



THE ALBATROSS^o

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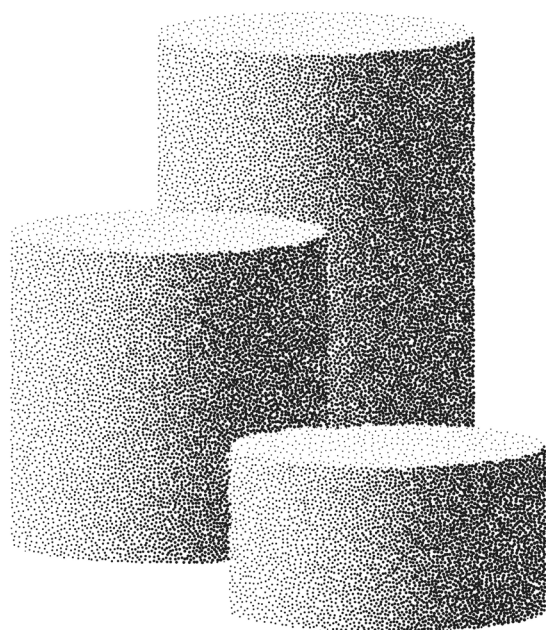
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EDITORIAL

Editors' Note

Maya Linsley & Rowan Watts

Welcome to *The Albatross* Volume 13. This instalment of our beloved journal could not have taken flight without the generous support and hard work of many people, to whom we owe our most heartfelt thanks.

To the Lekwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNEĆ peoples, we extend our respect and gratitude for their long stewardship of the lands where *The Albatross* operates. As students from many backgrounds and walks of life, we acknowledge their ongoing relationship to this place and are humbled by the privilege of studying here.

The Albatross is published annually through the generous financial support of the University of Victoria English Students' Association (ESA). We extend our thanks to the 2022–23 executive members of the ESA: Nina Bradley, Manmitha Deepthi, Jocelyn Diemer, John Fitzsimmons, Maya Linsley, Braedon Lowey, Mariah MacWilliam, Zoë Nilson, Nicole Paletta, Ekamjot Pooni, Ella Reedman, Leia Soulsbury and Rowan Watts.

We would like to extend our most sincere gratitude to the University of Victoria's Students' Society for their continued support, and a heartfelt thank you to Dr. Mary Elizabeth Leighton and Dr. Lisa SurrIDGE for their substantive editing workshop, as well as Anne Hung for her copy-editing workshop and exemplary layout design.

We are grateful to Robert Amos for his permission to reproduce his painting *Dedalus on the Shore* (2016) and his enthusiastic support of our journal.

Endless thanks and admiration is due to every member of the UVic English community who submitted, contributed and edited this volume. *The Albatross* is run by students, for students, operating entirely on volunteer power. We are in eternal awe of the intellect, enthusiasm, and grit that our editorial staff and contributing writers have brought to the

table. Their tireless collaboration and care has produced the seven excellent works which we are beyond proud to present on paper.

And last but certainly not least, we thank you, reader, for opening our journal. May you find yourself as inspired by these insightful papers as we have been.

This is *The Albatross* Volume 13. We hope you enjoy your flight.

Introduction

Maya Linsley

In late February of 2023, the ESA hosted a Careers in English event. One of the panellists was a graduate of UVic's English program and, chatting to her after the event, I discovered she had also been a founding editor of *The Albatross*. She was amazed to learn that the journal was still alive and well; for my part, I couldn't overcome the feeling of awe this interaction brought over me. As editors and contributors to *The Albatross* we walk in the footsteps of scholars we've never met. And as human beings, this sense of vast legacy is something to be considered from all angles, time and again.

It is only fitting, then, that the seven works featured in Volume 13 are all critically engaged with both transient and perennial facets of the human experience. Thirteen, commonly condemned as an unlucky number, came to represent for our team a point of expansion and creativity. The work of our forebears has left us a journal that is strong in mission, vision, and foundation. We give back to them a thirteenth volume of essays that pushes the boundaries of undergraduate criticism and challenges us to rethink the very structure of academic writing.

Our first three articles tackle complex issues of identity creation and society. Holding the aestheticization of Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955) against a feminist interpretation of Ursula Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), Nicole Paletta illuminates the inextricable relation between mass consumerism and female subjugation. Paletta challenges us to read Le Guin's novel as an entity that "defies

the inalienable link between sex and consumerism which typifies mid-century American culture” (25). Approached in this manner, the text intentionally disrupts a consumer culture that was designed to control and mitigate the power of women. Meanwhile on the high seas, Kara Hagedorn examines the brief presence of Captain Brierly in Joseph Conrad’s *Lord Jim* (1899) through the lens of Sara Ahmed’s queer phenomenology, excavating the linguistics of Brierly’s interactions to reveal their queer undertones. Hagedorn demonstrates how “the colonial frontier doubles as a place for queer men to hide under the guise of imperial expansion” (30), offering us fresh insight into the ongoing relevance of Conrad’s novel as a queer-oriented space and challenging us to rethink the narrative significance of Captain Brierly. Hopping across the Pacific, Ella Cuskelly shines a light on Yōko Ogawa’s subversion of Japanese “Normal Life” ideals in *The Housekeeper and the Professor* (2009). Drawing on cultural scholarship and historical context, Cuskelly demonstrates how “Ogawa depicts domestic labour as skilled, intellectual, and separated from gender roles” (45), and thereby overturns socially constructed frameworks of the Japanese nuclear family.

Our next two articles tackle text and visual art across two centuries. In a pertinent examination of Kate Beaton’s 2022 graphic memoir *Ducks*, Kalea Furmanek-Raposo takes a dual textual and visual analytic approach to examine Beaton’s portrayal of liminality in the Albertan oil sands. Dissecting everything from the memoir’s narrative intricacies to its physical arrangement on the page, Furmanek-Raposo demonstrates how Beaton’s artistic strategies “visually complement the liminality of the world that her charac-

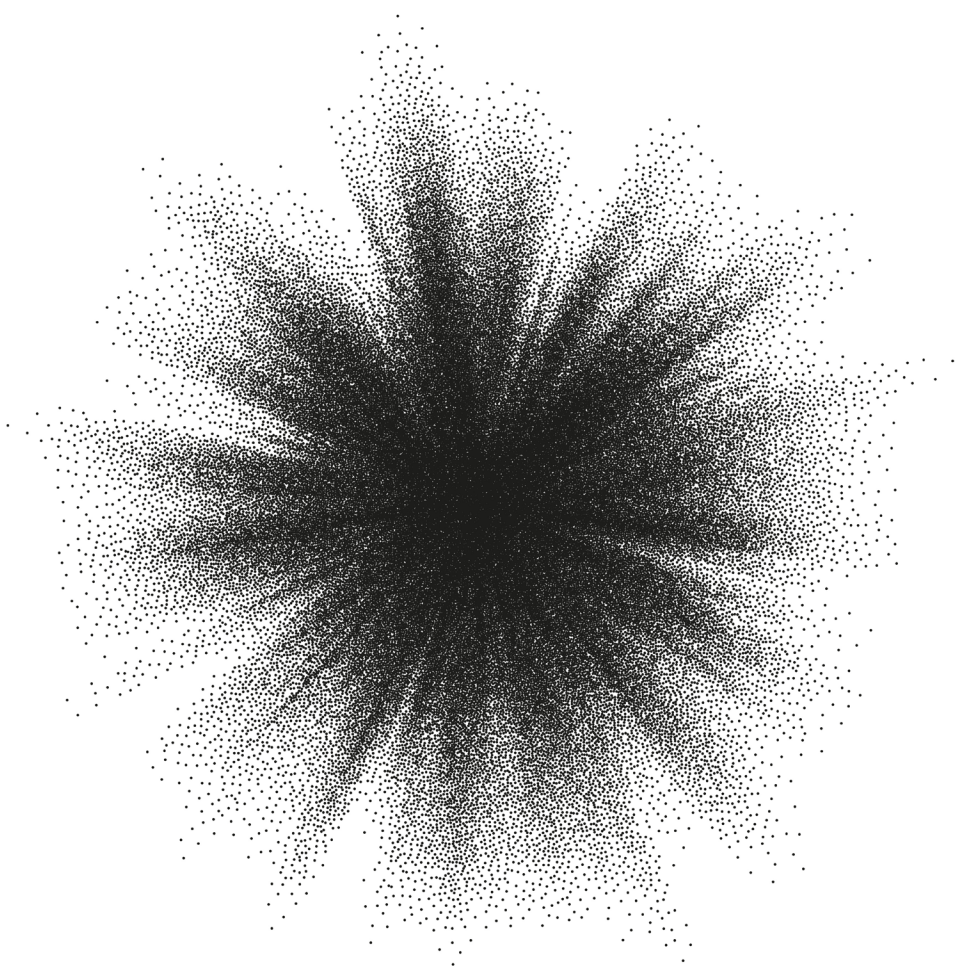
ters inhabit” (49) and call to the foreground not only a set of moral questions about life in the oil sands, but the very limits of human psychological endurance. In an ambitious bridging between critical analysis and readerly affect, Erin Kroi illuminates James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1920) through an articulation of her own response to Robert Amos’ painting *Dedalus on the Shore* (2016) and its Felskian phenomenological implications. “The novel lends the reader its experience through the reader’s intuitive experience,” Kroi argues (63), advocating for an approach to *Ulysses* that extends beyond its canonical status to “the influential power engendered by its essence, and our delight in its stylistic whims” (55).

Our final two articles are concerned with core notions of humanity in the Victorian and medieval eras, respectively. In an analysis of Charlotte Brontë’s *Villette* (1853), Colleen Bidner examines themes of humanity and mortality behind the Victorian obsession with flowers, revealing how the protagonist’s romance plot is humanised by the presence of floral symbolism throughout the text. Bidner demonstrates that if “flowers offer a path for humans to see each other’s souls and humanity” (73), then the clarifying power of romantic relationships is shifted beyond a topical infatuation and into a deeper, more transcendent experience of human bonds. In Jocelyn Diemer’s innovative approach to Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene* book three (1590), the narrative symbolism of the hyena blurs the human-animal boundary. Illustrating the complexities of the medieval bestiary and its reinscription of our sense of distinction as a species, Diemer asks: “Should we try desperately to reinforce the boundaries between human and animal and risk blurring them even further? Or should we immerse ourselves fully in

the pleasure of trans-animal exchanges and encounters and risk becoming monstrous?" (84). The answer, they assert, can be found if we "accept our own creaturely double nature, and perhaps even seek out positive opportunities for interspecies encounter and collaboration" (85).

The reach and ambition of our contributors cannot be overstated. From oil sands to shipwrecks, these seven authors bring us a set of refreshing, carefully constructed perspectives on the human condition. Reaching beyond their academic scaffolding, they ask us: What is love? What is art? How do we create ourselves? How do we *know* ourselves? And when we know ourselves, what can we do with that knowledge?

Though it may be our collective fate to be eternally lacking a set of clear answers, these articles have perhaps brought us one step closer to understanding the mysteries of our social and personal experiences. I invite you to turn a page, hang on their words, and prepare to question everything. Without further ado: *The Albatross*, Volume 13.



CRITICAL WORKS

Feminist Narratives of Mid-Century America: Reading Aesthetics in Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* Through *Lolita's* Lens

—
Nicole Paletta

Abstract: The portrayal, or lack thereof, of feminine power in Ursula Le Guin's 1969 novel, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, is contentious: scholars either praise the text for portraying a feminist utopia or criticise it for a failed attempt at equalising genders. Using aestheticization in Nabokov's *Lolita* to illustrate that mass consumerism and female subjugation are inextricably linked in mid-century America, I argue that, in *The Left Hand of Darkness*, the absence of aesthetics—from the material objects, atmosphere, and Gethenian attitudes toward sexuality—strengthens its reading as a feminist text.

Ursula Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* follows Genly Ai on his mission to Gethen, a perpetually ice-covered planet beyond Earth's solar system. He is sent on behalf of the Ekumen—an interplanetary organisation whose purpose is to facilitate trade, security, and harmonious relationships between members—to encourage Gethenian nations to join this coalition. During his time on the planet, Earthling Genly Ai builds political and interpersonal relationships with the indigenous peoples. Of the Gethenians he encounters, he becomes closely allied with Estraven—an influential political figure in Karhide, a nation on Gethen. The pair comes to protect and care for one another, despite their cultural differences. For example, gender is one of the many human concepts that is absent on Gethen as Gethenians are gender fluid. They only embody binary sexual characteristics

to reproduce during a biologically determined period of fertility, referred to as “kemmer;” and do not engage in non-reproductive sexual activity outside of this fertile window.

This unorthodox depiction of gender has resulted in disagreement among literary scholars about the acceptance of *The Left Hand of Darkness* as a feminist text. For William Marcellino, feminist fiction offers a “theoretical response to patriarchy” by imagining a society that is free from “dominant male power and focus” (203). He argues that Le Guin crafts a society which opposes patriarchy and instead depends upon the interdependence of genders: “just as we need light and dark to see, each gender needs the other to function” (206). The integration of male and female bodies into one unified and genderless form is the physical embodiment of gender interdependence; thus, he concludes that the novel is a feminist narrative (206). Marcellino engages with the opposition, acknowledging that some scholars—namely, Kathy Rudy, Joanna Russ, and Tim Libretti—critique Le Guin’s narrative, claiming that “her works are insufficiently feminist, even patriarchal” (208). They argue that the focalisation through a male narrator and the lack of feminine figures of power substantiate their reading of the novel as misogynistic (Marcellino 208). A feminist narrative, for these scholars, would require the deliberate representation and empowerment of female bodies and perspectives, qualifications that *The Left Hand of Darkness* fails to meet.

The controversy about Le Guin’s infamous line “The king is pregnant” exemplifies these diverging opinions (99). Critics of a feminist reading assert that the inherently feminine task of motherhood is displaced onto a character perceived as male, thereby erasing the necessity of females in society (Pennington 353). However, John Pennington refutes this claim, demonstrating that such an interpretation fails to appreciate the narrator’s human faults: Genly Ai projects his Earthly concept of gender as binary and male dominant onto genderless beings. As Pennington states: “this novel tempts us to misread it through our gendered

eyes, correcting us and reminding us of our limited perspectives” (354). Therefore, he contends that criticising Le Guin’s novel by claiming that Gethen fails to celebrate female bodies is a misunderstanding of the text. Despite fervent discourse regarding the feminist nature of Le Guin’s work, the conversation has yet to ponder the role of aesthetics—the appreciation and perception by the senses of that which is pleasurable or beautiful (“Aesthetics”). To do so, it is useful to consider how aestheticization functions in another mid-century American text: Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita* (1955).

In *Lolita*, readers are situated inside the mind of Humbert Humbert, a middle-aged man, as he lusts after and sexually abuses a school-aged girl named Dolores, who he calls Lolita. In *The Annotated Lolita*, Nabokov claims that his purpose in writing *Lolita* was “aesthetic bliss” (Nabokov and Appel 316); scholars have therefore studied the various instances of aesthetics in the text. Dana Brand notes that the sensational prose arises from the narrator “aestheticizing the objects he sees” (17). She argues that Humbert’s process of renaming characters in the novel, including himself, “is another paradigm of Humbert’s aesthetic process” (18). Likewise, Laura Byrne asserts that Humbert “attempts to portray [Lolita] as an aesthetic emanation of his own desire” (53). Ultimately, these scholars conclude that reducing the female body to an aesthetic object likens it to a consumer good and that this portrayal is underscored by depictions of mid-century mass consumerism (Brand 14–15; Byrne 51–53). Nabokov and Le Guin both contemplate American consumerism in their construction of fictitious worlds defined by, or inversely, devoid of, pleasurable consumption; therefore, the scholarship on aesthetics in *Lolita* is pertinent to Le Guin’s text.

To first situate Le Guin’s novel within its contemporary moment, I will consider the American zeitgeist in the mid-twentieth century. Next, I will demonstrate that the characterisation of Gethen—defined by pragmatism, the absence of sexual objectification, and a boundless barren environment—establishes a motif of utility replacing

aesthetics. Ultimately, I will argue that the omission of sensational elements from Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* bolsters its reading as a feminist text as it imagines a space devoid of consumer greed on both physical and sexual levels. Given the scholarly conversation surrounding Nabokov's *Lolita*, this motif becomes markedly apparent.

The Left Hand of Darkness, published in 1969, speaks directly to its historical context. In the years following the end of World War II, the American economy boomed: mass production brought consumerism to previously unthinkable levels as Americans purchased, used, and disposed of goods at unprecedented rates (Whiteley 5). Consequently, the marketing industry found innovative ways to fuel the shopping-obsessed machine newly synonymous with America (Mack 816, 830, 832). Beginning in the 1930s and continuing into the 1960s, advertisers capitalised upon the persuasiveness of gendered appeals, their logic founded in the "innate" differences between man and woman (Mack 821). Specifically, marketers exploited the tactic of sensationalising the marketplace; in doing so, aestheticization became inseparable from consumerism. Adam Mack notes that between the 1930s to 1950s, the world of marketing became "increasingly hyperaesthetic" (817). Eager to fuel consumer demand, marketers aimed to "engage as many senses as possible in the drive for [...] seduction of the consumer" (817). Importantly, Mack asserts that such tactics drew on the prevailing belief that "men's five senses are robust; women's are delicate" (821). Therefore, infusing the shopping experience with sensational appeal specifically targeted female shoppers. This new approach to advertising had one central goal: "[reinforce] the notion that middle-class women should look to the excitements of the homemaker role itself" and find satisfaction within "existing gender arrangements" (818). Evidently, the sensationalisation of the shopping experience served a larger purpose: the subjugation of the female shopper.

Lolita responds to its contemporary moment by accentuating its faults: imagery of hyper-abundance

and a lavish use of figurative language both imitate and exacerbate mid-century consumerism. For instance, readers of Nabokov's text are submerged in pages of superfluous paraphernalia:

In the gay town of Lepingville I bought her four books of comics, a box of candy, a box of sanitary pads, two cokes, a manicure set, a travel clock with a luminous dial, a ring with a real topaz, a tennis racket, roller skates with white high shoes, field glasses, a portable radio set, chewing gum, a transparent raincoat, sunglasses, some more garments—swooners, shorts, all kinds of summer frocks. (141–142)

This material excess epitomises the American mindset at the time of publication as needlessly wasteful. The sugar-filled candy and cokes evidence the fixation on food throughout the novel; Anastasia Tolstoy explains that gustatory metaphors in Nabokov's narratives "re-examine accepted notions of taste through the exploration of its antithesis: disgust" (224)—here being Humbert's perverse consumption of Dolores. For example, Humbert begins his narrative with a playful lick: "Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo. Lee. Ta." (Nabokov 9). By way of the alliterative passage, the word 'Lolita' swirls around the mouth, back to front, and settles on the tongue, forcing readers to join Humbert in feeling, and *tasting*, 'Lolita' while reading her name. Additionally, Byrne attests that the sexual defilement of the titular character is an allegory for the rampantly growing consumption in mid-century America: "the Lolita he paints represents not only an America that is young and impressionable, but an ideal that is hollow and transient: the inescapable ephemerality of the material" (57). Brand takes a similar stance in her article: "in his decline from aestheticism to consumerism, Humbert no longer finds the source of his gratification in his imagination. He locates it, rather, in Lolita, an external commoditised object" (20). Similarly, Byrne attests: "the girl's rampant materialism harkens to her discursive ties

with matter, the very Aristotelean notion that she is matter to man's form" (51).

In Le Guin's novel, she creates Gethen in opposition to consumer-crazed America. For instance, there are no frivolous possessions on Gethen. Instead, functionality is paramount to the design of goods, as exemplified by the versatility of Estraven's Chabe stove:

The stove was one of those excellent and economical devices perfected by the Gethenians in their millennial effort to outwit cold. Only the use of a fusion-pack as power source could improve it. Its bionic-powered battery was good for fourteen months' continuous use, its heat output was intense, it was stove, heater, and lantern all in one, and it weighed about four pounds. (205)

This singular multifunctional gadget illustrates the Gethenian attitude towards consumption: design for use, not aesthetic appeal. This description emphasises the stove's functional elements and lacks sensory information: no colour or tactile qualities, such as texture or materials, are mentioned. Additionally, unlike Nabokov's waste-filled prose, the acquisition of natural resources on Gethen leaves no parts squandered: "though that forest had been logged for centuries there were no waste places in it, no desolations of stumps, no eroded slopes. It seemed that every tree in it was accounted for, and that not one grain of sawdust from our mill went unused" (175). Goods in Le Guin's text, described without sensational details, are useful and sustainable.

Likewise, Genly remarks that Gethenian food is detached from sensory modalities. For example, food is hearty yet tasteless: "most of the food he had laid in previously was 'hyper-food' rations, a fortified, dehydrated, compressed, cubed mixture of high-energy foods—the Orgota name for it is gichy-michy" (206). For humans, eating involves both physical consumption and sensory enjoyment as our perceptual organs for smell, sight, touch, and taste are all activated. The Gethenian approach to eating renders it pleasureless by stripping it of these fundamental attributes. Instead, it is optimised for function

as food is carefully rationed to minimise consumption and maximise nutritional value: “[Estraven] knew, as do many Gethenians, the caloric and nutritive value of each food; he knew his own requirements under various conditions, and how to estimate [Genly Ai’s] pretty closely” (206). In *Lolita*, gustation is directly linked to Humbert’s sexual pleasure (Tolstoy 224); conversely, Gethenians’ methodical and mathematical approach to eating reimagines it as nourishment without the seductive charm of consumption.

Just as the appliances and diet are without aesthetic appeal, the Gethenian climate is without sensory qualities: the planet is permanently encased in snow and ice (Le Guin 220-221). When Estraven and Genly Ai traverse a glacier, it is described as an empty expanse: “across those valleys a great wall stood, a wall of ice, and raising our eyes up and still up to the rim of the wall we saw the Ice itself, the Gorbin Glacier, blinding and horizonless to the utmost north, a white, a white the eyes could not look on” (220). Ice surrounds the duo, encompassing them in what can only be visualised as monotonous whiteness. Impaired vision is reiterated in this passage: Genly refers to the glacier as “blinding” and as his eyes trace the icy facade, its brightness makes it so his “eyes could not look on” (220). Interestingly, Genly Ai remarks that the ice sheet is also devoid of auditory features: “in all the vast hilly country there was no sound” (211). The landscape—which lacks visual and auditory appeal—is therefore equated to a sensory vacuum, a stark opposition to Nabokov’s aesthetic creation. In this way, material products on Gethen are pragmatic, unsensational, and lessen the need to consume, and the planet itself is similarly un-aestheticized—it is the antithesis of 1960s America.

Much like the physical characteristics of the environment, the Gethenian concept of sexuality is divorced from sensuality. Importantly, sex is not absent from the narrative and instead is ingrained in the culture: on Gethen “room is made for sex, plenty of room; but a room, as it were, apart” (93). Gethenians’ sexual cycles are optimised for conception and reproductive impulses are biologically

determined. A previous human envoy, sent to Gethen before Genly Ai, writes a report on Gethenian sex and gender which explains that ‘kemmer’, “the culminant phase [...] lasts from two to five days, during which sexual drive and capacity are at a maximum. It ends abruptly, and if conception has not taken place, the individual returns to the somer phase within a few hours” (91). The aforementioned motif of utility replacing aesthetics culminates in the absence of the sex object: “there is no unconsenting sex, no rape. As with most mammals other than man, coitus can be performed only by mutual invitation and consent; otherwise it is not possible” (Le Guin 94). They do not aestheticize bodies as objects granting sexual satisfaction; therefore, sex is predictable and unthreatening. Consequently, *The Left Hand of Darkness* defies the inalienable link between sex and consumerism which typifies mid-century American culture.

Both Le Guin’s *The Left Hand of Darkness* and Nabokov’s *Lolita* contemplate the reality of the mid-twentieth century as a time defined by commodification. While Nabokov demonstrates how aestheticization of the female body reduces women to commodities themselves, Le Guin rejects aesthetics in her work. As a result, *The Left Hand of Darkness* envisions a non-patriarchal world without sensory appeals which, in *Lolita*, serve male pleasure. While Humbert of *Lolita* is inarguably misogynistic—specifically due to the sensationalisation and objectification of the female body for sexual gratification—Le Guin constructs a world where such injustices are inconceivable. Consequently, I believe that Le Guin’s novel should be acclaimed as a feminist text—one which disempowers the American zeitgeist of sensationalised materialism reinforcing the objectified feminine. Marcellino argues that the novel exemplifies a feminist theory of interdependence (206). Pennington eloquently asserts: “*The Left Hand of Darkness* resides in a no-(wo)man’s land—it is a simultaneously androcentric and feminist text” (353). However, I contend that a feminist reading of Le Guin’s novel is rooted, too, in the absence of aesthetics—a move that is in direct conversation with her historical moment. Her text points the finger at 1960s

consumer culture to warn readers about the dangers of falling prey to aesthetics, which are often used to belittle and harm women, in the modern marketplace and society at large.

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The Queer Surfacing of Captain Brierly: Examining Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* through Sara Ahmed's Queer Phenomenology

Kara Hagedorn

Abstract: Sara Ahmed's "Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology" (2006) asserts that queer bodies surface in the heteronormative landscape as disoriented in nature. Her theory of queer phenomenology provides a fresh instrument for exploring Captain Brierly's queer character in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1899). Captain Brierly's presence in the text is acute yet fleeting. The abrupt nature of his death by suicide disorients those who speak of his character. The language that describes his temperament breaks through the hetero-masculine mask of the sailors' disposition and invites a broader queer reading to Conrad's text.

Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1899) demands a queer interpretation. In my analysis of *Lord Jim*, I examine Captain Brierly's brief yet queer existence in the text. By queer, I am referring to the strange instances when Brierly's heterosexual masculinity is so perfected that it draws attention to its performance.¹ As a result, Brierly's performance is no longer just a question of being associated with heterosexual masculinity, but how it masks a homosexual orientation. Indeed, as Brierly presides as a judge in Jim's hearing, his reaction to Marlow's decision to jump from the Patna can be read as queer. By analysing Brierly and Marlow's interactions as captains and as sailors respectively, I argue that their queer linguistics also reveal the ship to be a designated queer space. Accordingly, I apply Sara Ahmed's queer phenomenology to the linguistic structure of Brierly's in-

1 For more on gender performativity and social politics, please see Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990), and *Undoing Gender* (2004).

teraction with Marlow as a means of examining Brierly's intense discomfort towards Jim's decision to abandon the Patna along with its passengers. For Brierly, Jim's abandonment not only draws attention to the ship as a queer space, but forces Brierly to face his own closeted self. By examining how Captain Brierly's presence in *Lord Jim* re-orientates the novel as a queer text, we can re-conceptualise elements of the colonial frontier as a queer space. I believe the task of 21st-century queer scholars is to unearth hidden histories of queer spaces in classic Western literature. Therefore, the aim of my argument is to add to the growing queer literary analysis of Conrad's work² by re-examining the landscape of *Lord Jim* as one that is both colonial and queer.

In "(Post)colonial, Queer: *Lord Jim*" (2012), William Lee Hughes overlaps colonial theory with queer theory to explore the deep homosocial³ undertones of Jim and Marlow's relationship.⁴ Hughes' analysis argues that a queer colonial reading of *Lord Jim* begins with the "triangulations of desire" between Marlow, Jim, and the "audience" (72). Hughes situates the "Orient" as a discourse in Marlow's narrative structure as well. The "Orient," according to Hughes, is necessary because it stabilises "Jim's place in the text as occidental and masculine" for "imperialism and colonialism ... to be effective" (72). Although I agree with Hughes' method of combining queer and colonial theory, I argue that the first queer-coded slips in the novel begins with Brierly and Marlow's interactions. Instead of examining the queer

2 For more on academic literature regarding Joseph Conrad's life and work, please see Richard Ruppel's *Homosexuality in the Life and Work of Joseph Conrad: Love between the Lines* (2008) and Philip Holden's *Imperial Desire: Dissident Sexualities And Colonial Literature* (2003), specifically, Richard Ruppel's essay "'Girl! What? Did I Mention a Girl?' The Economy of Desire in *Heart of Darkness*" (2003).

3 Designating social interaction between members of the same sex, esp. men; of, relating to, or characterised by such interaction. Contrasted with *heterosocial* (*OED*).

4 William Lee Hughes examines Jim and Marlow's relationship through Eve Sedgwick's schema the triangulation of desire from *Between Men* (1985). In doing so, the author argues that a queer reading of the text begins with the examination of Jim and Marlow's interactions through this specific schema.

presence that unfolds between Jim and Marlow, I insist that a queer reading of *Lord Jim* begins with an examination of Brierly and his emotional reaction to Jim's jump from the Patna. When queer scholars situate Brierly as the fulcrum for the text's queer analysis, the connection between queer orientations, imperialism, and heteronormativity broadens significantly.

To orientate *Lord Jim* as a queer text, I need to establish how England's colonial frontier doubles as a queer space. Industrial expansion in the 19th-century brought the Western world up to the edges of an unconquered space. England's naval industry and commerce excluded women and domestically orientated men, which made this frontier primarily populated by men alone. Indeed, if imperial expansion continued to exercise its power, the intimate lives of men operating within its space were free from the attention of the Empire.⁵ In *Orientalism*, Edward Said connects the space of "the Orient" to a "place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe" (190). Thus, for queer men in England during the 19th-century, the periphery of the British empire provided a "starting point for [their sexual] orientation" without fear of punishment or cultural ostracisation (Ahmed 545). The isolation of such a frontier drew in those seeking a space to escape the heterosexual decorum of 19th-century England. Therefore, my queer reading of *Lord Jim* is intimately linked to an examination of how Patna functions as two distinct entities: first as a floating signifier of Empire, and second as a queer territory for explorations of desire.

When a queer space exists in a realm that obfuscates its existence, a phenomenological approach can reveal the queer space's framework. In "Orientations: Towards a Queer Phenomenology," Sara Ahmed explains how one spatially orientates themselves to communicate their identity. According to Ahmed, a queer phenomenology begins

5 See Robert J. C. Young's *Empire, Colony, Postcolony* (2015), Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), and Hannah Arendt's "Theories of Imperialism" from *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951).

with the understanding that “consciousness is always directed towards objects” that give the individual a sense of their “orientation” in the world (544). For Ahmed, then, a queer phenomenological lens pays attention to what one is orientated towards and what is, by extension, “regulated to the background” (547). As a result, a closeted existence relegates the queer identity to the background to maintain a heterosexual performance in view. So, when Said’s Orient overlaps with Ahmed’s queer phenomenology, “the Orient” becomes a space that “relegates” compulsory heterosexuality⁶ to the “background” for English sailors not of the heterosexual persuasion in the 19th-century (Ahmed 547). Therefore, the colonial frontier doubles as a place for queer men to hide under the guise of imperial expansion. Duty, honour, and codes of heteronormative conduct can be understood as frameworks that uphold the space of Empire. To co-opt and perform this framework, then, becomes the mode of concealment for queer men in the colonial frontier. To amalgamate these spaces in *Lord Jim*, queer scholars can re-orientate our understanding of how Captain Brierly is a closeted homosexual man. In doing so, we have a better understanding of how and why Captain Brierly situates himself within the colonial frontier.

Notions of duty and honour are bound to heterosexual masculinity, which threads sexual ideology into the notion of Empire. Captain Brierly’s dedication to the colonial frontier forces him to submit to a performance of a sexual ideology that upholds the Empire. As a result, this submission doubles as an embodiment that denies his closeted self. Through a phenomenological queer lens, his commitment to notions of duty and honour takes on a double meaning. Specifically, it may serve to uphold colonial ideologies while also masking his queer sexual orientation. Accordingly, Mar-

6 Compulsory heterosexuality is the theory that heterosexuality is the assumed sexual orientation of all people, which is then used to enforce and sustain a patriarchal and heteronormative society. See Adrienne Rich’s 1980 essay entitled “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” for a thorough analysis.

low's description of his first impression of Brierly in court signals a heterosexual performance. For example, Marlow states that Brierly "had never in his life made a mistake, never had an accident, never a mishap, never a check in his steady rise" on his way to becoming a Captain (Conrad 81). Furthermore, Marlow emphasises Brierly's reputation of not knowing what "indecision" or "self-mistrust" feels like (81). Marlow adds weight to the value these traits have on Brierly's sense of self. Thus, from Marlow's perspective, Brierly "was acutely aware of his merits and his rewards" (81) to ensure his queer self remains below the surface.

A queer phenomenology, though, begs a question regarding Brierly's firm embodiment of his character traits. That is, we need to ask: what motivates Brierly's performance? To understand Brierly's desire to maintain a perfect record, then, we need to examine his character through a queer phenomenology. According to Ahmed, the objects "we direct our attention towards reveal the direction we have taken in life," which "relegates" aspects of ourselves "to the background" (546). For Brierly to direct his attention toward performing heterosexual masculinity, his queer sexual orientation gets "relegated to the background" (547). In doing so, Brierly's relegation upholds the social and "political" bond between heterosexual masculinity and imperialism (549). In other words, Brierly's dedication to upholding a dutiful position, the epitome of hyper-masculinity, calls into question the desire to sustain a straight orientation. From a queer phenomenological perspective, Brierly's performance becomes clear when it is re-orientated as a submission to the heteronormativity of imperialism.

The background of Brierly's character resides in the narrative structure of Marlow's description of Brierly's behaviour. Accordingly, when Marlow reflects on Brierly's state of "exasperation," Marlow begins to use his words hesitantly (Conrad 81). For example, when Marlow empathises with Brierly's "good [nature] and contemptuous pity" towards Jim, Marlow confesses that Brierly's humanity is an "attractive" quality (82). However, after noting this at-

tractive trait, Marlow quickly backtracks his sentiments by stating that he had “never defined” himself by “this attraction” (82). Yet, he admits that “there were moments” when he “envied” Brierly’s ability to “[present] his self-satisfaction” as a “surface as hard as granite” (82-3). On the surface, Marlow abruptly foregrounds his attraction to Brierly, then abruptly dismisses his own sentiments. However, Marlow brings his background to the fore through a formal semantic play. Just as quickly as the spatiality of the word “sentiment” is perceived, Marlow re-orientates the reader’s gaze on another simile of Brierly’s character: he is like stone. Indeed, a stone as dense as granite transfers the background to its rightful place once more. To Marlow, Brierly is enviable because he possesses such a firm hold on how he orientates himself. However, following Marlow’s encounter with Brierly, Marlow informs the reader that Brierly immediately dies by suicide. The abrupt passing of Brierly completely disrupts the interpretation of the text’s elucidation of Brierly’s honourable character. Accordingly, the death signals a re-interpretation of the linguistic framework of Brierly and Marlow’s dialogue. The question now becomes: what penetrates and disturbs Brierly’s commitment to duty and honour? Furthermore, once the reader is aware that Captain Brierly will die, readers are forced to re-interpret Brierly’s interactions with Marlow. Through the phenomenological lens, how Brierly interacts with Marlow on the topic of Jim unlocks the queer subtext.

Captain Brierly’s candid behaviour with Marlow signals a closeted culture between sailors of the 19th-century.⁷ In Chapter VI, the conversation between Brierly and Marlow is more than just a discussion about why Jim tortures himself by appearing in court. On the surface, Marlow and Brierly

7 For further reading on homosocial bonds in the maritime context please see Stephen Maynard “Making Waves: Gender and Sex in the History of Seafaring” (1993), Dian Murray’s “The Practice of Homosexuality Among the Pirates of Late 18th and Early 19th-Century China” (2017), and Nicole Keegan “Men and Matelotage: Sexuality and Same-Sex Relationships within Homosocial Structures in the Golden Age of Piracy, 1640-1720” (2017).

agree that Jim is putting himself under unnecessary stress. The language Brierly uses, though, alludes to a deep disturbance within himself, one that is linked to Jim's presence. When understood through a queer phenomenology, Brierly's fixation on Jim's behaviour reveals the undercurrent of Brierly's suppressed homosexual orientation. For example, at the beginning of their last conversation, Marlow describes Brierly as being in a "state of irritation," which contrasts with his typical mode of being "perfectly cool, with a trace of amused tolerance" (89). Moreover, Marlow continues to describe Brierly's composure as exhibiting a "pent-up violence" that comes across in a "hotly" manner too (89). As Brierly appears to be unsettled, Marlow decides to hold himself "aloof" during Brierly's tirade so that the dialogue remains superficial (89). In other words, Marlow is concerned that their discussion of Jim's characteristic behaviour might get Brierly so bothered that Brierly reveals his queer sexual disposition.

Between Marlow and Brierly, a language of the closet slips in the beginning of their conversations, which reveals the politics of the closeted homosexual.⁸ As the true meaning of their conversation comes to the surface, Brierly's homosexuality is relegated to the foreground. For example, when he abruptly admits that he feels "like a fool all of the time," this utterance echoes the underlying tension regarding his queer desires (89). Consequently, Marlow takes notice and acknowledges that "[such a comment] was going very far," especially regarding Brierly's character (89). For Brierly to reveal his inner tension between his performative and homosexual spaces, he betrays his relationship to the ship as a queer space. As the tension increases, it nearly pushes the closet door open, and the energy is palpable within the dialogue between the men. That is, when Brierly interrogates their process of "tormenting" Jim in court, Marlow admits that Brierly's tone "chimed ... so well to" his own "certain thoughts" as well (89). However, with a quick

8 For more on the politics of closeted homosexuals, please refer to the essay anthology *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, specifically Judith Butler's essay "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" (1993).

“cryptic” and sharp “utterance,” Marlow warns Brierly that he should not be “hung” up on Jim, and more importantly, to not “let” Jim into his head (89). As Marlow acknowledges that Brierly is “hanging” precariously too close to revealing himself (89). Furthermore, his direct tone attempts to bring Brierly away from the precipice of foregrounding the queer background. Thus, as Marlow emphasises the military parlance of Brierly “falling into line,” he hopes it will snap him out of his spiralling countenance (89). Indeed, Marlow can see Brierly’s orientation shifting, which is why he tries to refocus Brierly’s attention on his duties towards the court. For readers to understand the double meaning in dialogue, Jim’s presence signals a disturbance deep within Brierly’s concept of himself.

Through a queer phenomenological approach to Marlow and Brierly’s dialogue, we can examine how Jim destabilises Brierly’s performance. Keeping in mind, for Brierly to maintain his performance of heterosexual masculinity, his homosexuality must remain under the surface. Therefore, the space, the conduct, and Jim’s actions in the courtroom all have double meanings. For Brierly, Jim’s abandonment of the boat *Patna* symbolises two simultaneous things. First, it is a queer space, and as such, it must be protected and remain hidden. Secondly, the boat is a vehicle of imperial expansion. So, for Brierly, he must perform heterosexual masculinity within the ideals of Empire to maintain the queer space. Therefore, Brierly’s embodiment of duty and honour between sailors and Empire must be protected because the sailors are representatives of the two realms: queer refuge and Empire. For Brierly, the notion of duty overlaps with the two spaces as well. From Brierly’s perspective, Jim’s jump punctures through the double meanings that stabilise his performance. When Jim jumped from the *Patna*, his act was disruptive in two ways: first, it is an act of abandoning the ship *Patna* as it pertains to Empire and, secondly, to his homosexuality, respectively. In other words, from Brierly’s perspective, Jim simultaneously betrays the surface and the hidden. Therefore, Jim’s act of honesty, by presenting himself in court, undermines Brierly’s commitment to the act

of performance. Jim's jump represents the most reprehensible notion Brierly could imagine. The act of jumping off the *Patna* is to give into bodily desires of survival and the sense of responsibility toward the abandoned passengers of the ship.

By understanding the double meaning within Marlow and Brierly's language, Brierly's desperate attempt to make Jim scarce takes on a new significance. When Brierly admits that Jim ought to "run away" from the court proceedings immediately, an anxiety surfaces in his sense of urgency (90). Ironically, Brierly tells Marlow that Jim should "creep twenty feet underground" and disappear entirely (90). Such choice of words foregrounds the tension between surface appearances and what is hidden beneath. In this instance, though, Brierly subliminally infers that he fears Jim is drawing attention to the ship as a queer space. Marlow's retort encapsulates his desire to re-orientate Jim's willingness to face the consequences of his actions as a "kind of courage," which ought to be commended (90). However, Brierly refuses to entertain the idea that Jim's desire to be in court is courageous or even comparable to his own embodiment of duty and honour towards the Empire. Instead, Brierly insists that "that sort of courage is of no use to keep a man straight" (90). Whether the word straight was used in the 19th-century to indicate heterosexuality remains unknown.⁹ However, Brierly's refusal to agree with Marlow that Jim's courage is setting him on a straight path speaks to Brierly's insecurity towards Jim's behaviour, which brings attention to the ship as a queer space.

Another instance of irony occurs within this exchange as well. Marlow's use of the word courageous fits into the definition of what duty and honour means to Brierly. With Brierly's embodiment of such terms, Marlow assumes that he would agree with his definition of courageousness. According to Brierly, though, Jim being in court is "a kind of cowardice ... [a kind] of softness" as well (90). For Brierly

⁹ According to the *OED*, no working definition of straight referring to heterosexuality does not go as far back to the 19th-century.

to call Jim a coward is a queer reversal of his stance regarding bravery, indeed. Yet, through a queer phenomenological lens, the reversal of Brierly's framing of honour discloses something under the surface of Brierly's emotional state. If Brierly were to agree with Marlow that Jim is courageous, then Brierly would have to re-orientate his performance of duty in his mind. Indeed, from Brierly's perspective, if he admits that Jim is courageous, it would require a major shift in how Brierly identifies himself. Thus, to agree with Marlow would be relegating his dedication to the hetero performance and his duty to Empire to the foreground and agreeing that his is a mark of cowardice. So, for Brierly, to be present in court, to acknowledge what Jim represents, contradicts the basis of his entire orientation. Therefore, Jim's presence in court destabilises and collapses Brierly's entire orientation towards the duty of concealing his own homosexuality. Once his attention is on the truth of the orientation of his sexual desires, there is no way for him to go back. For Brierly, then, Jim is the "object" that causes him to completely re-orientate his attention (Ahmed 543). This new orientation brings Brierly face-to-face with his homosexuality that he relegates "to the background" of his sense of self (543).

In conclusion, Brierly's death by suicide not only represents an acknowledgment of the underlying fears of his own queer desires, but, ironically, echoes Jim's own jump from the Patna. For Brierly to abandon his post is an admission of the closet in his life. Through the act of jumping, Brierly embodies the desire that lurks below the surface of his heterosexual performance. Jim's choice to leap into the ocean is the beginning of his internal trial and his bond with Marlow. In contrast to Brierly, Jim's jump is the abandonment of the closet, which marks the beginning of *Lord Jim's* queer analysis for future 21st-century queer scholars.

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Yōko Ogawa's Subversion of the "Normal Life" in *The Housekeeper and the Professor*

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Abstract: In *The Housekeeper and the Professor* (2009), Yōko Ogawa explores domesticity and the everyday for an unconventional family. The everyday that Ogawa creates, however, is an intentional subversion of Japanese cultural expectations of a "normal life." These "normal life" ideals are supposed to be the only path to happiness; however, Ogawa's novel shows that there is more than one way to achieve fulfilment, despite the social pressure exerted through these ideals. In my analysis of Ogawa's novel, I engage with Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni's work on the Japanese "normal life." I argue that Ogawa breaks cultural expectations and subverts traditionally gendered associations of domestic duty. These subversions demonstrate that the culturally expected and patriarchally motivated "normal life" is not the only way to achieve fulfilment—manifested through the eclectic family in *The Housekeeper and the Professor*.

Yōko Ogawa's novel *The Housekeeper and the Professor* (2009) is a profoundly simple story of the everyday. However, this everyday is markedly different from the cultural expectations of the post-World War II "Bright New Life" (akarui seikatsu). This akarui seikatsu—a life of happiness and fulfilment—is supposed to be achieved through adherence to ideals of the "normal life" (Goldstein-Gidoni 282). Ogawa's novel subverts the promise of happiness in the Japanese "normal life" while simultaneously celebrating the products of domesticity that life encourages. In this paper, I analyse Ogawa's work through the lens of the "normal life" as described by Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni. I argue that the novel ascribes intellectualism and value to domestic labour that challenges the traditional ideal of the happy housewife. Ulti-

mately, the novel breaks Japanese cultural expectations and reorients our attitudes toward domesticity and the everyday. This subversion separates the traditionally gendered associations of domestic duties by subverting the expected link between the performance of expected domestic labour and the attainment of happiness. Ogawa's depiction of an eclectic family shows that the "normal life" is not the only path to happiness and fulfilment, even when social and cultural pressures informed by patriarchal structures exert immense force against such unconventional paths.

The *akarui seikatsu* emerged as a post-war attempt to rebuild Japan from inside the individual home. It was particularly marketed toward women as guiding their life path toward becoming "happy housewives" who build, maintain, and find joy in their homes (Goldstein-Gidoni 283). Ideal families were middle class, the husband a salaryman and the wife a full-time housewife. Japanese media emphasised the happiness of a "normal life"—the management of the home and fulfilment of social roles produced, above all else, a happy family. Though this "normal life" involves a husband, wife, and children, as Goldstein-Gidoni argues, "Surely, responsibility for producing this normal happiness lies in the hands of no other than 'normal housewives'" (289). Thus, the marketing of a normal, happy life was targeted primarily at women.

Ogawa subverts the "normal life" ideal in her portrayal of a happy family that does not fit into the essential elements: a heteronormative nuclear family, a marriage that precedes parenthood, and a clear division of labour between the man and woman (Goldstein-Gidoni 283). The man is responsible for working and providing financially and the woman for all domestic and everyday tasks of the home. This arrangement produces two important consequences. Firstly, labour, designated as feminine, is compensated non-monetarily. The housewife is rewarded for her efforts with the happy life *akarui seikatsu* promises. Her happiness is ultimately the happiness of her home, and she performs her role enthusiastically. Secondly, the husband is removed from the performance of domesticity. Ogawa's novel subverts this "normal

life” by celebrating domesticity in a family that does not abide by these traditional roles. Rather than rejecting the power of feminine labour by emphasising its non-monetary value or suggesting it requires less skill, Ogawa levels it in value with societally recognised masculine labour.

Subversion via Unconventional Family

Ogawa’s primary subversion of the “normal life” ideal is achieved through her unconventional presentation of family. Throughout the novel, the Housekeeper and her son, Root, start to form a family with the Professor, who employs her. The Housekeeper is positioned uniquely to traditionally feminine roles, including her own motherhood and her performance of domestic labour. The Professor begins to act as a father figure to Root, embracing and enjoying a kind of parental role that also goes against the detached breadwinning salaryman portrayed by “normal life” ideals. By removing the strict barriers of the nuclear family, Ogawa demonstrates the love and happiness that can be equally achieved outside the constraints of gendered social roles.

The Housekeeper subverts both the roles of wife and mother. She is a single mother and is connected non-romantically to Root’s father figure, the Professor. Notably, the Housekeeper expresses a sense of alienation from her own state of motherhood: “When I first saw him in the hospital nursery, I felt something closer to fear than to joy ... His tiny arms and legs ... flailed from time to time as if in protest at having been left here by mistake” (Ogawa 30). Ogawa weaves an estranged motherhood into the fabric of her relationship with Root. The use of “mistake” and “fear” here suggest that the Housekeeper does not conceptualise her self-identity with motherhood. Comparatively, in Japanese femininity, “motherhood is synonymous with femininity to the point that it ‘ellipses all other identities’” (Charlebois 6). It is expected that women follow a typical path from their career through to marriage, leaving their jobs to embody their new role as housewives. Any diversion from this norm—such as being unmarried, continuing work, or not having children—signals a failure to follow a life plan that promises

happiness. The Housekeeper's embodiment of such diversions establishes a firm subversion of the Japanese nuclear family. In the "normal life," embracing and identifying with motherhood signals belonging to a fulfilling and important role in society and the family. By portraying the Housekeeper as alienated from this kind of fulfilment, Ogawa challenges the expectation that motherhood is a goal or purpose of womanhood, and that the fulfilment of this purpose always produces happiness (Goldstein-Gidoni 287).

The Professor, too, subverts "normal life" ideals through his deep involvement in Root's life as a father figure. Where the man of the home is typically detached from childrearing and is engaged in the family primarily as a breadwinner, the Professor becomes very close to Root (Goldstein-Gidoni 290). The Housekeeper remarks that "for him ... children were the foundation of everything worthwhile in the adult world" (Ogawa 130). This is demonstrated throughout the novel: the Professor's most intense moments of distress occur when Root is in danger and the Professor takes on a parental instinct. When Root is injured by a knife, the Professor panics and cries with worry (68). He encourages Root to eat more (29), shields him from rogue baseballs (95), and defends him from his sister-in-law's interrogation (120). All of these instances convey a strong sense of duty and protection characteristic of an involved parent.

Moreover, the Professor is also involved with Root's intellectual development, a task that also typically falls on women in the "normal life." Mothers in Japan are typically responsible for their children's educational success (Charlebois 5). Conversely, in Ogawa's novel, Root is educated by his father figure. The Professor challenges him with difficult problems and encourages his interest in mathematics. The Housekeeper comments on his teaching ability, noting that "it occurred to me that all parents should be giving this kind of help to their children" (Ogawa 35). Thus, the Professor becomes a kind of co-parent, which is fundamentally distinct from the post-war nuclear family. This involvement of the "father" in child rearing—as well as the happiness both the Professor and Root experience as a result—serves as an important challenge to the "normal life" ideal.

The second mode of subversion Ogawa uses is the empowerment of inferiorised feminine labour. The Housekeeper's domestic labour is valued monetarily and is acknowledged by the Professor as intellectually skilled, but still produces happiness as the "normal life" suggests. Ogawa subverts this division and valuing of labour in two main ways. Firstly, Ogawa's unconventional family removes traditional economic dependencies. In the Japanese "normal life," the husband provides for the family, but in the novel, the Professor's sister-in-law economically provides for him and the Housekeeper. While the Housekeeper is still financially reliant on the Professor, this dependence is removed to the connection to the sister-in-law, rather than him directly.

Another key difference between the Housekeeper and the "happy housewife" is the nature of happiness. In ideal iterations of the housewife, she is smiling, enthusiastic, and proud to carry out her duties (Goldstein-Gidoni 290). This happiness is ultimately performative; the image of a woman happily doing her job feeds into her self-perception as being a happy woman. She enthusiastically participates in child-rearing, cooking, and cleaning, though perhaps not genuinely. Though Japanese women may realise that this image is ultimately fake, they participate in the fantasy as part of the cultural fabric that expects them to do so, and that promises them happiness through the performance of that image (Goldstein-Gidoni 294). The Housekeeper, conversely, performs her role well, but not as a means to achieve happiness. The happiness she eventually feels toward her work emerges from a sense of genuine pride:

I looked at the food I had just finished preparing and then at my hands. Sauteed pork garnished with lemon, a salad, and a soft, yellow omelet. I studied the 2 dishes, one by one. They were all perfectly ordinary, but they looked delicious—satisfying food at the end of a long day. I looked at my palms again, filled suddenly with an absurd sense of satisfaction, as though I had just solved Fermat's Last Theorem. (Ogawa 135)

This passage illustrates the external validation of her domestic labour. The Housekeeper sees her contribution to the happiness of their family. Moreover, there is a unique ascription of intellectualism in the comparison to solving a mathematical problem. This passage thus levels the oft-appreciated masculine labour—the Professor’s math—with the everyday feminine labour the Housekeeper performs. It is an intrinsically productive act no less rational, skilled, or methodical than mathematics. Thus, unlike the housewife who continually works “believing that one day [her husband and children] will understand the value of her existence” (Goldstein-Gidoni 290), the Housekeeper receives more immediate external affirmation of her value. The Professor empowers the domestic by ascribing it methodical and intellectual rigour. Her pride and happiness with her work are non-performative. Domesticity produces a happy family when it is valued, appreciated, and acknowledged. This genuine happiness stands in opposition to the happiness that the “normal life” promises, where a strong sense of duty toward one’s role as a homemaker itself necessitates a somewhat performative “happiness” in doing that role (Goldstein-Gidoni 289).

The final sense of subversion occurs in the Professor’s gradual involvement in domesticity. In *The Poetics of Space* (1994), Gaston Bachelard acknowledges that “in the intimate harmony of walls and furniture, it may be said that we become conscious of a house that is built by women” (68). The masculine is traditionally removed from the nurturing power of the home. Susan Fraiman notes that, in Bachelard’s writing, his appreciation for personally performing domestic tasks stems from performing them out of choice, rather than necessity (347). In the absence of his housekeeper, Bachelard notes the creative power of consciousness in the domestic task. As Fraiman describes, “wiping a table is no longer a routine act of maintenance but a singular act of creation, quite akin to God breathing life into Adam” (347). The Professor, unlike Bachelard, does not separate the labour from the person: he sees the work done by the Housekeep-

er as hers. It is not merely that the Professor appreciates domestic labour when he does it voluntarily, but that he sees it as a genuinely valuable and intelligent act that marks the power and capability of its performer, the Housekeeper. The traditionally feminine body responsible for the work is more than a body keeping things in order; she is a mind, a person, a solver of theorems. When the Professor says, “I like to watch you cook”, he importantly includes the “you” (Ogawa 134). The act of domesticity itself is not separated from its agent; he does not like to watch merely the cooking itself. Where Bachelard appreciates such labour only when he performs it himself, the Professor is able to see its power and value unified with the Housekeeper as a capable and valuable person, not just as a part of the maintenance of his home.

Further, the Professor actively participates in domestic labour, a role entirely reserved for women in the ideal image of a Japanese nuclear family. For instance, before Root’s birthday party, the Professor takes an active role in cleaning and preparations. He applies his mathematical mind to domestic tasks: when he irons a tablecloth, he performs the task with method, thoughtfulness, and precision, “like the good mathematician he was” (Ogawa 167). His involvement shows a reconceptualisation of the domestic, wherein the masculine both participates in and appreciates inferiorised feminine labour. The Professor finds genuine joy by taking part in areas he would not be expected to. Thus, the Professor also achieves unexpected fulfilment when his role challenges the expectations of masculinity enforced by the “normal life” ideal. Here, his own diversion from the masculine expectations of the “normal life” makes him genuinely happy, signalling again that the “normal life” is not the only way to achieve happiness for men as well as women.

Ogawa’s *The Housekeeper and the Professor* details the struggle between norms that promise fulfilment by adhering to the status quo, and powerfully illustrates a more genuine happiness achieved by going against those norms. Through its presentation of an unconventional family, the empowerment of domestic labour, and masculine partici-

pation in domesticity, it challenges the cultural and social norms of the Japanese nuclear family. The Housekeeper's genuine happiness, found through her unique relationship to motherhood and feminine labour, opposes the ultimately performative happiness promised by the ideals of the "normal life." By subverting these norms, Ogawa depicts domestic labour as skilled, intellectual, and separated from gender roles, showing that our chosen families and mutual appreciation are the true path to a "Bright New Life."

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“Out here you’re just in the wind”: The Liminal World of The Oil Sands in Kate Beaton’s *Ducks*

Kalea Furmanek-Raposo

Abstract: This paper examines how Kate Beaton represents the Alberta oil sands in her graphic memoir *Ducks* (2022). Taking an interdisciplinary approach that draws on comics studies and contemporary ethnographies, I argue that Beaton’s visual and textual details make the oil sands a liminal space. I explore how Beaton draws on shades of grey to visually establish this space between the boundaries of life and work, even as she conveys the harsh realities of such a transitory existence within the narrative. However, her solid black panels speak to the emotional consequences (such as disassociation, drug use, and infidelity) of such a life on the workers. Ultimately, Beaton’s memoir demonstrates how the liminal world of the oil sands ignores the humanity of its workers.

Kate Beaton’s graphic memoir *Ducks* (2022) digs into the world of the Alberta oil sands. During her time in the oil sands, the protagonist, Katie, witnesses how sexism, environmental degradation, and capitalist greed can exist in the same space as empathy, bravery, and familial care. For example, Katie encounters sexism in the lack of respect shown to female workers; she sees environmental damage in the titular incident wherein hundreds of ducks die at one of the mines, and she perceives the bravery and care of the employees who push themselves to provide for their families despite their dangerous and lonely work environment. However, the oil sands are certainly not a neutral space in her narrative. Beaton highlights the fact that the oil sands foster a lack of moral responsibility. That is, it is difficult to discern good and bad in this space. I argue that Beaton’s

carefully chosen visual and textual details make her world a liminal space.

I refer to “liminal space” in terms of a world “on a boundary or threshold, especially by being transitional or intermediate” (“Liminal,” def. A.2). This understanding of liminality stems from cultural anthropology: Arnold Van Gennep coined the term “liminality” in 1903 in the context of coming-of-age rituals, and anthropologist Victor Turner expanded it to broadly refer to the state “between” states of being (Buchanan n.p.). Recent criticism (such as that of Matthew Bamber et al. and Sara Dorow and Sandrine Jean) explores the anthropological understanding of liminality in workplaces with temporary employees.

Beaton demonstrates the consequences of life in a liminal world through her use of shades of black and white rather than colour. She thus makes the oil sands an actual grey zone that views what goes on within it as beyond normal moral categories (such as good, bad, or neutral). Furthermore, her panel arrangement and cartoonish style does not soften the distressing aspects of life in the camps—instead, the familiarity of her visuals emphasises how abusive events and behaviours (such as causal misogyny) are commonplace in such a space. However, she does turn to solid black panels to draw the reader’s attention to the long-term emotional impact of this world on Katie. Beaton’s text thus explores what happens when corporations blend life and work into a single space without a sense of permanence. By treating their employees as expendable resources, the oil companies in *Ducks* not only devalue the humanity of their workers but also prioritise the belief that people live temporarily and in sole service of profit.

Ducks episodically tells the story of Katie Beaton’s two years working in the Alberta oil sands between 2005 and 2008. She works for Syncrude (at the Mildred Lake and Aurora mines), Shell (at Albion Sands), and Opti Nexen (at Long Lake). After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts and suffocating student loans, Katie leaves her home of Cape Bretton, Nova Scotia and travels to Fort McMurray, Alberta

to find employment in the oil fields.¹⁰ Katie feels the physical toll of working long hours surrounded by pollution. For example, she develops a cough and a rash. She acclimates to causal misogyny and sexual harassment as a woman in a workplace dominated by men. Katie witnesses workers sustain injuries or die operating heavy equipment or driving to and from base. Yet, the environmental impact of their work—rather than the human cost—garners media attention when *The New York Times* reports on the five hundred ducks that die in a Syncrude tailings pond.¹¹ As Katie moves from one site to another, she forms connections with other workers who left their homes and families.¹² When she leaves the oil sands for good, Katie realises that she will continue to carry this world with her.

Beaton textually explores liminality in her narrative through her characters' conversations. Bamber et al. describe occupational liminality as a "revolving doorway" where workers separate themselves from their normal identities when they enter the workplace and reclaim their identity when they leave (686). However, *Ducks* demonstrates that the prolonged nature of work in the oil sands complicates the idea that workers can simply reclaim the identity that they leave behind. Beaton explores such a liminal dilemma in a conversation between Katie and Ambrose. Ambrose says, "you know, we're all in two places here. And we can get caught up in that in our own way." Katie replies, "well I'm not staying." "That may be. But people kid themselves if they think the only life they're living is somewhere

10 Beaton notes that the fish, steel, and coal industries that once supported the people of Cape Breton dried up, forcing the residents to find work away from home (10–13). She adds that her leaving to find work in Western Canada is part of a long and sad tradition in Atlantic Canada (Beaton 10).

11 A tailings pond is a large pool that collects the leftover water, sediment, and bitumen that mining and drilling creates (Barber).

12 Such workers—who appear in this essay—include Ambrose (a foreman from Newfoundland who drives Katie to base), Leon (a tool crib lead hand from Alberta who adores his wife), Mike (the mechanic from B.C. who Katie dates), Ryan (a foreman from B.C. providing for his two young daughters), and Norman (a mechanic from Alberta learning photography).

else,” Ambrose retorts. Katie jokes, “I don’t have a life here or anywhere else at this point!” (133). Katie gives up her home, family, friends, and aspirations to make quick money in a few years. As a result, she exists in a temporary space between her old self and future freedom from debt. Ambrose’s insistence that “we’re all in two places” and Katie’s interactions with other workers throughout the novel indicates that she is not alone in this experience (133). Fittingly, Beaton delivers Katie and Ambrose’s exchange about living in an in-between world in shades of grey—a shade in-between black and white—to visually complement the liminality of the world that her characters inhabit.

The prominence of grey in *Ducks* suggests a deliberate and thematic choice given its stylistic departure from Beaton’s previous works. Beaton’s use of grey in *Ducks* contrasts the black and white of her previous work, *Hark! A Vagrant* (2011). *Ducks* maintains the same crisp black outlines and cartoonish style as her earlier comics in *Hark! A Vagrant*—but some of the comics in this collection do not include any grey at all. For example, “Dude Watchin’ With the Brontës” preserves a simple division between black and white (Beaton, *Hark!* 9). In contrast, *Ducks* bleeds these binaries into each other, inviting the reader to look for complexities. Beaton’s use of grey extends from the panels within her memoir to the full-page illustrations, the endpapers, and even the cover; notably, *Hark! A Vagrant* includes a full colour cover. For example, on the cover of *Ducks*, Beaton not only opts for grey rather than colour but also chooses a decidedly liminal image that does not appear within the novel at all. *Ducks*’s cover shows Katie on a heavy hauler (a machine that she never operates) looking out from the Alberta oil sands to the shores of Nova Scotia (a geographically impossible scenario). The grey cover epitomises Katie’s experience of liminality during her time in the oil sands: she does not think that that she is truly living in Alberta, nor living the life that she wants to in Nova Scotia. Beaton’s move to grey thus proposes a purposeful visual choice that complements her textual construction of a liminal world. Her panel arrangement similarly functions thematically.

Beaton's panel arrangement reinforces the normality of alarming events in the oil sands. In graphic novels, the number of panels, the size of the panels, and the size of the gutters (the empty space surrounding panels [McCloud 66]) can serve both visual and narrative purposes (Brunetti 49). Beaton varies the size and amount of her panels throughout the story,¹³ but she largely uses democratic panel arrangement during distressing scenes. Comics scholar Ivan Brunetti refers to "democratic panels" as "panels that are all exactly the same size, from which we can infer their equal weight and value in the 'grand scheme' of the page" (45). Democratic panels deliver the following conversation between Mike and Katie about Leon: "He is sleeping with one of the cleaning ladies. And they could hear it through the wall but no one knew who it was till today so they thought it was you!" Mike exclaims (Beaton 185). "Wait Leon is married," says Katie. "Yeah so?" asks Mike. Katie says, "No, he has a wife, he—his baby, the picture..." (186). Although the dialogue conveys Katie's shock at Leon's infidelity, the democratic panel arrangement—along with her tired expression and the punctuation that draws out her protests—contradict her surprise. Beaton does not make a visual statement about infidelity or the misogyny of the men around Katie by varying the size or position of her panels. Rather, she conveys Katie's growing desensitisation to the world around her. Scholars Dorow and Jean study liminal time and its consequences in the Albertan oil sands. They discuss dissociative strategies similar to those that the characters in *Ducks* employ: "a number of workers told us they strive to be busy (...) so as not to dwell on the depressing distance from family and social life" (Dorow and Jean 694). Beaton's democratic panels leave space for empathy for those characters coping with the extreme loneliness of the camps through damaging means (e.g., Leon's infidelity and Ryan's drug use). However, Beaton unambiguously establishes the immorality of sexual assault through her visual and verbal details.

13 For example, she also includes full page panels and hierarchal panels (wherein some or all panels on the page vary in size).

Beaton does not exclusively use grey; indeed, solid black emphasises the long-term emotional consequences of living in the oil sands. For example, the scene of Katie's first sexual assault features black panels. Beaton intersperses this scene with black—rather than grey—to visually convey the negative consequences of living in a liminal world that obstructs employees' sense of moral responsibility. When the man grabs Katie's shoulder, four black panels appear on the following page (Beaton 192–93). Although the panels in this scene remain democratic, their vertical arrangement, large gutters, and the lack of page numbers constitute an abrupt change in form that matches their alarming contents (191–196). Furthermore, the black panels deny the reader straightforward closure.¹⁴ Comics scholar Scott McCloud writes, "comics panels fracture both time and space, offering a jagged staccato rhythm of unconnected moments. But closure allows us to connect these moments and mentally construct a continuous unified reality" (67). Beaton's page of black panels leaves the reader in a state of anxious anticipation "between" the moments before and after Katie's assault. Notably, the first man who assaults Katie does so the day his contract ends: "contract's up. Finally leaving this dump" (Beaton 189). When reflecting on her assault, Katie says, "I could have yelled. But he was leaving" (380). Existing in a liminal world thus not only creates a sense of impermanence that encourages instant gratification (as Katie's experiences with sexual assault and drug use demonstrate¹⁵) and exploitative behaviour but also discourages a sense of moral responsibility and resistance.¹⁶

While I argue that Beaton's grey visuals depict the oil sands as a space that evades moral categorisation, the solid black pages suggest that this liminal world has a nega-

14 McCloud defines closure as the "phenomenon of observing the part but perceiving the whole" (63).

15 Specifically, Katie's boss Ryan develops a drug addiction that impacts his work performance and family life (Beaton 387).

16 For example, when Katie informs her boss that the behaviour of her male co-workers makes her uncomfortable, he tells her to "get a thicker skin" (Beaton 165). Katie accepts his response (and even apologises for complaining) since her work is temporary.

tive effect on Katie. Beaton includes solid grey pages and full-page illustrations to separate episodes. The only solid black pages occur after Katie experiences sexual assaults (197–98, 215–16).¹⁷ Beaton follows the first black page with a conversation between Katie and Leon—who Katie now knows cheats on the wife who he praises earlier in the narrative (173). Katie asks, “Leon, do you think you’re different since you came here. Do you think people are different at home than they are here?” Leon responds, “course they are. This is a rat cage.” “But, are they different forever? People do things here they wouldn’t do at home,” Katie says. “People are bored and crazy,” retorts Leon. “But is that who they really are? Or are they who they are at home?” asks Katie (201). Beaton’s solid black pages not only speak to the unspeakable damage left by sexual assault, but also create the impression that any answers to Katie’s questions will not fill the void created by splitting a person between two worlds. Dorow and Jean remark that prolonged exposure to the liminal world of the oil sands has “psychological and physical costs, from mental exhaustion to anxiety and disorientation” (698). Through the simple black page, Beaton conveys the enormity of the anxiety and disorientation that Katie feels. In another conversation with Leon, after her second sexual assault,¹⁸ Katie asks, “why would anyone come here knowing it could tear their life apart.” She continues, “out here you’re just, in the wind” (Beaton 232). Despite her questions about other workers’ life choices, Katie herself continues to work in this world that is tearing her apart. Katie’s anxiety, dissociation, and disregard for her own mental and physical wellbeing typify the negative impacts of the liminal world of the oil sands—where morality is indistinct, so people are morally irresponsible.

Beaton includes instances of kindness that highlight

17 I consider the other black pages illustrations because they include a full-page image of Syncrude, the stars, the moon, or the northern lights (Beaton 43, 99, 299, 398). Furthermore, many of these black pages are not double-sided while the solid black pages are double-sided.

18 Katie’s conversation with Mike about Leon’s infidelity and Katie and Leon’s conversations about camp life bracket and separate her sexual assaults.

the goodness that Katie encounters during her time in the oil sands. In fact, most men that Katie interacts with daily do not bother her. She even exclaims, “I mean, how many men here are also just fine and say nothing to us? There’s hundreds of those ... They are still my people, even at their worst” (377). For example, a man brings Katie cookies during her night shift on Christmas because he knew that she was alone, Norman gives her large prints of photos he took of Long Lake and the northern lights because he knew that she liked them, and the other workers enjoy the comics that she makes in her spare time (95, 401, 313). Beaton thus empathetically communicates the fact that the other characters are also just people suffering from the loneliness and isolation brought on by living in a liminal world. However, Syncrude, Shell, and Opti Nexen approach their workers the same way they approach the environment: both are expendable resources.

Beaton establishes parallels between the oil sands workers and the environment throughout her memoir. The highly public death of the ducks in the tailing pond follows two scenes where the oil sands puts employees’ lives at risk (that is, they are figuratively ‘sitting ducks’) (329, 324, 326).¹⁹ Syncrude has buffalo that they show off to prove their environmental dedication much like Shell whose executive singles out Katie (the only woman in the room) to document their workplace equality (67, 309). Finally, the three-legged fox that Katie discourages from coming back to the mines mirrors the workers (like herself) who come back to the oil sands despite suffering physical and or emotional trauma (like Katie’s sexual assaults) at its hands (63). The liminal world created by these companies forces workers to become someone between the person they left home as and who they will become after experiencing hard environmentally and bodily damaging labour, extreme loneliness, and casual brutality.

19 Specifically, their plane out of the camp catches fire and the employees must sit through a redundant safety briefing about how ice is dangerous because it is slippery.

Ducks represents the Alberta oil sands as a world where people put their lives and their values on hold in the name of profit. Beaton includes both humanity's light and dark sides in her visual and textual details; indeed, what leaves a mark on her characters is the liminal world that capitalism creates. Although Beaton complicates normal moral categories within the oil sands, this liminal world's sense of impermanence fosters an environment rife with opportunities for unchecked abuse, which has negative long-term consequences. In the oil sands, the lives of employees like environmental resources are consumable and economically replaceable. Nothing in this world persists except, perhaps, emotional damage.

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“Signs on a White Field”: The Shadow of *Ulysses*

Erin Kroi

Abstract: This essay employs a poststructuralist approach to James Joyce’s *Ulysses* through affect: the dynamic method that considers bodies and their sensory experiences alongside the emotionally-formed forces that motivate them into relation. Through the examination of my own encounter with the Robert Amos painting, *Dedalus on the Shore* (2016), and the Proteus episode of *Ulysses* it depicts, I advocate for the novel’s endurance as a global cultural monument beyond its high-literary disposition. Utilising Rita Felski’s discussion of Edmund Husserl’s phenomenology, I explore reproductions of *Ulysses* that shift focus from the novel’s stature in literary history to the influential power engendered by its essence, and our delight in its stylistic whims.



Figure 1. The shadow of Stephen Dedalus, from Robert Amos’s *Dedalus on the Shore*.

Let the reader meet me in my cacophony of Joycean inquiry, beginning with the title of this essay, “The Shadow of *Ulysses*.” What I refer to throughout this paper as the shadow of Joyce’s preeminent work is a metaphorical mechanism describing a residual *Ulysses*—a theoretical resimulation of the text. This does not describe a physical revision of *Ulysses* through the manipulation of text. I point to an abstract re-rendering of the novel produced by each reader, as the reader’s individual experience guides the experience of the novel, extracting it from its context and generating new meaning. My encounter with a *Ulysses*-inspired artwork compelled me to modify my perspective of Joyce’s century-old monument of the literary canon: the shadow of Stephen Dedalus, illustrated by Robert Amos (see figure 1). Stephen’s shadow is a small fragment of Amos’s large, unfolding work, *Dedalus on the Shore* (2016), a contemporary reimagining of a modernist moment. The painting depicts Stephen traversing the Sandymount Strand in “Proteus,” the closing chapter of “The Telemachiad”—the novel’s first part. Struck by poetic epiphany, an amateur poetic Stephen begins scrawling on a paper scrap. He glimpses his own shadow in the sand and ponders its limits, simultaneously contemplating the limits of his metaphysical shadow—the possibility of an undying intellectual splendour he longs to achieve. I consider the image of Stephen as not the man but the shadow, and then contemplate *Ulysses* as not the novel (the object within its context) but as the abstract imprint cultivated through the novel’s gyration through ever-evolving contexts. As Stephen contemplates the limitations of his own shadow, I explore the expansion of *Ulysses*, liberated from the search for employed meaning within its referentially rich pages, instead reproduced through the possibility engendered by the reader’s transformative reception of the text. I assert *Ulysses* as an intuitively powerful work, not alone an intellectually reverberant one.

My perspective of Amos’s illustration converges with my experience of *Ulysses*. I view Amos’s depiction of the closing “Proteus,” and am transported to the nearly final moments of the labyrinthine episode stimulated by the in-

trospective journey of Stephen. I consider the intimacy of my own relationship to the text that forms the painting, and the knowing power I possess over a viewer unfamiliar with the Joycean context. Amos's work coagulates from the literary canon; arguably, so does its meaning. But the so-called power I contemplate barricades the aesthetic experience, and the possibility of meaning, with cultural capital. To greet Amos's work strictly as an appendage of *Ulysses* is to stifle inspired artistic engagement with the false conception that all there is to gain from the painting has already been extracted from *Ulysses*. Without its literary context, the painting remains a work of art that is subject to consideration and the desire to find meaning within it. After all, the painting is entitled *Dedalus on the Shore*, yet it does not picture Stephen in physical form. The work pictures Stephen's shadow moving along the unravelling parchment shore, and a vaguely man-shaped form composed of blue watercolour (reproduced here in black and white). Not Stephen himself, but his imprint; the implication of him unbound by the limitations of form. In truth, the shadow is a better indication of his rootless identity and consuming trajectory of densely saturated thought than any rendering of his actual form could have expressed. Ineluctable modality of the visible: I retrace Amos's work, lending my experience of *Dedalus on the Shore* to my experience of visual sense. Minimal. Focality concentrated in near-translucent man-shapes and ink splatterings, the rest deflected by negative space. Without the scatterings of text from *Ulysses*, the imagery does not divulge its context. Independent from the conception of a Stephen, without swarming fragments of *Ulysses* composing interpretations of the work, the contextual gap endues a possibility created in the impact of an interpreter's experience with a work of art.

Throughout the portions of *Ulysses* stimulated by Stephen's internal monologue, we see a character devised referentially, and a mind formulated from second-hand thoughts. "Proteus" depicts Stephen at his most emotionally vulnerable, and *Ulysses* at its most abandonable. In a *New York Times* article, J. D. Biersdorfer quotes Irish filmmaker

Eoghan Kidney stating, “people tend to put the book down during the first few episodes because it’s quite heavy with Stephen’s consciousness, which can be obscure” (Biersdorfer 2016). Those who abandon *Ulysses* during this episode are discouraged by the opaque expression of Stephen’s thoughts, and the perception that Joyce’s work is reserved for those select literary elites equipped with the canonical knowledge to decode the novel’s context. However, the form Stephen recognises in the sand is intellectually energetic, but not yet singularly impressive. The endless impression Stephen longs to envision can only be projected from the residue of his form by an interpreter. In relation to her application of Edmund Husserl’s phenomenology, Rita Felski criticises literary and cultural studies’ tendencies to embellish the facts of experience with mystifying qualities, rather than address that semi-conscious perception is the reality of everyday aesthetic experience. In “Everyday Aesthetics,” Felski posits the following:

What renders phenomenology a still timely framework is not Husserl’s attempt at a transcendental reduction—one more expression of a recurring philosophical ambition to escape one’s own shadow—but the gaze of wonder it directs at ordinary objects and mundane forms of feeling and thought. Its aim is to really see ordinary structures of experience—not in order to celebrate them or to trumpet their authenticity, but to gain a surer grasp of the ineluctable nature of our first-person relation to the world. (174)

I extend Felski’s assertion of a commonplace aesthetic experience to Amos’s painting, then further from the shadow of Dedalus to the shadow of *Ulysses*. From structural cultivation through the epic form of Homer’s *Odyssey* to thematic substance garnered from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, the text is formed through an explosion of literary and historical allusion. Joyce’s dense saturation of high literature weaves his modernist work into the catalogue of high-literary history that moulds it. Analysing the frames of reference within the text allows us to find hidden meaning, but is not neces-

sarily the meaning of the text. In accordance with Felski's assertion that art is "worldly, not otherworldly: not ineffable, untranslatable, or other" there is a vitality to *Ulysses*, unbridled by cultural capital, that is active and regenerative (171). This vitality is not elusive, or arduous to identify—it is not shrouded by belletristic projections decrypted through the literary canon, or else auspiciously unveiled in dreams. It can be named, and is named in representations of the text that are not centred around the dissection of the text's contents; rather, that are centred around what the reader makes of the novel and what the novel makes of its reader.

The shadow is the nexus between the physical and the mythical: it is one object's residual imprint onto another. It is not an original object, but an indication of how objects exist in overlay. The shadow is immaterial, phantasmagorical—a mirage beholden to the swift transfusion of time and light from an object to an observer. It is inseverable from and dependent upon the existence of a material object, which exists in some form of the present. We cannot completely interpret a shadow without the acknowledgement that it has an original form; however, we can acknowledge a shadow as a singular thing. We see the shadow of Stephen and know that there exists a Stephen that is the shadow's original context. However, as Amos illustrates, we do not have to examine the body of Stephen to make something of his shadow, born from yet independent of his original body. A freshly cultivated image, simultaneously dispatched from and true to the original form. Exposed through transformative receptions of *Ulysses*, the forms and frameworks through which we derive meaning from the text are susceptible to regeneration and decay, and the ability to derive meaning from the text expands and endures.

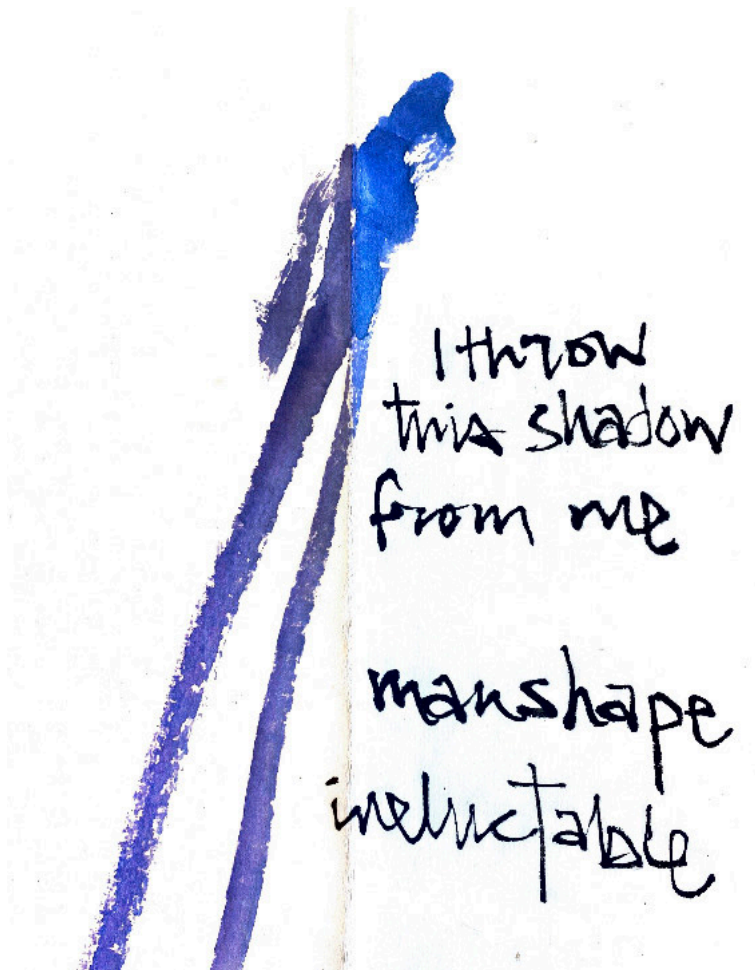


Figure 2. From Robert Amos's *Dedalus on the Shore*.

Through the genesis of a residual *Ulysses*, the catalyst of my swarming reflections on Amos's work, I meet Dedalus on the shore. Upon viewing his shadow, Stephen's internal monologue is propelled by the recognition of his physical

form's imprint before him. He calculates, "manshape ineluctable" (see figure 2). Stephen's shadow, as he perceives it in his present experience, is limited. It is reduced to a mark on the ground determined by the confines of his shape. It is inseverable from his present form and therefore inevitably restricted to his own perception. Stephen moves from calculations of the tangible and present sensory experience to ponder potentiality: "Who watches me here? Who ever anywhere will read these written words?"(see figure 3). Stephen hypothesises a viewer of his present moment. His shadow is immovable in the sand, impressed into the Sandymount Strand beyond his expedition across it. In an attempt to redirect my view of *Dedalus on the Shore* from the context of *Ulysses*, I inadvertently exposed the contextual vacuum between myself and the novel I love. I illuminated the divergence of my own experience from the world of Joyce and his modernist work in an effort to immerse myself in a discussion of context and affect. Here is an illustration of personal context, emblems on a page that convey the form of my experience, albeit void of the substance of character: I am an Albanian settler on unceded Canadian soil, a queer woman, a contemporary. I hold my own context up to that of *Ulysses* and examine: an English novel composed in Paris, Zurich, and Trieste, by a heterosexual, male, Irish author, officially published in 1922. The distance between myself and *Ulysses* is expounded by geography, identity, ideology, and a century. Where contextual commonality propels aesthetic pleasure, here is a chasm. Yet, my affection for the novel is irrefutable. I love it. Further, I see myself within it.



Stephen's shadow is equated to his poetic scraps, a formal element extending from his person, composing a residual Stephen. Markings reduced to physical shapes and ended by the momentary measurement of their composition. Stephen unites his actuality with his potential, liberating his thoughts from a hopeless destiny, expressing "Endless" (Joyce 48). With a breath of the word, he endows his world with a vision of the possible contained within the image impressed in the material: an endlessness empowered by

Stephen's relinquishing of power, or rather an acknowledgment of nonpossession over the transcendence of his ineluctable manshape into an endless form of his form. The possibility of "Endless," Stephen recognises, is realised by a viewer. I observe Stephen's emission of endlessness, facing his inquiry in retrospect, as a viewer intimate with the realisation of the novel's lasting impression. Though augmented through allusion to preceding canonical works, a reading of *Ulysses* is not ultimately fulfilled through the exhumation of its references. The novel lends the reader its experience through the reader's intuitive experience. This is the imperishable quality of *Ulysses*, evidenced by Amos's contemporary painting, and the regeneration of the text through intuitively transformative reception.

An immersion in affect extends beyond an exploration of my personal context in relation to that of the text: defining the shadow of *Ulysses* requires exploration of the readership onto which images of *Ulysses* are cast, and whose individualised extrapolations of meaning render *Ulysses* an intuitively powerful work. Through the following literary review, I assert the existence of a residual *Ulysses*—the vision of the novel that is rendered through the convergence of the reader's experience with the text.

In *The Illicit Joyce of Postmodernism: Reading Against the Grain*, Kevin J. H. Dettmar reassembles the works of Joyce through a postmodern lens. Dettmar indulges in the mystery of Joyce rather than the mastery. He states, "*Ulysses* is certainly a modernist classic," yet centres his discussion of the text on "its playful unwillingness to take itself or its modernist devices too seriously" (Dettmar 11). Rather than extrapolating the meaning of *Ulysses* from the fragments of

literary history or evidence of Joyce's voice within the text, Dettmar regenerates a personalised *Ulysses* that is "less interested in philosophical consistency than in discovery and delight" (2). Dettmar's warping of theoretical lenses is less advocating for a postmodernist *Ulysses* than it is exemplifying the vibrant and varying impressions of *Ulysses*. He demonstrates that while the physical text of *Ulysses* is unchanging, the meanings extracted from the text are unlimited, placeless, and subject to constant change.

Through similar mechanisms of manipulated perception, scholars such as Eishiro Ito and Krishna Sen regenerate *Ulysses* through ethnographic reception. They reclaim the text and unveil impressions which can be credibly excavated, but neglect secluded, traditional examinations. Eishiro Ito's article "United States of Asia: James Joyce and Japan" depicts a Joycean Japan, exposed through "the Japanese reception of Joyce from a postcolonial perspective" (Ito 194). Similarly, Krishna Sen unveils "ancient Indian philosophical and aesthetic systems" through expressions of epiphany in *Ulysses* (Sen 213). Both Ito and Sen briefly touch upon the relationship between Joyce's European modernism and Japan and India during the fabrication of *Ulysses*. However, the *Ulysses* made perceptible through their expositions is rendered through their transformative receptions of the text.

Ira Torressi's "Polysystems and the Postcolonial: The Wondrous Adventures of James Joyce and his *Ulysses* across Book Markets" contemplates the cultural journey of *Ulysses* from censored obscenity to undisputed masterwork of the literary canon. Torressi distinguishes the extensive translation of the text as the enabling instrument for the repossession of a distinctly Irish and modernist cultural marker

across the globe, unravelling the novel's migration "from the periphery to the centre of polysystems worldwide" (Torres-si 217). "Translation," she states, "can be a powerful actor of change in the original polysystem from which a work and/or author originate" (220). This *Ulysses* does not belong to a nationality, but to a possibility generated through diverse dispersion.

The shadow of *Ulysses* liquifies as individual illustrations of extrapolated meaning dilate into reimaginings of the text. In "Seeing James Joyce's *Ulysses* into the Digital Age," Hans Walter Gabler reflects on the fabrication of *Ulysses: A Critical and Synoptic Edition* (1984). It is an exercise in textual criticism and genetic editing that erupted tempests over the constituents of a "definitive" edition of *Ulysses*, determined by a replication most authentic to original form. In defence of the edition, Gabler contends the following:

It is the edition's underlying conception that the text of the work *Ulysses* extends in time over the range of its material inscriptions. Hence, the edition offers the text of *Ulysses* in two guises: as a reading text, yes; but mainly as an edition text to be experienced diachronically, that is, in its temporal depth. (30)

Stephen's ruminations are gratified by the various modes of transformative receptions of *Ulysses*, but I do not hope for my reflections on *Dedalus on the Shore* to end with assessments of *Ulysses's* consumption. The shadow of *Ulysses* is not merely an encapsulation of the novel's varied reception throughout its unfolding in time, but a statement about the possibility of seeing oneself within the vortex of reflections. In "Interpreting as Relating," Felski writes, "what

we choose to decipher, how we decipher it, and to what end—these decisions are driven by what we feel affinity for, what resonates” (128). The act of transformative reception is a testament to the endless quality of the novel, one mode through which *Ulysses* is stripped from its ended context, engendering its enduring imprint. We do not absorb and regurgitate *Ulysses* in commemoration of its literary stature, but because we are capable of deriving individualised meaning, and despite the illusory confines of context.

I am moved from the markings on Stephen’s paper to the markings on my own page: “signs on a white field” (Figure 4). My own context far removed from that of Joyce’s modernist world, I meet my intimacy with *Ulysses*. To name every impression the text has made on my experience would be to dissect every word from the pages of *Ulysses*, but what I make of these impressions is visible here. Like anyone who’s motive engine is an ambition to create, I interpret the immutable manshape of Stephen, and the ended text of *Ulysses*, and encounter myself. Calculating the confines of potential, wondering if I might ever be seen.



Figure 4. From Robert Amos's *Dedalus on the Shore*.

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Wilted Petals that Loved: Flowers and Humanity in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*

Colleen Bidner

Abstract: This essay discusses scenes in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) that involve flowers and the relationship between Lucy Snowe and Monsieur Paul Emmanuel. Their romance demonstrates how Brontë shines a light on the humanity of women when mid-Victorian society values their physical appearance and housewife skills. The relationship demonstrates human connection and mortality through the following: offering gifts more meaningful than a bouquet; security through the house that Monsieur Paul gives Lucy for her career; and Biblical origins of man and woman. Lucy achieves autonomous security due to their connection, making her a model for women in Brontë's desired society.

From a twenty-first century perspective, flowers are symbolic of blossoming love. A bouquet is bought for the receiving lover, representing the giver's thoughtfulness and dedication in the relationship. During the nineteenth century, flowers symbolised romance, relationships, and female delicacy. Barbara T. Gates emphasises the Victorians' long-lasting fascination with natural history as a "love affair" due to Victorian literature's association with romance and nature (539). Louisa Anne Meredith's book titled *The Romance of Nature; or the Flower Seasons Illustrated* (1836) is one example (Gates 539). Flowers in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) become a significant topic around the romantic relationship of Lucy Snowe and Monsieur Paul Emmanuel, considering the heightening interest in tending flowers during the 1840s and the creation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848 (Gates 545). Flowers play a central role in the scene of Monsieur Paul's fête, or birthday. As the story clos-

es, flowers are still present but blend with the background. Analysis of four scenes concludes that flowers in the novel show more than a human's outer beauty and emphasises Victorian women's romantic lives. The mortality of flowers symbolises Monsieur Paul's implied death and the terminal end of his relationship with Lucy. References to Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden within *Villette* and Victorian media enhance the link between humanity and flowers. I will demonstrate the humanity, and therefore mortality, that flowers of *Villette* and the Victorian age represent.

Flowers in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* are important objects in Chapter XXIX: "Monsieur's Fête," in which Brontë's figurative language personifies flowers and compares them to romantic feelings. In this chapter, the school's teachers and all-female pupils present Monsieur Paul with bouquets on his fête. Flowers are not depicted as an "article of value" such as expensive plates or accessories. Instead, Monsieur Paul prefers a flower "offered simply and with sincere feelings" (381). His fête is on March 1, a detail that adds to the spring atmosphere encapsulated in flowers. So, flowers represent the growth or budding of "sincere feelings" between Lucy and her fellow professor. Shawna Ross quotes Molly Engelhardt: Brontë "inserted flowers strategically into particularly potent scenes to represent sexual tension" (221), which connotes a burgeoning romantic relationship and spring atmosphere. Lucy would not be satisfied with offering simple plants for Monsieur Paul on his fête:

I like to see flowers growing, but when they are gathered, they cease to please. I look on them then as things rootless and perishable; their likeness to life makes me sad. I never offer flowers to those I love; I never wish to receive them from hands dear to me. (382)

The chapter setting has an academic context since Monsieur Paul's students offer flowers. Although Lucy still brings flowers into the topic of love, acknowledging their strong, almost default attachment to romance, her opinion on flowers equates to life itself. Lucy's words "rootless and perishable" to describe bouquets indicate that love, when

shown through ordinary bouquets, is rootless and perishable like life. She believes that love must be strengthened through deeper means than an offering of temporal objects valued merely for appearance. The words “some solitary symbolic flower” connect Lucy to herself since she values solitude when alone in gardens—where flowers also grow—making flowers an essential part of Lucy’s first-person voice (Brontë 383). Her view on flowers goes beyond their aesthetic appearance. Even though Monsieur Paul appreciates flowers offered as gifts while Lucy does not, they both denote flowers with genuine care, beginning a closer human connection with each other.

When flowers return in Lucy and Monsieur Paul’s relationship, men and women’s gender roles come into balance; therefore, romance unifies humanity. As Monsieur Paul shows Lucy the new house he provides for her future teaching classes, the flowers are more subtle compared to when they are the central gift during Monsieur Paul’s fête:

Three green flowerpots, each filled with a fine plant glowing in bloom; in one corner appeared a guéridon with a marble top, and upon it a workbox, and a glass filled with violets in water. The lattice of this room was open; the outer air breathing through gave freshness, the sweet violets lent fragrance. (548)

Here, the roles are switched regarding who receives the flowers. In this section of Chapter XLI: “Fauberg Clotilde,” flowers are part of the house décor, appearing briefly in the paragraph. The house represents the security that Monsieur Paul grants Lucy; therefore, security has been found in their relationship. Lucy then comments on the house’s aesthetic appeal; flowers and beauty are part of the house where a woman will carry out her career, not the house where a woman will raise children. This speaks to Helen Benedict’s words: Monsieur Paul is “symbolic of an essential Brontë vision: a future when women are loved not for their beauty or pretenses of virtue and submissiveness, but for their intelligence, character, and accomplishments” (584). This idea of women’s beauty and submissiveness can be com-

pared to the idea of delicate flowers. As previously quoted, Lucy describes flowers as having a “likeness to life” (Brontë 382). Her description of flowers being unfortunately picked from their life force, the earth, resembles the objectification of women: when objectified, both women and flowers are deprived of their existence as living beings. Instead, they are valued simply for aesthetics. Brontë goes against this concept by making the flowers part of the background as décor of Lucy’s classroom. The passage on Lucy’s new home shows how flowers, like women, serve more importance than their delicate appearances.

The 1852 John Bull article titled “Female Education” represents how women were viewed during Brontë’s time, and she fights against this viewpoint. This article says that women who present artificial flowers in their home instead of cleaning, cooking well, or managing their husband’s money serve little use as a wife (73). Artificial flowers are not picked from the earth and do not produce natural scents. Consequently, married women who display manmade flowers and receive this message may feel insubstantial. Their artificial flowers would be useful only for decoration, just as a wife of this nature would be valued significantly for appearance. In this scene (548), Brontë draws on the air and the scent of violets. Hence, she draws on human emotionality, as supported by Engelhardt: “Flowers exude perfumes that invoke feelings and trigger memories that are not necessarily ephemeral; by drying flowers and storing them inside books, those memories can be accessed on demand” (359). Engelhardt’s quotation applies to an earlier scene in *Villette*, when Monsieur Paul (then a stranger to Lucy) gives Lucy violets. Back then, Lucy dried the flowers to keep their fragrance (Brontë 132). Now, as Monsieur Paul and Lucy know each other more deeply, the scent of violets returns. By placing delicate flowers in the background of a schoolroom where Lucy has independence gifted from a man, Brontë’s vision of gender equality is depicted at the end of the novel. The plants and violets symbolise not only decoration but also the new breath of life and love given to her, where she can use a workbox and thrive alongside her plants.

Another magazine article titled “The Language of Flowers” (*The Ladies’ Cabinet of Fashion, Music and Romance*, 1850) analyses the romantic symbology of flowers and gardens, which goes back to the Bible. “The Language of Flowers” says that, in ancient times, there must have been a “language of the eyes” for humans to “communicate reciprocally their thoughts, and make known to each other their feelings, their wants, and their desires” (17). The unknown author argues that flowers were used as symbols of communication. In other words, flowers offer a path for humans to see each other’s souls and humanity. This path becomes clearer through romantic relationships. The author describes how Adam and Eve must have handed each other flowers to express love and how that language was passed on through generations (18-19). They quote another author who says, “[Flowers] are the teachers of gentle thoughts, and of kindly emotions” (19). Thus, flowers not only encapsulate the inner hearts of humans but also bring out the traits that make us better humans and help us strive for them. This teaching is demonstrated in Monsieur Paul and Lucy’s relationship. Prior to the fête, they had been angry with each other. For example, Monsieur Paul and Lucy clash when he locks her in the attic to ensure she learns her lines in the play and when he tells her not to look at the openly sexual painting of nude Cleopatra (Brontë 148, 226). When flowers appear in the novel, their connection starts to improve. Even though Lucy does not give him flowers at his fête, they connect intimately when she makes him a pocket watch for his fête instead of flowers.

Villette imitates the ideal Victorian image and symbology of flowers. Angelus’s poem “Genoveva: A Legend of Ardennes” (*The Lady’s Newspaper and Pictorial Times*, 1850) shows an ideal image of love and flowers that recreates a vision of Eden. The poem has its own “language of the eyes,” making flowers a significant art. In the third section, the narrator wishes to “paint” Genoveva with a “flower serene” (1, 7). She has an “Eve-like grace of primal paradise” (14). This line compares to previous descriptions of and connections to Genesis, women, and flowers in “The Language of

Flowers.” Since both articles are from 1850, the third section of “Genoveva” evokes the Pre-Raphaelite paintings that arose during this time. The poem continues by describing Genoveva and her lover walking at night with flowers that add to the romantic scene and atmosphere of “primal paradise.” Brontë’s scene near the end of “Fauberg Clotilde” parallels Angelus’s poem. Monsieur Paul’s words, “Be my dearest, first on earth” (Brontë 554), suggest an image of Adam and Eve. The following passage builds on this image, painting the couple in a likeness to the Biblical origin of humanity:

We walked back to the Rue Fossette by moonlight—
such moonlight as fell on Eden—shining through
the shades of the Great Garden, and haply gilding a
path glorious, for a step divine—a Presence name-
less. Once in their lives some men and women go
back to these first fresh days of our great Sire and
Mother—taste that grand morning’s dew—bathe
in its sunrise. (Brontë 554–555)

Beverly Seaton notes that “in nature, many Victorian thinkers read messages about Christ and the Christian experience in the same way that they read their Bibles” (260). Natural symbols had religious meaning that form a material connection to the historical truth of Scripture. Therefore, nature and flowers were interpreted like the symbols of Biblical typology that appear in the Old Testament to foreshadow their significance in the New Testament. In *Villette*’s case, nature amplifies the truth of human mortality as depicted in Christianity, and the overarching story sets Brontë’s work apart from Victorian material.

While “Genoveva,” Pre-Raphaelite paintings, and *Villette* reference eternal beauty found in myth and the Bible, *Villette*’s allusions to Adam and Eve emphasise the temporality of flowers, youthful feminine beauty, and human life. Throughout the novel, Lucy seeks solitude in gardens. Near the novel’s end, she is in the garden to bond with Monsieur Paul, a fellow human being. As Brontë compares the characters to Adam and Eve and the scenery to the Garden of Eden, readers see the idealised version of humanity. This

idealised perspective compares to how beautiful flowers may be idealised in the Victorian age. On a deeper level, Brontë's scene communicates the euphoric state that love and human connection can radiate. Brontë's novel *Shirley* (1849) has a similar scene in which "flowers ... are thus not only a metaphor for romance but also a physical medium through which it advances" (Ross 222). *Villette*'s scene uses the concept of "The Language of Flowers" and "Genoveva": there are no words needed when Lucy and Monsieur Paul walk through the "Great Garden." Instead, they use their eyes to sense the divine eternity of being human. However, the scene becomes different from both Victorian texts once the rest of the novel's context becomes clear: this moment is only temporary. While waiting for Monsieur Paul, Lucy tends plants on her own (558), once again in solitude. Since they can only "go back" to the "Sire and Mother" known as Adam and Eve, Brontë discretely acknowledges that the days of paradise on Earth are gone. With the couple's separation and Monsieur Paul's hinted death by the novel's end, readers know that the couple's walk, which evokes an "idealised," Pre-Raphaelite atmosphere, is mortal. Flowers, romance, and the human body eventually end in their paradise, just as the Garden of Eden becomes tainted with the Serpent's corruption.

Brontë also shows the personal human side of herself, an extension of showing women's (human) rights. John Hughes says that "the text can itself be seen as an artistic expression or reiteration of childhood emotions of loss, which still persist, unappeased, within the adult" (724–725). He notes that, just before *Villette*'s publication, Brontë recently experienced the deaths of sisters Emily (1848) and Anne (1849). He references when Madame Beck blocks Lucy from seeing Monsieur Paul for a last goodbye (Brontë 503). The emotion in this scene mirrors her sorrow regarding unrequited love from her professor Constantin Héger (Hughes 725). It is easier for Lucy to accept his absence after his final departure. Therefore, she realises that time spent with loved ones is temporary, like death. To cope with this, Lucy, who is "naturally no florist," grows Monsieur Paul's "pre-

ferred” plants (Brontë 558). These plants flourish under love, as she chooses to tend them out of caring for him. The scene links to Chapter XXIX: “Monsieur’s Fête,” as Monsieur Paul cares more about the feelings in a flower rather than its beauty. Both characters are unified in their vision of flowers. As Lucy prefers, she does not pluck the plants from the ground and offer them to her lover. Instead, she becomes an amateur florist, carrying out the purpose that pleases her: to watch them grow. Feelings are a quality that all humans have, whether or not society deems those humans attractive like a flower. Thus, the flowers in Lucy’s classroom can be interpreted as quotidian rather than an Eden-like perfection, adding to Brontë’s vision of women being valued for their personal, human characteristics. Just as Lucy helps the flowers grow, she begins to pave her own way as an individual, making a prime success in human life.

Since the time of Adam and Eve, flowers have been admired for their beauty. As humans, we understand why they wilt and die, for they are mortal like us. In *Villette*, flowers bring two humans together on an emotional level that runs deeper than outer beauty. The growth of Lucy and Monsieur Paul’s romance leads to an imitation of how Victorian media presents picturesque flowers and women. Charlotte Brontë veers from this vision by implying the end of their relationship, an unfortunate but inevitable occurrence for imperfect mortal lives. When flowers are associated with human traits, they represent the life and fragility of human love, which strengthens the emotional potency in someone giving their lover a bouquet.

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Belting the Beast: Trans-animality in *The Faerie Queene*

Jocelyn Diemer

Abstract: Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* is populated by hundreds of animal figures, many of whom are informed by a vast inherited tradition of medieval bestiary animal symbolism. Taking these bestiary motifs into account and drawing from current trans and animal studies theory, this article shows how book three's hyena-beast calls attention to the porousness of species boundaries and collapses animal-human hierarchies. This reading highlights the poem's ambiguous attitude towards the bestial nature of both its animal and its human characters, and gestures towards a Spenserian eco-poetics which emphasises the possibilities for mutuality and collaboration to be found in the shared creatureliness of animals and humans.

"Hyena is said to be a beast of double nature, Male and Female, they will hearken at the Cottages of shepherds, & learne the proper name that a man is called by, and calling him, when the man is come forth, they will straightway kill him."

—Thomas Hacket, *The secrets and wonders of the world*

Fr. Thomas Hacket's 1585 translation of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* is one of countless possible sources for the highly developed tradition of animal symbolism inherited by Edmund Spenser. As the expansiveness of Spenser's symbolic menagerie makes clear, this tradition provides a useful shorthand with which to construct multilayered allegorical figures. One such figure who has yet to be fully understood is the hyena-like beast summoned by the hag in book three of *The Faerie Queene*. Nearly fifty years ago, Arthur Marotti

identified the beast as representing lust's "feeding and destroying" nature (84). The present article aims to complicate Marotti's reading to encompass the complete depth of symbolic language at Spenser's fingertips. Illuminated by medieval and Renaissance understandings of the hyena's double nature, the hag's beast animates the porousness of apparently stable ontological binaries such as male/female and human/animal. By collapsing the assumed one-way hierarchy of man-over-woman-over-animal, the beast reveals possibilities for pleasure and mutuality between species in what trans studies scholars such as Myra J. Hird and Mel Y. Chen call "trans-animal" collaboration. My exploration of the beast takes as starting point a trio of medieval bestiaries to show how pre-Spenserian visual representations of the hyena troubled categories of sex as well as species. Reading book three, canto seven of *The Faerie Queene* with this trouble in mind, I show how Sir Satyrane, the beast, and the giantess Argante form a trans-animal triad, allegorically bleeding into each other in a series of encounters that indicate the violence and the (possibly perverse) pleasure of exceeding the species boundaries often understood to be natural law. I conclude by turning to the odd figure of Gryll (*FQ* 2.XII.86–87) to explore how trans-animality might be used to interrogate more extensively the possibilities for mutuality in Spenser's anthropological and ecological allegories.

Bestiary Hyenas

In simple terms, the medieval bestiary was intended to reflect the natural world as an extension of God's creative imagination. As Emma Campbell indicates, this task often entailed "encompassing the ambiguity and even deviancy of creaturely life from a Christian moral perspective" (235). Such is the case of the hyena. A creature who feasts on corpses and whose unusual genitals seemingly defy categories

of sex,²⁰ the hyena was often used by medieval thinkers to distinguish that which was tasteful, proper, and moral from that which was abject, foreign, and immoral.²¹ However, the visual depictions of hermaphroditic or ambiguously sexed hyenas found in the bestiaries often had the reverse effect, blurring lines rather than clarifying them. Indeed, this section will show that by the time it made its way to Hacket and Spenser in the late sixteenth century, the hyena's double nature had come to signify a crossing of the boundary of sex and had consequently revealed the permeability of the animal and human spheres.

Medieval bestiaries indicated the doubleness of hyenas in a variety of ways, but two representations are particularly interesting in the context of this article; the first is the hermaphroditic hyena, and the second is the belted hyena. A representative hermaphroditic example can be found in the thirteenth century Aberdeen Bestiary, which conceives of the animal as "sometimes male, sometimes female" (11v). In a visual acknowledgement of its sexual mutability, the Aberdeen hyena is shown to have both a circumcised penis and a rear-facing vagina. Like most bestiary hyenas, it is also chewing on a corpse. Ravenously troubling the boundaries of sex and death, this hyena seems to embody precisely the perverse "feeding and destroying" lust identified by Marotti. However, it is not the only conception of the hyena that was available to Spenser.

In the thirteenth-century Northumberland Bestiary and the twelfth-century Worksop Bestiary, we find two hyenas who appear to be wearing belts. Like the Aberdeen hyena, these two beasts are depicted as corpse-eaters with ambiguous genitals who destabilise male/female and living/dead

20 The clitoris of the female spotted hyena is elongated and contains a urogenital canal through which the hyena copulates, urinates, and gives birth. The presence of this pseudo-penis makes it difficult to determine any one hyena's sex, particularly for the untrained eye. See Glickman for more.

21 These distinctions often mobilised the hyena for antisemitic purposes. See Campbell, "Visualizing the Trans-Animal Body" and Leah DuVun, "The Hyena's Unclean Sex: Beasts, Bestiaries, and Jewish Communities." *The Shape of Sex*, Columbia University Press, 2021, pp. 70–101.

binaries. However, the Northumberland and Worksop hyenas also problematise more clearly the distinction between human and animal. It is unusual to see a bestiary animal dressed in clothing. In fact, in both bestiaries, the hyena is the only animal represented as wearing a clearly identifiable article of clothing. These belted hyenas therefore seem even more uncanny in their proximity to humanity than their unbelted Aberdeen counterpart. And indeed, there is a distinctive blurring of lines in Northumberland and Worksop; a mingling or exchanging of human and animal flesh as clothed hyenas consume unclothed humans. Furthermore, the garment that destabilises the hyenas' animality also obscures their genitalia: both belted hyenas have clearly identifiable vulvas, but their penises (or lack thereof) are rendered ambiguous by their belts. The human/animal division thus subsumes the male/female one, and the literalised double nature of these clothed, belt-bisected hyenas calls attention to the fragility of "insistent human ontologies" (Chen 13). In short, these belted hyenas represent a transing not only of sex, but also of species.

A Spenserian Trans-Animal Trio

Called into being by the concupiscent rage of the hag's spurned son, Spenser's beast seems at first to be a straightforward expression of destructive heterosexual masculine lust. In fact, Spenser tells us outright that the beast is hyena-like specifically in that he "feeds on wemens flesh" (3.VII.22.9). We are told nothing about the state of his genitals, but Spenser does indicate that the beast is "monstrous" and "mishapt" (3.VII.22.4). These adjectives echo descriptions of the villainous sorceress Duessa's deformed genitals in book one (1.II.41.1; 1.VIII.46.7), and may have indicated sexual abnormality for readers familiar with natural history texts like Hacket's. However, a clearer visual connection with the complexly signified medieval hyena emerges when Sir Satyrane belts the beast with Florimell's girdle.

As the product of a violent sexual encounter between a satyr and a human woman (FQ 1.VI.22–23), Satyrane "emphasizes bestial potentialities" which must be tamed

in order to become a well-adjusted human being (Horton 628). Indeed, he appears at first to invert the bestiary hyena, reinscribing the line between beast and human even as he embodies their synthesis at a genetic level. However, perhaps due to their close yet inverse symbolic relationship, Satyrane must discard his sword—and thus the civilising influence of his knightly training—and battle the beast on equal terms before victory can be achieved (3.VII.33). Because of his genetic closeness with the beast, the knight cannot clarify or reinstate the human-animal hierarchy without first interrogating its blurriness, and this interrogation leaves Satyrane open to his more bestial impulses. Satyrane taps into his own animality during the fight in a moment construed poetically as both an embrace and a grapple:

So him he held, and did through might amate:
So long he held him, and him did bett so long,
That at last his fierceness gan abate,
And meekely stoup unto the victor strong.
(VII.35.1-4)

The pronouns “him” and “he” slip between Satyrane and the beast across these four lines, eliding the distinction between the two characters and emphasising the animality of Satyrane’s attack. Moreover, in this context, the verb “bett” likely implies beating, but it might also connote the more animalistic act of biting (*OED*). Similarly, the verb “amate” can either mean “to befriend” and “to equal”—as Spenser uses it in *FQ* 2.IX.34.4—or to “dismay, daunt...[or] quell” (*OED*). Based on this verbal ambiguity, we can understand Satyrane’s defeat of the beast either as a forceful reaffirmation of his own humanity, or, more interestingly, as an act of trans-animal intimacy constituting a tacit embrace of his own animal instincts. If we assume the first possibility to be true, we must acknowledge that the taming of the beast can paradoxically be achieved only through Satyrane’s complete and willing embrace of his animal self—that the two must be intermingled before they can be separated. If we assume the second possibility to be true, we must acknowledge that the taming of the beast is not a violent defeat at all, but rather an act of willing surrender arising out of a recognition on

the beast's part of the kinship between itself and Satyrane. In either case, it is clear that there is a possibility for shared pleasure (however fleeting) in breaking down the "rigid separation between human and nonhuman organisms" and in embracing the animal as equal (Hird 238).

When Satyrane binds the beast with "the golden ribband, which that virgin [Florimell] wore / About her slender waste" he reproduces the medieval image of the belted hyena (VII.36.1–2). Yet unlike the bestiary hyenas, Satyrane's belted beast does not appear at first to collapse the human and animal, but rather to reinscribe their separation. Girdled with an emblem of chastity and "trembl[ing] like a lambe," the beast's deviant and destructive lust has seemingly been tamed and he has been subjugated back into his ostensibly proper, lower place in the human-animal hierarchy (VII.36.6). However, we must consider that Satyrane's victory (if it is a victory) is short-lived. As soon as the beast is bound, the giantess Argante bursts into the poem, facilitating the beast's escape and signifying either the resurfacing or the escalating of Satyrane's animality. Born while copulating with her twin brother, Argante is one half of a devilish, hyena-like hermaphrodite (VII.48.5–9). Indeed, her animality is so extreme that she "suffre[s] beasts her body to deflower," mingling animal DNA with her own and making explicit the collapsing of human-animal boundaries implicit in Satyrane's combat with the beast (VII.49.7). Forced to decide between a tamed, bound, and bounded animality and an unbounded, dangerous animality, Satyrane opts to try his luck with the latter. For a moment, the two combatants appear to be equally matched, but Argante eventually overcomes the knight and begins to take him away to serve her in sexual thralldom. However, Argante is soon frightened into dumping her prey by the chaste lady knight Palladine, and Satyrane is befriended and tenuously re-civilised by the Squire of Dames (VII.44–61). Ultimately, Satyrane's rapid and relatively ambiguous back-and-forth movement between the chaste/human and the perverse/animal constitutes a poetic reiteration of the trans-animal ontological anxiety embodied by the bestiary hyena. Each

time he crosses the boundary between human and animal, Satyrane smudges the dividing line, inching closer towards a full intermingling of the two as embodied in the bestial beast.

Trans-animality, Allegory, and the Human

What are we to do with this anxiety? Should we try desperately to reinforce the boundaries between human and animal and risk blurring them even further? Or should we immerse ourselves fully in the pleasure of trans-animal exchanges and encounters and risk becoming monstrous? The beast/Satyrane/Argante episode offers no clear answers to these questions. Instead, we must turn to Gryll, one of Spenser's briefest yet most memorable characters for a solution. Gryll is not, strictly speaking, a trans-animal figure as his engagement with animality involves a self-contained metamorphosis rather than a cross-species mingling. Nevertheless, he represents one of the poem's most explicit attempts to reinscribe boundaries between man and beast. Gryll makes his one and only appearance in the final stanzas of book two, when he is re-transformed from swine to human after the Palmer reverses the sorceress Acrasia's magic. He is not happy to return "from hoggish form to naturall" (*FQ* 2.XII.86.9), and his complaints trigger the following exchange between Sir Guyon and the Palmer:

Saide Guyon, "See the mind of beastly man,
That hath so soone forgot the excellence
Of his creation, when he life began,
That now he chooseth, with vile difference,
To be a beast, and lacke intelligence."
To whome the Palmer thus, "The donghill kinde
Delightes in filth and fowle incontinence:
Let Gryll be Gryll, and have his hoggish minde;
But let us hence depart, whilst wether serves and
winde." (XII.87)

It is clear from this stanza that Gryll is a warning against losing sight of the essential dignity bestowed upon man by virtue of the "excellence / Of his creation." He is thus designed to clarify the human-animal hierarchy by embodying

the absurdity of their collapse. However, Gryll's unwavering commitment to trading his intelligence for a life of "filth and fowle incontinence" means that even the allegorical embodiments of temperance (Guyon) and right reason (the Palmer) are forced to grant him his beastliness. Importantly, Guyon and the Palmer's decision to "let Gryll be Gryll" does not imply a restoration of Acrasia's magic, but rather a resigned acceptance that Gryll will retain his "hoggish minde" while in human form. In other words, the decision is a meta-poetic acknowledgement of the paradox typified by the medieval bestiary hyena: we can try to use animals in order to distinguish ourselves from that which is base and bestial, but such symbolic moves usually end up proving that we are not all that different from our fellow creatures after all.

The only thing to do with our ontological anxiety, then, is to "let Gryll be Gryll." We must accept our own creaturely double nature, and perhaps even seek out positive opportunities for interspecies encounter and collaboration. This is not to say that we should all join Satyrane in embracing the beast or become like Gryll and wallow in animality. Instead, we should pay attention to what animals can teach us about being human. As a final example, consider the Redcrosse Knight's "angry steede" and Una's "palfrey slow" in the opening few stanzas of the poem (*FQ* 1.1.1.6; 1.4.7). Although these horses offer insight into the temperaments of their respective owners—the immature Knight of Holiness is impulsive and headstrong, while guiding Truth is slow, steady, and perhaps falling slightly behind—they do so by acting in accordance with their animal instincts. In other words, the horses elucidate the poem's anthropological allegory by being their bestial selves. To be sure, this remains an anthropocentric way of thinking—Spenser was, after all, as caught up in a chain of hierarchical taxonomies as we are today. However, as this article has shown, conceiving of *The Faerie Queene's* human-animal allegorical pairings as porous exchanges rather than one-way projections of the human onto the animal enables us to better understand both the depth of Spenser's animal symbols and their oftentimes ambiguous relationship to the poem's broader allegorical

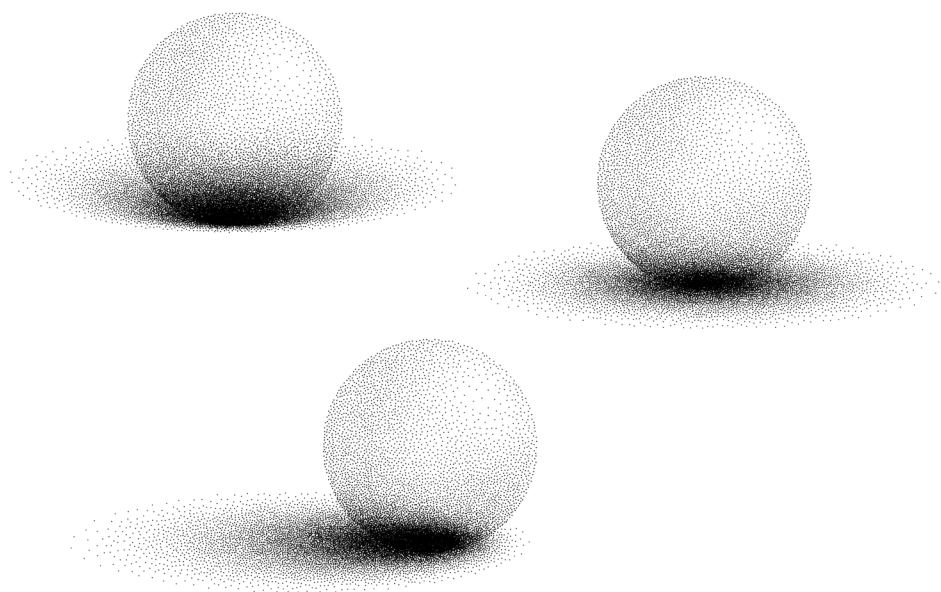
project. Furthermore, such a reading opens the door for a more expansive understanding of Spenser's compassionate eco-poetics as epitomised in his "Hymn of Heavenly Beauty":

[...] look on the frame
Of this wide universe, and therein reed
The endless kinds of creatures which by name
Thou canst not count, much less their natures aim;
All which are made with wondrous wise respect,
And all with admirable beauty deckt. (30–35)

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**EDITORS &
CONTRIBUTORS**

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Kara Hagedorn is in their final semester of their undergraduate studies of English literature and Philosophy and will be entering the University of Victoria's English Graduate Programme for the Fall 2023 semester. They have a passion for literary and culture theory, specifically queer theory, body theory, affect theory, quantum theory, narratology, and phenomenology. When not reading or writing, they can be found on their bicycle, cycle-touring across Vancouver Island. Finally, beyond their love for their bikes, they have two beautiful cats who can write better essays than any ChatGPT.

Karyn Hoskins has always had an affinity for reading, writing, and language, which is why she has an Associate Degree in Creative Writing and is working on a Bachelor Degree in Arts with a major in English at the University of Victoria. Instead of one main area of focus, Karyn dove into as many topics of English literature as she could, her favourites of which include the Romantic poets, Victorian novels, and fairy tales. Beyond English literature, she also enjoys studying ancient Greek myths, epics, and novels.

Avni Khepar is a first-year Economics and English student. Following her time at the University of Victoria, Avni hopes to use her background as a first-generation immigrant and multilingual speaker in her future work as a lawyer. She spends most of her time reading, napping, and drinking copious amounts of coffee. This is her first time editing with *The Albatross*.

Erin Kroi is a final-year English major, creative writer, and artist. Her primary academic interests include modernism, affect theory, and poststructuralist approaches to literary and media analysis. Her passion for literature is guided by

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Maya Linsley is the Vice President of the English Students' Association. She is currently in the third year of her English Honours degree with a minor in Journalism and Publishing. After two years editing for *The Albatross*, she was honoured to take on the responsibilities of Managing Editor. In addition to these roles, she works as a Research Assistant for *The Map of Early Modern London*, publishes fanfiction under a top-secret alias and plots/schemes with the University of Victoria Novelists' Society. She enjoys seeing new sights, trying new foods, reading fantasy epics and meeting the neighbourhood cats.

Mariah MacWilliam is completing a minor in English this year, along with another minor in Professional Writing and Journalism. She is Poet Laureate as well as the Director of Media for the English Students' Association, and has had so much fun discussing literature on its podcast *The Clearihue Corner*. After graduation she is excited to have more time to study all the work she has been introduced to in her undergrad, such as American writers like Edith Wharton, Zora Neale Hurston, Walt Whitman, and E.L. Doctorow.

Zoe Nilson enjoys reading, writing poems, meandering aimlessly, jogging, brutalist architecture, thinking about thoughts, and the beach. Sometimes a little literary criticism, too.

Nicole Paletta is in her final year of study, pursuing a double major in Psychology and English. As well as copyediting for *The Albatross*, Nicole is the President of the English Students' Association. She is a lover of all things food related and unwinds either by trying her hand at a new (and overly complicated) recipe or dining out with friends. She feels grateful for the opportunity to see her work published and considers it the perfect send-off from her undergraduate experience.

Ekamjot Pooni is a second-year Political Science major at the University of Victoria. She has been an editor for *The Albatross* for two years now. Ekam spends most of her time reading romance novels, watching Netflix and procrastinating all her work. She is very excited to be working with the *Albatross* team and looks forward to contributing to the academic journal.

Jordan Price is in his second year of studies at the University of Victoria, completing an Honours degree in English. His main scholarly interest is 20th-century Canadian literature, and his favourite authors include Don McKay, Al Purdy, Joy Kogawa, Alice Munro, and bpNichol. He lives as a guest on the unceded territory of the Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ peoples.

Nicole Rogers is a fourth-year English student with a passion for poetry, contemporary fiction, and the Oxford comma. She is minoring in Digital Media Arts. In her free time, she can be found snuggling with her cat, going for an ocean dip, or smothering her meals in ketchup. This is Nicole's first year editing for *The Albatross*.

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