrator not just of the images of the automaton (the flat paintings). It is important to note that Lucy has great disdain for the Cleopatra, calling her "indolent gipsy-giantess" (278). The lounging queen represents to Lucy a lazy image of women. While M. Paul's preferred painting shows women blank and bland, the Cleopatra is the complete opposite. Lucy's reaction to both paintings gives insight into her own aesthetic values. Lucy prefers to live in the shadows, content to be the observer and use her surveillance to penetrate the curated exterior of others. Lucy states, "I like seeking the goddess in her temple, and handling the veil, and daring the dread glance" (564). Neither of the paintings demonstrate to Lucy what it means to be a woman. But these images—because they represent two idealized (i.e. socially scripted) versions of Victorian women—allow Lucy to penetrate them by her own surveillance and to ultimately derive pleasure from the experience. Brontë reveals that this power structure is not just a part of the woman's experience but in fact embodies what it means to be human. Power structures and the ability to observe and react to those structures are one of the encoded aspects of human existence within the posthuman world. This aspect of humanness stems from a gender dichotomy, hence why gender becomes an integrated consequence of posthuman characters.

In *Villette,* Charlotte Brontë demonstrates how surveillance is a form of social construction that plays out in the very narrative and form of the novel. Lucy Snowe is not just aware of the shadow automaton in the same way as Jane, but Lucy goes further to reveal in more depth to the reader the psychological process by which the automaton is created—and the ways the automaton can be controlled actively by women. Not only does Lucy understand how the automaton is created but she herself seeks to see through the curated veil of others:

> I always, through my whole life, liked to penetrate to the real truth; I like seeking the goddess in her temple, and handling the veil, and daring the dread glance. O Titaness among deities! the covered outline of thine aspect sickens often through its uncertainty, but define to us one trait, show us one lineament, clear in awful sincerity; we may gasp in untold terror, but with that gasp we drink in a breath of thy divinity; our heart shakes, and its currents sway like rivers lifted by earthquake, but we have swallowed strength. To see and know the worst is to take from Fear her main advantage. (564)

Lucy seeks to "penetrate" the veil in order to see the true essence of every individual (564). The use of the word penetrate conjures the male sex act, which reveals that Lucy understands the way in which the male gaze influences behavior by "penetrating" her being. However, Lucy is not casting her own fantasy onto an object, but rather replacing the observer with herself. *She* is the one that will be doing the masculine act of penetrating. She will be the one "handling the veil, and daring the dread glance" into the face of the hidden human (Brontë 564). This face is not the madwoman in the attic, but the true nature of someone—their actual humanness. The real monster in Lucy's eyes is the veil. Just as a veil hides the face of a bride until she is presented at the altar, the automaton hides the human soul of the Victorian woman from observers.

After arriving at Rue Fossette, Lucy becomes keenly aware that she will no longer be the observer but also the observed: "Thus did the view appear, seen through the enchantment of distance; but there came a time when distance was to melt for me—when I was to be called down from my watch-tower of the nursery, whence I had hitherto made my observations, and was to be compelled into closer intercourse with this little world of the Rue Fossette" (138). Lucy, as the observer, knows that once she takes the teaching job that enables her to leave her original nursery career behind, she will also come under a new type of surveillance from Madame Beck, the headmistress. Lucy knows that once she leaves the "watch-tower of the nursery" that she will lose some of her power by giving up her vantage point of surveillance (138).

Jane uses the term "automaton" to explain to Rochester what it is to hide her own human feelings; Lucy describes this same construction in similar language as a "mask." Throughout the novel, Lucy explains that she needs to wear a mask in order to hide her true emotions. For example, when M. Paul tries to get Lucy to read classic Greek and Latin, she becomes upset because he clearly knows that she has not been classically trained to read in those languages. He continually stacks classics on her desk in order to provoke her shamed reaction (442). However, Lucy, determined to not show her true anger, explains to the reader that she replaces her countenance with a marbled mask: "Baffled—almost angry—he still clung to his fixed idea; my susceptibilities were pronounced marble—my face a mask" (442). Here we see an example of how Lucy strategically embraced the lifeless, flat "mask" in order to keep her inner feelings and desires secret.

John Hughes argues that Lucy's mask is a protection from her true consciousness, "a problematic affective division between one's inner and outer selves" (721). I agree with Hughes that the mask creates two selves. However, this mask creates not just an inner and outer self, but rather demonstrates the internal struggle of having an inner automaton to reckon with. What Hughes overlooks in his analysis is that Lucy is aware that she puts on a mask to hide her anger. Hughes's argument hinges on the fact that Lucy protects her emotions from being exposed to M. Paul. This is the case, but Hughes continues to state that Lucy does this only out of a "sense of vulnerability" (721). Lucy hides her emotions not necessarily out of a sense of vulnerability, but because she knows that she keeps some form of power by not giving M. Paul the ability to see her irritation. Thus, the exchange above is not only an example of Lucy hiding her inner emotions but an example of how she deliberately constructs of the shadow automaton as a form of power and protection. Jane sees the automaton as an all-consuming monster, one that she must vanquish in order to preserve her own humanness. Lucy, by contrast, takes a queerer yet arguably more active approach to the automaton—embracing the monster in order to protect her own humanness. In seeking to "penetrate" others' veils, Lucy is the one in control of her inner monster. In *The Queer Art of Failure* (2011), Jack Halberstam proposes "masochistic passivity" as a means to "step out of the easy model of transfer of femininity" (131). Specifically, Halberstam examines the way that self-harm brings down patriarchal models of power (133). Lucy's sexual desire revolves around her infatuation with this kind of power and power play. Through her sexual fantasy and "necromantic joys" Lucy demonstrates her pleasure in masochistic and sadistic fantasies (140). But is through her penetration of her own automaton that she is able to take back power that she has lacked her entire life.

In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë establishes the idea of the phantom automaton: the monster that is hidden within her heroines and doubled by other characters within the novel. But in the conclusion there is no real reckoning with the inner monster. Jane, after gaining her independence, is untroubled by the automaton she once feared. However, Brontë's real reckoning with the inner automaton comes in her later novel *Villette*. Brontë constructs a heroine that is content in the pain of existence because she has found a way to derive pleasure from the "living burial" that is the life of the working Victorian woman. As a masochist, Lucy is able to penetrate her automaton for her own pleasure and seeks to penetrate the automaton of others. Through this masochism, Brontë gives the reader a possible template to deal with the phantom automaton. Queerly, Lucy enjoys being and inhabiting the flat, non-human artifice, and this enjoyment is what makes her the most human. It is through the male gaze that the construction of the female automaton emerges, but it is by Lucy's own kink pleasure that she gains power in the face of the automaton jointly authored by men and Victorian society. In *Jane Eyre*, Brontë acknowledges the influence of the male gaze on her heroine, but in *Villette* Lucy is able to take off her own "veil" and become the penetrating observer of her own and others' trust (564). This role reversal and Lucy's masochistic fantasies allow her to disassemble the human by creating space for her own agency in subversion of the limited social scripts given to Victorian women.

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“There is no death, only change.”: Science and the Supernatural in H. Rider Haggard’s *The Days of My Life* and *She.*

Margo Beckmann

Avenging ghosts, a near-immortal woman who claims to possess lost scientific knowledge, and mummies awaiting reincarnation assume a prominent position in H. Rider Haggard’s novel, *She: A History of Adventure* (1886/87). But how do we read the mummies or the near-immortal Ayesha’s Eastern “scientific” knowledge that appears more akin to sorcery than science? A strategic reading of *She* with an eye on Haggard’s autobiography, *The Days of My Life* (1925), yields intriguing insights into the author’s fascination and fear of the occult, which he sought to reconcile with prevailing scientific thought. These ideas reverberate through the mummies and Ayesha, expressing Haggard’s unique and syncretic understanding of reincarnation that accords with contemporaneous shifts in scientifically informed religious ideologies.

Haggard’s interest in connecting religious concepts to evolution, scientific materialism,[4] and the nascent field of psychology adumbrates cultural shifts occurring at the fin de siècle as Christian theological positions on death and the afterlife were reimagined. The cultural contest between Eastern and Western knowledge emerges when examining how Haggard draws on ancient and modern Eastern religious concepts, new Western scientific theories, and particularly through his grudging acknowledgement that some Eastern thought was valid. Both texts intervene in the contemporaneous discourse on the tenuous distinction between Eastern and Western knowledge and “legitimate science” and “pseudo-science” that was liberally deployed to explain death, immortality, the subconscious mind, and past-life memories.

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[4] Scientific materialism posited that only physical matter exists, denying supernatural beliefs in an immortal soul. Spiritualists revised the theory to argue that the soul or spirit is energy that cannot be destroyed (i.e. the First Law of Thermodynamics), and therefore, it survives physical death.

Current Readings of Haggard's *She*

Haggard's *She* has typically been investigated for its imperialist and political underpinnings, which are unambiguously prevalent throughout the text. Bradley Deane contends that mummy fiction gestured to New Imperialist ambitions to maintain control over their interests in Egypt, particularly in respect to the Suez Canal, which many believed was crucial for maintaining the Empire for an indeterminate time. He succinctly illustrates how the tenuous "marriage plot" between East and West is allegorized in the mummy's seductive, exotic, and Orientalized images that appeared in political cartoons in *Punch* (171-74). According to Deane, mummy stories anticipate a union or marriage; however, the consummation of the marriage is deferred to an indeterminate time, rendering an unresolved ending to the plot. Deane equates Ayesha's indefinite vigil for her lost lover's return with Britain's indeterminate involvement in Egypt that was framed as a "sensual-political allegory of marriage" (175). Expanding on Deane's assessment, I propose that the notion of "deferment" also provides a context for the spiritual significance of the mummy, whose story is suspended in time until the indeterminate moment of reincarnation. While Deane's assessment of Ayesha and the mummy's allegorical meaning in terms of the Egyptian Question is undeniably plausible, the overdetermined nature of these figures provokes multiple interpretations.

Ayesha's imperial power has been interrogated through feminist perspectives that argue Haggard's novel reacts to anxieties regarding the rise of the New Woman, which ostensibly threatened to dismantle social order. While my focus in this article is specifically on Haggard's interest in science and the occult, death and the afterlife, and the privileging of Western thought over Eastern knowledge, Julia Reid's analysis of the novel offers fresh perspectives that inform my work. Reid challenges feminist readings that view *She* as a "matriarchal dystopia" and

Ayesha's power over her subjects as an exemplar of dangerous feminine misrule[5] (362-63). Instead, Reid cogently asserts that in *She*, Haggard subverts the prevailing "matriarchal theories"[6] that were championed by some Victorian anthropologists. Reid argues that Ayesha's atavistic and cyclical view of history undermines the linear concept of time proposed in the matriarchal narratives, which is associated with progressive masculinity. Instead, Ayesha's "cyclical temporality" is inscribed in her intrinsically feminine power (367-68). According to Reid, Ayesha's belief in reincarnation and her knowledge of ancient science and magic is complex in its association with both a scientific future and a primitive past. For Reid, Haggard does not confine female potency to a primordial past, arguing that through Ayesha, matriarchy has the potential to re-establish itself in the modern world (371). This is clearly expressed, first through Ayesha's ambitions to conquer Britain, and then through her final words that affirm her belief that death is not the end and that she will return. Reid's insights illustrate how Ayesha's magic and scientific knowledge destabilize the boundaries between past and present, East and West, and the ancient and modern worlds, illuminating Haggard's ambivalent attitudes toward the resurgence of ancient occult practices that proliferated at the fin de siècle.

Patrick Brantlinger attends to how alternative spiritualities, transported to Britain through contact with the East, moved beyond Christian orthodoxy on the afterlife. He writes: "Impelled by scientific materialism, the search for new sources of faith led many late-Victorians to telepathy, séances, and psychic research," as a new frontier to conquer (*Rule* 228). His analysis exposes how the language of imperial exploration enters investigation into the occult and the subconscious mind, which became new unchartered territory for exploration as imperial expansion reached its zenith and opportunities for adventure declined. He notes how a backsliding into "primitive" cultural expressions of spirituality indicates multiple anxieties as the supernatural became linked to cultural regression (229). These connections emerge in Haggard's novel through the contest between Eastern knowledge framed as superstition and sorcery and Western science that is rational and, therefore, deemed superior. While these critical assessments underscore the racial biases rampant at the fin de siècle, Brantlinger's assertions regarding shifts in spiritualities open avenues for investigating how new hybridized beliefs appear in *She*.

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[5] Reid refers to feminist literary critics, such as Sandra Gilbert, who argues that Ayesha's female power encapsulated masculine anxieties regarding matriarchal rule at the *fin de siècle*. Gilbert asserts: "She was an odd significant blend of the two types – an angelically chaste woman with monstrous powers, a monstrously passionate woman with angelic charms. Just as significantly, however, She was in certain important ways an entirely New Woman: the all-knowing, all powerful ruler of a matriarchal society" (Gilbert 124-25). See Sandra Gilbert, "Rider Haggard's Heart of Darkness" *Reading Fin De Siècle Fiction.* (ed.) Lyn Pykett, 2013, pp.124-25.

[6] The matriarchal theory was proposed by some Victorian anthropologists who posited the existence of primitive matriarchal societies that were replaced by progressive patriarchal civilizations. J. J. Bachofen argued that "all cultures has passed through a matriarchal age, which preceded the patriarchal era." He proposed a theory that human culture developed from "a primal state of promiscuity" to a patriarchal state that was moral (Reid 359).

Building on Brantlinger, Jeffery J. Franklin examines the sweeping changes in religious thought during the nineteenth century as traditional religious beliefs converge with reconfigured scientific theories and aspects of Eastern religions. Franklin asserts that, throughout the nineteenth century, a host of alternative religious positions proliferated. These included unorthodox Christian beliefs, European esotericism, new spiritual movements that embraced science, and modified Buddhist doctrines that incorporated Western beliefs, among others (xii). Recognizing Haggard's interest in these emerging epistemologies, Franklin provides a fresh reading of a well-examined text. He asserts that while Haggard is read in terms of its commentary on empire, race, or sexuality, "few have given due consideration to the fact that his 'occult and religious interest [was] the subject of a lifetime's reading and reflection' and that understanding his religious references is essential to a complete reading of his novels" (157). These observations offer a critical perspective for reading *She* since the occult assumes a prevalent position in the novel. The overarching themes of reincarnation and supernatural power provide the thrill typically expected in Gothic romance fiction, yet such ideas were central to many new forms of Spiritualism,[7] which Haggard interrogates in his autobiography.

In *The Days of My Life*, Haggard articulates his complex relationship with Christianity, Spiritualism, and non-Western religions that formed his conviction that the dead continue to impact the living (45). These speculations provide insights into his ambivalent beliefs about the paranormal, particularly regarding summoning the dead, which he emphatically rejected, believing the practice to be the devil's work (247). However, he was influenced by the way Spiritualists re-conceptualized reincarnation, providing context for his connection to ancient Egypt. Norman Etherington expounds on Haggard's interest in the ancient world, stating that Haggard believed that in previous lives he had visited public sites of history, which were parts of his private past (13). While acknowledging Haggard's imperialist ideologies, Etherington attends to the author's fixation on ancient Egyptian mysticism to facilitate a less-examined aspect of Haggard's work.

As scientific materialism contested the belief in an afterlife, Spiritualists ironically turned the tables on their critics, citing scientific materialism to defend their beliefs in the presence of a transcendental soul. According to Franklin, new spiritualist religions invoked science to: "produce a scientific spirituality and a spiritual science, thereby dissolving the spiritualism/materialism dichotomy without collapsing either side to the other" (xiv). Franklin illuminates the lengths to which Victorians strove to find consensus between two seemingly disparate subjects, regardless of how fraught such an endeavor appeared. For many who sought spiritual enlightenment, these reconfigurations and conflations allowed them to adapt their beliefs to fit the cultural context that turned to science and new syncretic religions to reimagine Christian doctrines that had lost some of their purchase. Franklin comprehensively examines how Theosophy, influenced by ancient Egyptian monotheistic religion, hybridized spiritual concepts with science, providing a contextual understanding of new occultism. In this article, I build on Franklin's assertion that the Gothic-romance novel articulated the ubiquitous tensions between Natural Theology and scientific materialism central to Victorian cultural discourses (186-89) by focusing on how Haggard's experiences and interest in new occultism articulated in his biography are given expression in *She* (xiv).

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[7] Jeffery Franklin cites Theosophy and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn as two spiritualist movements that drew on ancient and Eastern spiritualist beliefs. See *Spirit Matters: Occult Beliefs, Alternative Religions, and the Crisis of Faith in Victorian Britain* (143).

Haggard's Views on Death and the Afterlife

In 1925, a year after his death, Haggard's autobiography, *The Days of My Life*, dedicated "to my dear Wife and to the memory of our son whom now I seek," was published. He added a chapter, "A Note on Religion," written in 1925, refuting many of his earlier thoughts on Spiritualism. Recognizing reader interest in his religious views, Haggard penned the final chapter explaining his foray into Spiritualism and his journey back to Anglicanism. Religious belief during this era ranged from orthodoxy to heterodox syncretic beliefs, so it is not surprising that Haggard disagreed with Anglicanism's position on praying for the dead. Instead, he espoused beliefs more consistent with Roman Catholicism's practice of praying for the soul's repose. He writes: "The Protestant Faith, seems vaguely to inculcate that we should not pray for the dead. If so, I differ from the Protestant Faith, and hold that we should not pray for them but to them, that they will judge our frailties with tenderness and will not forget us who do not forget them" (25). Haggard's conviction that he will reunite with his wife and son in the afterlife elucidates his belief in an immortal soul; however, when he recorded these ideas, his quest to contact the dead through séances or to prove mediums to be charlatans had been repudiated in favor of more conventional

Christian beliefs.[8] His disavowal of occult practices did not emerge from skepticism but rather from his views that such practices are "harmful and unwholesome," and a subject to be investigated by scientists rather than by the curious (41).

The repudiation of some mediums may have influenced Haggard's disenchantment with Spiritualism; however, what appeared to trouble him more was the inability to expose some of his encounters as fraudulent. Haggard's experiences with the occult and his deployment of those encounters in the novel reveals a desire to rationalize what seemingly defies rationality. An avid supporter of evolutionary science, Haggard relates an occasion where a medium's physical appearance changed and "evolved" in ways that resonate with quasi-Darwinian notions of regression. The medium, swathed in "a kind of white garment which covered her head," undergoes a transformation whereby her beautiful hair disappears to reveal a bald, shrinking head, and her neck elongates before she disappears entirely (*Days* 39). The medium's seeming physical regression as her beautiful appearance devolves into a hairless nonhuman shape alludes to evolutionary science. In this way, Haggard invokes a scientific concept and vaguely ties it to inexplicable supernatural occurrences that he claims to have witnessed. This experience clearly had a profound impression on Haggard since this visual representation of physical regression appears in *She* through Ayesha's spectacular regression at the end of the novel. The white garment that veiled the medium's beautiful hair is reminiscent of Ayesha's mummy-like wrappings, gesturing to a similarity between the medium's and the fictional character's positions that transgress the boundaries between the worlds of the living and the dead.

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[8] By "conventional beliefs," I refer to doctrines that tended to be common to all denominations, such as the belief in resurrection.

Haggard presents the supernatural as a subject for scientific investigation through his insistence that all he experienced were the products of genuine, if unexplained and unexplored phenomena:

> To this day I wonder whether the whole thing was illusion, or, if not, what it can have been. Of one thing I am certain—that spirits, as we understand the term, had nothing to do with the matter. On the other hand I do not believe that it is a case of trickery; rather I am inclined to think that certain forces with which we are at present unacquainted were set loose that produced phenomena which, perhaps, had their real origin in our own minds, but nevertheless were true phenomena. (39)

He does not deny the existence of spirits, nor does he suggest that what he witnessed were parlour tricks, claiming instead that all he experienced has a rational, albeit unknown, cause. He suggests that psychological science may hold the key since supernatural episodes may proceed through dreams, the subconscious, or the illusions produced by the mind. During the late nineteenth century, the evolving field of psychology was a marginalized subject since it was initially concerned with the connection between spirit and matter, but Haggard frequently turned to science-adjacent subjects to validate his beliefs. (I will explore the relevance of psychology later). For Haggard, séances and telepathic experiments were "unwholesome" for the amateur, but he nonetheless believed that "spiritualism should be left to the expert and earnest investigator," indicating a presumption that empirical science can, in time, provide answers for the unexplained (41).

Although Haggard returned to the Anglican Church, he continued to legitimatize his beliefs in reincarnation. Like Etherington, Brantlinger expounds on Haggard's fixation with ancient Egypt, re-counting Haggard's belief that "in two previous incarnations" he may have been ancient

Egyptians[9] (*Taming* 161). In his biography, Haggard ponders how, although no proof exists, "vague memories" of ancient cultures, attractions and repulsions, and affinity for certain people one meets may explain past life remembrances (*Days* 241). Cognizant that his beliefs in reincarnation deviated from orthodox Anglicanism, Haggard took great pains to reconcile his beliefs with scripture, claiming that since Jesus identified John the Baptist[10] as Elijah's reincarnation, this proves that reincarnation is consistent with Christianity. He argues that such biblical references validate ideas "that we, or at any rate that some of us, already have individually gone through this process of coming into active Being and departing out of Being more than once –perhaps very often indeed" (241). Norman Etherington attends to Haggard's theological inconsistencies by describing his reworkings of Christian text as an attempt to provide a plausible argument that "the moral perfection demanded of Christians was to be achieved over the courses of several successive existences," cogently exposing how Haggard reframes Christian teachings of the afterlife to suit his syncretic ideas (17).

Haggard's conviction that "moral perfection" may be obtained in subsequent lifetimes differs considerably from Christian teaching on the resurrection; however, the language of evolutionary theory is apparent. Variations on the theme of continued evolution after physical death were not unique to Haggard since scientists like Alfred Russel Wallace also contemplated the afterlife in evolutionary terms. In *Miracles and Modern Spirituality* (1875), Wallace revises Darwin's theory to propose that the soul evolves beyond physical death. He argues that after death, an ethereal body continues its evolution, claiming that even as the organic world is subject to change through survival of the fittest, "[In] the spiritual world, the law of 'progression of the fittest' takes place, and carries on in unbroken continuity that development of the human mind which has been commenced here" (109). Conflated spiritual and scientific evolutionary motifs were common, and according to Franklin, "All responded to the profound impact of the Darwinian revolution, adapting to it in fashioning various adaptations of it, whether as progressive spiritual development in this life or as spiritual evolution over the course of multiple lifetimes" (186). Haggard's suggestion that multiple lifetimes are required to achieve moral perfection resonates with evolutionary language and adaptations of scientific materialism, which posits the soul as an indestructible energetic force.

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[9] Kate Holterhoff offers a nuanced understanding of the tension between science and archeology during the late nineteenth century. Holterhoff asserts that relics were meticulously scrutinized, categorized, and assessed for their significance, which was frequently indeterminate. Artifacts suspected of having a ceremonial or occult purpose upset the boundary between scientific objectivity and the imagination. Haggard's inclusion of the ancient sherd of Amenartes illustrates this tension in that its historical value is of interest to historians and archeologists, yet its contents regarding an eternal flame and an immortal woman indicates the occult association with ancient Egyptian occult practices. See "Egyptology and Darwinian Evolution in Conan Doyle and H. Rider Haggard: The Scientific Imagination." *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920,* vol. 60, no. 3, 2017, pp. 314-40).

[10] Haggard alludes to Matthew 11:14.

Haggard's conflation of scientific and spiritual concepts illustrates what Martin Fichman refers to as a "malleable border between scientific and non-scientific discourse" employed by Victorians to define the flexible boundaries between "legitimate" and "pseudo-science" (94). But legitimate science and pseudoscience were not always clearly defined. Alison Winter argues that what we presently regard as pseudoscience may not have been judged as such during an era where no definitive accepted view existed (26). It is imperative, then, to read Haggard's work within the context in which he wrote, attending to how he exploits the permeable boundaries between science and science-adjacent subjects to explain his belief that mystical occurrences were genuine, and to this end, he turned to notable scientists who explored the paranormal.

In *Days*, Haggard relates how he published a letter and corroborating testimonials in *The Times* (July 21, 1904) regarding a strange experience he had in connection with his dog, Bob, who was killed by a train. Haggard, with the assistance of witnesses, ascertained that Bob communicated with him through a dream three hours *after* its death, leading him to conclude that if such an experience could be proven, “it would solve one of the mysteries of our being, by showing that the spirit of even a dog can live on when its mortal frame is destroyed and physical death has happened” (165). Haggard submitted the letters to *The Journal of Psychical Research* in October 1904, to which the editor responded, “Mr. Rider Haggard deserves the gratitude of psychical researchers for having collected all the available evidence so promptly and completely and put it at the disposal of the scientific world” (162). Haggard then meticulously constructed a case for scientific enquiry into telepathic communication with the dead, prompting him to contact physicist Sir Oliver Lodge, a renowned scientist with a keen interest in the supernatural (166). After examining Haggard’s case, Lodge replied that he is “absolutely convinced of persistence of existence,” and he regards death as “an important episode—the reverse of birth—but neither of these episodes really initial or final. One is the assumption of connection with matter, the other is the abandoning of that connection” (166). Lodge’s assertions indicate how scientific materialism was reimagined by paranormal investigators who theorized that matter and the immaterial soul might continue to coexist after death in a completely mysterious way as “after we have abandoned matter we can . . . occasionally continue to act on it” (166). He claims that in his “judgement, the evidence points to the existence of some indistinct and undeveloped power of this sort” that may explain telepathic communication among the living and another form of communication with the dead (166). Despite Lodge’s endorsement of his theories, Haggard continued to vacillate between doubt and absolute belief in the paranormal for the remainder of his life.

“There is no death.”

She illustrates the extent to which science becomes embedded in Victorian culture, but more significantly, it articulates the complex ways it intervened in spiritual matters to defend a belief in an immortal essence that survived physical death. While Haggard's writing authenticates the degree to which Eastern beliefs, conflated with modern scientific theories, gained popularity, his convictions regarding Western superiority emerge from the text through his characters' ambivalent ponderings. The notion that the East is backward, exotic, and prone to superstitious ideas associated with sorcery, is often subverted by suggestions that some Eastern ideas are valid. Jeffery Franklin analyzes Haggard's writings as representations of the prevailing contest between spirit and matter, contending that Haggard's Gothic-romance novel, with its grotesque imagery and cathartic melodrama, effectively captures the Victorian crisis of faith (141). In agreement with Franklin, I argue that this religious/spiritual crisis reverberates in *She* on several fronts, as characters challenge conventional ideas about death, the afterlife, and telepathy, illuminating a wide range of attitudes that differ from orthodox Christian teachings.

The story of an adventure into the heart of Africa where Ayesha, an ancient and near-immortal queen, wields formidable power is narrated through a fictional editor whom Andrew Stauffer asserts is a "version of Haggard himself" (13). Haggard's convictions regarding death, the afterlife, and the permeability between the worlds of the living and the dead are also narrativized first through Leo Vincey Sr. and later by Ayesha and L. Horace Holly who, in varying degrees, echo quasi-scientific discourses prevalent at the fin de siècle.

The theory that the dead can impact the living appears early in the novel when Holly, a skeptical man "not unacquainted with the leading scientific facts" and "an utter unbeliever in hocus-pocus that in Europe goes by the name of superstition," promises his friend, Leo Vincey Sr., to care for his soon-to-be-orphaned son (156). The plot runs as follows: Vincey entrusts to Holly a casket containing an ancient sherd that implores the recipient to reach out across time and exact revenge on the near-immortal Ayesha. Amenartes, an Egyptian princess and the Vincey family's ancestor who swore to avenge the murder of her spouse, Kallikrates, inscribed the sherd. The sherd recounts Ayesha's supernatural power and unnatural longevity acquired by passing through a mysterious pillar of flame,[11] her murder of Kallikrates, who spurned her romantic advances, and Amenartes's escape with their unborn son. The motif of retribution from beyond the grave reiterates Vincey's warning that "if you betray my trust, by Heaven I will haunt you . . . remember that one day I shall ask for the account of your oath, for though I am dead and forgotten, yet I shall live. There is no such thing as death, Holly, only change" (45). While Amenartes's vengeance requires human agency, Vincey's revenge is contingent on a ghostly return to settle scores should Holly break his vows. Vincey's conviction that he can transgress the boundaries between life and death is qualified when he states that "there is no such thing as death, only change," an assertion that alludes to scientific materialism's theory on the conservation of energy. While scientific materialists repudiated the existence of a transcendental soul, Vincey's argument gestures to reconfigured scientific concepts to endorse ensoulment by positing the soul as an indestructible energetic force, much like theories posited by Sir Oliver Lodge (*Days* 166).

Vincey expresses Haggard's belief in an indestructible life force, and these ideas closely resemble new occultist precepts formulated by hybridizing and conflating quasi-scientific concepts with Eastern traditions, such as Buddhism. According to Franklin, these conflations were endemic to an era where "forms of holism according to which all things physical and spiritual are unified and interconnected in the divine-natural continuum of the universe, what Oliver Lodge summarized in 1905 as 'ultimate identity of matter and spirit'" (187). Decades before communicating with Lodge, Haggard had already pondered the possible interconnections between spirit and matter. This is conveyed in *She* as convictions that even when separated from the body, the spirit can continue to impose its will on the living. Such ideas endorse theories of scientists, such as William Crookes, who, like physicist Sir Oliver Lodge, posited a link between spirit and matter to explain supernatural phenomena.

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[11] While the pillar of flame closely resembles the flame of Exodus that guided the Israelites to freedom, it also alludes to a powerful source of energy that sustains life.

William Crookes, a well-respected chemist and physicist, investigated the properties of matter as atoms, the "building blocks of nature," which were gradually understood as mutable, leading to questions regarding the relationship between matter and the spirit (Lyons 105-6). Crookes endeavoured to legitimize psychic phenomena, associating it with physical science and applying these nascent ideas to the field that would become psychological science (105). He claimed that "a deep understanding of the brain would provide the connecting link between mind and matter," a theory that sought to explain psychic phenomena such as telepathy, dreams, and communication with the dead. (Crookes qtd. in Lyons 109). The quest to explain an afterlife through physical science illustrates the obscure delineation between what was considered to be "legitimate" science or "pseudo-science," and these concepts are clearly articulated in the novel.

Holly, the Uncanny, and Psychological Science

References to psychology permeate *She* through Holly, a character who, at times, appears to be Haggard's alter ego. In *Days*, Haggard ventures to explain dreams,[12] premonitions, and uncanny sensations in psychological terms by positing them as products of a disturbed mind, as "nerves and imagination play strange tricks" (41). While his appeal to psychology suggests a scientific explanation for supernatural experiences and sensations, the field of psychology was, at this juncture, more aptly defined as a "pseudo-science" because of its connection to mystical beliefs in an immortal, transcendental soul or consciousness. As Spiritualists attempted to forge a link between the mind/spirit and matter to authenticate beliefs in ensoulment, they found some support in the scientific community, albeit on a small scale. According to Jeffrey Franklin, William James, author of *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), classified the study of the mind as the "religion of healthy mindedness" that was later viewed as the "science of the soul", a term that validated scientific discussions about the soul (Franklin 187-89). James's theories illustrate how the evolving field of psychology aligned itself with spiritual "health," suggesting an association with health sciences. Although not universally accepted, these scientific inquiries into the interconnection of the mind and matter facilitated ways of thinking about the supernatural as a new frontier for scientific study.

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[12] Haggard's interest in dream interpretation and early psychological sciences clearly had a reciprocal effect on early psychological sciences, since according to Mark Doyle, the dreamlike quality of the novel made it a "natural source for Freudian dream interpretation" (A62). He states that since Haggard wrote the novel at a frenzied pace, "many critics argue that its imagery bypassed his conscious mind and tapped onto his unconscious wishes as a waking dream" (A63). (see "Ustane's Evolution Versus Ayesha's Immortality in H. Rider Haggard's *She*" *Philosophy and Literature,* vol. 38, no. 1A, 2014).

Psychological sciences would eventually sever ties with the paranormal, but the initial intersection of science and mysticism captured the imagination of late Victorians like Haggard. Given this new area of study's position in the scientific world, Haggard's allusions to psychology need to be contextualized. His conviction that disturbances of the mind could stimulate the imagination superficially appears to negate supernatural explanations for heightened senses; however, Haggard's deployment of psychology carries nuanced allusions to prevailing ideas that conjoin the spirit to matter. Nascent psychological theories echo Haggard's description of premonitions, dreams, and supernatural sensations as "uncanny," a term fraught with ambiguity and ambivalence.

The "uncanny"[13] is a term Sigmund Freud borrowed from Haggard to describe the anxiety that occurs when there is uncertainty as to whether "an object is living or inanimate" (229) or in the case "when the distinction between imagination and reality is effaced" (243).[14] The uncanny may commonly be interpreted as frightening, mysterious, unfamiliar, or supernatural. However, it also indicates a sense of intense mental disturbance predicated on the inability to discern what is real or imagined (*She* 143). This is evident in Holly's inability to fully understand Ayesha's being, which is alive, but also "unreal." When recounting the episode involving his dream about Bob, Haggard divulges how the experience was frightening, upsetting, and uncanny (13), and he later refers to Spiritualism's practice of communicating with the dead as "uncanny knowledge," which suggests "dangerous knowledge," since he believes the practice to be "a device of the Devil" (*Days* II 162, 250). The range of meanings associated with the word and the complex ways Haggard deploys it to suggest psychological turmoil when faced with the inexplicable emerges in the novel when Holly, at times, ventriloquizes the author's mental state and uneasiness toward the supernatural. Holly's uncanny sense is significant in all its connotations since, on meeting Ayesha, he experiences fear, disconnection from the comfortable and mundane life he has until now enjoyed, and an inability to fully discern fact from fantasy.

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[13] Freud translated the word to "*unheimlich*" or "unhomely."

At first, Holly reasons that he, an Englishman, does not need to fear a "savage" Arabian queen who uses trickery to control her subjects; however, this strategy fails when confronting Ayesha. His first meeting with Ayesha reveals a beautiful woman "wrapped up in soft white, gauzy material in such a way as at first sight to remind me most forcibly of a corpse in its grave-clothes;" however, he sees her apparel as an artifice and concludes that she is not a ghost (143). Until this point, Holly has rebuffed notions of immortality; however, confronted with the spectacle of a living mummy, his resolve falters as fear replaces rationality. He admits that he "felt more frightened than ever," and his "hair began to rise" upon his head, signalling that he is "in the presence of something that was not canny" (143). The acute physical sensation of fear he experiences is primal, and even when Ayesha queries him on the source of his fear, he cannot respond, yet she insightfully recognizes that "thou wast afraid because mine eyes were searching out thine heart" (144). Instinctually, and perhaps unwillingly, Holly is aware of Ayesha's power to read his thoughts and emotions, and as a skeptic who rejects telepathy, Holly finds this development to be unsettling. Ayesha's ability to telepathically see his inner turmoil is compounded by her "being" that appears to be suspended between past and present and between life and death.

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[14] See "The 'Uncanny'. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVII (1917-1919): An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works*, 217-56. I include Freud's definition here, because, although written much later, Freud was influenced by both Andrew Lang and Haggard's *She*, which he names in his 1899 publication *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Oxford UP, 1999 (359)).

The otherworldliness Holly perceives lies in Ayesha's appearance, and the uncanny aura is heightened by her archaic speech patterns, her proficiency in ancient languages, and her detailed, first-hand knowledge of ancient history,[15] which authenticate her displacement in time. Ayesha's intrusion into Holly's modern world creates both intense fear and fascination, and he is momentarily distracted by his academic curiosity in receiving first-hand historical knowledge. Despite his desire to converse with this otherworldly figure, he is anxiously aware that her existence authenticates the sherd's contents regarding her immortality, which validates theories he previously rejected as superstition. The grave clothes provide a visual representation of her liminality, and her assertion that "there is no such thing as Death, though there be a thing called Change," curiously echoes Vincey's words (148). While Holly initially attributes no supernatural powers to this woman, he becomes more aware that the uncanny sensations he experiences are not only the mind's disturbances precipitated by the fear of the unknown, but that they proceed from a subconscious part of his being uncontrolled by logic. In this respect, Holly's encounter with Ayesha closely resembles Haggard's experience with the medium, which causes him much anxiety. Apart from the medium's and Ayesha's similar appearance and liminality, Holly's experience of Ayesha's mirrors Haggard's. Haggard's sense of displacement and inability to discern whether what he experienced was imagination or an actual occurrence reverberates through Holly when Ayesha shows him the mummies, and he travels to the past through either his imagination or a past-life memory.

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[15] Julia Reid asserts that Ayesha's connection to the past, and her assurances that death does not annihilate the soul, subvert notions regarding linear progress and modernity's obliteration of connections to a primitive, matriarchal past. Reid argues that Ayesha's longevity and her vast knowledge of ancient history and languages authenticate her liminal existence as an "animated corpse" (370).

The perfectly preserved mummies provoke in Holly a spontaneous and uncanny sense of recognition—a *déjà vu* that draws him into the story of the dead. As he gazes at the corpses, he unconsciously constructs a tragic story filled with hope for reunion beyond death. Holly is troubled when he finds the corpses of two young lovers who lie together beneath a rock that bears an inscription, "Wedded in Death," and removing their shroud he sees the fatal dagger wounds (178). Moved by the tragic scene, Holly closes his eyes "and imagination taking up the thread of thought shot its swift shuttle back and forth across the ages, weaving a picture on their blackness so real and vivid in its details that I could almost for a moment think that I had triumphed o'er the Past, and that my spirit's eyes had pierced Time's mystery" (178). He vividly imagines a wedding celebration cut short as the young woman, repulsed by her intended groom, is about to be rescued by the young man she loves. He sees the couple's murder and hears the mourning cries of those present at the solemnity of marriage that has become a funeral dirge. These visions invoke uncanny sensations as unfamiliar emotions appear to indicate past-life experiences in which he intimately was embroiled as he grapples with discerning fact from fantasy and imagination from memory:

> Let him who reads this forgive the intrusion of a dream into a history of fact. But it came so home to me—I saw it all so clear in a moment as it were; and, besides, who shall say

> what proportion of fact, past present, or to come, may lie in imagination? What is imagination? Perhaps it is the shadow of the intangible truth, perhaps it is the soul's thought. (179)

By questioning how imagination may subconsciously draw on past-life memories, Holly articulates contemporaneous theories that integrated a spiritual component into scientific explorations of the mind. He ponders that his visions of the distant past were experienced through his "spirit eyes," a suggestion that gestures to Spiritualist ideas of holism that posited an inextricable link between the physical and the spiritual. Holly appeals to science to explain the source of these vivid thoughts, gesturing to prevailing theories that advance beliefs that memories of previous existences do not emerge from the brain's physical structure but from the spirit-self or soul.

Haggard's interest in the mind-soul connection also alludes to Carl Jung's theory of the "historical aspect" of the *anima* or soul. Throughout the novel, historical facts and artifacts abound, particularly through the mummies, skeletons, and cave writings of a lost civilization that impose itself on the present. Matthew Fike analyzes Ayesha through a Jungian lens, citing Jung's assertion that "the anima is conservative and clings in the most exasperating fashion to the ways of early humanity. She [the anima] likes to appear in historical dress, with a predilection for Greece and Egypt" (Jung qtd. in Fike 105). By expanding Jung's assessment of Ayesha to the mummies, who are quintessentially relics from a forgotten civilization awaiting reanimation, Holly's confusion and his visceral response in the form of a dream or a memory alludes to Jungian theory that "dreams may be historical and that imagination may be the soul's thought" (Jung qtd. in Fike 106). Furthermore, Fike proposes that Jung's view of history gestures to theories that posit time as not fixed, but as occurring simultaneously within the collective unconscious, explaining Holly's *déjà vu* moment as he is transported through time (106).

Through Holly, we see Haggard's propensity for rationalizing the unexplained in ways that were endemic to an era wherein science and spirituality were not mutually exclusive and supernatural experiences potentially had a rational explanation. Although contemporaneous intellectuals, such as William James, Freud, and Jung contemplated the mysteries surrounding the connection between the mind and the soul and between dreams and the imagination, these theories were not universally accepted. Haggard's uneasy union of Eastern spiritualism and Western science is not a comfortable alliance, for as we see in his interactions with Ayesha, Eastern wisdom is frequently framed as superstition over and against views that privileged Western ideologies as rational.

Ayesha's "Science"

Western origins of subjects like chemistry and physics that had some foundations in the East were contested by Western scientists who denied or undermined such connections. This privileging of the West over the East appears in the text as Ayesha's scientific knowledge is perceived to be, on one hand, wonderous and advanced practice, while on the other hand, sorcery. Holly's ambivalence reveals the tenuous line between "legitimate" and "pseudo-science," which was not always distinguishable due to the complex ways scientific concepts were reconfigured and applied to supernatural phenomena. This tension arises at several points in the text when Holly believes Ayesha's powers to be Eastern sorcery. Ayesha's insistence that her scientific knowledge is yet to be understood or accepted as such in the West alludes to marginalized scientific theories posited by a group of scientists, such as Crookes, Wallace, and Lodge, who drew on Eastern mysticism to speculate on the connection between spirit and matter.

The tension between scientific materialism and the reconfigured scientific theories employed by new occultists is expressed through Ayesha's ability to perform marvels that she claims are based on Eastern "scientific knowledge" acquired in ancient Egypt and Arabia. The contest between Eastern superstition and enlightened Western ideologies is narrativized through Holly's response to Ayesha's demonstrations that sometimes appear to be magic tricks, while at other times seem to be based on legitimate scientific practice. Her powers confound Holly, whose skepticism towards what he perceives as primitive knowledge dwindles, and he begins to believe that Ayesha's powers are magic, despite her claims that magic is superstitious ignorance. In a surprising reversal, Ayesha, the ostensibly "savage queen," is astounded that Holly, a modern academic, holds what she deems as primitive ideas about death and the secrets of Nature that animate the world. The reversal of their positions is intriguing since it inverts Holly's conservative views of racial inferiority attributed to this "savage" queen. Although Holly judges Ayesha as primitive, he grudgingly admires her scientific knowledge, which she claims originated in the East. This ambivalence is evident in Holly's estimation of what can be viewed as science and what is relegated to the subject of sorcery as he witnesses her powers.

To demonstrate her powers of surveillance, Ayesha shows Holly how she observed their arrival by having him gaze into the water contained in "a font-like vessel" (150). Holly recognizes the images as an accurate replay of their landing and, in an odd reversal, is convinced that what he sees is the result of magic. Ayesha assures Holly that "it is no magic, that is a fiction of ignorance. There is no such thing as magic, though there is such a thing as a knowledge of the secrets of Nature" (150). Despite Ayesha's claims that such powers are not magic, she never reveals how she transfers the images from the mind to the water, nor does she provide a sound scientific explanation or methodology. Instead, she claims that her abilities derive from an "old secret" she acquired from ancient Arabian and Egyptian sorcerers. Holly, previously skeptical of the "hocus pocus" presented as science, doubts his convictions as he makes accommodations for Ayesha's powers, later concluding that Ayesha's telepathic ability, although limited, is a result of her ability to "photograph upon the water what was actually in the mind of someone present" (201).[16] Despite Holly's vague allusion to the science behind photography, his conclusions gesture to investigations into telepathy, a subject that fascinated Haggard. In this instance, Ayesha resembles the mediums Haggard encountered, whose demonstrations brought his skepticism to the fore; however, as he relates in *Days*, these phenomena were not always easily debunked. While Holly is awed by Ayesha's demonstration that he considers magic, her powers also prove to be based on sound scientific knowledge that she researched and practiced during her two thousand years of isolation in the caves of Kôr.

Holly's equal fascination and horror of Ayesha's powers do not prevent him from believing she possesses the power to save Leo, who suffers grievous injuries sustained during a violent encounter with Ayesha's subjects, the Amahagger. Ayesha proves her medical competency as she assesses that since Leo's fever is on the third day, she should wait another day before she administers her medicine, which is "of a sort to shake the life in its very citadel" (151). Recognizing Holly's anxiety, Ayesha reassures him that she will "use no magic," reiterating that

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[16] Fike provides a plausible argument that, although Jung did not offer any thoughts on Ayesha's use of the font to see past and present events, "he would suggest that it parallels the anima's historical nature and that of the psyche more generally" (108). Fike bases his claim on Carl Jung's theory that "[t]he collective unconscious contains, or is, an historical mirror-image of the world. It too is a world, but a world of images." That "the unconscious is not just a reactive mirror-reflection, but an independent, productive activity'" corresponds to Ayesha's use of mirror-gazing to see beyond the walls of Kôr" (108). Although Holly uses no device, he too is ensnared by the past as he gazes at the mummies. His experience draws on notions of the collective unconscious.

"there is no such thing as magic, though there is such a thing as understanding and applying the forces which are in Nature" (184). In this instance, the "forces in Nature" are derived from her knowledge of how the immune system functions in healing, but it also refers to her competency in effectively distilling and administering medicinal botanical compounds. Holly writes in an addendum: "Ayesha was a great chemist, indeed chemistry appears to have been her only amusement and occupation. She had one of the caves fitted up as a laboratory, and, although her appliances were necessarily rude, the results that she attained were . . . sufficiently surprising" (184). While Holly acknowledges Ayesha's chemical knowledge and healing capabilities, it is worth attending to how he simultaneously undermines Ayesha's scientific experiments, noting that her laboratory is "crude," in contrast to Western laboratories fitted with modern equipment. Holly's reactions to Ayesha's scientific knowledge carry a host of implications for reading the complex line between legitimate science and pseudoscience. The disavowal of the links between ancient Eastern and modern Western science is evident through such references.

According to Susan Hroncek, Ayesha's acquisition of Eastern knowledge, her Arabian ethnicity, and her gender places her as inferior in Holly's estimation, hence his belief that much of her science is sorcery. Hroncek writes:

> [H]er practice of chemistry will always appear to him, as a British academic, as more akin to sorcery or witchcraft than to the "modern" chemistry of Victorian laboratories and factories. Ayesha's dangerous combination of the Eastern, feminine, and occult would prove a popular means of fictionalizing sources of concern regarding the origins of chemistry beyond the borders of Western materialist practice. Such fictional representations were significantly influenced by contemporaneous histories, popular science articles, and occultist discourses that characterized chemistry, its origins, and its

> relationship to the occult within frameworks that largely supported British Victorian perceptions regarding how science was defined, including what constituted "legitimate" scientific practice. (213)

Hroncek cogently articulates how Haggard frames these discourses within the text. However, Holly's views of Ayesha's power and knowledge are more nuanced when reading *She* alongside Haggard's biographical writings. While I concur that *She* articulates contemporaneous discourses around what constitutes legitimate science and pseudoscience in addition to the desire to distance modern science from its ancient Eastern roots, it is crucial to recognize that Haggard, despite his overt racial chauvinism, acknowledged some Eastern mysticism as potentially valid knowledge. This aspect of his work illustrates prevalent epistemologies that drew on Eastern mysticism and modern Western science. Despite his revulsion for occult practices, he nonetheless consulted scientific practitioners who conflated Eastern and Western knowledge to explain paranormal phenomena, such as telepathic communication and the existence of an immortal soul that retained memories of previous lives. While Haggard admired some Eastern philosophies that corresponded to his beliefs, it is evident that such accommodations were at odds with his notion of Western superiority.

"Immortal Entanglements"

In *She*, Haggard conflates Eastern and Western religious concepts that present reincarnation as a means to resolve past-life transgressions and frustrated romantic involvements. Norman Etherington asserts that Haggard believed that in his current lifetime, friendships and romantic relationships were immortal entanglements that were reiterated through numerous lives spanning many centuries; however, Etherington was also cognizant that while Haggard's fervent religious convictions informed his beliefs about the immortality of the soul, he also expressed, with equal intensity, the view that life was meaningless, and death ended all (13).

Haggard's doubts may be partly grounded in his misunderstanding of Buddhism, which influenced his belief in reincarnation. He writes, "I like the Buddhists, am strongly inclined to believe that the Personality which animates each of us is immeasurably ancient, having been forged in many fires, and that, as its past is immeasurable, so its future will be" (*Days* 241). Despite his insistence that the "Personality which animates each of us" continues to be reborn, he argues that Buddhism, unlike Christianity, which leads to eternal life, is ultimately a religion of death. Here he appears to misunderstand Buddhism's belief in a karmic cycle that leads to a state of *Nirvana* or enlightenment.[17] While Buddhists believe that the soul or *atman* achieves a state of enlightenment as it merges with the Oneness, Haggard interprets this as an annihilation of the soul, explaining his fear of death.

Haggard's recounting of unresolved romantic relationships, found in *Days,* expresses his regret at the painful loss of his first love through parental disapproval and then through death. The motif of failed relationships seeking resolution through rebirth is articulated through Holly and Ayesha, and as Brantlinger astutely notes, Holly's uncanny moment of *déjà vu* when viewing the mummies indicates Haggard's "erotic longing and unattainable romance" (*Taming* 176). He asserts that when writing *She* and the sequels, Haggard reflected on his own romantic and sexual relationships that were a source of disappointment, which is evident in *Days,* wherein he reveals a profoundly personal outpouring of his deepest hopes that could not be realized in his present life (176).

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[17] Buddhists affirm that once a soul reaches perfection it is released from the karmic cycle (*moksha* or *Nirvana*) it may return to assist other souls to attain enlightenment. The individual *atman* is not destroyed, but rather becomes a part of the One reality.

Holly, a self-proclaimed misogynist and skeptic who rejects romantic entanglements after being rebuffed by a woman in his youth, experiences a profound sense of loss when viewing the mummies (41). The mummies evoke in Holly a "memory" whereby he receives a second-hand experience of tragic and untimely death never experienced in his current life (98). For Holly, the mummies represent an ultimate immortal entanglement, yet even as he begins to contemplate immortality, Ayesha expresses doubt. Ayesha imagines the moment when "Day and Night, and Life and Death, are ended and swallowed up in that from which it came" (180). Traces of Haggard's certainty followed by momentary lapses into despair are articulated through Ayesha as she contemplates an ultimate *telos* that betrays a fleeting ambivalence towards the concept of immortality in much the same way Haggard expresses doubts that "life had no meaning and that death ended all" (Etherington 13).

In Ayesha's desire to resolve her troubled history with Kallikrates, we see Haggard's belief that reincarnation can facilitate a "do-over" in the case of frustrated romantic entanglements. Ayesha is embroiled in her own "immortal entanglement" as she awaits the return of Kallikrates, sometimes exhibiting absolute conviction that he will return while at other times expressing bitter grief at the prospect that such an event might not transpire. Ayesha's near-immortality places her in an untenable position of loneliness and grief as she awaits liberation from her "living death" (163). Having killed the object of her obsessive love in a jealous rage, Ayesha's two-thousand-year vigil for Kallikrates's return leads her to bitterness as she curses her rival, but even as she does so, she momentarily doubts her powers: "It is of no use . . . who can reach those who sleep? Not even I can reach them . . . Curse her when she should be born again … Let her be utterly accursed from the hour of her birth until sleep finds her . . . for then shall I overtake her with my vengeance, and utterly destroy her'" (161-2). These embittered words illustrate doubts as to her power to reach the dead. Her hatred overcomes this lapse as she vows to curse and *destroy* Amenartes, illustrating the disconnection between utterly believing that the life essence is indestructible and conversely suggesting that there are forces that can annihilate the soul. Such disparities are not uncommon in the novel, as Eastern and Western ideologies converge and are reconfigured. This is evident in the way Haggard revises Christian views on the reward of heaven or the punishment of hell with a version of reincarnation that rationalizes the immortal soul as an indestructible energetic force recycled through time. But even as Haggard embraced contemporary ideas on reincarnation, his revulsion for occult practices of summoning the dead is expressed through Ayesha's desire to perform a sacrilegious act.

Only his return can resolve Ayesha's emotional entanglement with Kallikrates, so she attempts to reanimate the corpse that lies before her, but even as the "quiet form beneath the covering began to quiver . . . [s]uddenly she withdrew her hands" (163). At that moment, Ayesha realizes, "Of what use is it to recall the semblance of life when I cannot recall the spirit? Even if thou stoodest before me thou wouldst not know me . . . The life in thee would be my life, and not thy life, Kallikrates" (163). Ayesha recognizes that her power is limited to reanimating a corpse devoid of a soul or personality, and witnessing this act, Holly is repelled by Ayesha's power. Through Holly's reaction, Haggard's distaste for occult practices of summoning disembodied souls to seek closure for grieving loved ones reverberates. More significantly, in her inability to raise the dead, Haggard alludes to the notion that reincarnation is a mysterious event wherein the soul alone has the agency to determine the time and circumstances of its return. As presented in *She,* reincarnation illustrates a modified version of Christian concepts of resurrection. This syncretic version emerges when it becomes evident that the mummy's purpose is redundant since the soul does not require the original body for reincarnation to occur.

Reincarnation and the Mummy

For ancient civilizations that practiced mummification, the mummy is emblematic of the promise of immortality through rebirth that involved the corpse's revivification. However, Haggard reconfigures ancient understandings, positing that a body is unnecessary. In this way, he gestures to Christian concepts of the resurrection of the body[18] as a spiritual rather than literal occurrence, illustrating his penchant for reframing and revising several religious concepts regarding the afterlife. Rather than a vessel that will receive the spirit, the mummy becomes a commemorative symbol of the past and a hope for immortality. The notion of rebirth is explored through the mummies and Ayesha, a living mummy who has deferred physical death[19] by passing through the eternal flame. The mummies tell a poignant story of loss, yet paradoxically, their staging and meticulous preservation illustrates a conviction that their story continues, and a new existence is possible. But Haggard is never afraid to shy away from ambiguities and ambivalences, so he undermines the notion of deferral and possibility inscribed on the mummy, and reincarnation is reconceptualized as the mummy is rendered superfluous.

Ayesha fully expects Kallikrates's body to receive his soul again, so she keeps vigil at his side. When she sees Leo for the first time, she recognizes him as her lost lover reincarnated, his spirit enshrined in a new and almost identical body. This realization amends her assumptions regarding reincarnation as she learns that the mummies are but relics of a past life, and reincarnation is not contingent on a preserved and fully intact body. Ayesha does not reveal any consternation that the mummified body she venerated serves no purpose, but rather she accepts

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[18] Although resurrection is concerned with the immortal soul rather than a temporal body, it should be noted that credal formulations continue to include the idea that the body will be resurrected. The proclamation that asserts: "I believe in the resurrection of the body," however, is not present in the Nicene Creed.

[19] Bradley Deane's interpretation of the "marriage plot" in terms of Britain's position in Egypt that remains unresolved may also be expanded to the mummy. While the mummy is suspended in time, so is British interest in Egypt.

Leo's physical appearance as proof that her vigil has ended. Finding no practical purpose for Kallikrates's mummified corpse, she destroys it.

Fully convinced that she holds the secrets of immortality, Ayesha attempts to confer immortality on Leo by having him pass through the flame. Perceiving Leo's fear, she enters the flame to demonstrate its harmless power and is unexpectedly destroyed by the very substance that gave her longevity and unsurpassed beauty. The flame's reverse effects ironically illustrate her limited knowledge of the secrets of Nature and her pride and hubris at assuming a power she could not fully understand, which proves to be her downfall.[20] Through Ayesha's ruin, Haggard's caution against encroaching on dangerous knowledge reverberates, but his Darwinian influence and modified belief in reincarnation are also apparent. Ayesha regresses to a mummy form, then a monkey-like creature, eventually crumbling to dust in a perverse Darwinian-like "devolution" reminiscent of Haggard's medium that seemingly morphed into an inhuman specter. Ayesha's destruction offers a cautionary tale against what Haggard viewed as unwholesome acts practiced by some Spiritualists while reiterating his contention that death is not permanent, since as she disintegrates, Ayesha promises to return, which she does, in Haggard's sequel, *Ayesha: The Return of She* (1905).

Conclusion

A deconstructed reading of the supernatural, the near-immortal Ayesha, and the mummies yield multiple anxieties rife at the *fin de siècle*, explaining the discursive approaches to *She*. When read through a sociopolitical lens, Ayesha and the mummies expound on crucial discourses around race and gender, and given Haggard's conservativism, it is not surprising that such ideologies permeate the novel. But Haggard's interest in ancient and modern religions, and his attitude towards scientific research into the paranormal, indicates significant cultural shifts as new spiritualist beliefs found value in reconceptualized scientific theories. Such a reading illustrates the myriad religious positions and the highly individualistic way believers altered and shaped their beliefs to address scientific materialism's threat to beliefs in a transcendental soul. Moreover, racial chauvinism emerges through the tension between Western and Eastern knowledge, influencing what might be accepted as legitimate science and what was relegated to the margins as pseudoscience. Considering Haggard's anxieties about death and the afterlife and his appeal to marginalized science to provide a rational explanation for paranormal phenomena, a less examined aspect of *She* emerges, elucidating his conviction that both Eastern and Western sciences hold the key to solving these mysteries.

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[20] Julia Reid suggests that, in light of the men's cowering before the "phallic" pillar of flame that ultimately destroys her, Ayesha demonstrates 'strength through fiery trial', which Reid argues is "transformative," alluding to the power of the pillar of flame as a "divine presence" (371-72). While I concur that the pillar of flame is reminiscent of the flame in Exodus, Ayesha's destruction appears to be a punishment for her hubris since she does not foresee the effects of the entering the flame. Her entering the flame is not sacrificial since she expected to enjoy a new life with Leo.

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What Else Is Out There? American Women's Progressive Era Utopian Societies in Outer Space

Alicia Matheny Benson

Utopian and dystopian texts typically fall under the larger umbrella of science fiction and fantasy, as they create alternative worlds that could include various governmental structures, environmental situations, technological advancements, and more. Many American utopian texts written in the Progressive Era explore a revision of current or future American culture, a remote society on Earth, a depiction of the afterlife, or a discovered society on another planet. For Progressive Era women writers, revisions to gendered norms in their utopian literary works were common as many fought for greater equality with men in their own world. Setting the society on another planet can interestingly pose gender equality as an otherworldly, alien phenomenon; however, outside of not only American but potentially also human constructs, this framework allows authors to imagine entirely new systems that promote gender equality. When the setting is on another planet, authors are not bound by any cultural, legal, or religious boundaries, other than those that permeate their minds while constructing these new worlds.

Contributing to the foundation for later works of science fiction, especially utopic and dystopic texts, several Progressive Era utopian novels by American women utilize the outer space setting. For instance, Alice Ilgenfritz Jones and Ella Merchant's *Unveiling a Parallel: A Romance* (1893) emphasizes the common humanity amongst men and women by depicting two different societies on Mars, Caskia and Paleveria, that consider the community-wide adoptions of stereotypically male or female behaviors, respectively. Similarly, Nettie Parrish Martin's *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds: Recounting the Wonderful Adventures of Ulyssum Storries and His Discovery of the Lost Star "Eden"* (1908) depicts Ulyssum Storries's exploration of planetary worlds with varying relationships between men and women that elevate women's status when compared to earthly relations. Both novels push the religious frameworks of their authors but assert that gender equality is compatible with traditional Christian beliefs. By depicting diverse societal constructions, and comparing them with American gender norms, the authors present new ways for their readers to imagine gender relations within spiritually-focused societies.

The scholarship on *Unveiling a Parallel* is limited, and for *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds*, it is virtually nonexistent though it appears in some annotated bibliographies of women's utopic works.[21] The conversation regarding *Unveiling a Parallel* focuses largely on the contrasting societies of Palaveria and Caskia. In their reviews, Rogers, Holyoke, Hollinger, and Saksung comment on the critique of bodily pleasures (correlated with men) and the celebration of spirituality and service (correlated with women). Robert Crossley places *Unveiling a Parallel* within the literary tradition focusing on Mars, and in "Middle-Class Edens," Darby Lewes explores the "rococo" decor of *Unveiling a Parallel* (16), the "bumbling fool" narrator (22), and the surprise of the Martian guide, Severnius, that Earth women do not rebel against their (mis)treatment. Christina Jane Lake explores *Unveiling a Parallel* within the history of utopian texts that include eugenics, an obviously problematic but popularly held perspective on social improvement in the Progressive Era. Lake argues that the differences between hedonistic Palaveria and ethical Caskia "represent the negotiation between the views of the two writers" (114), while Roemer suggests that it signifies a negotiation between the authors' "implied attitudes and expected responses by nineteenth-century readers" (Kolmerten, Introduction, xxxvii). In contrast with Lake and Roemer, I see the authors of *Unveiling a Parallel* reconciling their own spiritual beliefs with their desire for a more gender-equitable world. While they point out some advantages to Palaveria, the overarching narrative clearly favors Caskia, and they pose this latter community as successfully moral and egalitarian. Similarly, the even lesser-discussed *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds*[22] creates visions of spiritually grounded societies with various roles and relationships for men and women, highlighting alternative possibilities for their readers. Pairing these novels together provides an opportunity to explore the negotiation of gender equality and spirituality for women writers at the turn of the twentieth century. Additionally, this article adds to existing scholarship by emphasizing the role of the outer space setting, allowing authors to explore numerous (via the plethora of available moons, planets, suns, etc.) and varied societal constructions. Implicitly, this setting argues that not only could there be other societal arrangements, but there may already be, on other planets. These authors use interplanetary adventures to take their readers on a cognitive journey to consider the potential compatibility between Christian perspectives and gender equality.

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[21] Examples include Jane Donawerth and Carol Kolmerten's *Utopian and Science Fiction by Women: Worlds of Difference* (1994) and Carol Farley Kessler's *Daring to Dream: Utopian Fiction by United States Women Before 1950* (1995).

The Progressive Era: Politics, Utopia, and Religion

The Progressive Era, stretching from approximately 1890 to 1920, saw a shift in women's engagement with political and public debates and spaces. Lynn Gorden defines the Progressive Era as a period of "optimism and energy" that "pervaded middle-class America" (qtd. in Aldridge 423). Eager to build on the decades of work since the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, women were engaged in the fight for suffrage, but their work was much more expansive. Many white middle-class women were growing their sphere of influence beyond the home to try to improve, or uplift, the conditions of others[23] by advocating for labor reform, providing resources to low-income mothers and children, arguing for temperance, and more. Often, women saw this work as an extension of their motherly role in the home applied to society more broadly. As Schneider and Schneider aptly write, “Women in the Progressive Era flexed their moral and organizational muscles and did their effective best to make society behave” (243). Women stepped into areas historically operated by men and promoted change through speeches, marches, fundraisers, and more. Literature allowed women to process their experiences or advocate for changes through narratives, and utopian literature uniquely allowed writers to imagine more progressive worlds untethered to our current systems.

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[22] This novel is included in Kessler's annotated bibliography as well as Lewes' in *Dream Revisionaries* (1995). Lewes also mentions the novel as an example of "vindication," a characteristic of nineteenth-century women's utopias in which "women in these narratives are assured of their innate worth and inherent right-mindedness" ("Middle-Class Edens," 21).

Though the utopian texts discussed here were fairly obscure in their time and remain so today, they demonstrate the Progressive Era desire for improvement, albeit in a less concrete fashion, by providing thought experiments of other societal systems in outer space. As such, they depart from Ida Tarbell’s investigative writing that exposes real-world corruption in the oil industry or Margaret Sanger’s pamphlets providing practical contraception information directly to individual women. These utopian novels are more subtly arguing for change by opening their readers’ minds to other societal possibilities. Utopian texts often allow writers to point out “the unfulfilled needs and wants of specific classes, groups, and individuals in their unique historical contexts" (Moylan 1) and to express a “desire for a better way of being and living” (Levitas 8). To these aims, many Progressive Era utopian writers created revised versions of the United States. For instance, in *Salome Shepard, Reformer* (1893) by Helen Maria Winslow, the titular character improves a mill that she operates, and in *What Diantha Did* (1909-1910) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Diantha explores alternative systems for women's domestic work. Both depict relatively realistic versions of Progressive Era communities, and individual women create substantial change for others. In contrast, the societies in *Unveiling a Parallel* and *Pilgrim's Progress* already exist on other planets, and the visitors, and by extension the readers, learn about and consider their radically different societal systems. Like the most well-known utopian text published shortly after these novels, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* (1915), they depict more gender-equal societies outside of our reality; however, unlike Gilman's novel, *Unveiling a Parallel* and *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds* more prominently demonstrate the tension or balance between progressive gender ideologies and traditional Christian beliefs of the time.

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[23] This effort to uplift others is notable through its intention to help improve the conditions of others’ lives but problematic in its suggestion that others are lower or beneath the individual assisting them. Antoniazzi argues, “the middle-class activists who swept a symbolic broom over the country claimed moral authority over all kinds of regulation and worked to impart restrictive precepts to the lower classes, which were deemed incapable of self-government. In this way, the emergence of women in the public sphere during the Progressive Era corresponded to a re-articulation of the frictions between women of different classes” (83-84).

For some individuals of the Progressive Era, the reform efforts in the public sphere marked a shift away from the more conservative ideas of religious tradition, while for others, it was an application of their religious beliefs through tangible work aimed at societal improvement. The Progressive Era disrupted Victorian ideas through women's participation in public reform efforts, but it still maintained many of the ideals of Christianity and morality (Aldridge). The social gospel, or what was known as social Christianity around 1900, sometimes "designate[d] a movement within Protestantism, but other times it is contrasted to individual salvation or it identifies a faith commitment to and responsibility for the social order" (Gorrell 4).[24] Some Christians began to see themselves as caretakers for the material wellbeing of other humans, rather than, or not only of, their spiritual transformation. Jones and Merchant, along with Parrish, somewhat apply this notion of the social gospel in their utopian novels by creating worlds that are more gender equitable, which has a material impact on all of its citizens. It changes the jobs women can access, and thus, their socioeconomic status and capacity for independence. However, while exploring gender equality, the authors also integrate traditional Christian ideas into their works. For instance, the narrator of *Unveiling a Parallel* remarks on the citizens of Caskia, "These people have never had a Christ—in flesh and blood—but they have put into effect every precept of our Great Teacher" (127-28). Extraterrestrial beings in *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds* quote scripture, display images of Jesus, and frequently mention God, the Devil, and Christian stories. Though details about the authors' specific religious beliefs are difficult to determine, their alignment with traditional Christian beliefs emerges through these worlds. Interestingly, the writers all argue that increased gender equality and Christian belief were compatible ideologies, arguing for a middle ground for individuals who saw these as opposing values.

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[24] Gorrell explains that the five denominations most engaged in social gospel were Congregationalists, Epsicopalians, Bapitsts, Methodists, and Presbyterians. While in 1900 there were only a few supporters, the movement was fairly mainstream within these denominations by 1920. These novels were published during the time when this ideology was emerging and growing.

Otherworldly Gender Relations

By the time Alice Ilgenfritz Jones, Ella Merchant, and Nettie Parrish Martin were writing their novels, telescopes that provided a window into outer space had been around for centuries, and theories about how to access spaces beyond the Earth's atmosphere were emerging.[25] Scientists and others were interested in what was located in outer space and how they could reach it, which informed the creative work of the time. What the vast, unexplored terrain of outer space contained was uncertain, though. For instance, an 1895 article published in *Harper's Bazaar* explains that

> Science has not been able to tell us yet whether or not the stars and planets are inhabited.

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[25] For instance, Scottish astronomer William Leitch published "A Journey Through Space" in 1861 that proposed the use of rockets for space flight, and in 1895, Russian Konstantin Tsiolkovsky offered the idea of a space elevator that would transport individuals into outer space. In 1903, Tsiolkovsky expanded his theoretical basis for space exploration, highlighting it as a real possibility.

> It conjectures that the dense cloud atmosphere in Venus which occasions her brilliancy may also protect and shield animal life on certain portions of her surface; it sees no reason to suppose that the conditions of Mars are very different from her own, and that it may not be peopled. ("Letters from Space" 625)

The scientific perspectives of the time allowed for the possibility of life in outer space, even within our solar system. Nettie Parrish Martin herself writes in her preface to *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds*, "That there are other worlds besides the one on which we live, where human intelligence dwells, I sincerely and honestly believe." Martin's perspective allows her to earnestly consider other ways of being. The uncertainty of outer space, combined with the possibility, allows individuals to imagine alternative worlds where different social arrangements are the norm. For women, this often included a culture in which women had more rights and respect beyond their domestic sphere.

In Alice Ilgenfritz Jones and Ella Merchant's *Unveiling a Parallel*, an unnamed male protagonist journeys alone to Mars[26] where he discovers alternative societies that highlight Earth's shortcomings, particularly related to gender roles. A group of astronomers greets him upon his landing, and Severnius becomes his guide to the new city, Thursia, in the country called Paleveria. The narrator's aversion to "womanish things" (8) quickly becomes apparent, as does his disdain for the equal respect and honor shown for men and women on the red planet. He prefers, instead, Earthly gender relations, which he explains to Severnius. His Martian companion is confused by the described gender arrangements, highlighting the absurdity that Earthly women are capable of many tasks but discouraged from doing them and that they must pay taxes but are blocked from voting. The Earth man, in an attempt to justify these inconsistencies, states, “Our women are very superior; we treat them more as princesses than as inferiors, —they are angels” (29). Here, the narrator evokes Coventry Patmore’s estimation of “The Angel in the House,” a view that women were best suited or divinely charged to remain in the domestic sphere, a notion that aligned with True Womanhood. In *Disorderly Conduct*, Caroll Smith-Rosenberg explains that True Womanhood “prescribed a female role bounded by kitchen and nursery, overlaid with piety and purity, and crowned with subservience” (13). The male narrator is familiar and comfortable with this view of the docile, pure woman, and the longer he spends in Thursia, the more shocked he becomes by its female citizens who sharply contrast with the figure of the angelic, true woman.

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[26] In *Imagining Mars: A Literary History* (2011), Crossley explores the novel's setting on the planet Mars: "In *Unveiling a Parallel*, Jones and Merchant, while displaying almost no interest in the scientific controversies of their day about Mars, inaugurated a tradition of using Mars as a utopian experiment in criticism and simulation, a model for terrestrial contemplation and action. Their romance is the ancestor to the later utopias of Alexander Bogdanov and Kim Stanley Robinson and not unlike the antiscientific critical romances of C. S. Lewis and Ray Bradbury. Of all the utopian romances of Mars from the 1890s, *Unveiling a Parallel* is the one that still has the most residual energy" (97).

In Paleveria’s version of a gender-equal society, women participate in activities typically affiliated with men, which increasingly appalls the Earthman and encourages readers’ disgust as well. Especially amongst elite circles, women have an affinity for drinking, vaporizing (an alternative to smoking), and associating with male lovers and prostitutes. Severnius’s sister Elodia, a banker whom the narrator initially finds incredibly enchanting, eventually evokes “pain” and even “a kind of helpless rage” because she participates in such practices (146). This physical and emotional response highlights the depths of the narrator’s discomfort with gender equality in this form. Hollinger aptly articulates that Elodia is “the embodiment of the woman who enjoys traditional male privileges and is as unlike an angel in the house as it is possible to be” (233). The protagonist is appalled that the father rather than Elodia cares for their child, highlighting the double standard of women being judged much more harshly for a common practice of terrestrial men. Despite the narrator’s discomfort, Elodia is memorable, and through her character “the authors argue that women and men are similar in nature, even in their erotic and sexual needs, and that women should be free to experiment and express themselves in all the ways previously reserved for men" (Suksang 143). However, the narrator does not take this positive view of the society. Elodia's actions sharply conflict with his perspective of women as angelic, and the Paleverian society showcases the authors' view of gender equality without spirituality.

In their interrogation of gender roles, Jones and Merchant return to the Christian creation story, often used to justify women's oppression, and present a Martian alternative. Though the authors clearly value morality and spirituality, they also interrogate religious views that can demean women. In the Christian creation story, as interpreted by some, God designates Adam as the leader, and Eve is susceptible to mistakes when left to her own devices. The narrator from Earth explains, "We humor [women], patronize them, tyrannize over them. And they defer to, and exalt us, and usually acknowledge our superiority" (Jones and Merchant 35). The Christian perception of man's dominion over Earth, including their human counterpart, clearly emerges in the narrator's view. However, in this novel, the Martian creation myth "eliminates the complications of ribs, apples, and serpents in favor of simple equality: two beautiful and innocent animals" (Lewes, *Dream Revisionaries*, 148). After asking about the theory of humans' creation from the narrator's culture, Severnius explains, "Ours is different . . . A pair of creatures, male and female, sprang simultaneously from an enchanted lake . . . They were only animals, but they were beautiful and innocent. God breathed a Soul into them and they were Man and Woman, equal in all things" (32). Beautiful in its nature imagery, this creation story is even more striking in its equal treatment of the origins of men and women. This story is unlike the Christian version, in which man is created first, and then one of his ribs is used to create woman, making the latter essentially a byproduct of men; instead, the Martians imagine a concurrent and equivalent starting point for both sexes. While the Martian story still emphasizes a binary that we may critique in the twenty-first century, it makes great strides in creating a more equal origin for men and women, which undoubtedly informs their society's treatment of women. In turn, this reimaging encourages the novel's readers to consider how this religious human origin story impacts their views on man and woman.

Caskia presents a radically different societal construction from Paleveria, demonstrating the compatibility of spirituality and gender equality and how the combination positively impacts personal happiness and societal good. Donawerth and Kolmerten argue that Caskia is "an alternative to the nineteenth-century dilemma—to be either a passive, chaste female, or a greedy, lustful male" (112). Rather than women taking on vices typically associated with men on Earth, all citizens of Caskia are gentle and giving, adopting traits aligned with Earthly women. The country is clean and has plenty of space for its citizens, and everyone works joyfully to provide service for others. Another reviewer writes about Caskia: "moral behavior is so ingrained that civil laws are unnecessary, no one ever does anything that could adversely affect another, and sin is simply unthinkable" (Holyoke 587). It is clear that for Jones and Merchant, this society that highlights both equality and spirituality is a utopia. On the one hand, the ending of *Unveiling a Parallel* celebrates the strengths of women's stereotypical characteristics. On the other hand, it dismisses the value of material pleasures, including even sex outside of procreational purposes, and advances the moralistic binary of perceived womanly characteristics as good or angelic and stereotypical male behaviors as base or vile. While Kolmerten "question[s] why utopia must be linked with traditional Christian values" (xxxvii). I think this is Jones and Merchant's main argument: progressive gender equality is compatible with a Christian society.

A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds similarly draws attention to the problematic and limiting status of women in the turn-of-the-twentieth-century United States. Before he departs on his interplanetary adventure, the reader becomes familiar with Ulyssum Storries's earthly situation. He is more interested in experimenting with projects, such as his skycycle, than he is in laboring in ways that benefit his family, leaving nearly all the work to his wife Henriette. Initially, he sees this as an asset: "Henriette listened to all my notions and entered into all my plans (and you bet I had enough of them) and did my work and her own round the house, bringing water, splitting kindling, and making fires, letting me study out my inventions" (3). Henriette performs the labor typical of both men and women, providing Ulyssum, a Rip Van Winkle-esque character, with ample leisure time that he uses to build his skycycle that accidentally transports him out of the Earth's atmosphere. Ulyssum does not see his lack of contribution as a problem, and he does not oppose Henriette taking on the responsibilities of a stereotypical husband in addition to those of a wife. However, unlike the women of Paleveria in *Unveiling a Parallel*, Henriette does not partake in the vices of men that would be seen as unbecoming for a woman.

In contrast with *Unveiling a Parallel* which focuses on one planet, *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds* explores many planets and therefore a multitude of societal arrangements, all with religion playing a central role, thus resisting the popular Christian view of the roles of men and women as ordained and static. Once he departs from Earth and his wife Henriette, Ulyssum becomes familiar with many different societies, "each exhibiting a different arrangement between the sexes, a blend of innovation and conservatism" (Kessler 265). The universe of *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds* is a Christian, English-speaking interplanetary system in which individuals can be reincarnated on continually higher planes (with Earth being at the low end of that spectrum). An immortal angel guide named Trust leads Ulyssum Storries on a tour of various planets. On a moon of Mars, individuals are punished for wrongdoings such as murder and suicide, and one of Saturn's moons, Annamanda, contains parents who did not care for their children while on Earth and must work for a heathen king. Most of their stops highlight more progressive societies. For example, on Jupiter men hold political power but the sexes are perceived as equal in their capacities, and everyone has enough resources. On Neptune, citizens live in happiness as one family and have an opposite-sex companion who balances them in every way; they live mostly on air and see meat consumption as part of the cause of Earth dwellers' negative thoughts. Ulyssum and Trust also make stops on Saturn and Mercury before landing on the Sun, or Heaven, which is a perfected world of beauty. More than the narrator of *Unveiling a Parallel*, Ulyssum comes to view the status of women on Earth as a problem because of his exposure to these more perfected worlds, which encourages readers to do the same.

Some of the societies point out Earth's flaws by inverting the roles and rights of men and women and highlighting the capabilities of the latter. Ulyssum's stop on Mars is of particular note, as Ulyssum is greeted by a society that prizes women's maternity as they are also politically powerful landowners. They land on Urbana Goodheart's land; she is a "tall," "stately," "graceful" woman (93) who has recently been elected "Burgomistress . . . the highest office in the city" (96). Her husband, Bensuvie, tends to their twenty-two children, prepares dinner, and takes on other tasks around their home (93). Rather than being cultural leaders, men are trained to do the majority of the labor, and upon learning about earthly relations from Ulyssum, some of the men grow discontent. One Martian citizen, Uspurrshum, argues that the men unjustly "shoulder . . . every bit of labor" on Mars besides maternity (176). He advocates that men are as capable of leadership as women, and "if the sisters did part of the labor" on Mars, the men would have more time for leisure, inventions, and studying (176). In many ways, the status of men on Mars reflects that of women on Earth, as they are barred from many social and government roles and restricted to the types of labor they can perform. Through this role reversal, readers are encouraged to consider the absurdity of barring half the population from public roles. The men on Mars collaborate, trying to overthrow the monarchy to change their societal arrangements to be more like Earth's.[27] Through his relationships with the restricted, dissatisfied men on the red planet, Ulyssum is given new insight into the perspectives of many Earthly women.

The universe of *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds* emphasizes that there are many better ways for men and women to coexist, even within societies that ascribe to traditional Christian belief, than can be seen on planet Earth at the turn of the twentieth century. In fact, Earth is essentially the least evolved planet in the solar system. As Cyrvissa of Saturn explains to Ulyssum, "the Earth-born are the missing link between the higher life and the lowest plane, or animal. They are mortal animals in a material progressive state, in the plane of evolution. They are slowly developing into a higher plane and will some day reach the shores of immortality" (370). From a hierarchical perspective that places humans above animals, Earthlings are on the precipice of this boundary, more focused on the material than the spiritual. Evolutionarily less advanced than other planets, Earthlings have a long journey to improve their perspectives and treatment of others, especially women. Framed this way, Martin suggests that Earth does not need slight revisions but rather large restructurings to move them up the spiritual ladder toward, in the frame of this universe, immortality. For Martin, Earthlings need deeper spirituality and more equitable gender relations to progress. Notably, in her view, it is not despite religion but because of it, and that gender equity should exist for humans to evolve in their spirituality.

These lessons regarding women's status are reinforced on the Sun, the most idyllic, equitable, and spiritual setting that Martin hopes the reader will see as utopian. Ulyssum reunites with some of the individuals he has met on other planets who had risen to a higher plane and, because of knowing Ulyssum, they desire to visit Earth to elevate its societies. Heleftus explains to Ulyssum, "I shall bear the olive branch of redemption to woman who has groaned so long beneath a yoke so heavy that her tears and prayers have reached the portals of heaven. I am to go with my helpers and teach her the true knowledge of life; how to lift her burden and free herself. I shall assist woman in that world to regain her lost sphere" (405). Heleftus hopes to empower the women of Earth through education. Numa, a previous shepherdess on Neptune, says that she "shall try to lead the sisters of Earth, by their sweet, gentle influence, to draw lost manhood back to the perfection it had before the fall . . . For six thousand years man has controlled the Earth and woman has had little voice in its government. She has seen her sons and daughters go down in Error and could only weep and pray" (453-54). Numa thinks women have potential, if given the opportunity with more power and status, to improve the wellbeing of all. Martin applies the religious ideology of original sin, suggesting that women's societal involvement could return humanity to this perfected state. Laomeline of Mars similarly tells Ulyssum, "My mission will be the uplifting[28] of woman. Oh, what delight it will give me to see them advancing under my influence through God's help" (453). The citizens of the Sun agree about aiding Earth's women, though their approaches differ somewhat. Heleftus describes herself as a teacher, Numa sees herself as a guide, and Laomeline views her role more as the rescuer of women (with God's assistance). All, however, see the women of Earth as capable beings in need, and they are committed to aiding them for the sake of the women and Earth's society as a whole. This giving disposition displays their spiritual development and their self-belief as women, which are both critical aspects of the utopia readers are encouraged to accept.

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[27] Because of his involvement, Ulyssum goes before the queen who sees him as the "instigator" who "evidently wished to make the men dissatisfied with the present harmonious condition of affairs" (208). Though he explains he was only answering questions about earthly circumstances, the queen forces him to leave in his skycycle, leaving the woman he had fallen in love with, Laomeline.

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[28] This mission of uplift aligns with historical women of the Progressive Era who sought to lift up their fellow citizens materially and/or spiritually. The emphasis on social uplift pervades the discourse and motivated much of the political action of the time, including settlement houses and working women's clubs. As historian Nancy Woloch explains, the "special mission" of progressive middle and upper-class women "was to purify, uplift, control, and reform; to improve men, children, and society; to extend the values of the home" into other realms (270). Thus, Laomeline's language and mission would likely resonate with many readers, and Ulyssum does not object to her plans. However, in this scenario, all women, including those aforementioned middle- and upper-class women, would be the recipients of this uplift work, turning the tables on their typical role as interplanetary women enter the atmosphere. *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds* makes Earth one society amongst many, and notably, frames the society as less advanced and ideal than other alternatives, especially regarding its gender norms. Ulyssum's home society clearly needs change, and individuals from the other planets are happy to make Earth into a mission project. Martin turns a Christian paradigm on its head, pointing out that in the realm of gender roles, white, middle-class Americans (who would often be conducting the uplift or mission work) are in need of aid. For these writers, changing gender roles was imperative and compatible with a Christian worldview, and the lack of that equality necessitated missionary intervention in Martin's fictional tale.

Narrators of The Otherworldly Utopias

The narrators in both novels play a critical role in how readers might interpret the other societies. Often in utopian texts, an outsider narrator guides the reader through the new society and eventually comes to acknowledge the strengths of the new world, frequently accepting them as superior to their own. In *Dream Revisionaries* (1995), Darby Lewes names this common structure the hero-locale-guide model. She argues that "a protagonist encounters a strange new world and is led through its political, social, and ethical complexities by a knowledge guide (and frequently comes to reevaluate his own society in the process)" (12). Lewes explains that this formula creates the plot and conflict, as the narrator must assess the new society in comparison to their own. As one review of *Unveiling a Parallel* bluntly states, "The authors use this stranger-in-a-strange-land approach to point out the stupidity of [Earth's] society" (Rogers 204). The reader can explore the new world through the narrator's eyes, as they are also an outsider; however, depending on a reader's positionality, the narrator's views may or may not resonate with them. Both narrators of the novels discussed here are likely white, middle-class men, which highlights the mainstream patriarchal perspective and the possibility that it can change. However, responses from individuals with other positionalities are not depicted.

The narrator of *Unveiling a Parallel* does not fully perform this hero-locale-guide function for readers while he is in Paleveria; his acceptance occurs later in Caskia. While he learns about the Martian society from his astute companion Severnius, he does not fully reassess American society, instead clinging to his existing views. The authors guide readers away from Paleveria's construction through the narrator's response, encouraging them to see the flaws of a society without a spiritual focus. Readers' responses could vary widely—some would celebrate the freedom women experience in Paleveria while others could interpret this alternative culture as a warning against giving women more rights, especially suffrage. Kessler explains, "The parallel unveiled is the common human nature of women and men" (259). However, rather than focusing on the strengths of women, the narrator fixates on the possibility of women partaking in stereotypically male behaviors. One can only wonder how a more progressive man or woman would respond to the more liberating and equal roles for women displayed in Paleveria. Though the society still has flaws, especially through its socioeconomic differentiation, men and women both participate in worldly pleasures, and the narrator cannot accept that possibility. This response seems indicative of Jones and Merchant's moralistic viewpoint as they implicitly advocate instead for an equal, spiritual society. They aim to find a middle ground between traditional Christians adhering to strict gendered codes and radical reformers arguing for a society focused on materialistic pleasure. They argue for a gender-equal society grounded in spiritual and ethical practices, signified through the narrator's acceptance of Caskia.

Unveiling a Parallel's narrator accepts the more spiritual and nature-focused Martian nation of Caskia, lauding the society's characteristics that are typically associated with women.

The narrator serves as the example of Earthly (more specifically, American) ideologies through which the reader can consider and critique both Caskia and their reality. In contrast to the narrator's home planet, Caskia seems much more ideal.[29] He finds not only their society but also some of the women appealing because of their calm, confident, and productive demeanor. The narrator quickly falls in love with Ariadne, an heiress and teacher, whom he tells, "when I return to Earth again, and lift my eyes toward heaven, it will not be Mars that I shall see, but only—Ariadne" (158). Their romantic attachment seems possible because Ariadne aligns much more with the "angels" of Earth in their purest, most idealized state. However, Ariadne is not oppressed or subservient, instead she "is as active and articulate as Elodia: she is independently wealthy, holds a respected position as an educator, and is the central speaker during the final section of the book" (*Dream Revisionaries*, 17). As such, the narrator's love of Ariadne represents a slight shift in his perception of women, as he is endeared to this kind and confident female leader. In Caskia, both men *and* women adopt stereotypically and hyperbolically ideal female qualities, and the genders are equal, which proves beneficial for men, women, and children in the society. Even the narrator sees these benefits, suggesting to readers that men could be persuaded to adapt to this type of gender-equitable, spiritually robust society.

Like the narrator of *Unveiling a Parallel*, Ulyssum of *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds* initially does not take issue with the subservient status of Earthly women. However, he becomes aware of the injustice of sexism as individuals on other planets are shocked by the treatment of women on Earth, encouraging skeptical readers to also be more open to equality. In a conversation on Mars, Ulyssum overhears his immortal angel guide, Trust, tell a Martian named

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[29] Lake importantly emphasizes that Caskia's centuries-long "conscious programme of self-directed evolution" (111) pulled from eugenic ideologies, as it "counteract[ed]" and eventually "eradicate[d] hereditary evils" (Jones and Merchant 53). Thus, troubling Progressive Era beliefs find their way into the writer's utopias, and the narrator does not seem to take notice because the authors likely accept these beliefs themselves.

Onnodeen, “women's life on Earth with a very few exceptions, is not an enviable one. Her mission is wholly misunderstood, and being the weaker vessel brute force has placed her where she is to-day” (98). Ulyssum occupies an interesting position, as he learns about outsiders’ perceptions of women on his home planet. Trust highlights women’s sometimes physically weaker status that has contributed to their broader oppression. Another Martian, Arbazellon, asks Ulyssum directly about their treatment of women on Earth and whether they care for members of the sex as well as Martians do. He responds,

> “I'm afraid we do not,” then reflects, “I thought of Henriette splitting wood, and mother working in the field, when an extra man was needed, and of my running away to go fishing and letting her do it. But I answered, truthfully, by saying, ‘Woman, on Earth, takes her place beside man and helps in all kinds of labor,’ and I felt a conscious pride in saying it.” (105)

Ulyssum excuses his laziness by reframing it as gender equality to appeal to the Martians. Ulyssum and Henriette’s marital arrangement persists during the span of the novel, as Ulyssum is off on a grand space adventure while Henriette cares for their son at home, though Ulyssum is powerless to return to Earth on his own accord. The repeated conversations about women’s status during his interplanetary journey draw Ulyssum’s attention to the shortcomings of Earth’s gender constructions, including within his own home. The visit to Mars is early in his space exploration, and the continuous exposure to elevated societies over an extended period makes him see the need to alter women’s position on Earth and treat his wife with more dignity. By joining him on this journey, readers may also consider their status or treatment of women in their homes and societies more broadly, slowly inching readers toward a more gender-equitable society.

A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds allows readers to consider transformation on an individual level through Ulyssum. Upon returning to Earth after ten years, Ulyssum describes his relationship with Henriette as a partnership with a common goal: "We both are striving, with the light given us, to enter into the true circle of harmony, loving all, having charity for all, and lending a helping hand to all who need it" (480-81). Through his experiences in space, their marital relationship shifts from an unbalanced share of work and leisure to a common vision of love and service as they work towards a higher plane. As Lewes writes, "His unsuccessful flirtations with a variety of extra-terrestrial females open his eyes to his own failings; he finally returns to Earth, rejoins his ever-patient spouse, and lives as a good Christian and loyal husband" (*Dream Revisionaries*, 158). While I agree that their rejection illuminates his flaws, his observation of women, marriages, and societies that support all citizens compels him to change his ways more than his failed romantic dalliances. Ulyssum is persuaded by living within other societal arrangements to change his outlook on marriage and life, viewing his wife as a partner in the pursuit of aiding others. The example of Ulyssum could empower readers to change their own beliefs and actions or to encourage others to do so.

Women, Outer Space, and The Possibility of Equality

Despite the novels' focus on gender norms, both depict a male protagonist, rather than a female one, traveling into space. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, men and sometimes women were flying in hot-air balloons and dirigible balloons. French brothers Joseph Michel and Jacques Etienne Montgolfier created the hot air balloon in 1783, and German Wilhelmine Reichard was the first woman to make a solo flight in a balloon in 1811. French engineer Jules Henri Giffard built the first airship, or dirigible balloon, in 1852, and the first woman to pilot such an aircraft was Aida de Acosta of the United States in 1903. While airplanes and space shuttles were invented after these novels were written, the novelists would have been no stranger to the idea that women were sometimes flying, using the existing forms of air travel. Utopian texts offer critiques of current culture and thought experiments for possible futures. While the male protagonist provides a skeptical, masculine view of the other worlds, and he must be persuaded of the worth of new cultural arrangements, potentially convincing the reader alongside him, it does not allow the reader to fully consider how an Earthly woman might perceive and perhaps even thrive in these alternative cultures. As such, it seems unfortunate that these authors—and essentially all other authors of utopian works in this time period—were unable to depict, or decided against depicting, a female astronaut explorer.[30]

Though these novels lack female narrators, women have now of course traveled beyond the limits of the Earth's atmosphere. Soviet Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman in space in 1963 when she orbited the Earth for two days in Vostok 6. Now, sixty-five women have made the journey, making up approximately 11.5% of the total number of astronauts (Gorman). While women still make up a relatively small percentage of astronauts, women flying into outer space seems like an apt metaphor for how women's roles have changed over time. We are flying to new heights and exploring new spaces, often alongside male counterparts. Though increases to women's rights have improved slowly over time, and we have had some setbacks, we have seen improvements and expect to see more. Whether we are flying through outer space or we are firmly planted on planet Earth, it seems to be the hope of these authors and many readers that women will soar.

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[30] Exceptions might include Randall Richberg's *Reinstern* (1900), which includes a female protagonist who accesses a new planet through a dream vision, or Oldfield Pettersen's *Venus* (1924), which depicts two women arriving from Venus to educate women in Chicago. However, in neither of these texts does an Earth woman travel into space.

Not only did these novels contribute to conversations regarding women's rights and how societies could be constructed differently, but they also added to a body of work that laid the foundation for later utopic and dystopic texts.[31] More precisely, these novels contributed to the foundation of work in which women authors imagine alternative worlds with distinct gender relationships to highlight better alternatives and offer critiques of their own time and place.[32] Alice Ilgenfritz Jones, Ella Merchant, and Nettie Parrish Martin present readers with various worlds that consider diverse arrangements between men and women, ranging from the society-wide adoption of traditionally masculine behaviors to a perfected world of equality and harmony. In turn, this allows readers to reflect on the gender constructions in their own culture and consider whether changes are warranted, and if so, how they could come to be. Though we have made much progress on women's rights and gender equality since the publication of *Unveiling a Parallel* and *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds*, there is still work to be done. As Hollinger writes, "One hundred years after its first publication, the vast majority of North American women are still far from achieving even the less than completely desirable success enjoyed by Elodia in Thursia. The realm of universal peace and love represented by Caskia seems as out of reach as it ever was" (234). Thus, these novels are still relevant for us to read and study, both to deepen our understanding of cultural dynamics at the turn of the twentieth century and as a reminder that progress is slow but persistent. Whether in our world or another, may we work towards a just and equitable society for all.

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[31] As one reviewer states, "These long-forgotten authors beat H. G. Wells to the gate with their 1893 novel that was a combination of Utopian literature and science fiction" (Rogers 204). If the umbrella of utopian/dystopian fiction is defined broadly, nearly any work that takes place in outer space could fall within the genre, as each would likely present an alternative world that could be seen as more or less ideal than our own. Many of these novels share similarities with the Progressive Era utopian texts. For instance, like Ulyssum, Arthur Dent of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1979) similarly travels through outer space, interacting with other characters and learning more about Earth. Frank Herbert's *Dune* (1965) highlights interplanetary relationships, exploring cultural characteristics such as politics and religion, as we see in *A Pilgrim's Progress in Other Worlds*.

[32] For example, Hollinger points out the similarities between *Unveiling a Parallel* and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's well-known *Herland*, published nearly two decades later: "as in Herland, the narrator is a young male explorer who encounters a new world and a new world order, and whose naive questions and reactions provide the excuse for various of its inhabitants to explain this new world's social systems and values to him and to the reader" (233). The parallels with *Herland* are undeniable, and more recent works also seem informed by this literary legacy. For instance, Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) features a planet called Gethen whose inhabitants are ambisexual, with no fixed sex. Similarly, in Elizabeth Bear's *Carnival* (2006), an all-female, primarily lesbian society on the lush planet of New Amazonia defends themselves from the male-dominated Old Earth Colonial Coalition. Utopian and dystopian texts present thought experiments that allow authors and readers to ask questions and imagine alternatives. Authors like Jones, Merchant, and Martin helped lay the groundwork for writers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to build thought-provoking worlds.

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Media Review Essay

The Last Voyage of the Demeter (2023) and *Renfield* (2023)

Carol Senf

For those of us who appreciate interesting adaptations of *Dracula*, 2023 was an exciting year, with the release of two films that encourage us to rethink both Stoker's novel and its numerous adaptations. While neither *Renfield* (Universal; directed by Chris McKay) or *The Last Voyage of the Demeter* (Universal, directed by Andre Overdal) attempts to recapture the novel as a whole in the way that Francis Ford Coppola did in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1993), each film takes something from Stoker's novel (the character Renfield or "The Captain's Log" in *Demeter*) and uses it to provide the center for a fresh reading/viewing. Moreover, what is even more interesting for someone like me who tends to see books and films as means of providing insights into the period that produced them is that fact that both unabashedly focus on the primal evil of the Dracula character. There is no inkling of the romantic vampire seeking his lost love in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* or the charming character in Badham's *Dracula* (1979). Instead, there is only hunger and a vague desire to dominate the humans who appear ill-equipped to challenge him. What, if anything, does this emphasis on unremitting violence tell us about the time in which we live?

Despite the similarity in the Dracula character and the fact that each film focuses on ways to combat such evil, the films differ significantly in other ways. Adapted from a short story by Robert Kirkman (who also produced the film) *Renfield* focuses on the conflict between Robert Montague Renfield (played by Nicholas Hoult) and Dracula (played with screen chewing glee by Nicholas Cage) and is set in modern New Orleans. No longer incarcerated in an insane asylum, Renfield is a member of a support group for people attempting to end codependency, in his case a toxic employer who promises him much but never delivers. Having abandoned his wife and daughter a hundred years earlier to follow Dracula, Renfield is tired of procuring victims for his master. In fact, having originally joined the group to procure the blood of people no one will miss, he discovers that Dracula is a narcissist from whose control he must escape.

While the film is full of references to contemporary psychology and self-help, *Renfield* is also aware of its predecessors. Renfield's diet of insects, though, is no longer a pathology but is now a means of giving him superhuman strength. There are also numerous allusions to the 1931 Tod Browning *Dracula* film. Not only are both Renfield characters real estate lawyers, but Cage's costume and mannerisms echo Bela Lugosi. Indeed, *Renfield* opens with a black-and-white scene in which Cage and Hoult replace Bela Lugosi and Dwight Frye, a composite designed to acknowledge its predecessor. Subsequent black and white scenes continue to echo the Browning film even though most of the film takes place in a very bright color pallet of yellows, pinks, and turquoise and modern architecture. Gone are the castles and gloomy settings, a decision that provides a constant reminder to the viewer that *Renfield* is a new kind of *Dracula* film.

Aside from the tropical colors and the contrast to previous films, what distinguishes *Renfield* from its predecessors is the quantity of blood and the degree of physical violence that takes place, with bodies literally exploding on screen and blood splattered everywhere. While the film handles this violence with a degree of camp, it is not designed for the squeamish. There's good reason that it is R Rated (Children under 17 must be accompanied by an adult) by the Motion Picture Association of America while the British Board of Film Classification lowers the age to 15 and over.

The violence continues even after Renfield decides to accept the motto of the support group – "I am enough." – and go off on his own, and Dracula joins a prominent NO crime family to secure victims for himself. At this point, *Renfield* becomes more crime drama with Renfield allying himself with Rebecca, a NO policewoman, to arrest members of the crime family and rescue Rebecca's sister who had been taken prisoner by them. Rebecca and Renfield hack Dracula's body into pieces, which they encase in concrete and scatter through the city's water system though they also salvage enough of Dracula's blood to heal Rebecca's sister and to bring the members of the support group back to life. With the conclusion, the film once again echoes Stoker's novel in which the original Renfield escapes from Dracula's power over him when he attempts to save Mina Harker. Though Stoker's character subsequently dies, Stoker suggests that he has regained his humanity by breaking free of Dracula's power. Similarly, *Renfield* suggests that the eponymous character has finally regained his humanity as well as he continues to participate in the support group and to enjoy a relationship with Rebecca.

While the setting, color pallet, and reliance on contemporary self-help strategies remind viewers that *Renfield* is a new kind of *Dracula* film, *The Last Voyage of the Demeter* (Universal; directed by Andre Ovredal) incorporates its new approach in more subtle ways, introducing a cast of new characters: Dr. Clemens (played by Corey Hawkins), the Black Cambridge graduate who reminds the audience of the lack of opportunities available to people of color; Anna (Aisling Franciosi), Dracula's Romanian victim, demonstrates extraordinary strength of character in the face of the sailors' misogyny; and Toby, the captain's young grandson (Woody Norman) whose life and ultimate death humanize the crew of the *Demeter* and cause them to band together to destroy the evil that had killed him. No longer the almost anonymous victims of Stoker's novel, the crew is fully individualized. Furthermore, the film echoes contemporary readings of Stoker's novel, with Clemens clearly suggesting both the many scientific interpretations as well as its postcolonial ones. Anna's emotional strengths echo many feminist readings of *Dracula*, and the sailors remind the viewer that technology was changing their world in 1897, the year in which the events take place. The *Demeter* is a beautifully crafted wooden sailing ship, but frequent references to the rise of steam travel echo Stoker's repeated references to the fact that the world is changing. Even though most the film takes place on board the *Demeter*, it begins with the ship washed up on the shore at Whitby and concludes with Clemens in London vowing to pursue "the foul beast." A brief flashback to Varna, Bulgaria, where Dracula's earth boxes are loaded on board, also provides a glimpse of what life was like for Dr. Clemens and for the other sailors who are all confronted with forces beyond their control, whether it be the casual racism that plagues Clemens or the advent of technology the sailors face. Clemens is initially turned down when he applies for a position as a member of the crew even though he makes it clear that he wants to return to England. (We learn later that he had been hired as a physician by the king of Romania who apparently expected a white physician rather than a Black one.)

The film hints at the horror to come when the waggoneers transporting Dracula's earth boxes refuse to help load the ship, saying they must leave before sundown. However, the early days on board provide a pleasant interlude with Toby introducing Dr. Clemens to the ship and its contents as well as insights into the various crew members. Viewers learn, for example, that this is the last voyage for Captain Eliot (Liam Cunningham) who plans to retire to Ireland along with his grandson, and that the crew members have been together on previous voyages. The character that stands out from the rest is Joseph (Jon Jon Briones), the cook, who articulates typical religious views and thus provides an obvious contrast to the more scientific Clemens. Their conversations reveal, however, that both search for truth and echo Stoker's awareness of different ideologies at the *fin de siècle.*

Having established the crew members as human beings viewers can care about, the film turns to drama and action once Clemens discovers the dying Anna in the hold and, over the objections of crew members who object to having a woman on board, saves her by transfusing his blood directly into her veins, a direct reference to the science in Stoker's novel. Shortly thereafter, the animals on board, including Toby's beloved Lab Huck, are killed. Close ups of animals with throats slit and bodies drained of blood justify an R rating from the MPAA, and the film is equally clear about what Dracula does to his human victims even if the violence here is less dramatic than in *Renfield.* Fingers point at Clemens though he offers the scientific explanation, rabies, because he is too scientific to contemplate supernatural evil. Most of the remaining scenes take place at night, a decision that puts Dracula always in shadow, his hideousness revealed only briefly. Unlike the pastel pallet and explosive blood of *Renfield*, the deaths here are revealed mostly by transformations in Dracula's victims though the nighttime scenes also emphasize the mysteries of their inhuman opponent. Only with the death of Toby does the crew band together to destroy the evil in their midst, with the formerly ostracized Anna offering guidance based on her intimate knowledge of the monster, a subtle nod to Stoker's Mina Harker.

Once the English shore is sighted, the crew attempts to sink the *Demeter,* and Clemens confronts Dracula, pointing out his lack of humanity in the brief "You feed." Only Clemens and Anna manage to escape, however, on some of the wreckage of the *Demeter,* but Dracula controls the wind that takes the ship into Whitby harbor. The rising sun burns Anna who sinks into the ocean though not before she rejects Clemens offer of another transfusion. She acknowledges that death is her only way to escape Dracula's hold on her.

The film ends in London with Clemens seeing Dracula in a pub and announcing to the audience, "And so I will pursue this foul beast." He had not found truth in his scientific and medical studies, but he has found his mission pursuing the monster he had seen on the *Demeter*. Interestingly, the color pallet remains somber at this point, possibly because, with Dracula still very much alive, the world remains shrouded in darkness, and Clemens is very much alone in his quest.

While the two films look very different, there is one strong point of similarity, the recognition that the evil Dracula represents still exists despite human attempts to destroy it. Previous films read the conclusion to Stoker's novel as the destruction of Dracula and the victory of modern humanity over an ancient evil, despite Stoker's more nuanced ending: that Dracula is not destroyed and that his European opponents are deluding themselves when they return to Transylvania. In both *Renfield* and *The Last Voyage of the Demeter*, Dracula is still alive. Renfield continues to attend meetings of the support group, but he and Rebecca know that Dracula will one day manage to reunite himself, and Clemens knows that his opponent has found a ready source of blood in London. The conflict that Stoker identified as the battle between Good and Evil, past and present, continues in these films, but the human opponents seem even less prepared than Stoker's to confront such powerful evil. Their lack of preparedness is possibly the reason that we today need to see these films. Both hold a mirror up to Stoker's novel and to the classic film adaptations that follow, and both remind us of a more philosophical lesson: that deeply flawed human beings are worth fighting for even if humans have lost their conviction of what is needed to annihilate the evil in our midst. *Renfield* and *The Last Voyage of the Demeter* are imperfect films, but they are both worth seeing for anyone interested in vampires in general and Dracula in particular.

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Book Reviews

Calhoon, Kenneth S. *The Long Century's Long Shadow: Weimar Cinema and the Romantic Modern*. U of Toronto P, 2021.

https://utorontopress.com/9781487526955/the-long-century-and-x2019s-long-shadow/

Kenneth S. Calhoon's *The Long Century's Long Shadow: Weimar Cinema and the Romantic Modern* is an ambitious study that explores connections among Weimar films (that is, films made in Germany between the wars, particularly Expressionist films), Romantic literature and painting, and modern art. As a scholar of nineteenth-century literature and culture, I appreciated the book's insistence on the relevance of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century works to twentieth-century film; however, I found several aspects of the book to be frustrating.

According to the introduction, the book's "broad thesis" is that "Expressionist film (and Expressionism generally) was troubled by the same neoclassical ideal that, more than a century prior, had—in a manner consistent with a modern diagnosis of hysteria—stigmatized the surge of motion/emotion characteristic of Romantic art and literature" (4). To observe similarities between Expressionist films and Romantic works is not new; as Calhoon readily acknowledges, Lotte Eisner's *The Haunted Screen* (1952), for example, does so at length. Calhoon's thesis announces a focus on Expressionism's and Romanticism's shared alienation from the neoclassical ideal of clean lines and measured emotions. But the book itself is much more nebulous than such a sentence suggests. It includes much discussion of the Romantic paintings of Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840) and of Weimar films including *Nosferatu* (1922), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919), *The Hands of Orlac* (1924), *Metropolis* (1927), *The Blue Angel* (1930), and *The Street* (1923). There is less discussion than the introduction led me to expect of Romantic literature, but Novalis, Joseph von Eichendorff, and Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder make appearances, as do Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Shelleys.

Perhaps because the argument for similarity between Romanticism and Expressionism has been made before, Calhoon does not really make it here. *The Long Century's Long Shadow* is very different from, say, Nora Gilbert's *Better Left Unsaid: Victorian Novels, Hayes Code Films, and the Benefits of Censorship* (2013), in which the argument for similarity between Victorian novels and Hayes Code films is built over four chapters, each of which presents one pairing (such as Charles Dickens with Frank Capra, or Charlotte Brontë with Elia Kazan). By contrast, I find myself struggling to write a chapter summary of *The Long Century's Long Shadow*. Indeed, Calhoon himself does not include any such summary in the introduction. Chapters are not organized around works. They have atmospheric titles such as "The Turmoil of Forces," "Under the Sign of Insomnia," and "Nightwatching." The chapters seem to be organized around images, positions, or stances that Calhoon observes in a very large number of works, including some outside the media and periods ostensibly under discussion in this study.

Calhoon does not provide "readings" of works but rather uses works as sources for examples of images and types of movement. For instance, in chapter five, Calhoon observes that in a painting of Christ in Mathias Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece (1512-16), in *Frankenstein* (1818), in some of Egon Schiele's paintings, and in the film *The Hands of Orlac*, people appear to have an alienated relationship to their own tortured-looking hands. For those of us with wide-ranging interests, it is exciting to see this kind of juxtaposition. And indeed, as Calhoon's introduction encourages us to observe, this image diverges from the neoclassical ideal. However, the dearth of metadiscourse in the book makes it difficult to discern exactly what, more specifically, Calhoon wants the reader to learn from such observations. He provides many quotations and examples of similar images, but he rarely stops to make an argument for their importance to the works at hand or to explain why the prevalence of these images across periods and media might matter. For example, Calhoon observes of *Frankenstein* that "Acute photosensitivity is a quality the creature shares with Plato's prisoner" in the cave (145). This is true enough, but Calhoon does not make any kind of broader argument about the importance of this comparison (which could just as easily be extended to plenty of other characters in literature, film, and art). I love comparisons across medium and period, but I found myself frustrated—not by the breadth of the comparisons but by the rapidity with which they were superseded by other ones. The lack of metadiscourse sometimes made it difficult for me to distinguish offhand comments from important points.

This book is steeped in art history and art theory, more than in the history and theory of literature or of film. As a scholar of the Victorian novel, I did not find his foray into literary realism in chapter six to be compelling. As a scholar of film, I was sometimes surprised by his claims, including two specific ones, unaccompanied by explicit criteria, about what is or is not "essentially cinematic" (60, 63). Still, Calhoon is undoubtedly on to something in observing an affinity between Caspar David Friedrich's paintings and cinema more generally, as well as some of the specific films discussed in this book. He writes, "Friedrich's paintings … disclose a potential realized by the cinema, in which the shot acts like consciousness itself" (49). Happily for the nineteenth-centuryist, it is important to Calhoon's argument that twentieth-century films do not simply "cite" Romantic paintings but rather manifest something that was already latent in these earlier works. This "something" involves both specific kinds of images and more philosophical matters of the viewer's perspective on the work of art. I appreciate that, in contrast to many works of scholarship today, Calhoon's book does not look down on artists and writers of the past for being aesthetically or ideologically backward.

That said, it is possible to go too far, and Calhoon's lack of emphasis on the social context for these works feels strange to me—not because it puts him outside the norm for scholarship, which is perfectly fine, but because the whole book is about the historical period that led to the Nazi regime. While reading Calhoon's discussions of Weimar films, I found myself wanting to learn more about how the Nazi takeover (and the Nazi film aesthetic, as represented by Leni Riefenstahl and others) could be understood as a response to these films and the art with which they were contemporaneous. Calhoon does not discuss these Expressionist filmmakers' lives and identities, but it is noteworthy to me how many of them were undesirable from a Nazi perspective: F. W. Murnau and James Whale were gay; Robert Wiene was Jewish; Karl Grune was Jewish and had contributed the story for *Aus Eines Mannes Mädchenjahren* (*From a Man's Girlhood*, 1919), about a person born without a clear gender and raised alternately as male and female. I do not believe that every work of scholarship needs to foreground identity-based critique, but surely these "undesirable" identities bear some significance in this context. Calhoon refers at the beginning and end of the book to neoclassical opposition to the perceived emotional excesses of Romanticism and Expressionism. Such opposition, surely, is congruent with the nascent Nazi view. For me, it is hard to think about perceived emotional excess in the early-twentieth-century context without thinking about Max Nordau's *Degeneration* (1892-3). The question of whether one responds to art with cool judgment or becomes emotionally involved is not unrelated to debates (begun in the late nineteenth century) about Decadence and the Aesthetic Movement—debates that were themselves constitutive of the public discourse about homosexuality. I would have appreciated some guidance from Calhoon as to how to understand the ways the early-twentieth-century films and paintings under discussion here fit into the broader aesthetic and social debates that were about to come to a head with the rise of the Nazis.

Full disclosure: I am neither a historian nor a theoretician of art. Someone who is might have an easier time with this book than I did. Despite its frustrations, *The Long Century's Long Shadow* is full of interesting observations, and the concluding chapter on Disney's *Fantasia* (1940) inspired me to reserve a ticket for my local symphony's live accompaniment to the film next year. I encourage readers with an interest in art or in Weimar cinema to try the book for themselves.

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Faflak, Joel and Tilottama Rajan. *William Blake: Modernity and Disaster*. U of Toronto P, 2020.

https://utorontopress.com/9781487506568/william-blake/

William Blake was perhaps best known for his highly allusive and synesthetic work that syncretically mixed personal revelation with traditional religion as much as he generically mixed literature and art. Joel Faflak and Tilottama Rajan have collected essays that likewise explore the ruptures between categories and bodies of knowledge. As one might expect from its subtitle "Modernity and Disaster," these essays map a constellation of recurring terms, especially "disaster," "apocalypse," and "science." Like Roland Barthes emphasizes in *Writing Degree Zero* (1953), these terms are treated "encyclopedicly," stretching their multivarious affordances to the limit. For example, in the introduction the editors establish the term "disaster" as a unifying theme among the essays; its etymology (bad + star) necessarily invokes astrology and prediction as well as "apocalypse," which in turn is both an "uncovering" and an ending. They also provide a secondary definition of "disaster" as "aftermath," thus recursively rewriting the book's subtitle as "Modernity and Its (Post-Modern) Aftermath." Such cyclical and iterative (re)interpretation describes not only William Blake's theology, but also the approach of many of his scholars.

One senses from the very first essay that the scholars involved felt the pressure to make something new. The result is an often dazzling web of references and literary-critical language, but the web sometimes becomes a net insofar as the scholars stick to Blake's most obscure mythological works, which are disorienting enough on their own. It is only by the end of the nine main essays that the contributors explicate helpful background for the reader. Other than its fruitful discussion of the affordances of dis-aster, the introduction proves conspicuously inaccessible to the casual admirer of William Blake. The first few essays likewise give the reader precious few handholds, among which a central metaphor of corporeality emerges. Science, in its etymological root *scientia* (knowledge), is transplanted into the corpus of Blake's complex yet consistently personified mythology. The resulting "body of knowledge" becomes simultaneously graspable yet mortal, vulnerable to the disease and disorder inevitable in bodies.

This "body of knowledge" metaphor might have been better immunized against criticism if the gnostic complications lurking in the margins of every page were made more explicit. The main "bodies" discussed in the collection are the materialistic and the Jewish, but Christian notions of the body (both orthodox and heterodox) feel largely missing from the conversation. Gnosticism, especially its mistrust of the physical and its focus on "hidden" (apocalyptic) interpretations, could have been a pregnant connection between the secular shape of contemporary academia and the heterodox Christianity of Blake.

The fourth essay in the collection manages to pivot from the embodied to the psychoanalytic, updating the conversation from the Romantic tension between science and art to contemporary issues such as anti-psychiatry and post-modern modes of knowledge production. On the latter point, Faflak's essay highlights a subjectivity which the fifth essay threatens to transmute into solipsism. Lily Gurton-Wachter's essay marks and re-marks the short poem "London" until it is "blackened," that is illegible, and thus readily interpretable in any fashion desired (in this case, a shame concerning nationalism, something alien to Blake's "Albion"). The sixth essay explores the ramifications of rooting the imagination in the material, that is, in the body; this is not done to dismiss the imagination as a symptom, but instead to legitimize it and treat it holistically rather than clinically. Christopher Bundock here echoes Ludwig Feuerbach's (and Friedrich Nietzsche's) frequent remarks on the complex interrelation of digestion and belief, resuscitating via a post-modern modality what might seem to some a quaint early-modern idea. Bundock's essay also contextualizes the Blakean term “polypus” for the first time in the collection (158); this is the first of many definitions which may have fruitfully been located earlier rather than later in the book. The seventh essay continues with the background, this time describing various characters that had been previously discussed. In this essay, Elizabeth Effinger follows a Foucauldian route to find faultlines and other anxieties within the categories forming against the backdrop of the burgeoning empirical sciences. Blake finds himself in a precarious position, one where he desires reconciliation (between himself and the scientists of his day, and between the arts and the sciences), but his later editions of *Jerusalem* (1804-1820) literally effaced such attempts at “love” and “forgiveness,” with these words struck from the printing plates. This felt like an especially provocative point to end on; as such, this essay might serve as a microcosm of the book itself, ending where it should have begun.

The eighth essay begins by commiserating with readers new to Blake’s poem *Jerusalem*; furthermore, the last two essays (plus the final two of the *Coda*) focus the least on embodiment. David Collings’s essay perhaps lends itself most easily to gnostic intrusion, which, if the order of these essays were roughly reversed, would have provided a thematic bridge to and contrast with the heavily incarnational earlier essays. Without the exploration of possible gnostic influences or undertones, an unresolved (and largely unexplored) tension emerges between the earlier embodied essays and the increasingly disembodied later essays. Steven Goldsmith’s chapter especially makes the case that Blake “scorn[ed the]…mortal body” (223), which complicates the tortured and tattooed body of Albion on Plate 25 of *Jerusalem*, which several earlier essays analyze (however, any negative valences toward mortality *per se* are avoided in those earlier essays).

This full color plate is included in an insert along with several other images that the authors discuss. Especially striking are the final two images, *Pity* (1795) and *The Ghost of a Flea* (1819-

20), which accompany the two essays comprising the *Coda*. These two essays are both physically and topically disparate from the others in the collection, being separated by the color image inserts. This feels appropriate, as both essays focus primarily on the artwork of Blake rather than his mythological writings. This does not mean that either of the images are any less enigmatic, however; the former, *Pity*, is a literal representation of an obscure simile in *Macbeth* (1606), and the latter is the memorable personification of a flea as a muscular humanoid. Whether explicitly or implicitly, Derridean interrogation pervades both essays; the former asks why a "literal" or straightforward representation of a line from Shakespeare should be so hopelessly opaque (despite being "faithful" to the letter of the text), and the latter asks what we see when we gaze at animals, and especially when they gaze back at us.

Within these pages, bodies of knowledge possess and become possessed themselves (cf. Blake's *Milton* (1804-1810)). Blake turns out to be both a product of his age and far ahead of his time, anticipating alternatives to empirical modes of understanding while moving cyclically, regressing and progressing in turn. His personal revelation (apocalypse) destroys as it creates; as Peter Otto writes, "Teleology consequently becomes archaeology" (83). Astrology and other ancient sciences re-emerge with a disastrous vengeance, and bodies are caught in the middle: "The cost of knowledge is crisis and catastrophe" (118). Such trauma proves generative, however, and perhaps the central message from Blake (and from his scholars) is to learn to build on such ruins, to combine and recombine until coherence arises, because "the terror of thought … reveals nothing less than who we are" (120).

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Williams, Christy. *Mapping Fairy-Tale Space: Pastiche and Metafiction in Borderless Tales*. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 2021.

https://wsupress.wayne.edu/9780814348277/

Christy Williams explores fairy-tale structures in an innovative way by using a geographic metaphor to trace the history and interconnections of the fairy-tale genre. The map and web concepts are effective for explaining how these stories intersect across time and space and for decentering the European fairy-tale tradition by expanding beyond that canon. The main focus of Williams's book is to use the notion of mapping to analyze twenty-first century fairy tales, and she does so by organizing her study into two parts with two chapters in each that cover a range of examples from both television and written texts. At the core of this analysis lies an exploration of the ways in which familiar, well-known fairy tales are reconfigured and made relevant for modern audiences.

In the introduction, Williams effectively lays a foundation for her analysis with a discussion of how other scholars, including Marina Warner and Cristina Bacchilega, have viewed fairy tales and postmodernism. She carefully makes the distinction between a few terms key to her analysis, including the techniques of pastiche and parody; while both contain elements of imitation, the second is notably satirical. She also discusses the difference between revision (in which a tale is altered) and duplication (in which the main aspects of the tale are reproduced). Williams employs the term pastiche as a useful way to examine how it "captures the multiplicity with which fairy tales are engaged at a genre level" and sees the connection between pastiche and nostalgia as relevant to the texts she analyzes, but she diverges from the postmodern arguments that classify pastiche as "without critical impetus" (14). Additionally, most of the stories examined in this study are identified as metafictional texts that comment on their own status as fiction.

One of the main ideas Williams analyzes is how some fairy tales collapse multiple tales into one shared narrative space or "storyworld," and how other stories employ fairy tales as maps or guides for characters to use to navigate and think through their own situations. She contends that the texts she examines "have at their center a crisis about the relevance and sustainability of fairy tales" (3). Overall, Williams observes that twenty-first century stories mix fragments and genres, rather than simply retelling a single fairy-tale, which also reaffirms the cultural importance of the genre in the present day.

In Part 1, Williams examines how the pastiche technique creates a shared storyworld that brings together diverse fairy tales. She uses the geographic metaphor as a "figurative representation of the epistemological shift born of an increasingly interconnected world" (21). The strongest example Williams analyzes in her book is the television show *Once Upon a Time*, which premiered on ABC in 2011 and ran for seven seasons. She asserts that the show uses pastiche to create a combination or "mash up" from multiple sources that aimed to explore what was missing in the original tales rather than retelling the stories. Characters live in the same fairy-tale realm and fulfill multiple parts in each other's tales. While the show mostly draws upon fairy tales, there are other references to mythology, children's books, and gothic fiction. Williams contends that the notion of translating genre into geography is a useful way to reinvent fairy tales for modern readers and a powerful narrative technique. Additionally, while the show heavily draws upon Disney imagery (though not exclusively), Williams argues that it is really a distinctly "American Fairy Tale Land" created in the show, and if Disney features predominantly it is because that corporation "has had great commercial success as progenitor of American fairy tales" (40). She makes a compelling point about how the show uses the collapse of narrative borders to "reconfigure not only character traits and plots but also the tropes and motifs expected for the fairy-tale genre" (48).

Once Upon a Time is a particularly effective example of this concept of shared geography because it opens up opportunities to diverge from the sources and create new, unexpected stories that probe into the complexity and fluidity of heroes and villains.

In the next chapter, Williams examines how the pastiche technique works in serialized novels with examples from Marissa Meyer's *The Lunar Chronicles* (2012-2015) and Seanan McGuire's *Indexing* (2014). Notably, these novels mix other genres with fairy tales—especially science fiction and crime drama. Williams makes a strong argument for how serialization allows for expanded space to provide additional context that adds new meanings to familiar old tales. *The Lunar Chronicles* focuses on one tale in each of the books in the series, while *Indexing* is similar to the television show *Once Upon a Time* in that it contains overlapping tales in its book series. Although each series blends fairy tales with other genres and uses pastiche in different ways, both result in a "conceptualization of the interconnectedness of fairy tales grounded in geographic metaphor" (66). The discussion of *The Lunar Chronicles* focuses primarily on the first book, which features a cyborg Cinderella. Williams effectively illustrates how the series uses fairy tale plots to provide structure to the science fiction elements in innovative ways that draw in young adult audiences. Similarly, the *Indexing* books underscore the adaptability and flexibility of fairy tales through an inventive format. Williams asserts that the series uses the crime fiction structure as a stable background that stands in contrast to the variability of the fairy tales, and as a result, this complicates our understanding of the genre. In McGuire's storyworld, some of the characters know they are fairy-tale characters, and metafictional awareness is an important aspect of the books. The fairy tales, legends, and myths in *Indexing* are catalogued with an index by agents who work at an organization known as the ATI Management Bureau. The tales are shown to be unstable and part of what Williams refers to as a shared cultural space that shapes reality in the books, even as the agents try to stop that from happening.

In the second half of her study, Williams turns to an exploration of how characters use fairy-tale narratives as maps to guide them through their own problems and situations. The only non-American text that Williams examines is the Korean television drama *Secret Garden* (2010-2011). In this series, the two main characters attempt to use the fairy tale “The Little Mermaid” to help them navigate around their different social statuses which keep them apart, but ultimately, they must rewrite the story since the original was not effective as a map. Similarly, Williams examines three short stories by Kelly Link, which have characters who unsuccessfully try to use fairy tales to solve their problems. This notion of using fairy tales as maps is part of the critical history of fairy tales and their socializing function. As Williams contends, they can connect us and can serve as patterns that suggest ways to deal with conflict and offer hope, but as some of the example texts show, fairy tales need to be reimagined for a twenty-first century world. It is notable that fairy tales often function better as “a compass, pointing in a direction, [rather] than a map with a path to follow clearly marked” (168). Although the second half of the book is less compelling, it does support Williams’s central argument that these texts reaffirm the value of the fairy-tale genre and the need for its adaptability.

In a larger context, Williams’s use of the geographic metaphor allows her to tackle the notion of narrative borders and how modern audiences view them as more fluid and flexible. The symbolic connections between the fairy-tale genre and geography are clearly established through the analysis of the pastiche and fairy-tale mixing techniques in the television shows and novels that are examined. Williams asserts that these texts are part of a “long tradition of fairy tales being shaped and reshaped to reflect specific sociohistorical moments” (103). As she argues, these examples highlight the fairy-tale tradition as worthy of serious study, and the adaptability of the tales is seen as a natural evolution rather than a negative critique of the genre. This is a fascinating study of fairy tales as a flexible genre that can be "remapped" for twenty-first century audiences in interesting and meaningful ways.

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