UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

The Dis-Topic Future:

Biofuturity, Disability, and Crip Communities in Anglophone Speculative Fiction

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

in

Literature

by

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2018

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(Chair)

University of California, San Diego

2018

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my chronic pain support network—nothing about us without us!

Epigraph

“They're looking for this fearsome wizard only to discover that he's nothing but a little tiny fellow. I mean, I don't think the point is that he's tiny. I think the point is, you know, things that we believe we lack are already inside of us just wanting to be found.”

– George Crabtree, “Victoria Cross,” *Murdoch Mysteries*

“You don't speak of dreams as unreal. They exist. They leave a mark behind them.”

– Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Lathe of Heaven*

“Art is not neutral. It either upholds or disrupts the status quo, advancing or regressing justice. We are living now inside the imagination of people who thought economic disparity and environmental destruction were acceptable costs for their power. It is our right and responsibility to write ourselves into the future. All organizing is science fiction. If you are shaping the future, you are a futurist. And visionary fiction is a way to practice the future in our minds, alone and together.”

– adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy*

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Vita

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"*The Body Broken: A Memoir* by Lynne Greenberg." *Disability Experiences*. Gale: Farmington Hills, Michigan. Editors Eric Bargeron and Hollis Beach. 2019.

"Companion Species: From Imaginary to Cyborg Friend in Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* and Scott's *Blade Runner*." *Posthuman Pooh: Edward Bear After 100 Years*. Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, MD. Editor Jennifer Harrison. 2018.

"Running to a Still: Narratives of Energy and Care in Oz." *Monsters of Fiction, Film, and Fable.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK. Editors Lisa W. Bro, Crystal O'Leary-Davidson, and Mary Ann (Mert) Gareis. 2017.

Translation from the Spanish of "Los Sonetos de la Muerte" by Gabriela Mistral. *Alchemy Journal of Translation* 3: 32–34. 2013.

"On perfection: Pain and arts-making in Aronofsky's Black Swan." *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 12(3): 291–303. 2013.

"The Grad Student and the Vicodin Bottle." *Gnovis Journal of Communication, Culture & Technology Blog*. Web. 2011.

ARTISTIC PUBLICATIONS

"Desertification." *101 Fiction* 12. Web. 2016.

"Comedy Is..." *Northwest Comedy Network*. 2012.

"Som." *Clamor*. Web. 2011.

"Gardener of Xibalba." *Clamor*. Web. 2011.

"The Day the Englishman Stole Don Quixote Away." *Clamor.* 116–117. 2010.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

The Dis-Topic Future:

Biofuturity, Disability, and Crip Communities in Anglophone Speculative Fiction

by

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Professor Shelley Streeby, Chair

In this work, I define and analyze key examples of wonderlands as utopic spaces. I argue that these youth-oriented fantasy worlds are often more diverse than their adult counterparts, particularly in terms of race, sexuality, and, most importantly, disability. By considering who constitutes the citizens of conceptualized utopias, I further contend that persons with disabilities often offer ideal utopian figures. In order to demonstrate this reality in future literatures, I suggest that authors and readers alike turn to online fan fiction communities as significant sites of crip activism.

Introduction

In the summer of 2017, the popular child_lit listserv, an electronic mailing list, was shut down. The listserv, run for two decades by Rutgers rare books librarian, Michael Joseph, acted as an avenue for conversation among academics, writers, librarians, and other stakeholders of children's literature. The rationale for the shutdown was fairly tame, with the owner suggesting there were better alternative media platforms for discussions of children's literature and identifying a general "hostility to scholarship" on the listserv (Joseph). However, the context of this decision was particularly significant. Recent impassioned arguments about the representations of persons of color and women across multiple media platforms had recently reached a fever pitch. Impassioned discussions continued to surround the conservative voting blocs (Sad Puppies and Rabid Puppies), which work actively against progressive speculative fiction works eligible for the receipt of Hugo Awards. Almost simultaneously, threats of violence against female journalists and media theorists in the video game industry culminated in the harassment campaign called Gamergate. And, at the same time, heated conversations about depictions of race in speculative fiction led to the events of RaceFail. Each of these events, which I will describe in more detail later in this chapter, provided the backdrop for the elimination of the popular child_lit listserv.

Listserv member and librarian Elizabeth Bird notes that the dissolution of the group may be traced back to a particular incident that occurred earlier in the year. During this event, members of the group began a heated debate over Kat Rosenfield's piece, "The Toxic Drama on YA Twitter," from Vulture.com. This article considered Laurie Forest's 2017 young adult fantasy novel, *The Black Witch*. In the novel, the first in an intended series, the narrator is raised to believe that she belongs to a superior race among imagined creatures such as fairies and werewolves. Upon entering college, the young woman questions these ideas, contending with what Rosenfield argues is a clear parallel to white supremacy in a fantasy world context. Prior to the book's widespread publication, an early reader, bookstore employee and blogger Shauna Sinyard, posted a review of the text that went viral, spurring campaigns against the novel itself. The review is polemical, to say the least:

> Normally, I start these reviews with a photo of the book and a star rating. Today, I am not going to do that. ***The Black Witch* is the most dangerous, offensive, book I've ever read. It's racist, ableist, homophobic, and is written with no marginalized people in mind…**
>
> **This book was ultimately written for white people. It was written for the type of white person who considers themselves to be not-racist and thinks that they deserve recognition and praise for treating PoC like they are actually human. It holds no regard to the feelings of marginalized people, which is evident in the way that the book portrays racism, homophobia, and ableism.** (emphasis in original)

The conflict between Rosenfield's article and Sinyard's book review lies in whether or not the protagonist of *The Black Witch* is intended to be someone

raised in a bigoted community who educates herself and transcends such teachings. Per Sinyard, Forest presents characters who openly engage in intolerant behavior in such a way that normalizes these exclusionary acts to the point of tacitly supporting them. Furthermore, Sinyard points out how poorly-written the book is, indicating that Forest is an author who took on truly complex issues without the skills to properly address them. Rosenfield disagrees with Sinyard's reading of Forest's work as bigoted, pointing out that Sinyard fails to take into account that the transformation from chauvinist to ally can take a long time and that *The Black Witch* is only the first book of a trilogy.

Rosenfield's chief complaint lies in the fact that many rallied behind Sinyard's critical review to protest *The Black Witch*, decrying the text solely based on Sinyard's reading rather than deciding for themselves if the book was worth boycotting. Sinyard tweeted to ask her followers to spread the word about the book and her article was retweeted more than 500 times. The review itself went viral and, together with a simultaneous campaign via Amazon's social media platform/book review site, Goodreads, *The Black Witch*'s average rating fell to 1.71 out of 5 possible stars. The issue with which many on the child_lit listserv were concerned was Rosenfield's descent into alt-right rhetoric in her critique of Sinyard:

> Many members of YA Book Twitter have become culture cops, monitoring their peers across multiple platforms for violations. The result is a jumble of dogpiling and dragging, subtweeting and screenshotting, vote-brigading and flagging wars, with accusations

> of white supremacy on one side and charges of thought-policing moral authoritarianism on the other.

Without going into too much detail, there were two notable perspectives in the child_lit discussion of this controversy that mirrored those in support of Sinyard and those who agreed more with Rosenfield's critique. One side took issue with Rosenfield's precise language, understanding the title's use of "toxic" and "drama" as historic slurs against women, and women of color specifically. Others found that reviews such as Sinyard's purposefully stoked anger and provoked self-censorship, arguing that individual readers should determine whether or not a text is bigoted rather than depending upon the interpretations of others. Despite some emotionally charged language and vitriol in both directions, rather than allowing the argument to continue and lead to meaningful conversation, the child_lit listserv was taken offline.

This incident highlights just one of the many culture clashes that have taken place in the various speculative fiction communities since 2000. In her interview with *Lightspeed Magazine*, author and scholar Nalo Hopkinson notes that in-depth discussions about race and racism in the genre have become more common since the beginning of the new millennium. It was only in 2009 that such conversations "blew the hell up on the Internet," per Hopkinson. In the event later named RaceFail or RaceFail '09, numerous well-known and much-awarded speculative fiction authors began clashing publically over the issue of representation in the genre. The onset of the outbreak is largely attributed to

author Elizabeth Bear's blog post regarding many White authors' hesitancy to depict persons of color, what she referred to as "writ[ing] the other." In this post, she offered suggestions for writers seeking to depict groups to which they do not belong by largely offering two key suggestions: (1) to just think of such characters as people not persons otherized by their statuses, and (2) to do research into these cultures in order to be as accurate as possible. Readers of this post, however, were quick to point out that in many of Bear's own works, including *Blood and Iron*, include tropes regarding characters of color. Afro-Trinidadian blogger Avalon Willow noted the presence of a clear "magical negro" character in this text, arguing that good intentions for depicting persons of color does not excuse the reification of existing stereotypes. This post also went viral, leading to a largely binary argument taking place within the speculative fiction community. While one side argued that the English-speaking speculative fiction community existed in a state of colorblindness[1] and postraciality, persons of color and allies shared their own experiences with racism as authors, readers, and scholars. As interdisciplinary theorist Sara Ahmed explained, the proposition of colorblindness is problematic in itself: "When people claim they don't see race, it often means they don't see those who are assumed to bring race with them

[1] Notably, even the terms "color blind" or "race blind" have been critiqued within academia. Disability educators Annamma, Jackson, and Morrison point out that "The ways ableist language perpetuates non-recognition allows for the subordination of dis/abled people and misses the intersections between being socially constructed racially as the other and dis/abled" (154).

(white: not of color; race: of color). “I don’t see race” thus translates as, I don’t see those who are not white as not white, which translates as, I don’t see not white.” Thus, according to Ahmed and Hopkinson, “race blindness” actually translates into a method of invisibilizing persons of color within the genre, particularly women of color.

Despite being articulated in a far less scholarly manner than the discussions prior to the end of child_lit and RaceFail, the popular culture-based cases of the Puppies and Gamergate also demonstrate how conversations in speculative fiction have increasingly focused on the intersections between futurity, fantasy, disability, race, and gender. In brief, the Sad and Rabid Puppies voting blocs were created in an effort to promote less critical iterations of speculative fiction, particularly by nominating them for and voting such that they might win the Hugo Awards for speculative fiction literature. Until recently, this prestigious award, arguably the highest recognition a speculative fiction author may now receive, utilized an online voting mechanism to determine finalists; individuals may have voted as many times as they desired in order to further a candidate’s work. The two puppies groups argue that speculative fiction has historically been apolitical, largely focused on the sword and laser-based stories that supposedly have no political or social agenda. By rallying conservative readers around their preference for apolitical, largely White and male-written texts, the puppies were successful in engineering the inclusion of only puppies-sanctioned works in the 2015 Hugos. Due to their impact via social networking,

author sanctioning, and other internet activist efforts, the puppies gained much news media attention in 2015, leading the group to become better known outside of speculative fiction communities.

The puppies' rhetoric, however, worked to mask a call for exclusionary tactics. In particular, as former leader and speculative fiction author Brad R. Torgersen put it, the groups argued against turning the Hugos into "an affirmative action award: giving Hugos because a writer or artist is (insert underrepresented minority or victim group here) or because a given work features (insert underrepresented minority or victim group here) characters" (*The Daily Telegraph*). Such "anti-affirmative action" endeavors have led to the growth of the Sad Puppies and an offshoot voting bloc, the Rabid Puppies, in which followers predominantly vote for White and/or male authors.

In response to the power the puppies gained in determining the Hugo shortlists, counteractivists have suggested that progressives abstain from voting or enter a response of "No Vote" when facing a puppy-dominated group of candidates (*The Daily Telegraph*). Promoted by individuals such as Hugo and Nebula-Award winning author John Scalzi, the "No Award" option became an effective mechanism for opting out of choosing solely puppy-sanctioned candidates in the 2015 Hugo Award cycle: no awards were given that year for finalists in the categories of Best Novella, Best Short Story, Best Related Work, Best Editor for Long Form, and Best Editor for Short Form, which only offered

authors from the puppies' platforms (Wallace). While both puppy groups remain active as of 2018, their influence has floundered considerably since 2015.

Similarly, Gamergate, which took place from roughly 2012 to 2014, saw a call for a return to more conservative narratives and models. This event saw male video game enthusiasts react to what they deemed was a "corruption in game journalism" (Hathaway). When deconstructed, however, Gamergate instead saw a larger critique of female figures in the video game industry, including feminist media critic Anita Sarkeesian of Feminist Frequency, and video game developers Zoë Quinn and Brianna Wu. Supporters of Gamergate argued that these women received undue news media attention simply as a result of being female and representing politically progressive agendas; notably, Sarkeesian, Quinn, Wu, and others directly addressed issues such as sexism in gaming culture, the absence of disability representation, and the underrepresentation of women in the gaming industry. Gamergate advocates targeted these three figures, along with their supporters, for such harassment as death and rape threats, threats of violence, doxing (sharing one's address and other personal details online), games depicting violence against these women (such as the *Beat Up Anita Sarkeesian* game), and even bomb threats at the women's speaking engagements.

Understanding video games as a form of genre fiction is essential to understanding Gamergate as part of the larger debate about the depiction of marginalized persons in fiction, particularly women, persons of color, and

persons with disabilities. It's first important to note that not all video games fall under the auspices of speculative fiction; digital media scholar Thomas Apperley states that video games as texts largely remediate earlier genres per Bolter and Grusin. Bolter and Grusin define the term remediation as departing from Paul Levenson's usage, explaining that they are "using it to mean the formal logic by which new media refashion prior media forms. Along with immediacy and hypermediacy, remediation is one of the three traits of our genealogy of new media" (273). In unpacking this term, they understand that immediacy refers to a visual style of representation in which the creator attempts to make the medium unnoticeable or forgettable (272), while hypermediacy does the opposite by drawing the viewer or user's attention to the medium being utilized. Video games may utilize either stylistic choice, but Apperley contends that these two techniques tend to relate directly to different approaches to gameplay. The hypermedial video game draws additional attention to the game-based nature of the medium itself through rules and other mechanics that may be described as ludological per game designer and scholar Gonzalo Frasca (qtd. in Apperley 8). On the other hand, narrative video games, those which rely heavily on narrative paradigms, tend to be more immediate in their approach (Apperley 8). However, such a distinction is often bridged by third-person perspectives in heavily narrative-based games of the action/adventure genre. As a gamer, one not only sees one's surroundings but also an avatar-based depiction of oneself on the screen.

Rather than acting as media that is purely visual, audial, or a combination of the two, video games differ from traditional representational media forms by being both kinesthetic and interactive. Whether acting in lieu of an embodied experience through an immediate approach or drawing attention to its gamehood via hypermediacy, the video game, according to Apperley, ought to be understood as ergodic rather than representational. Drawing upon the works of video game and electronic literature scholar Espen Aarseth, Apperley illustrates the complex nature of such an approach to these media forms:

> Espen Aarseth (1997) criticizes the notion of interactivity in Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature, arguing that: "it is a purely ideological term [that is] lacking any analytical substance" (p. 51). In reaction, Aarseth first introduces the concept of the "cybertext" to describe the intricate feedback system that exists in certain types of texts that are characterized by a "mechanical organisation" and an "integrated" reader (1997, p. 1). He then coins the term ergodic to describe the role of the human actor in the process of creating the cybertext; specifically, ergodic refers to the point that "non-trivial effort is required to allow the reader to traverse the text" (Aarseth, 1997, p. 1). Although Aarseth's formulation is not medium specific, in the context of this article, the notion of "interactivity" refers to the ergodic actions taken in order to play a video game. (Apperley 7)

Despite the fact that video games go beyond the purely representational into the interactive, many of the same genre conventions remain, according to Apperley. Drawing upon the Library of Congress Moving Image Genre-Form Guide for his analysis of game genres, Apperley distinguishes four primary categories: simulation, strategy, action, and role-playing games (8). Gamers themselves, however, are unlikely to consider these definitions of categories when choosing

and playing video games. Additionally, both Apperley's 2006 piece and the Library of Congress categorizations from 1998 are relatively old in terms of the growth of the gaming world. Thus, to consider video games as a speculative fiction medium, it is necessary consider how gamers themselves categorize video game genres. Using Alexa Internet, Inc., the web traffic data and analytics website, I found that as of October 22, 2017, the most visited website for U.S.-based video game fans is the Imagine Games Network (IGN). Using their genre classification system, I considered the general stylistic indicators of genres and chose the three most popular titles per IGN ratings within each genre to clarify types of game play. Lastly, I checked to see whether speculative fiction titles currently existed in, or had been adapted for, gameplay in these genres.[2] A larger breakdown of these game types and functionalities are included in the appendix of this thesis.

Some video game categories have more potential than others as speculative fiction, but the vast majority support such narrative possibilities or directly build on them. Six of the ten best-selling video game franchises of all time are demonstrably based in fantastic worlds (*Mario*, *Pokémon*, *Final Fantasy*, *Donkey Kong*, *The Legend of Zelda*, and *Sonic the Hedgehog*). Furthermore, I contend that the remaining four categories (Koizumi 16) also include elements of

[2] Games are listed on IGN by system. Thus, games which were released on multiple systems were only included once in this table, as its purpose was to clarify meaning rather than to denote actual rating.

speculative fiction in terms of gameplay, narrative, or intent. The remaining series include *Madden NFL* (sports), *The Sims* (simulation), *Grand Theft Auto* (Action/Adventure), and *Gran Turismo* (racing). The speculative nature of the *Madden NFL* games derives from the practice upon which the games themselves are based: fantasy football. Simply put, when players construct idealized teams, leagues, and seasons, they create alternative histories, presents, and futures with the same motivations as that of the speculative fiction genre. Similarly, *Gran Turismo* allows players to imagine themselves as sportspersons and engage in alternative racing practices, including impossible and futuristic equipment, movements, and settings. *The Sims* follows players as they create entire fictional lives and watch those lives advance at faster-than-life speed, similar to the time manipulation and impossible characters present in speculative fiction. Additionally, subsequent expansions of *The Sims*, such as *Makin' Magic* (2003), *Supernatural* (2012), and *Vampires* (2017), fall explicitly under the auspices of speculative fiction. *Grand Theft Auto* manipulates time in a manner similar to *The Sims,* while also offering impossible equipment and movements similar to the sports games. There is also much speculation that future entries in the *Grand Theft Auto* series will include even more futuristic elements, including a potential potentially outer space-based setting (Gaston). Furthermore, this game series is essentially fantasy-driven, simulating multiple criminal activities without fear of retribution. As such, if not essentially based in speculative fiction, it may easily be contended that video games as media are clearly and fundamentally related to

the genre; therefore, debates surrounding Gamergate must be understood in terms of broader arguments in speculative fiction communities.

I further argue that Gamergate, RaceFail, the end of child_lit, and the birth of the puppies voting blocs must be considered together in order to understand how such developments work against the re-canonization occurring in speculative fiction. Indeed, these very debates form the impetus for this dissertation. Individually, each occurrence could be understood as a blip in the history of speculative fiction, but as a whole, they demonstrate the growing trend to recognize the historical and contemporary basis of the cultures in the work, support, scholarship, and labor of historically marginalized persons who are often depicted as "unraveling" the genre. Brad R. Torgersen, leader of the 2015 Sad Puppies 2015 campaign, continues to claim that "a few decades ago, if you saw a lovely spaceship on a book cover, with a gorgeous planet in the background, you could be pretty sure you were going to get a rousing space adventure featuring starships and distant, amazing worlds," suggesting that speculative fiction addressing issues of class, race, gender, sexuality, and social justice-related themes goes against tradition in the genre. This thesis attempts to demonstrate that such arguments are based on an alternative history of the speculative fiction genre itself by demonstrating how major works of critical utopian studies have historically been based around social justice issues; furthermore, in looking toward utopic visions of society, diverse populations have and continue to be included in many settings. Rather than depicting futures that

are largely homogenous and similar to our presents or those of the authors writing them, utopians have worked to envision change for human future in terms of radical shifts in politics, the status of women and other marginalized groups, and so much more. Social justice, I argue, is a driving force of the genre; the futures depicted within utopic narratives are heterogeneous even when limited in terms of certain representations. Furthermore, futurisms based around children's readership, particularly wonderlands, offer spaces that are, in contrast, defined through their polychromatic depictions. This tradition of social justice and positive representation continues in today's literature, as demonstrated in the various debates reviewed in this section. Yet, as the final chapter of this dissertation will contend, one must consider a wide array of more contemporary mediums beyond that of traditional literary publication in order to see the onset of certain movements, particularly that of crip futurity. Disability scholar Alison Kafer argues that "how one understands disability in the present determines how one imagines disability in the future; one's assumptions about the experience of disability create one's conception of a better future" (2). Yet, I expand upon this understanding to contend also that how one imagines disability in the future, or an idealized elsewhere, determines how one understands disability in the present as well. Models of perfection, what they entail, and who they permit, must be considered in greater depth in order to demonstrate the perceived potentiality for marginalized groups in efforts toward an idealized future.

Overview of Gray Futurity

In this dissertation, I consider Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Lathe of Heaven* as a metaphor for the efforts of the Puppies and other groups to reshape the history of the speculative fiction genre, as well as the homogenous visions of the utopic inherent in such endeavors. In *The Lathe of Heaven*, protagonist George Orr finds himself able to manipulate his lived surroundings based upon the content of his dreams; any reality that occurs in his dreams is replicated in his actual world upon waking. Under the advisement of his psychiatrist, Orr learns to control these visions and thus mold the future. Upon becoming proficient in guiding his dreams, Orr begins attempting to change the world around him into what he believes to be a more positive an equitable place; however, he quickly learns that such a conception is easier said than done. In one of his attempts to create a more utopic world, Orr creates a society without race in an attempt to combat racism, what he refers to as the "gray world." In this planet, no matter the origins or heritage of a person, their skin is uniformly gray, and all persons similarly wear the same colorless clothing. A World Planning Center is established to ensure uniformity and attempt to do away with all differences in order to create a more egalitarian world.

Orr's efforts to eliminate prejudice snowball into the elimination of multiple marginalized identities altogether because, simply put, prejudice in and of itself cannot be eradicated. Essentially, the "gray world" that George creates still includes bigoted persons; his approach merely eliminates categories by which persons can be differentiated rather than eliminating prejudice itself. I argue that

this elimination of marginalized groups rather than prejudice itself epitomizes the manner in which speculative fiction has been canonized by more conservative, older audiences as predominantly representing, created by, and developed for normativized bodies. Thus, the importance of current re-canonization efforts illustrates how the genre is inherently a tool for marginalized groups to enact social justice movements (brown, *Emergent Strategy*). The move toward creating speculative fiction in and of itself is a utopic endeavor, similar to Orr's continuous dreams of a better world.

Periodization

In the U.K. and U.S., the end of what disability studies historian Kim E. Nielsen terms the "institutionalization era" of disability, the period during which most persons with disabilities were either jailed within traditional prisons or placed within often prison-like psychiatric facilities, intersected with the rise of high modernism and high modernity in the early twentieth century. The increased representation of persons with disabilities in Anglophone literatures occurred simultaneously to these cultural and artistic movements. These intersecting aesthetic and ideological periods were marked by a purposeful break from tradition and an increased confidence in the ability of science and technology to master and cure the natural world. The context of this time period ensured that the concept of disability would be developed and increasingly scrutinized. Interweaving literary modernism and disability was so prevalent during this period that it led to the development of Lennard Davis's notion of "dismodernism," a

theory which “argues for commonality of bodies within the notion of difference,” essentially the idea that “we are all nonstandard” (“The End of Identity Politics,” 268). Michael Davidson builds upon this idea in his *Concerto for the Left Hand,* explaining that “the aesthetic values that art historians and literary scholars use to explain these changes are seen differently through a disability optic” (xii–xiii). For example, a poem written by a deaf poet, a painting by an artist who is sight-impaired, and a dance performed by an artist with one leg offer insightful and unique aesthetic values and ideas. The positionality of these creators as persons with disabilities inscribe new meanings, leading us to question what it means to be beautiful and create art (Davidson xii–xiii).

The concept of the normate, or “the corporeal incarnation of culture's collective, unmarked, normative characteristics” (Garland-Thomson 10), itself began to be more thoroughly questioned during the institutionalization era. Thus, modernist artwork must be interpreted with this contextual understanding in order to see the cultural shift that was occurring at the time. As disability theorists Mitchell and Snyder explain, reconsiderations of classic texts through a disability studies lens shows that, contrary to popular belief, “people with disabilities have been the object of representational treatments, but [also] that their function in literary discourse is primarily twofold: disability pervades literary narrative, first, as a stock feature of characterization and, second, as an opportunistic metaphorical device” (47).

Alongside the increased presence of persons with disabilities in conventional spaces, such as living on main street rather than secluded within hospitals, prisons, and asylums (Davis, “Introduction,” 5), came the increased presence of such persons in literature. This representation was furthered by a deeper understanding of disability in the broader population as well as a growth in the number of persons surviving injuries and illnesses to live with disabilities outside of an institutional context. This shift modified the concept of humanness itself, such that a human’s essential personhood, which had previously been conceptually moved from the soul to the brain with the rise of humanism, shifted again to exist within a person’s DNA or genetic material (Vidal). This change occurred as increasing numbers of individuals who worked in factories and other high-risk occupations and WWI veterans became a larger part of the general population while having visible neurological and physical disabilities that normate persons could encounter in everyday life (Mcleod ii). These particular categories of disabilities were non-genetic and due to injury or trauma, ensuring a differentiation that normalized returning veterans, particularly within patriotic post-war U.K. and U.S. cultures.

While previous studies have considered the historical significance and presence of persons with disabilities in Anglophone literatures, this thesis specifically considers unique representations of disability in children’s speculative literature, popular adaptations of classic speculative fiction, and fan fiction writings responding to such texts. This study is driven by intertextuality and the

intermingling of experiences expressed in literatures with those on main street. Fan culture is given particular significance as a result of its growth in public scholarship events such as conventions, literature such as fan fiction, and popular prequels, sequels, and coquels across media forms. Such works and communities build upon and influence scholarly debates, developing "conversations that continue to take place in spaces other than—though not always dissimilar to—the conferences and seminar rooms of academia" (Lothian, Busse, and Reid 103). Although this thesis primarily focuses on written literature, I do consider transmedial adaptations of certain texts when they are particularly culturally relevant. For example, the 1939 film interpretation of L. Frank Baum's wonderland, *The Wizard of Oz*, is so influential from a cultural studies perspective that it is in many ways more significant than the original text. As explained by film theorist Robert Stam's pivotal text on novel to film adaptation, the use of medium rather than content can be the key indicator of success and proliferation. The differentiation and elevation of the film makes even more practical sense when one realizes that many of *The Wizard of Oz*'s intended audience members are not yet able to read. Throughout most of the film's history, it has held a G-rating[3], marking it as proper viewing material for everyone by the MPAA; however, Common Sense Media, a leading educational review

[3] Notably, the film's new release was rerated in 2013 and given a PG rating. As such, *The Wizard of Oz* is now noted to be include material "not be suitable for children." However, the MPAA does not offer a suggested age range with this new rating.

organization, suggests that the original book only be read by children over 8 years of age. In short, the film is simply more accessible to a child viewership than the book.

This study also considers a particular subgenre, that of the child-oriented utopic wonderland, within the modernist timeframe by asking, "What contributions do wonderlands make to understanding the intersections of the utopic and disabled bodies in modernist Anglophone literature?" In this thesis, the wonderland is understood as a version of the utopic "no place" or idyllic community, a definition which will be built upon in subsequent chapters. Numerous terms will need to be defined through a cultural studies lens because terminology works toward "binding words in certain activities and their interpretation" and framing "words in certain forms of thought" (Williams 15). As words depend upon their contexts and cultures, clarifying my own usage is particularly essential as a prelude to this study.

Terms

As scholars of cultural studies, we must consider the societal impact of word choices beyond their academic understandings. As explains cultural studies critic Raymond Williams in *Keywords*:

> … we use the same words for most everyday things and activities, though with obvious variations of rhythm and accent and tone. Some of the variable words, say lunch and supper and dinner, may be highlighted but the differences are not particularly important. When we come to say 'we just don't speak the same language' we mean something more general: that we have different immediate values or different kinds of valuation, or that we are aware, often

> intangibly, of different formations and distributions of energy and interest. In such a case, each group is speaking its native language, but its uses are significantly different, and especially when strong feelings or important ideas are in question. No single group is 'wrong' by any linguistic criterion, though a temporarily dominant group may try to enforce its own uses as 'correct'. (10)

Williams's groundbreaking text took as its premise the importance of the cultural understanding of words over etymological conceptions. For example, the literal and etymological meaning of the word "decimate" refers to the reduction of something by 1/10th ("deci" from the Greek for "ten"); but, because the average person often uses this term to refer to complete destruction, under Williams's understanding, the second definition is more useful from a cultural studies perspective. Furthermore, one should not take one's usage of a term for granted, as knowledge, per cultural studies, is:

> … not a product of research that can be validated only in established disciplines and by credentializing institutions, but as a process that is responsive to the diverse constituencies that use and revise the meanings of the keywords that govern our understandings of the present, the future, and the past. (Burgett and Hendler 3)

Our definitions for terms can shift based on numerous contextual factors, necessitating that when a term such as "wonderland" is used as a study keyword, it should be explained according to the author's particular conception of it, as included below.

Criptopia. The concept of a utopia as a vision of the world that adheres to certain ideals and needs is not a new concept, but the term "criptopia" has largely emerged as a portmanteau following the appropriation of the term "cripple"

through the use of the word “crip” in disability activism[4]. As explained at the 2017 Sex Disability Conference:

> Crip is considered to be an inclusive term, representing all disabilities: people with vastly divergent physical and psychological differences. Crip represents the contemporary disability rights wave and is an “insider” term for disability culture. Not to be confused with a gang name, the term Crip within the disability community reflects the political reclaiming of the historically derogatory term “cripple,” which not only diminished the person to an image of ugliness but also excluded those with non-physical disabilities from the disability community.

Combining this word for disabled identity with the concept of utopia, an imagined but desired place characterized by perfection, suggests the imagining of a perfect world in which persons with disability are not just permitted to exist, but to thrive. As explained in the popular article “Criptopia” by Josie Byzek, managing editor of *New Mobility*, “the magazine for active wheelchair users,” this concept imagines a space in which everything is “perfectly accessible, affordable and accommodating.”

Crip Futurity. Related to the concept of criptopia, the idea of crip futurity considers the temporal existence of persons with disabilities. In his review of Alison Kafer’s *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, fellow intersectional disability theorist Robert McRuer offers a genealogy for her politics of crip futurity:

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[4] Some have argued that the reappropriation of the term “crip” to refer to disabled communities may be confusing as a result of the Crips or Original Crip Homies adopting this name for their street gang. However, as the organization was established in the late 1960s and is largely responsible for violence, I argue that the term “crip” can and should continue to be applied to disabled communities, to whom the term “cripple” has been applied since around the 10th century CE.

> While attuned to Lee Edelman's critique of a narrow reproductive futurism invested in an idealized childhood, Kafer writes more in a Muñozian vein and (as Feminist, Queer, Crip was published in the year of his death) carries on or crips a Muñozian legacy. "Queer kids, street kids, kids of color — all of the kids cast out of reproductive futurism, have been and continue to be framed as sick, as pathological, as contagious," Kafer writes (32). Although her book is not a direct response to [Muñoz's magnum opus] *Cruising Utopia*, she explicitly calls on readers to "do the work" Muñoz imagined, "and to do it with attention to how [these] different populations are demarcated differently" in relation to idealized notions of the future (34). (532)

Similar to queer persons per Edelman's *No Future*, Kafer reads the depiction and understanding of persons with disability in Anglo-American culture as consistently *future-less,* with disability acting as a condition upon which one's future is effectively ended or precluded (33). In his review, McRuer notes that most futurists "can only conceive of a future from which disability has been purged" (532). Thus, the purpose of crip futurity is to imagine a future, often a utopian one, in which disability and the communities surrounding its various conditions have not been eliminated. My understanding of crip futurity in this dissertation builds on such a model of criptopia based in queer, disability, feminist theory.

The reproduction-based futurism of queer theorist Lee Edelman is examined via the concept of biofuturity in poet and disability theorist Michael Davidson's "Pregnant Men: Modernism, Disability, and Biofuturity in Djuna Barnes." Davidson interrogates Edelman's concept of the queer "death drive," the call for a conception of queer time that is based in the present, accepting one's

futurity as ending with one's individual death rather than continuing via one's blood lineage. In his deconstruction of the term, Davidson analyzes the rhetoric utilized by euthanasia proponents; essentially critiquing the normate-based decision that certain crip lives are "not worth living" (209), a narrative that negates certain crip futures *and* presents. In his examination of the popular 2004 film *Million Dollar Baby*, in which a boxer is rendered paraplegic after an accident, he notes that there is an assumption of a "body that, could it speak, would want not to be born" (209). A more recent example of such a conception is Jojo Moyes's 2012 novel *Me Before You* and the boycotting of the 2016 adaptation by many disabled communities. The storyline in both texts follows a wealthy upper-class British man, Will, as he seeks to end his life following an accident that leaves him quadriplegic. When his new caretaker and love interest, Louisa, learns that his mother has agreed to support his physician-assisted suicide in six months, should he still wish to terminate his life, she attempts to convince him that his life is still worth living. Despite Will and Louisa falling in love, Will still chooses to end his life after the six month period. Regardless of having access to the highest quality healthcare, a supportive and wealthy family, and a loving partner, this character still feels that death is preferable to life as a quadriplegic. As disability and queer rights activist Jax Jacki Brown explains:

> Let's be clear here: Will ends his life solely on the basis of having disability… As a wheelchair user, I am deeply concerned that this film perpetuates these messages: that the lives of people with disabilities are not worth living, and that people with disabilities cannot be worthy partner… When able-bodied people feel as

> though they want to die, we get them help and talk about suicide prevention, but when people with disabilities are depressed, there's a large subset of society sending the message that it's understandable and wanting to legislate to help them do it.

With this movement toward a now and future based in self rather than coupling and reproduction, the concept of biofuturity for the disabled body extends to biological reproduction *of* and *by* persons with disabilities. In chapter one of this study, I therefore consider the implications of genetic modification, prenatal testing, and disability-based abortions in relation to crip futurity, asking if the future must preclude the continued existence of certain disabilities and their related crip communities.

Fan Fiction. The use of characters, worlds, and scenarios by another author to craft original stories is not a new phenomenon, but the term "fan fiction" originated as a disparaging term in contrast to "pro" fiction by established authors in the late 1930s (Tucker qtd. in Prucher 57). In chapter four of this study, I discuss how popular characters have been "borrowed" by authors who are not their initial creators since antiquity, with many contemporaneous examples seen in adaptations of Sherlock Holmes. Sherlockians Peter Ridgway Watt and Joseph Green have the earliest dated "pastiches" surrounding Holmes, such as J. M. Barrie's 1893 "The Late Sherlock Holmes"; I argue that such works constitute fan fiction by another name. The distinction between pastiche and fan fiction will be unpacked in chapter four, in which I argue that tradition

predominantly acts to minimize efforts by less-established authors and fan communities, particularly those belonging to marginalized groups.

Speculative Fiction. Sometimes used interchangeably with sf or science fiction, this term has been broadly used to include adventure fiction, mysteries, weird fiction, detective novels, fantasy, and even horror literature. Many contemporary authors whose works might otherwise be categorized as science fiction, such as Nalo Hopkinson, explain that the history of science fiction has mostly negated the presence of women and persons of color (Rutledge 591). Some groups, such as the alt-right ideological Hugo voting blocs the Rabid Puppies and the Sad Puppies, implicitly consider science fiction to be intended for White, male, straight, normate, and cisgender audiences. As such, the term "speculative fiction" is often applied when referring to a more diversified vision of the genre as it has existed from the late twentieth century, from the civil rights movements of the 1960s to the present. This definition can also be extended to address fiction that considers our world(s) from a broader, societal lens:

> … as a set of literatures that examine the effects on humans and human societies of the fact that we are toolmakers. We are always trying to control or improve our environments. Those tools may be tangible (such as machines) or intangible (such as laws, mores, belief systems). Spec-fic [short for speculative fiction] tells us stories about our lives with our creations. (Nelson and Hopkinson)

In terms of this dissertation, the term "speculative fiction" is differentiated from "science fiction" and "fantasy" because I use it to refer to various aforementioned

genre fiction in a broad, all-encompassing lens that historically includes compositions by persons belonging to marginalized groups.

Wonderland. While numerous definitions for this term exist, these understandings build upon the Oxford English Dictionary's generalized depiction of a wonderland as "a. An imaginary realm of wonder and faery… b. A country, realm, or domain which is full of wonders or marvels" ("wonderland"). Thus, in approaching this thesis from a cultural studies perspective, it is imperative to understand the societal uses of the term "wonderland" or "wonder" as an emotion. In fact, in his current project, professor of speculative fiction Glenn Willmott argues that it is the emotion of wonder rather than the existence of science or magic that builds the foundations of this genre (2). In his thought piece on this topic for the 2016 Modernist Studies Association conference, Willmott notes the common use of words such as "marvelous," "wonderful," "thrilling," "astounding," and "startling" in titles among the Golden Age of speculative fiction from the late-1930s to mid-1940s. Consider some of the more prominent texts indisputably linked to the concept of the wonderland: Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*, and L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. While notably absent from the title of Barrie's key work, the term "wonderful" is quite common in the text itself, appearing six times and linked to the ability to fly through Peter's explanation: "You just think lovely wonderful thoughts… and they lift you up in the air." The broader term "wonder" appears 22 times. The other two key texts include the

word in their very titles, suggesting that these terms were actually popular within the genre prior to the Golden Age.

Particularly significant additions to this definition include the wonderland as a literary utopic space intended for a predominantly child audience and a broader audience of persons concerned for their welfare. It is both this intended audience and the intended evoked emotion that mark the wonderland as distinct from the larger genre of utopic literature.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter 1: Crip Futurity and Literary Utopias

This chapter presents some of the ways that current scientific efforts and speculative fiction texts have attempted to remove disability from existence in an idealized world. Innovations that seek to rectify disabling conditions are considered in depth, including prenatal testing and resulting abortions and eugenics through genetic engineering. In this chapter, I argue that such scientific and literary endeavors complement one another to create an anti-disability ideology, a popular perspective whereby disabled bodies and minds are seen as a failure of contemporary science capable of being rectified with future generations. In this manner, persons with disabilities are perceived as needing cures in order to inhabit an idealized or utopic world.

This chapter also builds upon my understanding of criptopia. Criptopia, in this study, exists as a utopic space in which persons with disabilities are not only permitted to exist, but also treated as equally viable to the normate or part of a

broadly-defined understanding of the normate. Historically, utopic spaces in literature have largely erased or eliminated both physical and mental disabilities, often through eugenic practices or the assumption that, in a more perfect society, these perceived imperfections would simply cease to exist. I particularly discuss the wonderland utopia of Oz by L. Frank Baum, specifically the well-known *Wizard of Oz*, in relation to earlier and arguably grayer utopic texts, including Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, and William Morris's *News from Nowhere*.

Finally, I define what characteristics are indicative of the wonderland, including: (1) a heroine's journey, (2) monsters, fairy folk, or talking animals, (3) rules that differ largely from those of the real world in terms of morality, science, and economics/government, (4) physicality and literal existence otherwise known as geographic realism, (5) visitations by children or child-like figures from our own world, usually female, (6), and (7) monarchs and tyrants interrupted by the visit of the human protagonist.

Chapter 2: Criptopia and *The Wizard of Oz*

In this chapter, I argue that the fantasy world of Oz offers a quintessential criptopic wonderland space unlike those created by earlier twentieth-century authors. Drawing upon the characteristics introduced in the previous chapter, I demonstrate the manner in which the wonderland framework exists within Baum's Oz, particularly his first text in the series, *The Wizard of Oz*. Baum's Oz embodies a criptopia in an overt and narratively significant manner. This chapter

introduces readers to the techniques of deep reading, fan culture awareness, and intertextual understandings of this influential text.

By offering an in-depth reading of *The Wizard of Oz* in relation to its subsequent texts by Baum, I demonstrate the manner in which bodies in wonderlands constantly undergo metamorphoses. Differences, rather than being hierarchical, are shown to be equally valuable within unique contexts. While the protagonist, Dorothy Gale, acts as a quintessential normate figure outside of Oz, her normalcy in and of itself is questioned and, at times, shown to be disabling within the context of this wonderland.

Chapter 3: “I Am a Brain”: Creating an Everyperson in Fiction

In the third chapter, I consider shifting ideas of normalcy and perfection through the evolution of Arthur Conan Doyle’s famous detective, Sherlock Holmes. I examine notions of essential human nature in British and U.S. cultures, focusing on the change from the soul to the brain to DNA as representative of the self. Then, I consider how such a shift plays out in literatures over time, considering the implications for persons with disabilities. I argue that Sherlock Holmes came to embody the ideal modernist mind and consider what readings that place him on the autism spectrum mean for persons with neurodiverse conditions.

Specifically, I discuss recent adaptations of Sherlock Holmes in terms of representing persons with disabilities, including the current television adaptation, *Sherlock*, which portrays Holmes as a person with sociopathic tendencies on the

autism spectrum and Watson as a disabled military veteran. I also touch on the 2016 comic book adaptation *Watson and Holmes* set in twenty-first century Harlem with Black protagonists and the 2015 film *Mr. Holmes*, which considers the effects of age-based disability on the titular character.

Alongside an analysis and consideration of other early texts in speculative fiction, I offer an historic overview of the myriad ways in which the genre has become categorized as one by and for White men. This discussion will build on the idea that utopic visions lead to broader constructions of normalcy, as exemplified in the current Hugo Award debates surrounding the Sad Puppies and the Rabid Puppies, as well as RaceFail and Gamergate. The puppies groups aim to overwhelm voting for the Hugo Award, arguably the highest literary award bestowed upon writers of speculative fiction, to ensure that winners are predominantly "white… straight… [and] cisnormative" (Torgersen). While critiquing the notion of perfection as inherently White, male, cisgender, straight, normate-bodied, and neuro-normative has become mainstream, the alt-right Rabid Puppies and similar groups directly work against this by suggesting that the future and/or utopic should follow the normalization of past power relationships. I debunk this alternative history of the speculative fiction genre itself by considering how figures who do not fit a normalized model (i.e. women, persons of color) have been purposefully removed from the speculative fiction canon. Instead, the model utopian has shifted across narratives and time,

offering a far more colorful vision of the future than that imagined by Torgersen and his colleagues.

Chapter 4: Speculative Fan Fiction and the Future of the Disabled Body

In this chapter, I analyze how persons with disabilities exist prominently in utopic literatures as a direct result of the greater presence of disabled persons in everyday life from the nineteenth century to the present. This chapter considers utopic spaces as developed and/or inhabited by persons with disabilities to answer Alison Kafer's key question of whether or not utopia, by its very definition, "excludes disability and illness" (21). Historically, utopic spaces have erased or negated marginalized persons. As explained in Lee Edelman's key text regarding queer identity and concepts of normalcy and perfection, *No Future*, conceptions of the perfect provide the basis for what is understood as "normal." Normalcy, according to Edelman and as expanded by Davidson, usually translates to "compulsory ablebodiedness" as well as compulsory heterosexuality (Davidson 209).

By considering early and contemporary fan works about the fictional hero and idealized figure Sherlock Holmes, I argue that speculative fiction is a genre that originated from, for, and by the fan community. Moving to the twenty-first century, I analyze some popular fan fiction narratives and mainstream publishing success stories, such as E. L. James's *Fifty Shades* trilogy, which originated as *Twilight* fan fiction. Fan fiction and mediums such as video games and comic books have provided new venues where speculative fiction can flourish, albeit

not without conflict. I also present the many legal and ethical challenges that fan fiction faces in modern society. The distinction between traditional publication and online publication as fan fiction, fan video, or even video game, I contend, is not useful for understanding speculative fiction as a genre, as an author's ability to be published in a traditional manner largely depends upon their positionality.

Conclusions

This dissertation will build upon various concepts of criptopia in providing a rereading of the speculative fiction canon that moves marginalized voices to the center. The term "criptopia" has been popular among various Tumblr communities and can refer to a world much like our own, but without compulsory ablebodiedness or the troubles of socially-inscribed disability ("Criptopia"). I utilize this concept to refer to a more traditional utopic "no place," where persons with disabilities are both permitted and part of the definition of normate. I specifically consider literary utopic spaces intended for child audiences that are inhabited to some extent by persons with disabilities. I find that, unlike adult utopic fiction, the utopic wonderland of children's literature, as seen in Oz, Narnia, Wonderland, and Neverland, offers a space that is far more inclusive of disability and other marginalized groups. Rather than following the "woman as reward" trope so often depicted in early U.S. American utopic literature and speculative fiction, including Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, Butler's *Erewhon*, Morris's *News from Nowhere*, Perkins Gilman's *Herland*, Greg's *Across the Zodiac*, Serviss's *Edison's Conquest of Mars*, and numerous others, these

narratives follow female protagonists. Thus, the criptopic spaces of children's wonderlands offer the possibility of a positive future that is more diverse in terms of dis/ability and gendered power relationships.

The open diversification of the speculative fiction genre during the twentieth and twenty-first century is unpacked by analyzing fan fiction, filmic representations, non-canonical coquels, sequels, and prequels of historic texts. New iterations and readings of older texts demonstrate that not only were marginalized persons present in historic speculative fiction texts, including those pre-dating the 1960s civil rights movements, but also show how these communities have actively responded to their erasure from texts in this genre. I argue that these trends deconstruct the narrative of normality and alternative history supported by the Sad Puppies and Rabid Puppies, who purport that speculative fiction has been and should continue to be predominantly White, able bodied, neurotypical, male, heterosexual, and cisgender. Speculative fiction has not historically been homogenous nor utopic visions gray, as this dissertation will show. And newer, more diverse narratives actually and actively build upon historical texts often placed in the margins but still essential to the building of the speculative fiction genre.

Chapter 1: Crip Futurity and Literary Utopias

The unlimited possibilities inherent in the futuristic, fictional worlds of speculative fiction make the genre ripe for the study of societal norms, the social identity of persons with disabilities, and the future of disability studies. Tales of utopias, specifically, offer a unique opportunity to see how authors envision idealized futures and the place of persons with disabilities in supposedly perfect worlds. However, such an understanding of disability, particularly crip futurities, cannot be deconstructed without first looking at the context of disability as a status within Anglophone cultures and across time. Thus, I begin this chapter with an overview of disability studies with particular emphasis on readings of disability history with its theoretical lens.

Following this overview, and in consideration of the future of the disabled body, I turn to visions of the utopic and the manner in which persons with disabilities are included or entirely removed from such stories; such a narrative model in utopias outside of the realm of the wonderland, I argue, demonstrate broader Anglophone attitudes toward the lack of futurity for crip communities. By then turning to the subcategory of the utopic wonderland, I demonstrate how this idealized location is framed and the manner in which it creates a space ripe for a celebration of difference, particularly in terms of the body and mind.

Understanding Disability in Context

Disability can be understood in multiple contexts, both social and medical. Under the social definition, disability exists primarily in a relational and political

manner (Kafer 9). Essentially, it is not so much physical or mental conditions that render one disabled as it is society's inability to support or otherwise normalize disabled bodies in public spaces. The classic example, per disability studies theorist Tom Shakespeare, is that a wheelchair user is only rendered disabled by a lack of ramps, dropped curbs, accessible routes, or other accommodations in certain places ("Social Model" 212). When spaces and ideas are made accessible to persons who may otherwise receive limited entry, they are no longer disabled in the social sense. Recognizing that disability in many cases also exists in a physical sense, disability studies scholar and Medievalist Joshua R. Eyler notes that, "When we speak of disability using the social model, we do so with an acknowledgment that impairment precedes disability, but it is the disability that is actually the debilitating force" (320). This understanding of disability as biologically, or at least physically, designated by physicians is known as the medical model of disability. Both social and medical definitions tend to exist simultaneously, complementing one another in our greater understanding of disability as a complex and intersectional issue.

In her discussion of disability and futurity, activist and theorist Alison Kafer refers to the disabled body as a "potential site for collective reimagining" (9). Given the possibilities of imagined worlds based in the future or an alternative present, it would seem that speculative fiction is an area ripe for the negation of the factors contributing to disability in the social sense. However, I argue that these futurist visions instead tend to focus on the aspects constituting the

medical model of disability, striving to negate the existence of disabilities entirely by imagining worlds replete with what bioethicist Glenn McGee terms “perfect babies.” As McGee explains, “when an obstetrician refers to the ‘healthy baby,’ she is making a kind of ‘reverse diagnosis’—if the infant presents no symptoms of illness, it is healthy” (116); thus, the citizens of utopic literary spaces are generally depicted as absent of any conditions differing them from the normate. Recently, disability rights advocates, particularly parents with disabilities or to children with disabilities, have noted the troubling flip side of the phrase, “as long as it’s healthy.” Often used as an alternative to offering a gender preference, the suggestion still provides a clear preference for a child of a certain type. In actuality, the philosophy that accompanies this notion is that one should celebrate the birth of a *healthy* child, but that the birth of an *unhealthy* child or an infant with disabilities is not worth celebrating but, rather mourning (Free; Roberts; Taylor).

Adding to such critique, feminist theorist Sara Ahmed considers a second characteristic often used as a gauge for the worthiness of a child, and thus, a successful parent: happiness. Ahmed argues that in Anglophone cultures, “the obligation of the child to be happy is a repaying of what the child owes, of what is due to the parents given what they have given up. The duty of the child is to make the parents happy and to perform this duty happily by being happy or by showing signs of being happy in the right way.” (59)

This norm, which Ahmed refers to as "the happiness turn," focuses on the manner in which happiness has been both normalized and marketed. She notes the high number of books available from 2005 onward that attempt to sell the concept of happiness as something achievable by all (Ahmed 2). In combining these two concepts regarding the essentialness of happiness and healthiness, one also sees the rise of an industry for books directly related to raising an idealized baby who is both happy and healthy. Some of these texts include the following bestselling titles: *The Happiest Baby on the Block*; *Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child*; and *Peaceful Parent, Happy Kids*.[5] While there is nothing inherently wrong with being happy or wishing general health for one's child, Ahmed states that the trouble arises with societal conceptions of what happiness should look like. Largely, she argues, happiness is used to reify normative lifestyle choices, categories, and ways of being, such that parents hope that their children will not be queer or disabled in order to guarantee them "happier" lives (Ahmed 19). The ultimate outcome of such a desire for one's child, however well intentioned, works combat prejudice against marginalized groups by eliminating the marginalized group rather than the prejudice itself. For example, while there are clear societal advantages to being born as one who is at least medically defined as male, most countries ban sex-based abortion and limit scientific techniques for gender selection. While being sexed as female means that one

[5] According to Amazon.com's bestsellers list on October 27, 2017.

will face sex-based discrimination, whether or not one identifies with one's assigned gender, larger society has not sought to end the birth of girls. Instead, efforts such as the various feminist movements have focused on combatting sex-based discrimination and the patriarchy as a whole.

Yet, such a futuristic conception of unity through extreme, and often forced, homogeneity, as would be created through the elimination of disability, has long been considered in speculative fiction. In a particularly useful example, the protagonist of Ursula K. Le Guin's 1971 novel *The Lathe of Heaven*, George Orr, seeks to subvert racism by reimagining all humans with a gray complexion; in this novel, George is able to change the current state of the world through his dreams, which he learns to control. However, instead of ending prejudice on earth, George's alteration simply moves the prejudice to focus on alternative characteristics to race. Simultaneously, his attempt to create a utopic future becomes notably *dystopic* through the alterations that occur to persons on a deeper level than skin color. George realizes that his attorney friend, a half-Black woman named Heather, simply cannot exist sans her racialized identity, internally noting that "she could not have been born gray. Her color, her color of brown, was an essential part of her, not an accident. Her anger, timidity, brashness, gentleness, all were elements of her mixed being" (130). Similarly, individuals whose senses of self are inexorably linked to identities such as queer, crip, female, Latinx, and other positionalities, may be rendered entirely other to themselves when removed from such markers.

In short, to be in a position of marginalization and to recognize oneself as rendered inferior is a joyless experience. Most social movements, Ahmed explains, have thus "struggled against rather than for happiness" (2). As a result, the "killjoy" comes to represent the feminist figure because, in coming to understand the existence of the patriarchy, one simply cannot accept it and be happy with one's subordination. By desiring happiness for our children, we must therefore question what that this happiness should look like and whether it would not be better to wish for a cause-driven or self-validated child. Happiness, according to Ahmed, is often utilized as a mechanism for silencing persons who have legitimate reasons for being unhappy through the recognition of the cisheteropatriarchy, sustained racial injustice, neuronormativity and other forms of ableism, as well as other instances of regularized and system discrimination. In relation to the figure of the feminist killjoy, Ahmed discusses the counter concept of the feminist snap, which occurs as a result of persons trying not to be the "killjoy" that addresses and gives voice to such injustices; the feminist snap occurs as a result of maintaining the pressure of silence. This tension continues to accumulate until, against the imperative to be happy or at least maximize the potential for the happiness of others, this rage snaps free:

> When you are estranged from happiness – and happiness can be what you shatter just by turning up or speaking up – so much else is revealed. And so we might be there, listening to the happy hum of family life; you might be having conversations where only certain things are brought up. Someone says something problematic. If you find something problematic, you have a problem. If you find something problematic, you become a problem. So, you respond

> quietly, perhaps. You might be speaking quietly, or you might be getting wound up, recognizing with frustration that you are being wound up by someone who is winding you up. Being wound up: you become tighter, and tighter, the more you are provoked. Tighter, tighter, tighter still, gasp, there is no air left: until, snap. (Ahmed, "Snap!")

The desire that one's child be happy is not problematic in itself. Rather, it is the manner in which this desire manifests and becomes a tool for normalizing and controlling others that becomes the problem. Certain characteristics are universally assumed to make all persons happy, such as marriage, caring for children, and other regularized social institutions and relationship types. However, Ahmed notes that, "different people are made happy by different things; we have a diversity of likes and dislikes" (*The Promise of Happiness* 118–119). There is no standard model for what happiness looks like; instead, there is simply a normalized model for behavior that one is pressured to follow under the justification that it will "make one happy."

Furthermore, the promise of happiness is simply not accessible to all persons at all times, while some persons will be chronically *unhappy*. In his essential 1917 essay "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud notes that people can rarely control their responses to loss. Mourning deals explicitly with sorrow that results from the loss of a love object, an experience over which the mourner usually has little or no control. Melancholia is also experienced as a result of loss, but without the actual absence of a love object. This latter experience, now characterized as melancholic depression and a subset of major depressive

disorder ("MDD," APA, *DSM IV*), is even less navigable by an individual than mourning. When the moment of loss that causes mourning passes, over time the separation between the mourner and the love object becomes normalized. To put it simply, one generally copes with the loss and "moves on." But, in melancholic depression, the individual continually experiences the moment of loss, even when an actual loss has not actually occurred outside of the person's mind. Furthermore, beyond depressive conditions, additional health factors can continuously limit the ability of certain people to be happy, such as structures of ableism, racism, and the cisheteropatriarchy. Additionally, as noted by psychologist Todd B. Kashdan, conditions such as loneliness and insomnia can severely limit one's ability to be happy while even "the pressure to be happy makes people less happy." Addressing issues similar to those discussed by Sara Ahmed, but from the perspective of psychology, Kashdan comes to a similar conclusion:

> Think about what you want written on your tombstone.
> Here lies Todd Kashdan, a man who put every ounce of effort into being a happy person.
> Here lies Todd Kashdan, a man who strived to be a good friend, a good husband, a good father, while trying to make the world a slightly better place.

While the concept of "goodness" is as fraught and multifaceted as that of happiness, the second epitaph demonstrates how focusing on an outward approach to life may be preferable to a general goal of being happy. Essentially, Kashdan asks, when we think of revolutionary figures known as leaders of

movements for positive social change, we rarely focus on their personal fulfillment; few people think of someone such as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy and say, "Yes, his movement did a lot for Civil Rights in the U.S. *But was he happy*?" Kashdan's understanding mirrors Ahmed's argument that a cause-driven life may be a better desire for one's child than happiness or happiness alone.

Similarly, the conception of health varies widely from person to person. Although the desire for a healthy child may build upon common fears and anxieties surrounding perinatal death (Brockington, Macdonald, and Wainscott), popular online parenting resources also demonstrate a fixation on fears surrounding birth defects (Dreisbach). And such a fear regarding defect largely focuses on potential mental illnesses, such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and Down syndrome. Such a finding agrees with the arguments of historian and science philosopher Fernando Vidal. Vidal purports that one's personhood in Anglophone cultures has largely shifted from being based in the soul to the mind, with the brain as the model for selfhood in the contemporary era. Yet Vidal's studies into the nature of personhood and identity go even further, suggesting that we are currently undergoing a shift beginning in the twenty-first century whereby "genetics have been linked to fundamental selfhood issues" (6). An identity determined by one's unique DNA now poses the greatest challenge to personhood as defined by one's brain. An example of this shift may be seen in the rising popularity of genetic testing companies, such as 23andMe and

Ancestry.com's AncestryDNA. Thus, it has become essential to understand the question of health in terms of recent technologies that categorize congenital disabilities, which largely render a child "unhealthy" at birth, as conditions to be corrected. After all, the logic goes, one may be comfortable having a child with a disability, but one may question the morality of bearing a child who will continue a line of disabled persons indefinitely. For example, the popular What to Expect When You're Expecting web complement to the bestselling pregnancy guide by Heidi Murkoff, includes the article "The Benefits of Prenatal Testing."[6] While the article itself neither prescribes nor proscribes prenatal testing, the title misleadingly suggests that prenatal testing is a wholly positive or "beneficial" decision.

This and other articles that seek to appeal to persons across various belief systems often fail to address the real-life implications of such potentialities, namely disability-based abortions and prenatal gene editing. As of 2017, CRISPR-Cas9 has become an effective tool for prenatal gene editing. Gene editing is now able to prevent the conditions that lead to congenital heart disease prior to birth, leading to the need to analyze bioethical concepts surrounding prenatal testing, abortions based upon diagnoses, and possibilities for contemporary eugenic practices. Responding to the proliferation of access to and support for disability-based abortions, lawmaker Kevin Shinkwin of the United

[6] Tellingly, this piece was included in the 2017 disability studies primer, *Beginning Disability*, edited by Lennard J. Davis.

Kingdom (U.K.) described such practices as a form of eugenics, the practice of attempting to "improve" the genetic quality of humanity by promoting reproduction between individuals that possess perceived positive traits while discouraging it from those who possess perceived negative traits. Such a practice has largely been used to threaten the continued existence of certain racial groups, persons who identify as queer or genderqueer, the poor, and those with hereditary disabilities (Hansen and King; Snyder and Mitchell, "Compulsory Feral-ization"). Citing statistics from the U.K. Department of Health, Shinkwin notes that the "overall number of abortions on the grounds of disability, regardless of the point of gestation at which they occurred, has grown by 68 percent over the last 10 years" (qtd. in Tennant). While the exact numbers for disability-based abortions are difficult to find in the United States, largely due to the impact of Roe v. Wade and the privacy surrounding abortion offered to parents in the U.S. per the Fourteenth Amendment, an estimated 85–90% of positive prenatal tests for Down syndrome result in abortions (Ouellette 212). Shinkwin states that some of the conditions that resulted in abortions following prenatal testing in the U.K. in 2015 were largely curable, non-life threatening conditions or constituted conditions that were disabling solely in the social sense. Consider, for instance, the staggering statistic that these tests resulted in the abortion of 11 embryos with cleft lips and/or palettes, conditions that are almost always curable, non-life threatening, and largely aesthetic. As explained by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control: "With treatment, most children with orofacial clefts [cleft lips or cleft

palates] do well and lead a healthy life. Some children with orofacial clefts may have issues with self-esteem if they are concerned with visible differences between themselves and other children." As the biotechnology surrounding prenatal screening has advanced, a wider array of conditions and identities have been identified in embryos, including traits such as "sex, neural tube defects, deafness, trisomy 13, anencephaly, adult-onset genetic disorders (e.g., Huntington's), Down syndrome, and an increased likelihood to develop certain cancers" (Ouellette 212). Bioethics instructor and legal scholar Alicia Ouellette explains that the number of traits detectable prior to birth will only increase with future technical innovation:

> Advances in genetic and other prenatal testing appear likely to reveal even more information about developing fetuses, such as hair and eye color, skin pigmentation, and autism spectrum disorder….
>
> As genetic testing becomes more available, less invasive, and more robust, questions arise about "which conditions can and should be tested for [before implantation and] prenatally…And as science evolves, we need to ask: should prenatal testing include autism, breast cancer risk genes, or even one's sexual orientation?"

The question for many stakeholders, particularly those who identify as members of disability communities, is whether or not eliminating the existence of certain or all congenital disabilities constitutes a eugenic practice that threatens current persons with disabilities and their communities. From this perspective, I question if such efforts strive to eliminate a disability-based or crip identity. With the increase of active genetics and prenatal testing, the practical implications of the

drive to have a happy and healthy baby may at least strive to remove disability as a category of being.

As science fiction develops into scientific fact through genetic modification and other biomedical innovations, persons with disabilities and their advocates have come to question whether such technologies constitute eugenic policies or at least progress towards eugenics ideals. As professor of special education Solveig Magnus Reindal writes, such perspectives are problematic from a disability studies perspective for two primary reasons: (1) they "rest[…] on an individual model of disability, where disability is regarded as a product of biological determinism or 'personal tragedy' in the individual" (91), and (2) such understandings of disability largely consider the medicalized causes as constituting dysfunctions which one simply prefers not to have (89). As explained through Reindal's critique of such arguments, even though practices such as gene therapy generally do not seek to prevent persons with disabilities from reproducing, they *do* seek to prevent the reproduction of the disability in and of itself (89). In short, Reindal argues that such procedures remain irrevocably linked to the practice of eugenics by essentially "mask[ing] eugenics as science" (Miceli and Steele 85). Such distinctions merely subdivide and convolute the concept of eugenics, differentiating between that which sociologist and disability activist Tom Shakespeare designates "weak eugenics," practices that are non-coercive, and "strong eugenics," which eliminate the possibility of choice for persons with disabilities ("Choices," 669).

Disability studies scholars Michael George Miceli and Jason Kenneth, however, Steele deconstruct and problematize this distinction, noting that “the crude racial and class prejudices espoused by early eugenists are now being replaced by so-called scientific evidence of genetic inequality” (86). As evidence for this claim, Miceli and Steele observe that physicians offering gene manipulation therapies rarely, if ever, discuss the positive effects of disabilities with their patients. This pattern is discussed in further detail by psychologist Katja Boersma, who notes that physicians and other healthcare workers tend to focus on the negative aspects of patients’ personalities as related to conditions such as chronic pain; concurrently, they ignore aspects with “potential added value” (226) of accompanying characteristics. In her research into the personalities of persons with chronic pain, Boersma notes that positive traits remain underdiscussed in both research communities and with patients; for example, persons with chronic pain are actually more likely to avoid self-harming activities while being more self-directed than their largely pain-free peers (226). As a result of this tendency toward erasing positive personality traits and other qualities, disability is understood almost wholly in negative terms, as a condition of being to be avoided if at all possible. In one particularly notable case that considers the anti-disability rhetoric inherent in such thoughts, popular autism advocate Sarah Kurchak refers to the 2015 measles outbreak in Southern California as stemming from persons against the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccine. These persons, also known as “anti-vaxxers,” choose not to inoculate their children

against the now largely preventable MMR diseases.[7] Because the anti-vaxxer movement believes ASD to be caused by the MMR vaccine, Kurchak argues that anti-vaxxers are essentially demonstrating a preference for children with measles to those with autism, “we’re facing a massive public health crisis because a disturbing number of people believe that autism is worse than illness or death.” While not overtly or, perhaps, intentionally eugenic, such rhetoric continues to have a hugely negative effect upon the futurity of crip communities. Patterson and Satz particularly highlight why distinguishing between weak and strong eugenics can be deceptive, explaining that,

> At the core of the field of genetic counseling lies a paradox epitomized in the injunction that the counselor be nondirective. Ann Platt Walker perhaps unwittingly suggests part of the conflict by her choice of language in *A Guide to Genetic Counseling* (1998): "Adherence to a nonprescriptive (often referred to as 'nondirective') approach is perhaps the most defining feature of genetic counseling. The philosophy stems from a firm belief that genetic counseling should—insofar as is possible—be devoid of any eugenic motivation" (8). The phrase "insofar as is possible" within the dashes reveals a problem, suggesting its author's concern that the enterprise of genetic counseling may by its nature be unable to free itself totally from a eugenic cast (122).

The tendency to see technology that eliminates disabilities as wholly positive and non-problematic has also been proliferated by speculative fiction through visions of idealized futures. A multitude of authors have implicitly and

[7] Notably, persons with disabilities and illnesses, chronic or otherwise, are one group often effected by measles outbreaks, as many persons with compromised immune systems are recommended against receiving the MMR vaccine (Centers for Disease Control).

explicitly considered such issues, with the resulting materials obstructing rather than promoting an agenda that supports persons with disabilities per Kafer's socially-conscious eye. Particularly noteworthy among such narratives are considerations of the utopic, the idealized "no place" characterized "as having a perfect social, legal, and political system" (OED, "Utopia"). Because the utopic seeks to depict the very qualities toward which humanity strives, what is understood to be the best of our species' potential, these narratives are particularly meaningful for analyzing the interrelatedness of disability in societies and literature. Only by understanding the characteristics that our societies deem ideal can we recognize which persons inherently fail to meet that ideal and are thus rendered incapable of even striving toward perfection.

The Utopia as a Model for Futurity

Speculative fiction, particularly futuristic science fiction, has long acted as both a mirror of society's values and a place from which ideas for future innovations are incubated. For example, the original *Star Trek* series is often credited with introducing the conceptions from which the actualization of technologies such as automatic doors, cellular phones, tablets, and many other innovations were born. I argue that utopic speculative fiction spaces have a similar effect upon the construction of our societies; the positively depicted aspects and characters included in these narratives also often further the value of those features and persons in our current societies.

However, in order to investigate utopian tales in the context of disability studies, one must first recognize the diverse definitions of what constitutes a good or perfect life, as such a concept lies at the heart of utopian narratives. In her text critiquing happiness as an idealized model for futurity, intersectional feminist scholar Sara Ahmed further questions when it began to be taken for granted that eudaimonia, the good life or a life worth living, equated to a desire for happiness (*The Promise of Happiness*). Ahmed points out that rarely does a life worth living intersect with one's personal happiness per most traditional philosophical origins, whether Eastern or Western. In fact, a life lived in the pursuit of pleasure or happiness is historically understood as hedonistic and often associated with immorality or a lack of refinement according to such philosophies. And, although happiness in and of itself is something that is innately immeasurable, many of our most influential figures in terms of philosophy, literature, the arts, and other realms of idea creation have lived remarkably *unhappy* lives. Consider tragic religious figures such as Thích Quảng Đức's self-immolation in protest of prosecution against his religion, Christian martyrs and martyrdom itself as a means of achieving sainthood within Catholicism[8], or Jewish persons refusing to convert on penalty of death; notably, martyrdom is present among nearly all world religions, including also Islam, the Bahá'í Faith, Sikhism, Hinduism, and others. Similarly, major leaders in political

[8] Notably, martyrdom may take the place of a proven miracle in terms of the steps to become canonized within Catholicism.

thought have often been targeted by assassination efforts while living demonstrably unhappy lives according to their own accounts. Revolutionaries such as Malcolm X and Dolores Huerta did not practice contentment in their speeches or personal letters, but rather outrage and restlessness. Even those who considered the foundations of the good life themselves were often persecuted. In fact, such treatment includes the very creator of utopia himself, Saint Thomas More, who was put to death by Henry VIII for his refusal to support the divorce of the king from his then-wife, Catherine of Aragon.

Due to the various and shifting understandings of what a good life or perfect world might look like, some literary representations of utopias are especially conducive to a disability studies reading. While certain texts largely ignore disability, many take a troubling stance on this aspect of humanity. Thomas More's classic work *Utopia* originated an innovative albeit cruelly-worded idea for treating persons with disabilities that, simply put, does not stand the test of time:

> … there remained nothing but that some public provision might be made for the poor whom sickness or old age had disabled from labour, 'Leave that to me,' said the Fool, 'and I shall take care of them, for there is no sort of people whose sight I abhor more, having been so often vexed with them and with their sad complaints; but as dolefully soever as they have told their tale, they could never prevail so far as to draw one penny from me; for either I had no mind to give them anything, or, when I had a mind to do it, I had nothing to give them; and they now know me so well that they will not lose their labour, but let me pass without giving me any trouble, because they hope for nothing—no more, in faith, than if I were a priest; but I would have a law made for sending all these

> beggars to monasteries, the men to the Benedictines, to be made lay-brothers, and the women to be nuns.'

In one paragraph, More's characters equate persons with illnesses and disabilities to beggars while simultaneously suggesting that they be forced to become nuns, priests, or monks. While not unusual within the context of sixteenth-century England during which he wrote, More's text is noteworthy for considering the disadvantaged place that those who are aged, disabled, or ill inhabit in a perfect world, setting the standard for similar anti-disability practices in subsequent utopic narratives.

Of particular significance for this study are utopic texts developed in overt conversation with the historic contexts in which they were written and what disability historian Kim E. Nielsen terms the "creation" of persons with disabilities as "citizens" within a larger Anglophone, but particularly U.S. American, context (49). As the concept of disability arose through the demarcation of "good" vs. "bad citizens," in the newly independent United States of the late 18th century, solutions for the treatment of those termed "deviant" and "dependent" were sought. As such, literatures with an Anglophone context that strove to address these issues during this period to the early nineteenth century were particularly significant for establishing the manner in which persons with disabilities were to be treated in the young country. I argue that such texts formed the basis for and reflect conceptions of disability within the Progressive Era, setting the tone for

how disability was historically understood and continues to be viewed by many cultures in the United States.

Texts such as Edward Bellamy's groundbreaking 1888 novel, *Looking Backward*, H. G. Wells's 1895 *The Time Machine*, William Morris's 1890 *News From Nowhere*, Samuel Butler's 1872 *Erewhon*, Percy Greg's 1880 *Across the Zodiac*, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's particularly influential *Herland* (1915), offer examples of utopias that are uniquely situated to develop the conception of an U.S.-Americanized or U.S.-influenced idea of perfection. Notably, each example offers a unique glimpse into the manner in which persons with disabilities, illnesses, or the elderly are to be treated within such systems while simultaneously helping create a master narrative that negativizes and stigmatizes disability within the U.S.

Bellamy's especially influential text, *Looking Backwards*, upon which the popular Nationalist Clubs of the late nineteenth century were based, offers a utopic vision of Boston in the year 2000 in which disability is all but eradicated. One of the novel's primary characters, Dr. Leete, explains the nature of the utopia in which the protagonist, Julian West, finds himself in idyllic but notably anti-disability terms:

> The number of persons, more or less absolutely lost to the working force through physical disability, of the lame, sick, and debilitated, which constituted such a burden on the able-bodied in your day, now that all live under conditions of health and comfort, has shrunk to scarcely perceptible proportions, and with every generation is becoming more completely eliminated.

Julian enters this utopic setting with a kind of disability of his own: he can only sleep when sepulchered within a concrete bunker, suffering from a sleep disorder that would now be classified as insomnia (APA, DSM V). Like many cured of disabling conditions in this utopic setting, Julian finds himself able to sleep in the year 2000 without any of his usual aids. Many such conditions are explained by the societal problems of 1887. For instance, a woman's inferiority to man is referred to as a disability that stems from her dependence upon man, while Julian's insomnia is said to be a result of the stress of capitalism. Those who clearly *do* possess bodies with disabilities are hidden from West's, and thus the larger society's, view and continuously referred to in terms of their "burden" upon society. While not subject to the same institutionalization of late nineteenth-century Bostonites with intellectual and physical disabilities (Nielsen), persons with disabilities in Bellamy's fictional society are still segregated from the general population. While simultaneously "damning" the increasing reliance upon "insane asylums" in 1887, Julian does little to question where persons with the same disabilities reside in the year 2000 (Bellamy). The decreasing numbers of persons with disabilities in the twenty-first century also suggests that this utopia practices eugenics, though the exact means by which disability is eradicated in this fictional society is never clarified.

Similarly, Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, whose title is an adaptation of the word "nowhere" spelled backward in allusion to the etymology of the word "utopia," also stigmatizes persons with disabilities. In the idyllic country of

Erewhon, persons with disabilities are delegitimized via their own justice system. In a clear critique of the nineteenth-century British penal system, persons with illnesses and disabling afflictions must go to trial and face sentencing in Erewhon, while those who commit crimes such as theft and murder are instead given bed rest and medicine. As literary critic and scholar Patrick Parrinder explains, this society punishes “physical rather than moral deviations” (19). Parrinder highlights a scene in which an Erewhonian with tuberculosis is sentenced to life imprisonment: “The judge who passes this sentence gives full vent to the eugenic anxieties underlying the Erewhonian persecution of disability, disease and physical weakness. He explains to the unhappy prisoner that, if harsh measures were not taken against disease, 'a time of universal dephysicalisation would ensue.'” (19) Butler wrote his novel in 1872, at the beginning of the eugenics movement, a mere decade prior to the coining of the term “eugenics” by Francis Galton (OED, “Eugenic”). The troubling suggestion by Butler is that persons who commit crimes are no more to blame for their actions than those who inhabit bodies with disabilities. Butler delineates three separate classes among criminals with illnesses, including “those affecting the head, the trunk, and the lower limb.” Higgs, the narrator of this tale, finds such practices inhumane, an idea meant to be transposed upon the treatment of convicted felons within the reader’s own late nineteenth century setting:

> … the treatment of all convicted invalids had been much more barbarous than now, for no physical remedy was provided, and prisoners were put to the severest labour in all sorts of weather, so

> that most of them soon succumbed to the extreme hardships which they suffered; this was supposed to be beneficial in some ways, inasmuch as it put the country to less expense for the maintenance of its criminal class... those who had been imprisoned even for trifling ailments were often permanently disabled by their imprisonment; and when a man had been once convicted, it was probable that he would seldom afterwards be off the hands of the country.

When Higgs falls ill with a cold, he finds himself stigmatized to the extent that even his fiancée considers telling the authorities of his condition. She believes that his sickness is indicative of a moral defect of some kind and finds even the mention of his illness rude. Fortunately, Higgs recovers quickly, explaining "I never remember to have lost a cold so rapidly." By putting his mind to it, Higgs is apparently capable of curing himself. This thought depicts both disability and illness as defects not of character, like the Erewhonians surmise, but of will; purely by focusing and trying harder, Higgs is able to become healthy again.

This mindset is particularly troubling in light of contemporary politics of the early 21st century, which often contextualizes disability through such narratives as figure skater and testicular cancer survivor Scott Hamilton's idea that "the only disability in life is a bad attitude" (Ehrenreich). Journalist and breast cancer survivor Barbara Ehrenreich refers to this concept as the "smile or die" rationality, by which persons with cancer are seen to validate and allow their own deaths if they are openly unhappy about being ill. Ehrenreich wrote about this phenomenon in 2010, but this mindset reifies ideas shared by earlier cancer

survivors. In particular, scholar and poet Audre Lorde, during her own battle with breast cancer, notes that she "read a letter from a doctor in a medical magazine which said that no truly happy person ever gets cancer." The effect of becoming ill in a culture that perceives illness as the result of negative thinking has a profound effect upon Lorde, who explains:

> Despite my knowing better, and despite my having dealt with this blame-the-victim thinking for years, for a moment this letter hit my guilt button. Had I really been guilty of the crime of not being happy in this best of all possible infernos?
>
> The idea that the cancer patient should be made to feel guilty about having had cancer, as if in some way it were all her fault for not having been in the right psychological frame of mind at all times to prevent cancer, is a monstrous distortion of the idea that we can use our psychic strengths to help heal ourselves.

The idea that disability and illness result from a bad attitude further aligns all disability as mentally-derived, curable, and based upon a perceived weakness within the person who has the disability. These narratives argue that persons with disabilities are in some way inferior as a precursor to becoming disabled, not *because* they have disabilities, in an even further extension of anti-disability rhetoric. Elsewhere, I refer to this understanding as the "downer vibe," whereby persons with disabilities are both perceived as allowing themselves to become disabled and unpleasant to be around as a result of this perceived attitude (Martin Sandino).

Such a narrative is only furthered by texts such as Percy Greg's *Across the Zodiac*. This story follows a young unnamed Englishman who speaks with a military officer, Colonel A, who has voyaged to Mars using a mysterious

substance called apergy. On Mars, the colonel finds an almost utopic society in which the women are beautiful, nearly all persons are free of disease, and all hierarchical structures have been abolished. The persons of Mars are slightly shorter than the humans of Earth, yet the Martians believe that Colonel A is a tall Martian rather than someone from Earth. Despite their relative utopic existence, the Martians are more emotional than their Earthian counterparts, often getting into oral arguments but rarely engaging in physical confrontations. Near the end of the novel, the colonel's friend becomes ill, an extreme abnormality on Mars:

> ...illness is so rare among a race educated for countless generations on principles scientifically sound and sanitary, inheriting no seeds of disease from their ancestry, and safe from the infection of epidemics long extirpated, that no apprehension of serious physical cause for her changes of temper and complexion entered into my mind...
>
> "I have never seen illness, but if Eunané is not ill, and very ill, all I have gathered in my father's household from such books as he has allowed me, and from his own conversation, deceives me wholly; and yet no illness of which I have ever heard in the slightest degree resembles this."
>
> "I take it to be," I said, "what on Earth women call hysteria and men temper."

Eunané's disease proves to be caused by a severe Earth-based virus, likely brought to Mars by the Colonel himself, but the association of her illness with hysteria further ties affliction to the concept of mental weakness. Freud describes hysteria, a notably female-associated ailment whose name originates from the Latin and Greek terms for uterus, as an emotionally-driven disease generated from an overabundance of feeling (Webster). Such an illness was believed to result from a female's lack of mental ability, which has lead contemporary

readers to question the degree to which Greg's Martian society is truly non-hierarchical (McCormack).

As a whole, these early examples of Anglophone speculative fiction paint a stark picture in terms of disability studies, providing early justification for eugenics, euthanasia, and ostracism based upon a person's perceived mental weakness as the reason for psychological or physical disability. Within these technologically or socially savvy visions of the future, it is reasoned that anyone with good sense and willpower would simply fulfill the role of the normate. Failures to meet these expectations are associated with the choice to fill the role of the madman, the animal, or the overly emotional woman. Similar examples are prevalent in other texts of the time, including William Morris's *News From Nowhere*, a utopic setting in which disability is quite rare but renders one as "less than men and women," Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* in which disability has been eradicated and purportedly never occurs, and H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine* in which the mentally inferior or "childlike" Eloi are actively preyed upon by the mentally superior Morlocks.

The Wonderland as Utopia for Children

Yet, if utopic Anglophone literature of the late 19th and early 20th century targeting nearly entirely adult readerships offer largely negative understandings of persons with disabilities, so too do those meant for children and those invested in their educations offer an opposite and predominantly positive understanding. In brief, utopias featuring and predominantly for children provide far more diverse

artistic representations[9] of disability while often calling into question the nature of normalcy itself. In short, utopic literatures concerned with child readerships eschew Orr's gray utopia for one resplendent with difference. However, despite this marked dissimilarity, seldom do studies of the utopic considerations delve into the realm of children's literature. One reason for this discrepancy in scholarship, according to children's literature professor Catherine Butler, is that people just don't take fiction marketed for juveniles as seriously as they do literature meant to be consumed by adults. Recent scholarship, however, suggests that literature intended for children can actually be more important and thematically meaningful than its adult counterparts (Butler). The reason for this significance draws from the fact that children's literary texts are effectively marketed to and consumed by a dual audience: both children and the adults who care for them act as readers of these literatures. Such texts are just as much for children as they are for the people who surround them, including librarians, teachers, parents, caregivers, and many others. It has further been suggested that such literature may be demeaned as a result of its intended audience and because the realm of care is "numerically dominated by women"; often the purveyors of juvenile texts include far more female librarians, teachers, and caregivers than male-identified persons (Butler).

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[9] Throughout this dissertation, the term "representation" will be used in an aesthetic sense, referring to depictions, or lack thereof, of certain groups across artistic mediums.

In order to bring children's literature into a more thorough understanding of utopias as depicted during the time period of this study, it is particularly useful to consider the subgenre of children's speculative fiction that is the wonderland.[10] In the introduction to this thesis, I define this term as referring to a utopic literary place largely created to serve an audience of children; this definition predominantly draws upon such wonderland-based texts as Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland,* L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz*, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, and C. S. Lewis's Narnia series. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the word "wonderland," from the German "wonderland" actually predates Lewis Carroll's 1865 novel. The term is found to have first appeared in English Satirist John Wolcot's 1790 text, *Complimentary Epistle to James Bruce* under the nomme de plume of Peter Pindar. In this poem, the eponymous Scottish traveler is referred to in meritorious terms via his link to the wonderland, "Where other travelers, fraught with terror, roam/ Lo ! Bruce in Wonder-Land is quite at home;/The fame cool eye on Nature's forms looks down/Lions and rats, the courtier and the clown." The definition given by the OED for wonderland based upon this literary text is far from specific, offering merely, "a. An imaginary realm of wonder and faery" and "b. A country, realm, or domain which is full of wonders or marvels."

[10] Throughout this study, "Wonderland" as capitalized will refer to the magical world created by Lewis Carroll, while "wonderland" lowercased will refer to the fantasy land genre and realm as a whole.

As a whole, it is difficult, however, to contextualize experiences of wonder as they are applied in texts that create lands built upon the emotion. Sara Ahmed, one of the academics responsible for defining and fleshing out the field of affect studies, argues that "'wonder' is a key affective possibility within the women's studies classroom. On her research blog, Ahmed describes what she refers to as "feminist wonder," expanding on the concept introduced briefly in her pivotal book, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion.* In this earlier text, she offers a definition for "wonder" as a key feminist emotion that stems from one of the primary emotions that distinguishes humanity:

> Wonder is an encounter with an object that one does not recognise; or wonder works to transform the ordinary, which is already recognised, into the extraordinary. As such, wonder expands our field of vision and touch. Wonder is the pre-condition of the exposure of the subject to the world: we wonder when we are moved by that which we face. (qtd. in "Feminist Wonder")

This understanding of feminist wonder by Ahmed emphasizes the importance of the physical element, explaining that "the surprise of wonder is crucial to how it moves bodies." Thus, her conception of wonder stems from the act of curiosity as explained through the work of psychoanalyst and feminist mythopoesis scholar Clarissa Pinkola Estés. Pinkola Estés, in her reading of classic fairy tales through a feminist lens, notes that such stories tend to punish women who act upon their natural senses of curiosity: "…women's curiosity [i]s given quite a negative connotation [in these fairy tales]…in reality, the trivialization of women's curiosity so that it seems like nothing more than irksome snooping denies women's

insight, hunches, intuition. It denies all her senses." When acted upon, it is curiosity that brings about the sensation of wonder. In fact, it is curiosity that largely spurs the male protagonists of the aforementioned utopic novels to discover places such as Erewhon, Herland, the twenty-first century, and Mars, forming the basis for their subsequent sense of wonder at such utopias.

It is not surprising that the wonderland genre not only follows a narrative in which children find success by cultivating curiosity, but that such tales tend to feature young female protagonists. These heroines typically adhere to what Pinkola Estés refers to as the "wild woman archetype" by offering deference to female role models, following their intuitions, and taking part in their own journeys as heroines. To understand the deeper connotations of the wonderland and truly unpack the term, it is essential that some models be considered, and a new, more concrete understanding of the wonderland genre be put forward.

Wonderland as a Study Keyword

To clarify how the term "wonderland" is understood and depicted in feminist and disability studies, I will draw upon key texts essential to the formation of the wonderland concept. In particular, this analysis will consider Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* from 1865, Barrie's *Peter Pan* from 1911, Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* from 1900, and Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* from 1950. These four texts work especially well for this analysis for three reasons: all follow the same essential wonderland narrative, are based in an Anglophone tradition, and were written in the same century in the

English language. Translation, whether cultural or linguistic, brings in additional considerations, so I have chosen to work with texts written in my primary language for this study. Furthermore, I have chosen to focus on the original stories that are best known and most indicative of the wonderland structure, incorporating details from sequels only when necessary for clarification.

In developing the concept of the wonderland as both a keyword and theme, I argue that such spaces are delineated not only by existing outside of the scientific, moral, and societal rules that govern the outside world and magical creatures, but also by offering a vividly shifting concept of the self, such that Lacan's understanding of the mirror stage is constantly enacted. The mirror stage as a psychological theory refers to that point at which infants look into a mirror and are able to recognize their reflections as images of themselves. By recognizing themselves as depicted in exterior objects, children begin to understand the symbolic order of the world. In the wonderland, the body is constantly in a state of transformation, such that one becomes continuously estranged from oneself and one's physical image, as exemplified in the *Alice in Wonderland* quote: "I knew who I was this morning, but I've changed a few times since then." In addition to this quality, I identify eight primary characteristics that mark a text of the wonderland subgenre:

1. The young heroine's journey: The heroine's path through her novel largely follows mythologist Joseph Campbell's hero's journey, a common narrative framework exemplified drawn from the life stories of Prometheus,

Osiris, Jesus, and Buddha Gautama. Such a progression, Campbell finds, is common across cultures in epic narratives and religious writings alike. More recent examples of the hero's journey, also known as the monomyth, include *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, and *The Lord of the Rings*. The journey for the heroines outlined in this study particularly draw upon certain elements of Campbell's monomyth, including the stages:

i. The ordinary world
ii. The call to adventure
iii. Tests, allies, and enemies
iv. Approach
v. The ordeal
vi. The reward
vii. The road back

Darker characteristics that are more representative of an adult's hero journey, such as the resurrection, are eliminated from this list[11]. Perhaps the authors of the wonderland, largely appealing to children and their caretakers, simply find that such material is too dark for these spaces. However, nonetheless, some wonderlands do maintain these elements; they are eliminated merely because they are not applicable to most wonderland narratives.

[11] Elsewhere, I refer to this space in children's literature as the "terrorland," a notably dystopic place marked by largely negative emotions.

2. Monsters, fairy-folk, and talking animals: Animals may be anthropomorphized or human-like, even if they do not actually talk, such that they are distinct from those encountered in the real world.
3. A new system of law: The wonderland is governed by rules that largely differ from those of the real world, especially in terms of morality, science, and economics or administration.
4. Geographic realism: The wonderland physically and literally exists. There may be some initial confusion as to whether or not the space exists merely in dreams, but it is eventually proven to exist as a real place.
5. The child protagonist: The wonderland is visited by children or child-like figures from our own world, often female, who act as the stories' heroes. These characters largely interrupted everyday life in the wonderland; their arrival decidedly marks the land.
6. Magic and sorcery: Magic or sorcery truly exists to some extent and is at least partially depicted as non-technological in origin. Notably, this condition will not be given its own section within this thesis; simply put, the presence of magic is so inextricably linked to the prior five qualifications as to not require its own section to be demonstrated.

The Young Heroine's Journey

A feminine version of Joseph Campbell's monomyth might be considered appropriate to describe the typical wonderland protagonist, which is often a young female such as Wendy in *Peter Pan*, Alice in *Alice in Wonderland*, Dorothy

in *The Wizard of Oz*, and Lucy in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. However, this model for the heroine's journey is unsuccessful at defining all features of the wonderland protagonist. The predominant reason for such a limitation lays in the fact that the female protagonist in a wonderland setting is largely ageless, while other models of the heroine's journey, such as that of Valerie Estelle Frankel or Maureen Murdock, depend on a female figure aging from childhood to adulthood; thus, another notable feature of the wonderland is agelessness. All citizens of Oz are frozen at whatever age they were when falling under the fairy queen Lurline's spell to counter death:

> From that moment no one in Oz ever died. Those who were old remained old; those who were young and strong did not change as years passed them by; the children remained children always, and played and romped to their hearts' content, while all the babies lived in their cradles and were tenderly cared for and never grew up. So people in Oz stopped counting how old they were in years, for years made no difference in their appearance and could not alter their station. (*Tin Woodman of Oz*)

Similarly, Neverland is described as a place where children never grow up. While Alice may not have spent enough time in Wonderland to age significantly, it is noted that age is at least tampered with to the point that one may grow older or younger within a single day. Similarly, while the Pevensies do age within Narnia, they are rendered children again upon returning to the real world. Notably too, in the Narnia series, multiple characters are killed before being resurrected as younger versions of themselves, including Aslan and Caspian X (*The Lion*; *The Silver Chair*). The afterlife too is pictured as a sort of wonderland within a

wonderland; Aslan's Country, as it is called, offers an ageless afterlife in which the good may meet again in paradise.

Frankel and Murdock's model of the heroine's journey also largely exist within a patriarchal framework, while wonderlands often exist in nonpatriarchal or even matriarchal societies. For example, in the land of Oz it is effectively illegal for men to practice magic because only women are given magical permits (Baum, *The Tin Woodman of Oz*). Women can mentor men who want to learn magic, but men are not allowed to practice unsupervised in Oz. Similarly, while co-rulers, the Queen of Hearts demonstrates vastly more power than her husband, the king; she is furthermore feared and seen as a fierce ruler in contrast to her largely impotent husband. Lastly, the narrative across wonderland texts follows the traditional hero's journey more closely than models of the heroine's journey, perhaps because the protagonists themselves are pre-pubescent girls more in line with Campbell's model from infancy to death.

The ordinary world and the call to adventure. Each of these wonderland stories begin in the ordinary world, a place not unlike the one inhabited by us as readers. *The Wizard of Oz* opens with Dorothy going through the motions of a regular day on her aunt and uncle's farm in Kansas. *Peter Pan* begins by giving the exact address at which the Darlings live in average London. *Alice in Wonderland* begins with Alice lazing by her sister's side in a field later identified as located in rural England, and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* opens with the four Pevensie children travelling from London to somewhere "in the heart

of the country." The call to adventure occurs when the child protagonists are distracted from the normal world around them, whether by the White Rabbit, a young boy flying around their room, a tornado, or an ancient wardrobe. The children do not usually travel to these wonderlands on purpose, but literally or figuratively *fall* into them. In this way, the wonderland is similar to the "unknown world" described by Campbell: "… a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves, or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountaintop, or profound dream state; but it is always a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, super human deeds, and impossible delight" (48). These new worlds have new rules and histories that the child protagonists have to learn in order to be successful on their journeys.

Tests, allies, and enemies. Once transported to the wonderland, the young heroines are made aware of their new situations in a myriad of ways, but often their first encounters are with friendly, magical figures. In Lucy's first meeting with a Narnian, she encounters the friendly faun, Mr. Tumnus, who invites her home for a dinner during which the pair become friends. Mr. Tumnus is not a mentor figure, but rather a peer who simply makes Lucy aware of the status quo in Narnia.[12] Similarly, when Wendy is struck from the air, her first acquaintances in Neverland are the friendly Lost Boys, who tell her about

[12] While Mr. Tumnus does turn out to be a spy for the White Witch, his inability to betray Lucy marks him as a friend clearly aligned with Aslan's "good" within the Narnian binary.

Neverland before asking for stories. Dorothy first meets the friendly Munchkins in Oz and Alice encounters a speaking Mouse.[13] From that point on, the heroines face minor obstacles and gather allies all while becoming aware of greater enemies whom they know they must eventually fight.

The approach and the ordeal. As the final confrontation approaches, the heroines may prepare by failing or passing minor tests. Perhaps the most concrete example of this phase of the journey is seen in *The Wizard of Oz,* when Dorothy teams up with Toto, the Tinman, the Cowardly Lion, and the Scarecrow, while clearing obstacles along the Yellow Brick Road and making her way to the Emerald City. There, she learns that she must defeat the Wicked Witch in order to return home, a lie propagated by the eponymous wizard. She approaches the Wicked Witch of the West's castle, where she faces the ordeal of having to kill the Witch. Similarly, Wendy befriends both Pan and the Lost Boys, rises in their esteem through her storytelling abilities, and then goes with them to face the wicked Captain Hook and his crew. Alice befriends the Mad Hatter, the Cheshire Cat, and the March Hair, manages to tie the King and Queen of Hearts in a croquet game, and attempts to defeat the Queen through her testimony at trial. Finally, Lucy and her siblings befriend Aslan and his allies, break the White Witch's spell, and eventually face the Witch's army.

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[13] Capitalization from original text.

The reward and the road back. Upon successfully defeating their key nemeses, each heroine and her allies are rewarded: Dorothy is told how to return home, Lucy and the other Pevensie children are made Narnian royalty, and Alice and Wendy are finally returned home. Each of the children also expresses a desire to return to the ordinary world throughout the texts. Dorothy famously laments "there's no place like home!", Lucy tells Mr. Tumnus, "Oh, Mr Tumnus - I'm so sorry to stop you….but really, I must go home. I only meant to stay for a few minutes" (17), Alice notes that "it was much pleasanter at home," and the Darling children weep, "Let us go home!". In this manner, the reward and the road back are one and the same. By conquering their enemies, the girls are allowed to leave the wonderlands and return to the ordinary world, with the sole exception of Lucy. It is worth noting that Lucy only expresses a desire to return home when she is brought to Narnia alone, but when she is transported back to Narnia with her siblings, she is more than happy to remain in the magical land rather than return to a war-torn World War II England.

This summary does not yet comprise the entirety of the wonderland narrative, but its basis in the Campbell model makes it useful as a primary examination, summarized visually in Figure 1. In the following sections, this model will be amended to include additional elements common across these wonderland narratives.

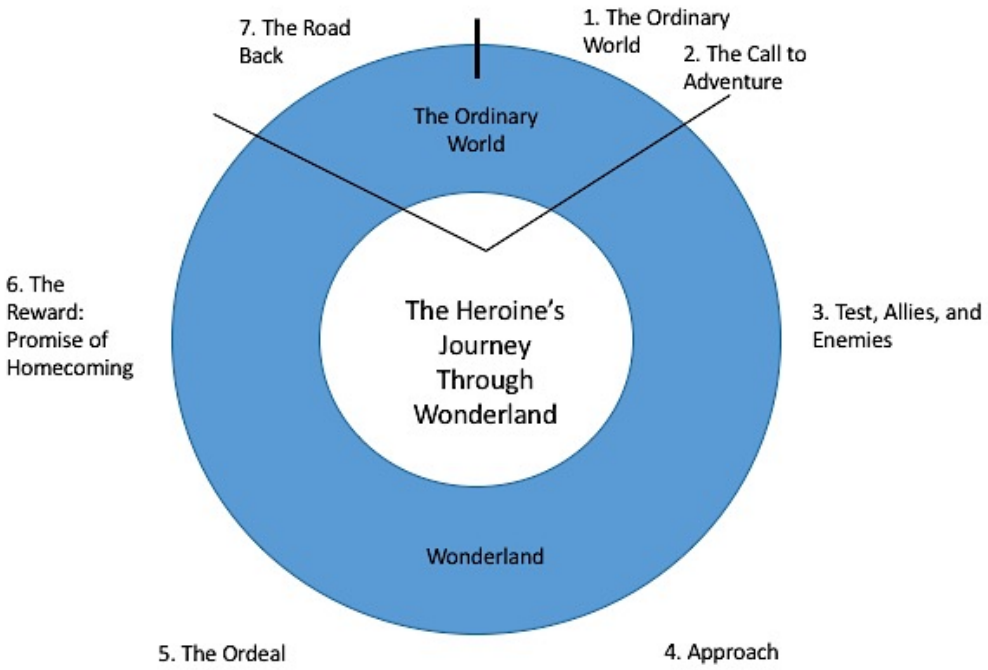


Figure 1. The young heroine's journey through wonderland.

Additionally similarities exist between the hero's journey and that of the heroine in wonderland. Campbell's monomyth includes the figure of a mentor or protector, generally an elderly person who provides supernatural aid, while the heroines in wonderland tend to encounter similarly innocuous, ageless, and inhuman figures. Glinda the Good in Oz and the talking lion Aslan in Narnia are examples of such characters. As with many classic utopian narratives, these early meetings tend to include in-depth explanations of the status quo (Ferns 38). Because the utopic journey acts as a fictional travel narrative in many ways (Ferns 38), it is essential that readers be made aware of the society into which the protagonists are delivered. Unlike adult-oriented utopic narratives, however, wonderland tales intended for children offer less detail and are less academic in

tone. Such exposition is delivered by magical creatures of far more interest to a largely child audience: Lucy is told of Narnia by Mr. Tumnus the fawn, Wendy learns more about Neverland from Peter Pan while they are midflight, Dorothy is made aware of her situation in Oz by Glinda the Good Witch, and Alice receives information throughout the novel from the helpful, friendly, and magical Cheshire Cat.

In addition to providing essential information for the narratives, these creatures make readers aware early on that the story will be filled with monsters, fairy-folk, and talking animals. Strangely, size is also essential to this narrative feature: the fully-grown Munchkins whom Dorothy encounters with Glinda are "about as tall as Dorothy," Alice's first adventure in Wonderland has her growing and shrinking in turn, Wendy notes that Peter Pan is as "tall as herself," and Lucy finds Mr. Tumnus "only a little taller than Lucy herself" (9). The children are particularly normalized in terms of height and, in some cases, age, in their untransformed states. One reason for such a decision may be related to the apparent ease by which these protagonists are elevated to levels of authority unbefitting children in a typical context. For example, Dorothy is crowned a princess of Oz (Baum, *Ozma of Oz*), the Pevensies are made rulers of Narnia (Lewis, *The Lion*), Alice eventually achieves the status of queen (Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*), and Wendy is made "mother" to all of the lost boys, the highest possible position within the context of Pan's society within Neverland (Barrie).

This elevation may simply be a reestablishment of humans as innate rulers of animals within a typically Judeo-Christian hierarchy of species, but it may also appeal to young readers who typically have little control over their lives (O'Kane 150). Developmental psychologists such as Wray-Lake, Crouter, and McHale note that it is generally not until adolescence between the ages of 13–17 that children are offered some agency over their own lives. To bring in some insights from horror studies, the choice of this age group for wonderland authors, particularly with female protagonists, creates a lead female character who is also most likely pre-menstrual. Menstruation within the same Judeo-Christian context is commonly associated with sinfulness; thus these young women are depicted as the idealized image of the pure, prepubescent child (Briefel; Kissling). As Pinkola Estés notes, the first menstrual blood has significant symbolism within the fairy tale narrative, literally embodying the crossing of the threshold from childhood to adulthood, something that does not occur within the ageless wonderland.

In their roles as young women in positions of power who are nearing adulthood, these female protagonists appear to have no trouble befriending a wide range of magical creatures and anthropomorphized, talking animals. In the Oz books, Dorothy meets the Nome king and his subjects, fairies such as Polychrome and her sisters, numerous species of human-like races across the various countries, and an array of talking animals, including the Cowardly Lion,

the Hungry Tiger, Billina the hen, and even the talking Toto.[14] In Wonderland, Alice learns of the monstrous Jabberwocky and speaks with various speaking animals, including the White Rabbit, the March Hare, Absolem the Caterpillar, the Cheshire Cat, and creatures such as the living playing cards. While having fewer of these characteristics, Neverland also presents Wendy with magical creatures such as fairies, mermaids, and the unseen gnomes. Furthermore, in Narnia, Lucy immediately meets Mr. Tumnus, a talking fawn, upon entering the fantasy world where the land is inhabited by cyclops and other monsters and nearly all of the animals are capable of speech.

A New System of Law

Another marker that differentiates the wonderland from the real world is the overturning of the rules, ethics, and other codes governing the real world. Whether moralistic or scientific, these wonderlands present spaces that are in many ways similar to our own but slightly different. In this manner, wonderlands inhabit the space of the uncanny, which Freud defines as that which "proceeds from something familiar which has been repressed" ("The Uncanny," 16). Many fears associated with the uncanny surround the alteration of one's body, such as the loss of an eye or limb. Often, creatures within these wonderland spaces, fantastic inhabitants and human visitors alike, are liable to undergo extreme

[14] In the context of Oz, all animals are capable of talking, though some, such as Toto, generally choose to abstain. While Toto is unable to speak "human" in Kansas, he can do so in Oz, but sees no reason to do so unless prompted.

physical alteration at a moment's notice in an uncanny manner. In *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice grows both exceptionally large and small, in turn, through the ingestion of various substances (Carroll).

> The Caterpillar and Alice looked at each other for some time in silence: at last the Caterpillar took the hookah out of its mouth, and addressed her in a languid, sleepy voice.
>
> 'Who are *you*?' said the Caterpillar.
>
> This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, 'I—I hardly know, sir, just at present—at least I know who I *was* when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then.'
>
> 'What do you mean by that?' said the Caterpillar sternly. 'Explain yourself!'
>
> 'I can't explain *myself*, I'm afraid, sir' said Alice, 'because I'm not myself, you see.'
>
> 'I don't see,' said the Caterpillar.
>
> 'I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly,' Alice replied very politely, 'for I can't understand it myself to begin with; and being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing.' (Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*)

Alice notes that she is no longer herself, recognizing that the being who is Alice is no longer be stable within the context of a mirror—she is constantly having to recognize her present state anew, as her body simultaneously comes to have an uncanny presence in the story and she regularly must engage with Lacan's mirror stage. Similarly, Trot and Cap'n Bill consume Lavender Berries and Dark Purple Berries[15] to grow smaller and larger at various times throughout their own adventures (Baum, *The Scarecrow of Oz*). Even more radical transformations, such as that between living creature and inanimate object, also occur, generally

[15] Capitalization in original.

by turning a person to or from stone (Lewis, *The Lion*; Lewis, *The Horse*; Lewis, *The Voyage;* Baum, *The Marvelous Land*; Baum, *The Patchwork Girl*). Characters may also change in terms of sex (Baum, *The Marvelous Land*), coloration (Baum, *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*), and between living and dead (Lewis, *The Lion*; Barrie) through various mechanisms. In this manner, there is no steady state of being; this constant change leads to the creation of an uncanny feeling both meant to set the reader slightly ill at ease and appear eventually rectifiable. The changes are meant to evoke, largely, wonder, rather than fear.

However, both the concept of the uncanny and mirror theory also offer an insightful introduction to disability studies and crip identity. In disability studies, it is often argued that the "able-bodied status is always temporary, disability being the one identity category that all people will embody if they live long enough" (Davis, "Introduction," VII). Thus, it is noteworthy that nearly all bodily conditions within these wonderlands are demonstrably changeable and ephemeral; one will eventually go through the mirror stage again as one must eventually experience the uncanny. As Davis notes, "Disability studies demands a shift from the ideology of normalcy" (Davis, *Bending Over Backward*, 39), a messiness that seems reflected in these wonderland settings. Such an ideological shift seems apparent through the constant bodily transformations within these texts, with the exception of the eternal youth that often occurs.

In addition to differences in physicality, the morality and law within wonderlands also differs from those of the real world. While literary theorist Josephine Ross argues that incarceration exists merely as a last resort in Oz, where criminalization is rare even for actions such as kidnapping, assault, and murder (109), punishments such as temporary incarceration and enslavement are present in nearly every book of Baum's contributions to the Oz series. Ross makes much of the jailer installed in *Rinkitink of Oz*, noting in her comment that Ojo is the first person to ever be imprisoned in Oz. In fact, there are dozens of persons imprisoned throughout the Oz books, either by the central government of the Emerald City or another empire. A notable example is Princess Ozma's imprisonment of the Flatheads. Ozma traps this race of angry and violent persons in their mountain home by creating an indestructible, impassable wall. Although the Flatheads are not imprisoned in a traditional jail, they are clearly rendered involuntarily immobile and confined. Furthermore, Ross fails to acknowledge the Official Wardrobe in the Emerald City prison, described as "a white robe, which cover[s Ojo] from head to foot, but ha[s] two holes just in front of his eyes, so he c[an] see where to go." This robe is problematic in many ways, being uncomfortably similar to the garb of KKK members per some theorists (Bell and Bell, 232) and demonstrating how Emerald City prisoners are dehumanized and standardized. Rather than remaining human while imprisoned, Ojo is literally transformed into a ghostlike figure with this mandatory costume. Ojo eventually receives a positive, albeit not innocent verdict, but his time in prison is notable

given his minor crime: picking a rare six-leaved clover. Furthermore, Ojo is only released because of the fortunate connection between himself and the monarch Ozma; he is able to escape a lifelong sentence as a result of nepotism. As the princess of Oz, Ozma alone determines Ojo's culpability and, because she likes him, she allows him to go free without further punishment. However, he is notably in no way compensated for time already served.

Ojo's story is the only demonstrative instance of an official trial and incarceration process within Oz, even though Ozma unofficially passes judgment and punishment on many others throughout Baum's books. For example, it is noted in *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* that magic is outlawed in Oz except when practiced by either the sorceress Glinda the Good or otherwise sanctioned by her specifically:

> "I am not allowed to perform magic, except for my own amusement," he [Dr. Pipt] told his visitors, as he lighted a pipe with a crooked stem and began to smoke. "Too many people were working magic in the Land of Oz, and so our lovely Princess Ozma put a stop to it. I think she was quite right. There were several wicked Witches who caused a lot of trouble; but now they are all out of business and only the great Sorceress, Glinda the Good, is permitted to practice her arts, which never harm anybody. The Wizard of Oz, who used to be a humbug and knew no magic at all, has been taking lessons of Glinda, and I'm told he is getting to be a pretty good Wizard; but he is merely the assistant of the great Sorceress. I've the right to make a servant girl for my wife, you know, or a Glass Cat to catch our mice—which she refuses to do—but I am forbidden to work magic for others, or to use it as a profession." (Baum, *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*)

Dr. Pipt, also known as the Crooked Magician, practices magic illegally in Oz. When he is caught, he is stripped of his magical powers by Glinda and his body

altered so that he is made “a simple Munchkin…a man like other men.” His body is literally altered with the hope that he will be unable to break the law again. This radical and state-sanctioned changing of the body bears eerie parallels with the histories of institutionalized marginalized bodies in the United States, including the forced sterilization, lobotomization, and castration of persons with disabilities or perceived to be infirm in some manner.

The law which finds Ojo imprisoned for plucking a rare clover also marks the world of Oz as a wonderland, however: a place with laws that are radically different from those in the real world. While not terribly onerous when endured by heroic and humanlike creatures in the context of Oz’s Emerald City, imprisonment in wonderlands generally follows the rules for a “fantasy land” as defined by famed children’s fantasy author Diana Wynne Jones, “Prison is really a lot of DUNGEONS in one place, plus a fairly grisly TORTURE Chamber. The prison will be reached by a stone stair, dampish, lit by torches in brackets on the walls, and guarded by sadistic soldiery” (emphasis in original, 150). For example, when Dorothy is imprisoned by the Wicked Witch, she must watch the torture of her colleagues, including the literal tearing apart of the Scarecrow and denting of the Tinman.

A similar dichotomy between being tried and/or imprisoned by a “good” character appears across multiple wonderlands. When the Lost Boys and Wendy are captured by Captain Hook and his crew, they are placed in a damp, dirty brig before being forced to walk the plank in punishment. Although no judicial

punishment befalls the pirates after they are defeated by the protagonists, they too seem to be punished by the rules that bad things must befall the wicked in a wonderland:

> Fifteen paid the penalty for their crimes that night; but two reached the shore: Starkey to be captured by the redskins, who made him nurse for all their papooses, a melancholy come-down for a pirate; and Smee, who henceforth wandered about the world in his spectacles, making a precarious living by saying he was the only man that Jas. Hook had feared.

When such ill befalls a heroine, it is often portrayed as unfair, unlucky, or the result of evil, but both law and punishment do occur across these wonderlands. The conclusion of *Alice in Wonderland* even revolves around a trial during which the Queen of Hearts repeatedly yells, “off with her head!” to punish Alice for breaking “rule 42” by being more than a foot tall. Alice is, in fact, only in court in the first place as a witness to a crime perpetrated by the Knave of Hearts. The Knave is facing judgment for having stolen some tarts, a crime which was punishable by death within the context of Wonderland.

While not quite as silly, the rules within Narnia are equally as fierce when enacted by an evil force, generally a wicked queen, upon a heroine or her allies. When the children arrive in the magical land after Lucy’s initial visit, they find the following note on the door of her friend Mr. Tumnus:

> The former occupant of these premises, the Faun Tumnus, is under arrest and awaiting his trial on a charge of High Treason against her Imperial Majesty Jadis, Queen of Narnia, Chatelaine of Cair Paravel, Empress of the Lone Islands, etc. [the evil White Witch], also of comforting her said Majesty's enemies, harbouring spies and fraternizing with Humans.

> signed MAUGRIM, Captain of the Secret Police, LONG LIVE THE QUEEN (Lewis, *The Lion*)

For his sentence, Mr. Tumnus is turned to stone. Likewise, when Aslan goes to the White Witch to accept punishment for Edmund's crimes, sacrificing himself for the young boy, he is summarily and brutally executed. In contrast, when the Pevensies come to power, they show mercy to the cruel Rabadash, who both attempts to blackmail Queen Susan into marrying him and overthrow the rulers of Narnia. The kind-hearted Lucy suggests that as long as Rabadash promises not to commit any additional acts of evil, he should be allowed to go free. Rabadash refuses even this condition. However, rather than executing him, it is decided that the young man will be transformed into a donkey. Such unusual punishments are particularly in line with the strange logic and rules that govern wonderlands, where law and order largely follows the whims of various rulers.

Geographic Realism

Although wonderlands initially appear to exist within dream worlds, these lands are proven to physically and literally exist within the contexts of their narratives. With the exception of the first Wonderland novel, which suggests that Alice may have merely dreamed her experience[16], each of these four

[16] In *Alice's Adventures Through the Looking Glass and What She Found There* (*Through the Looking Glass*), the sequel to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Alice questions whether or not her whole experience in Wonderland is a dream. The final poem of the text, however, demonstrates that these experiences are as meaningful and legitimate as those in the real world: "Life, what is it but a dream?"

wonderlands exist as accessible locations that are reachable from the real world of the story. Readers are taken, through the vehicle of a young protagonist, to these strange worlds from ones that are similar to our own through a wide variety of means, lending a level of reproducibility to such adventures. Peter Pan famously offers clear directions for reaching Neverland, “Second [star] to the right, and straight on till morning.” Similarly, after accidentally venturing through the wardrobe into Narnia by herself, Lucy is later able to bring her siblings along with her to Narnia using the same method, while the children of the Narnia series find multiple other methods to venture to this wonderland throughout the books.

Unfortunately, the path to wonderland is not as reliable for all protagonists. Dorothy always seems to encounter some sort of natural disaster or other great calamity in order to visit Oz, be it a tornado, a shipwreck, or an earthquake. Similarly, Alice has little control over her own adventures to Wonderland, though it is suggested at the end of the second book that she may be able to travel to the world via mirrors if she wishes.

Many of these books also include maps or are able to be mapped, following the convention of fantasy series (see figures 2–4). In fact, such a cartographic insert has become so popular as to be considered a genre trope, defined by TV Tropes as the “left-justified fantasy map.” As a method of world building, these authors not only imagine a new world, but literally create geographies for their wonderlands. Whether or not they themselves develop the

maps, these lands are described in enough detail to be mapped by illustrators or other fans.

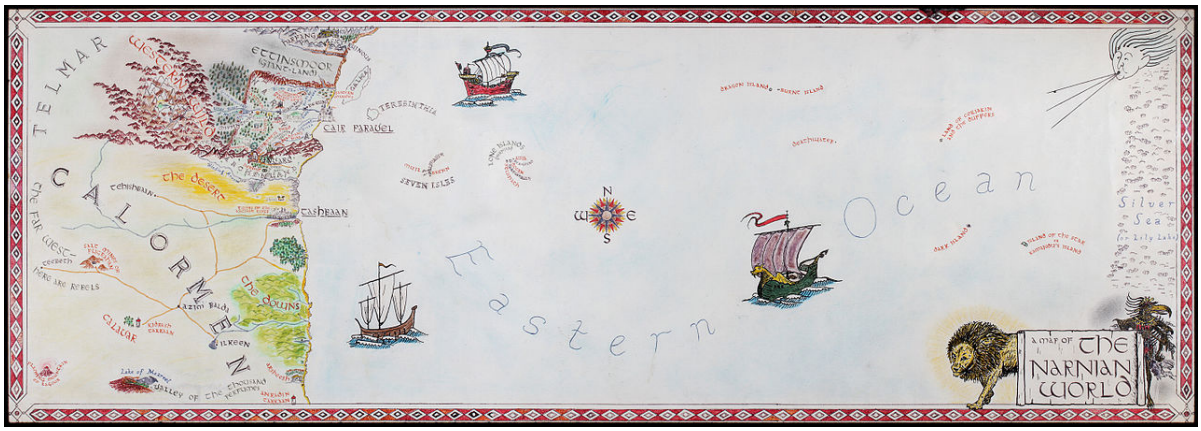


Figure 2. "Map of Narnian world," David Bedell



Figure 3. "Map of Neverland created by Walt Disney," (Hopkins, 187).

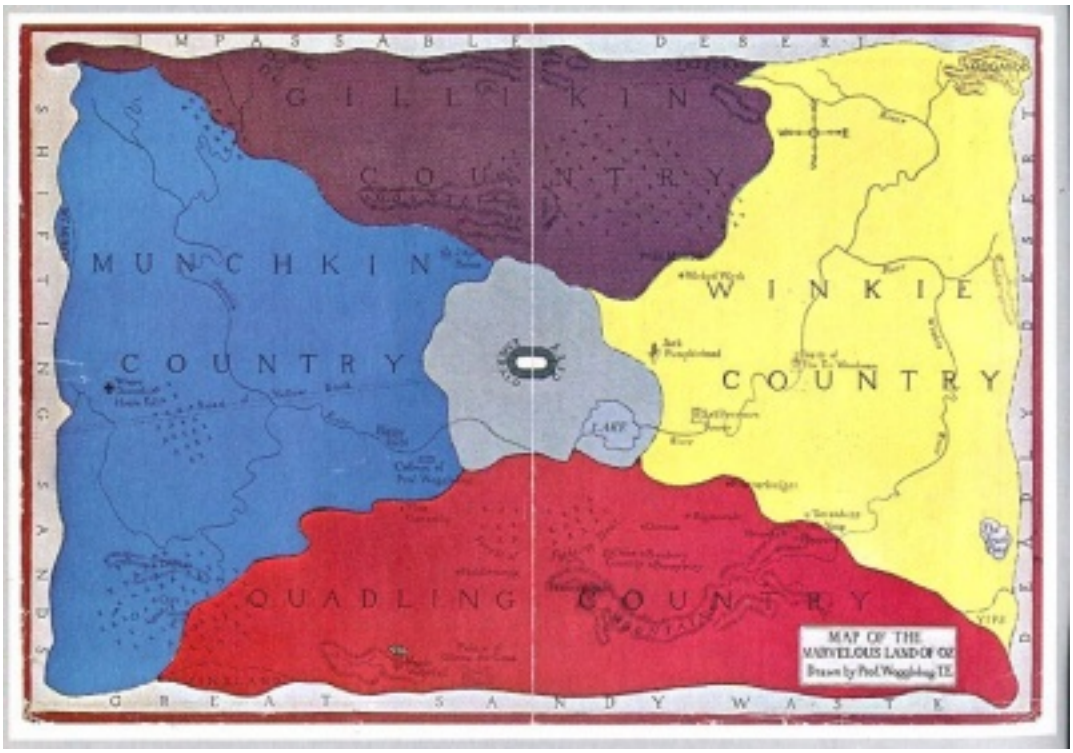


Figure 4. "Map of the Marvelous Land of Oz," (Baum, Tik-Tok of Oz).

Maps are quite popular in fantasy series set in worlds that are not wonderlands or that are intended for adult audiences. Famously, George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Fire and Ice* novels saw the cartography of Westeros adapted for the opening sequence of the television series' *The Game of Thrones*, demonstrating the importance of physicality in the fantasy genre. Similarly, Tolkien's iconic *Lord of the Rings* series includes maps in each book of the series, placing not only locations but battles and other significant occurrences in the book. Especially fond of this geographic realism, Baum describes himself in the introductions of Oz texts as the mere "royal historian of Oz," stating that he is receiving these stories via letter and telegraph rather than creating them himself. At some points, likely when Baum grew tired of writing such narratives, he remarks that he has

"lost contact" with Oz, but the world never ceases to exist and connection is soon after reestablished.

The Child Protagonist

Wonderland stories tend to be aimed at audiences comprised mostly of children and intended to be children's literature, with some exceptions to this general rule. I have previously discussed some of the rationale behind the authors' focus on young female characters, but I have yet to explain why certain texts have been left out of this study based on this rule. After all, *The Lord of the Rings* has been included in other studies of wonderland spaces, *Winnie-the-Pooh* meets many of the rules previously outlined, and even Diana Wynne Jones's *Howl's Moving Castle* series fits these guidelines. However, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *The Hobbit*, while marketed toward children and adults, do not follow either a child protagonist or a character from the real world with whom children can relate. Hobbits are of similar stature to children and fairly innocent compared to the other races in Middle-earth, but they are simply too comfortable with the rules and fantastical creatures of their world to be truly relatable to the average child reader. *Winnie-the-Pooh* has the character of Christopher Robin, who some theorists think may actually identify as female (Shea et al.); however, Christopher Robin is *not* the protagonist of the Pooh books. Instead, he is a side character who occasionally steps from his home into the Hundred Acre Wood. He is not enough of a constant presence in the land to have an overall effect on

its landscape and is understood to be a welcome visitor whose presence is merely celebrated from time to time.

Lastly, *Howl's Moving Castle* and the land therein also fails to offer the age-appropriate outsider insight into the enchanted land. Sophie, the protagonist, is an inhabitant of the wonderland of Ingary and has never lived anywhere else; therefore, she is already comfortable with the rules of this society. Howl,[17] in the context of the novel rather than the film adaptation, turns out to be a young man who has entered the series' magical world via a portal from Wales, but he is not the protagonist of the series. Offering a unique perspective in which Wales is the strange world rather than the wonderland, there is no narrative arc that follows the heroine's journey similar to the manner outlined above. Furthermore, the sequel to the initial novel, 1990's *Castle in the Air*, is set entirely in Ingary with no transition between the real world and the wonderland, which is a key concept in this study. Lastly, 2008's *House of Many Ways* may offer a more wonderland-esque narrative in that a young girl from the real world does venture to the Ingary, but its placement as the third in the series suggests that her story is secondary to that of Sophie and Howl. Furthermore, by this point in the series, most readers are well-acquainted with the rules that govern Ingary, removing the aspect of estrangement.

[17] Otherwise known as the far commoner "Howell" when he is in the U.K.

These child visitors to wonderlands are largely disruptive to the overall schema of the universe, often filling important positions in their societies, such as royalty, usurpers of evil rulers, and other positions of power and respect. In short, the children's adventures to and from these wonderlands are noticed and have a significant effect on the landscapes and politics surrounding them. For whatever reason, these children become well-known within these magical worlds, sometimes even before they come to positions of power. Prior to becoming Narnian royalty, Lucy builds a largely positive reputation across Narnia. She gains the trust of a multitude of different animals through word of mouth instigated by Mr. Tumnus's appreciation of her kindness. Wendy becomes well-known in Neverland after just one evening, so much so that even the pirates know of the Lost Boys' "mother." Similarly, Alice is invited to play croquet with the Queen of Hearts while Dorothy meets the all-powerful Good Witch Glenda after accidentally killing the Wicked Witch of the East.

As explained in detail via the outline of the heroine's journey through wonderland earlier in this chapter, the protagonist must overcome a great ordeal to fulfill the narrative. Wendy and her brothers must help Peter defeat the pirates, Lucy and her siblings must defeat the White Witch, Alice must call out the Queen and King of Hearts' tyranny, and Dorothy must defeat the Wicked Witch of the West. They are not only noticed within the contexts of these wonderlands, but are also actively shaping its atmosphere such that no history of these various

wonderlands would be complete without an overview of these characters' roles in them.

Conclusions

The following chapter will demonstrate, in depth, how one particular wonderland series integrates the conception of crip futurity. The wonderland of Oz, I argue, offers a ripe image of difference as something to be celebrated; no characters are depicted as *dis*abled but rather differently abled in a nonhierarchical manner. As Dorothy wanders through each stage of the heroine's journey, she finds that being a normate in Kansas does not render her in a position of power or privilege within Oz. On the contrary, her companions who would be marked as clearly disabled within the context of Kansas are shown to be superior in many ways, including the Scarecrow's ability to go without food and water, the Tinman's ability to live without breathing, and the Lion's ability to govern compassionately through his empathy.

In the utopic vision of the wonderland, disabilities are not seen as conditions to be cured. Rather, they are portrayed as contributing to the celebrated uncanniness and continuous metamorphoses taking place within these spaces. While the laws of the lands may provide radical physical alterations as punishments for crimes, even these changes are marked as temporary. Furthermore, it is not these conditions in and of themselves that indicate the prisoners' wickedness; merely punishments that seem far from punitive in lands that might otherwise transfigure such persons in any case

Chapter 2: Finding Criptopia in Baum's Oz Series

New readings of literatures considered to be cultural classics are valuable because they demonstrate that some contemporary philosophies are actually long-grounded and historically present. As such, this chapter will provide an in-depth disability studies reading of *The Wizard of Oz* and Baum's other contributions to the Oz series. By reading the texts in this manner, I demonstrate both how Oz offers a quintessential example of the heroine's journey through wonderland while providing a space in which difference is largely seen as a virtue rather than a hindrance. Persons who would been deemed disabled in the real world, such as the armless, legless, headless, and even heartless Tinman who depends entirely upon tin prostheses, are understood as equal to those who fulfill that role of the normate such as Dorothy. In this utopic vision, the binary between those deemed disabled and those deemed normate simply does not exist; nor does the hierarchy that often accompanies this binary.

Such contemporary readings of historically significant texts have proven particularly useful to both critical literary scholars and persons belonging to marginalized communities alike. These analyses often demonstrate how persons rendered largely invisible in earlier contexts may have still engaged with nineteenth- and twentieth-century movements surrounding feminism, queer studies, critical race theory, and other social justice endeavors. For example, some twentieth and twenty-first century critics offer feminist readings of William Shakespeare's plays, which reestablish the importance of female representation

prior to the feminist rights movements within the U.K. With a deeper understanding of the possibilities for a diversity of thoughts on the role of women, contemporaneous demonstrations of extremely anti-feminist positions are no longer acceptable based upon temporal context. In fact, such historical foundations are far less pronounced than many in the popular culture would like to believe. The argument that things were "simply like that" in a certain age is not so simple and the multifaceted nature of human opinion throughout history is revealed through such deep readings. A recent example of this rhetoric occurs in social media-based conversations surrounding education and literature professor Ebony Elizabeth Thomas's upcoming book on media depictions of race[18] ("I'll send my Tweets…"). Her original post responds to *Star Wars* star William Shatner's disagreement with the decision of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) to change the name of their Laura Ingalls Wilder Legacy Award to the Children's Literature Legacy Award in early July 2018 ("Did you hear…"). The basis for this potentially temporary renaming lies in the fact that Ingalls Wilder's books include images of persons in blackface, as well as largely negative portrayals of indigenous peoples. In Shatner's Tweet, he argues that it is "disturbing" to apply a contemporary understanding of race to works published in the past such as Ingalls Wilder's. Arguing against this position, Thomas's

[18] The book to which Thomas refers is entitled, *Toward a Theory of the Dark Fantastic: The Role of Racial Difference in Young Adult Speculative Fiction and Media*.

response notes that Shatner's position may be influenced by himself participating in a television series that, while "groundbreaking for its time… is problematic from a 2010s POV, especially on gender" ("1. The tea…"). Shatner then begins a series of Tweets questioning Thomas's expertise as a newly tenured professor of children's literature and race, while repeatedly arguing that contemporary 2018 "opinions" cannot be rightly applied to *Star Trek's* original 1966–1969 context ("I actually read," "An expert?").

This incident, recently covered by *Inside Higher Ed* (Flaherty), demonstrates the tendency for certain persons, particularly White men located outside of academia, to question this type of contemporary reading of historic texts. In Flaherty's article, she includes the Tweets of Americanist Brigitte Fielder, who publicly defends Thomas while explaining the importance of reconsidering texts from other time periods with a critical gaze. In particular, Fielder explains that Shatner repeats a "common (and historically false) argument: that past racism ought not to be judged by 'modern' standards of opposing racism because racism was not objectionable at the time… there have always been people objecting to racism, even when those people were not in the majority" (qtd. Flaherty). Contemporary readings from the lenses of women's studies, critical race theory, disability studies, queer studies, other fields concerned with forwarding social justice, and intersectionally thus refocus attention on efforts toward progress within these time periods. Furthermore, these efforts destabilize

the historicization of a homogenized normate, an idea that has worked to effectively invisibilize marginalized persons' historical presence.

Secondary, tertiary, and further readings of canonical texts are particularly useful in disability studies as they demonstrate that the normate exists ubiquitously as a social fabrication. Disability theorist and activist Rosemarie Garland-Thomson defines the normate as "the veiled subject position of the cultural self... outlined by the array of deviant others" (qtd. Linton 231–232), essentially referring to those who are marked as *not* disabled or, in some readings, otherwise rendered queer via race, gender identity, sexuality, or other characteristics. In reality, few texts exist that do not offer some example of an individual who possesses qualities of a disabled mind or body. Some recent contemporary readings of Shakespeare point to the figure of Richard III with his purported humpback, limp, and shortened arm (Siebers 229), while other close readings reexamine characters such as Sherlock Holmes in terms of mental illness, particularly reading him as a person on the autism spectrum (Freeman Loftis).

In this chapter, and along with such useful deep readings, I argue that Oz offers a quintessential criptopic space—a utopia oriented toward children that depicts multiple disabilities in a nonhierarchical manner. Persons with what would be termed disabilities in the real world are neither held as morally superior to the normates through what disability activist Stella Young dubs "inspiration porn" nor marked as inferior or wicked as a result of their differences. Instead, all persons

within Oz are marked as being socially disabled within certain settings, while the medicalized model of disability is removed altogether.

The Young Heroine's Journey Through Oz

L. Frank Baum wrote a popular, classic story ripe for analysis and entry into the speculative fiction canon with his 1900–1919 Oz series. These tales are also useful for unpacking the heroine's journey, providing a clear example of the various narrative devices discussed in the first chapter. Almost concurrent with the release of the first Oz book, *The (Wonderful) Wizard of Oz* (hereafter *The Wizard)*, both the 1900 novel and the 1939 film, came many close readings of this story following a young Kansas girl's adventures through the magical world of Oz. One of the most well-known interpretations is the populist reading offered by historian Henry Littlefield in his 1964 article, "The Wizard of Oz: Parable on Populism" (Parker). Littlefield argues that a strong degree of symbolism exists among the various characters and featured elements: the yellow brick road representing the gold standard, the Emerald City representing the dollar, and the silver shoes, which were changed to ruby in the film, representing William Jennings Bryan's plan to add silver to the nation's gold standard (49). Other popular theories suggest fundamentalist Christian themes (Leach) and a reading via Joseph Campbell's theory of the monomyth and the hero's journey (Beebe).

These analyses, however, tend to focus on singular events and characters in the first text of the series, *The Wizard*, rather than considering the Oz series as a continuous whole. Furthermore, their authors often disregard points in the

remainder of the series that could easily disprove or at least complicate their readings. In particular, Littlefield fails to account for why Baum would be so invested in late eighteenth-century politics when he was writing from an early twentieth-century perspective, or to consider the clear allusions to Teddy Roosevelt (Baum, *Ozma of Oz*), John D. Rockefeller (Baum's 1908 stage adaptation, qtd. Swartz 34), and Thomas Edison (Baum, *Lost Princess of Oz)*. Similarly, Leach compares the thematic progress in the first Oz book to Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which Baum likely read, but would have had little to do with the personal philosophies of Baum as a theosophist. While a clear parallel exists between the silver slippers that Dorothy wears throughout *The Wizard* and Bunyan's atheistic "By-ends" who "are always most zealous... when religion goes in silver slippers" (249-250), he completely overlooks Baum's extremely public agreement with the American theosophical movement and preference for science over religion (Roesch Wagner, qtd. Baum, *The Lost Princess of Oz*). In fact, on the subject of God, Baum raged in *The Aberdeen Daily News* asking, "What good are the Christian teachings?" (qtd. Schwartz 200). Furthermore, Leach fails to account for the reality that the Emerald City, which he equates to Bunyan's "bejeweled Celestial City" (250), turns out to be as gray as Kansas, with state mandated green-tinted glasses required to merely make the city appear bejeweled. Similarly, Beebe's reading of *The Wizard* focuses largely on the cyclical nature of Dorothy leaving from and returning to Kansas, ignoring Dorothy's permanent move back to Oz as soon as she convinces her aunt and

uncle to relocate with her (Baum, *Tik-Tok of Oz*). While the heroine may be said to engage in a series of challenges along her journey, she never actually has much to fear because death is quite uncommon and reversible in Oz.

It is only by drawing and expanding upon each of these readings, while recognizing their relative shortcomings, that a fuller picture of the heroine's journey through wonderland becomes clear. I argue that, although *The Wizard* is the most familiar of the Oz stories, it cannot be properly analyzed without accounting for the context of the whole series. As Baum wrote the Oz books, he continuously drew upon new technologies and utopic visions to develop a detailed picture of Oz as a wonderland. The earliest book in the series focuses primarily on characters in Oz, particularly Dorothy, but the later contributions portray Oz and the Emerald City as characters in and of themselves. This change in attention is evident in the titles of later installments in the series, including 1904's *The Marvelous Land of Oz* and 1910's *The Emerald City of Oz*, which are far more focused on world building than *The Wizard*.

For the sake of brevity, and with the understanding that *The Wizard* is the best-known of the Oz books due to the huge success of the 1939 film adaptation of the same name, this analysis will mostly focus on the first Oz story and bring in essential elements from other texts in the series when necessary. I will provide a brief overview of this original tale, which follows Dorothy Gale's initial trip to Oz, without ignoring contrary and supporting points in the books that follow, detailing Dorothy's heroine's journey through wonderland. I recognize that many readers

are more familiar with the film than the original text and will note important differences between the two versions that are critical to fully understanding the significance of disability in *The Wizard.* I argue that *The Wizard* is an essential early text dealing with the presence of disability in utopic settings, which I also contend is incredibly scarce in utopic literature from the time period. In particular, Baum's Oz is a crip-friendly utopia because nearly all bodies are presented as malleable or potentially changeable, as demonstrated in the first chapter of this study. Simply put, Oz allows for radical contingency and the "barely acknowledged vertiginous fear[...] of loss of control and of dismemberment" (Quayson). Furthermore, Oz interrogates the tenuous relationship between the social and medical models of disability by directly confronting the possibilities of bodily change inherent in amputation and prosthesis. Unlike utopias such as Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888), Butler's *Erewhon* (1872), Perkins Gilman's *Herland* (1915), and Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890), the Oz utopia does not call for the death of persons with physical or mental disabilities, "euthanize" elderly persons, or eliminate illness and infirmity completely. In fact, as noted in the previous chapter, persons with Oz do not age, though those who were previously elderly at the time of Lurline's spell remain elderly; those who required care at the time of this spell, including some of the aged and children, continue to need such care in a manner simply regarded as the order of life in Oz.

In her critique of futurist visions for queer and disabled persons, theorist Alison Kafer considers the nature of utopias extremely disappointing to persons

inhabiting disabled bodies, asking “Why is disability in the present constantly deferred, such that disability often enters critical discourse only as the marker of what must be eliminated in our futures or what was unquestioningly eliminated in our pasts?” (10). She further questions whether, by its social definition, the utopic is understood to entirely remove those with disability and illness. Building on Kafer’s work, I argue that, based upon the presence of persons with disabilities in the Oz utopic context, Baum’s model offers a profoundly positive answer to this question. Oz exists as a utopia that does not eliminate the subjectivity of the disabled body.

As offered in the previous chapter, the characteristics that define a wonderland, per this study, include:

1. The Heroine’s Journey, entailing:
    i. The ordinary world
    ii. The call to adventure
    iii. Tests, allies, and enemies
    iv. Approach
    v. The ordeal
    vi. The reward
    vii. The road back
2. Monsters, fairy-folk, and talking animals
3. A new system of law
4. Geographic realism

5. The child protagonist
6. Magic and sorcery

Thus, throughout this overview of *The Wizard of Oz*, I will denote the appearance of certain characteristics throughout the narrative with an abbreviated "WC" (Wonderland characteristic) with the characteristic's number and title.

A General Overview of *The Wizard of Oz*

In both the original book and film adaptation, *The Wizard of Oz* begins with a young[19], spirited girl named Dorothy (WC 5: The Child Protagonist). Raised by her Aunt Em (Auntie Em in the film) and Uncle Henry on a farm in Kansas, Dorothy and her faithful dog Toto are carried away from the ordinary world (WC 1: Heroine's Journey [HJ]: The Ordinary World) to Oz by a tornado. In the film version, some parallels are made between the creatures who inhabit Oz and their Kansas-based counterparts, including farmhands and a cruel local woman, but such parallels are notably absent from the books. When Dorothy regains consciousness after the tornado, she finds herself in a strange land that she soon learns is called Oz, finding herself in Munchkin Country in particular. She also learns upon waking that she has unintentionally killed the Wicked Witch of the East, sister to the even more sinister Wicked Witch of the West. Glinda, a good witch, tells Dorothy that because she has killed a Wicked Witch, she should

[19] Baum never specifies Dorothy's age, but she is said to be a year older than Trot (*The Lost Princess of Oz*). In the canonical sequels by Ruth Plumly Thompson, Trot's age is given to be ten, making Dorothy approximately eleven years old (*The Giant Horse of Oz*).

take the witch's shoes, which are known to possess magical properties (WC 6: Magic and Sorcery). Upon hearing that Dorothy desires to return home, she is told to follow the iconic yellow brick road to the Emerald City to meet the great and terrible wizard who rules over the city (WC 3: A New System of Law); Glinda believes that the Wizard may be able to return Dorothy and Toto to Kansas (WC 1, HJ: The Call to Adventure). As they travel toward the Emerald City, Dorothy and Toto meet the Scarecrow who desires a brain, the Tin Woodman (hereafter Tinman) who desires a heart, and the Cowardly Lion who desires courage (WC 2: Monsters, Fairy-Folk, and Talking Animals). Along the way, they must overcome obstacles such as a field of poppies, which makes all the "meat" or flesh-based life forms in Oz, fall asleep (WC 1, HJ: Tests, Allies, Enemies). When the group finally reaches the Wizard, they are told that they must defeat the Wicked Witch of the West (hereafter the Witch) before he will grant their respective wishes.

The quintet[20] thus depart to find and defeat the Witch. However, having been spying on the group, the Witch instead finds them first and kidnaps them with the help of her winged monkeys (WC 1, HJ: The Approach). The book specifically states that the winged monkeys only work for the Witch because she possesses a magical Golden Cap that enslaves them. While the Tinman is rendered motionless and trapped due to his need for oil and the Scarecrow's

[20] Despite his relative lack of character in the film, Toto is, after Dorothy, one of the Oz books' primary protagonists.

innards are removed and thrown about, Dorothy, Toto, and the Cowardly Lion are captured and forced into slavery (WC 1, The Young Heroine's Journey: The Ordeal). When she speaks with the Witch, Dorothy is so furious about the fates of her friends that she throws a bucket of water on her, unintentionally causing the villain to melt and die. Once the Tinman and Scarecrow are restored through oiling and re-stuffing, respectively, the group returns to the Wizard to claim their prizes. However, upon meeting the Wizard face to face, they learn that he is actually a confidence man with tricks that merely make him appear powerful, masking a complete lack of actual magic.[21] Despite the wizard's assurances that they already possess the traits that they desire, the Tinman, Scarecrow, and Cowardly Lion continue to demand the promised attributes and are given gifts that are symbolic of these traits instead (WC 1, HJ: The Reward). The Wizard apologizes to Dorothy, however, because he is unable to return her home to Kansas. Dejected, the group returns to Glinda who tells Dorothy that she has had the ability to return back home all along through the use of her magic shoes. The shoes will grant Dorothy's wish if she wears them and taps her heels together. Dorothy and Toto bid farewell to their friends and return home to Kansas (WC 1, HJ: The Road Back and Geographic Realism) via the magic shoes.

Differences Between the Text and the Screen

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[21] This moment offers an early consideration of speculative fiction author Arthur C. Clarke's Third Law that "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

Perhaps the most notable difference between the film and book versions of *The Wizard* is that the film portrays Dorothy's trip to Oz as a dream or hallucination that occurs as a result of hitting her head, while Oz exists as a real place on earth in the novels. Upon waking and explaining her dream to Aunt Em in the film, Dorothy is depicted as a frivolous young girl overcome by youthful fantasies. This characterization is reinforced throughout the film, which portrays Dorothy as helpless and weepy. In the movie, Dorothy frequently weeps and laments her inability to return home; in contrast, in the book she is determined to go back to Kansas so that her aunt and uncle do not worry about her (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 47). While the film Dorothy is portrayed as a damsel in distress who needs help from her companions and often screams in fear, the book Dorothy offers a heroine who usually saves both herself and her companions. For example, after melting the Wicked Witch, Dorothy frees Toto and the Cowardly Lion from slavery, refills the Scarecrow with his hay, and hammers the Tinman back into form before oiling him. Dorothy, however, remains human in the book; she does occasionally cry, but it is often for reasons that are emotionally accessible to adult audiences and in line with the humanist hero. For example, Dorothy cries after killing both of the wicked witches by accident and at the prospect of having to kill the Wicked Witch in order to return home.

Furthermore, neither her youth nor shortness of stature prevent Dorothy from being the principal heroine of the Oz books, despite the fact that shortness is often equated with silliness in the film. The movie offers a troubling depiction of

the Munchkins, who are represented by children and adults with dwarfism who speak almost exclusively through means of song and laughter. In this manner, the Munchkins fulfill the quality referred to as narrative prosthesis by Mitchell and Snyder, wherein "disability pervades literary narrative, first, as a stock feature of characterization and, second, as an opportunistic metaphorical device" (47). The Munchkins are mere stereotypes in the film, meant to be humorous and silly. In the books, however, the Munchkins are clever farmers and one of the most prosperous races of Oz in terms of innovation and wealth. Furthermore, in the books, Munchkins are nearly average in height because most people in Oz are roughly the same height as Dorothy, who towers above these figures in the film. This difference is explained in the book when Dorothy first encounters the inhabitants of Munchkin Country: "They were not as big as the grown folk she had always been used to; but neither were they very small. In fact, they seemed about as tall as Dorothy, who was a well-grown child for her age, although they were, so far as looks go, many years older" (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 34). Furthermore, many of the peoples in Oz are of the same or similar stature to the Munchkins, including the first person Dorothy meets in Emerald City, "a little man about the same size as the Munchkins" (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 170), and the Hammer Heads, who are "quite short and stout" (338). Moreover, as specified in later Oz books, people in Oz do not generally age:

> From that moment [when Queen Lurline enchanted the land] no one in Oz ever died. Those who were old remained old; those who were young and strong did not change as years passed them by;

> the children remained children always, and played and romped to their hearts' content, while all the babies lived in their cradles and were tenderly cared for and never grew up. So people in Oz stopped counting how old they were in years, for years made no difference in their appearance and could not alter their station. (Baum, *The Tin Woodman of Oz* 541)

For this reason, height and size have a different significance in the Oz books. Individuals who are short and small, whatever their age, are not infantilized. Similarly, as evidenced by the child ruler Princess Ozma, a childish appearance and youth are not associated with a lack of wisdom or intelligence. Little People of America, an activist group devoted to the rights of persons with dwarfism as well as education about this condition, notes that negative portrayals of dwarfs have led to an abundance of social stigma against this group. Notably, the filmic version of *The Wizard* largely helped to contribute to such a stereotype, depicting persons with dwarfism as childlike and mentally inferior (Snyder and Mitchell, "Re-engaging the Body").

Bodies in Transition

Despite the relative agelessness of Ozite bodies, their sizes are often in flux. People of Oz can, and often do, pass between animacy and inanimacy, thinking and lifelessness. In her essential text on the subject, Mel Chen explains animacy as:

> … described variously as a quality of agency, awareness, mobility, sentience, or liveness. In the last few decades [the 1990s and early 2000s], *animacy* has become a widely debated term within linguistics, and it is in fact within linguistics that animacy has been most extensively developed and applied. A pathbreaking work written in 1976 by the linguistic anthropologist Michael Silverstein

> suggested that “animacy hierarchies” were an important area of the intersection between meaning and grammar, on the basis of evidence that spanned many languages. Within linguistics today, animacy most generally refers to the grammatical effects of the sentience of liveness of nouns, but this ostensible meaning opens into much wider conversations.

By considering the manner in which all bodies transition between animacy and inanimacy, while questioning the inherent hierarchy that distinguishes between such transformations, Chen effectively introduces the concept of object-oriented ontology (OOO). This philosophical movement specifically rejects placing privilege on living bodies, especially those belonging to humans, over those of non-living objects (Atanasoski and Vora). However, I would argue that such a hierarchical model is nonexistent in Oz due to the consistent transition of bodies between these positions within a non-Ozite hierarchy of animacy. In particular, Tip/Ozma, Jack Pumpkinhead, and the Gump experience significant bodily transformations over the course of the second Oz book, *The Marvelous Land of Oz*.

Tip spends most of this book identified as a young boy, but it is later revealed that he began life as a female, Princess Ozma. As a baby, Tip/Ozma was transformed to prevent hir[22] from coming to power in the matriarchal monarchy of Oz. Hir transformation back into a girl at the end of the story “demonstrates the ease with which sex and gender roles are swapped in Oz[...]

[22] Because Tip/Ozma, in turn, identifies both as male and female, sometimes both simultaneously, I have chosen to utilize gender neutral pronouns when referring to hir as a united whole/single person.

additional examples of gender switching abound" (Pugh 221). Notably, too, this change in biological sex seems to be accompanied by a change in gender; Tip/Ozma both inhabits a body medically defined as one sex and identifies with that sex. The hierarchy of animacy is not the only such social structure undermined in Oz's utopic vision, which reverses the patriarchy against which Baum fought for the entirety of his life. Additionally, the thin line between the living and dead is demonstrated through the characters of Jack Pumpkinhead and the Gump, both of whom are brought to life with the Crooked Magician's Power of Life. After life is bestowed upon him, Jack Pumpkinhead agonizes over the eventual rotting of his pumpkin head and loss of his life, while the Gump, whose body is created of a variety of random items so that the heroes may escape Jinjur's Army of Revolt, begs to be disassembled. The Gump explains, "I did not wish to be brought to life, and I am greatly ashamed of my conglomerate personality" (Baum, *Marvelous Land of Oz*, 386). And, later, when The Gump is disassembled:

> The antlered head [i]s again hung over the mantle-piece in the hall, and the sofas [a]re untied and placed in the reception parlors. The broom tail resume[s] its accustomed duties in the kitchen, and finally, the Scarecrow replace[s] all the clotheslines and ropes on the pegs from which he had taken them on the eventful day when the Thing [the Gump] was constructed. (Baum, *Marvelous Land of Oz*, 387)

Death occupies a strange place in Oz because individuals rarely die. Even when villains are accidentally killed, their deaths are greatly lamented; it is thus his call for the murder of the Wicked Witch that marks the Wizard as a non-Ozite

most of all. The Gump's body, per his continued requests, is put to death at the end of *The Marvelous Road to Oz*. However, his head remains alive and well, even offering advice and amusing chit chat. Jack Pumpkinhead buries and creates tombstones for each pumpkin as it rots and receives a new pumpkin head inundated with life as soon as it is set upon his shoulders. As noted in chapter one, the wonderland is a place in which one's physical form may be in a constant state of flux in a variety of ways. Other characters' bodily transformations include shrinking and growing via the consumption of magical lavender and dark purple berries (Pessim, Trot, and Cap'n Bill in *The Scarecrow of Oz*), transformation into animals (Bibil/Prince Bobo of Boboland in *Rinkitink in Oz* and Coo-ee-oh in *Glinda of Oz*), conversion into inanimate objects (Uncle Nunkie, *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*), changing color (Polychrome, *The Road to Oz*), and metamorphizing between animacy and inanimacy (Tik-Tok and the Tinman).

Models of Disability in Oz

The radical bodily alterations, the manner in which bodies are constantly transforming, and the marked refusal to accept universal privileging of one bodily state over another in Oz all work to undermine the medical model of disability. The medical model of disability recognizes the body as a structure that is constantly judged and its perceived defects cured, invisibilized, or, as in many utopic worlds, negated through euthanasia. In this manner, the disabled body is

distinguished as the damaged form of a normate body. In contrast, the social model of disability,

> … interprets disabilities as being an interaction between physical impairment and the social and cultural environment. In other words, the problem for the person with an impairment is not just the struggle with the physical body that this often entails, but the larger and more inchoate struggle with negative and intransigent attitudes toward people with impairments. (Quayson)

The Oz books demonstrate a strong preference for the social model of disability by questioning what is normal in terms of height, weakness, and motion, with each character and each condition showing strength. In this manner, the Oz series as a whole presents the possibility of radical contingency, a counter position to the normate described by Donald Davidson that undermines the assumed reality that all persons have "a largely correct, shared, view of how things are" (qtd. Elridge 488). In disability studies, this concept refers to the presumption that it is better to be a person without disabilities than to be a person with disabilities. Although Dorothy is one of the more normative figures in the novels, she is imperfect in many scenarios, suggesting that normalcy itself can be debilitating in certain circumstances.

Three of Dorothy's four companions, the Scarecrow, the Tinman, and the Cowardly Lion are each initially missing an important piece of themselves: a brain, a heart, and courage, respectively. Each character feels that by missing this characteristic or item, he is kept from being a full person—a normate. The trio believe that the Wizard of Oz will not only return Dorothy and Toto to Kansas,

but will also help the three of them become complete beings by providing them with their missing parts and ameliorating their perceived deficiencies.

Dorothy's weakness is not revealed until later in the book when the group encounters one of the primary obstacles on their journey: the magical poppy field. When the quintet reaches the poppies, only Dorothy, Toto, and the Cowardly Lion fall into endless sleep. This scene is altered in the film version and quite short, as Glinda sends snow to counteract the poppies' effects at the behest of the Tinman and Scarecrow. In the book, however, the Scarecrow and Tinman's lack of flesh, initially perceived as disabilities, makes them impervious to the flowers' effect on the "meat" or flesh-and-blood creatures (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 109–10). Thus, the Scarecrow and Tinman are able to pull Dorothy and Toto out of the flowers, while getting help to save the Cowardly Lion from the Queen of the field mice and her subjects. In fact, because Tinman has previously shown kindness, the very quality he believes he lacks, the Queen agrees to help him save the others.

The group continues on towards the Witch, the primary villain of the story. The Witch, although weathered and ugly in the book, is not green as portrayed in the film. Instead, she has a single eye and is incapable of bleeding, marking her as a character with physical disabilities similar to those of her heroic counterparts (Eyler 330–1). Both she and the non-meat members of the quintet are incapable of bleeding, while another heroic character, Bristle, also has only one eye (Baum, *The Emerald City of Oz*). However, the Witch's most interesting disability, and

most significant in terms of disability narratives in Oz, is her vulnerability to water. In W. W. Denslow's illustrations from the original publication of the book, the Witch is consistently pictured holding an umbrella which she is said to always carry (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 220). Presumably, this umbrella is used to protect her from water, although she also utilizes the item as a weapon to strike heroes like Toto. Rather than being represented with the classic stereotype of a witch on a broomstick with a tall black hat, Denslow, chose to portray the Witch with this umbrella in hand, a flamboyant hat upon her head, and childlike braided pigtails (see figure 6). Furthermore, the stigma attached to the word witch is reevaluated in the Land of Oz. Feminist critics have noted that the figure of the witch or crone as a trope in fiction devalues the role of women, but the witches in Oz defy the stereotype of the wicked, elderly, and spinster-esque figure. In addition to the Wicked Witches of the West and East, there are the Good Witch of the North, Locasta, and the Good Witch of the South, Glinda; both of these good witches are described as being young and beautiful.



Figure 5. The Wicked Witch of the West (Baum, Annotated Wizard, 204)

Readers of *The Wizard* text already know of the Witch's aversion to water, so it is far less surprising when the Witch is melted at the end of the filmic version of the story. The Witch's sensitivity to water, however, is particularly notable because it is a quality she shares with the Tinman. This is an essential detail for understanding the text beyond the portrayal of this disabling quality as inherently good or evil. Furthermore, in the film adaptation, the Wicked Witch of the West is the only fully human character presented with non-White skin, presenting a racialized image of wickedness. Alissa Burger argues in her reading of racial representation in the film that the filmmakers' choice for skin tone was designed to position the Wicked Witch with another power deemed "wicked" by U.S. American film audiences at the time: the Japanese government and its people (109).

The Witch's actions to prevent the heroes' success further demonstrate how the Tinman and Scarecrow's differences can be both disabling and empowering. The Scarecrow has been marked as a disabled character physically, based upon his ability to be set on fire, and socially, due to the value judgment that he is foolish because he does not have a brain (Eyler 324). However, these bodily differences often prove advantageous. Certainly, the Scarecrow may be more easily lit on fire due to his straw innards, but the straw man's fluid physicality allows him to be re-stuffed with new straw as needed, have his straw removed for various purposes, and avoid pain and other negative effects that befall the meat characters. On their journey to the Witch, the group is attacked by a group of black bees, which have been commanded to "go to the strangers and sting them to death" (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 209). The brainless Scarecrow begs the Tinman to help him remove his straw innards and use them to cover the meat characters so that they cannot be stung. According to the brainless Scarecrow's clever plan, the Tinman stands still and allows the bees to sting him so that their stingers break (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 209). When the Witch sends her flying monkeys to attack the group, the Scarecrow and Tinman are rendered only temporarily incapacitated when they are unpacked and strewn about, dropped upon sharp rocks, and severely dented (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 215). These attacks would have killed their meat counterparts, but merely delay the Scarecrow and Tinman. As soon as Dorothy accidentally melts the Witch, she, Toto, and the Cowardly Lion head off to rescue their companions. With the

help of the Winkies, Dorothy recovers the Tinman and has him repaired “as good as ever” (233). He is so pleased “that he we[eps] tears of joy, and Dorothy ha[s] to wipe every tear carefully from his face with her apron, so his joints w[ill] not be rusted” (233), demonstrating a sweet scene that is representative of the caring relationships that exist between the characters and pervade the entire series. The Winkies, Dorothy, and her companions then set to finding the Scarecrow’s clothing which they fill with new “nice, clean straw” (234) and the Scarecrow is brought back to life. After each of its members has reestablished his or her autonomy, the group then returns to the Wizard for their rewards.

At this point in the story, the Wizard’s role in the disability narrative of Oz becomes complicated. First, the Wizard is proven to be a humbug, a great pretender from the real world utilizing his superior technology to simulate the magical powers inherent to Oz. The Wizard has benefited greatly from the Ozites’ fear of him, first commanding that they build him the Emerald City and then ruling over it (Baum, *The Wizard*, 266). Despite knowing he is a fraud, the Cowardly Lion, Tinman, and Scarecrow still consider the Wizard to be an authority over their bodies and deficiencies, even when he tells them that they have no disabilities. While they are, in fact, already imbued with the qualities they seek, they still feel bound to ask for their missing parts; thus, Ozites, like their contemporary Anglophone counterparts, are driven by some mechanism to normalize. Due to the largely accepting nature of Ozites toward these heroes, the

regulating force is clearly not the state, but an internalized power worthy of future research.

The characters' perceived deficiencies are amended in this case; however, this sort of curative behavior is extremely rare in Oz. The Cowardly Lion, Tinman, and Scarecrow come to the Wizard asking that their respective perceived disabilities be remedied, but the Wizard clearly tells our heroes that they are disabled in name only. To the Scarecrow, he explains, "You don't need them [brains]. You are learning something every day. A baby has brains, but it doesn't know much. Experience is the only thing that brings knowledge, and the longer you are on earth the more experience you are sure to get" (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* 270). To the Cowardly Lion, he explains, "You have plenty of courage, I am sure... All you need is confidence in yourself. There is no living thing that is not afraid when it faces danger. True courage is facing danger when you are afraid, and that kind of courage you have in plenty" (*Annotated Wizard* 271-2). The Wizard does not deny that the Tinman embodies a real difference via his missing heart. He merely tells the Tinman that he is fortunate to be missing the organ, which "makes most people unhappy" (*Annotated Wizard* 272). The Tinman's role is clearly as a figure disabled through his prostheses as well as his physicality rendering him, in turn, human, cyborg, inanimate object, and robot. This fluidity marks the Tinman's role as a central figure ripe for the study of disabled bodies in the land of Oz. Some minor narratives surrounding the fragile citizens of China Country and the armless Hammer Heads of Quadling Country,

who have large heads but no arms, also speak to the narrative of bodily presence in Oz. However, they are but briefly mentioned as they appear in the remainder of the book as the quintet speeds along toward Dorothy's eventual return to Kansas.

The Tinman as Crip

Baum's Tinman began his life as a Munchkin, the race most commonly represented in Oz, working as a woodcutter with the ominous and foreshadowing name of Nick Chopper. He fell in love with a Munchkin girl named Nimmie Amee (*Tin Woodman of Oz* 446), but the jealous Wicked Witch of the East enchanted his axe so that it severed Nick's legs, arms, and head, before splitting his torso in half. Each time a limb was removed, the Tinman went to the local tinsmith and had the part replaced with one made of tin. Contrary to being displeased by these bodily changes, the Tinman becomes extremely vain about his new body, polishing its various parts quite often and eventually having it coated in nickel (Baum, *Marvelous Land,* 269).

However, there are a few notable downsides to being made of tin aside from the Tinman's perceived loss of love due to his lack of heart (see Eyler). His body easily corrodes, which renders him incapable of moving until he is oiled by a companion. This relationship of care ties the narrative to disability activist Christine Miserandino's concept of "Spoon Theory," described on her popular blog as follows:

> Most people start the day with unlimited amount of possibilities, and energy to do whatever they desire, especially young people. For the most part, they do not need to worry about the effects of their actions. So for my explanation, I used spoons to convey this point. I wanted something for her to actually hold, for me to then take away, since most people who get sick feel a "loss" of a life they once knew. If I was in control of taking away the spoons, then she would know what it feels like to have someone or something else, in this case Lupus, being in control.

At the beginning of the day, a person with a chronic illness receives a certain number of spoons, or energy, with which they can do a specific number of tasks. Certain tasks may take more spoons, such as cleaning one's house or completing work. Once those spoons are gone, however, a person with a chronic illness, such as Miserandino's Lupus or my own fibromyalgia, simply has no choice but to return to bed. Once there are no spoons, the energy that is necessary to complete one's daily tasks has been completely used. Furthermore, unlike persons without such disabilities, this energy takes much longer to return, sometimes days or even weeks. For the Tinman, "oil is a source of life" that replaces water as a life-giving source—the energy, or spoons, with which the Tinman is able to complete his daily activities (Moore 87–88). Water quickly depletes the Tinman's energy until he is eventually rendered completely inanimate, the condition in which Dorothy first encounters him. The Tinman, despite having no physical heart, cries quite often, which rusts his jaws so that he is frequently incapable of speech. Only through the care provided by Dorothy and his other companions is the Tinman able to speak or move again.

It is essential to highlight that the Tinman is not considered weak due to his need for care. As someone who runs on oil rather than energy, the Tinman is often described in terms of a beneficial post-human condition, “I was a much better man than ever,” the Tinman explains of his tin body, “for my body could not ache or pain me, and I was so beautiful and bright that I had no need of clothing... but my tin body only needs to be oiled and polished” (Baum, *Tin Woodman of Oz* 26). This notion that mechanical and magical creatures are superior to their meat counterparts is a theme repeated throughout the Oz books. Because they have no need for food and rest (Wagenkgnecht 27), the mechanical creatures and cyborgs are often depicted as superior to their meat companions, often saving their fleshed companions from biological factors that render them motionless while protecting them from physical pain.

Tik-Tok and Energy

Another character who depends upon oil is Tik-Tok, the clockwork man created by the firm of Smith & Tinker. Tik-Tok is described on his instruction card as a creature who “Thinks, Speaks, Acts, and Does Everything but Live” (Baum, *Ozma of Oz*) and must be both oiled and wound in order to remain animate. “Tik-Tok is produced technologically, even though he exists in a fictional world where most things come about by magic” (Abrahm and Kenter). Notably, Tik-Tok is not nor has ever been alive, distinguishing him from the transhuman Tinman. In appearance, Tik-Tok is similar to Theodore Roosevelt, one of Baum’s heroes. Roosevelt “cut a dashing figure... posing in a wide-brimmed hat, a fringed

buckskin shirt, alligator boots, and all the accouterments of a horseman: the leather belt, the ivory-handled Colt revolver, the Winchester rifle, the bowie knife, the silver spurs, and a belt buckle that shone like justice" (Rogers 116). Many of these features can be found in original illustrator John R. Neill's illustrations of the Tinman, particularly the hat, Roosevelt-like moustache, and depiction of a shirt strikingly similar to that worn by members of the 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry, also known as the Rough Riders (see figure 6). Tik-Tok has three separate screws, one for thought, speech, and movement, but is entirely dependent on other people to wind these gears as his arms are quite short. When he is occasionally dismantled by his enemies, he must depend on master tinsmiths, such as Smith & Tinker or the Nome King's steward, Kaliko, to replace his various parts (Baum, "Tiktok and the Nome King").



Figure 6. Tik-Tok (Baum, Ozma of Oz)

The care narratives of Tik-Tok and the Tinman emerge through their respective needs for winding and oil. Without support, the mechanical men are rendered incapable of animacy, becoming objects instead of persons in the novels. This ability to be rendered inanimate and non-human was likely something to which Baum could easily relate, as he suffered many health issues related being born with a weak heart. Baum suffered his first heart attack at the age of fourteen (Schwartz 174), likely the result of rheumatic fever (Schwartz 324), which left him immobilized for the first time in his life. His family, including his wife, Maud, his mother-in-law, noted suffragette Matilda Joslyn Gage, and his son, Harry, all contributed to his care at various points in his life. They supported his ability to write in bed and, in Harry's case, did ghostwriting for Baum when he

was incapable of fulfilling his publishing obligations (Rogers 221). Baum also acted as a caregiver at times, tending to Maud when she became chronically ill for two years following the birth of her son Robert, his Uncle Adam who was immobilized for nearly all of his life, and his father, who, after being thrown from a carriage, was chronically ill for the remainder of his life. Baum had a personal, lifelong relationship with the nature of care, provided by both himself and others, which clearly translated into his books.

Baum links energy, specifically mobility, to both politics and technology. He complicates the physicist's definition of the term by applying his understanding to both material and transcendental energy sources. Baum considers science to be invested in culture and context, offering an early cultural studies construction of the terms "energy," "technology," and "science." He practices what Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler refer to as a "keyword" approach to defining "energy," which provides context for the use of certain terms over the course of time and in particular contexts. Thus, as demonstrated by his use and explanation of energies and technologies in the land of Oz, Baum offers a "flexible" (Williams qtd. Burgett and Hendler 2) approach to the concept, looking at "energy," "technology," and "science" as words whose meanings are in a flux both with time and between the hard sciences and humanities. Energy, as understood by Baum, is limited for all persons in different ways. One, such as Tik-Tok or the Tinman may continue indefinitely as long as they are, in turn, cranked and oiled. While Dorothy and the Lion simply cannot go as long as their

mechanical counterparts, due to their need for food, water, and rest, they have an advantage in being able to provide their own sources of power. Similarly, Toto, notably as intelligent as his four counterparts, requires sustenance and rest; yet he sleeps more often than the other flesh-based life forms within Dorothy's basket. Toto provides one of the most heroic and brave characters in the series, yet requires extra care in order to remain fierce and defend his friends, despite his need for extra rest and care. In this manner, *The Wizard* offers multiple visions of energy that well depict those offered in the real world. Rather than praising those a moderate amount of energy or scorning those with excess or a scarcity of energy, Ozites simply accept them for what they are, offering a positive vision of futurity for crip communities.

Finding Criptopia

Baum's contributions to the Oz series offer one example of criptopia. While there is clearly a lack of perfection within Oz due to the presence of villainous figures, I argue that Oz offers a classic example of a U.S. American utopia, or *the* Utopia Americana, as Edward Charles Wagenknecht refers to Oz in one of the earliest critiques of the series (1929). In his analysis of Oz's inherent "utopian tension," Karp notes that Oz fulfills the definition of a utopia for the following reasons: "a communal sharing of food, the elimination of money and poverty, a dearth of punishment, an absence of greed reminiscent of Sir Thomas More, and the virtual elimination of death or disease" (103). Many of these

characteristics overlap with Raymond William's argument for the four types of utopia, defined as:

> (a) *the paradise*, in which a happier life is described as simply existing elsewhere; (b) *the externally altered world*, in which a new kind of life has been made possible by an unlooked-for natural event; (c) *the willed transformation,* in which a new kind of life has been achieved by human effort; (d) *the technological transformation*, in which a new kind of life has been made possible by a technical discovery. ("Utopia and Science Fiction")

The first definition applies particularly well to Oz in *The Wizard*, though, notably, the three other characteristics do appear throughout the various texts that constitute Baum's contributions to the series.

Baum's Oz creates a world likely based upon the socialist utopias presented in Edward Bellamy's 1888 *Looking Backward* and William Morris's 1890 *News from Nowhere* (*Annotated Wizard* xcvi), but without their harsh treatment of persons with disabilities. The lack of class struggle and hierarchies further aligns Oz with Fredric Jameson's understanding of the utopic, in which non-egalitarian social structures are abandoned (30). Utopia exists in Jameson's understanding as a "form [of] representational meditation on radical difference, radical otherness, and on the systemic nature of the social totality" (xii). The following description of Oz shows the influence of socialism on the creation of this fantasy world and how, despite the royalist system of government in many Ozite nations, the system is quite collectivistic and egalitarian. Furthermore, it demonstrates how these nations abide by a Westphalian understanding of the state while consisting almost exclusively of the proletariat. It should also be noted

that individuals may become royalty in Oz as a result of possessing a natural instinct to lead, intelligence, and likeability, as in the case of the Tinman:

> There were no poor people in the Land of Oz, because there was no such thing as money[...] Some tilled the lands and raised great crops of grain, which was divided equally among the entire population, so that all had enough...
>
> Every one worked half the time and played half the time, and the people enjoyed the work as much as they did the play, because it is good to be occupied and to have something to do. There were no cruel overseers set to watch them, and no one to rebuke them or to find fault with them. So each one was proud to do all he could for his friends and neighbors, and was glad when they would accept the things he produced. (Baum, *The Emerald City of Oz*)

Thus, the farmers and manufacturers of Oz are free from the Marxian concept of alienation, the estrangement that occurs in the distancing of the producer/laborer from the product of his or her work. In terms of the Oz series as an early work of U.S. American speculative fiction, this lack of alienation applies to human, trans-human, and non-human animal figures. While Marx and Engels were generally critical of utopian idealism as a fantastic rather than scientific concept (Engels), the very nature of the duality that exists between the poverty of Dorothy's family in Kansas and the abundance of all person's in Oz offers an area ripe for further Marxist analysis.

The utopian exclusion of illness is initially troubling in the context of a disability studies perspective, but the inclusion of figures such as the Tinman, Tik-Tok, the Witch, the China people, and the demonstration of weakness inherent in normative bodies actually marks Oz as a criptopia. Individuals do not become sick by means of germs in Oz, but they are still marked by the traditional

features of illness in a non-utopian context: various figures in Oz are immobilized or otherwise incapacitated, require care, and must rest for extended periods of time. Furthermore, the nature of care as reciprocal marks these narratives and portrayals far beyond Mitchell and Snyder's concept of the narrative prosthesis. These characters are not mere placeholders for the concept of purity and goodness (i.e. Dickens's Tiny Tim) or wickedness and perversion (i.e. Shakespeare's Richard III), but rather well-developed characters who both receive care and provide care for others. Additionally, rather than the caregiver's "recipients [being] seen as suffering a socially constructed dependency" (Fine 24), there are specific contexts in which each character in the quintet is rendered weaker or stronger, more caring or less caring, than others. Both wicked and good characters may have the same attributes, including sex, height, ability, and sensitivity, undermining the medical model of disability that ascribes certain attributes as more beneficial or normal than others. Furthermore, it is worth noting that such a reading of the Oz series is greatly compromised via a reading of *The Wizard of Oz* alone; the context of the entire series is necessary to understand the roles that disability and normativity play. Additionally, this reading would be all but negated when applied to the 1939 film adaptation alone.

For example, Toto, perhaps the most underappreciated and dehumanized member of the quintet, demonstrates a particularly powerful reason as to why the Oz series must be considered as a whole and why the series has so much to offer in terms of disability studies. Toto is an odd dog compared to other animals

in Oz because all other animals speak in a verbal/auditory manner. Despite this departure from the average Ozite, however animal in appearance, Toto is given great responsibility and no one views Toto's seeming lack of speech as equivalent to a lack of ability. When Ozma explains to Dorothy that Toto has fallen under the same spell that allows all other animals in Oz to talk, she remarks that Toto is "a wise little dog" who simply prefers not to talk; after all, Toto is able to communicate as effectively via nonverbal methods and barking as his companions do via speech. Upon learning of his ability for speech, however, Dorothy asks Toto why he does not talk while in Oz. The scene that depicts this realization and the Ozites' responses to it is perhaps the best demonstration of how Ozites deal with flux and changeability in Oz, as well as Dorothy's slow adaptability to her new socially-constructed world from one based on the medical model of disability:

> "Goodness me!" exclaimed Dorothy. "I never s'pected Toto was fooling me all this time." Then she drew a small silver whistle from her pocket and blew a shrill note upon it. A moment later there was a sound of scurrying footsteps, and a shaggy black dog came running up the path.
>
> Dorothy knelt down before him and shaking her finger just above his nose she said: "Toto, haven't I always been good to you?"
>
> Toto looked up at her with his bright black eyes and wagged his tail.
>
> "Bow-wow!" he said, and Betsy knew at once that meant yes, as well as Dorothy and Ozma knew it, for there was no mistaking the tone of Toto's voice.
>
> "That's a dog answer," said Dorothy. "How would you like it, Toto, if I said nothing to you but 'bow-wow'?"
>
> Toto's tail was wagging furiously now, but otherwise he was silent.

> "Really, Dorothy," said Betsy, "he can talk with his bark and his tail just as well as we can. Don't you understand such dog language?"
>
> "Of course I do," replied Dorothy. "But Toto's got to be more sociable. See here, sir!" she continued, addressing the dog, "I've just learned, for the first time, that you can say words—if you want to. Don't you want to, Toto?"
>
> "Woof!" said Toto, and that meant "no."
>
> "Not just one word, Toto, to prove you're as any other animal in Oz?"
>
> "Woof!"
>
> "Just one word, Toto—and then you may run away."
>
> He looked at her steadily a moment.
>
> "All right. Here I go!" he said, and darted away as swift as an arrow. (Baum, *Tik-Tok of Oz* 489–490)

Toto is able to speak from the beginning of the story, but he *chooses* not to talk until the eighth book in the series. Even without speaking, however, he acts as a wise figure who protects Dorothy and contributes to the group's success. Unfortunately, those who have only watched MGM's film adaptation of *The Wizard* are left with only brief introductions to Toto and many other Oz characters. These representations are, unlike the books, based upon a multitude of hierarchical structures, particularly in terms of disability, species, animacy, and gender.

Conclusions

The Oz series contributes to blurring the binary between human and non-human animal (The Cowardly Lion, Toto, The Hungry Tiger, Billina), object and living creature (Pumpkin Jack, The Scarecrow, Bungle, China people), man and woman (Bill/Billina, Tip/Ozma), human and technology (the Tinman, Tik-Tok), and race/color (Polychrome and the Blueskins, though *not* the Wicked Witches in

the canonical Oz books). Baum's contributions to the Oz series are far from perfect in terms of offering a more inclusive utopian methodology as imagined by such theorists as José Esteban Muñoz, but they do make some significant advances, particularly within the context of the early twentieth century. By offering a multitude of queer characters inhabiting a variety of positions within a predominantly egalitarian society (Pugh), Oz disrupts the traditional hierarchy inherent in places such as Kansas, designating where such bodies may exist, or, in Muñoz's terms, sit (124).

Lyman Frank Baum wrote fourteen books set in the utopian world of Oz between 1899 and 1919, drawing upon and critiquing many of the utopic, but ultimately problematic, themes of the era. Beginning with the immensely popular *Wizard of Oz,* perhaps best known by its 1939 film adaptation, the Oz books represent one of the best-selling series of the twentieth century (Baum, *Annotated Wizard* xiv-xv), and remain an extremely popular series among children to this day. In addition to the original Baum texts, their canonical sequels by subsequent authors (1921-2014), and the great number of adaptations for screen, stage, and radio, the Oz books have spurred a great number of parallel texts (Gregory Maguire's *Wicked* series and the musical of the same name), retellings (*The Wiz*, ScyFy's popular *Tin Man* miniseries), and non-canonical sequels and prequels (Disney's *The Return to Oz* and *Oz the Great and*

Powerful).[23] It is due to this astounding popularity that I argue the importance of a disability reading of Oz. By continuing to engage with the wide range of Oz texts, particularly those by Baum, readers and viewers will come to understand one method through which the concept of utopia can transform into an accessible space; a futuristic vision filled with color and difference.

[23] Canonical texts are generally differentiated from non-canonical Oz works based on their recognition as such by the L. Frank Baum Family Trust.

Chapter 2, in part, is a reprint of the material as it appears in *Monsters of Film, Fiction, and Fable: The Cultural Links between the Human and Inhuman*. Martin Sandino, Amanda, Cambridge University Press, 2018. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

Chapter 3: "I Am a Brain": Creating an Everyperson in Fiction

The diverse wonderlands of children's fiction offer a particular subcategory of speculative fiction that largely succeeds in combatting a gray vision for the future. Yet, the larger genre in and of itself has also been making much progress through the concerted efforts of contemporary readers; particularly the re-reading of seemingly normate figures as persons with disabilities, who are queer, or who otherwise offer voice to marginalized communities. In particular, this chapter considers contemporary adaptations and readings of Sherlock Holmes, initially portrayed as heterosexual, White, male, and without disability. In my examination of the various iterations of Sherlock Holmes, I explore how Holmes's originally White, male, British character, an embodiment of conceptions of the normate, however exemplary, has been appropriated to become a queerer and far more subversive figure through later adaptations, unofficial sequels, and other fan works.

Speculative fiction is a wide-ranging genre that is often mistakenly thought to be synonymous with science fiction and fantasy when, in fact, it is tied to many genres, including romance, historical fiction, and, particularly pertinent to this chapter, detective fiction. The term "speculative fiction" refers to literature that is itself marginalized, often referring to genre fiction written by or for women, persons of color, and authors belonging to other marginalized groups (Tuchman and Fortin 72). As general literary fiction achieved higher levels of cultural capital and female authors were "edged out" (Tuchman and Fortin 72), genre fiction has

simultaneously been pushed to the margins of low culture, while texts that initially found themselves in those sections of the bookstore are now relocated into shelves for general fiction. Literary professor and speculative fiction editor Gary K. Wolfe notes that:

> … this devaluation, or at least devalorization, of the fantastic began at a time when the outlines of the modern popular genres of the fantastic were first being laid down in a series of seminal works: the Gothic novel and the stories of Poe provided a rough template for what would become horror fiction; Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (also derived largely from the Gothic, but with the crucial distinction that her protagonist rejected supernaturalism and alchemy in favor of experimental science) established many of the preconditions of science fiction; the extended fairy-tale narratives of the German Romantics and their English imitators (which included Thackeray and Ruskin as well as MacDonald) first articulated the portaled alternate realities that became a key element of modern fantasy…. the protocols for reading the fantastic were not so much suppressed as diverted: into children's literature, into historical novels, into false medieval narratives, into the literature of sensation, sometimes even into the substrata of the tale being told (this is more or less what happens to Gothic supernaturalism in the novels of the Brontës). (409–410)

Wolfe also points out a change of intended readership by publishers who pushed narratives such as Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy to children's book sections (410). The heyday of pulp magazines from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century further solidified the separation between general fiction and genre fiction. Genre fiction was understood to be "at best a guilty pleasure, at worst an assault on the moral order" (Wolfe 413). Such literatures were assumed to aimed at a less mature audience comprised mainly of women and children.

The originals novels featuring Sherlock Holmes predate the stratification of literary fiction versus genre fiction; however, the later stories fall into the realm that begins to transform into detective fiction. Simply put, the hard-boiled noir and detective mysteries of the pulps developed from these earlier detective stories, including those by Doyle and contemporaries such as Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Dickens, and William Wilkie Collins. Sherlock Holmes stories have also been categorized as genre fiction through their relatively recent presence in the children's section of the bookstore. I initially believed that my own experience performing *Hound of the Baskervilles* in the fourth grade was coincidental and anecdotal, however, these detective stories have seemingly joined the children's literature canon. Along with similar genre-defined texts such as the works of H. G. Wells, Robert Louis Stevenson, and J. R. R. Tolkien, Doyle's works are often found in the "classic literature" subsection of the children's area in a bookstore, while they are also viewable under the "Children's Books" category on Amazon and Barnes and Noble.com. They are also published as children's classics versions with additional illustrations, abridgements, and sometimes even censorship of scenes deemed inappropriate to younger audiences (Booth 26). Many stories from the series are regularly included in children's literature anthologies, including the popular *Children's Literature, Briefly* texts, as well as junior to middle school English curricula (Raby 37). Even C. S. Lewis, who directly and intentionally wrote to an audience of children with his Narnia series, expected that his audience would be familiar with the famous literary detective. In

his Narnia novel, *The Horse and His Boy*, he sets the story at a time when "Mr. Sherlock Holmes was still living in Baker Street" (*The Horse and His Boy*).

The Holmes stories also include various emotional elements that eventually came to define speculative fiction, including the purpose of being "horrified, astounded, amazed, astonished, terrified, stirred, gripped, and thrilled" as a reader (Wolfe 412). Literary critic and children's literature professor Roger Sale, who spent his career arguing for the artistic and literary merit of texts aimed at youth audiences, notes that in many ways Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mirrors the character of Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli from the *Jungle Books* (207). Both protagonists are "fantasy figures of such richness that they become quasi-mythical" (Sale 207). Similarly, sociologist Michael Saler contends that the fantastic elements of the Holmes stories are especially meant to appeal to readers of all ages:

> Because Holmes represented the values of modernity in ways that addressed criticisms of the cultural pessimists, he spoke to the dissatisfactions and hopes of adults as well as to the imaginations of children. Like many of his readers, Holmes yearned for enchantment, confessing to his 'love of all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of everyday life'. (603)

Because the Sherlock Holmes stories have been previously classified as genre fiction, the readership includes children, much as other classic speculative fiction texts. Additionally, both the scientific and the fantastic are valued in the Holmes stories, marking them as speculative fiction texts ripe for study in the context of this dissertation. And, perhaps most significantly of all, following Sherlock

Holmes's entry into the public domain, he has come to be a common presence in other, more explicitly speculative literatures, including space fiction, steampunk, weird fiction, and horror.

In my deconstruction of the Holmes character that constitutes this chapter, I will address the presence of disability, with an emphasis on the original texts and particularly significant later adaptations of the character. I consider Holmes as both an ideal utopian character from a modernist perspective and one who has disabilities, arguing that these concepts are not mutually exclusive, but, in fact, complementary. By connecting the many narratives and character stylings of Holmes adaptations to the concepts of the other and utopia, I argue that Sherlock Holmes is the ideal utopian *because* of, rather than in spite of, his disabilities.

The Challenges of Writing Ourselves

In order to understand the importance of rereading and rewriting the character of Sherlock Holmes as, firstly, an idealized utopic citizen and, secondly, as someone far from representative of a gray futurity, it is essential to understand such tasks within various historical contexts. Largely speaking, we must first understand the likely reasons for Holmes's rise to prominence following his first appearance in 1887. Some factors that influence the character's success include the lack of access to publication options and readerships by many diverse voices, including women, persons of color, colonialized bodies, and lower income individuals.

In her pivotal text on feminist studies, *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf invokes the ghost of William Shakespeare's hypothetical sister, Judith:

> She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he [William] was. But she was not sent to school. She had no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil. She picked up a book now and then, one of her brother's perhaps, and read a few pages. But then her parents came in and told her to mend the stockings or mind the stew and not moon about with books and papers… Perhaps she scribbled some pages up in an apple loft on the sly but was careful to hide them… (54–56)

Woolf theorizes that, due to a combination of low class, lesser education, and power relationships (56), a woman of the Renaissance simply would not be equipped to write the texts of playwrights such as Jonson, Marlowe, and Shakespeare. Yet, a popular critique of her text, which has widely spread to discuss the First Wave of Feminism, argues that such a conception largely erases issues of intersectionality, particularly in the lives of women of color and poor women. Novelist and theorist Alice Walker notes that such a universalization of experience in the text fails to remark upon the lives of Black women who have been largely enslaved and otherwise marginalized within Anglophone cultures during the period Woolf discusses (235). In this critique, Walker invokes poet Phillis Wheatley, whom she argues would have never considered needing a room of her own and money enough to support herself when writing within a context that didn't even allow her to have legal ownership of herself (Walker 235).

Both Woolf's essay and Walker's critique focus not only on the literary genius displayed by marginalized voices, but also on the fact that such persons were able to create creative works despite their difficult situations. Writing nearly two decades after Walker, Sheree R. Thomas's anthology of speculative fiction by Black authors draws particular attention to the invisibilization of literary works by persons of color, referring to such authors and texts with the metaphor "dark matter" (Thomas xii). Similar to dark matter, the invisible matter thought to constitute most matter in the universe that is only observable by its gravitational effect, Thomas notes that "the contributions of black writers to the sf genre have not been directly observed or fully explored… both sf and mainstream scholarship have overlooked or ignored the contributions of less well known black writers" (Thomas xi). In his article in the same anthology, speculative fiction author Samuel R. Delany further notes that speculative fiction, particularly pulps, has historically been published with pen names and anonymous authors, meaning that "we simply have no way of knowing if one, three, or seven of them—or even many more—were blacks, Hispanics, women, Native Americans, Asians, or whatever" (384).

Such an erasure of diverse voices from the speculative fiction dates back to earlier marginalization of certain groups, such as women, from the publishing sphere. Sociologists Tuchman and Fortmin highlight that for women it was more

difficult to write, get published under one's own name following the year 1814[24], as well as to have one's works be included in canonizing texts such as *The Dictionary of National Biography* to gain recognition for their achievements (73). Prior to the 1820s, literary historian William B. Warner notes, "The contingent fact that most of the popular novelists were previous hit women" during the age of Enlightenment in roughly the 18th century (140). Yet, the novel, arguably the first instance of genre fiction, also received a far broader readership than previous genres; as explained by Warner, "Second, the novel's ability to assemble a diverse group of readers—women and men, the learned and the barely literate, the young and the old—enabled the successful novel to build a large general audience" (134). Unfortunately, it was found that, following her death, a woman's oeuvre was far less likely to be remarked upon, celebrated, or preserved (Tuchman and Fortmin 73). Subsequently, female and marginalized writers have continued to occupy a less prevalent place in literary canons, particularly within such arenas as speculative fiction.

In particular, as highlighted through the publication of *Dark Matter* and its two sequels, multiple publications and conferences dedicated to female authors and authors of color in the speculative fiction genre, and increased funding for research such as "Alternative Futurisms" in the University of California

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[24] A notable exception offered by Tuchman and Fortmin occurred prior 1814; before this time period, women and men were almost equally as likely to be published as a result of access to the financial resources necessary to publish at the time (73).

Riverside's Eaton Collection, there is renewed interest in the reality that "the canon is not monolithically white" in speculative fiction (Hopkinson qtd. in Miller). Almost simultaneously, however, the twenty-first century has seen multiple countermovements that argue for the inherent Whiteness and maleness of the speculative fiction genre. In an interview with *Lightspeed Magazine*, renowned speculative fiction author and theorist Nalo Hopkinson notes the incidents surrounding RaceFail in 2009, which occurred a mere four years prior to the formation of the Sad Puppies Hugo Award voting bloc and simultaneous Gamergate controversy:

> … in 2009, discussions on race and racism in science fiction and fantasy in literature and community blew the hell up on the Internet. There are some ten thousand posts that have been archived, with people of color in the community talking about what our experience has been, with white people in the community talking about what their experience has been, with lots of people who are very proud to say that they're colorblind opining very loudly on why the people of color were talking nonsense…
>
> So a lot of the buried and not-so-buried systemic racism in the science fiction community became laid bare. Lots of people denied it was there, but how could it not be? We're part of the rest of the world… This idea that the worst thing that could happen to you is for somebody to say, "That was racist," and that you should react virulently against the very notion that you can be affected by your own society. People began to talk about that, and people began to make space to talk about it…. And so there's just all of that going on, still going on, still getting challenged, still arguments going back and forth. It's a very rich time, I think, in the science fiction community, and a lot of nastiness has come out of it, but a lot of change, I think, is beginning to come out of it, and it's, at base, a hopeful time for me. (Adams and Kirtley)

While Hopkinson notes the productive aspects of this event, others were far less optimistic, with the popular Fanlore wiki community dedicated to fan culture

describing the events as, “a large and tangled snarl of racism, misunderstanding, culture clash, poor behavior, and hurt which consumed several interconnected corners of fandom in early 2009” (“Racefail”). Essentially, this event saw “hundreds of blogs, livejournals and other social media, as well as some print magazines… all passionately exercised over the status of people of colour within SF” (Roberts 198). In the ensuing arguments, implications arose regarding the canonization of certain speculative fiction texts, such as the idea that the genre was predominantly written by and for White heterosexual males on a historical level.

Speculative fiction author Adam Roberts states in his analysis of canonization in literature that to make a text part of the literary canon is to suggest that readers should, given a finite number of books that can be read in a lifetime, prioritize the reading of certain texts over their contemporaries. Considering a text for inclusion in the so-called canon, according to Roberts, requires a sort of “resuscitation”: “In practice, this takes one of two forms: first rescuing texts from unjust suppression, and second, re-arguing the case for mediocrity on the grounds of aesthetic work or historical significance” (1978). While texts may have been marginalized due to oppressive regimes or religious persecution, more recently in relation to speculative fiction such censorship has occurred as a result of implicit prejudice on the parts of publishers, readers, and a “generalized” sense of racism, homophobia, and sexism (Roberts 1978). As such, canonization that excludes persons of color and female writers are as

much a part of speculative fiction erasure enacted by the anti-social justice movements addressed in the introduction to this study.

Speculative fiction has been and continues to be a genre historically dedicated to the social justice, regardless of the aforementioned efforts against this understanding. As explained in the groundbreaking *Octavia's Brood* anthology, co-editor Walidah Imarisha notes that:

> Whenever we try to envision a world without war, without violence, without prisons, without capitalism, we are engaging in science fiction. All organizing is science fiction. Organizers and activists dedicate their lives to creating and envisioning another world, or many other worlds—so what better venue for organizers to explore their work than science fiction stories? (3)

This thought notably echoes queer studies scholar Lee Edelman's rejection of futurity in his tellingly titled text, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, who explains:

> Rather than rejecting, with liberal discourse, this ascription of negativity to the queer, we might, as I argue, do better to consider accepting and even embracing it. Not in the hope of forging thereby some more perfect social order--such a hope, after all, would only reproduce the constraining mandate of futurism, just as any such order would equally occasion the negativity of the queer--but rather to refuse the insistence of hope itself as affirmation, which is always affirmation of an order whose refusal will register as unthinkable, irresponsible, inhumane. (4)

Edelman finds this rejection of futurity and hope a positive emotion or at least one that counters negative feelings—a concept that contributes to the multifaceted nature of happiness developed by Sara Ahmed. In effect, Edelman demonstrates that queer communities can be invested in the future, just not the heteropartriarchal vision of the future that depends on reproduction, the

traditional family, and other so-called "traditional" values. In brief, the future, per these scholars, is multifaceted enough to radically question the legitimacy of gray futurity.

Offering a third perspective for the function of speculative fiction, José Esteban Muñoz's concept of queer futurity builds upon and interrogates the concept of the death drive—queerness as understood in this key text is something inherently future based, a process of *becoming*, and an ideal. As explained in the introduction, "Queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (Muñoz, 1). In short, such communities are living with an alternate view of the future that codes as fatalistic merely from a heteropatriarchal view of happiness per Ahmed; in fact, such communities have been contributing to futurist thought in a multitude of ways, often in less traditional literary contexts and outside of written, or at least published, literary cultures.

Feminist theorist Sara Ahmed contributes to this notion of the future as a space for those invested in social justice, such as feminists, women of color, LGBTQ communities, and all of their various intersections in her pivotal text, *The Promise of Happiness.* In building a theory of queer optimism, Ahmed writes, "In response to Edelman's polemic, I want to take seriously the question of whether all forms of political hope, all forms of optimism as well as utopianism… can be described as performing the logic of futurism" (161). Admitting that there is a sense of affirmation in the refusal of affirmation, Ahmed finds that happiness in

itself is far more complicated than many scholars consider or is sold by the happiness industrial complex. In many cases, she finds happiness to be linked with a normative manner of living. Thus, the attachment of futurity to biofuturity such that one's future is ensured through reproduction. Ahmed rightly asks what other methods of living beyond the realms of one's body exist, through her suggestion that a more political happiness may exist instead of personal joy. Noting the coexistence of unhappy terms with those referring to marginalized groups, Ahmed even subdivides her text to consider those whose "happiness" as a euphemism for lifestyle or marginalized status are often linked to their categories of being. Her discussion includes figures such as the feminist killjoy, with particular attention to the angry black woman, the unhappy queer, and melancholic migrants. As a futurist, I would argue that such depictions of these stereotypically unhappy figures as filled with joy and hope, perhaps even thriving in the future, is in itself a political and transformative act.

Adrienne maree brown builds upon such discussions in her text *Emergent Strategy*. This book acts as a guide to activism and transformative justice led by lessons from the natural world and speculative fiction, particularly the texts of Octavia Butler. Along the way, brown also complicates the notion of time by describing the "time traveling emotion":

> it's like anything else that traverses time, both fully of another time and fully present in the place when it appears. in the case of grief, the time traveling emotion touches into your sadness over a present day experience of absence, and then drags forward a living

> satchel of the most tender innocent moments, the smallest memory. or perhaps sucks your heart back in time.

In short, she builds a notion of transformative justice and happiness that is simultaneously based in the present, the past, and the future. Imagining a non-gray future, or a future where "everyone doesn't have to be the same," is in itself a kind of utopianism, though brown herself eschews the term (brown). The future, under brown's activist perspective, should be concerned with issues of environmentalism as well as social justice, while also keeping space for continued evolution and growth as a species. According to brown, even in a utopia, we simply cannot have perfection all the time or expect to be perfect because growth is a condition of the human experience. She deliberately finds the act of activism as a form of speculative fiction while science fiction and fantasy, without a social justice purpose, merely offers a sword and laser approach to the genres. As discussed in the introduction of this study, speculative fiction has largely been utilized as a term to describe science fiction and fantasy that addresses or is authored from the margins; genre fiction that is more likely to be self-described as science fiction or fantasy generally comes to its readers via a depiction or mindset of gray futurity.

The interrelationship between social justice and efforts toward equality is essential to the speculative fiction genre, particularly considering the discussions of RaceFail, voting groups such as the Sad and Rabid Puppies, and harassment campaigns like the Gamergate Controversy. Such movements largely see social

justice as separate from the aims of genres like speculative fiction and mediums indebted to speculative fiction, such as video games. Therefore, it may be that women and persons of color *were* writing and creating speculative fiction stories, but that they were simply less likely to be published and, when published either under their own names or noms de plume, less likely to be recognized as marginalized figures as skilled as their White male counterparts. Yet, as communities, these communities decidedly *did* create speculative literatures, whether in their oral traditions or missions for a brighter and much changed future.

Feminist scholar Bette London, who analyzed Mary Shelley's depiction and legacy after her death, notes that even this essential figure in the creation of speculative fiction, specifically horror, as a genre, is subject to the "construction of posthumous meaning… contribut[ing] to the narrative production and circulation of hierarchically ordered, gendered literary history" (253). Shelley was the daughter of prominent feminist philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft, but she is inexorably linked and forced to bolster "the lasting rites of masculinity" (253). Shelley's iconic work, *Frankenstein*, was initially published anonymously "with broad hints that [the author] might be Percy Shelley or Byron" (Hunter, xi), while scholars such as the editor of the *Norton Critical Edition*, J. Paul Hunter, note that "Percy Shelley's direct influence on the writing of *Frankenstein* is palpable[25]"

[25] It must be noted, however, that later in this introduction Hunter begins questioning the extent of Percy's influence on his wife's iconic work.

(xiv). Similarly, the work itself is often interpreted such that "*Frankenstein*… is a critical portrait of Percy" (London 255). It may be argued that the entirety of "Mary Shelley's authorship… would seem to have been effectively erased" (London 255), a significant contention in a genre that has erased so much authorship by women and persons of color. Yet, this assertion is difficult to dispute when the text of *Frankenstein* and Mary Shelley herself are rarely discussed without mentioning the author's husband—the reverse rarely occurs in discussions of male authors.

In addition to such authorship erasure, designation of authors as White or male, and other aforementioned issues, the problem of language and what types of language are deemed acceptable within speculative fiction must be discussed. In his controversial and much-discussed essay on writing workshops and race entitled "MFA vs. POC," author Junot Díaz highlights many of the frustrations that young writers face. Whether they are in an MFA program or other writing workshop environment, young persons of color are often told to limit their writing to English and fictitious languages, avoid discussing race (i.e. defaulting characters to White), and adopt a less-marginalized perspective (Díaz). In his own experience, Díaz and the two other persons of color in his cohort consistently faced both microaggressions and overt racism over the course of the MFA program at Cornell. One of those three eventually dropped out of the program, largely due to her frustrations at facing such oppression in the classroom and having it ignored or excused away by colleagues and faculty

members alike. Due to the overwhelmingly White nature of MFA programs, her absence reduced the presence of persons of color in those writing workshops by one-third, making it even more difficult for the two persons of color who remained.

While his legacy has recently fallen under scrutiny due to sexual harassment and assault claims, the significance of his statements regarding support for writers of color should not be dismissed. In “MFA vs. POC,” Díaz notes that, as a professor, he consistently met by students of color were experiencing similar frustrations in the still overwhelmingly White-centric writing workshop experience: “I can’t tell you how often students of color seek me out during my visits or approach me after readings in order to share with me the racist nonsense they’re facing in their programs, from both their peers and their professors. In the last 17 years I must have had at least three hundred of these conversations, minimum.” His findings are far from anecdotal. In a literature review by education and sexuality studies professor Susan K. Gardner, she reports that a wide range of scholars have found that women and students of color are far more likely to drop out of graduate programs than their White and male counterparts (99). Many MFA students of color, and by extension writers in general, seem to quit writing altogether as a result of the toxic environment offered by many writing workshops (Díaz). This finding was mirrored in my own personal experiences in an MFA program. When writing about the 1973 coup d’état in Chile, I remember distinctly being told that I was writing, “depressing,

third world shit" by a classmate. The comment was spoken in front of the entire workshop, but when I later went to discuss the issue and its acceptability with the professor in charge, she said she recalled no such incident.

Díaz also refers to another, more recent issue related to the underrepresentation of persons of color and women in speculative fiction, explaining what he often heard in his writing workshop, "I don't want to write about race, I want to write about real literature." Scholar and feminist essayist Roxane Gay has deconstructed the usage of terms like "women's fiction" as a way of minimizing women's contributions to literature, saying, "the issues of gender, literary credibility and the relative lack of critical acceptance and attention women receive from the (male) literary establishment, with equal skill and precision" continue to plague the publishing industry. She goes on to explain:

> The term "women's fiction" is so wildly vague as to be mostly useless. "Women's fiction," is a label designed to sell a certain kind of book to a certain kind of reader. As writers, we have little control over how our books are marketed. And let's be clear— "women's fiction," is a marketing term meant to either encompass the subject matter of a book or its author, or both. These conversations are so difficult because we are forced to deal in gross generalizations like, "women's fiction." We are beholden to these arbitrary categories that are, in many ways, insulting to men, women, and writing.
>
> There are books written by women. There are books written by men. Somehow, though, it is only books by women, or books about certain topics, that require this special "women's fiction," designation, particularly when those books have the audacity to explore, in some manner, the female experience which, apparently, includes the topics of marriage, suburban existence, and parenthood, as if women act alone in these endeavors, immaculately conceiving children and the like. Women's fiction is often considered small fiction, a more intimate brand of storytelling that doesn't tackle the *big* issues found in men's fiction. Anyone

> who reads well knows this isn't the case but that misperception lingers. As Ruth Franklin notes, "The underlying problem is that while women read books by male writers about male characters, men tend not to do the reverse. Men's novels about suburbia (Franzen) are about society; women's novels about suburbia (Wolitzer) are about women."

Similarly, fiction by persons of color is often characterized as belonging to identities rather than genre. In her essential critique of academic hierarchies of power given at the New York University Institute for the Humanities Conference, titled "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," writer Audre Lorde notes with much frustration that the only panel in which Black feminists and lesbians are invited to speak is specifically dedicated to Black feminism and lesbian feminism. "To read this [conference's] program," she wryly notes, "is to assume that lesbian and Black women have nothing to say about existentialism, the erotic, women's culture and silence, developing feminist theory, or heterosexuality and power" (*Sister Outsider*, 25). Marginalized groups, it seems, can only be expected to write and theorize about their marginalized identities, and thus, are hierarchically placed below genre fiction, which is already minimized.

The final issue of underrepresentation in the genre addressed here concerns which materials are considered worth preserving. In her study of archival practices at the University of California San Diego's Archive for New Poetry (ANP), literary theorist Eunsong Kim finds that the appraisal and prioritization of materials to be catalogued and preserved has historically been,

and remains, inherently racialized. Simply put, whether conscious or not, there remain many "institutional and financial efforts to keep whiteness the norm" (6). In her study of the ANP, Kim "utiliz[ed] the ANP's financial proposals, internal administrative correspondences, and its manuscript appraisals and collections [finding that the] ANP's collection development priority is racialized, and this prioritization is institutionally processed by literary scholarship that linked innovation to whiteness" (2). In short, Kim argues that the avant-garde, the creation of literary genres, and experimentation are implicitly linked to Whiteness, such that persons of color writing in creation of the same movements are seem as merely mimicking White practices.

Unpacking Sherlock Holmes

With the continuation of such practices of erasure and marginalization, it is hardly surprising that the creation of the mystery genre is also tied to almost entirely White male creators such as Edgar Allan Poe, Wilkie Collins, and the creator of perhaps the best known detective in literary history, Arthur Conan Doyle (Johanna M. Smith 78). Drama and literature scholar Johanna M. Smith explains that the manner in which both detective fiction and the literary canon are taught often depend upon upholding the perceived notions of literariness and respectability (78). While women and persons of color were simultaneously publishing and otherwise creating detective and mystery novels, these figures have far less name recognition; Smith argues that such a division largely rests on male authors being more likely to be seen as "literary" while female authors are

more likely to seem “pop culture” or “pulp” oriented (78). Outside of Anglophone tradition, one can find far earlier examples of detective fiction in the Middle Eastern classic *One Thousand and One Nights*, while popular detective fiction dates back as far as the 18th century in China. Within Anglophone literature, early examples of detective fiction authors include White female authors Anna Katharine Green and Geraldine Bonner, and Latinx author María Amparo Ruiz de Burton. Yet, many marginalized voices remained in the margins; it is unsurprising that Ruiz de Burton’s *Who Would Have Thought It?* was found and brought to the world’s attention by Chicanx scholar Rosaura Sánchez as an early example of Latinx mystery fiction. As explained by critic and speculative fiction Nalo Hopkinson, the community of speculative fiction, including mystery fiction, has largely focused on the normative White male figure:

> Any space created in this community for people of color, and any space we can make for ourselves makes it possible for more of us to find it easier to be ourselves, to speak up, makes it easier to write, or possible to write at all. That is true when we do it for any disenfranchised group of people within the larger fantasy and science fiction community; women, disabled people, queer people, poor and working class people, chronically ill people, old people. I'd lay odds that everyone in this room experiences at least one of those disenfranchisements. Making room makes room for all of us. It makes the possibility for even more great writing in a field where we are already blessed with so much of it; how wonderful would that be? And come right down to it, the writing is why we are all here, nah true? (Hopkinson, *Report*, 49)

Holmes, a character initially created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was originally portrayed in a way that shows the heroic detective as an ideal, particularly in terms of his objectivity, emotionlessness, and rationality. In fact, his

colleague Dr. James Watson describes Holmes as, “the best and the wisest man” he has ever known (Doyle, *Memoirs of Sherlock Homes*). While far from average at the time and to the present, his exemplariness marks him as an idealized figure—a person worthy of emulation. Thus, it may come as little surprise that this near perfect figure is depicted as a White, normate male from a nation known for its widespread colonial presence during the time of the original stories’ publications between 1887 and 1927.

While Holmes is flawed, even in the original text, through his use of opium, but he is still understood to be the ideal reasoner. Certain theorists have even posited Holmes as the “utopian personified” (Vanacker 35), a detective completing utopian work (Gomel 354), and a “utopian figure” (Capancioni 99). As a key character in the development of detective fiction and, according to the Guinness Book of World Records, the most portrayed character in film history (Fox), Sherlock Holmes and the many adaptations of his character are meaningful in both an historical context and a less Anglocentric and androcentric context, including portrayals of Holmes as a Black man, focus on his female counterparts, and readings that look more into Holmes’s potential queerness and disabilities. Together, these character adaptations re-visualize the presence of marginalized populations within a significant series of speculative fiction literature.

Some of the key narratives that I will consider in these adaptations depict Sherlock Holmes or his companions as a female, person of color, or person with

a disability-centered narrative. I will offer a brief literature review of how gender and race has been diversified within fan retellings before looking at disability, an issue that has only more recently entered into these fan adaptations.

Gender in Holmes Depictions

The original Sherlock Holmes texts, despite what recent adaptations suggest, have little to offer in terms of female or non-White characters. Two of the most commonly depicted female characters in fan derivatives include Irene Adler and Mary Morstan (later Watson). Irene Adler is introduced as the mistress to a member of the aristocracy but, more importantly, a woman able to outsmart Holmes in her one story, "A Scandal in Bohemia." Mary, John Watson's eventual wife, merely exists as a side character, appearing more as a narrative device to frame Holmes and Watson's relationship and Watson's relative averageness. There is a severe underrepresentation of women who are not victims in these stories, which has made Adler's presence common in later Holmesian adaptations, despite her single appearance in the canonical texts. Morstan's character is also quite limited. She figures prominently as Holmes and Watson's client in *The Sign of the Four,* with minor appearances in "The Adventure of the Crooked Man" and "The Boscombe Valley Mystery." However, she later falls victim to the trope of "women in refrigerators," being killed off-screen or off-page, in order to further the plot of "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder." Coined by feminist comic book author Gail Simone, the term "women in refrigerators" stems from the off-screen death of the Green Lantern's girlfriend, Alexandra DeWitt; the

sole purpose of her demise is to drive the hero's narrative arc (Feminist Frequency, "#2: Women in Refrigerators"). Simone and her colleagues find that DeWitt's pointless murder is far from unusual in comic books; together, the group composed a list of what now amounts to 125 female characters who have been "killed, raped, depowered, crippled, turned evil, maimed, tortured, contracted a disease or had other life-derailing tragedies befall her" within superhero-based comic book fiction alone (*Women in Refrigerators*). Yet, the trope also applies as a narrative device outside of visual novels, providing a revenge or solution-driven mystery ripe in what journalist Alice Bolin terms the "dead girls" obsession; within detective and true crime fiction, largely male detectives are often driven to solve the death of a woman, usually young, White, and attractive, who have never appeared on page or screen. The women literally exist in these texts in a posthumous state, as with Mostran in "The Adventure of the Empty House."

This story begins with Watson as a figured marked by tragedy, who nonetheless continues attempting to solve crimes following Holmes's apparent death in "The Adventure of the Final Problem." The image of the empty house pictures both the murder victim dying in what has now become a classic locked-room scenario, yet it also pictures Watson alone following the deaths of those he loves. However, in the same story, we also see Holmes's apparent rise from the dead, thus bringing to mind the related "dead men defrosting" trope whereby major male characters may be killed in literature but, often, return by some implausible means. For example, Holmes' own survival at Reichenbach Falls is

said to have been facilitated by a mastery of baritsu, a fictional martial art like based on baritsu, and free solo climbing up the side of the cliff. Morstran's demise is given far less attention, occurring at the same point in the Holmes series as Holmes' primary death itself. No reason is given for Morstan's death, suggesting that the true reason for her demise was the narrative need for Watson to return to 221B Baker Street, marking her as yet another woman in a refrigerator.

These narrative points may be accurately included in faithful depictions of Sherlock texts, but many adaptations have modified these tropes. For example, Irene Adler's role is often expanded such that she becomes a common love interest for the originally asexual Holmes in adaptations such as William S. Baring-Gould's fictional Holmes biography, *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*; Carole Nelson Douglas's *Irene Adler* series; John Lescroart's *Auguste Lupa* series; Laurie R. King's Mary Russell series; Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss's popular *Sherlock*; Guy Richie's 2009 *Sherlock Holmes*; Robert Doherty's *Elementary*; and likely hundreds more texts across stage, screen, and page. Despite the popularity of providing Holmes with a romantic interest in Adler, the text of "A Scandal in Bohemia" clearly presents Holmes's interest in her as purely asexual and aromantic. In fact, Watson says, "It was not that he felt any emotion akin to love for Irene Adler," questioning whether Holmes is even capable of such feelings. For her part, Adler outsmarts Holmes, keeps him from gaining possession of a photograph depicting the titular scandal, and bestows a shrewd

gift upon him. Her reasoning behind the gift demonstrates that she is not in love with Holmes—she too wants to put the scandal behind her so that she may live happily with her barrister husband, Godfrey Norton. Holmes, per Watson, even refers to Adler as "the woman," speaking to the misogynistic surprise that he feels at being outsmarted by a female whom he deems inferior. Watson, in his concluding entry, says that Holmes "used to make merry over the cleverness of women, but I have not heard him do it of late." If anything, it seems that Holmes is intrigued by Adler because she is an intelligent woman. It is also worth noting that, like the unfortunate Morstan, Adler also falls victim to the "women in refrigerators" trope when she is presumably killed off-page, as Watson refers to her as "the late Irene Adler" before recounting the tale in which she appears ("A Scandal in Bohemia").

Thus, we are left with a single enduring image of a woman in the original Sherlock Holmes books: Holmes and Watson's housekeeper, Mrs. Hudson. Her importance, or relative lack thereof, in the canonical Holmes stories may best be articulated by the *Baker Street Wiki,* an online Holmes fan community: "Mrs Hudson is Sherlock Holmes's landlady. She makes occasional appearances in the original stories. Not much is known about Mrs Hudson. She is given no physical description or first name by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" ("Mrs. Hudson"). Despite her many appearances in the Holmes canon, Mrs. Hudson is not important enough to Doyle to merit a physical description or backstory of any kind in any of the numerous Sherlock Holmes tales. Even the description

provided by Watson demonstrates that her role in the narrative is simply to do "woman's work" for Holmes and Watson:

> Mrs Hudson, the landlady of Sherlock Holmes, was a long-suffering woman. Not only was her first-floor flat invaded at all hours by throngs of singular and often undesirable characters but her remarkable lodger showed an eccentricity and irregularity in his life which must have sorely tried her patience. His incredible untidiness, his addiction to music at strange hours, his occasional revolver practice within doors, his weird and often malodorous scientific experiments, and the atmosphere of violence and danger which hung around him made him the very worst tenant in London. On the other hand, his payments were princely. I have no doubt that the house might have been purchased at the price which Holmes paid for his rooms during the years that I was with him. The landlady stood in the deepest awe of him and never dared to interfere with him, however outrageous his proceedings might seem. She was fond of him, too, for he had a remarkable gentleness and courtesy in his dealings with women. ("The Adventure of the Dying Detective")

Depicted as elderly and widowed in most adaptations, there is too little information provided about Mrs. Hudson in the fifty-six canonical short stories and four novels to verify either her age or marital status.

The Holmes books and stories largely focus on two male characters, for whom female characters only exist as minor distractions, temporary plot points, and off-screen necessities to minimize the impact of mundane tasks such as cooking and cleaning. It is unsurprising, then, that female and male readers alike have inflated the female roles within Holmes narratives as an attempt at increased representation. As explained in feminist theorist Sabine Vanacker's "Sherlock's Progress through History: Feminist Revisions of Holmes," the lack of female representation, especially positive female representation, has proved a

significant point for revision in later adaptations. Vanacker's text particularly focuses on Carole Nelson Douglas's *Irene Adler* series (1990–2009) and Laurie R. King's *Mary Russell* series (1994–2016).[26] Both series sought to work with rather than change the Sherlockian canon. King's stories are set following the publication of the final Holmes short story in 1927, and they track Holmes and his new apprentice post-retirement. Douglas's texts intermingle with Doyle's stories while imagining Adler's death in *A Scandal in Bohemia* as faked in a manner similar to Holmes's own.

Douglas's reimagining of Irene Adler offers the witty, clever opera singer as a female equal to Holmes. From the very beginning of the first book in this series, Adler is marked as an equal when Holmes remarks to Watson, "she is one of only four individuals… to outwit me… Why should she not cheat death as well?" (Douglas, *Good Night, Mr. Holmes*, 15). The way Holmes refers to Adler offers a retelling of Virginia Woolf's key question in "A Room of One's Own," asking how a woman such as Irene Adler could possibly be as successful as Holmes or Watson while living under the strong patriarchal structure of Victorian England: "Think! How would an ordinary female accompany me through the night streets unhailed and unhampered? How would she navigate the suburban outlands we have trod together, upholstered in thirty yards of train and a veiled

[26] Both authors have expressed interest in continuing their respective series; thus, additional texts may be published following the completion of this dissertation in 2018.

bonnet? Could she pick up a revolver and leave upon a midnight moment's notice, as you often have?" (Douglas, *Good Night, Mr. Holmes*, 16–17). Per Douglas's adaptation, it is not Adler's biological femaleness that prevents her from becoming the world's greatest detective or his sidekick, but rather the manner in which the world regards her *simply because she is a woman*. Despite such assumptions, Adler and her assistant, Nell, manage to traverse Victorian England in much the same manner that Holmes is able to travel lower class neighborhoods despite his wealth—through the intelligent use of disguise.

Feminist issues also surround much of Laurie R. King's Jewish-American heroine, Mary Russell. The young woman is first introduced having outwitted Holmes in his own game of cold readings and deductions. Consequently, Holmes befriends her and takes her as his apprentice. Because Holmes canonically turns to apiculture, or beekeeping, following his retirement from detective work, the title of *The Beekeeper's Apprentice* is itself an example of the witty, pun-filled, and sarcastic tone personified in Russell's character. Holmes appears initially taken in by Russell's cheekiness even more than her intelligence. Following Russell's explanation as to how she deduced that Holmes was an apiculturist, Holmes in his characteristically blunt way, remarks, "My God… it can think" (17). Unimpressed by Holmes's apparent compliment, Russell retorts, "My God, it can recognise another human being when it's hit over the head with one" (17).

Even Mrs. Hudson's character has been developed in later texts, such as Manly W. Wellman and Wade Wellman's 1975 cross-over *Sherlock Holmes: The*

War of the Worlds. This book reimagines the Martian invasion of H. G. Wells's classic *War of the Worlds* with none other than Sherlock Holmes, Watson, and perhaps Doyle's third most famous character, the choleric Professor Challenger of *The Lost World*. Mrs. Hudson is not a major figure in this text, but her clear importance to Holmes as a lover and caregiver, as well as the full description of her personality and appearance, make this text noteworthy in terms of female representation in the Holmes adaptations. For example, when Holmes speaks to Watson of his newfound affinity for beekeeping, Holmes offers the "*Handbook of Bee Culture, with Some Observations on the Segregation of the Queen*" as a potential title. In response, Mrs. Hudson bursts out laughing, although Watson himself finds "nothing funny in the title" (Wellman and Wellman 192). Mrs. Hudson is also described as "a stately blonde woman with a rosy face" (Wellman and Wellman 65). While Holmes's biographer, Watson, notices Mrs. Hudson's work around 221 Baker Street, her presence as a heroine is also repeated in many instances throughout the book. When Holmes attempts to send her away to escape the Martian invasion, Mrs. Hudson returns to London at the earliest chance. Angered by this, Holmes demands to know why she has returned, only to be told, "I had to find out what had become of you" (Wellman and Wellman 196). Relishing the affection from his beloved in a way that is very unlike the canonical Holmes, the detective muses, "You have come more than a hundred miles… you rode on a velocipede, I perceive" (Wellman and Wellman 196), before learning that she also encountered Martians on her way.

In short, the portrayals of strong women equal to their male counterparts, particularly the idealized Holmes, offer a possibility for the utopian citizen to be female. Douglas's Adler proves that she is just as able to solve mysteries, disguise herself, and even fake her death as Holmes. King's Russell is able to keep up with, and even surpass, Holmes at his own games of deduction. And Wellman and Wellman's Mrs. Hudson is given a narrative that demonstrates bravery, vigor, and resourcefulness in her own right. In this manner, post-Doyle Sherlockians have effectively demonstrated the Holmes mythos as not inherently male dominated.

Holmes and the Issue of Race

In a manner similar to the depictions of women in Doyle's Holmes series, persons of color only exist in the original Sherlock Holmes stories as minor characters utilized to further a plot. Some of these figures include Lucy, the daughter of the White Effie Munroe and Black John Hebron, from "The Adventure of the Yellow Face," and "Black" Steve Dixie, the Black henchman of crime boss Barney Stockdale in "The Adventure of the Three Gables." Far less significantly, there are references to the KKK in "The Five Orange Pips" and their "aversion to the negroes… and extending the franchise to them." None of these figures plays a pivotal role in the series as a whole. Lucy's mixed-race heritage is a secret leading to the clandestine activities of "The Adventure of the Yellow Face," Steve fills a minor role by attacking Holmes before divulging the name of his boss, and

the KKK, per literary critic Henry Cuningham, may be replaced by “virtually any cult… without significantly affecting the main plot” (122).

Cuningham praises Doyle for his sympathy toward Lucy, acknowledging that his support for the “marriage of a black man to a white woman… in the 1890s is a historical oddity” (113). Both Watson and Holmes support Lucy and her mother, who had previously concealed her daughter and interracial marriage from her second husband. Journalist and historian Laura Smith of *The Guardian* notes however that, unlike the United States, the U.K. never has never had anti-miscegenation laws on the books. In fact, antipathy toward interracial marriage did not become commonplace in the country until after World War I, over three decades after the publication of “The Adventure of the Yellow Face.” Thus, this story may present Doyle and his characters as ahead of their times in some ways, but does little to support actual racial diversification in the Holmes series.

Furthermore, the highly racialized and stereotypical presentation of Steve Dixie in the Holmes texts fails to promote an overall positive representation of Black persons. Steve’s character is remarkably unintelligent and racialized, even from his first words to Watson and Holmes: “Which of you gen’l’men is Masser Holmes?” (“The Adventure of the Three Gables”.). Steve is described via Watson’s narration as “a huge negro… dressed in a very loud gray check suit with a flowing salmon-coloured tie. His broad face and flattened nose were thrust forward, as his sullen dark eyes, with a smouldering gleam of malice in them, turned from one of us to the other.” Holmes’s interpretation of Steve is even less

sympathetic: “he is really rather a harmless fellow, a great muscular, foolish, blustering baby, and easily cowed,” marking him as infantilized, foolish, and easily manipulated. Additionally, Holmes notes that he would invite Steve to sit with him and Watson except for the fact that, “I don’t like the smell of you.” Cuningham suggests that through Steve’s character, Doyle was likely hoping to capitalize on the popularity of minstrel shows at the time (123), but his willingness to contribute to racist stereotypes denote Watson and Holmes as canonically anti-Black, and perhaps only able to accept Lucy because she is half-White.

Adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories have dealt with the issue of race in remarkably different ways. In her analysis of Chinese characters in CBS’s *Elementary* vs. BBC/PBS’s *Sherlock*, media theorist Britney Broyles notes a stark contrast. *Sherlock* is set in modern-day London and the notoriously controversial episode “The Blind Banker” maintains a Chinese presence by relying upon “racial essentialism to identify and contain threats to national security by recycling the ideology of Doyle’s canon” (Broyles 147). In contrast to *Sherlock*, Lucy Liu’s Joan Watson in *Elementary* “represents a more pluralistic notion of racial identity and recognises that appearances can mislead through its more liberal handling of the original text” (Broyles 147). There are few Chinese characters in the original Holmes stories, but the detective’s dependence upon opium suggests that, per literary scholar Susan Cannon Harris, “the Orientalist basis of this equation of disease, drug, and toxin [with foreignness] is demonstrated with startling clarity”

(453). Similarly, *Sherlock*'s "The Blind Banker" relies on tropes about the other, particularly based in practices and notions of Orientalism (Moffat and Gatiss). Postcolonial theorist Edward Said defines Orientalism as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident,'" as well as "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient… a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (2–3). In "The Blind Banker," two White British men are killed after visiting China and having visited the same Chinese shop in London, the Lucky Cat; while notably popular with some Chinese merchants, a lucky cat, or manekineko, is actually Japanese in origin. In order to solve their murders, Holmes and Watson attend a Chinese circus, which turns out to be a cover for the Black Lotus Tong Chinese criminal organization responsible for the deaths of the two White men.

The exotic other, in this case China, is both marked as dangerous and intentionally separate from the entirely White or White-passing cast of *Sherlock*, which has been critiqued for being yet another story "about clever white men and how special they are" (Penny). Interestingly, while all of the Asian actors in the episode portray Chinese characters, many of them are actually British actors of Chinese ancestry, including Gemma Chan (Soo Lin) and Sarah Lam (General Shan). The actors might easily have portrayed British Chinese women as well, adding some much-needed cultural pluralism to the series. The decision to make these Black Lotus Tong members definitively racially Chinese from China rather

than British Chinese demonstrates how China has come to fill the Orientalist role previously occupied by India in the original Doyle texts (Broyles, *Crime and Culture,* 101), rather than working to mark the Holmes universe as multicultural. Numerous theorists, including Broyles, Cannon Harris, and postcolonial theorist Yumna Siddiqi, have found that India was pathologized in the original Holmes texts, depicted as causing disease to all White British subjects who visited, as well as being dangerous, dirty, and drug ridden. Colonized by Britain from 1858–1947, a time period that largely intersected with Doyle's Sherlock stories (1887–1927), India came to represent the quintessential Orientalist other in these texts; this role, Broyles argues, has been instead filled by China in PBS/BBC's *Sherlock* nearly a century later.

Furthermore, the choices about language and action for the actors portraying Chinese characters in *Sherlock* follow multiple tropes for Asian characters in a particularly Orientalist fashion. The episode opens with the Black Lotus Tong's third victim, antiquities expert Soo Lin Yao, carefully practicing the art of a tea ceremony alone in a museum at night. The cinematography works to exoticize her in many ways; as explained by AV Club reviewer John Teti, "her moves [are] captured in slow motion and accentuated with the sound of breeze sweeping through the weeds, as if she were some unknowable mystic." The leader of the Black Lotus Tong literally speaks in aphorism at one point, telling Watson, whom she has mistaken for Sherlock, "A book is like a magic garden carried in your pocket. Chinese proverb, Mr. Holmes." In short, per feminist

journalist Laurie Penny, “Sunday's show [“The Blind Banker”]… was less of an update than a direct transposition of British Sinophobia in the late-Victorian period.” The episode largely reifies stereotypes surrounding Asian women as either sexualized and aggressive per the trope of the dragon lady, or docile, sexually available, and dependent on White men, such as Soo Lin’s role in the episode. Similarly, all of the Asian characters know martial arts to some degree, while speaking in a stereotypical poor English dialect associated with pidgin English, regardless of their education attainment levels or how long they have been living in Britain.

Finally, and perhaps of most damage to actual British Chinese in the U.K. today, is the use of the term “Tong” in the episode to refer to this criminal gang. The problematic association of tongs, particularly in the contemporary usage, with criminality in an Anglophone context is evidenced by the Oxford English Dictionary’s definition of “tong” in this context as “an association or secret society of Chinese in the U.S., orig. formed as a benevolent or protective society but frequently associated with underworld criminal activity.” Historically, tong associations offered meeting places for cultural growth, membership, and community building within immigrant communities. While particularly prevalent with immigrant Chinese communities in the United States and Canada, they have proved significant to maintaining Chinese heritage in Britain as well. Thus, the association of tongs with criminality, while sometimes accurate, stereotypes meaningful immigrant organizations in a contemporary context that works to

further demonize British Chinese *in addition to* the Chinese characters in the story.

This particular episode is at the heart of fan debate over which of the simultaneously running Sherlock Holmes television adaptions is of higher quality. Notably, PBS and BBC's *Sherlock* antedates *Elementary*, with the former starting in 2010 and the latter starting in 2012. Animosity between the two series began with rumors of *Sherlock*'s showrunner, Steven Moffat, and Sherlock actor, Benedict Cumberbatch, speaking out against *Elementary* by stating that they felt "cynical" about it, particularly the casting of Lucy Liu as an ethnically-Chinese female Joan vs. the White, male, and British John Watson. Cumberbatch has claimed that various media sources misquoted him and that he actually supports *Elementary*, but the rumors nonetheless created tension between fans of both shows (Dunn). Some Sherlockians are "super upset and totally opposed to a female (and in some respects, to an Asian female) John Watson" (Dunn), while opponents argue that "In contrast [to *Sherlock]*, *Elementary* casts a Chinese-American actress (Lucy Liu) as Watson with whom the audience usually identifies and directly confronts this problematic inheritance of orientalism (Broyles, *Crime and Culture*, 8)." Watson's ethnicity and gender allow us, as viewers, to consider the role that orientalism has and continues to play in the Holmes stories, which, I contend, mirror the perpetuation of a gray utopia. Through her denial of stereotypes and lack of reticence to call out both racist and

misogynist behaviors, we are offered a critical lens through which we might view both Doyle's work and subsequent texts that reify his Orientalist lens.

Numerous other factors clearly come into play when questioning the overall quality of television series and adaptations as a whole, but the comparisons between *Sherlock* and *Elementary* offer an opportunity to analyze *Elementary* in detail. Set in contemporary New York, *Elementary* seeks to "chang[e] it up" per lead actress and Joan Watson portrayer, Lucy Liu, who says:

> If you look at the percentage of ethnicities and the percentage of women on television now, it's such a different time. That's how you keep things current. You update and you change them accordingly… It's nice to be able to portray an Asian-American on camera without having an accent, or without having to be spoofy. And I think that's a big step forward (qtd. in Dunn).

Joan Watson, unlike her counterpart in Doyle's texts and Moffat's television series, works as an effective partner to Holmes and may even be considered the true protagonist and truly utopian figure of *Elementary.* In the initial episode, we are introduced to the world through Watson. Following the initial murder scene, we see Watson awaking and going about her morning, including walking down a sidewalk in New York to give the audience a glimpse into the U.S.-based Baker Street through her perspective. As she jogs to a cemetery and pauses at the grave of one "Charles Azzarello," it is her intriguing backstory that becomes the focus. We are introduced to Holmes through his relationship to Watson as a client because she initially acts as his sober companion for Narcotics Anonymous. In many ways, including portraying Watson as a true partner and

potential protagonist, *Elementary* offers a more collaborative, less individualistic, and far less Holmes-centric adaptation that at least strives toward transformative change and more colorful utopic figures:

> In *Elementary*, the denouement of most episodes is a collaborative speech in which Sherlock, Joan, Marcus, Gregson, and later Kitty take turns explaining the different twists and turns that led to the solution of the investigation. In addition, the leads in the case are found by various characters besides Sherlock. The show often presents stereotypical criminals as suspects, only to complicate these expectations about the inherent criminality of the non-normative—the Other. (Broyles, *Crime and Culture*, 121)

Elementary recognizes otherness based upon race in the canonical Holmes texts and tries to subvert it through complexities in story and casting. In this manner, it follows a similar agenda to works such as Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Anna Waterhouse's *Mycroft Holmes*, which takes Sherlock's brother Mycroft on a case with his own Watson, a West Indian man named Cyrus Douglas; Samuel Williams Jr.'s *Anomalous: The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, which reintroduces Lucy and Steve Dixie in a story that partners Sherlock Holmes with Black U.S. American boxer Jack Johnson to solve a crime; and Karl Bollers (writer), Rick Leonardi (illustrator), and Larry Stroman's (illustrator) graphic novel series *Watson and Holmes*, which features Black titular characters set in contemporary Harlem. This last series offers the most explicit commentary on race in a Holmes adaptation, as the eponymous Watson and Holmes continuously face prejudice from suspects and police officers alike as Black men in the modern U.S. Both leads must navigate a more complex relationship with

the local police department compared to other adaptations, and although they work with a local lieutenant, they believe the police force to be corrupt. While Holmes and Watson skirt and sometimes break the law in the original Doyle texts, these two characters blatantly do so from the beginning of this adaptation, including engaging in the practice of pickpocketing and carrying guns without licenses (Alberto 19).

The question of Holmes's race in this adaptation has drawn particular attention, with critics specifically questioning why Bollers chose to make Holmes Black. It seems that such questions are uniquely applied to race and gender in these Holmes tales. Literary theorist Maria Alberto highlights the particular scrutiny that series such as *Watson and Holmes* face:

> For some, though, either the move to comic form or the move from precise attributes (descriptions, settings, era, etc.) may re-prompt the question of why. In other words: why rescript Doyle's characters, why bring them into the twenty-first century, why have them deal with gang- and software-driven crime – but often more particularly, why change them into Americans, why make them black? While these types of questions certainly can prompt productive conversations about the value of textual fidelity (Leitch 6), it is also easy to see how some of the prescriptive questions specific to "Black" are not raised by other, arguably even less authentic adaptations, such as the "limited videogame action" style of Guy Ritchie's films (Nicol 139), the post-modern take of BBC's Sherlock, or even other comic-form series (Alterna, Black House Comics). This difference, of course, is race. No matter their other changes to era, environment, age, etc., each of the aforementioned Holmesian adaptations rescripts Holmes in ways other than his whiteness, and in fact, each of the other media artefacts examined in this project also features an either implicitly or explicitly white Holmes. (21–22)

Adaptations that wildly alter the original Doyle texts in a non-transformative manner, per brown's analysis of speculative fiction as activism, face little debate, including texts that make Sherlock Holmes exist in a definitively science fiction (*Sherlock Holmes's War of the Worlds*), fantasy/horror (The anthology *Shadows Over Baker Street*), or even steampunk setting (Guy Ritchie's Holmes series). But, shifting the race or gender of the protagonist appears to rile fan communities and critics who seemingly have no issue with other non-canonical changes to elements, as noted in the case studies of this dissertation's introduction.

Neurodiversity and the Holmes Figure

In the first episode of the podcast *How to Survive the End of the World* by sisters adrienne maree brown and Autumn Brown, they raise the question of trash and unwantedness. The hosts consider what qualities an alien species might use to connect with humanity, despite our continued steps toward self-destruction, and evoke speculative fiction author Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* series in their discussion. In these books, humans who have survived a nuclear holocaust are taken in by an alien race, the Oankali. Rather than being impressed by human accomplishments or the things that our species is proud of, it is cancer which captures the Oankali's interest. Referring to the protagonist, Lilith, and her cancer, they say that she has a "talent" for the illness. It is her disease and genetic predilection for cancer that makes her in particular, and humans as a whole, useful and interesting to the Oankali. Lilith remarks that this same illness killed her mother, but her grandmother and two aunts survived,

suggesting that she is especially “good” at transmitting the disease (Butler, Dawn, 21). The Oankali also note that humans possess “a mismatched pair of genetic characteristics” including both intelligence and hierarchy (38). Ignoring and even accepting this hierarchical nature, the Oankali explain, is “like ignoring cancer” (38), a “genetic problem” (38).

In *Emergent Strategy*, adrienne maree brown expands upon the argument made in her podcast *How To Survive the End of the World* by questioning what qualities must be eradicated according activism that reduces social issues to specific identities or traits. By focusing on particular groups in a manner that especially eliminates the other, certain activist and futurist visions have “left out” groups of people “not just in a slightly hurtful way.” Those who are neglected, brown explains, “account for crucial segments of our communities,” noting that the creation of many positionality-based social movements has historically “entail[led] leaving behind people with disabilities; or trans, Indigenous, immigrant communities and others.” In short, she argues that a futurity of activism that seeks grayness or uniformity simply fails to move toward the creation of a better world.

Related to this conception of the utopic citizen, multicolored futurity, and the role of persons with disabilities, in the final section of this chapter, I examine the shifting notions of what constitutes essential human nature within Anglophone cultures, particularly focusing on the change from the soul to the brain to DNA as representative of the self. I consider how this shift plays out in

literature of the time, especially the implications for persons with disabilities like Sherlock Holmes, who has come to embody the ideal modernist mind, and the implications of readings that place him on the autism spectrum for actual persons with neurodiverse conditions. There are multiple recent adaptations of Sherlock Holmes as a person with disabilities. Texts considered in this study include the current television adaptation, *Sherlock*, which portrays Holmes as a person with sociopathic tendencies who is on the autism spectrum; the 1974 novel *The Seven Per-Cent Solution* by Nicholas Meyer, which imagines many of the conspiracies of the Holmesian universe, including Moriarty's network of villainy, as a mere manifestation of Holmes's mental illness, addiction, and posttraumatic stress; and the 2015 film *Mr. Holmes*, which considers the effects of age-based disability on the titular character. I argue it is these disabilities, both as applied to the canonical Holmes and these particular adaptations that *actually* mark him as an ideal utopian citizen—one able to cope with monotony, boredom, and few surprises.

Building upon contemporary readings of Holmes that identify the detective as a person with disabilities, *Sherlock* presents the eponymous figure with multiple mental illnesses. At various points in the series, Holmes is described as "a high-functioning sociopath" ("His Last Vow") with Asperger's syndrome ("The Hounds of Baskerville"). Critics have been vocal in pointing out the carelessness in both portrayals and descriptions of these disabling conditions. In particular, many have noted that Holmes's distinction between psychopathy and sociopathy

is at odds with current psychological understandings. Holmes explains, “I’m not a psychopath, I’m a high-functioning sociopath, do your research” (“His Last Vow”), but his statement is inconsistent with modern psychological knowledge. In his study of psychopathy, its prevalence, and manners by which the lay person may better come to understand its complexities, popular journalist Jon Ronson makes a clear distinction between psychopathy and sociopathy. Per his discussions with neuroscientists, psychologists, and others researching psychopathy, he explains that the terms are generally used interchangeably with no significant difference (118). He shortens definitions from psychologists such as Lilienfeld et al. with the following:

> “Psychopathy” versus “sociopathy.” Psychopathy, otherwise known as psychopathic personality, is a personality disorder characterized by a paradoxical combination of features: superficial charm, poise, and low anxiety on the one hand, conjoined with guiltlessness, callousness, dishonesty, and poor impulse control, on the other (Cleckley, 1941/1988; Hare, 1991/2003; Lilienfeld, 1994). “Sociopathy,” in contrast, is a colloquial term that refers variously to any one or more of four concepts. Specifically, various authors describe sociopathy as a condition that is (a) synonymous with psychopathy (Mealey, 1995), (b) similar to psychopathy, but characterized by especially poor emotion regulation (Siciliano, 2014), (c) marked by chronic antisocial and criminal behavior that is primarily sociocultural in origin (Partridge, 1930; Lykken, 1995), or (d) marked by a long-standing history of antisocial and criminal behavior dating back at least to adolescence (Robins, 1966), that is, as a condition more or less synonymous with the DSM diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). As Berg et al. (2013) noted, “sociopathy is not a formal psychiatric or psychological term, and its indiscriminate use appears to have engendered little more than conceptual confusion” (p. 66). We therefore recommend its belated retirement (cf., Pemment, 2013). (Lilienfield et al.)

Because both terms are included in the broader mental disability diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder, it is useful to understand the characteristics that apply to both and which Holmes, however incorrectly, claims to possess:

A. Significant impairments in personality functioning manifest by
    1. Impairments in self functioning (a or b):
        a) Identity: Ego-centrism; self-esteem derived from personal gain, power, or pleasure.
        b) Self-direction: Goal-setting based on personal gratification; absence of prosocial internal standards associated with failure to conform to lawful or culturally normative ethical behavior.

    AND

    2. Impairments in interpersonal functioning (a or b):
        a) Empathy: Lack of concern for feelings, needs, or suffering of others; lack of remorse after hurting or mistreating another.
        b) Intimacy: Incapacity for mutually intimate relationships, as exploitation is a primary means of relating to others, including by deceit and coercion; use of dominance or intimidation to control others.

B. Pathological personality traits in the following domains:
    1. Antagonism, characterized by:
        a) Manipulativeness: Frequent use of subterfuge to influence or control others; use of seduction, charm, glibness, or ingratiation to achieve one's ends.
        b) Deceitfulness: Dishonesty and fraudulence; misrepresentation of self; embellishment or fabrication when relating events.
        c) Callousness: Lack of concern for feelings or problems of others; lack of guilt or remorse about the negative or harmful effects of one's actions on others; aggression; sadism.
        d) Hostility: Persistent or frequent angry feelings; anger or irritability in response to minor slights and insults; mean, nasty, or vengeful behavior.
    2. Disinhibition, characterized by:
        a) Irresponsibility: Disregard for – and failure to honor – financial and other obligations or commitments; lack of respect for – and lack of follow through on agreements and promises.

b) Impulsivity: Acting on the spur of the moment in response to immediate stimuli; acting on a momentary basis without a plan or consideration of outcomes; difficulty establishing and following plans.
c) Risk taking: Engagement in dangerous, risky, and potentially self-damaging activities, unnecessarily and without regard for consequences; boredom proneness and thoughtless initiation of activities to counter boredom; lack of concern for one's limitations and denial of the reality of personal danger.

C. The impairments in personality functioning and the individual's personality trait expression are relatively stable across time and consistent across situations.
D. The impairments in personality functioning and the individual's personality trait expression are not better understood as normative for the individual's developmental stage or sociocultural environment.
E. The impairments in personality functioning and the individual's personality trait expression are not solely due to the direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, medication) or a general medical condition (e.g., severe head trauma).
F. The individual is at least age 18 years. ("Antisocial Personality Disorder," *DSMV*)

While some of these traits apply to Cumberbatch's Sherlock, many are at odds with his character. Although we cannot say definitively whether or not a fictional character is disabled, the suggestion of characters as disabled without their disabling characteristics often contributes to further misunderstanding of crip communities. Journalist and trained psychologist Maria Konnikova breaks these diagnoses into four categories to evaluate whether or not Sherlock meets the criteria: the interpersonal, the affective, the lifestyle, and the antisocial. In terms of Holmes's interpersonal relationships, Konnikova finds that Holmes protects those he respects and grows increasingly close to Watson, even worrying about

Watson being hurt at various points in the series (Konnikova). Similarly, Holmes is never rude or apathetic toward others without reason:

> On the interpersonal dimension, we can dismiss pathological deception out of hand. As for glibness and superficiality, that, too, is not something we associate with Holmes. Holmes may be quite witty and often ironic, but he is neither shallow nor insincere. And manipulatively cunning? Holmes is clever, to be sure, but he does not deceive for personal gratification—or purely for the expense of others. To do so would be, well, psychopathic.

In terms of affect, Holmes generally chooses to depict an emotionless demeanor, but he is genuinely upset or pleased at times: "Holmes's coldness is learned. It is deliberate… What's more, Holmes's coldness lacks the related elements of no empathy, no remorse, and failure to take responsibility" (Konnikova). He accepts responsibility, apologizes to Watson when his plans go astray, expresses concern and genuine love for Watson (Konnikova), and even kills Charles Augustus Magnussen when he threatens to expose Mary Watson's history ("His Last Vow"). As for lifestyle, Holmes generally lives as the average Londoner, with the exception of his propensity for boredom (Konnikova) and use of unknown illicit drugs, most likely cocaine or heroin. Konnikova notes, however, that he only turns to such a pursuit when not working on a case—which is uncommon in the series. Finally, in terms of lacking control over his behavior, Holmes exercises meticulous power over his actions and personality, such that he can shift to accommodate his various cases and disguises. We know little of his childhood, but we do know that he is not sexually promiscuous and only breaks the law when necessary. Overall, he fails to meet most of the characteristics of antisocial

personality disorder. However, regardless of this reading, viewers are meant to believe that such relatively normal behaviors are consistent with the condition, making it markedly more difficult for persons with antisocial personality disorder to explain their own behaviors. If Holmes, in this instance, is presented as one who is disabled, and severely enough to be freely diagnosed by his colleagues, yet does not offer many behaviors associated with that disability, then this character is simply marking persons with the actual conditions as less able to cope, lower functioning, and more severe.

Let's consider a more prevalent though, perhaps, even less understood disability in the series: Cumberbatch's Holmes's diagnosis with autism spectrum disorder. Unlike the previous reading, BBC's Sherlock does a markedly better job depicting the life of a high functioning person with ASD, perhaps because such a diagnosis has long been associated with the character of Homles. Literary theorist Sonya Freeman Loftis remarks that "Sherlock Holmes has long been rumored to be on the autism spectrum. From chat on fan sites to direct diagnoses in the *New York Times* and *Psychology Today*, he is the literary character most commonly associated with autism in the popular imagination" (23). However, journalist Christine Hughes points out that this is "in part because widespread awareness of autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) in adults is a very recent phenomenon, current media portrayals of adults with autistic traits often incorporate popular misconceptions about ASDs." One such misconception is the association and confusion of psychopathy and ASD, such as that provided in

Sherlock. Hughes differentiates between emotional and cognitive empathy, the latter solely being a characteristic associated with ASD. Per the *DSMV*, ASD is defined as:

A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, as manifested by the following, currently or by history (examples are illustrative, not exhaustive, see text):
    1) Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity, ranging, for example, from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back-and-forth conversation; to reduced sharing of interests, emotions, or affect; to failure to initiate or respond to social interactions.
    2) Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction, ranging, for example, from poorly integrated verbal and nonverbal communication; to abnormalities in eye contact and body language or deficits in understanding and use of gestures; to a total lack of facial expressions and nonverbal communication.
    3) Deficits in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships, ranging, for example, from difficulties adjusting behavior to suit various social contexts; to difficulties in sharing imaginative play or in making friends; to absence of interest in peers.
B. Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities, as manifested by at least two of the following, currently or by history (examples are illustrative, not exhaustive; see text):
    1) Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements, use of objects, or speech (e.g., simple motor stereotypies, lining up toys or flipping objects, echolalia, idiosyncratic phrases).
    2) Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns or verbal nonverbal behavior (e.g., extreme distress at small changes, difficulties with transitions, rigid thinking patterns, greeting rituals, need to take same route or eat food every day).
    3) Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus (e.g., strong attachment to or preoccupation with unusual objects, excessively circumscribed or perseverative interest).
    4) Hyper- or hyporeactivity to sensory input or unusual interests in sensory aspects of the environment (e.g., apparent

indifference to pain/temperature, adverse response to specific sounds or textures, excessive smelling or touching of objects, visual fascination with lights or movement).

C. Symptoms must be present in the early developmental period (but may not become fully manifest until social demands exceed limited capacities, or may be masked by learned strategies in later life).
D. Symptoms cause clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of current functioning.
E. These disturbances are not better explained by intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder) or global developmental delay. Intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder frequently co-occur; to make comorbid diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disability, social communication should be below that expected for general developmental level.

Hughes demonstrates that Holmes meets criteria A with examples of inappropriate giggling at crime scenes, references to others as “idiots,” and failure to anticipate Watson’s unhappy reactions in certain instances. Similarly, I argue that he meets criteria B3 and B4 in that he obsesses over cases to the point of utilizing narcotics when he is not working and being particularly perceptive and detail oriented. Yet, interestingly these are both characteristics that are commonly associated with detectives in literature and are not necessarily disabling. And, offering a more positive representative image to actual persons with ASD, Holmes is clearly able to care for himself, succeed in his career, form meaningful relationships, and function as a normate.

Even more important in this narrative, however, is the manner in which Holmes is treated by others who assume him to be disabled; the largely negative commentary that surrounds him well demonstrates the difficulties that persons

with disabilities must face on a daily basis. Work colleagues frequently refer to Holmes with derogatory terms such as “freak” or as a psychopath (“A Study in Pink” among others), and even Watson treats Sherlock as alternately superhuman or subhuman: “Holmes is objectified by his beloved Watson, who constantly compares the brilliant sleuth to machines and repeatedly describes him as ‘inhuman’” (Freeman Loftis 23). In this manner, *Sherlock* presents Holmes as alternatively defective or superior, but *never* normal or able to fit in. Holmes fulfills a particular function needed in a non-utopian society. However, in a utopia, the disabled Holmes may actually thrive. After all, following his career solving crime, Holmes turns to something as seemingly utilitarian as beekeeping; he is used to being bored at nearly all times and thus likely able to take pleasure in the details of a utopic setting while depending upon his intellect to remain entertained.

I argue that persons with ASD as a whole would likely flourish in a utopic setting compared to individuals not on the spectrum. Theorists have largely critiqued the notion of utopia on the basis that anything, even perfection or happiness, becomes tedious over time. For example, philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer argues that:

> If every desire were satisfied as soon as it arose how would men occupy their lives, how would they pass the time? Imagine this race transported to a Utopia where everything grows of its own accord and turkeys fly around ready-roasted, where lovers find one another without any delay and keep one another without any difficulty; in such a place some men would die of boredom or hang themselves, some would fight and kill one another, and thus they

> would create for themselves more suffering than nature inflicts on them as it is. (qtd. Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, 175)

However, persons who rely upon and appreciate routine can maintain their interest through fixation and focus on the mundane over time. Furthermore, given that the utopic assumes differing social mores, a person that does not adhere to typical sociocultural cues, gestures, and other patterns may either become the new norm or someone who piques and maintains interest in an otherwise gray world. An example of how this process may work is offered through the Holmes-inspired Mark Haddon's 2003 *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*, in which a young boy with ASD is able to craft and entertain himself via the death of his neighbor's dog.

Persons with Cluster A personality disorders associated with schizophrenia may also be immune to the monotony of utopia. Consider, for example, the depiction of Sherlock Holmes in Nicholas Meyer's *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution,* where Holmes experiences delusions about large-scale crime conspiracies because of his cocaine addiction. In this text, Holmes is still a successful and famous detective, but the crime syndicate led by Moriarty is just a fiction created by his imagination. By adding this element to the stories, Meyer offers a version of Holmes who fulfills nearly every characteristic for diagnosis in the ICD-10's (International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th edition) criteria for schizoid personality disorder (SPD), which requires only four of the following for diagnosis:

1. Emotional coldness, detachment or reduced affect.
2. Limited capacity to express either positive or negative emotions towards others.
3. Consistent preference for solitary activities.
4. Very few, if any, close friends or personal relationship, and a lack of desire for such.
5. Indifference to either praise or criticism.
6. Little interest in having sexual experiences with another person (taking age into account).
7. Taking pleasure in few, if any, activities.
8. Indifference to social norms and conventions.
9. Preoccupation with fantasy and introspection. (ICD-10)

Furthermore, Holmes is diagnosed with multiple conditions by a fictionalized version of Dr. Sigmund Freud, including hallucinations, childhood trauma, and opiate addiction. As understood by both the ICD-10's definition and Freud's understanding within the texts, Holmes's solitary nature, apathy toward norms, seeming asexuality, limited interpersonal relationships, and limited affect identify him as having a form of schizophrenia. Even without the delusions of Moriarty, Holmes's introspective tendencies make him a good fit for this diagnosis, both within Doyle's original text and in Meyer's adaptation. In brief, the conception of Holmes as a character with disabilities who is able to entertain himself by whatever means necessary makes him a key utopian citizen. His life is perfect to

the point that perfection in and of itself is internally subverted to maintain necessary ideals.

The 2015 British-American film *Mr. Holmes* takes such conceptions of disability and utopia one step further by following the titular detective into old age. *Mr. Holmes* depicts a common theme in disability studies: the idea of "the disability yet to come," or the idea that "if we live long enough, disability is the one identity we will all inhabit" (McRuer, *Crip Theory*, 200). Starring 76-year-old Ian McKellen as *Mr. Holmes*, the film is based on Mitch Cullin's 2005 *A Slight Trick of the Mind* and shows a 93-year-old Holmes dealing with the effects of age-related illness and memory loss. Visual media theorist Sadie Wearing notes that dementia and associated memory loss, in the case of Holmes, is actually a positive development:

> This emphasis is significant for the film's representation of the forgetfulness of dementia and the importance of different moral orders of memory. Significantly Holmes learns during the course of his investigation not merely 'what happened' but also how to come to terms with both the inevitability of dependency and the necessity of acknowledging a fundamental relationality to others. This lesson in turn allows him to find ways of remembering other important people in his life, thus finally alleviating a lifelong loneliness. Holmes learns that stories, fictions, have an important place in assuaging the grief and loss that is endemic to the human condition. Indeed, the film can be read as a story which foregrounds the inevitability of forgetting, even as it highlights the value of remembering people in ways not reliant on rationality and individual cerebral competency. At the same time, the film softens the anxiety and fear provoked by forgetting, in a resolution that shows the healing of the household's generational rifts through stories and other forms of manipulating or enhancing memory. (15)

In general, the utopic fails to consider the disabling effects of aging. When elderly characters are presented, they typically appear as much younger looking than their actual ages while possessing few, if any, disabilities. For example, in William Morris's *News From Nowhere*, the protagonist speaks to a utopian citizen's great-grandfather, showing that the population lives much longer than in previous time periods. Moreover, the elderly man's memory remains sharp and he is said to be quite healthy. Similarly, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* states that the population lives much longer, well past the age of 100, while continuing to participate in highly physical activities like acrobatics. Furthermore, within the wonderland setting, most persons simply remain the age they were upon visiting the realm.

In general, the disabilities that come with aging are eliminated in most utopic depictions. Regardless of how long persons live in these utopias, they usually die from something that is disabling in the meantime. Utopias, generally speaking, do not include ageless populations, with the exceptions of such spaces as Oz and Neverland, discussed earlier in this thesis. The changes that come with aging and disability, as demonstrated in *Mr. Holmes,* may even have positive aspects that make them conducive to the utopic. The care relationships, ability to grow and change, and even memory loss to suppress trauma can be useful and enabling traits in a utopian setting. They provide a much needed counter to what otherwise may become a gray utopia, offering traits that work to recreate the wonder that comes when first entering such a space.

Colorful Utopias

Traditionally conceived, Sherlock Holmes may present the quintessential classic utopian, however, I argue in this chapter that his later adaptations present far more realistic inhabitants who offer a more diverse, interesting, and pleasant picture. In particular, Holmes as adapted or understood to be disabled provides a far stronger inhabitant of the classic utopia, able to stave off boredom, find pleasure in monotonous tasks, and find wonder in the seemingly mundane. Meanwhile, feminist interpretations allow for less sexist utopian environments, such as the setting envisioned in Gilman's *Herland*, where beautiful women are not simply awarded to interesting men from non-utopic elsewheres. Persons of color allow for a setting less based in the "mono value… monoculture" (brown, *Emergent Strategy*) critiqued by adrienne maree brown, among others. Queerness, as suggested by Holmes's inherent asexuality and aromanticism, further marks utopia as a place more concerned with happiness in the now rather than happiness in the future. It is thus the very characteristics that might have initially argued against Holmes being an idealized utopian in his original time period that makes him a perfect candidate for a more colorful vision of utopia.

The eventual disability of those who live long enough, especially likely in an idealized world free of war and illness, must be considered essential to the utopia. Holmes is not the perfect utopian due to his rationality, Whiteness, masculinity, or understandings of him as non-queer or heterosexual. It is Holmes's disabling conditions, as read through various adaptations, that mark

him as the perfect utopian. He offers the essential qualities of change, self-engagement, and shifting normativity make him especially well-suited to such a space when read through a disability studies lens. He or she is equipped to survive in this Edenic place because of his disabilities, not despite them.

Chapter 4: Speculative Fan Fiction and the Future of the Disabled Body

In May 2010, author Diana Gabaldon of the popular *Outlander* fantasy romance series argued the illegality and immorality of fan fiction, building on a 2008 CompuServe post in which she compared the use of her characters by outside authors to "someone selling your children into white slavery." This article on her personal blog, titled "Fan-Fiction and Moral Conundrums," provoked a strong backlash from *Outlander* fan communities, leading Gabaldon to eventually remove this post and multiple follow-ups related to her disgust for fan fiction (alternatively fanfiction or fan-fiction).[27] The respondents made a clear comparison between fan fiction as a form of writing and the historic use of pastiche, noting that replication and the use of another author's characters has a long history in literature.

Further study into the division between fan fiction and that of the pastiche is clearly merited. In the previous chapter, I considered the role of Sherlock Holmes adaptations, with the clear use of the Holmes and Watson characters that occurred during and after Doyle's life. Currently, there exist huge fan communities that create literature related to Sherlock Holmes in relation to popular series such as *Elementary* and *Sherlock* or even the original Doyle works. Such texts are available online, published to the web via fan fiction communities like Archive of Our Own and Fanfiction.net. But, there are also

[27] These posts were screen captured and saved for posterity by numerous fan communities, including those cited in this work.

many books published on this popular detective that have merited subsections for Holmes in bookstores and libraries. In this chapter, I consider what distinctions are and should be made between fan fictions and published pastiches. In this analysis, I argue that the distinction is largely a legal one, originating in the copyright laws of the 1920s, rather than being based in literary production or artistic practice. By working with projects such as the Creative Commons and supporting the proliferation of fanfiction, I contend that authors not only solidify their legacies, both financially and culturally, but also support the development of a more colorful utopic vision. Simply put, women and marginalized groups, particularly persons with disabilities, remain grossly underrepresented in most Anglophone and even global media. Smith and colleagues from the Social, Diversity, & Social Change Initiative analyzed 900 popular films from 2007–2016; they found that only 2.7% of characters who spoke, whether verbally or through another mechanism, were depicted as having a disability. Similar findings supported a more homogenized view of media consumption, with only, 29.2% of characters or their actors identifying as persons of color, and 24% even including a queer character of any gender identity or orientation. These numbers prove just as stark when ascertained in relation to print literature, with the Lee and Low Books Diversity Baseline Survey finding that only 8% of published children's book authors identify as disabled, with 21% identifying as persons of color and 12% identifying as queer. While notably no similar survey has yet been completed for the publishing industry as a whole, the

findings, with the exception of demographics based upon gender, are thought to be largely representative. Persons with disabilities remain severely underrepresented at all levels of media production and representation, a trend mirrored to a lesser extend among racial and sexual minorities.

While this chapter merely offers an overview of copyright as relates to pastiches and other works by secondary authors, such as fan art and fan fiction, the arguments provide a foundation for further research. The issue of copyright remains highly politicized and complex; as attorney and digital media scholar Adrienne K. Goss explains:

> At the core of… debates [surrounding copyright and the commons] are dialogues of power and control and questions fundamental to the ordering and organization of our "information society." Copyright law is increasingly politicized because many understand the production of even innocuous cultural texts as a direct expression of power. Debates about copyright are thus full of subtexts; they are partly about law, partly about profit, partly about access, and partly about who produces what. (963)

Because numerous complications surrounding copyright law, this chapter will thus largely seek to consider the cultural value and legality of producing fan works for popular media texts. I argue that, because persons with disabilities, in particular, are severely underrepresented and negatively represented in media, it is essential for crip communities to tell our stories through alternative and less traditional formats. Whether through reclaiming classic or popular narratives as our own via fanfiction or crafting fan art that features crip characters, fan works offer a rich area for developing narratives of crip futurity.

Fan Fiction and Authors Against It

Some speculative fiction authors never see the majority of fan-based adaptations of their work because they come to fruition posthumously, others celebrate the diverse range of co-authoring that their work spawns, while still others have become well-known in fan communities for trying to curtail fan fiction. This chapter builds upon the hyperbolic postings of Gabaldon, unpacking her arguments and those of other published authors who are opposed to fan fiction for legal and/or moral reasons.

The primary arguments against the creation of fan fiction, as explained by author George R. R. Martin of the popular *Song of Ice and Fire* (*Game of Thrones*) series, include: (1) in order to maintain a copyright, authors must defend their creative work against fan fiction from a legal perspective, and (2) authors are like parents and protectors to their creations—thus, "play[ing] with" an author's children should require an author's permission (Martin). Other authors, including Gabaldon and *Harry Potter* author JK Rowling (Waters), argue specifically against the use of their characters in fan fiction. These arguments are mirrored in the anti-fan fiction stances of authors like horror author Anne Rice, who consistently refers to fan fiction as equivalent to rape (Irr 9), and speculative fiction author Orson Scott Card. Interestingly, most speculative fiction authors support fan creations wholeheartedly or otherwise accept them with some limitations, such as the late speculative fiction author Anne McCaffrey who offered general rules for fan fiction ("Anne McCaffrey").

The arguments against fan fiction can largely be summed up in the following statements and categorizations:

1. The Financial Argument: Fan fiction potentially deprives original creators of profit by reducing their creations to, essentially, generic trademarks (i.e. Thermos, Kleenex, Dumpster, Band-Aid).
2. The Legal Argument: Through violation of copyright law, fan fiction authors are breaking the law and impeding on the original creators' copyrights.
3. The Rights of the Author Argument: Fan fiction authors are metaphorically kidnapping, robbing, enslaving, and/or raping original authors' creations by using them without consent.
4. The Anti-Smut Argument: Fan fiction authors often bring characters into sexualized settings in which they would not originally exist.

In the following subsections, I will consider each argument before exploring the positive benefits of fan fiction for particular marginalized communities, including persons with disabilities.

The Financial Argument

Multiple authors have argued that "a copyright MUST BE DEFENDED. If someone infringes on your copyright, and you are aware of the infringement, and you do not defend your copyright, the law assumes that you have abandoned it" (Martin). In order to defend one's copyright ownership over a property, as well as the potential financial benefit to one's heirs, authors must keep their intellectual property from entering the public domain at all costs. Essentially, Martin argues,

if a copyright is not defended by its intellectual property holder, then it will become a generic trademark or proprietary eponym, suffering from the so-called "genericide" that has affected brand names that now effectively describe entire products, such as Kleenex, Band-Aid, and Dumpster (Wherry 14). Martin's argument brings to mind infamous stories of brands, such as Disney's decision to sue daycare centers that created murals and other artwork featuring Mickey Mouse and friends in the 1980s (Litman 429). As Wayne State University law professor Jessica Litman explains: "That's a very good business posture. Being known as the company so aggressive about policing its intellectual property that folks write comic strips and late night skits about it is a very cheap method of deterring infringement, once you've invested what you need to set it up" (430). However, as Litman's analysis highlights, such action is incredibly negative for creators, including Disney, in the long term (430). In fact, *not policing* copyright infringement in the arts, per Litman, has proven to both proliferate and expand interest in original works; it actually tends to be more profitable to allow the copyright to be used illegal. As Litman points out, copyright is already very long-lasting: copyright ownership now extends for 95 years from the date of publication for work published between 1922 and 1978, while work published following 1977 extends copyright for the entirety of an author's life plus 70 years, with certain exceptions (Rich).

An extension of the copyright, which according to Litman and countless other voices in the fan and legal communities is already too long, offers "*more*

than enough protection to the characters embodied in works of authorship" (431, emphasis in original). Her argument depends on the idea that authors, such as Walt Disney in this case, have greatly drawn upon the public domain in ways that they fail to realize or articulate:

> Walt Disney created Mickey Mouse using preexisting elements. Mickey was not the first cartoon mouse, nor the first cute cartoon mouse. He was probably the first cute motion picture cartoon mouse with a squeaky voice, but other characters had had squeaky voices. The elements of Mickey Mouse's character that Walt Disney drew from the public domain belong to us, the public. The Disney Company has been hanging on to a particular combination of them for a time, but it has them *on loan* from us. Unless Disney is to pull up the bridge after itself, those elements, and their combination in the unique character of Mickey Mouse, need to be returned to the public domain so that the Walt Disneys of tomorrow will have raw materials that they can use to draw new characters. (433–434)

The same argument might easily be applied to authors such as George R. R. Martin, who openly expresses the influence of previous authors like J. R. R. Tolkien, creator of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (Begley). Tolkien was also influenced by authors whose works are completely or mostly based in the public domain, including George MacDonald (1824–1905), William Morris (1834–1896), H. Rider Haggard (1856–1925), E. Nesbit (1858–1924), and L. Frank Baum (1856–1919) (Anderson). By the copyright rules of today, the vast majority of these authors who influenced an author who influenced Martin could have a copyright claim against him because the first *Song of Ice and Fire* novel was written in 1991. In short, authors' creations now stand to benefit not only them and their potential children, but the entire lives of potential grandchildren as

well—a span of time so long as to extend beyond the artistic and innovation merit-based arguments upon which copyright laws are based.

As Litman explains, there is no creative justification for extending copyright for such a lengthy period of time. Instead, large corporations that have come to represent individual creators, especially Walt Disney and his Disney Co., have dominated courts in order to allow for such endless trademarks:

> There is also good reason for limiting the scope of intellectual property rights even during the limited time period of protection. We don't give out intellectual property rights to encourage authors to appropriate all of the rents that a given creation might yield. What we want, rather, is to assist authors in earning just enough profit to, first, enhance the creative environment enough to stimulate them to create works in the first place, and, second, encourage them to make their works available to us. If they make a killing, that's great, but it isn't the system's purpose. The system incorporates limitations because its purpose is to benefit all of us in a variety of creativity-enhancing ways. (434)

The extension of one's copyright thus becomes ambiguous, particularly with iconic figures such as Mickey Mouse. As such, any other cartoon mouse will have difficulty succeeding because Disney now has the resources to prevent such creatures from entering production on the mere basis of being able to hold them up in court indefinitely.

George R. R. Martin's key argument is that fan fiction and other derivative works would cost him and his descendants potential money, arguing that many fan fiction authors aspire to publish their works because they "just want the bucks." For authors of popular series such as *A Song of Ice and Fire* and *The Lord of the Rings*, particularly with the rise of film and television adaptations,

there does seem to be infinite money at stake. Yet, it is these very lucrative adaptations that themselves undermine Martin's key point. If "No one gets to abuse the people of Westeros but [him]" then how can he be comfortable with the television adaptation, which hands creative powers over to people who are *not* Martin? Between the actors' portrayals, the many directors and writers, and even showrunners David Benioff and Dan Weiss, Martin is given only a minor say in the proceedings, not complete creative ownership. As of the sixth season, the television series has even gone beyond the current scope of the books. One might argue that Martin's future *Ice and Fire* novels will, in fact, be adaptations of the series rather than the other way around.

This is where the monetary argument largely falls apart. In short, without the television adaptation and various adaptations of other successful texts, the original writings would eventually lose their cultural capital. Even Martin's cherry-picked examples from speculative fiction history demonstrate this point:

> ERB [Edgar Rice Burroughs] created Tarzan and John Carter of Mars. HPL created Cthulhu and his Mythos. ERB, and later his estate, was extremely protective of his creations. Try to use Tarzan, or even an ape man who was suspiciously similar to Tarzan, without his/ their permission, and their lawyers would famously descend on you like a ton of bricks. HPL [H.P. Lovecraft] was the complete opposite. The Cthulhu Mythos soon turned into one of our genres first shared worlds. HPL encouraged writer friends like Robert Bloch and Clark Ashton Smith to borrow elements from his Cthulhu Mythos, and to add elements as well, which HPL himself would borrow in turn. And in time, other writers who were NOT friends of HPL also began to write Cthulhu Mythos stories, which continues to this day.
>
> Fair enough. Two writers, two different decisions.

> Thing is, ERB died a millionaire many times over, living on a gigantic ranch in a town that was named Tarzana after his creation. HPL lived and died in genteel poverty, and some biographers have suggested that poor diet brought on by poverty may have hastened his death. HPL was a far more beloved figure amongst other writers, but love will only get you so far. Sometimes it's nice to be able to have a steak too. The Burroughs estate was paid handsomely for every Tarzan movie ever made, and collected plenty on the PRINCESS OF MARS movie I worked on during my Hollywood years, and no doubt is still collecting on the one currently in development... though the book is in the public domain by now. Did the Lovecraft estate make a penny off THE DUNWICH HORROR movie, the HERBERT WEST, REANIMATOR movie, the recent DAGON movie, the internet version of CALL OF CTHULHU? I don't know. I rather doubt it. If they did, I'll betcha it was just chump change. Meanwhile, new writers go right on mining the Cthulhu mythos, writing new stories and novels.
>
> Cthulhu, like John Carter, is in the public domain by now, I know. But it wouldn't matter. Because HPL let so many others play in his sandbox, he essentially lost control of his own creations. ("Someone Is Angry").

I contend that it is here in the rhetoric that Martin and many other anti-fan fiction writers miss the point. Consider the cultural impact of Lovecraft vs. Burroughs: a mere Google search of "Cthulhu" vs. "John Carter" offers a whopping 8 million+ to 1.6 million returns and "A Princess of Mars" returns fewer than 500,000 search hits. *Tarzan* returned to the cultural sphere in 1999 through the power of the Disney Company's marketing mechanism and, at the time, a production cost valued higher than any animated film ever before (Rukstad and Collis). I contend that such success stems from Disney shifting their response to copyright infringement in the Second Disney Renaissance era from 2010 to present. Key acquisitions of this time have greatly shaped the company as a whole. In 2006, Disney acquired digital animation studio Pixar, in 2009, Marvel, and in 2012,

LucasFilm. During this time period, Disney has become lax in their prosecution of fans who not only create derivative works, but who actively sell them through such venues as comic book conventions, Etsy, and DeviantArt. Animator and writer Katie Cook began her careers and achieved acclaim through fan art, including art that depicted characters from Disney Animation, Marvel, and LucasFilm. Her DeviantArt and personal websites demonstrate the progression of her artistic career, including a note that her fan drawings of the Hasbro-owned *My Little Pony* series eventually garnered enough attention on Twitter to lead to a deal for a licensed comic book series with the copyright holder.

Proliferation of derivative work by fans, as demonstrated through this and countless other examples, expands the life cycle of an author's creations, keeps these works culturally relevant, helps original artists and corporations find talented collaborators, and even renews interest in the primary texts themselves. The popularity of Stephen Schwartz's *Wicked* musical, based on the Gregory Maguire novel which was itself an adaptation of L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz*, not only led to increased sales of Maguire's text, but to those of Baum as well (Kelleter). While other creators benefit financially through unlicensed adaptations, the original creators often profit from the continued significance of their creative works.

The Legal Argument

According to Gabaldon and many other authors who are against fan fiction, the practice is indisputably illegal. U.S. law, however, disproves her claim.

In the case of *The Wind Done Gone* author Alice Randall, represented by Houghton Mifflin, vs. Suntrust Bank, representing the estate of *Gone With the Wind* author Margaret Mitchell, the injunction against Randall was summarily vacated. Even this monetary adaptation of Mitchell's work was found to constitute fair use on the merit of critiquing the original work. Fair use is defined as "any copying of copyrighted material done for a limited and 'transformative' purpose, such as to comment upon, criticize, or parody a copyrighted work" (Stim); essentially, a copyrighted work may be reproduced or altered without permission from the original creator or copyright holder if it falls under the auspices of fair use. However, given the vague language surrounding what constitutes fair use in U.S. and international law, particular types of derived works must be considered in depth in and of themselves. As such, this thesis will largely focus on fair use as applies to fan works, including fan fiction and fan art.

Fan fiction critics argue that some fan fiction authors profit indirectly from their works, causing direct financial "harm" to original authors and thus violating fair use. Through platforms like GoFundMe, gift-based accounts that may be popularized through fan fiction notes, fan fiction authors are sometimes able to receive remuneration for their works (qtd. in Nepveu). Other critics question the ethics of Patreon, which provides content to "subscribers" who pay a certain amount of money to artists each month (ChancellorGriffin). However, these donations or patronage-based services do not offer a specific product for a specific price. GoFundMe donations are considered "personal gifts" (GoFundMe)

and Patreon subscriptions are considered “donations” (Patreon). While the distinctions between a product-based model for financial transactions and these models may seem gray, the legal difference is, in fact, quite clear. Any fan adaptation that is not published as a product for direct profit is legal under current U.S. fair use laws. Profit, in terms of a product-purchase relationship, is key for copyright law to be broken and this simply is not true in many fan fiction cases (Chase).

The Rights of the Author Argument

Strangely similar to the conception of biofuturity defined earlier in this thesis, multiple authors have referred to their creations as surrogate children of sorts. Martin refers to the people of Westeros as though they are his progeny: “My characters are my children, I have been heard to say. I don't want people making off with them, thank you. Even people who say they love my children” (“Someone is Angry”). Gabaldon refers to fan fiction as “someone selling your children into white slavery” (“Diane Gabaldon”). Historically, many authors have referred to their work as their children and the period of writing as a period of gestation, including those who have actual children. As explained in Barthes’s essential “Death of the Author” essay:

> The Author, when we believe in him, is always conceived as the past of his own book: the book and the author take their places of their own accord on the same line, cast as a before and an after: the Author is supposed to feed the book — that is, he pre-exists it, thinks, suffers, lives for it; he maintains with his work the same relation of antecedence a father maintains with his child. (4)

Even without considering the problematic equation of literary creations with literal human beings, this argument implies an incredibly property-based understanding of one's children. U.S. law is inherently patriarchal and paternalistic, particularly with regard to the role of children, "the law's current approach to paternity disputes reflects a classic model of property rights and ownership rooted in static, rigid, and exclusive claims" (Noble Mailllard 3). Even if children are thought to be one's legal property until the age of adulthood, a parent's 18-year-old+ children are under no legal or moral obligation to do as their parents direct. If we are to think of original works as children on which adaptations are based, then the authors should have no right to directly command behavior after 18 years, a far shorter period than a traditional copyright. As a parent, grandparent, or creator, one simply must accept that one will lose ownership of one's creations at some point. Just as one's parents must pass, so too must the author, per Barthes, die and leave her children to carry on her legacy however they see fit.

The Anti-Smut Argument

As an industry, pornography has a long history of depicting popular media in relation to sexual acts. From small Tijuana bibles depicting pornographic comics in the 1920s–1960s to a popular meme, Rule 34, which states that "if it exists, there is porn of it" with no exceptions, pornography has been linked to nearly every popular series and publication in modern history. While cases against pornographic depictions of copyrighted characters have historically sided

with original creators, such as in the landmark 1978 Walt Disney Productions v. Air Pirates case, there is simply *so much derivative* pornography in the internet age that the law has yet to catch up in a meaningful way to handle the excessive volume of potential claims (Carlisle). The primary function of most pornography is neither social commentary nor humor, and thus, the parody argument simply does not apply to paid pornography. However, fair use is also defined via three categories: (1) commentary and criticism, (2) parody, or (3) educational use (Stim).

Free pornography, such as that offered by some DeviantArt creators, is unlikely to be litigated though in a legally gray area for the reasons included in the previous sections. In brief to violate fair use, the derivative work must be found to cause "harm" to the original authors; this language has largely come to be defined via a loss of profits (Byrne and Fleming 693). Thus, fan fiction created for mature audiences, particularly slash fiction which features an emphasis on same-sex relationships, often sexual, while only questionably legal, is very unlikely to be tried in court. As the following sections will demonstrate, in lieu of actual representation of queer relationships in mainstream series, such content may even constitute a form of activism.

Historical Fiction vs. Fan Fiction

Authors, including Gabaldon herself, seem to have no problem with utilizing *actual* ancestors of living persons to tell their stories. In fact, the historic figures who appear in the *Outlander* series include Marie Louise de La Tour

d'Auvergne, Louis XV, Bonnie Prince Charlie, Simon Fraser, 11th Lord Lovat, the Comte de Saint Germain, and others. Historical fiction has long existed as an acceptable and uncomplicated genre whose popular success is demonstrated through both sales and literary awards. Literary theorist Harry E. Shaw goes so far as to say that "few intellectual developments in the last 200 years [prior to 1983] have affected us more profoundly than the enriched sense of historicity which emerged in the 18th century" (9). While he argues that "the historical novel… suffers from neglect, even contempt" (9) in some arenas, Shaw demonstrates that the historical novel has a long lifespan, originating from such lauded figures as Balzac, Tolstoy, Scott, Herder, Marx, and Ranke (9).

There are many examples of wildly successful and critically acclaimed historical novels in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Margaret Mitchell's Pulitzer and National Book Award winning *Gone With the Wind* was set in the U.S. Civil War, including references and depictions of such characters as Confederate officer Wade Hampton III. Lists of major literary award-winning novels and bestsellers are simultaneously filled with historical fiction, from Edith Wharton's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Age of Innocence* (published in 1920, referring to and set in the 1870s' so-called Gilded Age) to Colson Whitehead's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Underground Railroad* (published in 2016, set in an alternate 1800s). The popularity of historical fiction among critics and readers alike is even more profound in children's literature, where the ALA's Phoenix

Award and Newbery Medal are sometimes thought to "experience[…] a bias in favor of historical fiction" (Kidd and Thomas).

Many pop culture critics, including the women at feminist media nonprofit *Feminist Frequency,* have pointed out that the depiction of historic events and historically-marginalized persons in these novels is often highly problematic. Essentially, significant figures and activists who are women, LGBTQ folk and allies, and persons of color are often shown to support causes they abhorred in life or not shown to support key ideologies. For example, they reviewed Woody Allen's 2011 fantasy comedy *Midnight in Paris,* in which Academy Award-winning actress Kathy Bates portrays Gertrude Stein. In the film, Stein speaks almost entirely to male protagonist Gil, even going so far as to support him in the writing of his first novel. *Feminist Frequency* host Anita Sarkeesian notes that "one of the most important historical figures that Gil interacts with is Gertrude Stein… one of the most famous writers *and lesbians* in American history. And Woody Allen has the nerve to not have her speak to another female character in the entire film" ("The 2012 Oscars and the Bechdel Test," emphasis in original). Similarly, openly pansexual feminist icon Frida Kahlo, depicted in the 2017 film *Coco,* only speaks with male characters. A classic example from feminist film criticism, Disney's *Pocahontas* depicts an older Powhatan princess who is more concerned with protecting the rights of White settlers than defending her tribe.

Fighting back against these appropriations of marginalized historical figures to reaffirm their legacy is not only ethical but necessary. A much-cited

example in fan fiction legal studies is Suntrust v. Houghton Mifflin Co. This 2001 case, which was decided by the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, surrounded a coquel of Margaret Mitchell's 1936 *Gone With the Wind*. The case concerned Alice Randall's *The Wind Done Gone*, which tells the story of *Gone With the Wind* from the perspective of Scarlett O'Hara's mixed-race half-sister, Cynara, and offers a critique of the way that Black and mixed-race characters were portrayed in the original novel. The case was settled prior to an official decision, but the court noted that fair use was found:

> The court held that defendant's borrowing from GWTW [*Gone With the Wind*] was fair use. The court first found that the defendant's novel was in fact a parody because it commented on or criticized an original work by appropriating its elements to create a new artistic work. Specifically, TWDG [*The Wind Done Gone*] criticizes GWTW's depiction of slavery and race relations in the antebellum South. (U.S. Copyright Office Fair Use Index)

In this case, the distinction between coquel and fan fiction is noticeably blurred. As demonstrated by many of the authors against fan derivatives, not all adaptations are of as high of quality or content as *The Wind Done Gone*. Clearly, one may imagine them arguing, *The Wind Done Gone*, while focusing on a sex worker, also offers more than simple pleasure reading or pornography. However, as the following section demonstrates, even mundane, hypersexualized, or otherwise poorly-written adaptations can be meaningful.

Feminist critic Carole Pateman built her argument in the second wave of feminism around the very idea that the personal is political (Bargetz), and more recent scholars have built upon this notion to argue that the everyday has a key

place within the political sphere (Bargetz). Sexuality has been a key space for activism in many movements, including feminism, LGBTQ rights, and disability rights movements. Finally, any judgment against quality must be dismissed because fan fiction by its very definition builds an oeuvre of the *fan*—it is by amateurs and celebrated because of this. Alternatively, some fan fiction may be of literary award-winning quality, and some pastiches have been published to awards: the WH Smith Literary Award (Jean Rhys's 1966 *Wide Sargasso Sea*; a parallel tale to *Jane Eyre*), the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction (Michael Cunningham's 1998 *The Hours;* a fictional coquel, biography, and response to the impact of *Mrs. Dalloway*), the Tony Award (Tom Stoppard's 1966 *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*; a parallel tale to *Hamlet*), the Pulitzer Price (Geraldine Brooks's 2006 *March*; a parallel tale to *Little Women*), the ALA Alex Award, Huston/Wright Legacy Award, New York Public Library Books for the Teen Age Award (Nancy Rawles's 2005 *My Jim*; a parallel tale to *Huckleberry Finn*), and countless others.

Fan Fiction as a Tool for the Marginalized

What those decrying fan fiction often fail to take into consideration is the ways in which fan adaptations have been utilized as a key point of activism, culture building, and representation for marginalized groups. In particular, fan fiction communities largely take place online, a site that has increasingly functioned as a space for disability activism. Perhaps most well-known in the Virtual Disability March following the election of U.S. President Donald Trump,

online activism has proven essential for "provid[ing] alternative venues for involvement in accessible protesting and social movements" by persons with disabilities (Li et al. 1). While disregarded as "slacktivism," low impact and low reward, by some, and in some ways limited (Li et al. 1), the internet has become a significant way in which many persons with disabilities form communities and protest. Li et al. explain the particular importance of public assembly as a form of protest within the United States:

> The freedom to participate in protests or public activism is one of the fundamental components of being heard in a democratic society. Public assembly holds a unique significance as a collective performance that supports a particular cause [9]. Many rights have been gained through activism in democratic societies like the United States, such as the right for women to vote and the creation of new civil rights legislation to prohibit racial discrimination. In 1977, sit-ins by disability activists directly led to the passing of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prevents discrimination against people with disabilities when they apply for or use federal services. (1)

Yet, even during the disability rights sit ins in the 1970s, many would-be activists were deterred by physical or psychological barriers, accessibility issues, lack of resources, or a host of other reasons. In short, not everyone who would benefit from Section 504 was able to attend the sit in for a variety of reasons completely unrelated to their intent to support their colleagues. Online activism provides a space that allows more, although still not all, constituents with disabilities to have their voices heard. Professor of education leadership Ryan A. Miller particularly finds online spaces to be essential for queer persons with disabilities to both connect with others belonging to this doubly marginalized group and create

empowered, confident identities (509). He also found online engagement to also increase participants' abilities to find partners and to engage in activism through the writing of articles, sharing of disability and queer rights materials, participating in virtual marches, and much more (509). Adding to these findings, digital cultures researcher Milena Popova argues that fan fiction, in and of itself, has become a site for significant identity generation and sexual activism. While her research particularly considers the role that fan fiction has played in form of cultural activism surrounding sexual consent, Popova's understanding of the popularity of fan fiction and the role it plays in activism remains significant for disability studies. Fan fiction as a whole represents far more diverse characters and authors than traditional publishing, while also offering a model of community-based reading that brings together marginalized persons who may be unable to meet in a physical space.

How then do fan fictions published in traditional markets relate to this debate? To answer this question, it may be useful to consider the perspectives offered in the adaptive novels and parodies mentioned in the previous paragraph, offered in figure 7, below.

Text	**Author and Bio**	**Original Text**	**Abbreviated Adaptation Description**
The Wind Done Gone (2001)	Alice Randall—"She is a Harvard educated African-American novelist who lives in Nashville and writes country songs." (Randall, "Bio")	*Gone With the Wind* (1936) by Margaret Mitchell	"Alice Randall explodes the world created in GONE WITH THE WIND, a work that more than any other has defined our image of the antebellum South. Taking sharp aim

Figure 7. Popular published adaptations.

			at the romanticized, whitewashed mythology perpetrated by this southern classic, Randall has ingeniously conceived a multilayered, emotionally complex tale of her own - that of Cynara, the mulatto half-sister, who, beautiful and brown and born into slavery, manages to break away from the damaging world of the Old South" (Randall, *The Wind Done Gone*, back cover copy).
Wide Sargasso Sea (1966)	"Taunted with the cruel nickname the 'white cockroach' as a child, the author Jean Rhys grew up on the Caribbean island of Dominica. She was the daughter of a Creole mother and a Welsh father and always felt distant from both the black and white communities" (Thorpe)	*Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Brontë	Rhys "ingeniously brings into light one of fiction's most fascinating characters: the madwoman in the attic from Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. This mesmerizing work introduces us to Antoinette Cosway, a sensual and protected young woman who is sold into marriage to the prideful Mr. Rochester. Rhys portrays Cosway amidst a society so driven by hatred, so skewed in its sexual relations, that it can literally drive a woman out of her mind" (Rhys, back cover copy)
The Hours (1999)	Michael Cunningham "lives in New York, in the neighbourhood where he set part of *The Hours*…. and five	*Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) by Virginia Woolf	"*The Hours* tells the story of three women: Virginia Woolf, beginning to write Mrs. Dalloway as she recuperates in a London

Figure 7. Popular published adaptations, continued.

	minutes from the loft he shares with his partner of 24 years, Ken Corbett" (Brockes)		suburb with her husband in 1923; Clarissa Vaughan, beloved friend of an acclaimed poet dying from AIDS, who in modern-day New York is planning a party in his honor; and Laura Brown, in a 1949 Los Angeles suburb, who slowly begins to feel the constraints of a perfect family and home" (Cunningham, back cover copy).
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (1966)	"Playwright Sir Tom Stoppard was born Tomás Straüssler on 3 July 1937 in Zlín, Czechoslovakia. He grew up in Singapore and India during the Second World War and moved to England in 1946 with his mother and stepfather, his own father having been killed in Singapore" (British Council).	*Hamlet* (c. 1599–1602) by William Shakespeare	"Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are the college chums of Hamlet and their story is what happened behind the scenes in Shakespeare's play. What were they doing there in Elsinore anyway? "I don't know; we were sent for." They are not only anti agents, but also anti sympathy, anti identification, and in fact anti persons, which is uniquely demonstrated by their having such a hard time recollecting which of them goes by what name. The Players come and go; Prince Hamlet comes through reading words, words, words; foul deeds are done; Hamlet is sent abroad, escapes death; and in turn Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find their "only exit is death"

Figure 7. Popular published adaptations, continued.

			(Stoppard, back cover copy).
March (2005) by Geraldine Brooks	“Australian-born Geraldine Brooks grew up in Sydney. She worked as a reporter for The Sydney Morning Herald and The Wall Street Journal, where she covered crises in the mideast, Africa and the Balkans” (Brooks, *GeraldineBrooks.com*)	*Little Women* (1868-1869) by Louisa May Alcott	“Geraldine Brooks has animated the character of the absent father, March, and crafted a story "filled with the ache of love and marriage and with the power of war upon the mind and heart of one unforgettable man" (Sue Monk Kidd). With "pitch-perfect writing" (*USA Today*), Brooks follows March as he leaves behind his family to aid the Union cause in the Civil War. His experiences will utterly change his marriage and challenge his most ardently held beliefs” (Brooks, *March*, back cover copy).
My Jim (2005) by Nancy Rawles	"Nancy Rawles is the author of three critically-acclaimed and award-winning novels - My Jim (Crown Publishing 2005); Crawfish Dreams (Doubleday, 2003), and Love Like Gumbo (Fjord Press, 1997). All three novels address issues of sexuality, violence, and racial oppression in the lives of their female protagonists” (“The Feminist Sexual Ethics Project”)	*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) by Mark Twain	“Written in the great literary tradition of novels of American slavery, *My Jim* is told in the incantatory voice of Sadie Watson, an ex-slave who schools her granddaughter with lessons of love she learned in bondage. To help her granddaughter confront the decisions she needs to make, Sadie mines her memory for the tale of the unquenchable love of her life, Jim. Sadie’s Jim was an ambitious young slave

Figure 7. Popular published adaptations, continued.

			and seer who, when faced with the prospect of being sold, escaped down the Mississippi with a white boy named Huck. Sadie is suddenly left alone. Worried about her children, convinced her husband is dead, reviled as a witch, and punished for Jim's escape, Sadie's will and her love for Jim, even in absentia, animate her life and see her through. Told with spare eloquence and mirroring the true stories of countless slave women, *My Jim* re-creates one of the most controversial characters in American literature" (Rawles, back cover copy).

Figure 7. Popular published adaptations, continued.

This is merely a sampling of fiction that derives elements from earlier texts, but the rationale for revisiting key books and plays is clear. These authors seek to subvert classic narratives by refocusing on key characters, groups, or elements that were mostly invisible or erased from the original text.

Adaptations such as those by Randall and Rawles meaningfully reorient classic narratives that minimize the lives of enslaved persons and the controversial use of Black characters as plot devices to further the key narratives of White protagonists. In a retelling of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Nalo Hopkinson's 2002 short story "Shift" focuses on the minor characters of Ariel and

Caliban. She explains the motivations for her retelling in an interview with journalist Terry Bisson of *Outspoken* magazine, as reprinted in *Report from Planet Midnight*:

> Let's see… in the play, Prospero is a rich white duke who's been exiled to a small island with his beautiful daughter Miranda. There he finds an ethereal fairy named Ariel who's been trapped inside a split tree by a white Algerian (African) witch named Sycorax. Sycorax had been exiled to the island earlier, while pregnant with her son Caliban. Sycorax has died, leaving Ariel imprisoned and Caliban abandoned. Prospero frees Ariel and requires her servitude in return, but promises to release her eventually. Prospero takes Caliban in and teaches him to read, but when Caliban attempts to rape Miranda, Prospero makes him a slave (as in, no promise of release). Ariel gets all the flitting-about jobs and Caliban gets all the hard labour. Prospero repeatedly ridicules Caliban. Ariel helps Prospero and Miranda get off the island, and thus wins freedom. I think we're supposed to identify with Prospero and Miranda, but I was disturbed by Ariel's servitude and Caliban's slavery, and even though Prospero eventually pardons Caliban, I had trouble with the play's relentless mockery of Caliban as a "savage."
>
> A few years ago I was visiting Kamau Brathwaite's literature class at NYU, and they were discussing Caliban. I had the insight that Ariel and Caliban could be seen as the house Negro and the field Negro, and I proceeded to mess with the story from there. (*Report From Planet Midnight*, 94)

These narratives seek to interrogate the problematic elements of classic tales by shifting characters of color—who are often derided, written in an attempt at cultural vernacular, and trope-defining—to the center of the stories in which they appear.

Jean Rhys also seeks to refocus the *Jane Eyre* narrative on Mrs. Rochester as someone more than the iconic "madwoman in the attic," critiqued by Gilbert and Gubar in the 1979 book of the same name. Within the context of

Jane Eyre, Rochester's wife, Bertha Mason, acts as a plot point rather than a full character. Her initial function is to prevent Eyre and Rochester from marrying on the basis of her behavior, while also offering a tragic history to explain and excuse the moody behavior of the arrogant Rochester. Mason is described in animalistic terms as a burden on Rochester rather than a person with intellectual disabilities:

> In the deep shade, at the farther end of the room, a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not, at first sight, tell: it grovelled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face.

As noted by Gilbert and Gubar, Mason is marginalized in multiple ways: through her disabilities, her mixed-race heritage, and as a woman within the nineteenth century context (xxxvi). She is a character "created only to be destroyed" (Gilbert and Gubar 78) until her story is expanded upon by Rhys. Rhys places Mason in the center of the narrative, rather than Eyre's relationship with Rochester, as the key romance of his life. In doing so, she explicitly questions the racial hierarchy in *Jane Eyre* while also offering personhood to a character with severe mental illness. Gilbert and Gubar predominantly argue that Mason depicts "madness as rebellion" (Donaldson 100); Mason is not so much mentally ill as she is raging against a deeply racist and patriarchal society in a manner deemed improper. In a recent 2002 critique of the text, medical humanities scholar Elizabeth J. Donaldson argues that Rhys's novel "gives voice to the previously silent

madwoman and depicts what some might consider the causes of her madness—a difficult childhood, a dangerous social climate, and her husband's ultimate betrayal" (100). In Rhys's text, Donaldson argues, it is not Mason's madness that leads to her being locked in the attic, but rather her being locked in the attic that drives her mad.

Such marginalized characters have often existed both on the margins of narratives and society. As explained in intermedial literary theorist Caren Irr's pivotal text on the feminist nature of fan fiction, the creative commons, and alternative practices to copyright protection, *Pink Pirates*, women and persons from marginalized groups have historically maintained a less than legitimate and often extralegal writing sphere. Such persons often had no ownership over their own creations or even their own bodies, through enslavement, status as the property of one's husband or father, and laws eliminating personal property. For those working toward grand social change, including persons of color, women, and other marginalized populations, as Irr so poignantly summarizes, "ensuring originality and protecting copyright could be less vital than defending a friend's honor or working for emancipation." Prior to the first official wave of feminist history, few women were published. Yet, Irr notes:

> … although officially excluded from copyright ownership as individuals, women writers were still active in the market... some even became notorious and exposed themselves to notorious public attack by flaunting conventions that urged anonymous publication as the most genteel strategy for entering the public sphere. Susana Rowson, for instance, not only published a popular novel [1791's *Charlotte Temple*] under her own name, but also took

> to the stage and opened her own school for women—activities all the more notable for her undertaking them in a situation in which she was unable to exercise a full complement of economic rights because of her status as a married woman.

Those who did not have the privilege of being married, have a supportive publisher, or have the patronage of a father or other living relative, however, turned to what Irr terms "pink piracy," the illegal or informal sharing of creative works outside of the realm of a patriarchal copyright structure. Unable to be taken seriously or otherwise dismissed as silly (Petersen 189), women and other marginalized populations were denied access to copyright ownership, and thus created their own spheres of literature. Such literatures were privatized, per Irr's analysis, while their male counterparts were publicized and praised.

Crip Culture and Fan Communities

I argue that a similar dichotomy exists today whereby persons with disabilities are often seen as alternately undepictable, unpublishable, or unrepresentable in a traditional media context. What disability theorist Ato Quayson defines as aesthetic nervousness either impedes or circumvents the creation and meaningfulness of such narratives:

> Let me begin formulaically: Aesthetic nervousness is seen when the dominant protocols of representation within the literary text are short-circuited in relation to disability. The primary level in which it may be discerned is in the interaction between a disabled and nondisabled character, where a variety of tensions may be identified. However, in most texts aesthetic nervousness is hardly ever limited to this primary level, but is augmented by tensions refracted across other levels of the text such as the disposition of symbols and motifs, the overall narrative or dramatic perspective, the constitution and reversals of plot structure and so on. The final

> dimension of aesthetic nervousness is that between the reader and the text. The reader's status within a given text is a function of the several interacting elements such as the identifications with the vicissitudes of the life of a particular character, or the alignment between the reader and the shifting position of the narrator, or the necessary reformulations of the reader's perspective enjoined by the modulations of various plot elements and so on. (195)

Because the non-disabled are inherently discomforted by the notion of becoming disabled, such readings bring a sense of unease to non-disabled readers, publishers, and authors when presented with a disabled character. Certain presentations of disability, specifically those which do not depend upon tropes, are particularly disquieting, including depictions of sexualized crip lives. As a result, depictions of persons with visible disabilities are almost entirely absent from popular narratives that focus on the sexual aspects of one's life (Eunjong Kim; Garland-Thomson "Integrating Disability," 337).

Thus, it is not surprising that disabled persons write themselves into classic and contemporary media contexts, particularly those with sexual relationships. The asexualization of crip communities and the sense of unease with disabled bodies from non-disabled authors representing disabled characters has led disabled authors to write texts that fill in this gap. However, readings of such narratives are not palatable to wider audiences, making such writings unprofitable and, thus, unpublished. As with other queer or queerified sexual experiences (McRuer, "Compulsory Able-bodiedness," 365), the informal literary circles offered through pink piracy fill this gap: crip authors can write directly to crip communities through the informal literature of fan fiction.

Whether published informally on websites whose explicit purpose is fan fiction, such as Fanfiction.net and Archive of Our Own (A03), microblogging sites such as Tumblr, or personal blogs or websites, fan fiction has allowed crip communities to write their stories onto existing narratives. Such communities not only restructure and rewrite literary classics and pop culture to include explicitly crip stories, but also highlight existing crip elements in these tales; "disability" and related terms are common enough on A03 to warrant their own tag. In fact, disability has become central to the sexual relationships that occur between characters on A03, just as the insistence on care as a prelude to pleasure has become central in these dichotomies. Some of the earliest fan fiction depicted queer relationships between Spock and Kirk in the original *Star Trek* television series; fan communities, including the popularity of Spock/Kirk fan fiction, contributed greatly to the show's revival after its initial cancellation (Pearson).

In fact, disability is central to one of the key relationship types in slash fiction: male-male relationships whose name derives from the slash between the two characters of a relationship, i.e. Spock/Kirk (Lothian et al., 106). This relationship type, sometimes termed the "hurt/comfort" relationship (Pearson 89), generally depicts one character lovingly caring for another before the relationship develops a sexual nature. Often, such a relationship relies upon disability, whether of a social or medical nature, in what becomes a relationship based around the model of care:

> Every character has suffered, at the hands of different K/S writers, just about every disablement and malady known to human- (or Vulcan-) kind. This hurt-comfort theme… depends on Kirk's and Spock's "feminine" traits: compassion, tenderness, affection, gentleness, altruism, and… the necessity for permission to initiate physical closeness. (Frazer Lamb and Veith, 108)

In such narratives, like many that permeate fan fiction particularly within crip communities, disability is not removed from an asexual association, but rather sexualized. Pop culture theorist Francesca Coppa goes so far as to argue that fan fiction communities, already known to include a far higher percentage of queer and female writers than their traditional publication counterparts (Lothian et al. 110), has both a higher percentage of disabled writers and readers while demonstrating a higher level of concern for issues of accessibility (78). While Coppa does not offer statistics, her informal analysis asks future fan fiction scholars to consider such an ethnographic project. Disability and social policy professor Andrea Hollomotz demonstrates how fan fiction practices can be used to further "a revived openness toward sexual issues… [especially] for disabled people seeking support with creating spaces and opportunities for intimacy" (418). Hollomotz particularly considers E.L. James's *Fifty Shades of Grey* series and its origins as *Twilight* fan fiction. She sees the translation of this literature from fan fiction to popular culture via the relative legitimacy of publication as an opening for further possibilities in a sexual rights agenda, and particularly for crip sex and disability activism as a whole. In brief, fan fiction and other pink pirates communities allow persons living on the margins or denied access to traditional

copyright and publication options the opportunity to share and proliferate their works. Possibilities for further empowerment are available if such fictions are offered legitimacy through traditional publication. As such, it is suggested that publishers not only allow authors to maintain their original voices and audiences when transitioning to formal forms of publication, but also that more fan fiction authors attempt to make this transition. In terms of both queer and disability representation, the possibilities for adaptations and critical readings of classics cannot be exaggerated in this thesis.

Conclusion

Following the release of the Rian Johnson-helmed *Star Wars* film, *Episode VIII: The Last Jedi* in 2017, a much-propagated fan campaign began in hopes of creating a replacement eighth installment in the film series. Aptly titled "Remake the Last Jedi," this effort gained widespread media attention in late June 2018 following the group's Twitter-based announcement that $200 million dollars had been pledged to the campaign; largely, Remake the Last Jedi seeks to offset the cost it would take for Disney to produce a new Episode VIII. While far from an actual possibility[28], the effort to recreate this film in the popular *Star Wars* franchise demonstrates a continued effort to equate speculative fiction with what author N. K. Jemisin terms "Tolkien clones" (Sarkeesian): literatures and fans who at least appear to believe that Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* was successful because it largely focused on cis, White, male, heterosexual, normate characters rather than succeeding *despite* the characters' limited relatability.

Like Tolkien's work, the original *Star Wars* trilogy followed a male protagonist as he predominantly encountered a similarly cis, White, male, heterosexual, normate cast, with a handful of women, droids, and persons of

[28] Apart from copyright and other legal issues, the money "pledged" can hardly be said to represent an actual possibility of recreating *The Last Jedi*, or even actual funds. To contribute to the campaign, one must simply provide an email address, which need not be verified, along with a monetary pledge up to $10,000 in value. Thus, supporters of the campaign's ideas may simply promise an amount of money not represented by their actual bank account holdings.

color thrown in to keep things interesting[29]. Despite this reality, Remake the Last Jedi purports to be more concerned with narrative than representation. As explained on their website:

> The more relate-able a hero is to human nature, the more compelling the story because people begin to see themselves in these heroes. This is imperative to storytelling because if you don't care about the characters then you don't care to see where their story goes.
>
> When we decide to edit out the human element from within a story then the story becomes no longer compelling.
>
> This is why many of us tend to point at The Last Jedi [sic] as having a bad story. The characters have lost their relatability…
>
> The hero archetype's of the original films is what made these so great, it made characters that everyone could relate to regardless of their background and beliefs.

Despite this analysis, however, one of the largest critiques of *Episode VII: The Force Awakens* is that the story yet again follows the same hero's journey as the original *Star Wars*, *Episode IV: A New Hope*. What makes these characters lose their "relatability" then, seems merely to be their lack of normativity in terms of positionality: of the ten characters with the most speaking time, 3 are portrayed by White males, 3 by White females, 2 by men of color, one by a woman of color, and two by technology overtly coded as male.

Furthermore, the model of Campbell's monomyth continues to apply, most clearly through the same protagonist as the original series, Luke. Luke Skywalker

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[29] Notably, while the initial trilogy is remembered for *two* droid characters, only one person of color (Billy Dee Williams' Baron Landonis "Lando" Calrissian) and one woman (Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia Organa of Alderaan) are represented among the main cast of any film.

is called to adventure by Rey's arrival at his self-imposed exile, while he receives mentorship yet again from Yoda, faces the trial of encountering (and fighting) his disciple Kylo-Ren, projects himself via the force despite knowing it may cause his death, succeeds in his showdown against Kylo-Ren, is killed, and is resurrected as a force projection to mentor Rey. In terms of narrative, little has altered; the hero archetype is clearly featured within this film. And thus, one must question what "relatability" actually means in this campaign. Most likely, and as largely suggested by supporters via social media, it is rather non-dominant positionality that makes normate groups uncomfortable rather than the composition of these stories themselves that lead fans to demean such narratives.

While explicitly placed in "a galaxy far, far away," the *Star Wars* films offer a vision of the future that well resonates with many viewers, making it one of the most lucrative and popular franchises in history. And, following the fall of the Empire or New Order in the various trilogies, we are left with a futuristic vision nearing the utopic—not only a world but an entire *universe* free of war. Yet, for many fans, this future must still be homogenous while upholding both White supremacy and the patriarchy in order to be truly utopic.

This effort demonstrates yet another move toward a less diversified model of perfection—the gray world exemplified also through movements such as the Sad and Rabid Puppies, as well as cultural moments like RaceFail and Gamergate. Whether based in the future or an idealized present, the key question of "whose utopia" has again come under fierce debate. As I have

contended in this thesis, the role of the person with disability within such spaces has become even more murky despite us being actually better suited to a utopic environment. As science progresses to develop technologies, such as the prenatal gene-modifying CRISPR-Cas9, that may eliminate entire categories of persons with disabilities, debates of ethics ensue. Arguably eugenics-based practices, such as the abortion of fetuses known to have disabilities, have also become divisive issues. For example, in June 2018, when Pope Francis spoke against disability-based abortion at a speech, it was his opposition to abortion as a whole rather than eugenics as a practice that became the subject of widespread news coverage. In this speech, Pope Francis explained his, and the Catholic Church's, position: "It is fashionable, or at least usual, that when in the first few months of a pregnancy doctors do studies to see if the child is healthy or has something, the first idea is: 'Let's send it away.' We do the same as the Nazis to maintain the purity of the race, but with white gloves on" (qtd. Lyman). A brief perusal of highly-viewed newspaper coverage demonstrates that many of the sources such as *USA Today* (Lyman), *The New York Times* ("Pope"), and *The Wall Street Journal* (Rocca) do little to focus on the particular *kind* of abortion to which Francis refers. Instead, the headlines suggest a more wide-ranging abortion platform, with, respectively, "Pope: Abortion is 'white glove' equivalent to Nazi crimes," "Pope Calls Abortion 'White Glove' Equivalent of Nazi Crimes," "Pope Francis Likens Abortion to Nazi Eugenics." Yet, while Pope Francis' comments may initially seem to follow under the auspices of the logical

fallacy Reductio ad Hitlerum, also known as “playing the Nazi card,” the practice of aborting fetuses that may become chronically ill or disabled infants does actually bear similarity to eugenics practices working to eliminate disability and crip futurity as practiced under the Nazi regime.

While this particular episode may simply demonstrate a journalistic tendency toward the sensational and overly simplistic, it also reiterates the continuation of a perceived limited biofuturity for persons with disabilities. Lee et al. recently reported in *Nature* that scientists have effectively utilized CRISPR-Gold, “a nonviral delivery vehicle for the CRISPR–Cas9 ribonucleoprotein” to decrease instances of “exaggerated repetitive behaviours” in mice. Notably, and as confirmed in Lee et al.’s findings, repetitive behavior is one of the key symptoms of autism spectrum disorder. However, as discussed in chapter one of this study, persons with ASD, researchers, and other invested parties continue to question whether or not this condition ethically *should* be eliminated, thus limiting the biofuturity of an entire population characterized by a broad spectrum of disabilities or, as argued by some, simple differences. Furthermore, as argued in chapter 3 of this study, such scientists may actually be working toward eliminating ideal utopians.

The inherent question proposed by the potential elimination of certain disabilities and, thus, their future populations, asks: “What *should* the people of the future be like?” Or, more simply, “in a perfect world, which people should remain?” Yet, an analysis of both the history of conditions considered disabilities

and idealized figures demonstrates that even our models of normalcy and superiority have altered over time. In fact, disability theorist and historian Douglas C. Baynton argues that disability has actively been used as a category by which to subjugate other marginalized persons across times. He contends that "disability has been one of prevalent justifications for inequality in American history," particularly injustices against immigrants, Black persons, and women. Similarly, queer and genderqueer persons have been subjugated via the medicalizations of states now considered perfectly healthy, however marginalized.

Nevertheless, despite various disabilities depending wholly or at least partially on a social model of normality, efforts to eliminate disabling conditions altogether continue. Simultaneously, models of idealized communities have and continue to portray utopic spaces as largely absent of persons with identifiable disabilities of all kinds despite persons with many disabilities actually offering ideal bodies to inhabit the mundaneness of a utopic setting. Yet, as demonstrated in chapter three of this study, as conditions which, conversely, have been previously understood to be normative have come to be marked as disabling, so too have contemporary readings of past idealized spaces demonstrated the persistence of crip utopic citizens. Thus, re-readings of traditional consummate figures tellingly show that even allegedly prototypical bodies can often contain disabilities: for example, it is argued by surgeon Hutan Ashrafian that Leonardo da Vinci's idealized figure of the *Vitruvian Man* likely

actually has a left inguinal hernia which could easily have led to the model becoming disabled before dying. Similarly, as shown in chapter 3 of this study, the venerated figure of the highly logical consulting detective, Sherlock Holmes, has been read as depicting disabilities, both consistent with the time of Doyle's writing and through the lens of the contemporary era.

Readings with a current understanding of science, disability, and culture, have allowed many marginalized groups to recognize themselves within the typically White and usually male texts that have been canonized and archived while writing themselves into these environments through derivative works. Whether through online communities, contemporary scholarship, fan fiction, or other mechanisms, activists, whether intentional or not, are particularly working against the homogenized agenda of a potentially gray world. While the corporatization and potential end of net neutrality continue limit online reading and writing spaces, the potentialities for activism and self-representation via the internet remain significant, particularly for persons with disabilities. Debates, such as 2009's RaceFail and discussions surrounding 2014's Gamergate simply would have been made far less effective and instantaneous without such technologies as Tumblr, blogging, YouTube and other video hosting sites, and other digital tools. Efforts for reestablishing a White, male, cis, hetero, normate-centric model of storytelling represented by the Rabid and Sad Puppies, as well as the Remake *The Last Jedi* campaign, may offer a contrary point showing how these tools can be used against social justice efforts. Yet, I argue that, just as commonly, one

can see efforts against such attempts to reestablish the status quo gaining more momentum and furthering social progress. As progressive online communities, particularly those working to connect persons with disabilities, continue to grow and achieve influence, one may expect their depictions of multifaceted futurities and utopic spaces to continue proliferating as well.

Appendix

The following includes a detailed deconstruction of various video game genres and the means by which I argue that they constitute speculative fiction pieces.

Genre	Style Notes	Titles	Notes
Action	Third person perspective; often interspersed with cut scenes of extended narrative; dynamic movement	*Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time; Metal Gear Solid; Grand Theft Auto IV*	
Adventure	Third person perspective; often interspersed with cut scenes of extended narrative; dynamic movement	*Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild; Inside; Shadow of the Colossus*	
Battle	Largely from the third person perspective and heavy emphasis on rules	*Magic Pengel: The Quest for Color; Monster Rancher 4; Pokémon Stadium*	Distinguished from fighting based upon ability to significantly alter fighters' attributes (Battle) and turn-based nature (Battle).
Board	Essentially digital adaptations of board games	*Chessmaster; Hero Academy; Culdcept*	
Card	Essentially digital adaptations of board games	*Ultimate Card Games; Hold 'em Poker+ for Prizes; Hearthstone: Heroes of Warcraft*	

Casino	Essentially digital adaptations of casino games	*Hoyle Casino; Capone Casino; Casino Inc.*	
Compilation	N/A	*Black & White; The Orange Box. Metroid Prime Trilogy*	Term for multiple games sold in one pack—thus not useful for genre but rather marketing purposes.
Educational	Generally centered around a discrete set of subjects and learning goals that guide the plot, if any exists. Usually targeted at younger players.	*The Typing of the Dead; Smart As…; Sesame Street: Once Upon a Monster*	Also *Oregon Trail, Where in the World is Carmen San Diego, Math Blasters*
Fighting	Dynamic movement vs. turn based; discrete set of moves available; usually a health meter as well.	*Soulcalibur; SNK vs. Capcom: Match of the Millennium; Infinity Blade II*	Also *Super Smash Bros.* series
Flight	Similar to simulation but also inclusive of certain narrative elements.	*Ace Combat 5: The Unsung War; Star Wars Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Leader; Ace Combat 4: Shattered Skies*	
Hunting	Similar to simulation and sports but also inclusive of certain narrative elements, at times.	*Championship Bass; SEGA Bass Fishing; SEGA Bass Fishing 2*	Also *Deer Hunter* series

Music	Generally similar to puzzle games but with music integrated into gameplay.	*Samba de Amigo; Groove Coaster; Elite Beat Agents*	Also *Dance Revolution* and *Guitar Hero/Rock Band* series
Other	N/A	*Skipping Stone; Orcs Must Die; Incredible Crisis*	Term for any game in a genre not well enough represented to have a category of its own—thus not an actual genre. Often includes game show adaptations as well.
Pinball	Similar to simulation but often with futuristic mechanisms or gameplay functions impossible on a physical pinball machine.	*The Pinball Arcade; Pokémon Pinball: Ruby & Sapphire; Pinball Hall of Fame: The Williams Collection*	
Platformer	Dynamic movement within closed or open world environments. Avatar-based character model.	*Super Mario Bros.; Super Mario Galaxy 2; Sonic the Hedgehog: Pocket Adventure*	
Party	Meant to be played in groups. Digital possibilities that expand upon board games. Generally minimal narrative—meant to generate discussion rather than distract from reality.	*Digital Chocolate Cave; Wario Ware, Inc.; Big Bang Mini*	Also includes *Mario Party* series.

	Designed to be simple and intuitive.		
Productivity	See note. Sometimes overlaps with puzzle games.	*Personal Trainer: Cooking; Flipnote Studio; Colors! 3D*	Applications released on gaming systems—not actual games and thus not included in genre study.
Puzzle	Involve abstract combinations of items and ideas with a clear objective.	*Tornado Mania, The Witness; Magical Tetris Challenge*	Also includes *Tetris* series.
RPG	Character-driven story in which the player is in control of statistics. Quest/task driven.	*Pokémon Red Version; Pokémon Blue Version; Dragon Warrior III*	Also includes Mass Effect series.
Racing	Simulated time and speed-based race that may or may not include fantasy and real world elements.	*Checkered Flag; Gran Turismo 2; Gran Turismo 3*	Also includes Mario Kart series.
Shooter	Team or solo combat-based game with clearable stages.	*Perfect Dark; Halo 2; Halo 4*	Also Half-Life, BioShock, and 007 series.
Simulation	Life-based fantasy/real life tasks, including such activities as farming, flying, city building, etc.	*Black & White; Faster Than Light; Animal Crossing: New Leaf*	Also most all Sims titles.
Sports	Realistic or fantasy recreation of athletic sports, whether actual or fantasy in and of	*Mario Golf; Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2; Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*	Also NFL and other major league sports series.

	themselves (i.e. Quidditch or Blitzball)		
Strategy	Real time tactical planning and movement/unit-based action.	*Advance Wars; Fire Emblem Awakening; StarCraft*	
Trivia	Question-based game that tests specific or general knowledge.	*Buzz! Quiz World; MLSN Sports Picks; You Don't Know Jack*	
Virtual Pet	Computer-based animals, beings, and fantasy creatures that are raised and cared for.	*Nintendogs: Chihuahua & Friends; Nintendogs: Daschund & Friends; Nintendogs: Lab & Friends*	Includes magical pet series.
Wrestling	Specific subset of sports games that include the theatrical entertainment elements of professional wrestling.	*WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2006; WWF Raw 2002; WWE SmackDown! Here Comes the Pain*	

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@WilliamShatner. "🤔 An expert? How is any of this "expert"? She's taking 2018 opinions and applying them to 50yo TV and making condemnations?🙄 This is pseudo intelligent bragging at best." *Twitter*, 4 July 2018, 7:27 a.m., https://twitter.com/williamshatner/status/1014516012224401409?lang=en

---. "That's not what she said. And where can I see this "enduring quality" work? She said she has a book coming out. BTW on the "racist stuff"I participated in; I assume you meant Star Trek? I'm sorry that Star Trek upset you. I'd encourage you not to watch. Good enough apology?🤔🙄." *Twitter*, 5 July 2018, 9:21 a.m., https://twitter.com/williamshatner/status/1014907231584698370?lang=en

---. "Did you hear about the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award being renamed over negative lines on the indigenous people of America? Laura changed the lines in the 50's. I find it disturbing that some take modern opinion & obliterate the past. Isn't progress @ learning from our mistakes?🤔." *Twitter*, 30 June 2018, 7:34 p.m., https://twitter.com/williamshatner/status/1013249513757159426?lang=en

---. "I actually read her diatribe of opinion. How can you claim "takedown" when she uses current opinions on 50 year old TV episodes & then says I need to stay in my lane? She is so far out of her "lane" that it's sad to see that she is an educator comparing Peter Pan to LHOTP. 🙄." *Twitter*, 4 July 2018, 7:16 a.m., https://twitter.com/williamshatner/status/1014513255685939200?lang=en

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