

magnificat

A Journal of Undergraduate Nonfiction

2016 EDITORIAL BOARD

Amanda Bourne

Joanna Chenaille

Madison Herbert

Peter Lengyel

Leora Libach

Adrienne West

Dr. Sarah H. Ficke

Dr. Katie Lyn Peebles

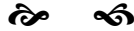
FOR MORE INFORMATION

magnificat@marymount.edu
<http://commons.marymount.edu/magnificat/>

©2016 Marymount University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APRIL 2016



Social Constructions of Identity

“Sensibility in *Frankenstein*: A Case for Humanity”4
Nicholas Bensmiller

“Considering the Autobiographical 'I': Between Self-
Narration and Fiction”12
Ashley Tucker

“*Do the Right Thing* Analysis”25
Walker Valdez

“Superheroes”33
Samantha Cooper

Gender in Society

“The Fashion Industry and Gender Inequality”38
Oluremi Akin-Olugbade

“The Gendered Social Norms in *Clarissa*”44
Kadie Aaron

“Fashionable Dressing and Fashionable Giving”52
Benedikte Hatlehol

The Power of Language

“Always”59
Natasha Anderson

“The Power of Voodoo”63
Angelica Brewer

“Ethical Translation and Intertextuality in *Foe* and *Robinson
Crusoe*”76
Leticia Zelaya

Biographies

Contributing Authors	88
Board of Student Editors	91

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITY





SENSIBILITY IN *FRANKENSTEIN*: A CASE FOR HUMANITY
by Nicholas Bensmiller

The first edition of *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, was written in 1818 as *Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus* in a Gothic style with many philosophical, psychological, and ethical themes within the text. Shelley, like other Gothic writers of her time, created her characters as individuals of Sensibility. Sensibility can be most thoroughly understood through its defining features: an intellectual or philosophical ideology, extreme emotional feelings and reactions, and extreme physical reactions to emotional occurrences. Arguably, the three aforementioned aspects of Sensibility can relate to characteristics of humanity. When an individual exhibits emotional or physical reactivity or when they become critical in their philosophical or intellectual beliefs it is often said that they are demonstrating uniquely human features. Some philosophers like René Descartes would even argue that if one lacked emotional complexity and compound intellectual thoughts, they are not as human as other individuals because it is these defining features that separate humans from animals (Descartes 1641). Although in *Frankenstein*, both Victor and The Creature show strong evidence of intellectualism and philosophical ideologies, extreme emotions, and extreme physical reactions, The Creature demonstrates higher levels

of Sensibility than Victor. The higher levels of Sensibility suggest that The Creature possesses more humanity than Victor, even though he is referred to as a non-human being.

Victor Frankenstein displays Sensibility in that he is often intellectual and philosophical in nature. Even as an adolescent at his home in Geneva, Victor declares “natural philosophy is the genius that had regulated my fate” (Shelley 26). However he lacks the depth of philosophical thoughts throughout the course of the story. Regardless of his interest in the subject, Victor narrates his thought processes as more scientific than philosophical. For example, he forsakes creative discourse for chemistry and becomes obsessed with creating life while attending University: “I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation.” (35). He shows a concentrated pursuit of science throughout the novel as well; his thought processes reflecting the logical, fact-based individual he had become after college. He says statements like “the mere presence of the idea was an irresistible proof of the fact,” “I weighed the various arguments,” “I paused some time to reflect on all he had related, and the various arguments which he had employed” (64, 88, 134). Victor displays the necessary intellectual ideations to be considered a character of Sensibility.

Despite possessing no formal education, The Creature is also an intensely intelligent and insightful individual who often questions the world around him. Even before he was able to speak, The Creature was an exceedingly curious individual who was not only open to, but craved new knowledge. For example, when he first begins to observe the cottage-dwellers, he hears them speak and marvels “This was indeed a Godlike science, and I ardently desired to become acquainted with it” (100). Much like Victor, The Creature seems to examine the world in a scientific and curious way: “I examined the structure...,” “I discovered,” “I conjectured...and I ardently longed to comprehend these also” (93, 99, 101). He exhibits intelligence in many ways, especially when he first gains knowledge of the world, saying “...I obtained a cursory

knowledge of history and a view of the several empires at present existing in the world; it gave me an insight into the manners, governments, and religions of the different nations of the earth” (107). In addition to acquiring general historical knowledge, he demonstrates the ability to contextualize information in a meaningful way. For example, he takes what he learns about language phonetically and applied emotions, thought processes, and what he observes about human behavior to assess his beloved cottage-dwellers’ personalities.

Unlike Victor, The Creature possesses characteristics of Sensibility related to philosophical thought. Not only did The Creature desire to learn more about individual people in an intellectual sense, he also had a strong philosophical perspective on society: “I learned, from the views of social life which it developed, to admire their [the cottagers] virtues and to deprecate the vices of man” (115). Many characters of Sensibility find solace in nature and retreat to the natural world to center themselves. For example, Adeline from *The Romance of the Forest* often withdraws to the forest to think (Radcliff 1791). The Creature also displays Sensibility when he finds sanctuary in nature: “The pleasant sunshine, and the pure air of day, restored me to some degree of tranquility” (Shelley 124). His conversation with Victor provides more insight into his philosophical ideologies when he discusses why he can never be friends with a human: “the human senses are insurmountable barriers to our union” (132). In this moment, he realizes that he may never become civil acquaintances with a human being, and reflects upon his existence as seemingly “non-human.” This thought is significant philosophically due to his tendencies to question existence and the reason why prejudices against him exist.

Both The Creature and Victor are portrayed as intelligent and insightful thinkers, but The Creature possesses tendencies of questioning the structures of society and human thought that Victor lacks. An expert and professor of Romantic and Gothic Literature, Essaka Joshua, argues that within *Frankenstein* there is a prevalent theme of “moral monstrosity” (Joshua 49). The moral

monstrosity is how people in the story perceive The Creature and pass judgments about his character based upon his appearance (Joshua 50). The Creature touches on this within his own narrative in the novel; he mentions how he believes humans are socialized to become easily deceived by how an object looks, and even mentions that he knows this is why he can never be friends with a human who can see his form (Shelley 132). Arguably, in these moments of social reflection, The Creature displays more humanity than Victor because while Victor readily accepts the nuances and prejudices set out by society, The Creature questions them and continually seeks answers to his questions in hopes of changing stigmas and biases that many characters in the story have against him. The ability to question structural injustices within the society he lives in can be seen throughout his philosophical and intellectual discourse; these investigative dialogues (such as questioning human behavior and personal existence) are only seen in a measurable way in The Creature.

The second defining feature of Sensibility that can be observed in the novel is extreme emotional feelings. Victor demonstrates pronounced emotional reactivity throughout the novel. He is frequently portrayed as anxious and miserable in the face of adversity or misfortune. For example, Victor feels anxious when he is about to bring life to his creation: "With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony," and feels immense sorrow when his life-long friend and loved-one dies: "Torn by remorse, horror and despair" (44, 76). Victor's positive emotions in the narrative are also extreme: "...I bounded along with feelings of unbridled joy and hilarity" (58). The archetype of Sensibility emphasizes heightened emotions of all forms, and in this respect, Victor is portrayed throughout the novel as an individual possessing Sensible character traits.

Although The Creature is referred to as an emotionless non-human atrocity by Victor, he also expresses a wide range of complex and extreme emotions that indicate Sensibility. From happiness to grief, The Creature continually articulates and feels emotions that advocate his humanity. Like Victor, The Creature finds

himself somewhat unable to command or tolerate his extreme emotional states even as he is first beginning to feel his emotions, saying that he “felt sensations of a peculiar and overpowering nature: they were a mixture of pain and pleasure, such as I have never before experienced” (96). The presence of the compound emotions outlined alludes to his sensitive and moral nature even as he is just beginning to notice them. Relating to his philosophical nature, The Creature often questions his existence, and while doing so, he experiences extreme emotions of inadequacy, concern, and sadness: “I cannot describe to you the agony that these reflections inflicted upon me” “[I was]... overcome by pain and anguish” (108, 122). Most of The Creature’s extreme emotional reactivity is rooted in the discrimination against him.

The Creature and Victor both demonstrate extreme and complex emotions in the text, however, the source of emotions for each suggests that The Creature reveals a greater sense of humility and humanity than Victor. The sources of Victor’s emotions tend to originate from events that happen to him (usually due to acts that he either has or has not accomplished). For example, Victor feels extreme anxiety when he creates The Creature and extreme pride after he reanimates a corpse. Conversely, The Creature also experiences extreme emotion, but his feelings are usually the result of wrongdoings that the structure of society places upon him. For example, he feels excessive shame for his appearance, and he expresses extreme sorrow when those whom he loves the most (the cottage dwellers) reject him due to his appearance. Throughout the story, The Creature is outcast socially, and his extreme emotions are displayed at many points when he realizes he will never be able to associate with the humans he previously found so fascinating and loving. Many of The Creature’s feelings are evoked when discussing his difference from humans, and his humanity is displayed through his desire to be accepted. This is the opposite of Victor, whose emotions are self-interested and reflect a desire for personal wellbeing and success.

Physical reactions to extreme emotions are the third aspect of Sensibility. Victor exhibits these symptoms within the novel on multiple occasions. Victor is sometimes so overwhelmed by his emotions that he enters catatonic states: “I neither spoke, nor looked at any one, but sat motionless, bewildered by the multitude of miseries that overcame me” (Shelley 175). Victor expresses extraordinary emotional reactions to events in his life as well—his emotions can overcome him to the point that he remains immobile, only allowing himself to feel. Another example of how Victor’s emotions cause physiological reactions occurred through anxiety after his creation had been let loose in his apartment: “I trembled excessively... and a cold shivering came over me” (47-48). Individuals who are portrayed as Sensible sometime faint, shiver, or enter trance-like states when overcome by emotions—Victor is no exception, he continually develops physical reactions to his extreme emotional states.

The Creature also displays physical reactions to extreme emotions—the final defining feature of Sensibility. In addition to experiencing elevated heart rate when nervous, “my heart beat quick,” he also often shudders when he feels sorrow, “I trembled violently,” or fear “a thrill of terror ran through me” (120, 124, 130). Although The Creature does not necessarily surpass Victor in how he exhibits the third aspect of Sensibility, he certainly remains equal.

Differences in the severity of the three different features of Sensibility can be seen throughout *Frankenstein* when comparing Victor and The Creature, and through analysis, it can be observed that The Creature is portrayed as more Sensible than Victor. As previously stated, Sensibility can be viewed as a characteristic of human behavior, and those who display Sensibility as a character type show more humanity and humility than those who do not. Arguably, it can also be asserted that individuals displaying higher levels of Sensibility (i.e. The Creature) show more humanity than those of lower levels of Sensibility (i.e. Victor). Even though The Creature continually separates himself from humanity by talking

about humans as if he is not one, “watching my human neighbors,” “the vices of mankind,” “you must create a female for me, with whom I can live in the interchange of those sympathies necessary for my being,” he is portrayed as more Sensible than Victor, and consequently he is more human (98, 115, 131). While Victor readily accepts previously established social laws, The Creature questions them, and though both feel extreme forms of emotion, The Creature only has these tendencies when he is discriminated against. Possessing higher levels of philosophical and intellectual thought, an equal possibility of demonstrating physical reactions to emotions, and an intensified sense of extreme emotions, The Creature is more human than Victor Frankenstein.

Works Cited

- Descartes, René. *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*. 1641. Trans. Donald Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998. Print.
- Joshua, Essaka. "'Blind Vacancy': Sighted Culture and Voyeuristic Historiography in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*." *European Romantic Review* 22.1 (Feb. 2011): 49-69. Web. 16 Mar. 2015.
- Radcliffe, Ann. *The Romance of the Forest*. 1791. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. Print.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2012. Print.



CONSIDERING THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL 'I': BETWEEN
SELF-NARRATION AND FICTION

by Ashley Tucker

The telling and retelling of one's own story is a powerful experience, giving the voiceless a voice, granting authorial freedom, and offering a window into potentially untold stories. J.M. Coetzee's and Charlotte Brontë's first person narratives in *Foe* and *Jane Eyre* foreground female protagonists telling of their personal histories. Jane Eyre and Susan Barton represent the complexity of autobiography in demonstrating how sources outside of the women themselves have a dominant influence on the way that their stories are experienced, as well as the way that they are later retold. Jane's story is driven by the oppression to which she responds. Susan's tale is shaped by her attempt to convince Foe that she is "a bold adventuress" (Coetzee 45). Both fictional characters are left with the task of constructing their stories in such a way that evokes a desired response from their audience. In doing so, however, one of the challenges becomes presenting these stories with authenticity. This conflict arises not only in the isolated instances of these novels, but can be applied to a much greater context: the telling and retelling of all autobiography. Through a fictional

platform, *Jane Eyre* and *Susan Barton* show that by allowing one the liberty to tell *their* truth, autobiography affords a narrator the opportunity to claim ownership of their story, develop self-awareness and identity, and provide a sense of concreteness to a series of experiences that at one time may have seemed unreal.

In its simplest form, an autobiography is when a person is narrating their own life story. In "The Veto of the Imagination," Louis Renza expands on this definition and suggests that autobiography is "an indeterminate mixture of truth and fiction about the person writing it" (Renza 1). What both of these definitions fail to encompass, however, is the inevitable evolution that the author experiences by writing. In "Some Principles of Autobiography," William Howarth goes even further to suggest that in producing an autobiography in the truest sense, one will undergo, "a spiritual experiment, a voyage of discovery" (Howarth 85). It is irresponsible to neglect this kind of unfolding when defining autobiography because it becomes equal to, or perhaps more significant than the story itself. Renza considers it to be a "'literary' event whose primary being resides in and through the writing itself: in the 'life' of the signifier as opposed to the life being signified" (Renza 1). What this suggests is that written autobiographical text reflects an outward expression which is only one component of the autobiographical experience. In the piece "Girl Talk: *Jane Eyre* and the Romance of Women's Narration," Carla Kaplan sees an autobiography, in Jane's case, as "the story of the growth of a writer, someone who can extend the gesture - or invitation... of her own, assured voice to an unknown and unpredictable other (the reader)" (Kaplan 334). If one is to approve of Howarth's notion that an autobiography functions as a self-portrait does, in the way that the artist and author "work from memory as well as sight, in two levels of time, on two planes of space, while reaching for those other dimensions, depth and the future" then one can also accept that both Jane and Susan are telling their stories in a way that can be

classified as autobiography (Howarth 85).

Jane Eyre and *Foe* are similar because their authors present two women protagonists who manifest both a drive and a will to tell their unthinkable stories. They set up Jane and Susan as authors themselves. As stated in "Fictions of Autobiography," "it is essential to reach some understanding of the state of mind that motivates autobiographical discourse in the first place" (Eakin 3). Brontë and Coetzee make a statement about autobiography as these characters raise questions about the parallel between function and form. The authors manipulate the way these stories are told which leaves the reader wondering what might happen when one tells their story one way rather than another. Through Jane's assertive voice, the reader is given a clear interpretation of personal events. Different from Brontë, Coetzee uses Susan's character to complicate stories themselves. Given the Postmodern context, Susan is depicted as an undermined female narrator and presents issues of power.

McLeod defines this issue of power as a fight for "who gets to establish and maintain the narrative framework and with who is going to seduce (and/or compel) whom into living inside his or her story world" (McLeod 3). This is significant because "to 'narrate the world' is to gain power and authority" (McLeod 3). Both protagonists endure this very power struggle. Jane finds other characters such as Mr. Rochester presenting interpretations of her own story. Kaplan references Mary Poovey who exposes Rochester's tendency to "usurp Jane's control over what is, after all, primarily her story" (Kaplan 14). St. John also attempts to kidnap Jane's story when he says "I find the matter will be better managed by my assuming the narrator's part, and converting you into a listener" (Brontë 438). Jane not only struggles to find a reasonable listener, but Kaplan suggests that she herself must "settle" to become the listener (Kaplan 15). She therefore battles to hold onto the "narrative framework" to which McLeod refers (McLeod 3).

Susan also wrangles with a conflict regarding

ownership of narration. There is a clash between Susan and Foe, as Susan thinks of her story in one way, while Foe chooses to project it in another. Susan makes it very clear that she aims to tell a story as close to the truth as possible. She argues that “if I cannot come forward, as author, and swear to the truth of my tale, what will be the work of it?” (Coetzee 40). Foe, however, has a different agenda. He sets out to attract a mass audience and “cause a great stir,” even if it jeopardizes Susan’s “truth” (Coetzee 40). Though Susan firmly states that “[she] will not have any lies told,” ultimately she is dependent upon Foe. To begin, Susan relies on Foe because she doesn’t see herself as a born storyteller (Coetzee 81). Additionally, given the limitations of the patriarchal society in which Susan lives, the reality is that for her story to be heard, it must be projected through a man’s voice. In some ways, without Foe, Susan sees herself as “a being without substance” in the eyes of her reader (Coetzee 51). In the article “Reading History, Writing Heresy,” Brian Macaskill and Jeanne Colleran, however, track a progress in Susan’s dependency when they suggest “Susan moves from a position of sexual and hermeneutic dependency[...] to one of sexual and authorial independence” (Macaskill and Colleran 440-441).

In addition to this power struggle between the author and the other characters, there is also a tension between the author and the crafted “I.” Brontë and Coetzee demonstrate how autobiographical writing calls for the author to develop a sense of self-awareness and identity. As one works to tell their story, they must first establish a clear understanding of themselves. They are forced to see themselves as the primary character, and consider the way that they act and react within the greater context of the story. Eakin articulates this evolution in saying:

I view the rhythms of the
autobiographical act recapitulating the
fundamental rhythms of identity

formation: in this sense the writing of autobiography emerges as a second acquisition of language, a second coming into being of self, a self-conscious self-consciousness. (Eakin 9)

So when considering the “I” of autobiography, the reader must make the distinction between the author and the character. Howarth identifies this relationship as the “artist and model” (Howarth 87). It is only possible for the narrator to present a replica of themselves for two primary reasons: the author is blinded by their perception of themselves and the story is told in retrospect, therefore after the events have come to some sort of conclusion. Howarth points out that the character the reader sees is “far different from the original model, resembling life but actually composed and framed as an artful invention” (Howarth 86). He goes on to identify an important dynamic about this author to character relationship. He explains that though the narrator may have more knowledge than the protagonist, “he remains faithful to the latter’s ignorance for the sake of credible suspense” (Howarth 87). Howarth also notes that these two individual characters “have to merge, as past approaches present, the protagonist’s deeds should begin to match his narrator’s thoughts,” which is particularly relevant to the development of identity (Howarth 87).

Although Jane demonstrates an evolution from a victimized child to a self-governing adult, the reader observes the poor perception that Jane has of herself. This is revealed in the way that Jane portrays her character. She is dependent upon the respect of others to fill the void of a lack of self-respect. She makes it clear that she desires “to earn respect and win affection” (Brontë 81). Although Jane is eventually able to claim “I care for myself,” it is evident that at the core she has a “wounded...self-esteem” (Brontë 365, 28). In addition to Jane’s direct assertions of her low self-esteem, it is revealed implicitly as well. There is a significant scene in which Jane does a series of paintings. As she compares the drawing of herself to the drawing of Rosamond

Oliver she demonstrates a moment of class-consciousness. This instance, a mode of autobiography in itself, illustrates not only Jane's self-awareness, but also her resistance to her social status. The reader watches as Jane grapples with why she is excluded from certain forms of life.

Susan's self-perception becomes evident as well. As she tells her story to Foe it becomes clear she is on a desperate campaign for validation. She not only questions herself, but more importantly questions her story itself. Towards the end of the novel, she says "I am full of doubt. Nothing is left to me but doubt. I am doubt itself. Who is speaking me? Am I a phantom too? To what order do I belong?" (Coetzee 133). Susan, once strictly dedicated to presenting facts, now loses any sense of solidity. As she tells her story, and begins to develop self-awareness, it also becomes clear that she feels she lacks significance within it. Susan says, "when I reflect on my story I seem to exist only as the one who came, the one who witnessed, the one who longed to be gone: a being without substance, a ghost beside a true body of Cruso" (Coetzee 51). Susan fears that her place in her own story, and more broadly, her position on the island, has been minimized.

The women's motivation for sharing their stories becomes significant when considering these identities. Eakin believes that "the impulse to write autobiography is but a special, heightened form of that reflective consciousness which is the distinctive feature of our human nature" (Eakin 9). Jane chooses to tell her story because she sees it as a way to take back the power which she had lost over time. In doing so, she owns it. She can orchestrate, for example, surrounding characters, most importantly her oppressors such as John Reed, Mrs. Reed, and Mr. Brockelhurst. They are "living inside [of Jane's] story world" as McLeod describes it (McLeod 3). Jane proudly proclaims that she "will tell anybody who asks [...] this exact tale" (Brontë 44). Kaplan identifies this statement, directed to Mrs. Reed, as the first time that the reader witnesses Jane's self-narration

(Kaplan 5). This moment is dynamic because of the light it sheds on Jane's determination to release her story and her truth. The idea of authorship, even in this preliminary instance, caused Jane to feel as though her "soul began to expand, [and] to exult with the strangest sense of freedom [and] triumph" (Brontë 44). Susan has similar motives for sharing her story, as it also allows her the feeling of liberation. She makes the claim that "I am a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire" (Coetzee 131). Coupled with Jane's desire to emancipate herself and illustrate her own evolution, Jane also hopes to gain an audience that will justify her experiences. Jane, as Kaplan sees it, searches for a source to "credit her version of her life" (Kaplan 9).

Jane and Susan approach the telling of their stories in different ways. Though Jane insists that readers understand that it is "not a regular autobiography," the novel traces a somewhat chronological account of her life events (Brontë 98). Her story offers a clear beginning, middle, and substantial conclusion. Her tight-knit relationship with her primary listener (the reader) is also significant. She addresses the reader directly, calling them by name. Howarth insists that these strategic stylistic decisions are significant because they "lead to larger effects like metaphor and tone" (Howarth 87). This portrays Jane's authoritative voice. Additionally, this personal connection compels the reader to listen attentively with a greater degree of accountability. Susan, on the other hand, tells a story about stories. As she recounts the tale of the island, her narration is directed solely to Foe. Unlike Jane who engages her outside reader, Susan blocks them out. Perhaps Coetzee structured the narrative in this way to further reflect Susan's insecurity. Susan searches for meaning and until she finds clarity (which she is never able to achieve) she can not include an outside reader in the way that Jane does.

The way that Brontë and Coetzee present a gendered story-telling style is also particularly

noteworthy. Jane exercises her own right to tell her story. Much like her character, the way in which Jane tells her story breaks outside of the typical feminine narrative. In his article that observes the difference between male and female narration, James Krasner decides “men’s life stories describe either success or failure” (Krasner 114). Though Jane enumerates her tribulations, ultimately, her reflections represent her achievements. Her story is told in a way that appears complete. This style of storytelling matches the “linear” structure that Luce Irigaray associates with masculine writing in her work “The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine” (Irigaray 797). She is direct, patterned, and comprehensible. Susan, however, represents a rejection of this linearity and serves as more of an exploration of sorts. Krasner contrasts the male oriented narrative when he describes women’s narratives as “manifestly fictional; their stories describe the construction of fictions” (Krasner 114). Susan does not achieve Jane’s same completeness considering, even in the final pages of the novel, Susan proclaims to be “doubt itself” (Coetzee 133). Her construction fits into the “fluid” state that Irigaray associates with feminine writing, and models the way that “its ‘style’ resists and explodes every firmly established form, figure, idea or concept” (Irigaray 797). This fluid narrative technique is represented literally at the end of the book. Susan presents images of water and describes the “slow stream” that “flows” from Friday’s mouth (Coetzee 157). “Petals floating around me like a rain of snowflakes” is another image of fluidity that contrasts Jane’s images of concreteness (Coetzee 156).

Through their storytelling they begin to create something clear and permanent. Susan describes this concreteness as “a substantial body” (Coetzee 53). In many ways, the women encountered unspeakable circumstances. Once they account their experiences for the characters themselves, the stories become real. The effort to recall events, account for them in chronological order, and identify their meaning can serve as therapeutic

as the mind tries to come to grips with a life narrative. In the work, "Narrating From the Margins: Self-representation of Female and Colonial Subjectivities in Jean Rhys's Novels," Nagilhan Haliloğlu explains how "the need to order past and future events [...] to account for the passage of time by recounting past events, is an impulse people give in to by means of narrative" (Haliloğlu 14). Finally, and perhaps most relevant, the women write their stories because by doing so they are not only rewriting a series of events, they are also rewriting themselves, which forces them to craft their own identity. Haliloğlu touches upon John Shotter's argument that says, "What we talk of as our experience of our reality is constituted for us very largely by the already established ways in which we must talk in our attempts to account for ourselves" (Haliloğlu 15-16).

These motivations become crucial because they play a role in the authenticity of autobiography, an element that must be questioned on several accounts. In many ways, the audience unconsciously shapes the nature of an autobiography. The author writes them in mind, again, remembering that they are creating an "artful invention" (Howarth 86). Howarth says that narrators tend to "obey the dictates of audiences, whose responses justify their craft" (Howarth 98). Susan realizes that autobiography "must not only tell the truth about us but please its readers too" (Coetzee 63). She emphasizes McLeod's idea of seduction when she says that we use our tongues as an instrument to "jest and lie and seduce" (Coetzee 85). Authors of all narratives to some degree set out to manipulate the reader.

The unreliability of memory organically contributes to the failure of accuracy as well. Susan even suggests "the secret meaning of the word story [might be] a storing-place of memories" (Coetzee 59). The women must rely on their memories, which Howarth names as one of the "essential controls" of autobiography, to convey their stories because these narratives are being told in hindsight (Howarth 86). Jane describes her memory as "not naturally tenacious"

(Brontë 88). Despite this, memory (and some degree of imagination) is essentially their only resource. Memory becomes significant because as Susan suggests, “the secret meaning of the word story [might be] a storing-place of memories” (Coetzee 59). Authors then must fill in certain gaps to create completeness. Renza sees autobiography as more of an “imaginative” rather than “descriptive” outlet of writing (Renza 4).

What matters here is not the undoubtable sense that the author’s memory is often undependable, but rather to what degree these women are exercising *selective* memory. The narrators omit parts of their story, not always because they do not remember, but because they opt not to share. In “Speech and Silence in Jane Eyre” Janet H. Freeman identifies Jane’s narrative as “only [a partial version] of the complex narrative” (Freeman 685). Susan is willing to claim these empty spaces when she declares “I choose not to tell it because to no one [...] do I owe proof that I am a substantial being with a substantial history in the world” (Coetzee 131).

As readers of autobiography, either fictional or otherwise, there is an ethical responsibility that lies within one’s interpretation. Accepting the genre of autobiography in a way that one would any other story, readers must keep in mind the claims made by J. Hills Miller’s piece, “The Ethics of Reading,” which argues that “stories contain the thematic dramatization of ethical situations, choices, and judgments” (Miller 3). It is therefore the reader’s duty to interpret these three defining elements in a way that allows them to connect to a larger message beyond the characters themselves. It becomes more productive to search for meaning opposed to truth. Ultimately, it is not the who, what, when, and where of Jane’s and Susan’s story that will lend the reader substance, but instead the why. MacLeod points that the fulfillment of the novel comes into play when “the discourse of the novel overrides ‘the truth’ or our actual experiences and we begin to feel and see things according to the framework the book posits even when we aren’t reading it, even between readings”

(MacLeod 8).

In an attempt to find a resolution, Renza poses the question:

Must we settle [...] for the compromising, commonplace, conception that depicts autobiography as a formal mutation, a hybrid genre, a vague, unresolved mixture of “truth” about the autobiographer’s life dyed into the colors of an ersatz, imaginative “design?” (Renza 5)

To insist as readers upon the truth, one robs the narrator authorial freedom. It takes away the author’s truth which is the very element that classifies the story as autobiography. To elicit this “proof” that Susan refers to is to undermine not only the accuracy of the events, but more importantly the meaning behind these stories. The question then becomes, is an entirely “authentic” autobiography even practical?

Krasner suggests that it is an unrealistic request when he poses the question “in a world of such chaotic inconsistency, in which desire, perspective, and comprehension change from moment to moment, is it possible to write a consistent personal history?” (Krasner 116). The answer is in fact, no. Instead of insisting, however, Freeman asks the reader to evoke it. It is our responsibility as readers to be active listeners. In doing so, we must receive these personal histories. She says that as the audience, “only, our presence, listening, can endorse... truth-telling” (Freeman 700). She goes on to say that “for...[the] truth to be fully told, we are the ones who must hear it” (Freeman 700).

Brontë and Coetzee set up Jane and Susan as authors of their own narratives to show the power behind autobiography. Though Jane and Susan are fictional characters, it is fair to speak of them in real terms because of the way they represent larger real-life significance. They echo the power behind self-narration in demonstrating the personal evolution that it evokes. To tell one’s own story is to tell one’s truth. How this truth is conveyed is primarily dependent on one’s

motivations and desired outcomes. The narrator is robbed of their authorial freedom, the very driving point of autobiography, when the reader challenges their truth. It is the reader's responsibility to be aware of this lack of authenticity, yet accept these versions. In doing so, one will truly be able to welcome autobiography as "a work of art and life... [that] defines, restricts, [and] shapes [a] life into a self-portrait" (Howarth 86).

Works Cited

- Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Penguin Classics, 2006. Print.
- Case, A. A. (1992). Writing the Female 'I': Gender and Narration in the 18th- and 19th- Century English Novel. Web.
- Coetzee, J. M. *Foe*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1986. Print.
- Freeman, Janet H. "Speech and Silence in Jane Eyre." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*. 24.4 (1984): 683-700. JSTOR. Web.
- Howarth, William L. "Some Principles of Autobiography." *New Literary History* 5.2 (1974): 363-81. JSTOR. Web.
- Irigaray, Luce, and Margaret Whitford. *The Irigaray Reader*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1991. Print.
- Kaplan, Carla. "Girl Talk: *Jane Eyre* and the Romance of Women's Narration." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 30.1 (1996): 5-31. JSTOR. Web.
- Krasner, James. "The Life of Women: Zora Neale Hurston and Female Autobiography." *Black American Literature Forum* 23.1 (1989): 113-26. JSTOR. Web.
- Macaskill, Brian, and Jeanne Collier. "Reading History, Writing Heresy: The Resistance of Representation and the Representation of Resistance in J. M. Coetzee's *Foe*." *Contemporary Literature* 33.3 (1992): 432-457. Web.
- MacLeod, Lewis. "'Do We of Necessity Become Puppets in a Story?' Or, narrating the World: On Speech, Silence, and Discourse in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*." *Modern Fiction Studies* 52.1 (2006): 1,18,259. ProQuest. Web.
- Miller, J.H. "Reading Doing Reading." *The Ethics of Reading*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987. 1-11. Print.
- Renza, Louis A. "The Veto of the Imagination: A Theory of Autobiography." *New Literary History* 9.1 (1977): 1-26. JSTOR. Web.



DO THE RIGHT THING ANALYSIS
by Walker Valdez

Introduction

The film *Do the Right Thing*, written, directed and produced by Spike Lee, focuses on a single day of the lives of racially diverse people who live and work in a lower class neighborhood in Brooklyn New York. However, this ordinary day takes place on one of the hottest days of the summer. The film centers on how social class, race and the moral decisions that the characters make have a direct effect on the way people interact with each other. It starts with the film's characters waking up to start their day and climaxes with a neighborhood riot after police officers excessively restrain and kill a young black man named Radio Raheem for fighting an older Italian American restaurant owner named Sal in his pizzeria, and then outside on the street. The film, although released in 1989, with its social commentary on the effect that race has on police brutality is just as relevant today as when it was released 26 years ago.

Though the movie ultimately shows how dangerous it is to react to others based on race, ironically, Lee portrays characters stereotypically in the movie through their language and aesthetics. Spike Lee indulges in stereotypes by using iconography to represent the different racial groups in the film (Etherington-Wright 236). He does

this in numerous ways such as having Italian American characters wear crosses and tank top shirts. He also does this in his portrayal of Radio Raheem wearing an African medallion necklace while carrying a large boom box playing loud rap music. Even tertiary characters such as a group of Puerto Rican friends are shown listening to salsa while speaking Spanish and drinking beer on the stoop of their apartment building. Lee also points out that his characters recognize that their different ethnicities can lead to a power struggle by having them openly insult each other through ethnic slurs in both a comic and serious fashion. Lee also shows this when his black activist character Buggin' Out tells Mookie, who is a black man employed by a white man, to "Stay Black" insinuating that Mookie should never strive to be a Tom or a sell-out (Etherington-Wright 238).

Throughout the film, the characters not only point out the differences in their race, but also display the ideas found in Marxism through their social interactions. According to *Understanding Film Theory*, "Marxism was conceived as a revolutionary theory that attempted to explain and expose the relations of power in capitalist societies" (Etherington-Wright 83). It also says that Marxism's founder, Karl Marx, was "concerned with the apparent division between the ruling and the working class" (83). In the film, Buggin' Out verbally attacks a property owning white man for running over his new Air Jordans and then asks him "What are you doing in my neighborhood?" In this brief scene Lee is able to show how a character in a poor neighborhood feels the psychological need to compete with others economically. This is an example of the Culture Industry and Buggin' Out displays this because he buys the latest shoes and does not want to feel that he was literally and symbolically being run over by a man who was much wealthier than he was (86).

The film is set in a predominantly black neighborhood and the only two families seen that own businesses are either Italian American or Korean American. Therefore, some of the black characters like them because they are business owners and others dislike them for the same reason. However, at the end of the film the only

business owner whose business is vandalized and burned to the ground is a white man's. Lee shows that, although there is conflict between Korean Americans and African Americans, the history between whites and blacks is much more conflicted. Furthermore, even though many of the black characters love Sal's pizzeria, they do become aware of what Sal really thinks of them when he feels threatened out by Buggin' Out and denies him the chance to put a picture of a black man on the pizzeria wall. The movie also clearly shows how by denying the picture, Sal keeps control over the black patrons in his restaurant. The two film clips that will be discussed will be analyzed by using both a racial and Marxist perspective. The first clip shows black and Hispanic characters in conflict over material possessions, but ultimately respecting each other, and the second clip shows Mookie coming to the realization that as much as he tries to moderate peaceful relations between white and black characters at some point he feels he has to fight for what he thinks is unfair, even if it means losing his job over it.

Do the Right Thing Analysis of Scenes

The first selected scene begins with a record being played that brings in the sound of conga drums while the camera fades to the next scene where we find a group of Puerto Rican men who fit a perceived ethnic Puerto Rican image while the salsa music of Ruben Blades is heard loud. Spike Lee opening the scene with heavy use of iconography enforces stereotypes by choice of the men's clothes, language, and facial appearance. The man in the center speaks in Spanish, referring to his beautiful land Puerto Rico, while his friend disagrees with its beauty by calling it a nightmare. The scene is successful in portraying that this corner of the majority black neighborhood is very different from the rest. While the two friends begin to argue the camera pans away to reveal that the loud salsa music actually comes from an old boom box which begins to blend with loud rap music cluing the viewer that Radio Raheem must be near. The camera pans to the right and

starts from the ground, moving up stopping at the large newer stereo being held by two large African American hands wearing gold knuckle jewelry, showing Lee's use of fetishization by focusing on half of the body and not the face. As the camera pauses, the viewer can read the words Super and PRO stereo and Raheem's music is heard much more clearly, showing signs of economic excess. The jewelry and the stereo's excessive noise and size represent economic power and status. The camera pans up to Raheem's serious face and the African medallion hanging on his neck once again shows iconography. While the camera focus on Raheem, the sound of the Puerto Ricans yelling that their salsa music is being drowned out is heard. The camera rotates to the right again and passes green bushes that represent a tropical climate as the salsa music starts to be heard again.

The man in the center recognizes that Radio Raheem is issuing a challenge of power by standing next to them blaring loud rap music that many black youth identify with. This challenge of power has both racial and economic symbolism because it is essentially seeing not only whose stereo plays louder music, but also whose culture is the more dominating one. When the Puerto Rican man walks over to his boom box, which has a Puerto Rican flag sticker on it, it is clear that his stereo is not as new and when he turns up the volume louder the viewer realizes it's not as loud either. Raheem then turns up multiple knobs and drowns out the salsa yet again, letting the Puerto Rican man know that in this power struggle he has just lost. He responds by turning down his music again and saying "You Got it Bro" to which Raheem responds by smiling and pumping his fist in the air. This two minute scene, although entertaining, in reality represents the whole movie in the way the different races want to feel acknowledged, powerful and respected by the other races in the film. In this scene Raheem proves he is more powerful and it is a precursor for the many confrontations that he faces throughout the film.

The second selected scene begins minutes after Radio Raheem has been killed by the police because of their

response to a street fight between Radio Raheem and Sal. This scene represents how disbelief turns to outrage, as the characters shout the names of other victims of police violence. At this point the viewer begins to realize that this may not have been a freak accident and in fact that has been happening repeatedly in this neighborhood. The residents of this lower class neighborhood are now all aware that it is the norm for them to be victimized by police. The older man saying "They didn't have to kill the boy," points out that Radio, though large and intimidating, was still a fairly young man.

When the camera pans to Mookie's shocked face, it reveals that Mookie has decided that there is something wrong with standing next to these three white men while the rest of his neighbors and friends watch. The way they stand is very important because Sal is standing in the center and his two sons are standing behind him. Mookie is also next to him, but his body is slightly away from them showing that he is reconsidering his position towards them. He looks to Sal, then back at the neighborhood and begins to walk away from Sal and his sons. The act is very significant because Mookie felt a loyalty to Sal through employment, but now a line in the sand is drawn. After Mookie leaves, Sal's facial expression becomes tenser because he realizes that at least he had someone in the neighborhood literally on his side who ethnically looked like the rest of the residents who at the moment are not happy with him or his sons.

Seeing that tensions may escalate, the character Mayor tries to pacify the crowd, but they do not take him seriously due to his alcoholism and the fact that he is dressed poorly. At this point the crowd is upset, but have not decided to commit any acts of violence yet. The camera panning from a largely black crowd to three white men staring at them shows that Sal and his sons may have more economic status, but they do not have the numbers. Pino's face shows that he may have been expecting this to happen all along. This scene is very fascinating because at this point Sal and his sons are not just a symbol of wealth, but are now a symbol of any injustice committed against the people

of the neighborhood by someone who is white or economically more powerful than they are. It is ironic because Raheem was actually choking Sal before the police came, but the residents do not acknowledge that. As Mookie runs with a trashcan towards the pizzeria, he is not only smashing Sal's store, but is showing his outrage and anger for being made to feel powerless by the police. Sal's voice in slow motion can be heard yelling "No!" but by then it is too late. As the residents loot the store it shows that they are tired of being made to feel powerless by the police and by all those who are economically better off. While some destroy the store, others go for the money showing that they are desperate to regain the power that they felt that they never had. While the neighborhood residents destroys the pizzeria, Sal is taken to the other side of the street where he is forced to watch in disbelief as not only his store is being destroyed, but also his economic superiority over them becomes destroyed as well, thus proving to be a remarkable scene.

Conclusion

Director Spike Lee chose to create a film that is able to both entertain and emotionally resonate with an audience by pointing out that when racial and social disparities are not properly addressed by those in power, they can ultimately lead to acts of extreme violence by those who feel powerless. The film is realistic in its approach that a melting pot of different cultures and races doesn't mean that everyone will live happily ever after. Lee knew that in order to make a film about social issues he needed to embrace the stereotypes in order to criticize them. At one point in the film the police officers are driving through the neighborhood and say "What a waste" while they are driving by. The residents outside at the moment were not committing any acts of violence, but in a brief instant it shows that the officers whose job it is to protect the community do not respect the residents they serve, and also hints at what is to come later in the movie.

The film expertly lets the conflict build slowly instead focusing on the ridiculousness of stereotypes such as the Asian store owner with a thick accent, or the overly agitated and hyper active young man who can be seen as very pro black. The film shows the viewer that these issues concerning race exist, but the characters do not directly confront them until the very end of the film. It is important to emphasize that these issues are not solely with race, but also who is in control. It is the combination of the two that takes things to a boiling point. Comic scenes like a boom box show down ultimately prove to be more about power and less about who's got better music, and a riot does not usually form without years of feeling that the system created for a group's protection does not benefit their best interests. *Do The Right Thing* is more than just a film on police brutality or racial identity, it is about the beauty and ugliness that exist, not only in a low income community, but in our selves.

Works Cited

- Do The Right Thing*. Dir. Spike Lee. Perf. Spike Lee, Danny Aiello. Universal, 1989. DVD.
- Etherington-Wright, Christine, and Ruth Doughty.
Understanding Film Theory. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Print.



SUPERHEROES *by Samantha Cooper*

In the movie *Spider-Man* (Raimi 2002) and the comic book, *Ms. Marvel, Volume 1: No Normal* (Wilson), two social outcasts are granted superhuman powers and transform from ugly ducklings into modern-day heroes who experience both exhilaration and dread once they obtain these powers. Both Peter Parker and Kamala Khan are outliers within their social groups. Peter Parker is a geeky teenage boy who is too shy to talk to the woman he loves, and instead invests his time longingly staring after her or working on his science projects. Kamala Khan is a Muslim girl who struggles with assimilating to Western culture, juggling school and overbearing parents, and also wanting to fit in with kids her age. Both of these characters strongly wish for a different life, and once granted super powers, experience the type of exhilaration that represents a sense of liberation and newfound freedom. This type of transformation is indicative to today's youth to celebrate their differences instead of trying to assimilate into what they identify as normal in their environments, and it is through both of these awkward teenager's journeys that self-identity is established as more important than how others identify you.

Peter Parker yearns to drive an expensive car and run like the jocks that capture Mary Jane's attention. He is

bullied at school and does not have many friends. Although he has a stable home environment with his aunt and uncle, he cannot stop dreaming of more. When a scientifically modified spider bites Peter, giving him the powers of Spider-Man, he is sick at first. However, after the sickness passes he wakes up feeling healthy and strong, and looks much stronger. He admires his appearance in front of the mirror, and immediately starts to plan around it. He celebrates his new appearance by running and jumping from rooftops and shouting out with joy. He fashions a new figure-flattering superhero suit, and enters into a wrestling competition to win money for a car to impress Mary Jane.

Kamala Kahn is a high school girl who is struggling with identifying as both Muslim and American. She has immigrant parents who have assimilated well into the culture while maintaining their traditional views. On top of this, she is surrounded by people who continually misunderstand both her and her culture. Her peers make ignorant comments like Zoe who chooses to excuse herself from being around Kamala for smelling like curry (Wilson 9). Comic book heroes, including Ms. Marvel, are Kamala's bigger idols, and when she becomes enveloped in thick smog she is granted the powers of Ms. Marvel. Although at first she is convinced she somehow became inebriated from one sip of a drink, she soon discovers that she has these powers. She is frightened but incredibly excited, and just like Peter Parker, begins to experiment with her new powers. She experiments by changing her hair blonde, disguising herself to look like another person, and she learns she can heal from bullet wounds (Wilson 66). Both Peter Parker and Kamala Khan learn hard lessons after they experiment with their newfound powers. Peter Parker's Uncle Ben dies from a gunshot wound after Peter lets a thief run away and Kamala Khan is shot trying to help a store from being robbed (and also trashes the store from lack of experience). As Uncle Ben says to Peter, "with great power comes great responsibility"—it's a lesson both characters have to learn early on. However, it is also their powers that allows them to start expressing their

individuality. Not only do they start expressing their individuality, but they also start becoming prouder and more assertive of themselves and their self-worth. Peter Parker has newfound confidence to pursue Mary Jane, and Kamala Khan is able to stick up to Zoe, her snobby classmate who continually disrespects her background.

Peter Parker and Kamala Khan are representations of today's youth who can misguide themselves into being versions of themselves they think will be more socially acceptable. Peter Parker struggles in the beginning with appealing to Mary Jane's love of jocks and fast cars. He tries in vain to assimilate to that standard. Kamala Khan struggles with being more Americanized than her Muslim parents, but also fears letting go of that part of herself that connects to her traditionalist parents and culture. Both Kamala and Peter have to ultimately accept themselves for who they are, and that means letting go of what they had both previously identified as standard. It is in this struggle that these comics encourage the youth reading or watching these stories to accept themselves for who they are. Perhaps what is most inspiring, by the end of these stories, is that both characters not only come to accept their individuality, but also embrace it and are happy with themselves. The stories' promotion of self-acceptance is why they are a great resource for any pre-pubescent young adult who will inevitably struggle with some form of self-consciousness while entering adulthood.

Both *Spider-Man* and *Ms. Marvel* are perfect representations for how fantasy and superhero stories can positively influence today's youth. The traditional representation of an unflawed hero has been tossed out, and in its place is an average citizen who undermines their own value, just like a lot of today's youth. These are the types of stories that more children and young adults should read, as they inspire everyone to be not only more independent and confident in themselves, but also more understanding of people of different races, ethnicities, backgrounds, and religions.

Works Cited

- Spider-Man*. Sam Raimi, Director. Sony Pictures Entertainment. 2002.
- Wilson, G. Willow. Artist: Alphona, Adrian. *Ms. Marvel, Volume 1: No Normal*. Marvel Comics. 2014. Print.

GENDER IN SOCIETY





THE FASHION INDUSTRY AND GENDER INEQUALITY
by Oluremi Akin-Olugbade

Every year the United States of America produces trillions of dollars' worth of goods and services, all finished products of a variety of lucrative and developing industries. Of these industries, the fashion industry has remained a growing source of income in the economy. With the average American spending over a thousand dollars on clothing every year, the clothing and textile industry in the US remains one of many remunerative social structures (Bureau of Labor Statistics 3). The fashion industry is also one of very few business trades receiving minimal criticisms of gender inequality in comparison to other traditionally gendered fields, such as technology and services. As a commerce whose success and profitability is significantly reliant on women, many assume that the industry is owned by women, for women. Unfortunately, the majority of influential fashion houses are owned by men, as is the case in most other industries. Of the seven Americans on the Forbes 400 list for the year 2014, only two are female: Doris Fisher of Gap Clothing and Anne Gittinger of Nordstrom (Bhushan). The social practice of gender inequality plays a role in the fashion industry of the United States and is supported by the functional structures of this industry such as educational qualifications, capital resources, homosocial reproduction, and cultural capital. These structures are

organized and influenced by existing social norms and beliefs of gendered behavioral differences, such as the interpersonal skills of men and women.

In 2012, *Fashionista* released a list of the “Top 10 Highest Paid CEOs in Fashion,” all of whom were male and a majority with business degrees (Phelan). In corporate firms—fashion houses included—the norm is that individuals who have acquired educational qualification in business and work experience commonly hold executive positions. The executive position holders determine the nature of the structures in the fashion industry and, similar to other industries, executives are typically male. Men dominate the industry as designers and CEOs, and also tend to advance more quickly than women in this industry. This can be attributed to the fact that a larger percentage of people with the required business skills both academically and experientially are, in fact, men. In the United States, studies show that 22% of male college graduates hold a business degree versus 11% of female graduates (CollegeAtlas). Therefore, men are more likely to come out with degrees in business and gain experience running businesses. This puts them at the forefront when executive positions are being fulfilled. In her book *Framed by Gender*, author and sociologist Cecilia Ridgeway explains that the practices and activities of the workplace are constrained “within organization and institutional structures” (93). The nature of these structures, she explains, determines the social relations between workers and the extent to which social norms and beliefs are maximized to engage in these relations (93). Certainly there are companies in which women occupy positions of authority, especially in the fashion industry. However, the executive officers remain largely male because of this educational and experiential requirement.

Identical to other industries, the fashion industry requires capital resources in the form of money and labor in order to sustain its fashion houses. The need for capital resources for the administration and maintenance of the corporation also tends to further the reproduction of gender inequality in the foundation of the fashion industry.

The sociological theory of power, which Ridgeway references in *Framed by Gender*, shows that dependence between people, resulting from the innate human need for valued resources, is unevenly distributed (10). Fashion houses are constantly looking for wealthy investors with the capital resources needed to launch and sustain their corporations. In the United States, these capital resources are primarily at the disposal of the majority group: men. Consequently, this unequal distribution of capital resources between men and women in the United States continues to put more men in the positions of authority.

The concept of homosocial reproduction, also referred to as homophily, is another structure that encourages and perpetuates the persistence of gender inequality in the fashion industry. Homophily, commonly observed in network settings by sociologists, is a behavioral concept in which a person tends to associate with others similar to themselves (Purcell 301). Research confirms that men often professionally adopt and mentor other male colleagues or personnel more often than females—grooming them to take over their positions when they retire. The same theory also applies for women in authority who, in their case, tend to mentor more women. The CEO of Ralph Lauren Inc., Ralph Lauren, a white American man, recently stepped down from his role and appointed a new executive, Stefan Larson—another Caucasian male with previous experience running operations in world famous brands, including Old Navy, H&M, and Gap (Tabuchi and Friedman). This unconscious tendency to associate with people who are “socially and culturally similar” allows for the continuous gendering of jobs to create an unbalanced gender ratio in the field (Purcell 292).

The informal social structure that exists in the fashion industry makes it one of the few industries that allow for employees to socialize and attend exciting and engaging events. At the same time, this social structure provides a platform where gender inequality is able to thrive even more so. Purcell identifies the idea of cultural capital as “the role that cultural knowledge, tastes, practices, attitudes and goods play in the reproduction of inequality”

(294). At social events such as after-work gatherings, fashion shows, happy hours and more, employees have the opportunity to network with executives and activate their cultural capital to increase their prospects for advancement. However, in order for cultural capital to be beneficial, it must represent a similarity in interests between employers and employees. Because the majority of executives are male, the interests and tastes of that group are fundamentally masculine. As a result, the informal activities are usually designed to fulfill those interests and tastes (e.g. golf dates, hangouts at the gym, bars). In general, very few women hold these same interests—especially in the fashion industry—and, as a result, they are less likely to advance. The same goes for women in the firm who have families or other obligations, which often prevent them from attending these after-work events (301). Unfortunately the concentration of men in the places of power make the informal culture of the fashion industry a lot more masculine, limiting the full engagement of women with differing interests and responsibilities in corporate events.

Ridgeway explains that there are social beliefs and norms that a society holds and uses to categorize individuals, splitting them into groups. These social beliefs, which people associate with the typical man or woman, are defined as gender stereotypes (58). One of these beliefs is that men possess agentic skills while women possess communal skills. Agentic skills refer to traits of assertiveness, confidence, independence, forcefulness, and dominance—all skills largely attributed to men (58). On the other hand, women are regarded as more community oriented, with communal skills such as emotional expressiveness, nurturance, interpersonal sensitivity, kindness, and responsiveness (58). These social beliefs are evident in the structure of the fashion industry from the minute one enters a clothing store. At the lowest level of management are the store associates, customer service attendants, and secretaries who are required to possess strong interpersonal skills. In the Midwestern headquarters of a large retail corporation, 70%-80% of employees in low levels of management are women (Purcell 301). This social

belief of women as communal makes them more favored in roles such as these, where they are required to portray the “nice girl” image by dressing nicely and engaging with employees and clientele (Fox 815). In this same corporation, the top tier consisted of 11 members of whom 18% were female. The social belief that men are more agentic makes them more favorable for these positions, which require leadership and expert business skills. Accordingly, these social beliefs restrict women from engaging in the fashion industry to the best of their ability. Women are kept in jobs that require interaction with customers because society attributes communality with them, denying women of the opportunity to equally compete with men for higher positions.

The fashion industry, although less hyper-masculine than other fields such as technology and law, still has structures and practices in place that allow for the persistence of gender inequality. Due to the general belief that fashion is every woman’s “hobby,” it is easy to assume that there is a significant representation of women in power in the field; however, this is not the case. In fact, while there is a substantial presence of women in the industry, this is only true at the lower positions of authority. Consequently, in the fashion industry women continue to be denied equal opportunities to advance to positions of authority because of the structures established by the dominating male group. Social beliefs also continue to limit the professional growth of women with stereotypical perceptions of what women represent and have to offer to society at large.

Works Cited

- Bhushan, Amarendra. "The 11 Richest Fashion Moguls in America : Fashion Billionaires 2014." *CEO World Magazine*. CEO World Magazine, 2 Oct. 2014. Web. 30 Sept. 2015.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Consumer Expenditures in 2013." *BLS Reports*. February 2015. Web. 30 Sept. 2015.
- Casas, Kristin. "Makers: Women Who Make America (Part 3)." *YouTube*. YouTube, 3 Mar. 2013. Web. 30 Sept. 2015.
- Fox, Greer Litton. "'Nice Girl': Social Control of Women through a Value Construct." *Chicago Journals* 2.4 (1977): 805-17. Print.
- Hiroko, Tabuchi, and Friedman Vanessa. "Ralph Lauren, Creator of Fashion Empire, Is Stepping Down as C.E.O." *The New York Times*. The New York Times Company, 29 Sept. 2015. Web. 30 Sept. 2015.
- "Most Popular College Degrees For Men and Women." *CollegeAtlas.org*. 1 June 2015. Web. Oct 2015.
- Phelan, Hayley. "Revealed: The Top 10 Highest Paid CEOs in Fashion." *The Fashionista*. Breaking Media Inc., 30 July 2012. Web. 30 Sept. 2015.
- Purcell, D. "Baseball, Beer, and Bulgari: Examining Cultural Capital and Gender Inequality in a Retail Fashion Corporation." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 42.3 (2012): 291-319. Web. Oct. 2015.
- Ridgeway, Cecilia L. *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*. New York: Oxford UP, 2011. Print.



THE GENDERED SOCIAL NORMS IN *CLARISSA*
by Kadie Aaron

The societal structure surrounding an individual often has a large impact on the choices one may make. This idea is seen in the novel *Clarissa* written by Samuel Richardson. The novel is set in 18th century England. This time period is one of change, which is displayed in the novel. The role of women is beginning to change; however, society seems to be against this new concept of an independent woman. Clarissa is not only impacted by society but also by her family. Clarissa's father, brother, and sister all seem to have a negative effect on Clarissa. On the other hand, Mrs. Howe, Anna Howe's mother, presents the image of another struggling independent woman. A grave personal force upon Clarissa's life is Lovelace, a very manipulative figure. Clarissa struggles with pleasing her family but also making choices for herself. These forces are at play throughout the novel and influence the individual Clarissa becomes. Richardson's character Clarissa is trapped by the oppressive societal gender structures of her own environment.

Gender structures have the ability to determine an individual's role in society. The role of women during the 18th century has a great influence upon Clarissa Harlowe. The character Richardson portrays is contradictory to the general portrayal of females in literature. According to Paul

Schellinger, editor of *Sex, Gender and the Novel*, many novelists were beginning to stray away from the general portrayal of women in the 18th century. He asserts that women were typically portrayed in “the polite political handbook or the ordered poem” (1). And so as these changes begin to occur, society also begins to see the rise of the female writer. According to Susan Lehr, author of “Feminist Women Writers of the 18th Century: Those Barbarous and Didactic Women,” women writers were trying to assert themselves in the literary world. These female writers were trying to contradict the idea that women were inferior to men and that women were only useful in the domestic marriage. They confronted the lack of women’s rights within society (5). Schellinger and Lehr both confront women in relation to literature whether it be as women writers or women as the subject of literature. The change of women within literature is related to their role within the family and the law. Cheryl Nixon, author of “Maternal Guardianship by “Nature” and “Nurture”: Eighteenth-Century Chancery Court Records and *Clarissa*,” looks at the maternal guardian as one example of women having greater rights with the law. However, she points out that only widows are able to gain this position (1-3). While women are beginning to see more opportunities, they are not easily accessible and are not looked upon favorably by society. These opportunities do not fit a patriarchal society’s idea of the dutiful woman.

Duty and submissiveness in a wife was the most important aspect of womanhood in the 18th century. 18th-century society still heavily focused on women in relation to marriage. According to Lehr, the idea of an unwed woman was intimidating. She points out that women are best seen in “the safe confinement of the female in the home” (4). Regardless of marital status, women have few rights. *Clarissa*’s estate shows the lack of rights women have within a marriage. According to Nixon, “it is not until the late nineteenth century that women had the power to gain custody of their children” (8). Unmarried women did not even have rights over their own families and married women were expected to submit to their husbands. Both

Lehr and Nixon point out the oppression of women within and outside of marriage. For both cases, there are certain expectations of women's actions. According to Dianne Osland, author of "Complaisance and Complacence, and the Perils of Pleasing in *Clarissa*," women were expected to happily submit to patriarchal authority. In fact, "in the women's behavior a willingness to oblige, but in both 'complacency' refers more in which the women obliges – with graciousness" (3). This idea from Osland points out that even within marriage there are expectations of female behavior. Osland also relates this to *Clarissa* because *Clarissa* wants to satisfy other people, such as her family (3). In the beginning of the novel, *Clarissa* reasons with her family so she does not have to marry Solmes. *Clarissa* promises obedience in all other aspects but her unwillingness to marry Solmes is still seen as a disgrace by her family (Richardson 322). *Clarissa*'s desire to please is made evident, as she truly wants her family to accept her despite her choice on Solmes. Osland, Lehr, Richardson and Nixon utilize the common idea that unless a woman is fully submitting herself to male authority, she will not be accepted by the patriarchal 18th-century society.

Independent women have an impact on *Clarissa*'s environment. There are often oppressive forces weighing upon *Clarissa*; however, characters like Mrs. Howe provide a positive influence. According to Nixon, Mrs. Howe represents the class of women who have gained power over themselves and their families by being a "maternal-guardian" (5). She is one of the most independent women in the novel because she has the ability to dictate her own life. Laura Fasick the author of *Sentiment, Authority, and the Female Body in the Novels of Samuel Richardson*, argues that female bodies are typically seen negatively but Richardson also utilizes the body to promote his "heroine" (1). Since the female body is viewed in a negative way, Fasick states that "the female body is untrustworthy and suspect, and female authority is thereby jeopardized" (6). Females are not viewed positively in the world in which *Clarissa* resides. They face great oppressive forces. Mrs. Howe is able to salvage some independence within this world. Mrs. Howe

even rejects a marriage proposal in order to avoid losing the independence she gained by being a widow (Richardson 70). This independent force has a positive and encouraging impact on Clarissa. Nixon writes, "Mrs. Howe exerts this power over Clarissa not in manipulating the events of Clarissa's life but in effecting the recording of that life.... And the first to encourage Clarissa" (6). This concept helps the reader envision the impact that Mrs. Howe had on Clarissa. She was not only an independent role model but she also encouraged Clarissa during her personal struggles. It is clear that it is difficult to be independent in this world but it is possible. Fasick and Nixon point out the oppressive social forces that Mrs. Howe had to overcome. Other people see this poor treatment of Clarissa as well. Nixon discusses how Mrs. Howe struggles in taking a stance in the Harlowe family's treatment of Clarissa. Mrs. Howe eventually "condemns their treatment of Clarissa" (13). Howe can be seen as a maternal figure encouraging Clarissa rather than confining her.

Clarissa's familial environment oppresses her personal desires. Clarissa's family is a large negative influence because of the way that they treat her in regards to her refusal to marry Solmes. Her father writes, "And when Mr. Solmes can introduce you to us, in the temper in which we wish to behold you in, we may perhaps forgive his wife, although we can never, in any other character, our perverse daughter" (190). This is a very negative comment to make to his daughter because Clarissa still tries to please her father despite her refusal to marry Solmes. Schellinger even discusses the rising idea of love within a marriage and not just convenience (2). However, Clarissa's family does not acknowledge this idea. They only see her lack of obedience. Osland says that "For Clarissa's father, that 'cheerful duty', that 'absolute acquiescence' is the only legitimate proof of her love and the only satisfactory return for his former indulgence, and he expects it to be bestowed unconditionally" (7). Clarissa's father will never be satisfied by Clarissa unless she does everything he wants. According to Fasick, the Harlowe family will not "admit that Clarissa's body can prompt her to morally correct action, refuse to

acknowledge the genuineness of the obedience she offers” (4). Her father’s influence also influences the rest of the family. They are unable to see her desire to please. She will never be obedient enough for her family (Fassick 4). It is evident that Clarissa tries to obey her family but she never succeeds. This negativity in Clarissa’s life forces her to rebel and make decisions contrary to what her family wants. Clarissa’s family, just like other community members, are influenced by society and these forces give Clarissa no choice in her decisions.

Clarissa’s independence contradicts the behavior of an ideal female. Clarissa has been making independent decisions throughout the novel such as her resistance to marriage with Solmes (Richardson 190). Lehr discusses the constraint that is placed upon women. This restraint makes it difficult for women to think for themselves. It is clear that during the time period, women lived “tightly constricted lives... in public and private spheres” (5). Others negatively judge Clarissa’s independent actions, but Clarissa no longer seems to care. Lovelace even scorns her actions as he discusses how others would disgrace her for trying to escape him (Richardson 917). Lovelace disagrees with her actions; however, Clarissa has likely gotten to the point that this is irrelevant to her. According to Osland, Clarissa has likely lost the desire to please others. This stems from the fact that Clarissa has put forth great effort to please her family. Osland says, “Clarissa either wants to please or she does not – and in her dealings with both her father and Lovelace the issue reverts always to whose will out to triumph.... Her circumstances make her resignation seem like sheer female willfulness rather than voluntary submission” (8). Clarissa’s desire to please is no longer there because of the lack of acceptance from her father and Lovelace. Fassick reiterates this when she points out that “Clarissa will respond only to the authority of her own bodily and spiritual consciousness” (5). Clarissa’s actions are now driven by her own thought rather than the ideas of others. This shows how those in Clarissa’s life led her to independence.

Lovelace's manipulation is a defining factor of Clarissa's internal struggle. Lovelace is a consistent manipulative force in Clarissa's life. He has a very negative view of the female that translates to his treatment of Clarissa. He is known for consistently testing Clarissa and her morals (Osland 6). Belford even writes to Lovelace saying, "If trial only was thy end, as once was they pretense, enough surely has thou tried this paragon of virtue and vigilance. But I knew thee too well to expect, at the time, that thou wouldst stop there" (Richardson 714). Fasick presents that "Lovelace at times assumes that women control all of their physiological responses, at other times that female nature forces women into self exposure" (4). Lovelace does not seem to believe that Clarissa is as virtuous as she acts. It is evident that Lovelace puts Clarissa through trials just to satisfy his own curiosity about her virtues. He puts Clarissa through this because he has such low standards of women. Lovelace does not even believe that women can seem "innocent" and that she must be putting on a guise (Fasick 4). This thought from Lovelace is likely due to the strict gender norms of the time. Lehr writes that literature from the time contained many rules about how individuals should act within their gender. Works from the period also discussed "heavy-handed learning about heaven and hell and all the severe punishments in between" (8). This impact affects Clarissa's actions when reacting to Lovelace's trials. This also has had a large impact on the way that Lovelace views the female gender. This likely causes his many negative and manipulative actions towards Clarissa. This consistent manipulation from Lovelace forces Clarissa's actions and puts her in unfavorable situations. Clarissa constantly aims to please others despite her fear, and Lovelace utilizes this quality for his own personal gain. Lovelace was able to use Clarissa's pleasing nature to his advantage (Osland 7). Osland writes that "by depriving her of the social parameters that enable a woman's actions to be construed as unequivocal expressions of her own free will – and, more particularly, by depriving her of the opportunity to demonstrate that she is not obliged to oblige" (7). Both

Osland and Fasick see that Lovelace's construed view of women is the reason behind his manipulations. Lovelace's influence had the capability to negatively affect Clarissa and her actions because of the way that he manipulated her.

Clarissa's actions are often driven by her internal urges to please others. Clarissa is a character full of virtue and her ultimate goal is to make others happy. Women are seen as "vulnerable" and the general public wants this view to continue (Shellinger et al. 2). The individuals in Clarissa's life often aim to make her a "vulnerable" individual. Despite this, Clarissa consistently aims to please them. She writes to them begging for their acceptance as she feels she has truly done everything to please them (Richardson 125). This inner desire is a part of her character and affects all aspects of her life. Even her physical identity reflects this desire to please others. Fasick writes, "To them, the physical expression of her dutifulness – curtsies, kneelings, and other deferential bodily attitudes – are only proof of a contemptibly transparent dishonesty" (4). Every action taken by is aimed at pleasing others. She truly wants to make her family happy yet she is never truly able to succeed. Osland makes the point that Clarissa continuously tried to please others. She writes that Clarissa "imposes on him, that he forbear even the mention of marriage until she is reconciled with her family" (Osland 7). Osland, Schellinger, and Fasick point to Clarissa's inherent desire to please. This desire makes her easily manipulated to society's standards for a female life.

Clarissa's environment determines her character choices. The individuals in Clarissa's life drive her to rebellion because they do not accept her obedient nature. As a dutiful daughter, Clarissa inherently has the desire to be submissive to patriarchal influences. Mrs. Howe's influence is important, as she is Clarissa's independent role model. Ultimately, Clarissa's independence is a direct result of her oppression by gender roles accepted by society and her family.

Works Cited

- Fasick, Laura. "Sentiment, authority, and the female body in the novels of Samuel Richardson." *Essays in Literature* 19.2 (1992): 193+. *Artemis Literary Sources*. Web. 4 Oct. 2015.
- Lehr, Susan S. "Feminist Women Writers of the 18th Century: Those Barbarous and Didactic Women." *Shattering the Looking Glass: Challenge, Risk, and Controversy in Children's Literature*. Ed. Susan Stewart Lehr. Norwood, Mass.: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc., 2008. 161-178. Rpt. in *Children's Literature Review*. Ed. Dana Ferguson. Vol. 152. Detroit: Gale, 2010. *Literature Resource Center*. Web. 4 Oct. 2015.
- McNab, Christopher. "Sex, Gender, and the Novel." *Encyclopedia of the Novel*. Ed. Paul Schellinger. London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998. *Literature Online*. Web. 05 Oct. 2015.
- Nixon, Cheryl L. "Maternal Guardianship by 'Nature' and 'Nurture': Eighteenth-Century Chancery Court Records and *Clarissa*." *Intertexts* 5.2 (2001): 128+. *Literature Resource Center*. Web. 4 Oct. 2015.
- Osland, Dianne. "Complaisance and Complacency, and the Perils of Pleasing in *Clarissa*." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 40.3 (2000): 491. *Literature Resource Center*. Web. 10 Oct. 2015.
- Richardson, Samuel. *Clarissa, Or, The History of a Young Lady*. Ed. Angus Ross. New York: Penguin, 1985. Print.



FASHIONABLE DRESSING AND FASHIONABLE GIVING

by Benedikte Hatlehol

In 2009, two British women in their twenties ventured to India to volunteer at an aftercare home for victims of human trafficking and the sex trade, located in one of the slums in Delhi. It wasn't the overwhelming poverty Natasha Rufus Isaacs and Lavinia Brennan saw that had the greatest impact on them, but their encounter with modern slavery. They heard testimonies of heartbreaking stories from women who were trafficked from rural areas and imprisoned in brothels in the city. Some had also suffered severe domestic violence. This was a life-transforming experience for the tourists and the beginning of a new epoch in their own lives.

Rufus Isaacs and Brennan recognized not only the misery, but an opportunity to give these women a better life. And so they were inspired to launch an ethical fashion label with a transparent supply chain, while employing former sex workers. Through this effort, it was their aspiration to provide these women with a livelihood, independence, and a chance to make decisions about their future – a future free from abuse and captivity. However, neither Natasha nor Lavinia had any formal fashion training, so the first challenge was to learn how to start a fashion line. After two years of hard work, the result came

in 2011 when their brand, Beulah London, was launched. During the first year of retail, the company had a satisfactory turnover of around £14,000 (Cocozza 6).

The brand is founded with the explicit goal to raise social awareness concerning both the issues and victims surrounding modern-day slavery. Their vision is “to contribute towards eradicating modern day slavery,” and seeks to inspire individuals and instruct society as a whole by claiming that “a woman’s freedom is not a luxury” (*Beulah London*). Ultimately, Natasha and Lavinia envision a world where slavery does not exist – a world where freedom is not only expected, but also guarded and protected. Brennan says that their aim is to “equip and empower women and young girls who have been trapped and exploited in the most appalling way” (*Media Intelligence Partners*).

Beulah London is a luxury brand that focuses on timeless elegance, and each piece is designed to be a wardrobe classic. The price range starts at £160 and goes up to £680. Each beautiful garment is created to make a positive change somewhere else in the world. Rufus Isaacs and Brennan call this the butterfly effect: “a small change at one place in a complex system having a large effect elsewhere” (*Beulah London*). Beulah is a traditional Hebrew first name for females used in several parts of the world, but can also refer to Israel and the Promised Land. So, the name Beulah becomes more than a name. It is a symbol of the brand’s philosophy, and represents each woman’s journey out of “darkness and despair, into a new life of hope and restoration” (*Beulah London*). More than 190 women have been helped through the work of Freeset, which is one of the organizations Beulah London collaborates with. Debi is one of these women and her inspiring story is just one of many that illustrates the positive force the fashion brand is driving:

My mother's life as a sex worker was very hard, but she did it for us (my brother and I). There were customers in our room all the time which was hard. Because of this, it was difficult to study when I was young. When I got older it got even worse - many

customers wanted me. That's when I thought, If I could just grow up and get married I could get away from this, but my mother didn't have enough money to give me in marriage. I thought it would be good if I could find a job, then I could have money for myself - enough money for my own marriage.

Freeset solved lots of my problems. I got a salary, which meant slowly I could save. I didn't have a bank account at first, but I was able to get one and start saving. Freeset helped me to save lots of money. I used my own money to get married. I didn't take any money from my mother. Because of my job at Freeset, I was able to help my mother, which meant she didn't need to have so many customers. (*Freeset*)

Rufus Isaacs and Brennan's admirable and inspirational effort to initiate and facilitate change is noticed by industry experts and consumers alike. The brand is also acknowledged by organizations like the United Nations and End Human Trafficking Now (EHTN) for their commitment to "social business" (Cocozza 6). Early in their career, they were recognized and honored for their use of fashion as a weapon against slavery. They received a special commendation during the prestigious UN Business Leaders Award to Fight Human Trafficking. In addition, a couple of years later they won the Business Leader Award, and have also worked on projects alongside various UN efforts.

Each Beulah garment comes with a simple canvas bag with their logo, and it is also possible to buy the bags separately. Currently the bags are produced by a business located in Kolkata in India, called Freeset. Over the last few years Freeset has employed around 190 trafficked women or women who are regarded as high risk of ending up as victims. Through employment, Freeset gives these women a chance to build a new life free from abuse. The women are employed full-time, paid nearly twice the going rate for an equivalent job, and have health insurance and a pension

plan as part of their employment benefits package. (*Freezet*). Women trapped by poverty, sold by their own family, trafficked by strangers, and robbed of their freedom are given a second chance in life.

At the moment Beulah's prints, kaftans and scarfs are produced through a project called Open Hand that is located in Delhi. The majority of the workers are either HIV-positive, widows, or trafficked women, and the long-term goal is to teach these women the skills needed to make all the garments. As a means to achieve this, The Beulah Trust was founded in January 2013. The trust is partially funded by 10% of Beulah London's accessory sales, but individuals or businesses can also donate directly to the trust or add a donation as they process their order (*Beulah London*). The trust gives grants that pay for skill courses, and support third parties that provide women with education and professional training.

Some styles and accessories in the Beulah Collections are covered with the elegant embroidery of butterflies, just like the one in the Beulah logo. These are all embroidered by abused women. Every woman who commits to their embroidery course are given education, practical support, and a chance for full recovery. Embroidery is therefore an important piece of the puzzle, and each puzzle is a long lasting restoration of a broken life; a journey that enables individuals to discover their true potential. To financially support this remarkable project, the Beulah Trust collaborates with charities like Justice & Care, which rescues and supports victims of trafficking, slavery and other forms of abuse.

Since Beulah London's launch in 2011 it has constantly grown, and what began as an abstract idea is now a great success. This year they presented their collection at Britain's most fashionable event – London Fashion Week. The Duchess of Cambridge is an important supporter of the brand. Kate Middleton often wears their designs, most recently when she visited New York in December. She picked a black lace dress by Beulah for her first night out. The English aristocracy and *Tatler* society lovers, not to mention Hollywood celebrities like Sarah Jessica Parker,

Sienna Miller, and Demi Moore, are also among the brand's most notable enthusiasts and devotees. Demi Moore regularly wears Beulah designs and also met the founders, Natasha Rufus Isaacs and Lavinia Brennan, at a UN event in Luxor in 2010. She was very impressed by the gorgeous dresses and the label's admirable ethical foundation.

The fashion industry is not known for high ethical standards, but Rufus Isaacs and Brennan found a way to unite the world of fashion with their passion for triumphing in the struggle for global social justice. They managed to develop a brand with a transparent supply chain and collaborate only with companies who share a similar brand ethos. The two founders feel they did not sacrifice in order to achieve this, and find it inspiring that other designers, such as Stella McCartney and Diane Von Furstenberg, are following their lead and using fashion as a platform to raise social awareness. Even though these brands did not originate with that in mind, like Beulah London, they use their label as a tool to influence and make a change for the better. It is Natasha's and Lavinia's hope for the future that all designers will eventually do the same.

Works Cited

- Beulah London*. Beulah London, 2015. Web. 2015.
<http://www.beulahlondon.com/the-beulah-trust/>.
- Cocozza, Francesca. "Beulah London: The Perfect Union Between the Love for Fashion and Social Engagement." *Case Studies on Business & Human Trafficking*. The United Nations Global Compact. 2013. Web. 3 March 2015.
<http://www.ungift.org/doc/knowledgehub/resource-centre/2013/Beulah-London-Case-Study.pdf>.
- Freeset*. Freeset Bags & Apparel, 2015. Web. 3 March 2015.
<http://freesetglobal.com/who-we-are/our-story.html>, and <http://freesetglobal.com/who-we-are/meet-the-women.html>.
- "London fashion label squares up to Indian sex trade."
Media Intelligence Partners Ltd. Cision, 18 Oct 2010. Web. 4 March 2015.
<http://news.cision.com/media-intelligence-partners-ltd/r/london-fashion-label-squares-up-to-indian-sex-trade,c519107>.

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE





ALWAYS

by Natasha Anderson

Stuttgart.

It is a city cradled by hills, golden sunlight sliding down the wooded slopes cresting like emerald waves toward the horizon. A single band of sapphire, the Neckar, winds its way through the center. Sun-kissed southern Germany. *Land der Dichter und Denker*. Country of Poets and Philosophers. Standing still and strong, a water-worn stone submerged in the river of time.

Once home, now nothing more than a city across the sea, swept away as my life rolls on like the never-resting waves. Everything from the familiar past now lies forever beyond my grasp. But its legacy still lives on, within me, through the dewdrops of remembrance caught in the spider's web of my mind. Through the kaleidoscope of recollections swirling before my inner eye. Through the ceaseless, circular stream of seasons. The images glisten and sparkle, drawing me back with their luster.

Taking me back to the place where I once belonged.

It is a city of life. Spring shivers on the edge of awakening, buds thrusting through the still-cold ground. Grass spears through the last lumps of snow, a viridian victory as the cold retreats. The first notes of birdsong peal through the air like bells, cracking the icy cold into splinters

of iridescence. The electrifying hiss of the subway trembles through me as we speed through the sleeping earth like a bolt of lightning. Bursting up into daylight, I breathe in the air like champagne.

It is a city of sweltering summer air captured in a cauldron. Too thick to breathe, suffocating in its intensity. Ice cream melts lavishly across my tongue for a moment of blissful cool. I retreat into the museum to escape the heat filling the streets like molasses. Silent hallways of *Altes Schloss*, *Lindenmuseum*, *Ebene 0*, *Kunstgalerie*, *Landesmuseum*. On the central square, back corners, boulevards, everywhere. Castles and chapels of hidden knowledge. Treasure troves. Hushed feet slide across the marble floors, following a whispered voice just up ahead. Vibrant colors and faded secrets on the walls. Crowns and diamond brilliance in glass casks. Ancient eyes stare down at me as I pass under the gallery of kings. Familiar ghosts.

It is a city of the senses. In the marketplace, fruit tickles my nose with its fragrance. Strawberries, oranges, kiwi, plums gleam with jeweled brilliance in the sunlight. Bees buzz in the honeyed air, as hypnotized by the scents as I am. The berries burst upon my tongue, fulfilling flavor promises with nectar of honey-golden sunshine. The vendor gives me a smile and a laugh that I carry with me long after.

It is a city of joy. I remember standing on the *Karlsböhe*, rising like an emerald crown from the surrounding streets. The small forest is full of dreamers sitting on lonely park benches, families hauling strollers up the slope, joggers outdistancing the clouds of sweat they leave behind. Birds, flits of color, weave through the rustling green canopy alive with dappled shadows and sparks of sunlight. Sneakers crunch over gravel as a soccer ball shoots toward the azure sky, joyous shouts rising high. Standing at the peak, I can see the glass spires of the city sloping away from me.

It is a city of loneliness. Concrete canyons echo the snarl and roar of cars speeding past. Porsche, Mercedes let loose on their asphalt hunting grounds like wolves of glittering steel. Icy wind rips through the bare-bone branches of trees, burning colors already bleached away.

Now only naked skeletons robbed of their fiery fury.
Autumn leaves drift down in spirals, not ready to let go of
their home yet. They hit the cold earth like broken
butterflies, without a sound. Huddled forms of the
homeless lie forgotten in empty doorways. Wrapped in
lumpy cloth cocoons, they wait to be reborn.

It is a city of motion. I walk the crowded streets,
only a drop of color in a surging ocean, a kaleidoscope of
sights and sounds. A thousand tongues, pulsating with
breath, whisk the air with their words. Rain peppers down,
sliding down the back of my neck in icy shivers no matter
how high I pull my coat. My feet ache against the asphalt
speckled with faded gum long since merged with the
cracked stone. Already the third pair of shoes that I have
worn through by racing across these petrified plains.
Backpack cutting into my shoulder blades, air slicing
through my lungs like a dagger as I dash to class.

It is a city of knowledge. The university, twin
towers stretching high above the tides of students.
Wavering sunlight through a break in the lead-gray sky
ripples like water across the countless windows. Inside, my
feet squeak across the linoleum floor, too loud for the
library. The printer churns out papers still wet with new ink
like a thunderstorm, lightning flashes from the copy
machine making me wince. I duck down, hoping to blend in
with the shelves surrounding me. Cinnamon scent wafts out
from the books already crumbling to dust. Secrets fill the air
in whispered languages: Latin, Greek, German, English. A
thousand lives press in on me.

It is a city of cold. As the nights turn icy, I wrap
coat, scarf, gloves around me, pull on boots to hurry after
my family across mirror-smooth cobblestones. We climb
the stairs and gratefully enter into the warmth. A restaurant,
a glass cube, floating high above the city pulsing with
energy. Dinner arrives daintily arranged on ivory-white
plates, like savory sculptures on cold clouds. The gentle
delight of chocolate melts on my tongue. I gaze out past my
shimmering reflection, watching the metropolis watching
me.

It is a city of lights, a glittering galaxy of stars fallen at our feet, gently reflecting the midnight heavens above. The colored ecstasy of Christmas trees breathing prickly pine fragrance competes with the warm embrace of gingerbread and hot chocolate just up ahead. The dreamy glow upon the distant clock tower, a sentinel against the encroaching night, is dusted with snow. Now the flakes swirl down thicker, making me lose sight of my companions just up ahead.

And it is gone again, that star-kissed city, forever out of reach. I long to return to the shores of the crystal Neckar, to explore the ever-wakeful streets again. I can't. Can't return to that time, that feeling of belonging. But that does not mean it is lost in me. Even as the sun rises and sets with mechanical rhythm, Stuttgart will stay a part of me. It will remain, crystallized in memory, mine forever.

Stuttgart.

Every season, always home.



THE POWER OF VODOO

by Angelica Brewer

Intertextuality, according to Romita Choudhury, is “a deliberate, self-conscious reply of one text to another, [and] has significant implications for [postcolonial] discourse” (315). In her essay “‘Is there a ghost, a zombie there?’ Postcolonial Intertextuality and Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*,” Choudhury argues that postcolonial intertextual works are “framed by domination and subversion, the possibilities of diverse forms and content ... [which] ultimately converge towards a unified domain of true and nameless resistance” (315). Jean Rhys’s 1966 postcolonial novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* addresses the ethics of domination and subversion by having Mr. Rochester, the erstwhile romantic hero of Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, exploit his Creole wife’s fear of zombification through *obeah*—a syncretization of French Catholicism and “African-based belief systems ... analogous to voodoo”—in order to dominate her (Aizenberg 463). Understanding the nuances of *obeah* and zombification allows for a deeper comprehension of the supernatural void into which Rhys deposits her audience. *Wide Sargasso Sea* engages and subverts Brontë’s late-nineteenth-century canonical novel by upending the reader’s certainty as to the identity of *Jane Eyre*’s true antagonist and undermines the assumed primacy of Jane’s supernatural world. Rhys’s prose, in turn, casts an

obeah-like spell on the reader as, indeed, it becomes virtually impossible to revisit *Jane Eyre* without interpolating *Wide Sargasso Sea*'s supernatural influence.

Wide Sargasso Sea chronicles the events preceding Rochester's confinement of his Jamaican-born Creole wife, Antoinette Cosway (the "reconfigured" Bertha Antoinetta Mason of *Jane Eyre*) to his attic in Thornfield Hall (Aizenberg 464). Told partly through her perspective, *Wide Sargasso Sea* relates Antoinette's upbringing in the West Indies as the daughter of a widowed French "Martinique girl" following the Emancipation Act of 1833 (Rhys 9). While the Emancipation Act technically outlawed slavery in Britain and in her foreign outposts, it left the 'freed' slaves uncompensated for their labor and, at least nominally, reliant upon their former owners for sources of sustenance, shelter, and occasional employment (9). With her own English father dead, her family's plantation, Coulibri Estate, has "gone wild ... No more slavery—[which meant no more work; for,] why should *anybody* work?" (11).

Antoinette details her alienation as a "white nigger" and recounts a violent uprising in which her father's emancipated slaves—"not presented as a product of a savage nature, but of a colonial history"—burn down Coulibri (Rhys 14; Carr 54). Her infirm younger brother dies from injuries sustained in the fire and this drives Antoinette's mother to insanity and premature death. Ostracized, orphaned, and uncertain of her identity or place, Antoinette is coerced into an arranged marriage with a 'proper' Englishman, who remains unnamed, but is clearly an unfledged, pre-Byronic Mr. Rochester.

The narrative in *Wide Sargasso Sea* shifts from Antoinette's vague, uncertain prose to Rochester's self-absorbed perspective of patriarchal reasoning and entitlement. An outcast himself, Rochester is denied by primogeniture, a British patrilineal inheritance law dictating that since he is not firstborn, Rochester is precluded from inheriting his father's wealth (Rhys 41). He must, therefore, make his own way in the world and is 'forced' into pursuing a profitable marriage in the Caribbean islands, "not [at] the end of the world, only the last stage of [his] interminable

journey” (38–39). With their marriage loveless and volatile, Rochester nevertheless enjoys his position of white privilege and newly acquired wealth, and seeks excuses during vulnerable moments of young Antoinette’s life to defend his reprehensible behavior by portraying himself as a wronged party and suffering master of an ungovernable foreign wife.

Furious with a spouse he does not love and abetted by the sudden, fortuitous death of his older brother, Rochester returns to his newly inherited estate in England and immures Antoinette in the attic of Thornfield Hall. *Wide Sargasso Sea* concludes with a captive Antoinette, rechristened “Bertha,” at the center of a dramatic turning point in *Jane Eyre*. Antoinette’s voice, now restored to the narrative, is disjointed from having been locked away in Rochester’s manor for an untold period of time, “liv[ing] in her own darkness” (Rhys 106). Determined to bring her story full-circle, Antoinette stages her own slave rebellion by setting fire to her captor’s estate and ending her life. Only through Rhys’s novel does “Brontë’s mad Creole object [finally] find ... a voice, however tremulous and disjunctive; she finds a space agitated by racial and class conflicts, by identification and alienation. In short, she finds a *story*” (Choudhury 322).

Interspersed throughout her story is the supernatural presence summoned by *obeah* in zombification, that “so often sensationalized symbol of Afro-Antillean bondage,” with which Antoinette is enthralled (Aizenberg 461). In “Patterns of the Zombie in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*,” Thomas Loe argues that *obeah*, the voodoo belief system of Rhys’s West Indies, permeates the novel and that fear of zombification is an underlying motive that directs many of its characters. Loe suggests that while “the zombie may seem to be a figure traditionally associated with black magic cults and too fanciful an allusion to be taken seriously even within the context of the hallucinatory fictive world created” by Jean Rhys, its characteristics haunt the breadth of the text (35). *Wide Sargasso Sea* bears the hallmarks of zombification that a majority of readers understandably “unfamiliar with voodoo or obeah ... [are]

consequently ... unprepared rather than unwilling to recognize ... Rhys's specific allusions to zombies [function] as an important narrative patterning" (35).

Citing ethnobotanist Wade Davis's 1982 anthropological study of zombies, *Passage of Darkness*, Thomas Loe discerns from Davis's research that the "efficacy of the zombification process" largely relies upon the participant's faith in the supernatural reach of the ritual, which "allows a victim to be conscious, but inhibits ... the exercise of will power. [Thus,] the real cultural impact ... [of *obeah* and zombification] was to instill fear that one's *ti bon ange*—the essence of individuality of one's soul—could be taken, destroying a person's ... [sense of] identity, personality, and willpower" (Loe 36).

According to Loe, it is the spectre of Antoinette's unfortunate mother, Annette—driven to insanity with grief—who simultaneously foreshadows her daughter's own doom and most effectively manifests the horrors of zombification, long before Rochester exploits *obeah* as a means of dominating his spouse. For Rochester and Antoinette, *obeah* functions as a stand-in for the "experience of slavery, of the disassociation of people from their will, their reduction to beasts of burden subject to a master" (Paravisini-Gerbert 39). Antoinette encapsulates "Davis' definition of the departure of [Annette's] *ti bon ange* when she prays in the convent ... 'This is for my mother ... wherever her soul is wandering, for it has left her body'" (Loe 36).

Antoinette obliquely alludes to her fear of zombification when she defends her mother's reputation and sanity to Rochester. "There are always two deaths," she tells him, "the real one and the one people know about ... There is always the other side, always" (Rhys 77). If Annette's second death "is a release from the zombie state," Loe suggests, "it would explain Rochester's enigmatic remark, 'Two at least ... for the fortunate'" (36). Loe further identifies what he perceives to be the tell-tale signs of zombification when Rochester observes of his defeated wife that "soon she'll join the others who know the secret and will not tell it. Or cannot. Or try and fail because they

do not know enough. They can be recognized. White faces, dazed eyes, aimless gestures, high-pitched laughter” (Rhys 103). The deathly pallor, expressionless eyes, and aimlessness are classic hallmarks of B-movie zombie possession.

Jean Rhys’s personal correspondences also indicate that that she was altogether too aware of the cultural significance of zombification and clearly saw the irony of *obeah* developing from a syncretization of French colonized slaves’ societies—“utterly different ... based not on European models but on their own ancestral traditions”—blended with French Catholic influence (Choudhury 324; Davis 29). In fact, Rhys makes evident in *Wide Sargasso Sea* that the *obeah* practitioner from Martinique, Christophine, who “was not like the other women [for s]he was much blacker—blue-black,” is also Catholic: alongside Christophine’s “pictures of the Holy Family” in her quarters lie remnants of an *obeah* ritual containing “a dead man’s dried hand, white chicken feathers, [and] a cock with its throat cut, dying slowly, slowly ... [its blood] falling into a red bin” (12; 18).

Rather than simply invoke *obeah* as a supernatural or spiritual tradition singularly and “objectively determined from an underlying social and historical reality, *Wide Sargasso Sea* presents it as a discursive construct deployed by the colonizer as much as by the colonized” (Mardorossian 1079). It is, after all, Rochester who first reads from *The Glittering Coronet of the Isles* the following passage on *obeah* and extrapolates its significance:

I have noticed that negroes as a rule refuse to discuss the black magic in which so many believe. Voodoo as it is called in Haiti—Obeah in some of the islands, another name in South America. They confuse matters by telling lies if pressed. The white people, sometimes credulous, pretend to dismiss the whole thing as nonsense. Cases of sudden or mysterious death are attributed to a poison known to the negroes which cannot be traced. (Rhys 64)

Rhys abruptly shifts the narrative to Antoinette, who tells the reader, “I did not look up though I saw [Rochester] at

the window but rode on until I came to the rocks. People here call them Mounes Mors (the Dead Ones)” (64). Here, Antoinette’s preoccupation with zombification becomes evident only after a close reading and better understanding of *obeah*. The conscientious reader can now recognize the implications of *obeah*’s “potential for extra-textual stories and [alternate] avenues of meaning”; thus, those “Dead Ones” signify to Antoinette the far-reaching influence of zombification, not just the rocks upon which Christophine—her *obeah* guide—resides (Loe 34).

Jean Rhys includes this passage so that Rochester’s pursuit of *obeah* immediately impresses itself upon Antoinette in a supernatural way. Furthermore, it highlights Rhys’s own spell-weaving with her placement of scenes and deliberate removal of identifying words, the ideas of which are left unspoken and abandoned to the white spaces of her frequent ellipses. After all, the reader is not privy to the extent to which Rochester comprehends the nuances of *obeah* and zombification. It would appear that his “experience of the island and its inhabitants and his understanding of the role of ... [zombification and *obeah* are] completely filtered through the English text” (Mardorossian 1081). Rochester’s fragmented understanding mirrors the reader’s heretofore unformed conception of *obeah*.

Jean Rhys methodically “fragments gaze and voice [in *Wide Sargasso Sea*] so that the reader is subjected to a kaleidoscope of impressions mediated by” a variety of culturally different voices—each at odds with the reader’s preconceptions of Charlotte Brontë’s Mr. Rochester and Bertha/Antoinette (Fincham 18). The strength of the author’s deceptively uncomplicated prose “comes through its suggestiveness, its reliance on inference, and its ability to project possibilities of action and implication beyond just those of its central causal episodes”; by employing free indirect discourse and heteroglossia, for instance, Rhys demonstrates the power language possesses to divide, unite, or even control people (Loe 34).

In short, Rhys manipulates the reader by omitting tantalizing perspectives and withholding key information,

such as when Antoinette lets slip her trysts with cousin Sandi; Antoinette reveals this secret long after the reader has identified her as a wholly innocent victim, and even longer after their affair has any bearing on her marriage to Rochester (Rhys 110). These deliberate absences of words, floating in ‘the white spaces of her frequent ellipses,’ lend an overwhelming sense of secrecy and magic to *Wide Sargasso Sea* and it is within this concisely written story that Rhys invokes *obeah* both within the colonial Caribbean milieu and intertextually with *Jane Eyre*.

But what of Rochester’s manipulation of *obeah*? Charles Larmore states in his essay, “The Ethics of Reading,” that the philosophy of ethics is “concerned with two distinct though interrelated questions: how we ought to live in order to live well, and how we are to treat one another” (49). Jean Rhys’s Rochester makes clear his belief in how *he* ought to live, but doesn’t acknowledge his failure to extend the same courtesy to his wife when he summons the power of *obeah*. Although Rochester reaps the benefits of living in a patriarchal colonial society, languishing in the Caribbean with “a modest competence,” beautiful estates, and an unpaid staff of servants, he sees himself as a victim of circumstance—of primogeniture (Rhys 41). His lack of empathy for a wife he does not love reveals Rochester’s self-absorption and portends how easily he will abandon any semblance of ethical behavior in order to “live well” for himself, and he freely admits that his marriage, “meant nothing to [him]. Nor did she” (45).

This personality defect bleeds over into Charlotte Brontë’s Edward Fairfax Rochester, who not only bemoans having been “cheated into espousing” the woman he calls Bertha, but himself tries to trick Jane into marriage while still legally bound to Antoinette (249). If, as Larmore states, “our ethical character shows itself most clearly in how we treat the vulnerable, since they cannot make it in our interest to treat them well,” then the Rochesters of both *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Jane Eyre* could not be more blatant in revealing the dark nature of his/their ethics (54).

David Cowart argues, however, that, in spite of his exploitation of *obeah* as a means of controlling Antoinette,

Wide Sargasso Sea's Rochester isn't an evil villain, merely a deeply flawed—if “somewhat morally unformed”—young man (51). Greed drives him more than villainy and, as Christophine observes, “Money have pretty face for everybody, but for that man money pretty like pretty self, he can't see nothing else ... The man not a bad man, even if he loves money” (Rhys 68). Incapable of interpreting the world beyond a patriarchal lens, he passes “Père Lilièvre's house, near Granbois, [where Rochester himself] is taken for a zombie,” but remains entirely oblivious to this nuance (Coward 51). Recounting to his servant, Baptiste, “a little girl carrying a large basket on her head ... [who, much to Rochester's] astonishment ... screamed loudly, threw up her arms and ran,” Rochester guilelessly wonders, “Is there a ghost, a zombi there?” (Rhys 62–63). Rhys's words suggest to Coward “that, morally, at least, *all of his class* [emphasis mine] and moral obtuseness are zombies. He is, in a word, blind or nearly blind to the real moral complexity of the world, especially the West Indian world, and this blindness anticipates the literal blindness he suffers at the end of *Jane Eyre*—caused” by Antoinette Cosway herself (51).

Jean Rhys skillfully “depicts the process whereby through fear, jealousy and fierce suppression [Rochester] takes on the role of cruel patriarch, a mercenary and [becomes a] possessive oppressor himself” (Carr 51). And, “while prejudice, cruelty, and hypocrisy can be found in both men and women, and in people of any race, the primary focus of [Rhys's] attack is,” not Rochester, according to Helen Carr, but the “English patriarchy” (51–52). Rochester, the British colonial plantation owner, appropriates West Indies slave culture and invokes *obeah* over Antoinette as a means of manipulating and exerting control over this ‘problematic’ foreign wife who has made him wealthy. He does so by simply changing her name from the exotic French “Antoinette” to a more staid, properly English “Bertha.” The power of the name, and its implied application in *obeah*, become quite evident as Antoinette slowly loses her grip on reality, and likewise her will to live. Rhys contravenes his tyranny by deliberately censoring his

name from the text; the reader merely infers that he is the Mr. Rochester of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (Rhys 38).

As befitting a cruel tyrant, Rochester abandons any semblance of ethics when he sleeps with their servant, Amélie, within earshot of his wife; having assumed full command of his situation, he "listened for the sound [he] knew [he] should hear, the horse's hoofs as [his] wife left the house" (Rhys 85). Rochester physically and psychically possesses Antoinette once she stops resisting the fact that he is "trying to make [her] into someone else, calling [her] by another name" (88). By renaming her, Rochester not only invokes the power of *obeah* (which he knows Antoinette fears), but assumes total authority over his spouse and her property, all the while justifying that "they bought *me*, me with [her] paltry money. [She] helped them do it ... [but] she was only a ghost" because Rochester strove to make her so (102). In the end, "Antoinette is subsumed into the politics of slavery—the zombie's origin—into the imperialist's fear of slave rebellion, of Africans threatening Europeans. And in truth, she reacts, much as her father's ex-slaves did, by setting a torch to the Great House" (Aizenberg 464).

Jane Eyre's canonicity is also subsumed into *Wide Sargasso Sea*. The novel dismantles *Jane Eyre's* "power through formal subversions and thematic contestations"; Jean Rhys does so by mirroring and reiterating supernatural themes from *Jane Eyre*, but in the guise of *obeah* (Aizenberg 463). Once the reader is attuned to the subtleties of *obeah*, then the act of discerning patterns and fragments of phrases not necessarily "central to the surface stories of the first-person chronological discourses" becomes relatively simple (Loe 34).

Rhys's deliberate allusions to minute details in Charlotte Brontë's novel allow *Wide Sargasso Sea* to transcend the canon, and they possess an even greater poignancy than the most obvious analogies which many readers and critics initially discern. In *Jane Eyre*, for instance, Rochester disguises himself as a mystical, fortune-telling gypsy, "almost as black as a crock", a striking feature which harkens to the blackest, "blue-black" mystical *obeah* priestess

Christophine (Brontë 164; Rhys 12). Likewise, Jane's childhood trauma in the macabre red-room, with Mrs. Reed's "divers parchments, her jewel-casket, and a miniature of her deceased husband ... [wherein this red-room his] last words lie" calls to mind the various ghoulish accoutrements of Christophine's *obeah* ceremony, with the blood of a sacrificial cock slowly dripping into a "red bin"—the macabre imagery of which haunts Antoinette in her childhood (Brontë 11; Rhys 18).

All of the power usurped from Antoinette Cosway in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is mystically reinstated in the *obeah*-charged fugue state that pervades the atmosphere of *Jane Eyre*. Essayist J. Jeffrey Franklin identifies "four primary supernatural events"—the most obvious analogies—in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, which paradoxically seem to bear the fruit of Jean Rhys's *obeah* in *Wide Sargasso Sea* (471):

... first, the "spell" of the red room; second, the entire Bertha Mason Rochester ("Vampyre," or "Vamp-pyre") subplot, with its female, mixed-race, voodoo fire imagery and bedside hauntings; third, Jane's dreams, drawings, and premonitions, which ... form a chain of signs and spells throughout the novel and because they all work to warn Jane by foretelling her future and that of other characters; and last, the extrasensory perception (ESP) that permits Jane and Rochester to communicate long-distance. (Franklin 471)

But, unlike with the mysterious, unfathomable depths of *obeah* and zombification, the "reader is intended ... [really, *expected*] to accept [Brontë's] supernatural as 'real'", to proffer one's own *ti bon ange* without questioning its incongruity—its syncretization—with Jane's Christianity (471).

Thus, the reader begins to question the primacy and legitimacy of *Jane Eyre*. Gail Fincham observes in her essay, "The Mind's Eye: Focalizing 'Nature' in *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*", that if "the unconscious can accommodate the 'otherness' marginalized by European rationality, oppositions such as nature/civilization; female/male; black/white; inner/outer; madness/sanity and

dreams/reality” begin to disintegrate (18). This is the *obeah* that Rhys has wrought. By “extricat[ing] Bertha Mason and the West Indies from their discursive bondage to the formation” of *Jane Eyre*’s beloved England, Jean Rhys destroys what Wayne Booth refers to as our binary tendencies toward “strong ethical traditions [which] advise us ... about how to address the deceptive heroes and villains, saints and sinners” (Choudhury 321, Booth 485). The effect produces for the reader a sense of “historical knowledge that *solves* the mystery of Bertha Mason’s madness ... As a result two very different texts are collapsed in an inclusionary [and mystical] gaze that turns ... into a mutually beneficial space of enlightenment” (Choudhury 318).

Works Cited

- Aizenberg, Edna. "‘I Walked with a Zombie’: The Pleasures and Perils of Postcolonial Hybridity." *World Literature Today: A Literary Quarterly of the University of Oklahoma* 73.3 (1999): 461–6. *ProQuest*. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Booth, Wayne C. "Epilogue: The Ethics of Reading." *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. 483–489. Print.
- Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Ed. Richard J. Dunn. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001. Print.
- Carr, Helen. "Intemperate and Unchaste": Jean Rhys and Caribbean Creole Identity." *Women: A Cultural Review* 14.1 (2003): 38–62. *ProQuest*. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Choudhury, Romita. "Is there a ghost, a zombie there? Postcolonial intertextuality and Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Textual Practice* 10.2 (1996): 315–27. *ProQuest*. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Cowart, David. "Patriarchy and its Discontents: *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Literary Symbiosis: The Reconfigured Text in Twentieth-Century Writing*. University of Georgia Press, 1993. 46–65. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Davis, Wade. "The Historical and Cultural Setting: Colonial Origins and the Birth of Haitian Peasantry." *Passage of Darkness: The Ethnobiology of the Haitian Zombie*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988. 15–29. Print.
- Fincham, Gail. "The Mind’s Eye: Focalizing ‘Nature’ in *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *English Academy Review* 27.1 (2010): 14–23. *ProQuest*. Web. 15 Dec. 2015.
- Franklin, J. Jeffrey. "The Merging of Spiritualities: Jane Eyre as Missionary of Love." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*. 49.4 (1995): 456–482. *JSTOR*. Web. 12 Dec. 2015.
- Larmore, Charles. "The Ethics of Reading." *The Humanities and Public Life*. Eds. Peter Brooks and Hilary

- Jewett. New York: Fordham University Press, 2014. 49–54. Print.
- Loe, Thomas. “Patterns of the Zombie in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*.” *World Literature Written in English*. 31.1 (1991): 34–42. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Mardorossian, Carine Melkom. “Shutting up the Subaltern: Silences, Stereotypes, and Double- Entendre in Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*.” *Callaloo*. 22.4 (1999): 1071–1090. *ProQuest*. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Paravisini-Gebert, Lizabeth. “Women Possessed: Eroticism and Exoticism in the Representation of Woman as Zombie.” *Sacred Possessions: Vodou, Santería, Obeah, and the Caribbean*. Eds. Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert. Rutgers University Press, 1997. 37–58. *ProQuest*. Web. 18 Nov. 2015.
- Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Ed. Judith L. Raiskin. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999. Print.



ETHICAL TRANSLATION AND INTERTEXTUALITY IN
FOE AND *ROBINSON CRUSOE*
by Leticia Zelaya

In all cultures, language is a system of communication that directly relates to elements of social identity. In literature, language is also used as a component that defines a character's identity whether it is through dialogue or written word. Both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Foe* explore the voluminous power of voice in language as well as the ethics of translating one language into that of another. As writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'o states in "Decolonizing the Mind," the goal of colonialism "was to control the people's wealth: what they produced, how they produced it, and how it was distributed; to control, in other words, the entire realm of the language of real life" (Ngugi 1135). Language is a part of life; it is the essence that differentiates human existence from animals, it is "an unseparated medium of life, and to live with it is precisely *not* to centrifuge it, but to use it: to breathe it" (Haines 19). Without language, the human culture would be just like any animal species. By assigning voices to a selected people, both texts limit language such that the only chance that an 'other' or minority has for obtaining a voice is through the translation of the dominant race, that is to say through the voice of the European. This essay will explore how these texts serve as voices that speak for those silenced. Coetzee

rewrites *Robinson Crusoe* not to give voice to Friday but to question or critique our first world ability to speak on behalf of the 'other.'

Authors intentionally construct characters in ways that, whether direct or indirectly, raise social concerns. In *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe documents a "true" story about a man named Robinson Crusoe who was actually a castaway on a deserted island, where he survived for over twenty years. However, he leaves readers questioning authenticity in relation to language and the power of storytelling. Coetzee's *Foe* responds to Defoe by exploring appearances of truth illustrating limits of storytelling and fiction through Friday's character. It is no coincidence that Coetzee's *Foe* incorporates many of the characters in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, for it appears that Coetzee responds to Defoe's text with the intent to introduce readers to the problematic links between the reality and fiction of storytelling, particularly in relation to the character of Friday.

In the process of stealing people's wealth, Ngugi states, colonialism also destroys and "deliberate[ly] undervalue[es] a people's culture, their art, dances, religions, history, geography, education, orature and literature" on one hand and "conscious[ly] elevat[es]...the language of the colonizer" (1135). In *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe suggests that the colonized is completely disregarded and thus their language is lost. At no point in the narrative does Crusoe ask Friday about his native name or his language, nor does he show any interest in learning. Instead, Crusoe offers to teach Friday language, names him Friday because he discovers him on a Friday and teaches him that his own name is "Master." From then on, these become the terms and conditions of their relationship and of the narrative. As a result, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* provides only the lens and perspective of the colonizer, the Europeans. Coetzee rewrites *Robinson Crusoe* in *Foe* responding to this colonization, by dramatizing the ethics of language and representing the colonized as language-less. In *Foe*, Friday is portrayed as a savage-like native who does not possess a tongue and cannot speak, therefore keeping him from telling his story. His humanity is taken from him and

shaped by the way in which Susan Barton describes him. Coetzee raises questions underscored by authorial intentionality, responsibility of writing, and importance of authorship. Thus Coetzee suggests that if natives had the possibility of using language in terms of written word or vocal voice, then they would be able to tell their story, something that *Robinson Crusoe* simply undermines.

Daniel Defoe's 1719 novel *Robinson Crusoe* is a fictional biography that attempts to provide a full account and complete history of the rebuilding of a civilization from European perspective. Crusoe divides his autobiography in three parts: adventures of exploration, life on a deserted island, and his escape. During his early years, Crusoe recounts the many times that his father insisted on conforming to a defined lifestyle that would guarantee him to be a member of the middle-class. However, Crusoe becomes invested in traveling and wants nothing more than to head out to sea. He daringly betrays his father's desires and sets to sea in search of adventure. Throughout his journey, he learns about the trading business, the essence of surviving, and life as a slave. He eventually escapes and is rescued by a Portuguese sailing captain who assists him in establishing a life as a sugar plantation owner. Life as a sugar plantation owner goes fairly well until he finds himself on a mission to bring back slaves from Africa.

A storm interrupts his journey and results in a shipwreck. Robinson Crusoe discovers he is the only survivor and immediately begins to develop skills necessary to stay alive. His account suggests that the acquisition is immediate. In an effort to document his truth as a castaway, Crusoe begins to keep a journal. He eventually notices a footprint and fears cannibals on the island. Next, he heroically rescues a fleeing victim, he calls savage, from cannibals and names him Friday. He describes Friday as a:

Handsome fellow, perfectly well made, with straight strong limbs, not too large; tall and well shap'd ...[with] all the sweetness and softness of an *European* in his countenance...His hair was long and black, not curl'd like wool; his forehead very high, and large, and a great vivacity and sparkling

sharpness in his eyes. The colour of his skin was not quite black, but very tawny...His face was round and plump; his nose small, not flat like the Negroes, a very good mouth, thin lips and his fine teeth well set, and white as ivory. (162)

Crusoe nurtures him allowing him to “lay his head on flat upon the ground, close to [Crusoe’s] foot, and sets [Crusoe’s] other foot upon his head...[making] all the signs to [Crusoe] of subjection, servitude, and submission imaginable, to let [him] know how, he would serve [him] as long as he liv’d” (163). It is in this way that Defoe creates an ideological story. He shapes the narrative logically to normalize ideas to depict a particular perspective to readers. Defoe proposes two destinies for Friday: he could have been eaten or be Crusoe’s subservient companion. Defoe suggests, from the lens of a European, that the better option for Friday is to serve as a subservient companion, “the effect is to make Friday a part of the systematized world Crusoe has built around himself” (Cohen 11). Friday is portrayed as grateful to Crusoe and thus abides with treatment of enslavement.

In his article “Fashioning Friday,” Derek Cohen thoroughly investigates the character of Friday in *Robinson Crusoe* by exploring the ways in which Defoe defines him. Cohen compares Friday to an “infant, he arrives naked, nameless, and even in Crusoe’s mind, without speech. The language he already knows is mere gabble according to his surrogate father who believes he has literally brought him to life” (12). Crusoe states that he names him Friday to commemorate the “day [he] sav’d his life” (Defoe 163). Cohen compares the introduction of Friday’s character to childbirth and relates it to governing the power of the colonizers imposing power over the natives. Cohen focuses the ways in which Friday’s character illustrates European colonialism by exploring the master and slave relationship. Crusoe teaches Friday “to say Master and then let him know that was to be [his] name” (Defoe 163). This ultimately conveys the negative effects of colonialism on identity. For Cohen, *Robinson Crusoe*’s autobiography is nothing more than the European version of events. The

European shelters, feeds, and teaches the 'other' "every thing that was proper to make him useful, handy, and helpful; but especially to make him speak and understand me when [he] spake" (Defoe 166). Eventually, as Cohen relates:

Friday, the savage, becomes Friday the contentedly Christianized slave. He is the colonizer's dream subject. He is strong and hardworking, but he is also pacific, easily cowed and subdued, and wants no greater reward than his master's good opinion. The only words that Friday utters once he can speak confirm his entire loss of original identity. He is without language, history, true religion, or social grace. (18)

Crusoe's account implies that Friday has an original language but that he has no interest in learning it. Instead, he implies that Friday is knowledgeable of universal signs and it is in this way that they begin communicating. Though Friday learns a few words and is able to speak with Crusoe, it is not his real voice. It is not his language. Rather, it is the language and voice that the European gives him. Ultimately Defoe suggests that in relation to colonialism,

The primitive savage needed the European civilization to bring order, harmony, and morality to those parts of the world that had not fallen under the sway of Christianity. And the European cultures needed the savage to be universally imagined as he is in the novel in order to justify their adventures of self-enrichment through slavery and conquest in their scramble to enlarge the perimeters of their nations. (Cohen 19)

Thus, in a colonial context, Defoe uses Crusoe's character to illustrate the European colonists as heroes by normalizing imperialist ideology therefore depicting him as the prototype of British colonists. If Defoe's text gives Friday as an 'other' a voice, though limited and controlled, he seems to suggest that his existence is the result of heroic efforts and the result of power of the colonists or dominating race. As Ngugi states, "The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people's

definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment” (1126). This raises a question of translation and truth. Is it possible to believe Crusoe’s autobiography if we have not heard Friday’s story? How can we ensure that the account that Crusoe documents is accurate if he doesn’t know Friday’s language? The answer is essentially in J.M. Coetzee’s response to Defoe in his reimagined novel, *Foe*.

J.M. Coetzee’s 1986 novel, *Foe*, is a rewriting of Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. Coetzee’s novel presents the same characters, Cruso and Friday with the addition of a female voice, Susan Barton. Coetzee divides the narrative into four parts, the first three narrated by Susan Barton. The first part of the narrative is addressed to a writer named Foe, where Susan tells her tale of losing her daughter in Brazil and arriving as a castaway to a deserted island. Susan describes the island as a “desert isle” (7). Eventually, Susan meets two more castaways, Cruso and his ‘tongueless’ African man servant named Friday. The castaways are later rescued from the desert island and taken back to England. All but Cruso survive the journey. In the second part of the novel, Susan adopts the name Mrs. Cruso, and writes a series of letters to Foe, in hopes of having him write of her adventures on the island as she has recorded them. In this second section, Susan finds herself stranded in England mourning Cruso’s death and seeks shelter in Foe’s home, a place that seems to have been abandoned by the writer and occupied by bailiffs (61). While sheltering in Foe’s home, Susan reflects on her story of the island, of Friday and the possibilities of having her story written...*her way*. When Susan eventually finds Foe, she is unhappy about the way he is going about narrating the content of her story. It seems that Foe’s mission is to publish a story that he is sure will sell. Her immediate apprehension and anxiety are further affected by Friday’s silence and the frustration in attempting to teach him to write his true story. She attempts to speculate his origins and the events that lead up to the loss of his tongue. The final part of the narrative shifts tone indicating the voice of an anonymous narrator. The final section appears unintelligible compared to the rest of the novel and it is

here that Coetzee illustrates in nontraditional ways dimensions of storytelling.

Coetzee adds a woman, Susan Barton, as a narrator to his novel to give place to characters that are not traditionally given agency. While Defoe concentrates on the heroism of Crusoe's colonialism, Coetzee focuses on the absence of voice that the oppressed, or 'other' experiences as a result of colonialism. In *Foe*, Robinson Crusoe is depicted as a green-eyed, "dark-skinned and heavily bearded" European with "hair burnt to a straw colour" (8). Coetzee depicts Friday as a tongueless Negro with springy hair, head of fuzzy wool, and hard skin (6-7). Coetzee writes off Crusoe by only featuring him in the beginning of Susan's story, dying shortly after his introduction to emphasize that Crusoe's story has already been told. Susan's focus is not only to discover the origins of Friday's tonguelessness but "to present her experience on the island in a 'factual' account" (Jolly, 3). The remainder of the novel is Susan's attempt at telling of her own story but also trying to understand and tell of Friday's story "justifying narrative [by its] ability to convey 'the truth'" (Jolly, 3). The conflict becomes Susan Barton's challenge in discovering the meaning of storytelling.

Susan's quest to get her story told begins as a desire for substantiality. As she reflects on her own story to *Foe* she states, "I seem to exist only as the one who came, the one who witnessed, the one who longed to be gone: a being without substance, a ghost beside the true body of Crusoe" (Coetzee 51). As she considers the power that *Foe* has in publishing her work she asks him to "return to [her] the substance [she has] lost...that is [her] entreaty" (51). She tells herself that the word "story" means "a storing-place of memories" (59) and that language creates a "correspondence between things as they are and the pictures we have of them in our minds" (65). Susan eventually finds herself lost in her own and her history, "is finally, a history of her inability tell the story she wants to tell; it is not the story she originally desires" (Jolly 4). Moreover she finally realizes that she doesn't know how to account for Friday's tonguelessness, as she states "I should

never learn how Friday lost his tongue...what we accept in life we cannot accept in history. To tell my story and be silent on Friday's tongue is no better than offering a book for sale with pages in it quietly left empty. Yet the only tongue that can tell Friday's secret is the tongue he has lost!" (Coetzee 67). Susan begins to understand that because of his silence, anyone might be able to unethically appropriate his story:

Friday has no command of words and therefore no defence against being re-shaped day by day in conformity with the desires of others. I say he is a cannibal and he becomes a cannibal; I say he is a laundryman and he becomes a laundryman. What is the truth of Friday? You will respond: he is neither cannibal, nor laundryman, these are mere names, they do not touch his essence, he is a substantial body, he is himself, Friday is Friday. But that is not so. No matter what he is to himself (is he anything to himself - how can he tell us?) What he is to the world is what I make of him. (121-22)

Susan accepts that it is not her position or responsibility to tell Friday's story but rather that it is her ethical position to try to help him tell his own story. For *Foe*, Friday's story is nothing but a riddle to solve: "In every story there is a silence, some sight concealed, some word unspoken, I believe. Till we have spoken the unspoken we have not come to the heart of the story" (141). The struggle within the narrative is not to give Friday a voice but rather to discover other avenues in which his story might be told. The point that Coetzee addresses is that Friday's story cannot be told from Susan's perspective or anyone else's. It can only be told from Friday's perspective. This then brings forth the ethical question of translation, the idea of who is telling whose story.

When thinking of the concept of translation, it is often associated with translating from one language to another. It is not necessarily thought of as translating someone's story into one's own or someone else's. In her essay "Translation with No Original: Scandals of Textual

Reproduction,” Emily Apter essentially argues that all translations are fallacies as the notion of translating a work performs as acts of pretend to possess a sense of truth. As Apter relates, something is always lost in the process of translation, stating that, “unless one knows the language of the original, the exact nature and substance of what is lost will be always impossible to ascertain” (106). Coetzee’s response to Defoe in *Foe* seems to question the effects of ethical translation by the characterization of Friday. Throughout the narrative of *Foe*, Sarah Barton shapes the character of Friday and attempts to tell his story. However, Friday’s story is one that is ambiguous and thus, the translation of his story in Sarah Barton’s words raises ethical problems of translation. Essentially, Coetzee must also remain silent in trying to shine light on Friday’s story. If he told Friday’s story through the narrative of Susan Barton, he would be committing the same crime as Robinson Crusoe, assuming to speak for the ‘other.’

Coetzee ultimately challenges the appearance of truth on colonization that Defoe presents in Crusoe. When Robinson Crusoe tells his story incorporating Friday, he presents himself as a hero. Friday’s story becomes completely subordinate and essentially does not exist. When readers are invested in the story of heroism through a colonial lens, then there is no way that Friday’s story can be told. In his article “Post-Colonial African Literature as Counter- Discourse: J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* and the Reworking of the Canon,” Ayobami Kehinde examines how African novelists have used their works to respond to the misrepresented portrayal of colonialism on Africans and Africa that has been previously illustrated in literary canonical texts. As Kehinde relates, Friday’s silence is not a disability per se, rather it is “a social condition imposed upon him by those in power. He therefore represents all human beings who have been silenced because of their race, gender or class” (112). When Susan realizes that she cannot tell Friday’s story it becomes apparent that “Friday possesses the history that Susan is unable to tell, and it will not be heard until there is a means of giving voice to Friday. *Foe* is suggesting that the world’s harmony and true

progress will improve if there is mutual respect and cross fertilization of ideas” (114). Thus, the image of colonization is depicted in Foe’s absence of voice in Friday’s character. This image underpins the notion that “African history did not begin with the continent’s contact and subsequent destruction by the European colonists” (115). These natives, or savages as Robinson Crusoe might call them, had voices before colonization and it is texts like these by Coetzee that take on the task of “reclaim[ing] that which has been misappropriated and to reconstruct that which has been damaged, even destroyed” (115).

The last section of *Foe* is an image of narrative return to a story. The way that a story is traditionally understood is through the structure of *Robinson Crusoe*. In contrast, Coetzee’s final section in *Foe* is utterly unintelligible and does not function in the traditional way that we understand story. The narrative becomes non-linear through the image of water as a metaphorical representation of storytelling. Water is something that is so fluid, it cannot be held as its own and its taste is something that is almost impossible to describe. The image of water, thus, emphasizes what a story is. Water is itself in the same way that we are our own voice. Essentially, Coetzee uses the image of water to suggest a radical fluidity in Friday’s voice that is so different to the way that Susan tells the story that it doesn’t even look or sound like a story. If we imagine where Friday’s story comes from, it is quite simply only what comes out of his mouth:

“His mouth opens. From inside comes a slow stream, without breath, without interruption. It flows up through his body and out upon me; it passes through the cabin, through the wreck; washing the cliffs and shores of the island, it runs northward and southward to the ends of the earth.” (157).

Foe’s ending looks nothing like the narrative of heroism that is clearly depicted in *Robinson Crusoe* and it also looks nothing like, at least on the surface, the competing narrative of Susan Barton’s story. The fact that Friday’s tongue has been removed ties into the ability of his being able to tell

his story literally being ripped out of him. Traditionally we may think that because of this, he cannot tell his story; the reality is that he can, just not in the Western preconception. Friday's story may not look the way we would want it to and thus we deny its possibility: "Friday's silence is indeed *voiced* but not by using words. Thus, language and story-writing about the formerly colonized are shown to lead up a blind alley" (Fries-Dieckmann 174). A story can be told in many ways. Susan believes that the only way to produce a work that gains recognition is "to transform her narrative into a popular travel adventure, because this has been used for stories such as hers" (Jolly 5). As readers, we privilege the kind of stories that make sense to us, in the same way that Robinson Crusoe's seems to make sense to us. However, that style of storytelling carries the same amount of power that any traditional story carries.

As readers, we are doing a disservice in denying multiple modes of storytelling. It's not a coincidence that we value stories like *Robinson Crusoe* over stories like the confusing stream that comes out of Friday's mouth. Coetzee ultimately criticizes the naturalization we come to give to the understanding of storytelling. Over time, through power we come to value these styles of storytelling over Friday's. And that poses ramifications in terms of whose story gets told, whose has power, and whose has meaning. As Ngugi states, "language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world" (1134). While reading and responding to novels such as *Robinson Crusoe* and *Foe*, we must pay close attention to the role that language plays within the narrative and how its absence seems to underscore the effects of what happens to a language when a society is colonized.

Works Cited

- Apter, Emily. "Translation with No Original: Scandals of Textual Reproduction" *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*. Ed. Sandra Bermann and Michael Wood. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005. 106-176. *EBSCO*. Web. 24 November 2015.
- Coetzee, J.M. *Foe*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1986. Print.
- Cohen, Derek. "Fashioning Friday." *Queen's Quarterly* 115.1 (2008): 9-21. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 24 November 2015.
- Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. London: Penguin, 2001. Print.
- Fries-Dieckman, Marion. "'Castaways in the Very Heart of the City': Island and Metropolis in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*" *Local Natures, Global Responsibilities: Ecocritical Perspectives on the New English Literatures*. Ed. Laurenz Volkmann. New York: Editions Rodolpi, 2010. 167-178. *EBSCO*. Web. 24 November 2015.
- Haines, Simon. "Deepening the Self: The Language of Ethics and the Language of Literature." *Critical Review* 33 (1993): 15-28. *ProQuest*. Web. 19 Nov. 2015.
- Jolly, Rosemary Jane. *Colonization, Violence, and Narration in White South African Writing: André Brink, Breyten Breytenbach, and J.M. Coetzee*. Athens: Ohio UP, 1996. Print.
- Kehinde, Ayobami. "Post-Colonial African Literature as Counter- Discourse: J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* and the Reworking of the Canon." *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*. 32.3 (2006): 92-122. Web. 27 November 2015.
- Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. "Decolonizing the Mind." *Literary Theory, an Anthology*, 2nd ed. Ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004. 1126-50. Print.

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS



Kadie Aaron is Nursing major. After she graduates in 2018 she hopes to work in the hospital setting. Kadie also enjoys reading, exploring DC, and history.

Natasha Anderson is an English Literature major with a minor in History. She is in her junior year at Marymount and a member of the English Honor Society Sigma Tau Delta. She previously completed two years of bilingual study at the University of Stuttgart in Germany. After graduation, she hopes to become a Secondary Education teacher. In the meantime, she enjoys writing both poetry and novels, plays the piano, and visits art museums.

Nick Bensmiller is a Psychology major with a minor in Gender & Society, and a minor in Philosophy. After graduating this May, he will be attending graduate school to obtain a Master's degree in Psychological Counseling. His primary research interests are gender, multiculturalism and transnationalism, stigmatization, and marginalization within both Literature and a broader context.

Angelica Brewer is a senior English major with a passion for writing. She is looking forward to graduating in May of 2016.

Samantha Cooper is a Biology major with a focus on Cellular and Molecular biology. After graduating in 2016 she hopes to continue her work in the Animal Science field, and continue expanding her knowledge within the Veterinary community. Her main areas of interest include caring for animals, hiking with her dogs, playing tennis, and spending time with family.

Benedikte Hatlehol is a Fashion Design major with a focus on women's wear. After graduating this spring, her goal is to work for a company that focuses on sustainable fashion and fair trade. Benedikte is an international student, and she hopes to be able to launch her own label in Norway one day.

Oluremi Akin-Olugbade is an Economics major with a focus on developmental economics and a minor in International Studies. After graduating this year, she hopes to work with organizations that encourage economic growth and empower women and children in developing countries. Her main areas of interest include God, music, photography, British history and gender studies.

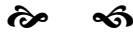
Ashley Tucker is an English major graduating in 2016. Her post graduate plans are to participate in a clinical psychology graduate program with the desire of pursuing a career in pediatric psychology. Her main areas of interest include child advocacy, mental health, feature writing, and remaining in tune with popular culture.

Walker Valdez is an English and Performance Media Major, who firmly believes that the creative arts and education go hand in hand. He is graduating in the summer and hopes to teach English in the near future and continue to pursue his passion for writing and performing as well. His academic and creative interests include music, poetry,

race, identity, and social class theory. Walker is also a big fan of Spike Lee's work and was thrilled to write a film theory analysis on one of his favorite films.

Leticia Zelaya is a first generation English major undergraduate from Marymount University. As a daughter of immigrants and a second-born American in her family, she grew up with a passion for discovering cultures and traditions encompassed in the arts, whether it be through literature, food or fashion. She began her college academic career at Northern Virginia Community College where she discovered her academically inclined passion: the arts through the power of word. The milestone completion of her Associates Degree in Liberal Arts encouraged her to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree with a concentration in English at Marymount University. During her academic career she has participated in a global classroom series, and has also been recognized for exceptional merit by award of academic achievements. After graduating this year, she hopes to continue to ignite her creativity in blog writing and expand her career in human resource management. Aside from reading and writing, Leticia spends her free time imagining being the next cake boss, baking custom cakes for family and friends. She also enjoys participating in group exercises, road trips, and constructing all sorts of "Do-It-Yourself" projects.

BOARD OF STUDENT EDITORS



Amanda Bourne is an English Media and Performance Studies major with a minor in Theology and Religious Studies. Her research interests include Virginia Woolf, film and transmedia adaptations, and Sherlock Holmes. A senior Honors student, she has studied abroad in Spain, Italy and at Oxford University. After graduating in May, she will be living in Boston, interning at Society of Saint John the Evangelist through Episcopal Service Corps.

Joanna Chenaille is an Interior Design major in her Junior year at Marymount. After graduation, she hopes to work designing healthcare spaces. Joanna enjoys taking pictures and writing letters. She is interested in film, poetry, and musical theater.

Madison Herbert is studying writing, communications, and fashion merchandising at Marymount University. She anticipates graduating in May of 2016.

Peter Lengyel is a senior English major with a strong interest in writing and education. He anticipates graduating in May of 2016.

Leora Lihach is a Senior Honors student, majoring in Communications and minoring in Gender Studies. She is currently interning at the National Organization for Women and plans to continue her feminist work after graduation. Specifically, she hopes to produce the activist play she wrote last summer while studying at Oxford University, *Madres de la Revolución*.

Adrienne West is a happily married mother of two boys living in Great Falls, VA. She has held a number of leadership positions on campus and is involved in many organizations including, but not limited to, writing and editing for student literary publications *The Banner*, *Magnificat* and *BlueInk*. Majoring in MU's writing track, she has enjoyed the many English classes she's taken in the last two years. After graduating in May, Adrienne looks forward to working on her thriller novel and pursuing a career in writing and publishing.

