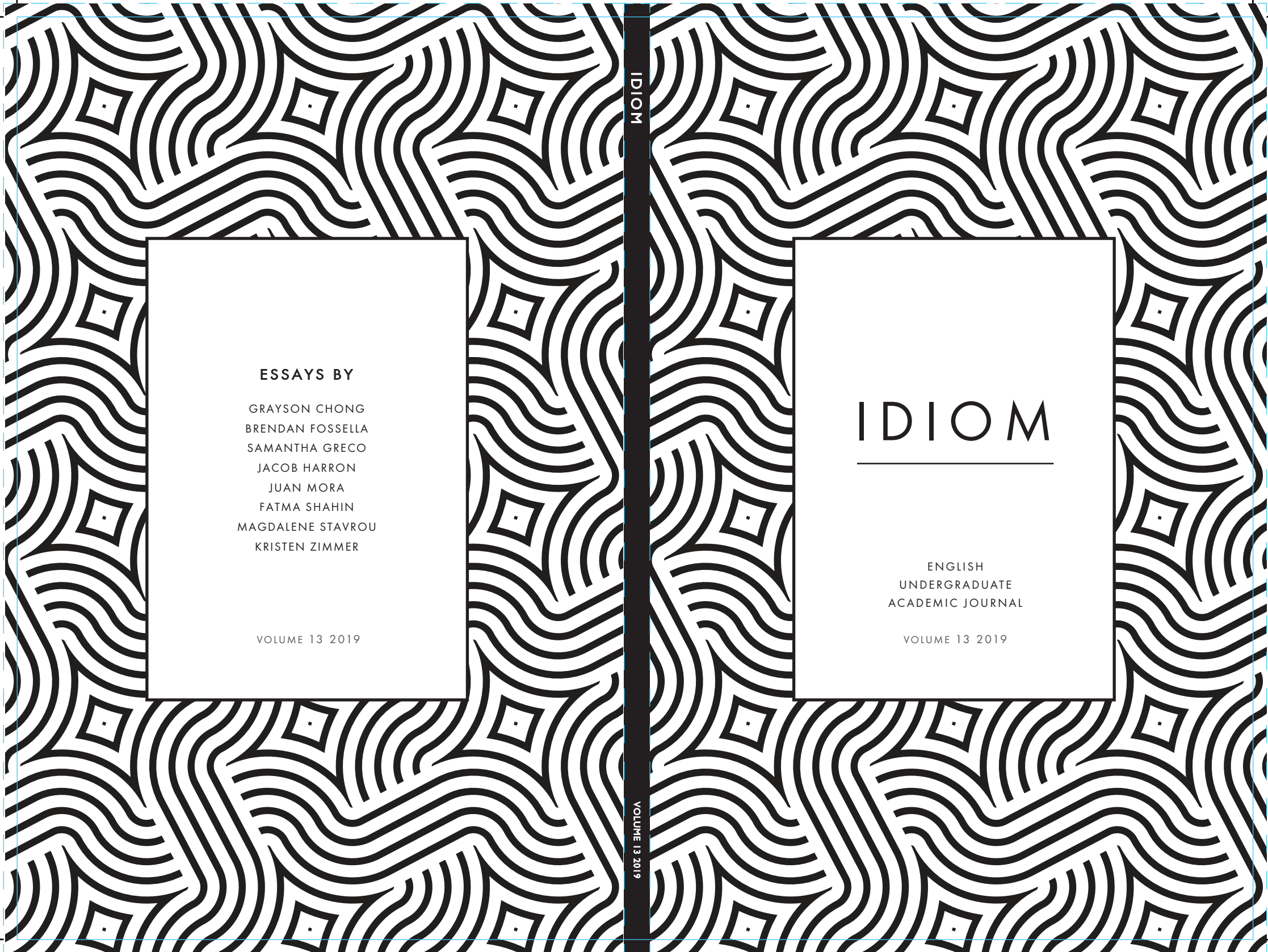288 mm

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EDITOR'S NOTE

If you look inside the front and back covers of this journal, you will see an etching from the seventeenth century called "Two Philosophers Watching an Eclipse," by the French artist Pierre Brebiette. On the opening side, you will see a figure in profile gesticulating up toward the sky and pointing their finger down toward the Earth; and on the back side, you will see a person turned away from the viewer and sprawled across the steps of a Romanesque building, conversing with their acquaintance as they watch the moon slowly eclipse the sun. Each year, it is the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief of *IDIOM* to select the artwork that opens and closes the journal, and so you may be wondering, why did I choose this one?

Well, the reason is not simply for its aesthetic value; but also, embodied in this image is everything I admire about what we do here at *IDIOM* and what we as students of literature do in our classrooms—we discuss, we debate, we interpret; we look to the world around us and we explore its nuances and its peculiarities, its absurdities and its contradictions. We don't just ask ourselves *why*, but also *how*, and we do not stop questioning, comparing, and deconstructing until we have at least seen the glimpses and glimmers of this shifty, equivocal thing we call the truth. For literary studies do not just start and stop with the text or in a lecture; they give us the tools we need to become better thinkers, better participants in our communities, and better people in this strange and thrilling thing we call our everyday lives. So we give you the papers in this journal as a testimony to this timeless endeavour of sharing knowledge and curiosity, and with it, we hope you find something moving, provoking, and upheaving that allows you to also contribute to the project of human experience.

But, putting our ideals aside for a moment, this journal would not have been possible without the real efforts and labours of all who had a hand in it. A big round of applause first goes to the entirety of our 2018-19 Editorial Board, who argued passionately, edited assiduously, and worked tirelessly to nurture this journal from infancy to maturity. I am especially indebted to my successor, Olivia Anderson-Clarke, who not only baked vegan cookies for all of our Board meetings, but also provided much-needed reassurance and

help whenever I asked. I am equally indebted to my predecessor, Maria Al-Raes, who was always quick to reply to my frantic texts and never hesitated to impart her experience and editorial wisdom. A special thanks goes out to Professor Nick Mount, who was our new Academic Advisor this year, and after I sent him a massive email asking if he'd be interested in the position, replied succinctly, "Sure, I can do this for you." Another professorial thanks is due to Dr. Vikki Visvis, whose editing seminar I have attended the past three years I have been apart of *IDIOM* but it never fails to teach me something new about how to spy a good piece of literary criticism. And, as always, perpetual admiration is in order for our graphic designer Becky Caunce, whose bold yet simple style has adorned our journals for years and has given us our signature aesthetic.

Lastly, but certainly not in the least, my greatest thanks goes to the authors included in this volume. It is you whom we do this for—for your ideas, your interpretations, your critiques—whether that ranges from intersections of patriarchy and capitalism in Shakespeare, or to intersections of traumatic experiences and sound (or non-semantic sound), this volume strives to capture the originality and the diversity of thought in literary studies today. As readers, you are offered in this book the power of witchcraft in Emily Brontë, an epidemic of invisible women that compliments and confuses queer theory, the socio-political critiques latent in Romantic poetry, and the influences of oral history and tradition on Zora Neale Hurston. We invite you to set foot into the worlds contained in each of these papers, into the ingenuities of the authors and their minds, and into the thirteenth volume of *IDIOM*.

LEYLAND ROCHESTER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
March 2019

THE OUTSIDER IN THE CIRCULATION OF EXCHANGE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMMODIFICATION, ECONOMICS, AND LIMINALITY OF CRESSIDA IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*

Grayson Chong

In Act 4 Scene 5 of William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (1601-02), Cressida arrives to the Greek camp after professing her love for Troilus. Ulysses, a Greek commander, insists that Cressida give each soldier a kiss. When Cressida attempts to kiss Ulysses, she tells him, "I am your debtor; claim it when 'tis due" (4.5.50). The exchange of Cressida among the Greeks parallels a transaction. However, instead of money or gifts, Cressida becomes the currency. This paper reflects upon how Cressida's decision to exploit, traffic, and commodify herself speak to her acute self-awareness and survival tactics needed to traverse through the patriarchal system she finds herself within. The paper analyzes her agency through her interactions with male characters—Pandarus (Act 1 Scene 2), Troilus (Act 3 Scene 2), and Diomedes (Act 5 Scene 2). Most importantly, it uncovers how Cressida asserts and creates agency for herself through these interactions (and transactions). If Cressida's worth is determined by her intelligence and sexual prowess, critics and writers often associate Cressida with infidelity when she vows herself to Diomedes. This paper hopes to remedy this connotation by offering another interpretation of Cressida—a young woman, dual and intelligent, who must survive the matrix of a patriarchal war.

In Act 4, Scene 5 of *Troilus and Cressida*[1] the Greek commander, Ulysses, insists that Cressida give each of the soldiers a kiss as a "welcome" to the Greek camp. When Cressida attempts to kiss Ulysses, she says, "I am your debtor; claim it when 'tis due" (4.5.50), using a metaphor to describe herself in economic terms. The exchange of Cressida among the Greeks resembles a transaction. Instead of money or gifts, Cressida herself becomes the currency. Luce Irigaray uses a Marxist lens to consider the "social status of women as objects of exchange whose value is split between its natural form (as a [re]productive body) and its social form (as a body possessing value insofar as it can be exchanged)" (Schrift 14). In her words, Irigaray asserts that "[t] he circulation of women among men is what establishes the operations of society, at least of patriarchal society" (Irigaray 184). As Irigaray might predict, Cressida finds herself caught within the confines of a system that seeks to assert value onto both her social and physical body. But Shakespeare's play uses Cressida to mock, rather than perpetrate, the patriarchal society that confines her.

As a character, Cressida satirizes political systems based on the economic exchange of women. Satirists share the common denominator of being an outsider: either lurking on the edges of society which gives them an objective view of the ills they wish to correct or occupying two spaces at once. Cressida's position outside the social sphere but physically among the Trojans and Greeks is an example of this latter liminality: her father's (Calchas) alliance with the Greeks deprives Cressida of her place in the social hierarchy by making her a target of suspicion. As Virginia Vaughan asserts, Cressida "is a marginal figure, in Troy but not part of it" (217). It is this political marginality that separates Cressida from the other characters in the play and gives her the freedom to satirize the system that politically excludes her. She satirizes her liminal state by intentionally commodifying herself. The sense of agency Cressida derives from satire is essential to her navigation (and survival) of the play's patriarchal system. Close analysis of Cressida's decision to exploit, traffic, and commodify herself through sexual and economic puns reveals her acute self-awareness. Cressida's conversations with Pandarus, Troilus, and Diomedes demonstrate how she asserts and creates agency for herself through these interactions and transactions. Ultimately, Cressida's position as an outsider frees her from traditional gendered expectations to critique male expectations, anxieties, and economics of female chastity.

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[1] William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (written in 1601-02) is based on Homer's *Iliad*. Set during the Trojan War, Troilus, the Trojan prince, is in love with Cressida. They declare their love for each other. However, Calchas (Cressida's father) visits Agamemnon (a Greek) and persuades him to release a war prisoner in exchange for Cressida. She is forced to live amongst the Greeks with Diomedes as her protector.

Besides the brief appearances of Helen, Andromache, and Cassandra, there are no other women present in the play. This lack of a female presence (and father figure) leaves Cressida vulnerable to the care of other men — Pandarus and Diomedes, in particular. Cressida is aware of the protection her relation to her uncle, Pandarus, gives her. She makes this awareness explicit when she tells him:

> Upon my back to defend my belly, upon my wit to
>
> defend my wiles, upon my secrecy to defend mine honesty,
>
> my mask to defend my beauty, and you to defend all these
> (1.2.240-43)

By the same token, Cressida also understands that she cannot completely rely on Pandarus because his first loyalty is to Troilus. Vaughan notes that "such male bonding is symptomatic of Troy's militarized society" (217). In other words, Pandarus and Troilus share a homosocial bond from which Cressida is excluded.

With its emphasis on male ideals, the play forces Cressida to participate in the rhetorical games that men model for her. In Act 1, Scene 2, Cressida and Pandarus watch Trojan nobles and soldiers pass by from the balcony. Pandarus tries to gauge Cressida's interest in the men below her, particularly her interest in Troilus. A rhetorical pattern emerges in the stichomythia between these two characters that parallels how Cressida internalizes the Trojan ideals and attempts to use them to her advantage as shown in the following excerpt when Pandarus makes Troilus the topic of their discussion:

> PANDARUS: What, not between Troilus and Hector? Do you know a man if you see him?
>
> CRESSIDA: Ay, if I ever saw him before and knew him.
>
> PANDARUS: Well, I say Troilus is Troilus.
>
> CRESSIDA: Then you say as I say, for I am sure he is not Hector.
>
> PANDARUS: No, nor Hector is not Troilus in some degrees.
>
> CRESSIDA: 'Tis to each of them: he is himself. (1.2.58-64)

In the first two lines of this stichomythic exchange, Pandarus and Cressida share the word "know/knew." Pandarus uses "to know" to connote understanding; Cressida highlights a double entendre, suggesting that she "knew" Troilus sexually. As the two characters continue to banter, Cressida playfully tells Pandarus that there are other men besides Troilus. According to Vaughan, "her badinage with Pandarus shows a worldly wit that understands social norms. But her joking also conveys a desperation, an awareness of her powerless position in Troy. She must play social games to protect herself" (217). In other words, she asserts agency over herself by engaging in the high rhetoric often reserved for men. By imitating the language of men, she subverts the patriarchal system that attempts to exclude her.

Cressida's use of ambiguous language builds a metaphorical wall around herself. By noting that there are other men besides Troilus, Cressida leads Pandarus away from the suspicion that she does indeed fancy Troilus. While one might suspect, in part, that Cressida is playing "hard to get," the audience cannot forget that the play takes place during the Trojan War. Vaughan considers how war affects the precarious position of women characters, using Cressida and Helen to illustrate her claim:

> [Cressida and Helen] must protect themselves from under-
> miners and saboteurs. Like Troy's fortified walls, their bodies
> are objects of attack, which opposing men seek to penetrate
> and conquer. Like the Greek and Trojan armies' battle over
> the city of Troy, conquest of these women validates manhood
> and valor. (216)

By refusing to disclose her affections for Troilus to Pandarus, Cressida refuses to validate Troilus's manhood to Pandarus for the moment. She also resists the idea that she is simply a sexual possession for Troilus to conquer. When she deflects Troilus's attack on her affections, Cressida asserts agency and autonomy.

It is only when Pandarus leaves the stage that Cressida explicitly reveals her internal state through her monologue: "Yet I hold off. […] / Men prize the thing ungained more than it is" (1.2.264, 267). In the context of war, "the thing ungained" (1.2.267) alludes to land, armies, and women. Cressida knows that men value what they cannot have. According to Vaughan, "[i]n real life and on the stage, English women were thus caught within a contradiction: chastity alone makes them desirable, yet

if they provoke desire, they are to be blamed for being unchaste" (213). Cressida understands this contradiction and double standard very well. Her position as an outsider in this respect makes her something unattainable and desirable. Heather James notes how "Cressida anticipates and personalizes Troilus' question about value: the illusion of an unknown and unachievable interior is functional, she claims, for it defers her inevitable exhaustion by another's desire" (107). While in her banter with Pandarus, Cressida creates connotative verbal walls around her true self, in her denotative soliloquy, the audience becomes privy to how she really feels about Troilus. In both instances, the play uses Cressida to critique how women must navigate the social and political spaces that exclude them.

If Cressida is socially and politically excluded from both the Trojans and the Greeks, she is only included when her sexuality is at stake or being offered. Perhaps this is best exemplified in Act 3, Scene 2, when she and Troilus express their love for one another. It is also in this scene that Cressida demonstrates that she is more aware than Troilus of the politics within the patriarchal system in which they are enmeshed. Although not as prominent as Cressida's eventual transaction to Diomedes, even this interaction between Troilus and Cressida can be seen as an exchange, because Pandarus gives Cressida to Troilus. According to Irigaray, "[t]he *virginal woman* […] *is pure exchange value*. She is nothing but the possibility, the place, the sign of relations among men. In and of herself, she does not exist: she is a simple envelope veiling what is really at stake in social exchange" (185, emphasis added). Vaughan adds historical detail to Irigaray's assertion, noting that "[t]he doctrine of female chastity was part of official Tudor ideology. Defined by male Protestant thinkers as virginity before marriage […], chastity was preached from every pulpit in Elizabethan England and enforced by ecclesiastical courts" (211). The ability to choose to whom she gives her body gives Cressida agency over herself. As important, she resists ideas of virginity constructed to appease the men anxious about the control they assert over women.

When meeting Troilus, Cressida does not profess her love outright, but greets him with the line: "Will you walk in, my lord" (3.2.57), a sexually suggestive phrase associated with Elizabethan prostitutes. At this moment, Cressida is still a virgin but uses the rhetoric of the Elizabethan whore. Her invocation of the whore makes explicit that her body is available through an economic contract and agreement. Irigaray observes this dilemma:

> Explicitly condemned by the social order, [the prostitute] is
> implicitly tolerated. In her case, the qualities of woman's body
> are useful. However, these qualities have value only because they
> have already been appropriated by a man, and because they serve
> as the locus of relations–hidden ones–between men. Prostitution
> amounts to *usage that is exchanged*. (185, emphasis added)

By engaging in rhetoric associated with prostitution, Cressida blurs the
line between the virgin and whore. It is in this ambivalent space that
Cressida finds agency. To echo Katherine Gillen, this undefined space
allows Cressida to "manipulate [her] own value" (88) in a way that suits
her. Cressida satirizes the idea that chastity is a mystique that can be upheld,
by exposing the double standards of men. Juliet Dusinberre asserts that "to
demote the chaste woman is to upgrade the whore" (32). Thus, Cressida
does not define herself as a whore, but greets Troilus the way she does to
undermine the double standard she finds herself caught within. Cressida
continues to address this double standard when she tells Troilus:

> I have a kind of self resides with you,
>
> But an unkind self that itself will leave
>
> To be another's fool. (3.2.135-37)

Here, Cressida seems to foreshadow her eventual exchange to Diomedes and
the breaking of her vows to Troilus. She knows that even if her feelings for
Troilus are true, the war and politics surrounding them will not allow such a
union to exist.

Lovesick Troilus does not appear to understand the complex system
through which he benefits. In early modern England, masculinity was
constructed in relation to female sexuality and chastity. According to
Elizabeth A. Foyster, "Honourable manhood depended very literally on
the 'carnal knowledge' and ownership of female sexuality" (93). Troilus
asserts his manhood over Cressida when they consummate their love,
metaphorically penetrating her fortified walls and conquering her female
sexuality. In this way, Troilus shows he has earned his manhood. However,
Troilus's own masculinity comes into question when Cressida is exchanged
by the Greeks. Troilus does not challenge the order even though he said he
would fight for her a few scenes prior. In this way, Troilus fails Cressida and
sacrifices her to the battle he believes is greater than them both: the Trojan
War. Perhaps in this way, Cressida's decision to prostitute herself acts as a

way to critique the societal expectations and double standards of women within the context of survival in war.

Cressida returns into the circulation of exchange when she is forced to leave Troy and Troilus. In Act 3, Scene 3, Calchas asks Agamemnon to send for her in exchange for a prisoner, stating that Diomedes

[S]hall buy my daughter, and her presence

Shall quite strike off all service I have done

In most accepted pain. (3.3.28-30)

Calchas allowing Diomedes to "buy" (3.3.28) Cressida shoes that she can be commodified by men against her will – even by her own father. As Irigaray observes, "all the systems of exchange that organize patriarchal societies […] are men's business. The production of women, signs, and commodities is always referred back to men … and they always pass from one man to another" (174). Jyotsna Singh notes that Cressida "functions as a *gift* within a patriarchal sex/gender system" (152). Cressida's value is determined by a male authority that has very little physical presence in her day-to-day life. When Calchas authorizes this trade on her behalf, Cressida re-enters the circuit of exchange among men — but not on her own accord. Gillen notes that "[t]his economic discourse is as common as it is imprecise, often conflating the woman, her spiritual essence and her genitalia in its attempt to identify the source of chastity's value" (1). For Diomedes, Cressida's chastity and authenticity are something to be bought, owned, and controlled.

In Act 5, Scene 2, Cressida transacts herself to her new lover, Diomedes. In her precarious position, Cressida understands that Troilus cannot offer protection to her anymore because he is on the enemy line. Perhaps this is why she gives Diomedes "some token for the surety of it" (5.2.59). In this exchange, Troilus's glove acts as the physical marker of their verbal contract. By giving Diomedes the glove, Cressida metaphorically passes herself onto him and his care. But given her position, one questions whether Cressida has any choice in the matter. Cristina León Alfar describes Cressida's painful situation best when she writes: "The story of 'false Cressid' is displaced by a system of masculine aggression played out on the bodies of women" (88). In this scene, it is difficult to determine exactly how much agency Cressida maintains. While Cressida satirizes her interactions with Pandarus, Troilus, and Diomedes—thereby critiquing male dominance and retaining a sense of inner autonomy—her female identity forces her to submit to patriarchal biases,

preventing her from asserting her autonomy in the social sphere. It is difficult for Cressida to define a space for herself in a system that demands the need to ease anxieties of male honour come.

Despite her status as a social outsider, Cressida finds herself enmeshed within a patriarchal war that seeks to buy and sell her. Cressida asserts her own agency through language and action (particularly in her interactions with Pandarus, Troilus, and Diomedes). The men in the play assign value onto her according to how she suits their needs. Cressida is aware of this imposition and attempts to find pockets of undefined spaces to negate these negative effects. In attempting to free herself from traditional gendered expectations, Cressida demonstrates that she is neither free from nor immune to them. Ultimately, Cressida uses her compromised position to satirize and critique how men commodify women, subverting patriarchy's attempts to silence women until they submit to the system.

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FORESTS OF ESTRANGEMENT: SELF-CREATION IN JOHN CLARE AND FERNANDO PESSOA

Brendan Fossella

"Though this be madness," observes Polonius in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, "yet there is method in't." Similarly, though John Clare's (1793-1864) delusions, multiple identities, and puzzling literary output bear the mark of madness, this essay argues that there is indeed method in it—that is, if one views it through the proper lens. Brendan finds such a lens in Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935), a Portuguese author who wrote through a multitude of "heteronyms." Using Pessoa's heteronymic methods as an entry point into Clare's "madness," this essay proceeds to re-interpret the paradoxical and delusional nature of Clare's asylum poetry through a Pessoan lens, concluding that it is more fruitful to view Clare's writing as a method of "self-creation" akin to Pessoa's, rather than as the byproduct of an uncontrolled psychological disorder. The inspiration for this thesis originates from Brendan's experiences facilitating a mental health support group in which it was common to hear of the struggles to overcome the stigma of living with a mental illness. In fact, one of the reasons why Jonathan Bate wrote his biography on Clare was to counter the stigma that surrounded Clare's mental instability and make him "something other than the freak of nature which he has all too frequently been presented as." Brendan believes that Pessoa can likewise offer a fresh perspective on Clare, and in so doing serve as a critical reminder that it is not what one sees but how one sees that is imperative. This essay was originally written for ENG308: Romantic Poetry and Prose. Although Professor Alan Bewell provided the class with a wide array of thoughtful and stimulating topics, Brendan had the foolhardy temerity to approach him with a completely unrelated topic, involving a writer with whom he was not at all familiar. Brendan would like to thank Professor Bewell for his unexpected encouragement and guidance on the original essay, and also extend a debt of gratitude to Vivian Li and Jovana Pajovic for helping develop and polish it into its current form.

> But if I want to say I exist as an entity that addresses and acts on itself, exercising the divine function of self-creation, then I'll make *to be* into a transitive verb. Triumphantly and anti-grammatically supreme, I'll speak of 'amming myself'.
>
> —Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*

When John Clare was admitted to Dr. Matthew Allen's private lunatic asylum in Epping Forest on 15 July 1837, he simultaneously became estranged from his native environment, his family, and himself. As a result, much of the important poetry he wrote during this period is preoccupied with the struggle to preserve his sense of identity. Fernando Pessoa, born in Lisbon in 1888, likewise faced significant environmental and social estrangement during his lifetime, prompting him to adopt a style of "estranged writing" (*Book of Disquiet* 485) that he implemented through a multitude of "heteronyms."[1] Pessoa's first publication was "In the Forest of Estrangement," a Symbolist-inspired fragment imbued with uncertainty and synesthesia—as though in a "dream that is a shadow of dreaming" (425)—in which *what* one sees is far less important than *how* one sees. Similarly, in the introduction to *The Later Poems of John Clare*, Eric Robinson examines the interpretive difficulties caused by the paradoxical and delusional nature of Clare's asylum writings, speculating that it is perhaps "not what we see that is wrong but the lens with which we view it" (xv). Therefore, by interpreting Clare's poetry and struggle for identity through a Pessoan lens, I will argue that the image of Clare as mad or incoherent drops out of focus, and what remains is a more complex picture of a poet with a method, or at least the "shadow" of a method: a method that Pessoa perfected in which one is able to find unity through fragmentation, coherence through contradiction, and freedom through self-creation.

One visitor to Allen's asylum described Clare as saying "I'm John Clare now. I was Byron and Shakespeare formerly. At different times you know I'm different people" (Haughton 10). If Pessoa had been interred in an asylum, its visitors may well have heard him saying something similar, as Clare was in so many words describing what Pessoa claimed to be his artistic enterprise: the expression of a "drama divided into people instead of into acts" (*Selected Prose* 84). Pessoa expressed this "drama" through his heteronyms, which were "beings with a sort-of-life-of-their-own, with feelings I do not have, and opinions I do not accept. While their

[1] Unlike mere pseudonyms, heteronyms are fully formed alter egos who have their own distinct biographies, personalities, ideologies, and writing styles.

writings are not mine, they do also happen to be mine" (*Selected Prose* 312). A recent study of his heteronyms by Jeronimo Pizarro and Patricio Ferarri found a total of 136 distinct heteronyms now attributable to Pessoa (*Book of Disquiet* viii). I have chosen to focus my re-interpretation of Clare through the Pessoan "semi-heteronym," particularly the persona Bernardo Soares. "Although [Soares'] personality is not mine," wrote Pessoa, "it is not different from, but rather a simple mutilation of my personality" (ix). "In the Forest of Estrangement"[2] was initially published under Pessoa's name, but he later attributed it to Soares and included it in *The Book of Disquiet*, a collection of Soares' intimate diary entries and prose fragments.

Viewed through a Pessoan lens, Clare's adopted identities can be re-interpreted as semi-heteronyms, especially his belief that he was Lord Byron. In most of his pre-asylum poetry, the presence of Clare's self "is either opaque or, at most, marginal to the portrayal of the real world" (Chilcott 154). However, "Don Juan" exhibits not only aspects of his "real" self but also the emergence of a new fictional persona, both of which are in a state of constant flux throughout the poem. Although he adopts Byron's *ottava rima* structure, while also imitating his own improvisational style, the emergent fictional persona is not Byron himself but an amalgamation of Clare and Byron. Clare identifies himself as Byron, but he also clearly distinguishes Byron as a separate entity, writing "Lord Byron poh—the man wot rites the werses, / And is just what he is and nothing more" (263-4). While he is able to admit that Byron is dead, he nonetheless adds that Byron is "still in Allen's madhouse caged and living" (270). A subtler example of Clare's blending of identity occurs when he claims that "next Tuesday used to be Lord Byron's birthday" (262). The problem is that, a few lines earlier, he mentions that "this day is the eleventh of July" (255), and Byron was born in January. Clare's birthday, however, is July 13, so he mistakes Byron's birthday for his own. For Pessoa, a semi-heteronym was the amalgamation of his "real" self and some other personality,[3] and thus Clare's mixing of authentic elements with a Byronic persona has the cumulative effect of a semi-heteronym, explaining why, on at least one occasion, he refers to himself as "Clare Byron" (Russett 137).

---

[2] "In the Forest of Estrangement" will be referred to as "Forest" for the remainder of this essay.

[3] "Fernando Pessoa" and "Bernardo Soares" are spelled similarly and have the exact same number of letters. Interestingly, "John Clare" and "Lord Byron" also have the same number of letters.

The semi-heteronym that Clare creates in "Don Juan" is carried over into "Child Harold," but at least five additional voices are also present, none of whom are "identifiable with the author *per se*; none represents an 'essential' John Clare" (Pearce 140). Furthermore, these different identities do not exist in isolation—they interact with each other throughout the poem, in accordance with Pessoa's methodology. The heteronyms that Pessoa created are constantly communicating with each other, criticizing and translating one another's writings, and even directly commenting on Pessoa himself. One of his main heteronyms, Álvaro de Campos, once famously wrote that "Fernando Pessoa, strictly speaking, does not exist" (*Selected Prose* 38). Similarly, the fracturing of identity in "Child Harold" is so extensive that Clare appears to be suggesting that strictly speaking, he may not exist. Traditional literary criticism has largely deemed "Child Harold" a poetic "failure" because of its "indeterminacy" and the fact that it "shows neither development nor resolution" (Pearce 140). However, reading the poem through a Pessoan lens reveals the creative method of depersonalization, a method that allowed Pessoa to create some semblance of unity through a process of fragmentation.

According to Soares, the strange landscape in "Forest"—where trees have "static motion," hours are multicolored, and names have fragrances (*Book of Disquiet* 429)—is a metaphor for his mind. For him, writing functions as a way for him to give "exteriority" to his internal contradictions and, through a gradual accretion of disparate fragments, create some semblance of subjective unity (427). Although Pessoa believed that the concept of unity was somewhat of an illusion,[4] he did believe in a provisional sort of unity that "doesn't pretend to be smooth and absolute or even unambiguously singular, which is built around an imagination, a fiction" (3). Soares, in a diary entry from 1931, explains how such a fiction is created:

> I've made myself into the character of a book, a life one reads... From so much self-revising, I've destroyed myself. From so much self-thinking, I'm now my thoughts and not I. I plumbed myself and dropped the plumb; I spend my life wondering if I'm deep or not, with no remaining plumb except my gaze that shows me—blackly vivid in the mirror at the bottom of the well—my own face that observes me observing it. (172)

[4] One of Pessoa's first heteronyms, Alberto Caeiro, says in a poem that "Nature is parts without a whole," which is a sentiment that runs through much of Pessoa's oeuvre.

This method of depersonalization, and the resultant fragmentation, is visible in "Child Harold" when one of Clare's voices observes himself observing himself: "But still the dullest thing I see / Is self that wanders slow" (*Later Poems* 71). Moreover, in "An Invite to Eternity," Clare uses both depersonalization and "exteriority" by depicting a landscape that is highly unstable and fragmented—where stones "turn to flooding streams"—inside of which the self is reduced to a "sad non-identity" (347). Thus, Clare externalizes and fragments himself to such an extent that the "real" self either becomes lost in a sea of other voices, as in "Child Harold," or becomes a "non-identity," both of which echo one of Soares' prose fragments: "I externalized myself so much inside that, inside, I exist only externally. I am the bare stage on which various actors perform various plays" (*Book of Disquiet* 159). In other words, Jacques's belief in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* that "All the world's a stage" (2.7.142) becomes inverted in both Clare and Pessoa, wherein all the *self* is now a unified stage.

In July 1841, Clare escaped from the asylum in Epping Forest and walked nearly a hundred miles back home to his family in Northborough (Bate 457). He continued to work on "Don Juan" and "Child Harold" during the five months back home until he was taken to Northampton General Lunatic Asylum in December 1841, which is where he remained until his death in 1864. It is notable that, also during that turbulent five-month interval, he managed to compose a surprisingly lucid essay called "Self-Identity"—a term he actually invented (Guyer 57)—in which he says:

> There are two impossibilitys [*sic*] that can never happen—I shall never be in three places at once nor ever change to a woman & that ought to be some comfort amid this moral or immoral 'changing' in life. (*Prose of John Clare* 239)

Clare appears to find comfort in impossibilities—in the idea that there is some stability in both the physical laws of nature and in his identity. However, he does not say that he is comforted but that it "ought" to be a comfort, and he is also uncertain as to whether the changes in his life are "moral or immoral." I have already shown how changes in identity (depersonalization) can, through a Pessoan lens, have beneficial consequences (unity), and the same is true with Clare's other stated "impossibility." Whereas Clare finds comfort in the impossibility of being

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in three places at once, Soares relishes the concept of fragmentation, a
kind of subjective delocalization:

> To dream, for example, that I'm simultaneously, separately,
> severally the man and the woman on a stroll that a man and a
> woman are taking along the river. To see myself – at the same
> time, in the same way, with equal precision and without over-
> lap, being equally but separately integrated into both things –
> as a conscious ship in a South Sea and a printed page from an
> old book. (*Book of Disquiet* 143)

Soares' way of seeing himself models a possible coherence in Clare's life,
which in many ways had "been one chain of contradictions" (*Later Poems*
45). In a 1931 diary entry, Soares writes that "between what I am and what
I've lost, in that interval of myself I refer to as me" (*Book of Disquiet* 131). He
also describes himself as "a confused series of intervals between non-exis-
tent things" (369). In other words, Soares does not see himself as an entity
that *has* intervals—he *is* the interval itself.[5]

 This concept of in-betweenness—of being a delocalized interval—
is particularly relevant to Clare's "Lines: I am," an important poem
he wrote in Northampton Asylum. In the poem, when Clare says he
wishes to go places "where man hath never trod" and where "woman
never smiled or wept" (13-4), he is not referring to physical locations
but instead to the innocence inherent in such hypothetical places. He
associates this innocence with childhood, yearning to go back to a time
where he can lie "untroubled" in that imaginary place, existing *in between*
the symbolic "grass below" him and the "vaulted sky" above (17-8).
Clare is thus the interval between hypothetical, "non-existent" places;
between a past that is lost forever and a future that is forever opaque,
living in the present like mere "vapour" (6). Furthermore, Clare writes in
an untitled fragment from the same period that

> There is a chasm in the heart of man
>
> That nothing fathoms like a gulph at sea
>
> A depth of darkness lines may never span
>
> A shade unsunned in dark eternity. (Later Poems 165)

What initially appears like the description of a hopeless situation changes
if viewed through a Pessoan lens. Clare's earlier comfort in impossibilities

[5] Pessoa planned on naming the collected works of all his heteronyms as *Fictions of the Interlude* (*Book of Disquiet* 487), but he died of cirrhosis of the liver, aged 47, before he got the chance.

is somewhat contradicted here by the discomfort he feels about the impossibility of measuring or comprehending ("fathoms" in both senses of the word) his internal chasm. However, since a "chasm" is also an "interval" that affects the "continuity of a chain of facts" (*OED*), Clare is not saying that he *has* a chasm inside him, but that he *is* the chasm itself. This method of delocalization, in conjunction with his previous experiments in depersonalization, gives some coherence to Clare's chain of contradictions, while at the same time opening up the possibility of shining a light on that "shade unsunned in dark eternity."

For depersonalized and delocalized entities, the possibility of freedom and fulfillment lies in "exercising the divine function of self-creation." Soares believed that grammar was an "instrument and not a law,"[6] and that it is often necessary to break certain rules in order to ascertain a deeper truth:

> If I want to say I exist, I'll say, 'I am.' If I want to say I exist as a separate entity, I'll say, 'I am myself.' But if I want to say I exist as an entity that addresses and acts on itself, exercising the divine function of self-creation, then I'll make *to be* into a transitive verb. Triumphantly and anti-grammatically supreme, I'll speak of 'amming myself'. I'll have stated a philosophy in just two words. (*Book of Disquiet* 82)

One of the most significant developments in Clare's asylum poetry was his instrumentation of grammar and language, particularly the change in the amount of stress he puts on the various forms of the verb *to be*. Not only is there a sharp increase in frequency of using *to be* as a main verb,[7] but the strenuous and paradoxical way in which Clare implements these verbs in his asylum poetry corresponds with his struggle to preserve his sense of identity, as exhibited by the following excerpts from *The Later Poems of John Clare*: "Is nothing less than naught – nothing is naught / And there is nothing less – but something is..." (250); "At once to be, and not to be / That was, and is not..." (349); "I wish I was what I have been / And what I was could be" (653). Although Clare creates puzzling syntactical arrangements in much of his asylum poetry, seemingly without any method or pattern, looking at a few specific poems through a Pessoan lens reveals how Clare was attempting to exercise "the divine function of self-creation."

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[6] Clare espoused a similar view on grammar in an [1822] letter to his publisher: "grammer [*sic*] in learning is like Tyranny in government—confound the bitch Ill never be her slave" (*Letters* 231).

[7] In "Child Harold," for instance, Clare uses *to be* as a main verb more than three times as often than in earlier major poems like "Remembrances," "Decay," and "The Flitting" (Chilcott 195).

Clare's process of enacting selfhood in "Lines: I am," "Sonnet: I am," and "A Vision" can be interpreted as representing "I am," "I am myself," and "amming myself," respectively. When Soares wants to say he exists, he says, 'I am,' positing a self that is without content. Correspondingly, Clare does not provide a predicate for the verb "to be" in "Lines: I am": "I am – yet what I am, none cares or knows." Although he momentarily provides a predicate complement in one of the lines in the poem ("I am the self-consumer of my woes"), it is significant that the "act of predication is entirely in-turning, a *self*-consuming, and that even the 'objects' of which he is ostensibly aware (his 'woes') quickly vanish into oblivion" (Chilcott 201). However, in "Sonnet: I am," Clare is now saying that he exists as a separate entity—a version of Soares' claim that "I am myself." He begins the poem by writing, "I feel I am – I only know I am," where the *knowing* self and *feeling* self appear separate, and then offers more concrete predication for the identity, albeit in the past tense: "I was a being created in the race / Of men disdaining bounds of place and time." Although both "I am" poems exhibit aspects of depersonalization and delocalization, it is the lack of creative agency—the "amming"— that ultimately prevents the self from achieving freedom in the face of estrangement.

It is not until "A Vision" that Clare appears to be saying that he exists as an entity that addresses and acts on itself, thereby exercising self-creation. The dominant tone of the "I am" poems is that of passivity and resignation. In "Lines: I am," the speaker is reduced to mere "vapours tossed / Into the nothingness of scorn and noise," and in "Sonnet: I am," the speaker is completely helpless in earth's presence: "Earth's prison chilled my body with its dram / Of dullness, and my soaring thoughts destroyed." But in "A Vision," Clare exhibits an unprecedented amount of creative agency: "I snatch'd the sun's eternal ray, - / And wrote 'till earth was but a name" (12). The Earth, hitherto the locus of sorrow and estrangement, is reduced to "but a name," and instead of being the self-consumer of his woes, Clare now becomes "The bard of immortality." And in snatching "the sun's eternal ray" he manages to shine a light on what used to be "a shade unsunned in dark eternity," allowing him to self-create:

> In every language upon the earth,
>
> On every shore, o'er every sea;

> I gave my name immortal birth,
>
> And kep't my spirit with the free.

It is significant that Clare is not giving his name immortal *life* (a state) but instead immortal *birth* (a process). As Chilcott remarks, "the poem is itself the imaginative reincarnation of which it speaks" since it "enacts the visionary creativity of its theme" (208). Thus, Clare's method of self-creation involves the willful enactment of an ever-renewing ("immortal") process of becoming ("birth") through his writing. Clare, in effect, invents a transitive form of the verb *exist*. Viewed through a Pessoan lens, Clare here is not simply saying "I exist"; triumphantly and anti-grammatically, Clare is now saying "I *exist* me," and in so doing keeps his "spirit with the free."

Pessoa likewise wrote until "Pessoa" was just a name; he was considered to be "The Man Who Never Was" (Sena 19) because his heteronymic methods made it nearly impossible to say anything definitive about the "real" Pessoa. Even the writing published under his own name does not shed any light on his true identity because he considered "Fernando Pessoa" to be an "orthonym,"[8] and thus he turned himself, according to Octavio Paz in *A Centenary Pessoa*, "into an *oeuvre* of his *oeuvre*" (9). It is hard to believe that "Pessoa" was his genuine birth name, since "Pessoa" in Portuguese means "person" or "persona," making it one of the most aptronymic[9] names in all of literature. Pessoa managed to give his own name "immortal birth" by birthing many different names, forming a whole universe within himself. Clare, who once wrote that he felt "homeless at home" (*Letters of Clare* 649), similarly turned his estrangement into a creative enterprise. In the draft of a letter written sometime in the 1850s, he reveals one of his final acts of self-creation— the making of a home for himself, *of* himself: "Foolish people tell me I have got no home in this world & as I don't believe in the other at any rate I make myself heaven" (*Journals, Essays & The Journey* 26).

In Clare's "Essay on Landscape," he criticized the tendency of painters to have their trees look too uniform, each a facsimile of the other. According to Clare, artists often neglected the "characters of trees," since real forests have a "harmony & diversity" of greenery. He concluded that one can know a lot about an artist just "by the style of their trees"

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[8] A word Pessoa invented, signifying a personality that shared his real name but was nevertheless a self-reflexive fiction containing even yet more "subpersonalities" (*Pessoa & Co.* 27).

[9] An aptronym is a name "appropriate to a person's profession or personal characteristics" (*OED*).

(*Prose of Clare* 211). Pessoa used literature as a way for him to exteriorize the "forest of estrangement" that existed inside him; each fragment he wrote, can be seen as an individual tree, and his oeuvre as an entire forest. The variety of personalities and styles that Pessoa implemented ensured that each of his trees had a distinct character, making him a successful artist by Clare's standards. Similarly, instead of viewing the puzzling literary output of Clare as the product of some unrestrained psychological disorder, I argued that it is more fruitful to see it as an artistic method akin to Pessoa's, a method in which unity can be found in fragmentation, coherence in contradiction, and freedom in self-creation. Pessoa provides an important analog to Clare as an estranged writer, while at the same time making it possible, for perhaps the first time, to see Clare's forest for his trees.

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THEIR EARS WERE LISTENING TO GOD

Samantha Greco

The purpose of Samantha Greco's essay is to study archived oral histories in relation to literary studies in order to open up written texts to new modes of interpretation. The paper's focus is on Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), and it explores how her anthropological field recordings documenting African-American oral histories in Florida influenced her use of a narrative structure that does not include one dominating voice, but an intermingling between literary and dialectic voices. The objective of this research is to critically engage with sonic archives in order to extrapolate the rich historicizing layers they add to written texts. Hurston's work demonstrates how the translation of oral myths and folklore into written text can give voices back to marginalized communities, such as both women and African Americans in the South. Greco aims to situate her research in an important cross-section of Digital Humanities and Sound Studies. The perceived impact of her research would then be to both *hear* and *read* whether or how culture and dialect are preserved through oral knowledge transmissions in aural archives, with the greater goal of unmuting both the narrative of *TEWWG* and literary studies at large. Written for the Modern Fiction to 1960 course, Greco would like to thank Professor Adam Hammond for his contributions to the first drafts of this paper.

"It was the time to hear things and talk."
—Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)

Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) recounts the story of Janie Crawford's return from her journey in search of the "bloom of things" (Hurston 43). The words of Janie's adventure petal-fall off her tongue as her long-time friend, Pheoby Watson, engages in a "hungry listening [that helps] Janie to tell her story" (10). Hurston's novel is woven together by the actions of telling and listening, and it is through these actions that the novel mirrors the foundations of oral history transmission. In them we can see how Hurston's background as an anthropologist, including her research documenting African-American oral histories in Florida with folk musicologist Alan Lomax for the Library of Congress in 1935, influenced the narrative structure of her novel (State Library). Professor Della Pollock in the Department of Communication at the University of North Carolina states in *Remembering: Oral History Performance*: "At [oral history performance's] best, it democratizes tellers and listeners by easing the monologic power of what is said into [a] collaborative [act]" (7). I argue that *Their Eyes Were Watching God* presents ethical "oral history at its best" by challenging the reader's expectation for narrative resolution and the monologic narrative structures that conceal he multiplicity of voices that form reality.

Hurston subverts dominant monologic constraints in favour of a more dialogic story that includes the acts of telling and listening through the use of free indirect discourse, a type of narration that slips in and out of multiple characters' consciousness. This mixture of voices in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (henceforth *TEWWG*) begins with a literary narrator describing the "life of men" (Hurston 1), which is then disrupted by the dialectic voice introduced on the next page. Moreover, the literary narration is in dialogue with itself through the inclusion of free indirect discourse, including the insertion of multiple voices within the narration creating dialogues that operate on multiple levels within *TEWWG*. This reflects the multiplicity of voices that were present during Hurston's research and documentation of oral histories. The audio recordings of her fieldwork provided her with example and opportunity to give a voice to many who did not have one, beginning a subversion of the literate voice

that dominates academia. By using this dialogic form, Hurston continues this subversion by opening the door to the inclusion of multiple kinds of voices within the literary medium of the novel.

Hurston learned through ethical listening during her fieldwork experiences studying folklore in the African-American communities of Eatonville, Florida and Polk County, New Orleans (Hernández 351), and archived her findings through audio recordings. She hoped that the recorded accounts would be systematically obtained and translated within a theoretical framework that would then present the folklore as the "laying out of objects as if in an art museum" (352-53). Throughout her recording initiatives, Hurston captured the stories, songs, tradition, and histories of small African-American communities across Florida, immersing herself in her culture as both a member and an objective observer. In the recording *Halimuhfack*, Hurston describes to anthropologist and folklorist Herbert Halpert her method of ethical listening, whereby she learns folk songs by echoing back to the people what they sing to her until they confirm she gets it right (State Library). In this way, her findings embody a dialectic voice because she must sing back the folk songs to document them. Pollock states that "Oral history is strung between reference to real events and real listener/witnesses, between recollection and anticipation for historical change" (7). In Pollock's sense, Hurston represents both teller and listener, exemplifying the chain of knowledge transmission through oral discourse in her research. This teller/listener dynamic is reflected within *TEWWG* in the relationship between Janie and Pheoby that drives the plot forward.

More specifically, *TEWWG* shows elements of folk song structure when compared to Hurston's archived audio recording of the song "Po' Gal." This is a tune that Hurston grew up with, and during her fieldwork research she heard additional verses (State Library). Hurston states that "Po' Gal" is a blues tune sung throughout the South that includes words that are not rhymed. She states that this unrhymed form is a "typical Negro pattern, the same line repeated three times with a sort of flip line on the end; and the change is in the tune rather than the words, for the most part" (Florida Memory, Web). There are many "flip lines" that can be found within *TEWWG*. A notable instance of this is the beginning of the novel in which a literate voice paints a scene depicting the "life of men," followed immediately by a colloquial voice that begins to explain the life of women in the novel. Janie's relationships with the men in her

life also reflect this folk tune method of oral history transmission. Janie has three love interests, arguably reflective of the flipping verse structure of "Po' Gal." The first two verses, one with Logan and the other with Joe, are similar, as they both are about men that Janie does not truly love. Janie takes a certain amount of agency in ending these first two relationships. She consciously leaves Logan for Joe, only then to talk Joe to death when she is no longer "petal-open with him" (Hurston 71). Then, during the third verse with her final male interest, Tea Cake, she encounters an unexpected flip in the music that forces her to end that verse of her life when she shoots Tea Cake to protect herself from the mad dog disease that overtakes him.

By documenting oral histories, Hurston gave a voice to African-American communities across Florida and raised these voices into the realm of academia. So too does her novel, described by Edwidge Danticat in a foreword to a 2013 edition of the novel as containing instances of "communal gatherings on open porches at dusk; the intimate storytelling; the tall-tale sessions, both about real people who have erred and fictional folks who have hilariously blundered," all demonstrating "dead-on orality in both the narration and the dialogue" (xiii). Within these pockets of orality lie power dynamics that allow some to be heard and others to be silenced. There are multiple instances in which the imbalanced dynamics of power between tellers and listeners are shown throughout *TEWWG*. For example, instances of discourse on porches during sundown are freeing to the folk of the town who "had been tongueless, earless, eyeless conveniences all day long" under their oppressive circumstances, and were now able to speak without the "bossman" present (1). On another domestic level, Nanny holds the power of discourse over Janie, as Janie gets all her information orally from Nanny, most of which does not serve Janie in the long run. This is especially apparent during the beginnings of Janie and Logan's marriage when she realizes she does not love him and goes to Nanny to "get a lil information from [her]" (22). In this instance, Janie searches for the oral transmission of knowledge as she searches for answers in order to try to love a man she does not love in the hope that "someone was to tell [her] how, [she] could do it" (23). Unfortunately, Janie does not get the answer she is looking for, and thus the literary narrator states that she has "become a woman" when she learns for herself that "marriage [does] not make love" (25). This revelation leads her on the search for "new words […] to be made and said" (32) to fit her growing perception of life.

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Nanny's method of telling was unethical, as it left no room for Janie to grow. Subsequently, this contractive discourse inspired Janie to want something more—namely, a different mode of life and a different mode of speech than what Nanny presents and represents. On this search for new words to be said and heard, Janie tries to tear away from Nanny's pernicious narratives and partially finds what she is looking for when she meets Joe Starks. Their blossoming relationship symbolizes change to Janie as she begins to yearn for more than her decaying marriage to Logan, which began as a ripe fruit picked prematurely. Unfortunately, this relationship soon withers as well. Joe begins to strip away the petals of Janie's ability to communicate and participate within pockets of orality with those around her with his "big voice" (46), asserting his power over Janie's discourse during the period of time she is rooted to his store. In his speech as Mayor he says, "mah wife don't know nothin' 'bout no speech-makin'" (43). Soon after, the narrator explains Janie's emotional reaction to being silenced before she had a chance to open her mouth: "she had never thought of making a speech, and didn't know if she cared to make one at all. It must have been the way Joe spoke out without giving her a chance to say anything one way or another that took the bloom off things" (43). Joe essentially strips Janie of her ability to be a teller in those moments, and she becomes a silent listener for the majority their marriage. Joe constantly presents constricting narratives about Janie to the public, whether about her silence or her age; by doing so, he exhibits his ignorance of the real Janie, who is later said to be "uh born orator" after she praises Joe for buying a mule to show it mercy in its final days of life (58). Joe represents an unethical teller and listener: he silences others, constructs his own narrative which dominates others, and remains a stranger to the authentic Janie by remaining ignorant about aspects of her life.

The most striking depiction of oral discourse power dynamics within *TEWWG*, vis-a-vis transmission of information through the means of oral discourse, is the courtroom scene in which Janie is on trial for the murder of Tea Cake. The court is a constrictive pocket of orality, and during this section the narration shifts heavily to the monologic side and leaves very little space for t dialectic voices to come through. This dynamic mirrors Janie's lack of power in this situation and the fact that she must remain silent until otherwise addressed by the court. Hurston writes: "The court set and Janie saw the judge who had put on a great robe to listen about her and Tea Cake. And twelve more white men had

stopped whatever they were doing to listen and pass on what happened between Janie and Tea Cake Woods" (185). This scene clearly depicts the domination of white voices and the power they hold as listeners in this situation, existing to tell Janie "whether things were done right or not" (185) and leaving her life in the hands of courtroom discourse. Additional silenced listeners are included in the scene via the presence of "coloured people standing up in the back of the courtroom […] with their tongues cocked and loaded" (185). They briefly become tellers in the court, wanting to testify in a "tongue storm" (Hurston 186), and the "bailiff went up and the sheriff and the judge, and the police chief, and the lawyers all came together to listen for a few minutes" (Hurston 186). All those in the back "had come to talk. [And] the state couldn't rest until it heard" (186). But just as Joe's "big voice" dominated Janie during their marriage, the "big court" dominates all other voices in the courtroom scene (187). This power dynamic is demonstrated when Sop-de-Bottom is described as speaking out "anonymously from the anonymous herd" at the back of the courtroom (187).

In the court, Janie is nearly silenced by a "white man that was going to talk for her"; she does eventually speak for herself, however, and "they all leaned over to listen while she talked," creating a physically and orally constrictive space around her (187). This constriction is akin to the oral power dynamics Janie experiences at home, a place where "it was not death she feared. It was misunderstanding" (188). In this section, devoid of dialectic narrative intervention, the novel's literary narrative voice reigns and describes how Janie tries to convince the court of her innocence. This is a moment that returns to what the novel resists: the domination of a singular narrative. This section also shows how the domination of singular narratives silences the voices that need to be heard.

After the court scene, we return to Janie finishing her tale to Pheoby. Pheoby has previously heard fragments of Janie's story by listening to what folks say when they "collect around [her] porch" (5); in response to their judgment Janie says, "dey's parched up from not knowing things. […] Let 'em consulate theyselves wid talk. 'Course talkin' don't amount tuh uh hill uh beans when yuh can't do nothing else" (192). As an anthropologist, Hurston moved beyond the realm of just talking and put those words into action through her researching and archiving of African-American oral histories. When Pheoby initially

has difficulties understanding her story, Janie says, "'tain't no use in me telling you somethin' unless Ah gave you de understandin' to go 'long wid it" (7). The audio recordings of Hurston's field excursions present a cultural artefact; her novel provides the understanding of the artefact to go along with it.

Arguably, Pheoby—like Hurston—is an example of the ideal ethical listener. She respectfully hears Janie's story and fully opens her ears and heart to be an earwitness to Janie's tale. Pheoby can be heard as a model for readers to learn from, as she opens herself to the stories and histories of others. Hurston opened herself and her ears to the oral histories of the African-American South, and because of her devotion to this material, its archival and documentation, these histories can be remembered, respected, and built upon. History is a woven set of narratives; instead of privileging a singular narrative, the ethical study of oral histories opens the door to understanding history as a collective creation strung together by a multiplicity of voices. The tale of Janie and Tea Cake suggests an analogy to this dynamic, as it takes on various shapes and colours depending on the fragment observed, the voice telling it, and the state of the heart of those listening to it. Like Janie's final definition of love, oral histories are "lak de sea. It's uh movin' thing, but still and all, it takes its shape from de shore it meets, and it's different on every shore" (191). Moving forward, it is "time [for us] to hear things and talk" ethically and potentially grow "ten feet higher" like Pheoby, just from listening to each other (1, 192).

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THE NEEDLE BENEATH THE WOOL: NELLY DEAN'S WITCHCRAFT IN *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

Jacob Harron

The ideas in this essay emerged during a trudge through increasingly tedious analyses of the greatest English novel. From its ignominious publication in 1847 to its internment in secondary-school curricula, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* remains misunderstood by readers and critics who continue to judge it by the morality of its characters. Researching for ENG325: Victorian Realist Novels, Jacob Harron was in search of any useful interrogation of Nelly Dean, the keenly manipulative second narrator, beyond irrelevant debates as to whether she is a good person. A breakthrough came when he opened his book to the following assertion by Catherine Earnshaw, within the novel itself: "Nelly is my hidden enemy—you witch! So you do seek elf-bolts to hurt us! Let me go, and I'll make her rue! I'll make her howl a recantation!" Here, at last, was something interesting. The words are spoken at the height of what Nelly calls "delirium," but Harron quickly recognised them as forming one of the most direct and clear-headed statements in the entire narrative. Within less than a day, he was convinced that Nelly Dean is a witch, and he set out to determine the extent and nature of her powers, which had eluded critical observation thus far. This work contains the results of that investigation. It owes its existence to fairy magic, several hundred teabags, and to Professor Hao Li, who wanted something original.

Witchcraft is a more fitting term than any yet summoned for the work of Ellen Dean, the raconteur lurking behind the better part of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. Presenting herself as a simple servant, she recounts her "history" (E. Brontë 29) ostensibly for the entertainment of Lockwood, the book's initial narrator. An active participant in the events she describes, and purporting to recall them from memory, she reveals prejudices, lapses in judgement, and manipulations of detail for generations of readers to interrogate. Sadly, few have made meaningful inquiry into her function as our access point into the story beyond branding her as an unreliable narrator. None have followed the lead of other characters and called her a witch. Ever since Charlotte's defence of her sister's book in 1850, which urged critics, "For a specimen of true benevolence and homely fidelity, look at the character of Nelly Dean" (A. Brontë 309), analysis has fallen for the decoy of moral judgement. Those who defend Nelly's honesty as a narrator miss her purpose doubly, discount the nature of her work, and subordinate her to the bumbling Lockwood, whose mode of storytelling is so different that it calls for a different term.[1] Nelly is no unselfconscious diarist, but a studied bard, in an old corner of the world where bards' power verges on the supernatural, where to name something is to risk conjuring it. Brontë knows a storyteller does not merely reflect, but acts upon her world, and must cut and weave the raw materials of a life into something new. To this purpose, she casts Nelly as both a seamstress and a sorceress, and re-characterises the practices of witchcraft as artistic. Look beneath the tapestry, and see the needles running through her characters as she remakes their lives.

It is unfortunate that judgements of Nelly's narrative have chased its merits as a history, or as a transcription of events as they happened, rather than as art in itself. To say that Nelly is an unreliable sort of narrator says nothing about what sort of artist she is. For the Victorian novelist, questions of realism went beyond a binary of factual history and lying. As George Henry Lewes would write in 1865,

> Foolish critics often betray their ignorance by saying that a painter or a writer "only copies what he has seen, or puts down what he has known." They forget that no man imagines what he has not seen or known, and that it is in the *selection of the characteristic details* that the artistic power is manifested. (Lewes 60)

[1] Let us be clear that Nelly's actions justify interrogation. She is capable of astonishing cruelty. Her relentless demonization of Catherine Earnshaw, worthy of an essay in itself, still sways the unwary reader. Look, for example, to John Fraser's desperate defence of Nelly's character, which can only sustain itself by condemning Catherine's. The point is not that moral judgements in fiction are unsubstantiated, but that they are irrelevant.

Lewes' theories make for a useful guide to Nelly's work. He goes on to distinguish the faculties of Memory and Imagination: the first he regards as "passive," distinct from the "active faculty" of the latter (74), whose character "is derived from the powers of selection and recombination" (57-58). We may extend the principle to one who works from real events, for a storyteller is not a god who conjures from nothing, but a sculptor who cuts away the raw material of her knowledge and rearranges what remains. And as Lewes makes clear, to select is to omit: "[The poet] cannot without confusion present all the details. And it is here that the fine selective instinct of the true artist shows itself, in knowing what details to present and what to omit" (52). The relevance to *Wuthering Heights* is that Nelly's narrative has hitherto been judged as a work of what Lewes would call Memory, when it is in fact Imagination. To remember—that is, to recall passively—is merely what Lockwood asks of Nelly; what she delivers is not a passive recollection. Nor is it the free, compulsive prattling she claims it to be (E. Brontë 54). Nelly takes care in the unravelling of her tale and selects details with a weaponised precision. When Lockwood compliments her delivery, she laughs, "Sharp discipline […] has taught me wisdom; and then, I have read more than you would fancy […] You could not open a book in this library that I have not looked into, and got something out of also" (55). Critics who hold her tale to a standard of mere honesty come no closer to grasping its artistic power than Lockwood, who does not question it at all.

While the "penetralium" Lockwood approaches upon "passing the threshold" of *Wuthering Heights* (2) has been related to the layered narrative structure of Wuthering Heights the novel, a more fitting image for Nelly's technique is patchwork. Whether we hear a story or a song from her, the bard is rarely without her threads. She agrees to regale Lockwood provided she may sew as she does so, and produces a "basket of work" (30). When halting the action, she pauses her needle the same: "Thus interrupting herself, the housekeeper rose, and proceeded to lay aside her sewing; but I felt incapable of moving from the hearth" (54). She has the power to withdraw, but the longer she weaves her story, the more tightly she ties Lockwood up in its threads. The man descends into a chronic state of suspense and comes to consider needlework inseparable from narrative; he later commands her, when she attempts to bring him medicine, "Keep your fingers from that bitter phalanx of vials. Draw your knitting out of your pocket—that will do—now continue the history of Mr. Heathcliff, from where you left off, to the present day" (80). The

yarn she spins, in both senses,[2] is her basket of work, a woven container for her craft, narratives within narratives.

Where material is lacking, the patchwork joins its fragments by trimming away their edges. One of Nelly's most striking acts of omission comes after she relays Heathcliff's promise that he "shall pay Hindley back." When Heathcliff declares, "I don't care how long I wait [...] I'll plan it out" (53), Nelly pauses, insisting that she has been "chattering" (54), and simply must leave Lockwood to rest. When Lockwood demands she continue, Nelly tries to skip three years, but he haggles, and she skips only to the following summer (54-55). The false innocence of her decision to stop here reveals her as a keen storyteller, aware of her audience's interest. She not only creates suspense, but also draws attention to the construction of her narrative: jumping forward in time marks the scene as pivotal. If what follows in the intervening years is immaterial, then all future events appear to unfold from the young Heathcliff's plan. Thus Nelly is able to smooth over his absence and return with an unexplained fortune, a massive gap in her "history," by implying that nothing in that period altered the course he had already set for himself.

She takes care, as well, to manage our interpretation of the details we do have. Of Heathcliff as a child, she says, "[Heathcliff] complained so seldom [...] that I really thought him not vindictive—I was deceived, completely, as you will hear" (34). The deftness of her rhetoric so early in the tale could make anyone other than Lockwood think she has rehearsed it. Nelly pre-empts any suspicion about her ability to interpret people around her by specifying that she was deliberately *deceived* rather than mistaken, thus reinforcing her own reliability and innocence while colouring her audience's subsequent reading of Heathcliff. "As you will hear" bids us read the past non-chronologically, in terms of what came after it. We now judge Heathcliff 's trajectory not to have changed significantly over time—that is, enough to place him beyond Nelly's understanding—but to have always been vengeful. Any evidence we encounter to the contrary, we deem a ruse. Nelly's entire narrative arises as the answer to a leading question from Lockwood: "[Heathcliff] must have had some ups and downs in life to make him such a churl. Do you know anything of his history?" (29). To satisfy Lockwood's understanding of linear character development, omission becomes an act of narrative

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[2] The earliest usage of "to spin a yarn" as a metaphor for storytelling in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is from [1819], so the association is not anachronistic.

unification. One can picture Nelly's needle as she speaks, tying Heathcliff together from the knowable fragments with a long thread, and closing over the gaps. While tying over contradictions is not unique to Nelly, it is through Nelly that Brontë exposes the seams, and shows how the raw material of a life is shaped into a cohesive story. Nelly's goal in telling it is less accuracy than enchantment.

Enchantment in *Wuthering Heights* is often literal, and Brontë's detailed references to witchcraft are deliberate and precise. The first in the novel to invoke black magic directly is the young Cathy Linton, who threatens Joseph, "I'll show you how far I've progressed in the Black Art [...] The red cow didn't die by chance; and your rheumatism can hardly be reckoned among providential visitations!" (12). Cathy is called "witch" by Joseph, Heathcliff, Lockwood, and Hareton,[3] but she is not the black art's only practitioner. When Nelly conceals the young Edgar Linton's visits to the Heights from Hindley, Joseph brands her "gooid fur nowt, slattenly witch!" (77). By the novel's end, he refers to the two women as a joint force. Offended by Nelly's folk ballads, he shouts, "Yah're [Nelly] a right nowt; un shoo's [Cathy] another; un' that poor lad [Hareton] 'ull be lost, atween ye [...] he's witched" (274). Calling on God to judge them, he laments that there is "norther law nur justice amang wer rullers." Nelly, not having seen Lockwood come in, retorts, "No! or we should be sitting in flaming fagots, I suppose" (274). The image of witch-burning is unmistakable. Nelly latches on to what they have been called, and even anticipates their sentence, but she does not dispute the charge. When Cathy threatens Joseph with "the Black Art," she produces "a long, dark book" and warns, "I'll hurt you seriously! I'll have you all modelled in wax and clay [...] Go, I'm looking at you!" (11-12). In both examples, the rituals of spell-work are artistic: singing, reading, and sculpting; the conjurer depicts her world in order to influence it. Nina Auerbach, in her study of George Eliot, has offered a helpful understanding of what witchcraft meant to folklore in the Victorian period: "Transformation has always been central," she writes. "The witch's ability to impress herself on others by fixing on them the evil eye or making of them a waxen effigy strikes at the heart of our fear that we will disappear into the image of ourselves that others see" (168-69). Note the menace in Cathy's declaration that she is looking at Joseph, and that this is what drives him to flee; the superstitious recognise the power in a witch's gaze.

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[3] Cathy Linton is associated with witchcraft so persistently that a complete catalogue of references would require another essay.

And it is difficult not to see the storyteller's representational doubling in the mimesis of an effigy; Nelly the servant is subject to the authority of people around her, but Nelly the narrator can craft representations of those people, which are entirely under her control.

There is a literary, as well as folkloric, allusion at work. Lockwood names a "brindled" cat Grimalkin (24), after the witches' cat in *Macbeth* (Dry 21).[4] Once Joseph shoos Grimalkin away, Lockwood spies Cathy reading a book by the hearth, perhaps the same she used to threaten Joseph. Heathcliff enters, and Lockwood fears a "cat-and-dog combat" between them, buttressing Cathy's association with the feline (E. Brontë 25). He will later compare hearing Nelly's story to watching a cat lick its kitten, making the two women interchangeable with the animals and with each other, and tying the cat both to storytelling and witchcraft (54). As Auerbach notes, tradition depicts "the witch in an intense and equivocal relationship to the animal kingdom [...] animals are worshipped and used as conduits for spells, the witch's nature seeming at times interchangeable with that of her familiar" (161). The reference to the play is too specific to disregard, and Lockwood leaves no doubt that he is thinking of Shakespeare, as he names *King Lear* in the previous chapter (14). The novel bids us consider witchcraft not merely in general terms, but with regard to *Macbeth*. What is pertinent about Shakespeare's Weird Sisters is that they do not deceive Macbeth by lying outright. Rather, they mislead him through careful selection of detail. Nelly is called a witch twice, and both times because she has manipulated others by withholding information. The first occasion, she enables Edgar to court Catherine Earnshaw undetected; on the second, she conceals Catherine's illness from Edgar, and possibly brings about her death. Nelly's lying by omission does not only hone a narrative, but, like that of the Weird Sisters, reshapes the world around her, with fatal consequences. Lockwood the listener watches only the licking tongue of the mother cat; he misses its claws.

In all the tales in Nelly's repertoire, magic lurks. The narrative she gives Lockwood is an oral performance and should be considered alongside the supernatural, often Gothic, ballads she likes to sing as she sews. The young Cathy Linton, to whom Nelly sings in her childhood, grows into something like her apprentice bard, recalling these songs when

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[4] Lew Girdler disputes Dry's work pedantically, believing "Grimalkin" too common to constitute an allusion, forgetting it was specifically a stock name for a witch's familiar. He also neglects to compare "brindled, grey cat, which crept from the ashes, and saluted me with a querulous mew" with "Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed," as well as the cat's association with an amateur sorceress. The Brontës read Shakespeare and shared their reading material; Charlotte praises *Macbeth* in particular. It is absurd to think Emily did not have the Scottish Play in mind.

Heathcliff deprives her of books (203). Her skill with them blossoms while enchanting the young Linton: "He was charmed with two or three pretty songs—*your* songs, Ellen; and when I was obliged to go, he begged and entreated me to come the following evening" (219). "Charmed" is the key, and Cathy means it in the sense of bewitching: "He'll soon do as I direct him with some slight coaxing [...] I'd make such a pet of him, if he were mine" (213). He continues to request ballad after ballad each night, refusing to sleep, before insisting she return the next day; the parallel with Nelly and Lockwood is uncanny (213). And the magic in Nelly's traditional ballads is of a pagan sort. As she sings and sews, Joseph complains of her "glories tuh Sattan" (274). The song on that occasion is "Fair Annie's Wedding," but she names it to Joseph as "*Fairy* Annie's Wedding," as though to irk him deliberately.[5] She also raises the infant Hareton on ballads about ghosts (Wilcockson 259). Presumably, what she taught Cathy was far from hymnal. Through storytelling, she bestows Cathy with the power to control; the magic in the stories becomes a magic wielded by the singer.

Cathy will later teach Hareton spelling, a word with its own undercurrent of magic. Two meanings of *spell* are at play from the novel's outset.[6] When Lockwood stays in Catherine Earnshaw's old room, and reads the names scrawled on the ledge, he begins "spelling over Catherine Earnshaw—Heathcliff—Linton" until "a glare of white letters started from the dark, as vivid as spectres—the air swarmed with Catherines." He can only sleep after "rousing [himself] to dispel the obtrusive name," as though it were a physical entity to combat (E. Brontë 15). After he reads a page from Catherine's journal, dated "some quarter of a century back," in which she writes of running to the moors with Heathcliff (16-17), he meets the ghostly Catherine at his window, crying she has been lost on the moors for twenty years (20-21). The act of *spelling* raises spectres; reading Catherine's words summons her apparition to his window. He tries to reason away what he sees—"Spelling over the name [...] produced an impression which personified itself when I had no longer my imagination under control" (22-23)—but even the rationalist explanation makes reading seem a dangerous pastime, liable to turn into incantation if one is not wary. Lockwood himself is in two minds about whether his encounter was a dream or "another proof that the place was haunted" (22). The threads of each possibility run parallel without meeting.

[5] Wilcockson notes that scholars were long unable to find the source for her song because of this change in title.
[6] Both are Germanic, but the sense of "to read letter by letter" enters English later, via Old French. The earliest meaning of the Old English spel, before incantation, is narrative (*OED*).

How easily Lockwood falls under the influence of enchantment: despite his authority over Nelly as a servant, he is so taken in by her story that he becomes one of its actors. Thinking he might marry the apprentice himself, he assumes the role of Nelly's informant and messenger concerning the young Cathy. She subtly pries him for information on the girl from their first conversation (29). Though she prides herself on being "a steady, reasonable sort of body", in all her conversations with Lockwood she takes care to encourage his superstitious impulses by allowing for a supernatural reading of events (55). After Heathcliff's death, Lockwood remarks that the Heights will belong to "such ghosts as choose to inhabit it," and Nelly admonishes him, "I believe the dead are at peace, but it is not right to speak of them with levity" (300). "At peace" is not the same as out of earshot. "At present," she relates, "[Heathcliff's grave] is as smooth and verdant as its companion mounds—and I hope its tenant sleeps as soundly" (299). What doubtful words are "at present," "hope," and "tenant." Heathcliff, lacking any home upon the earth, does not even own his grave, but rents it. Nelly's histories are as open to ghosts as her ballads are. When she finally tells him of Cathy's engagement, she says, "I'm glad you did not try [to win her]—the crown of all my wishes will be the union of those two", implying she has desired and even planned it for a long time (281). His function ended, Lockwood can finally "escape" when he hears the end of her story, and runs from the Heights, as though a spell has been broken (300).

Like Lockwood's encounter with the spirit at his window, the vision the older Catherine experiences at the height of her illness is not convincingly explained away. Its clarity is frightful. Shut in her room, she pleads that she is dying, yet Nelly chooses not to tell Edgar. In a state Nelly dismisses as "feverish bewilderment" and "madness", Catherine prophesies:

> I see in you, Nelly... an aged woman—you have grey hair and bent shoulders. This bed is the fairy cave under Peniston Crag, and you are gathering elf-bolts to hurt our heifers; pretending, while I am near, that they are only locks of wool. That's what you'll come to fifty years hence [...] I'm not wandering [...] or else I should believe you really were that withered hag. (108)

The imagery is not random. A hag is a witch, and among the "commonest manifestations of witchery," Auerbach writes, "is the power

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to blight and cause disease in the animal kingdom" (Auerbach 161). Recall the young Cathy's claim to Joseph that "the red cow didn't die by chance," and the responsibility she claims for afflicting him with rheumatism by magic (E. Brontë 12). Elf-bolts are ancient flint arrowheads, held by rural folklore to have been shot by fairies at cattle, causing blight. The "locks of wool" Nelly pretends to gather resemble materials for knitting. Nelly's needles–here the malicious arrows of fairies–hide below. When Edgar returns, and reveals that he did not know the severity of his wife's condition, Catherine shouts, "Ah! Nelly has played traitor [...] Nelly is my hidden enemy—you witch! So you do seek elf-bolts to hurt us!" (114). Catherine feels Nelly curse her in the stories she tells, or does not tell.

The young Heathcliff recalls Isabella "shrieking as if witches were running red-hot needles into her" (42). Perhaps they are. Reading from the page, one creates images in one's own mind to match the words, but Nelly's narration to Lockwood is an oral performance. Her audience must watch her sewing in front of him, stabbing her needle in and out at the same time as she speaks of witches' needles. Whether Emily Brontë considered Nelly a genuine practitioner of magic is unknown, but the ties she knits between Nelly and witchcraft, and between witchcraft and storytelling, are too deep and disturbing to deny. Though Nelly has studied the written word and can shape her speech enough to fool a middle-class tourist, she belongs to an older folkloric tradition of oral stories and poetry, whose bards share in the occult power of their tales. Brontë's framing devices ensure that her story remains oral; to present events first-hand through a single narrator would confine it entirely to the realm of the written novel, a distinctly modern, urbane form, bereft of the magic and uncertainty of fairytale. While Lockwood may be called the prevailing layer of access to *Wuthering Heights*, Nelly's words existing within his, to judge these layers as a hierarchy is to ignore Nelly's power. Lockwood, an outsider, merely records what he is told. Nelly, the "hidden enemy" in her own story, conjures (114). That readers have yet to becomes listeners, and discover the needles under the wool, speaks to the authority of her spell.

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WORDSWORTH'S SOCIO-POLITICAL IMAGINATION: "THE THORN'S" IMAGINING OF THE SOCIAL AND THE PROGRESSION TOWARDS "TINTERN ABBEY"

Juan Mora

      The seminar *Revolution and Genre in Wordsworth and Coleridge's Lyrical Ballads* encouraged Juan to read the collection, particularly the 1798 edition, as exactly that: a collection, a sequence of poems that deals with sociopolitical issues and alienation on its way to a resolution. Strongly influenced by Neil Fraistat's criticism, Juan finds that the questioning and epistemological obscurity of William Wordsworth's "The Thorn," a poem located at the centre of the collection, are resolved by the last poem, "Tintern Abbey." Juan uses this reading to find weaknesses in Marjorie Levinson's isolated reading of "Tintern Abbey" and her conclusion that Wordsworth avoids confronting sociopolitical issues. Wordsworth, in fact, observes objects and settings and attaches to them his ideas about contemporary issues; narratives such as the bridegroom's abandonment of Martha Ray and her consequent infanticide rise out of objects and settings. Wordsworth, then, seems to observe and write the world around him with what Juan calls his sociopolitical imagination. In "The Thorn," the late-eighteenth century stigmatization of single mothers, their economic distresses, and the (perhaps justifiable) extremes to which they are driven are the issues that arise from Wordsworth's observation of a natural scene during a walk in Quantock Hills. Wordsworth approaches the character of Martha Ray sympathetically, challenging English governmental ideologies.

In the "Note" William Wordsworth appends to "The Thorn" in the 1800 *Lyrical Ballads*, he writes, "[t]his Poem ought to have been preceded by an introductory Poem" before proceeding to describe the speaker (W. Wordsworth 287). The premise that surrounding poems should supply information to each other, or that information should be supplied elsewhere in the collection to enlighten the reading of a single poem, is a concept Neil Fraistat seizes upon in his approach to the 1798 edition. He reads the collection as a progression, with "The Thorn" as a "centerpiece" and "Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour, July 13, 1798" as a consoling conclusion, a reading I have found very effective for examining the place and role of "The Thorn" in the 1798 edition (Fraistat 51). "The Thorn" is full of the mystery and obscure symbolism we find in other ballads in the collection; the speaker and questioner fail repeatedly in their attempts to "know" what objects such as the thorn mean to one of the poem's central characters, Martha Ray, and in their attempts to "know" her narrative (113). The ontological nature of objects in the poem is obscure, unlike in "Tintern Abbey." Marjorie Levinson finds in "Tintern Abbey" evidence of "suppression of the social"—of contemporary society and socio-political issues (Levinson 37). I apply her critique to "The Thorn," because its obscurity certainly seems evidence of Wordsworth's hesitancy to face the social world, but I argue that the poem engages with rather than suppresses socio-political issues. The initial object that prompted the poem, a thorn that Wordsworth saw on a walk to Quantock Hills, conduces the speaker's—and Wordsworth's—mind to a narrative about a single mother, a stigmatized figure in late-eighteenth century England, committing infanticide (D. Wordsworth 149). Instead of suppressing social issues, Wordsworth looks upon nature and imagines a narrative that works against harmful perceptions of single mothers, a narrative that is therefore socio-politically laden.

Fraistat directs us to read the 1798 edition as a collection of poems that have an "essential likeness" and reminds us that Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge initially intended to give their audience the impression that the poems were all written by a single author (Fraistat 51). With this pretense of unity in mind, it follows that attention to "the 'inner' meaning of the poems" must shift somewhat to "their 'outer' meaning as a group" (51). Consequently, the placing of the poems and the possible relationships between them are accentuated. Through this approach, Fraistat reads the edition as a sequence, starting with "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere, in Seven Parts" and ending with "Tintern Abbey." He argues that the former's general "mystery," "obsession," and "alienation" are eventually resolved by

the "'solemn and soothing' conclusion" that is "Tintern Abbey," that the two poems function as "seed and fruit" (78, 87). Coleridge develops a cryptic symbolism in "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere." Once the Mariner kills the albatross with his crossbow, the weather becomes unfavourable for sailing. This narrative mechanism suggests a parable-like moral, which could be put into a maxim such as "the harming of the natural world, or simply life, has its consequences." The albatross therefore stands for an abstraction, the natural world or life. The first poem, then, initiates the use of unsettled symbolism and morally didactic subtexts that will recur later in the collection.

In "The Thorn," the central objects—the thorn, mound of moss, and ponds—are also symbols like the albatross. The poem begins, "There is a thorn [...] Not higher than a two-year's child [...] It is a mass of knotted joints" (W. Wordsworth 1-8). Before we learn anything about Martha Ray and her child, the speaker is already associating a natural object with a human infant, both through this shared size and the word "joints." The symbolism is developed further:

> There is a fresh and lovely sight,
>
> A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
>
> Just half a foot in height.
>
> [...]
>
> [It] is like an infant's grave in size. (33-52)

The image of a dead infant first appears here as a simile for the size of a "heap" of moss, anticipating the speaker's later narration of "all" he knows about Martha Ray (114), when he tells the questioner that the pregnant Martha Ray was abandoned by her bridegroom-to-be on their wedding morning and implies that she committed infanticide. The emphasis on the material likeness of the heap of moss to an infant's grave strongly implies that it stands for the child, or perhaps is the child's gravesite. The specificity of the dimensions, such as "Just half a foot in height," emphasize the similarity. However, as the reader searches for the meaning of the similarity, the speaker refuses to give any conclusive information: "'But what's the thorn? and what's the pond? / And what's the hill of moss to her?'[...] I cannot tell" (210-14). He goes on to rely on gossip to suggest that this is where Martha Ray committed the crime and buried the child. Whether the objects, so strongly associated with the child, stand materially for the infant's gravesite or abstractedly for the infant, remains unclear.

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In fact, Fraistat, argues that "The Thorn" "at its most fundamental level" is "concerned with epistemology" (Fairstat 78). The need to know pervades the speaker and the questioner's speech. The physical world certainly seems well defined; the hill of moss is a concentration of colours, "olive-green and scarlet bright [...] Green, red, and pearly white" (W. Wordsworth 45-50). The repetitive appearance of colours and the adjective "pearly," which is itself a derivation of a concrete noun ("pearl"), emphasize the materiality of the object. Contemporary reviews also noticed the poem's emphasis on the visual. Southey comments, "It resembles a Flemish picture" (Southey 200), and Charles Burney, "All our author's pictures, in colouring, are dark as those of Rembrandt and Spanioletto" (Burney 159). Despite the emphasis on materiality, the questions "'But what's the thorn? and what's the pond? / And what's the hill of moss to her?'" (W. Wordsworth 210-11) and their response, "I cannot tell" (89), along with the penultimate stanza's detail that the moss mysteriously "stirs" (237) when people, presumably villagers, investigate it, leave the ontological nature of the hill obscure. In Kantian terms, the phenomena of the poem, despite their profuse physical details, are mysterious, obscure, unknown as noumena in the mind. The epistemology, the way we "know" things even as they are perceived, is unresolved by the poem.

In her essay on "Tintern Abbey," Levinson unpacks the poem's epistemology to argue that Wordsworth suppresses "the social" world (Levinson 37). She considers the first sentence of the poem, noticing in the phrase, "the length / Of five long winters" (W. Wordsworth 1-2) the repetition of the same concept ("length" and "long"), the first being relatively "objective-quantitative" and the second "subjective-qualitative" (40). The poem, then, urges the "commutability of objective-quantitative and subjective-qualitative experience" and "conceal[s] the difference between an object and an object of knowledge" (Levinson 40). But in this "commutability" between phenomena and noumena, many details are left out. The most important of these, in Levinson's view, are the socio-political issues that the location itself should have represented. Details such as the "signs of industrial and commercial activity" that were present in the Wye valley (29) do not appear in the poem, resulting in what Levinson calls a "fiercely private vision" of nature (37). It would be intriguing to see what Levinson would say about suppression of the social in "The Thorn." The poem seems hesitant to resolve Martha Ray's tragic narrative. Abandoned while pregnant by her husband-to-be, Stephen Hill, her fate is left unclear in the poem: "what became of [the] poor child / There's none that ever knew" (W. Wordsworth 128-60). The speaker says, "I cannot tell" a total of three times (89, 214, 243),

each time continuing with the obscured, rumoured narrative of Martha Ray. Again, the speaker and reader are unable to make satisfactory meaning of phenomena—in this case, details about an individual's experience as told by others. It seems, then, that Wordsworth is suppressing Martha Ray's narrative and what it may have to say about women and single mothers living in late eighteenth-century England.

Despite the hesitation and obscure epistemology, I argue that Wordsworth does not suppress socio-political issues in "The Thorn." Cases of infanticide in the eighteenth century were often committed because the mother lacked the economic resources to raise the child alone due to the shame associated with having an illegitimate child (Francus 133-34). The stigmatization of single mothers is evident in the Infanticide Statute of 1624, which was upheld until 1803. "The 1624 law was not devised out of solicitude for illegitimate children, but was aimed at policing what it called the 'many lewd women' who were accused of murdering their children 'to avoid their shame'" (O'Rourke 114). As the word "lewd" reveals, governmental ideology discredited and stigmatized single mothers and refused to consider a mother's motivations behind killing her child. Moments of clarity in "The Thorn" foreground Martha Ray's suffering, if nothing else. The most poignant are her repeated exclamations, "'Oh misery! oh misery! / Oh woe is me! oh misery!'" (W. Wordsworth 65-66, 86-87, 251-53). They appear three times throughout the poem, and twice in a slightly different form (as "'Oh misery! oh misery!'" in lines 202 and 211). The concreteness of Martha Ray's voice undercuts the absence of details about the narrative of infanticide. The only fact of which the reader is meant to be aware is that Martha Ray is suffering. Wordsworth, then, forces the reader to avoid the mistake that the law makes, that is, to preoccupy themselves with the infanticide narrative and consequently stigmatize and judge single mothers and the lengths to which they may resort. In his comparison of Wordsworth's treatment of marginalized figures from the late eighteenth century to that of contemporary poets, points out that Wordsworth alone seems to see "the social abuse or offending institution [...] through the eyes of the suffering victim, who appeals directly to the reader" (Mayo 512). Although we do not exactly see the world through Martha Ray's eyes, we are asked to assume her moral perspective by not preoccupying ourselves with the particulars of her crime, but to grieve with her.

"The Thorn" demonstrates how Wordsworth's observation of a natural setting or any worldly object is informed by what I call his socio-political imagination. Following Steven Maxfield Parrish's argumentative

strain, we see that the poem begins with the thorn and nothing else in focus. As Parrish suggests, Martha Ray's narrative gradually is imagined out of the scene that the speaker first invokes and that we first perceive (Parrish 97-99). The thorn is compared to a "two-year's child," anticipating the image of an infant, and is said to be a "wretched thing" "hung" with "melancholy" moss, preceding the conjecture in stanza twenty that Martha Ray hanged the child (W. Wordsworth 5-15). "[W]retched" and "melancholy" are adjectives that eventually become applicable to Martha Ray's narrative. They incite the emotions associated with the narrative. Parrish's suggestion that the objects lead the narrator's mind to think of—or imagine—a narrative is certainly a strong reading, but he does not emphasize the topic of this imagined narrative enough; it is about a marginalized figure in society, about a contemporary socio-political issue. The "impressive effects" that Wordsworth's and the speaker's imaginations make out of "simple elements" are distinctively socio-political "effects" (W. Wordsworth "Note" 287). Wordsworth saw the scene of the thorn that inspired the poem while on a walk in Quantock Hills. Dorothy Wordsworth writes in her journal entry for March 19, 1798, that "William and Basil and I walked to the hill-tops, a very cold, bleak day. We were met on our return by a severe hailstorm. William wrote some lines describing a stunted thorn" (D. Wordsworth 149). Wordsworth later verified the story to Isabella Fenwick (Parrish 98). His inspiration was a mere thorn, an object. Like the speaker, then, Wordsworth's own imagination, his socio-political imagination, tints his observation of worldly objects and creates socio-political narratives out of them.

It is important to note from Dorothy Wordsworth's entry, too, that Basil Montagu was walking with her and Wordsworth. He was Wordsworth's friend and the illegitimate son of John Montagu, Fourth Earl of Sandwich, and a woman named Martha Ray. She was murdered by a "rejected suitor" in 1779 (Gamer and Porter 106). Not only does the Martha Ray of the poem therefore have a "real-life counterpart", but her son was present at the scene that inspired Wordsworth to write the poem (106). His presence was probably conducive towards the writing of a narrative about a suffering mother and a pernicious suitor. It influenced Wordsworth's observation of the "stunted thorn" and created mental associations, albeit obscure ones in the poem, that all seem to have begun with the tree. O'Rourke also ties Stephen Hill's abandonment of Martha Ray to Wordsworth's own abandonment of Annette and Caroline Vallon, his lover and their daughter respectively (O'Rourke 114). The presence of Basil, the fact that his mother was murdered, and the guilt of leaving Annette with their child in France are all mental associations

that become tied to a worldly object. When Wordsworth describes "The Thorn's" narrator as someone whose mind is "not loose but adhesive" and who has "a reasonable share of imagination, by which word I mean the faculty which produces impressive effects out of simple elements" (W. Wordsworth "Note" 287), he may as well be describing himself. The "effects" produced are personal, moral, and most important, socio-political.

Levinson and Fraistat agree on the point that "Tintern Abbey" contains a resolving and consoling worldview, certainly more so than "The Thorn's." The earlier poem—earlier in the progression, as Fraistat emphasizes—seems overly burdened with personal and social connotations, its only certain fact that Martha Ray is suffering. As obscure as her narrative and most things perceived in the poem are, a mere thorn, a moody feature of the landscape Wordsworth saw while on a walk, was the poem's starting point. The mental process of creating the narrative is opposite to the one Levinson suggests, wherein the poet overlooks the socio-political connotations of a landscape. Certainly, the obscurity of the poem and Martha Ray's narrative, and the speaker's hesitancy to admit the concreteness of her narrative, can be evidence of Wordsworth's internal struggle to accept or face his personal experience and mistreatment of the Vallon women, a struggle O'Rourke finds characteristic of guilt (O'Rourke 113-14). However, we must remember that the origin of the poem, the prompting of the struggle, is a thorn. The poem exhibits a commutability between the material and the personal, moral, and socio-political. Wordsworth writes in "Tintern Abbey," "I have learned / To look on nature [...] hearing oftentimes / The still, sad music of humanity" (W. Wordsworth 89-92). In these lines, he recognizes the way his own socio-political imagination affects his looking "on nature." In "The Thorn," he has not yet "learned" to "look on nature" with the same peaceful contemplation of "Tintern Abbey." It is by reading the collection as a whole, and not its poems in isolation, that Wordsworth's constant awareness of contemporary issues becomes increasingly apparent.

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THE SEDGWICKIAN LITTLE AND BUTLERIAN LARGE: THE EPIDEMIC OF THE GENDERED BODY IN MACHADO'S "REAL WOMEN HAVE BODIES"

Fatma Shahin

Fatma's essay initially came about due to a coincidence. At the time, she needed to write a paper for her English theory class. All the paper necessitated was an analysis of any work—a novel, a show, a movie, etc.—to which queer theory could be applied. Having just finished *Her Body and Other Parties*, a collection of short stories by Carmen Maria Machado which just so happened to focus on women and their bodies, Fatma could not help but connect Machado's collection with her assigned paper. One story in particular, "Real Women Have Bodies," the one about which she eventually wrote the paper, struck Fatma not just as a compelling narrative—it was her favourite of the collection—but also as a textually rich one. Indeed, its title alone intrigued Fatma. Given the thought-provoking content of the story, Fatma decided to explicate it in her paper by linking it to two readings from her course, one by Judith Butler and the other by Eve Sedgwick. What specifically interested Fatma about Machado' story is that it presented Butler and Sedgwick's theories from a literal perspective, consequently affirming but also transforming the substance of those theories. So much of theory focuses on exactly that—the theoretical—but Machado's surrealist story, one wherein women's bodies begin to disappear, allowed Fatma to explore how theory can become—and is, to a certain extent—material when the bodies it discusses become *de*materialized.

Carmen Maria Machado's *Her Body and Other Parties* is a short story collection that has at its heart exactly that: "her" body. In her stories, Machado explores the myriad ways in which women's bodies are tread upon, negotiated, and disregarded—how they become loci of contention about the world. "Real Women Have Bodies," the fifth in the collection, revolves around an epidemic that exclusively targets women's bodies, causing them to turn slowly invisible. In the midst of this epidemic is a nameless narrator struggling to navigate her relationship with another woman, Petra, whose body is beginning to disappear. The story interweaves the little and the large, the macrocosm of the epidemic and the microcosm of the queer relationship, and as such, calls for an interweaving of the two if one is to explicate it. Specifically, the story serves as a surreal construal of Judith Butler's notions of gender and the gendered body, particularly in its decoupling of the former from the latter. Read in the light of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's use of Melanie Klein's paranoid/schizoid and depressive positions, the story also demonstrates how reparative processes take on a salient urgency, becoming necessary for survival. If anything certain is to be said about "Real Women Have Bodies," it is that it refuses to yield to a view of theory as ungrounded as its fading women—indeed, theory is as much a part of these characters' lives as their lives are a part of theory.

At first glance, Machado's story begs one resounding question: why is it that only "real" women have bodies? If these disappearing women still exist, albeit incorporeally, why are they not considered "real"? With these questions in mind, and in light of Butler's theory, "Real Women Have Bodies" proposes a central syllogism: if gender is decoupled from the body, then the body can no longer come into being, and thus gender cannot be performed. However, the disappearing women of the story simultaneously represent the opposite logic: if gender can be performed, then perhaps the body can tentatively come into being, and gender can be reinstated onto it. Crucial to understanding these syllogisms is Butler's theory of gender, a theory which, in its resistance of the metaphysics of substance, asserts that bodies cannot have an "existence prior to the mark of their gender" (Butler 8); the body is, as a condition, always inextricably gendered. It becomes, then, a question not of *when* is the body gendered, but rather "*to what extent* does the body come into being in and through the mark(s) of gender?" (8; emphasis added). Machado's story poses this question, or rather a different iteration of it, through the focus of its narrative. It asks: how does the body come *out* of being in and through the mark(s) of gender? Throughout the story, women's bodies begin to disappear, and thus their status as "real

women" becomes forfeit. In this way, they come out of being because of their gender and cease to be real and thus to exist, all despite the fact that they are still present in the world, though without a physical form.

That being said, Butler's understanding of sex and gender may also elucidate why, in losing their physical bodies, these women lose their status as "real" women. Butler outlines how gender is often conceived of as "cultural" or "discursive" as opposed to biological sex, which is considered "prediscursive" or "pregiven" (7) to the body. However, no such dichotomy exists between the two for Butler; indeed, the construal of gender as discursive is precisely the means by which sex becomes construed as *pre*discursive. In reality, biological sex is as much of a "cultural construction" (7) as gender. In this sense, Butler's theory of gender is paranoid—that is, a theory that prioritizes suspicion of the ordinary in order to uncover how institutions of systemic oppression operate in everyday life. A Butlerian understanding of sex and gender figures prominently in Machado's story. If a woman has no body, then there is no "pregiven" sex to be assumed in it and consequently no gender to "mirror" or be ascribed onto that sex; she therefore ceases to be a "real" woman. When one of the story's male characters asserts, "Hips. That's what you want. Hips and enough flesh for you to grab onto, you know?" (Machado 5), he fixates on hips as major markers of the desirable female body, reinforcing a particular preoccupation with the gendered female body. "What you want" suggests that what constitutes the "realness" of a woman's body is tactility, the ability to feel the female body's gendering in its hips and flesh. Given this, the inverse implication becomes clear: if an existence maintains a gendering with no body to bear the signs of that gendering, then a status of "realness" and "femaleness" can no longer be conferred onto it.

Thus far, the discussion has only focused on gender as a notion. However, Butler contends that gender is not a *being*, but critically, a "performative [...] *doing*" (25; emphasis added). If gender is always tied to the body (i.e., there is no metaphysics of substance) and performed through it, then what occurs when there is a *doing* of gender without the *body* that gender entails? This is the crux of "Real Women Have Bodies." Here, Machado decouples gender from the body, and in doing so, distorts Butler's resistance to the metaphysics of substance. In the story, the disappearing women do not blink out of existence merely because they have no bodies; rather, their presence is occasionally extremely faint, and can only be noted with a keen eye. Given this, the narrator observes these

women attempting to engage literally and figuratively in a performance of their gender. She associates them with performance imagery, describing their skirts as "gathered in small places like a theater curtain," and likens their forms to "stringless marionettes" (7). What is more, however, is that these comparisons occur when the narrator finds the disappearing women posing as dressmaking mannequins, allowing the seamstress to sew dresses onto their faint bodies. The dresses, along with the faded women sewn into them, are then taken to be sold in a store called "Glam," which features an ultra-feminine collection marked by "plunging backs" and "princess gowns" (2). Altogether, these instances emphasize how these disembodied women manipulate the logic of Butler's question. If their bodies have come out of being because of their gender, then they counter this by figuratively asking, to what extent can their bodies *re*-come into being through the mark(s) of gender? Herein lies the answer to why they willingly "fold themselves into the fabric of the [dresses'] needlework" (12). By becoming one with these hyper-feminine dresses, these faded women attempt to assert the doing of their gender so that, by extension, they can also tentatively assert their bodies and the "realness" associated with them. With this in mind, one can repose the question around which the story revolves: why *do* "real women have bodies"? Machado's story and Butler's theory converge and diverge, offering the interconnected threads of gender, the gendered body, and the doing of gender as possible answers to this question.

Up until this point, the focus has been on the "Butlerian large"—that is, the ways in which large-scale occurrences such as a female-targeting epidemic can be understood through paranoid theories such as Butler's. However, Machado's story also hinges on the "Sedgwickian little": the ways in which reparative processes operate in the small-scale through the lives of and relationship between two queer women. Indeed, in Machado's story, her characters reparatively read their own lives, an act that becomes inextricably tied to their survival. This is evinced by the ways in which Petra, the narrator's disappearing girlfriend, embodies Klein's paranoid/ schizoid and depressive positions. Klein's theory, as explained by Sedgwick, proposes a "mental life […] populated […] with things" that have "physical properties, including people and hacked-off bits of people" ("Melanie Klein" 629). These things are what Klein terms "part-objects." Critically, when one is disappearing, existing liminally in a body that is not quite a body, one is literally, and to oneself, a part-object: there and not there. This dynamic unfolds in Petra's relationship with her disappearing body, to

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which she alternately adopts the paranoid/schizoid and depressive positions. One hallmark of the paranoid/schizoid position is an "inability […] to comprehend or tolerate ambivalence," an "insistence on all or nothing" (633). This is perhaps the element most exemplified by this story. The very linchpin of the epidemic is ambivalence: these disappearing women exist, and yet they do not exist; they are "dying," and yet they are "not exactly dying" (19), as Machado writes. Faced with this ambivalence, Petra responds with complete rejection. For instance, when she is at a bar, her body momentarily "blinks out" (19), causing the glass of beer she is holding to fall through her hands and shatter on the floor. Unable to tolerate this back-and-forth between existing and not existing, Petra grabs a dart and "plunges it deep into the back of her hand" (19) three times. She "[screams], "flails," "[howls]" (19) with pain, and yet she does it nonetheless, quite simply because there can be nothing ambivalent about such a physical pain.

Another aspect of the paranoid/schizoid position that Sedgwick highlights is a "greed for good things […] figured in terms of ingesting them" so that they may be "magically alive, doing battle with bad contents" (633). This is primarily echoed in the way the story frames Petra's desire to have sex with the narrator, who is not afflicted by this disappearing epidemic. It is not Petra's general desire for sex that demonstrates this position, but rather the way this desire is represented in scenes after her condition becomes known. When Petra finds out she is beginning to disappear, she lays down with the narrator, after which she "wakes up ravenous—for food, for [the narrator]" (17). Certainly, Petra craves sex in this moment. However, in her being "ravenous" for it, and in the alignment of that ravenousness with actual hunger, her sexual desire also becomes a desire to be whole by consuming that which is whole, in this case the narrator. The paranoid/schizoid "greed for good things" thus becomes a greed for substantiality, not one that will "battle with" Petra's "bad contents," but rather one that will battle with her lack of contents altogether: her slowly dematerializing body. It is no wonder, then, that the narrator observes that she and Petra "[had] never fucked with such urgency as [they did] in [those] weeks" (20). In this way, Petra adopts a paranoid/schizoid position to the literal part-object that is her body, consequently becoming "[alert] to the dangers" (636) it poses. Accordingly, the paranoid/schizoid position takes on a kind of urgency in the story; it becomes inseparably tied to Petra's own survival as a corporeal being in the world, to her ability to take up space firmly in the act of living.

To fixate only on the paranoid/schizoid position, however, is to miss the moments in the story when characters reparatively reconcile themselves to their situation—that is, when they adopt the depressive position. Sedgwick describes the depressive position as an "anxiety-mitigating achievement" that one "only sometimes and often only briefly" succeeds in inhabiting. Critically, she explains that it is the position from which people can "use [their] own resources to assemble or 'repair' […] part-objects into something like a whole" ("Paranoid" 128). Again, the story takes this statement and breathes life into it. To "repair" or "assemble" the part-object here is to assert one's existence in a body that one knows is actively going out of existence. Put another way, it is an attempt to patch up the part-object that is the body, even while knowing that it will always be "part" and never whole. This is exactly what Petra does, though "only sometimes" and "only briefly," as Sedgwick suggests. Specifically, Petra strives to move towards the "sustained seeking of pleasure" (137) that marks the depressive position. When she and the narrator go on a picnic, the narrator describes how Petra indulges in the sensory experience of eating a meal. She "peels the skins off pieces of chicken and chews on them with her eyes closed," "sets each wedge of orange in her mouth reverently, as if it [were] the Eucharist," and "rubs the peels against her skin" (21). This quotidian act of eating chicken and oranges thus becomes evocative and luxurious, even religious, and it is only by reconciling herself to her status as part-object, by "treating every meal as her last" (20), that Petra is able to accomplish this.

Another aspect of the depressive position that Sedgwick underscores is its relation to a subject's "care of the self," a "fragile" state involving a "concern to provide the self with pleasure and nourishment in an environment […] perceived as not particularly offering them" (137). This is inscribed in how Petra craves intimacy—not exclusively physical—with the narrator when she finds out she is fading. As the narrator says, "That first night, Petra just wants to be held, so that's what I do": "We line up our bodies and press them together, every inch" (17). In another scene after their picnic, the two "peel off [their] clothes and soak in the sun" (21). In these moments, there is a striving for "care of the self," an attempt at achieving, through their relationship, this "pleasure" and "nourishment" even though they will both inevitably be cut short. And thus, for these characters, to act reparatively becomes to thrive, to insist on survival even when it is flatly denied. Consequently, Petra is able to "repair" the part-object that is her body into "something like a whole, albeit a compromised one" (Sedgwick, "Melanie" 637). Even though her "skin is more like skim milk than whole"

she "breathes" as if "she [is] fighting it" (17). The relationship between Petra and the narrator, specifically the momentary comfort and closeness that Petra finds in this relationship, is a testament to "the reparative process" of "love" (128). The two are able to forge a relationship as quotidian as "binge-watch[ing] medical procedural[s] […] and eat[ing] lo mein and kiss[ing] and fuck[ing] and sleep[ing] tangled up together like coat-hangers" (16), despite the chaos within and without their relationship. With the understated power of a reparative reading at hand, one gains the ability to recognize the moments that often go unrecognized: the quiet, candid intimacy of bodies tangled up like "coat hangers." Even in the midst of its unsettling epidemic, the story refuses to succumb to cynicism. Petra and the narrator enjoy their picnic in the "watery afterbirth of [a] sunrise" (24) and "come out of the woods like [they are] being born" (23). Even when bodies are actively coming out of existence, there is still an undercurrent of coming into existence, a potential if not a certainty. If a paranoid theory like Butler's refuses to acknowledge this because it aims at grander endeavours— the unravelling of systems of gendered oppression—then a reparative theory like Sedgwick's latches onto it, making from it the very threads that hold its theory together.

If "Real Women Have Bodies" is a study of anything, it is a study of the weight placed on women's bodies, one so heavy that it makes those very bodies vanish into thin air. The breadth of Butler's theory is a testament to this, an exploration of the entity comprising gender, its doing, and its body. To focus only on this Butlerian large, however, is to overlook another shade of Machado's story: the Sedgwickian little. As Sedgwick aptly puts it, "Because there can be terrible surprises, […] there can also be good ones" ("Paranoid" 146). If the disturbing shock of the epidemic lends itself to a Butlerian reading, then the quiet growth of the intimacy of a relationship amid this epidemic invites a reparative reading. Machado does not literalize these two theories as much as she depicts how their impact can be literal, on the body. Indeed, if for Machado "the scrim between [the real and the unreal] is barely there" (qtd. in Kuhn), then the scrim between theory and life is much the same. There is something surreal about theory, but also something surreal about life. They are, together, the kind of "party" to which *Her Body and Other Parties* gestures: a familiar space, yet a defamiliarizing one; a taking for granted, and yet an upheaving.

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AURAL MEMORY: THE CYCLE OF TRAUMA AND HEALING IN *FUGITIVE PIECES* AND *THREE DAY ROAD*

Magdalene Stavrou

Sound and trauma intersect in Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces* and Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road*. In these works, sound traumatizes, causing Jakob Beer's repetition compulsion and Xavier Bird's dissociation. Their traumatic stories are composed of three stages: the catastrophe in which the initial trauma occurs; the wounding in which the effects of trauma manifest; and the healing that allows these characters to both embrace and disengage from the traumatic catastrophe. Although sound figures prominently in traumatic catastrophe and wounding, it can also affect the healing process. In *Fugitive Pieces*, auditory engagement with the traumatic experience is a crucial element of traumatic healing. However, it must be accompanied by imaginative re-creation and an attentive listener in order to complete the healing process. In *Three Day Road*, sound is less significant in the healing process than Indigenous cultural practices, specifically the sweat lodge. Because trauma is experienced in unique ways, no single healing process is sufficient and effective for all. The idiosyncratic manifestations of trauma necessitate individualized modes of healing, an idea that is explored by both Michaels and Boyden.

The traumatic cycle begins with the traumatic catastrophe, an event that forces individuals to remain stuck in their past and their pain. In both *Fugitive Pieces* and *Three Day Road*, the initial catastrophe occurs in auditory form. At the outset of *Fugitive Pieces*, Jakob tells the reader, "I did not witness the most important events of my life. My deepest story must be told by a blind man, a prisoner of sound" (Michaels 17). In this scenario, Jakob is the blind man listening to the murder of his Jewish parents and the abduction of his sister, Bella, by Nazi soldiers while he hides in the wall of his house. His experience of this event is auditory because he does not see the action unfold but rather hears it. This process of hearing turns him into a "prisoner of sound" because he is unable to block out the noise, unable to stop the sounds from travelling to his ears then or remembering those sounds now. Jakob is confined to his experience because sound is ubiquitous; it has surrounded and encompassed him in this moment in time. Thus, his entrapment in this aural memory is his traumatic catastrophe. Being subjected to the sounds of his parents' death and his sister's kidnapping, while unable to intervene, initiates Jakob's traumatic story.

While fighting as a soldier in World War I, Xavier—an Indigenous Canadian—is subjected to unending sounds of strain and bereavement: the sounds of foreign men speaking foreign languages; the sounds of guns, tanks, and planes; the sounds of men dying, crying, and calling out. Over

time, these sounds etch themselves into his memory. Xavier begins to feel as if he is "living in a hallowed cave" (Boyden 227). This "hallowed cave" again suggests the encompassing effects of auditory trauma by imparting the sense of personal insignificance and spatial immensity on the protagonist. Xavier's feelings demonstrate how the traumatic sounds he hears during the war whittle away his sense of self and leave emptiness in their wake. He claims, "I listen carefully now for the sounds of the big and little guns. I try to learn them" (18). He attunes himself to the sounds of war in an effort to familiarize himself with their nuances, hoping this knowledge of sound will aid in his survival. Both Jakob and Xavier are subjected to sounds of death and loss in war, sounds that haunt them, sounds that are the source of the traumatic catastrophes they endure.

Sound also plays a significant role in traumatic wounding, the second stage of the traumatic cycle. In *Fugitive Pieces*, Jakob suffers repetition compulsion, a tendency to re-engage with the source of his traumatic catastrophe. The compulsion, in his case, is reliving the auditory experience of losing his family. Jakob says, "Awake at night, I'd hear [Bella] breathing or singing next to me in the dark, half comforted, half terrified that my ear was pressed against the thin wall between the living and the dead; the vibrating membrane between them was so fragile" (Michaels 31). Jakob's association of sound with loss stems from his traumatic catastrophe—his last memories of his family are aural, not visual, and thus he remembers them primarily through sound. Jakob's tendency to hear Bella simultaneously haunts and consoles him as the connection between the living and the dead offered through sound is a vehicle through which Jakob is able to remember his family. But it also prevents him from letting his family go because he is forced to relive these auditory experiences due to his repetition compulsion. He has become stationary, moving neither forward nor backward, stuck in this moment. The "vibrating membrane" between the living and the dead restricts Jakob by preventing him from obtaining the release that accompanies the process of forgetting. Forced to recall his loss, he cannot confront his trauma: he can only relive it.

Unlike Jakob, Xavier hides from his acoustic memories. "My hearing continues to leave me," he says, "but for longer stretches now" (Boyden 306-7). While Jakob is immersed in a world of sound, Xavier lives in a world devoid of it. His loss of hearing is a form of disassociation as he cuts himself off from a sensory experience that he once used for survival. Xavier reaches a point in his traumatic experience in which the relief of

silence outweighs the benefit of hearing. However, he thinks his loss of hearing "is punishment for [his] crimes" (307). Here, he internalizes his trauma and the periods of deafness he experiences serve to remind him of his crimes during the war. When the scenes of deafness are interpreted as scenes of punishment, it is as if Xavier's body is reprimanding itself for remembering the traumatic catastrophe, worsening the traumatic wound. These scenes can also be read as moments of repression, as Xavier's body now refuses to acknowledge the traumatic sounds of war.

Xavier deliberately isolates himself from his military unit in order to advance his retreat into silence. He says, "I learn their English but pretend I don't. When an officer speaks to me I look at him and answer in Cree" (78). Xavier enacts his cultural agency as a form of defiance, a way to assert his individuality in a place where he is told when to sleep, eat, and move. His refusal to speak English is an attempt to maintain his subjectivity and Cree identity against the threat of assimilation and loss of self. Both his auditory dissociation and his attempts at cultural preservation stem from a traumatic catastrophe that challenges Xavier's Indigenous heritage and sense of self. Traumatic wounding in both *Fugitive Pieces* and *Three Day Road* incorporates aural memory, memory that has its roots in auditory experiences, but the wounds manifest in different ways. Jakob is compelled to recall the traumatic sounds, while Xavier retreats into silence. This retreat causes a disassociation as he slips in and out of auditory awareness, moving between silence and sound. He claims, "[I] feel like I am suffocating" (58) as he slowly becomes deaf. Xavier creates a barrier around himself, sealing himself off from the others and entering into a domain of silence. The traumatic wounds that Jakob and Xavier sustain are rooted in sound and foster two different responses—one refuses to exist outside the moment of trauma, the other refuses to exist within it.

Traumatic wounding causes an emotional disengagement, preventing individuals from fully experiencing their emotions or environment. When Jakob finds Athos's research on Bella's whereabouts, he admits, "When you've hardened yourself in certain places, crying is painful, almost as if nature is against it" (Michaels 117). Jakob has desensitized himself to his own suffering, rendering him unable to feel the full extent of his traumatic wound. His inability to cry can be understood as an unwillingness to contribute additional sounds of grief to his narrative. Or, because his trauma is auditory rather than physical, he may be unable to engage in a physical form of grief. Similarly, in *Three Day Road,* Xavier

exhibits a flat affect—a reduction in emotional expressiveness—engaging in neither physical nor auditory interactions. The longer he serves on the front lines, the more he withdraws from the world, noting: "[S]omething in me has hardened in the last few months. I talk even less than before, do not smile at all any more" (Boyden 283). Michaels and Boyden both depict emotional isolation as a "hardening," a process that deteriorates affective self-awareness. This suggests that trauma is ubiquitous, affecting both mind and body. Like Jakob, Xavier does not participate in physical demonstrations of affect. Jakob does not cry and Xavier does not smile. Both men are unable to display bodily reactions to the emotions they feel. *Fugitive Pieces* and *Three Day Road* incorporate similar depictions of traumatic wounding in which the protagonists reject auditory expression of their suffering and grief. Jakob and Xavier withdraw into their minds, causing their bodies to become empty, reactionless shells. The absence of sound in the traumatic wound is significant because it suggests Jakob and Xavier are attempting to escape the auditory element of their traumatic cycle.

Sound re-emerges as a crucial component of the trauma narrative in *Fugitive Pieces,* but this time in the form of the healing process. Michaels portrays traumatic healing that incorporates two elements: imaginative re-creation and the role of the listener. Imaginative re-creation, an active decision to alter the events one remembers, is the first step Jakob experiences in the traumatic healing process. Initially, Jakob cannot "remember hearing Bella at all" (Michaels 10) when she is taken from their home. This lack of aural memory leaves him "no choice but to imagine her face" (10). Hence, from the outset of the novel, Jakob engages in a form of imaginative re-creation by recalling his sister's face at a moment when auditory memory escapes him. Later, he wonders, "If sound waves carry on to infinity, where are their [the Jews who died in the Holocaust] screams now?" (54). The anxiety Jacob feels over screams of death travelling through time and space connects to his aural traumatic catastrophe and perpetuates the traumatic wound by furthering the terror of sound. In order to relieve this feeling of horror, Jakob must reinterpret the cause of their screams, and Bella's in particular as she is the source of his trauma. He declares, "I blaspheme by imagining" (167). The use of "blaspheme" in this context implies that the suffering of the Jews and their screams are sacred. He informs the reader, "We know they cried out. Each mouth, Bella's mouth, strained for its miracle" (Michaels 168), thus acknowledging the sounds of terror in the gas chambers. By reimagining the motivations behind their screams, Jakob is transgressing conventions of respect; by taking a moment

of horror and consciously interpreting it as a moment of peace, he negates the suffering they experience. However, his imaginative recreation occurs as he asserts, "[But] can anyone tell with absolute certainty the difference between the sounds of those who are in despair and the sounds of those who want desperately to believe?" (168). Jakob chooses to believe that Bella's scream was rooted in hope, in faith, and in belief. He rejects the notion that her scream was one of fear, allowing him to "give her death a place" (139), something he has set out to do since he hid in the wall on the day she was taken. Jakob asks both his reader and the dead to "forgive this blasphemy of choosing philosophy over the brutalism of fact" (168), an admission of his lie. He is aware that, according to fact, Bella's scream was most likely one of despair, but he chooses to think of it as hopeful, thereby engaging in imaginative re-creation to confront his trauma and begin the process of healing. This reattribution of Bella's scream, this redirection of sound, is essential to Jakob's healing process.

In addition to imaginative recreation, Jakob requires an active, attentive listener to heal the wounds caused by the traumatic event. In *Fugitive Pieces*, Michaela fulfills the role of the listener for Jakob. She allows him to recall and vocalize his trauma, the final step in the healing process. Jakob notes, "She has heard everything—her heart an ear, her skin an ear" (Michaels 182). Michaela is an involved and responsive listener: she listens not just with her ears, but with her body and her soul. She embraces Jakob's trauma, enabling him to claim the experience as his own. Jakob asserts, "Michaela is crying for Bella" (Michaels 182), suggesting that Michaela has accompanied him on his journey into his painful past. Michaela shares in Jakob's emotions, validating his feelings and allowing him to come to terms with them. This experience causes Jakob to feel as if "every cell in [his] body had been replaced, suffused with peace" (182). Jakob's traumatic healing begins with imaginative re-creation and communication with an open and active listener, thus demonstrating how traumatic healing is both personalized and tied to the nature of the initial catastrophe. He was alone and voiceless when Bella was kidnapped; now he is both heard and accompanied.

Three Day Road presents a form of traumatic healing that minimizes the significance of aural memory and emphasizes the function of Indigenous cultural practices. Xavier undergoes a healing process that involves a *matatosowin*, a sweat lodge, which results in a more inclusive sensory experience. Sweat lodges are ritual steam baths that act as a form of

purification in Indigenous culture; the heat cleanses individuals by burning away impurities. When Xavier and his aunt Niska are in the *matatosowin*, Niska notes, "The pain that nephew has carried inside of himself for so long is leaving his body and swirling around in this place [...] I want it to be burned up by the heat" (Boyden 380). *Three Day Road* offers an Indigenous cleansing practice as the solution to Xavier's traumatic wounds. His wounds are dissociation, physical withdrawal, and emotional hardening, and consequently his traumatic healing must account for the wounds that have been inflicted upon him. The *matatosowin* grounds Xavier in the moment, forcing him to be present. The physical strain his body is under does not allow him to distance himself, but instead he is hyper-aware in the sweat lodge, allowing him to acknowledge all he has endured and all he has done.

But as Xavier's pain leaves the *matatosowin*, the presence of Elijah, his deceased best friend, enters. Niska notes the spirit "isn't threatening" but "pure" (380). Elijah's presence is a necessary component of Xavier's healing because part of his trauma resides in the fact that he killed his companion. Xavier asks for Elijah's forgiveness, claiming he had no choice, though he also tells Elijah, "I cannot forgive everything you did [...]. It is not my place to do so" (380). The opportunity to gain forgiveness, while recognizing his inability to completely exonerate his friend's actions, allows Xavier to relieve the pain he carries within him. The traumatic healing of the *matatosowin* ends with a "good vision" (381), a vision of two brothers being watched over by Xavier. Once Xavier has healed, once he is able to shed the burden of his wounds, he lies beside Niska with their "skin as tender as newborns, steam rising from [them] like [they] are on fire inside" (382). The image of newborns suggests a fresh beginning for Xavier, who is now able to move beyond the trauma he suffered during the war. The fire inside of them reaffirms the *matatosowin's* ability to heal, cleanse, and purify. *Three Day Road* thus depicts a form of traumatic healing that revolves around Indigenous cultural practices, offering a method of recovery that is restorative, nourishing, and culturally significant. It is a therapeutic process that is personalized in the context and condition of the individual, much like Jakob's healing process.

Though *Three Day Road* de-emphasizes the role of the listener in traumatic healing compared to *Fugitive Pieces*, it does recognize the curative properties of sound. Niska tells Xavier stories while he is unconscious: "[M]aybe it is best he hears it in his sleep so that the medicine in the tale can slip into him unnoticed" (257). The novel is suggesting that sound in

the form of language can have restorative properties, like medicine. The power of words has the ability to impact and heal the unconscious listener. Ultimately, *Fugitive Pieces* and *Three Day Road* both depict narratives of trauma that are rooted in war and mediated by sound. Both Michaels and Boyden portray sound as fundamental in the traumatic event and the traumatic wounding, and *Fugitive Pieces* incorporates sound as one among many crucial elements of traumatic healing. Regardless of the healing method that each novel represents, both suggest the process should be personalized to the individual and directly correlate to the traumatic event they endured. *Fugitive Pieces* and *Three Day Road* illuminate that trauma, like sound, is ubiquitous; it is everywhere, filling in spaces and gaps, leaving nothing untouched. Jakob's friend Salman says, "[W]hether you live by a lie or live by a truth makes no difference, as long as you get past the wall" (210). Both Jakob and Xavier surmount their wall: they suffered, they endured, and they healed.

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EMPATHETIC IDENTIFICATION THROUGH NON-SEMANTIC SOUND IN CAVE'S "POEM FOR CHILDREN" AND BARBAULD'S "THE MOUSE'S PETITION"

Kristen Zimmer

I wrote this paper for Professor Hernandez's ENG373 course, Late-Eighteenth Century Poetry. I close read two burgeoning animal rights poems: "Poem for Children on Cruelty to the Irrational Creature," by Jane Cave, and "The Mouse's Petition," by Anna Laetitia Barbauld. In "Poem for Children," Cave's speaker is a little boy who imagines himself in the position of smaller creatures; in Barbauld's poem, the speaker is a trapped mouse pleading for its release. Both poems draw our attention to the non-semantic, but nevertheless communicative, aspects of sound, sounds which sensitize human beings to animals' subjectivity and to the potential for communication outside of a strictly semantic framework. This form of communication allows for the possibility of empathy, because it disrupts anthropocentrism and equalizes the human-animal hierarchy. Alongside Michel de Montaigne's arguments for the ethical treatment of animals, I consider the poems' non-semantic exclamations, regular metre, and metrical irregularity. I analyze metre and its implications through Frye's claims on metrical regularity indicating consciousness in "Towards Defining and Age of Sensibility." These aural aesthetics disrupt a linear reading of poetry by prompting readers to dwell on double meanings, or to re-read previous lines to identify metrical irregularity. This non-linear approach to reading, I argue, enacts the imaginative shift humans need in order to empathize with the animal perspective. By playing with aural aesthetics, both poets reorient conventional ways of reading for semantic meaning and facilitate the imaginative engagement necessary for empathy. Ultimately, these poems open an alternative conceptual space where reason and anthropocentrism do not dominate, but affective empathetic identification and human-animal equality are possible.

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In his meditations on cruelty and animals, Michel de Montaigne cites non-semantic sound as evidence for animals' "reason within" (190). For Montaigne, this form of affective expression that animals share with humans demands empathy and fair treatment. In their respective poems, "Poem for Children on Cruelty to the Irrational Creation" and "The Mouse's Petition," Jane Cave and Anna Laetitia Barbauld thematize human cruelty towards animals. While the poems' contents draw our attention to animal suffering, their aural aesthetics encourage readers to identify—and therefore empathize—with animals. In an attempt to level the human-animal hierarchy, both poems emphasize the shared capacity to create and respond to non-semantic sounds. By encouraging readers to identify and interpret aural aesthetics, particularly non-semantic exclamations, metrical regularity, and metrical variation, the poems interrupt and redirect conventional ways of reading primarily for semantic meaning. This non-semantic (and often non-linear) reading method models alternative approaches to human consciousness in relation to animals. In other words, the process of identifying and interpreting the poems' aural aesthetics teaches us how to shift our perspective in order to identify with a non-human way of being, an identification which fosters the empathy towards animals that Montaigne supports.

By beginning with non-semantic exclamations, both poems place affective expression before rational thinking. Montaigne argues that "our crying is common with the greatest part of other animals" (180). This common cry allows humans to identify and empathize with animals through non-semantic expression. Cave begins the poem with "Oh!" (1), an exclamation which becomes an "Ah!" (6) by the second stanza. These two interjections can signify a range of affective states, including surprise, shock, and sympathy. The speaker withholds the emotional specificity behind these expressions before the "anguish cry" (6) explains their meaning. By placing a non-semantic expression before its meaning, Cave privileges expression over explanation, thereby prioritizing what humans and animals share. Cave further destabilizes the human domain of rational explanation in the possible grammatical ambivalence of the phrase "with anguish cry." We can interpret "anguish" as either an archaic adjectival form modifying the noun "cry" ["should I not with anguish*ed* cry"] ("Anguish, adj." def. 2), or as a noun and "cry" as a verb. These shifting parts of speech suggest that, while our ability to reason and ascribe meaning helps us to distinguish human from animal consciousness, these intellectual faculties remain unstable.

This shifting grammatical interpretation accompanies the progressive change in Cave's non-semantic exclamation, and nuances of that interpretation enact the speaker's changing subject position. Given the anaphora and repeated subjunctive mood in stanzas two and three, we expect the repetition of a primary interjection (an "Oh!" or "Ah!") before "Should I not think myself opprest" (10). Cave, however, disrupts this expectation:

> Were I a chaser, and could fly,
>
> Ah! should I not with anguish cry,
>
> …
>
> Were I a bird, took from my nest,
>
> Should I not think myself opprest. (5-6, 9-10)

Absence replaces the expected exclamation before "should I not," as though the "anguish cry" were itself "opprest." From "Oh!" to "Ah!" to absence, this transition enacts the speaker's shifts from a woman writer to a little boy ("a little king") (2), who then imagines himself as different animals in pain—specifically, "a chaser" (5) and "a bird" (9). Cave refracts consciousness and subject position through different beings as part of her moral instruction against cruelty towards animals. The poem's non-semantic interjections recreate not only the unifying cry between humans and animals that Montaigne identifies, but also the speaker's changing subject positions, thereby emphasizing the shift in identification necessary for empathy. By embodying the little boy, the speaker reveals how even the most innocent humans have the potential for both cruelty and empathy.

In "The Mouse's Petition," Barbauld's use of "O's" level the human intellectual hierarchy over animals by highlighting commands and assonance. The poem opens with the "Oh" and an imperative verb that inscribes the exclamation: "Oh! hear a pensive prisoner's prayer" (1). Crucially, we must "hear," rather than "listen to," the poem. The speaker not only demands sensory over cerebral attention, but also inverts the human–animal intellectual hierarchy: as a "pensive" praying being, the mouse occupies the intellectual position, while the human readers "hear" and engage with the poem on a basic sensory level. When read aloud, the opening line resists semantic meaning in the homophone "O here," and we hear the "O" in its vocative case, a direct address imploring us to listen. Here, semantics and faculties of "the well taught philosophic mind" (25)

yield to feeling "for all that lives" (28). If we read the poem silently, we must shift our linear approach to reading in order to identify and interpret homophones, words which necessarily require a double-take. This shift in our initial perspective enacts the reorientation necessary to identify and empathize with the animal perspective. Barbauld's second "O" underscores another subtle, yet significant, shift in the assonant lines: "O do not stain with guiltless blood / Thy hospitable hearth!" (13-14) The O-vowels change from long ("O do"), to short ("not"), to reduced ("blood"). When read in tandem with Montaigne's theories, the poem's phonetic variation aligns humans with animals. Montaigne asserts that this linguistic variation, "the difference of language which is seen amongst us [,] is also observed in animals of the same kind" (183), and quotes Aristotle's account of the same birds who "utter quite different notes" (183). For Montaigne, this difference in language and phonetic variation supports the "resemblance betwixt us and animals" (152).

Sensitivity to rhythm and syllables also forms part of animals' sophisticated systems of communication and consciousness—an attunement which Montaigne observes and which both poems emphasize through metrical regularity. Montaigne uses the example of birds, whose speech recognition "formed and confined within a certain number of letters and syllables, does evince that they have a reason within" (190). In "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," Northrop Frye extends the claim that controlled syllables convey reason, claiming that "a regular metre" is one of "the qualities of consciousness" (Frye 147). Montaigne's reading alongside Frye's assessment dignifies animals with a kind of poetic proof of consciousness. These theoretical readings of reason and consciousness in metre lend themselves to Cave's and Barbauld's metrically consistent poems. "Poem for Children" follows an AABB rhyme scheme in iambic tetrameter with eight syllables per line, a strict syllabic count to complement the strict moral instruction against cruelty that the writer wants to impart to children like the speaker. Similarly, the ballad form in "The Mouse's Petition" confines the poem to a consistent metre, like the trap holding the mouse "captive" (1).

In these otherwise metrically regular poems, syllabic deviations catch the ear. Metrical irregularity in Cave's "Poem for Children" functions as a non-semantic expression of human violence. In the following stanza, metrical inconsistencies and a partial rhyme of "evil" and "Devil" echo cruelty:

> Now, and when I'm a bigger boy,
>
> Let cruelty my heart annoy,
>
> Because it is a dreadful evil,
>
> That only fits me for the Devil. (13-16)

We stretch "cru-el-ty" into three syllables to fill the eight-syllable line, before the next two lines deliberately exceed this structure with nine syllables. The partial rhyme stands out against the perfect rhymes the reader comes to expect. These inconsistencies "annoy" the ear and recreate "cruelty" and "dreadful evil" on a metrical level. If we accept Frye's statement that a regular metre is a quality of consciousness, these metrically irregular lines constitute the opposite of consciousness. According to this reading, the metrically inconsistent stanza frames the "bigger boy," whose "cruelty" would see him "torment" (21) animals, as the ones without consciousness.

If metrical irregularity gestures towards a lack of consciousness in "Poem for Children," the opposite holds true for "The Mouse's Petition," where metrical deviation reveals the speaker's conscious poetic control. In the line "If e'er thy breast with freedom glow'd" (9), Barbauld maintains the eight-syllable line by eliding the word "ever" into the monosyllabic "e'er." Through the elision, the mouse (as speaker) controls the line and therefore demonstrates consciousness—or, in Montaigne's words, "reason within" (190). However, when the poem's syllabic count does deviate, Barbauld sustains the mouse's control and consciousness by pairing metrical irregularity with the diction of irregularity: "Still shifts thro' matter's varying forms" (31). We can read "varying" with either two or three syllables, the latter count giving the line nine syllables. In other words, our interpretation of the metrical count varies precisely on the word "varying." This highly controlled metrical imbalance not only characterizes the mouse as a conscious thinker but also draws attention to a key line: "In every form the same" (32). Shifting from human to animal perspectives allows us to see the equality—the sameness Barbauld's line invokes—across multiple forms of existence. This identification is the ultimate form of empathy.

In his meditations on stoicism and human suffering, Montaigne aligns man with mouse through a simile: "the soul of a man, crushed under a ruin, long labours and strives to get out, like a mouse caught in a trap" (315). In "Poem for Children" and "The Mouse's Petition," Cave and Barbauld reduce the magnitude of human cruelty to comparatively

microscopic moments in the animal world: a chaser pierced with a pin, a mouse caught in a trap. Somewhat paradoxically, the poets give weight to these small creatures through subtle non-semantic shifts—an "Ah!" instead of an "Oh!", a changing vowel in an assonant line, an extra syllable that barely stretches the regular metre. But these small poetic moments nevertheless demand our attention, as do the smallest creatures. The poems' non-semantic sounds and subtle shifts open an alternative conceptual space where empathetic identification with animals presides over reason and anthropocentrism. Our interpretation of the poems' aural aesthetics redirects our linear reading—for instance, we cannot identify metrical irregularity without re-reading the previous stanzas. Similarly, recognizing and empathizing with animals requires a shift from our human perspective, just as Cave's speaker imagines himself as a bird, and Barbauld writes from the mouse's point of view. Through our imagination, we can change our perspective; these poems extend our imagination beyond the human through non-semantic sound and sympathy.

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FATMA SHAHIN is a fourth-year Victoria College student majoring in English and Psychology. Her interests have always lain in questioning what is taken at face value, uncovering what is taken for granted. But where her love for English really started—and never really stopped—is in Jane Austen novels. She is both fascinated by the scholarly history of Jane Austen—her pioneering of free indirect discourse, the seemingly never-ending afterlife of her work—but also by the stories of Austen themselves—her whip-smart writing and vibrant characters. As an author about whom relatively little is known, Austen has fuelled Fatma's interest in the figure of the author and how their presence inevitably informs readings of their work. Altogether, Fatma hopes to continue to find works of literature that inspire both her personal love of stories but also her academic love of deconstructing them.

MAGDALENE STAVROU is a fourth-year student at Trinity College, pursuing an English major with a double minor in Psychology and Education & Society. Her area of interest lies in Anglophone fiction and how novels both comment on and critique modern society while manipulating and re-defining what is means to be contemporary. The study of language and literature has always been her passion, though she looks forward to beginning her Master's of Teaching at OISE in the fall. She hopes to one day revitalize and reimagine the Ontario high school English curriculum by accounting for student diversity and placing a greater emphasis on post-colonial literature.

KRISTEN ZIMMER is an English literature student at the University of Toronto. She has writing published in *Feels Zine*, *The Vault*, and *The Varsity*. She performed her poetry at the Tranzac Club and at The Sophisticated Boom Boom. She was a speaker at the Sick Theories Conference and Unruly Bodies. Her writing received awards in the Norma Epstein and Frederic Davidson competitions, as well as the Avie Bennett Prize in Canadian Literature. She studied Margaret Cavendish as a Jackman Scholar-in-Residence in 2018, and continues her Cavendish work as a digital humanities research assistant.

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