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Final Master's Portfolio

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FINAL MASTER'S PORTFOLIO

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A Final Portfolio

Submitted to the English Department of
Bowling Green State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts in the Field of English
with a specialization in Literary & Textual Studies

May 5, 2021

Dr. Erin Labbie, First Reader
Ms. Kimberly Spallinger, Second Reader

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Analytical Narrative

I pursued an M.A. because it offered me the opportunity to hone my writing, researching, and teaching skills. I wanted to teach and learn to be a better instructor. I explored different graduate programs, and I selected the only program that offered the opportunity to teach. Teaching provides a career opportunity that I did not imagine before attending Bowling Green State University (BGSU). After graduating from The University of Connecticut with a B.A. in English, I wanted to pursue graduate school to improve my writing, develop my academic work, and learn about academia's job prospects. BGSU has prepared me for two paths simultaneously: to pursue a Ph.D. program or to return to teaching full-time at the high school level. Thanks to the teaching experience and exposure to literary theories and genres outside my interest, I feel excited and prepared for a career in education.

The pandemic disrupted teaching and researching opportunities because I moved to attend remotely and teaching classes remotely. Before the pandemic, I learned to investigate primary sources and present at conferences because multiple professors created a mock conference to read, present, and answer questions about our research. I was excited to read my first paper at a national conference. The pandemic canceled the 2020 PCA conference, but I plan to reapply in the future. While I was accepted to read my paper on "The Rats in the Walls," the pandemic changed my experience at BGSU both as a researcher and teacher. In response to the pandemic, I taught remotely and limited my research material to online sources exclusively. Photocopies of physical books are limited to 3 or fewer chapters, so I did not have access to a majority of my sources for my paper on "The Rats in the Wall." Overall, the lack of face to face with students, professors, and peers made the most straightforward communication more difficult

and tenuous depending on internet connections. We all learned to adapt and are more experienced teachers as a result of the pandemic.

I entered the M.A. program with the hope of pursuing an interest in comics and manga. Still, I left with a more rounded research background that included Gender studies, Shakespeare Adaptations, Gothic horror, and Memory and Trauma studies. I initially desired to gain experience within the various avenues of literary theory to re-read comics and manga from a critical lens. Over time, I learned my interest center on trauma, memory, and gender politics. My papers represent my goals of applying my literary interests to various mediums: comics, manga, screenplays, and short stories. My future goal is to examine how mediums like manga, anime, and novels vary and enhance how readers witness the effects of trauma, memory, and gender politics.

H. P. Lovecraft's horror frightened me, but I compelled to keep reading. From reading his many entries in pulp magazines, I decided to learn more about the author and what made him stand out from other pulp authors of his time. My first essay was born out of genuine interest in the material and author. "Rats and Madness": Lovecraft's Themes of Decay is a conference paper with time constraints. I hope to read my paper at a future conference, so I have edited it with that purpose in mind. To clarify for readers and listeners, I have defined key terms earlier within my paper. Initially, I decided to have the keywords defined on a PowerPoint but placing the critical terms within the document allows the audience to follow along better. Before revisions, my conclusion was open-ended and advocated for further research about aesthetics. However, I have rewritten the conclusion to tie together Lovecraft's writing as a sub-category of modernism expressed within pulp magazines – a medium of little monetary value that foremost

sought engaging narratives that shocked, humored, or inspired audiences. Lovecraft entered pulp magazines to shock readers and perfected his cosmic horror and form of modernism.

“Women’s Rage and Self-negation”: The Characterization of Women in Tezuka’s *Black Jack* begins to examine how the medium of manga questions the performance of gender. *Black Jack* is a manga that has interested me for years. I jumped at the opportunity to study its reading of gender within Osamu Tezuka’s numerous volumes of *Black Jack*. My focus is on three women who have their desires superseded by society’s expectations for them. In my revisions, I have better organized and explained the significance of each female character. According to Andre Long Chu, I have defined early on the difference between the terms “female” and “woman” so that readers recognize the unrealistic expectations for both women and females. According to Chu, the term “females” is a universal sex subordinated by society’s desire to delineate and define gender roles. In addition, I have added sections to help differentiate my background information and literary theory from my analysis of *Black Jack*. Finally, I have rewritten the conclusion to create a more explicit connection between Chu’s “female” and “woman” as represented in the manga, *Black Jack*. I will continue to revise this paper for journal submission in the future because manga offers readers a unique avenue for expressing gender and representing our expectations for beauty. In many ways, manga provides us with a mirror to judge our own world’s superficiality.

The Victimization of Women within Bond’s *Lear* and the Intersectional Gap within Bond’s “Social Morality” seeks to examine the failure of Edward Bond’s adaption of King Lear by problematizing the gender politics at play. I wrote this paper for my Shakespeare adaptation course, and I was fascinated by the stark treatment of men and women with Bond’s adaptation. I planned to consider adaptation theory as a lens to analyze narratives that move to a new genre of

the medium. An adaptation has a responsibility to be faithful to a core aspect of the story. Still, in Bond's case, Lear's daughters are reduced to evil caricatures making the play less equitable for women. I focus on removing the excessive use of questions within the initial draft and rephrase the topic sentences to introduce the main idea of each paragraph. The initial draft was too focused on framing the argument with questions that it became distracting. The revised draft better transitions from concept to the idea while articulating the central point of each new argument. Furthermore, I did not introduce or elaborate on quotations sufficiently, so I added sentences to introduce and explain quoted material.

The final paper depicts an interest in memory and trauma and how it creates temporal links to the past and future. I was initially introduced to Trauma and Memory Studies by W. G. Sebald's *The Emigrants*. The text makes an amalgam of written words and photos to buttress the realities portrayed on the pages. The book blends mediums by drawing meaning from both pictures and prose though not a graphic novel; *The Emigrants* distinguishes itself through its multimodal storytelling. The blending continues with fiction and reality because we are told the narratives follow real people; however, it is more likely that the actual photos add integrity to the histories of each character. The narrative follows the re-experiencing of family trauma across different generations. My revisions focused on developing how trauma is perceived and experienced across time and how prejudice influences connected events between past and present. By expanding my conclusion and improving readability, I delivered my argument without superficial sentences and unnecessary questions. In the future, I will continue to research Memory and Trauma Studies within mediums like *The Emigrants* that approach trauma from multiple textual approaches.

“Rats and Madness”: Lovecraft’s Themes of Decay

H. P. Lovecraft is one of many pulp authors that wrote horror fiction for *Weird Tales*. However, none have come close to Lovecraft’s unique blend of Weird Fiction that emphasizes his theme of decay within the narrative world, mind, and lore that began to take shape within one of his earliest works. “The Rats in the Walls” uses rats, dreams, and lore/science to achieve Lovecraft’s aesthetics goal of formlessness in a gothic style story. Jason Ray Carney’s term “shadow modernism: a sensory amplifying art device that functions to expose a fundamental, hidden quality of the cosmos and our relationship to it: the ordinary is ephemeral; the strange, though occasionally domesticated, conversely, is eternal” (18). Scholars overlook pulp stories because of their general popularity and derisive quantity. Lovecraft’s stories stand apart because of the development of his writing aesthetic. Lovecraft’s stories did not seek to entertain, and he developed his approach in the form of “shadow modernism.” Carney further developed Lovecraft’s niche within modernist writers by defining “pulp ekphrasis: in its unfinished and fragmented form, a unique critique of modernity by framing it as an inhumane process of cruel historical acceleration bolstered by an unperceivable agency” (17). Carney’s terms establish a space for Lovecraft as a serious modernist author that operates with different themes and goals because of the medium of pulp magazines and writing aesthetic.

Lovecraft is aware of conventions within gothic literature and pulp magazines, which are the classic tropes like nightmares, things going bump in the night, and an appeal to rationality and science for resolution. However, we come to learn that Lovecraft seeks to subvert these conventions for his unique aesthetic purposes.

To summarize the story, our narrator learns of an ancient family estate for sale that once belonged to his ancestors. The narrator purchases the estate and renovates it with the plan to move in. Once asleep in his newly renovated estate, he is startled awake by sounds within the walls. His cats seem to hear the noise too, but other servants and friends only notice the cats' reactions, so the narrator investigates the noises each night. They open a passageway into a grotto littered with bones and the remnants of a small town. Fear and speculation paralyze the narrator and scholars.

“The Rats in the Wall” seeks to expose the underlying decay of the physical world and how it begins to infect the mind of the narrator. Lovecraft tries to connect rats, decay, and lore into his narrative:

the dramatic epic of rats—the scampering army of obscene vermin which had burst forth from the castle three months after the tragedy that doomed it to desertion—the lean, filthy, ravenous army which had swept all before it and devoured fowl, cat, dogs, hogs, sheep, and even two hapless human beings before its fury was spent . . . Such was the lore that assailed me as I pushed to completion, with an elderly obstinacy, the work of restoring my ancestral home. (18)

The quote is the first mention of rats, lore, and the protagonist's penchant for incredulous myths. Upon reading the text, it may infer that the protagonist's dive into madness begins here, which later led to his act of cannibalism. There is no doubt that cannibalism is a despicable act, but the mutual breakdown of self-control and the consumption of other humans ties into the idea of “pulp ekphrasis,” which attempts to offer an avenue for the exploration of Lovecraft's aesthetic within Carney's “shadow modernism.” Lovecraft's work is pervasive with meta-references to the illogical constructions of horror genres, widely circulated in *Weird Tales*. According to S. T.

Joshi, Lovecraft saw himself as both an educated and talented writer despite a lack of collegiate credentials or diplomas (7). Lovecraft's writing career began in his family's enormous library of classic authors (Joshi 3-5). To separate himself and elevate beyond his peers within *Weird Tales*, he crafted his aesthetic. The rats are a motif within the text and appear only in the protagonist's dreams, the lore of the village, and possibly to the household cats' acute ears. The haunted estate terrifies the narrator, and we learn the estate has a morbid and bloody history. Lovecraft writes, "I realize how trite this sounds—like the inevitable dog in the ghost story, which always growls before his master sees the sheeted figure—yet I cannot consistently suppress it" (19). We are again shown Lovecraft's meta-approach to weird fiction, as he calls out the use of conventions and utilizes it throughout the narrative.

Dreams can be an escape from a terrible day or a haunting insular chamber of life-like terror. Lovecraft utilizes dreams to terrify the narrator, and he introduces audiences to an otherworldly power that influences the world. Lovecraft uses dreams to wear down the narrator's state of mind, and he uses dreams to foreshadow the rats and begin the process of decaying the protagonist's mental state. Our protagonist is:

harassed by dreams of the most horrible sort. I seemed to be looking down from an immense height upon twilight grotto, knee-deep with filth, where a white-bearded daemon swineherd drove about with his staff a flock of fungous, flabby beasts whose appearance filled me with unutterable loathing. Then, as the swineherd paused and nodded over his task, a mighty swarm of rats rained down on the stinking abyss and fell devouring beasts and man alike. (21)

Rats invade his dream. Carney's *unperceivable agency* helps contextualize the rat invasion as: "an inhumane process of cruel historical acceleration bolstered by an unperceivable agency"

(16). By the end of the narrative, we never see rats in the real world. So, we might construe that their purpose is as a vile otherworldly agency that only the protagonist is aware of and acts upon. The title, “The Rats in the Walls,” functions as a metaphor for analysis. As the rats infest the walls, the protagonist suffers because his ancestral home is a site for ritual sacrifice. The narrator continues the practice by eating another human. Lovecraft writes, “These rats, if not the creatures of a madness which I shared with the cats alone” (23). Lovecraft’s “white-bearded daemon” orders the rats to invade the narrator to repeat the history of human sacrifice at the narrator’s ancestral home (21). The narrator repeats the despicable history because of his decaying mental state due to the rats invading his dreams. The cycle of history is cyclic, and the protagonist is fated to reenact the atrocities of his ancestors in his ancient estate. Throughout the text, rumors swirl and speculation abound ritual sacrifice, but the protagonist believes that he hears rats in the walls. An irrational narrative thread that other characters cannot prove, yet it is the sound of the rats that leads the protagonist to ruin.

As the rats accelerate the narrator’s decay towards madness, he succumbs to his ancestor’s crime of cannibalism, and the narrator discovers an ancient subterranean site. Nick Freeman’s “Weird Realism” is essential to relate both the rational and irrational narrative threads by utilizing the term:

Unrationalized fiction is a helpful term because it engages with the weird’s critique of conventional narrative resolution, as well as signaling its affinities with the surreal and absurd. Surrealism’s rejection of logic and reason, and its pursuit ... of ‘that secret and hidden territory where all that is apparently contradictory in our everyday lives and consciousness will be made plain’. . . . (10)

The dream projects a surreal reality that hastens the protagonist's descent into madness. Lovecraft's use of "unrationalized fiction" is on display when the protagonist leads the scientist and scholars into the underground site. Lovecraft writes, "It was a twilit grotto of enormous height, stretching away farther than any eye could see . . . For yards about the steps extended an insane tangle of human bones, or bones at least as human as those on steps" (26-27). The scholars are dumbfounded and cannot rationalize the site or activities, so the narrative fulfillment comes when the protagonist eats his companion. The subversive narrative places the audience in a liminal space. The narrative structure puts the irrational and rational plot threads into conflict to create doubt. Lovecraft creates a successful "weird" narrative by leaving the audience with a rational and irrational explanation for the plot, which connects Freeman's idea of "unrationalized fiction" to a resolution (or lack thereof). Lovecraft's use of scholars as guides for the narrator serves as a critique of logical resolution and potential understanding for the decayed grotto littered with bones beneath the estate. The underground grotto is juxtaposed with the decaying manner above because Lovecraft's aesthetic focuses on all forms of decay over time. The significance of the settings implicates the surreal and absurd within Lovecraft's narrative that further distances Lovecraft from plain horror stories within *Weird Tales*.

The first-person narration confines the storytelling to engage and blind the audience from anything outside of the narrator's perception. The intimacy makes the horror more compelling for the narrative, "Having grasped to some slight degree the frightful revelations of this twilit area—an area so hideously foreshadowed by my recurrent dream---we turned to that apparently boundless depth of midnight cavern where no ray of light from the cliff could penetrate" (Lovecraft 28). The cliff and "boundless depth of midnight cavern" beneath it represent the protagonist about to fall into madness. We leave the rational world above to enter the irrational

and surreal underground. The storytelling perspective focuses the audience's attention on the setting to foreshadow a fall that the others in the party cannot see coming. "Twilit grotto" does not haunt the scholars because they do not witness two realities (Lovecraft 21). We see another reference when Lovecraft indicates the dream is foreshadowing events in the "real" world. Freeman offers another insight towards understanding the purpose of Lovecraft's subversive implication:

The subtle distortion of a seemingly given reality, its intensely subjective apprehension, or the implication that 'reality' exists in multiple forms simultaneously and that its various incarnations rub against each other like tectonic plates to produce seismic disturbances, are all central to a Weird aesthetic. (10)

Lovecraft employs multiple realities, and the resulting friction of the awareness causes our narrator's sanity to crumble. The agency that drives the horrible reality exists, but it does not possess a name. Instead, the audience and witnesses to the protagonist's madness are left afraid in the dark.

Lovecraft's narrative frightens audiences because of its infusion of an unknown terror that influences the protagonist. The narrative separates itself by telling a ghost story about the indifference and powerlessness of humans; thus, Lovecraft's next step to separate himself from other gothic authors and pulp writers. According to Joshi, Lovecraft was undoubtedly aware of the history of gothic literature thanks to his family's well-stocked library (3-5). Lovecraft showcases his knowledge of gothic conventions in writing, and he does this to subvert the genre's historical expectations. As a result, Carney's "shadow modernism" is a suitable tag for Lovecraft's position in literature. We can see the rats as the "unperceived agency." The dreams are the gothic conventions that foreshadow the character's fate and actions. At the same time,

scholars witness irrational events, which raise doubts about their ability to observe the reality. These three motifs help to shape Lovecraft's aesthetic of the weird. Conventionally speaking, the narrative is a simple ghost story, but with the motifs of Lovecraft's aesthetic, it differentiates the narrative to make it uniquely "Lovecraftian weird."

Within Lovecraft's narrative, the breakdown of ordinary life and the appeal to rationality and science are doomed conventions that the author chooses to subvert by facing his protagonist to madness. "The Rats in the Walls" is one of Lovecraft's earliest narratives, and it utilizes science, occult, and cannibalism as markers for Lovecraft's "weird aesthetic." Carney's shadow modernism characterizes "Lovecraft's early attempts to imagine the artistic enterprise as a form of occult and scientific research for producing a prosthetic device, an art object, that functions to reveal the ephemerality of the ordinary" (56). Occult rituals and Scholars are devices powerless to reveal the real agent of influence that acts upon the protagonist. "The Rats in the Walls" is an early example of Lovecraft's aesthetic:

Cosmic horror . . . amounts to an experience of the cataclysmic horror that the human subject experiences once it cognizes the finitude of its existence and realizes that, contrary to a humanistic view which posits human life as intrinsically meaningful in relation not only to itself but to the cosmos, there is neither anything distinctive nor significant about being human. (qtd. in Omidasalar 716)

We are helpless in the face of Lovecraft's "cosmic horror," which makes us fear the unknown reason as to why the protagonist fell into madness. Lovecraft consistently argues that the irrational/rational states of mind are powerless to realize what is happening. Ultimately, his ancestors' consummated occult practices that have no scientific explanation or occult rationalization, so the protagonist's state of mind fractures under the friction of dueling realities.

Lovecraft is deliberate in using adjectives when he decided the narrator would use “plump” twice to describe Captain Norryst’s face (Lovecraft 26, 28). The narrator comments, “Once my foot slipped near a horribly yawning brink, and I had a movement of ecstatic fear. I must have been musing a long time, for I could not see any of the party but the plump Capt. Norryst” (Lovecraft 28). Two things to consider are the near precipitous fall and the sole awareness of Capt. Norryst. Lovecraft has the narrator experience a natural fall; metaphorically, we learn the character has already fallen into madness and is about to eat Capt. Norryst’s face. From the perspective of Lovecraft, “no form can endure time, and the horror of this realization is their keynote” (Carney 168). The narrator falls prey to the horror that Carney describes. Formlessness is the overarching theme that the narrator struggles against and fails. Capt. Norryst is a simple and well-to-do gentleman that aids the protagonist in his investigation of Exham Priory. He offers little more than being a close acquaintance of the narrator’s invalid son. For Lovecraft’s aesthetic, this is useful as another form that eventually decays.

The degradation of the Delapore family is another layering of Lovecraft’s form to formlessness. Alfred is the narrator’s son; he discovers the lore and myth surrounding his ancestral estate and writes to the narrator. The narrative is the beginning of the family’s misfortunes. Not only does the son become injured in a war, but he develops a disability and disappears from the narrative altogether once the “ghost story” begins. The narrator states, “During the two years that he lived I thought of nothing but his care...In 1921, I found myself bereaved and aimless” (Lovecraft 15-16). The rational reality of the protagonist slowly degrades until the ghost story begins. As a result, the protagonist is overwhelmed by the friction between competing realities that degrade his sanity.

The estate Exham Priory is a decayed site that would have given way to the elements were it not for the protagonist's intervention. His efforts to stymie the shift from form to formlessness leaves the protagonist out of order with Lovecraft's aesthetic, and he becomes the victim of the author's cosmic horror. Lovecraft creates fiction to fit within both a sub-category of modernism and pulp magazines, and we see Lovecraft's writing has inspired the recent rise in supernatural horror. Without a doubt, Lovecraft has become a household name because of his writing prowess, and further study of his earliest works within pulp magazines will better contextualize Lovecraft's cosmic horror.

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“Women’s Rage and Self-negation”: The Characterization of Women in Tezuka’s *Black Jack*

The manga *Black Jack* by Osamu Tezuka introduces us to a slew of characters that both rebel and conform to the rigidity of the universal sex of females, and the medium of manga reinforces the performative reality of gender. Black Jack is the eponymous manga protagonist who refuses to abide by the pressures of society, yet he services all his patients with the mindset to heal them and fulfill their desires in life. Tezuka’s character allows the reader to witness the absurdity of society’s expectations and how societal expectations, especially subordinate women. As Andrea Long Chu argues, a woman is different from a female: “femaleness is a universal sex defined by self-negation, against which all politics, even feminist politics, rebels” (11). Meanwhile, “women” in *Black Jack* refute by choice or necessity the burden of becoming an object of desire within the eyes of society. Black Jack only desires/accepts “women” who realize their agency and desire outside of society’s expectation. Yet, the women within *Black Jack* accept the burden of self-negation to remain within society, while Black Jack refuses to self-negate operating outside of society. By resisting the universal femaleness, Black Jack provides a unique perspective to critique sexist pressures on females. The medium of manga combines words and images to represent the narrative of *Black Jack*, so Ito Go’s framework of a “multiplicity of readings” is essential for re-reading chapter of Black Jack to see characters become “females” or “women.” *Black Jack’s* female characters illustrate society’s double bind for women, and Tezuka examines the artifice of beauty expectations that become both consciously and unconsciously accepted by women.

Scholar Ito Go identifies the “multiplicity of manga reading” that expounds on a system theory for reading manga and identifies its appeal to a broader demographic than the genre was created for (Go 72-73). When Go uses “multiplicity of reading,” it points to an audience’s attention towards characters and their relationship and Go’s “system of representation” (75). Go calls friction from these readings as a “collision” that may draw staunch refusals of one reader’s interpretation over the another’s. Go attributes fans’ passionate response as a result of a “manga-esque pleasure” that does not exclude awareness or acceptance of a multiplicity of readings (74). Go argues it is more likely that we may find pleasure from reading both subsystems consciously and unconsciously even if we would be opposed to a particular read of character dynamics as yaoi (gay male relationships) readings (73). However, a yaoi reading for character relationships is only one possible reading of any other number for character relationships. Go’s system places genre as a “higher-level environment that includes various works and authors” and analyzes panels and stories as a lower-level subsystem (75). Manga’s multiple readings create multiple avenues for interpretation, and readings about character relationships further deepen the narrative. Character relationships are reader based on the audience’s desire, so we read into the manga as it pleases the readers. Go’s reading allows us to consider Chu’s universal femaleness as one of the numerous manga readings.

Tezuka creates style a unique vocabulary within manga by turning our attention to the eyes of his characters. Within the chapter “Your Mistake,” the antagonist only has one eye open for the duration of the chapter. According to Susanne Phillips, “for Tezuka, the most important feature with which to reveal a character’s inner feelings is the eyes . . . a one-eye character always has a bad nature . . . they are usually perfidious cowards, betrayers, and even murderers” (83). Tezuka also follows accepted norms for characterizing shoujo (a genre of manga written for

young girls) and a specific aesthetic of large eyes. Tezuka’s style of emphasizing eye shape and size in a cartoonish manner as characterization has become the norm within the medium (Prough 104). A character’s eyes will betray their importance and feelings, so we analyze how transformed women accept or defy society’s desire.

The chapter “Your Mistake” criticizes the standard of objectifying women; however, females within *Black Jack* are treated differently depending upon the degree to which they have gone to self-negate or appease a misogynistic standard (Tezuka Volume 3,76-96). To summarize,

the heroine is an unattractive nurse blamed for the patient’s death. The real culprit was the inattentive doctor (with only one eye open) that would instead focus on a beautiful singer than an overweight nurse, as seen in figure 1.

Black Jack performed plastic surgery to make the nurse look like an attractive singer that initially distracted the lying doctor. Later, the nurse reappears, looking for evidence to support her case, and she is given a job by preying on the doctors’ newly found attraction for her. Beauty at the cost of self-negation of our physical selves provides the nurse with a means to

reintegrate into society. The narrative makes it clear that fulfilling the

expectations leads to a positive outcome. While it works out for the nurse, does this chapter

inspire feminist sentiments for change or perpetuate the burden of misogyny on women. It is a

burden for women to achieve the desires of men over their own, so gender expectations become

artificially narrated. The surgery echoes Chu’s explanation: “gender is not just the misogynistic

expectations a female internalizes but also *the process internalizes itself*, the self’s gentle suicide

in the name of someone *else’s* desires, someone *else’s* narcissism” (35). Chu’s argument of

gender is expansive, yet all females commit this process of desiring for another but Black Jack



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Figure 1

rebels. While Black Jack offers the nurse a chance to clear her name at the cost of becoming the object of desire of another, Black Jack does not allow himself to fall prey to the wishes of others. Therefore, while complicated, Tezuka’s critique of gender does in some small part realize Chu’s expression of rebelling against being the object of desire—a female. In Tezuka’s eyes, a character must become a “female” and accept the burden of self-negation; otherwise, they risk remaining a woman that does not or cannot self-negate for the desires of others. “Females” are welcome back into society, and women are quickly ostracized. For Tezuka to be a member of society, characters must conform to Chu’s universal female gender.

Tezuka drew the nurse (Miss Yamada) with a much larger set of expressive eyes after becoming the object of desire for another. It is as if the nurse is fully realized as a character within manga once she fulfills its aesthetics expectations of a shoujo heroine. The nurse may rise from side character to shoujo heroine through a change of appearance. However, Chu complicates this heroic rise by showcasing that the nurse internalizes and externalizes a misogynistic expectation for beauty. Tezuka illustrates the imbalance in power between men and women and critiquing the double standard for women to change to be seen and taken seriously. Black Jack originally asked the nurse, “You still want to get even, yes?” (Tezuka 88). Black Jack can help make the hospital pay the cheated nurse (Tezuka 83). By the chapter’s end, the nurse attains an



Figure 2

artificially accepted level of beauty and payout. The change of appearance is a product of necessity to trick the lying doctor. The new appearance lets the nurse reintegrate into a society that previously ostracized her. The nurse changes from victim to picturesque heroine because the medium of manga enhances simple markers like enlarged eyes to denote a role change. A “female” shoujo heroine “wins,” but the price is a body transformation to meet the desires of society and the manga’s expectation of a shoujo heroine.

Tezuka criticizes society for demanding women to self-negate to be accepted within “Your Mistake” after realizing that Black Jack was the surgeon who constructed the beautiful face of the celebrity that the nurse later copied (Tezuka 96). In figure 1, we can examine the paneling to witness Black Jack’s reaction to the lying doctor’s infatuation with the singer’s

beauty. Manga is read from top right to bottom left. Scott McCloud tells us that our perception of time changes based upon the size and arrangements of panels in comics/manga (101). Looking at figure 2, we naturally linger on the bottom left panel because of its size and final position. The final panel offers “closure” to the chapter and Black Jack’s early laughter in figure 1. McCloud argues that the fractured nature of manga creates distortions between our perception of time and space on the page, and the audience collaborates to connect panels into more significant ideas that process is called “closure” (67). The finale reveals that Black Jack constructed the singer’s face, which



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Figure 3

acts like a coda within the music that brings us back to an early part of the song. We close out the chapter with an emphasis placed on Black Jack’s laughter as a criticism of the artificially enhanced conception of beauty that becomes the expectation of men and society. The artificial beauty standard is ironically created in part by Black Jack, yet he does not

subscribe to subjecting “women” to meet an absurd standard. By helping the nurse, she becomes a “female” with Black Jack’s aid. However, Black Jack does not influence society to adopt artificial beauty standards, and he wants to aid characters by fulfilling their desire at the cost of self-negation.

Shounen manga like *Black Jack* is written for young boys, and Go emphasizes the “multiplicity of reading” that offers exciting possibilities when we consider women within *Black Jack* and especially Pinoko within the context of a shoujo reading (75). First, we should consider Pinoko’s appearance with large eyes and a prepubescent body that does not age, and she frequently claims to be the wife of Black Jack. Thus, Pinoko is a quintessential shoujo character, but how does “The SL Called Life” complicate and critique this shoujo trope? Published in the 1970s, Tezuka’s *Black Jack* marks a shift from early works that offered didactic lessons, and he introduces a morally gray area into his plot construction (Phillips 82). The change was in response to the readership demands for gekiga (dramatic picture) that depicted violence and had more realistically drawn characters (Phillips 68-69). *Black Jack* is more complicated to read than Tezuka’s earlier work, like *Astro Boy*, which allows the audience room for readings and interpretations. This chapter escapes the trappings of a shounen manga by being set within Black Jack’s dream. A dream where his desire for his close friends manifests by the transformation of Kisaragi and Pinoko. According to the chapter “What Boys Will Be: A Study of Shounen Manga” from *Manga: An Anthology of Global and Cultural Perspectives*, shounen typically follows the hero’s journey (Mathews 72-73). Within “The SL Called Life,” we see no such hero’s journey or any action play out before the audience. Instead, Black Jack’s female friends confront him, so a shoujo reading of *Black Jack* may illuminate greater meaning.

Tezuka's chapter "The SL Called Life" of *Black Jack*, Volume 11, introduces audiences to women who refuse the self-negation of being females. Kisaragi confronts Black Jack while they transition from male to woman on the page. Black Jack can see Kisaragi for whom they chose to be. For emphasis, we see Kisaragi's face and hands circled in two panels of figure 4. We can see in the fourth panel how Tezuka creates a longing look on their face. Looking at Kisaragi's hands, we focus on the overlapping hands on their lap while one digit extends towards Black Jack. Of most tremendous significance from figure 4, the final exchange on the page occurs while both characters have their eyes closed.

A character with closed eyes is not honest; within this exchange, we see them discussing their jobs (Tezuka 293). Black Jack and Kisaragi share a moment of irony once readers realize the romantic history between the two.



Figure 4

They were both medical students that harbored affections for one another, yet Kisaragi became sick with ovarian cancer and becomes unsexed in her own eyes. Kisaragi elects to embrace a male identity, and the romance between the two doctors ends. They refuse "femaleness" by embracing their desires over the desires of others. As the conversation develops, Kisaragi transitions to a more feminized figure and sports a ponytail, hourglass figure, and large round shoujo eyes. Kisaragi's transition is a result of Black Jack's subconscious desire. Chu explains, "gender transition, no matter the direction, is always a process of becoming a canvas for someone else's fantasy" (Chu 30). Chu helps to analyze the competing desires and their effect on Black Jack when Chu writes, "To be female is to let someone else do your desiring for you, at your own expense" (Chu 11). However, Kisaragi does not transition for Black Jack's sake but out of their desire. Out of a combination of circumstance and choice, Kisaragi avoids

becoming an object of desire for Black Jack and society. Kisaragi appears feminized in Black Jack's dream, but Black Jack does not act on the physical transition because Kisaragi does not become a female in Black Jack's eyes. Black Jack's subconscious betrays his desires, yet he knows that their relationship is only professional in the real world. We read into the romantic tension between them, but Black Jack accepts Kisaragi's decision to find their happiness.

By re-reading Black Jack's dream as a shoujo manga, we can further analyze his relationship with Pinoko, but we need to define the shoujo genre. Black Jack and Pinoko's partnership collides with the shounen expectations of the manga. Shoujo manga is for young girls and distinctive from shounen manga because of their plot and themes. While reading *Black Jack* as a shoujo manga, Pinoko becomes the heroine. The chapter "Shoujo Manga in Japan and Abroad" by Jennifer Prough is helpful to understand standard conventions, themes and focuses within shoujo manga. Prough writes, "Girls' manga tends to revolve around issues of love and friendship, and is filled with unrequited love, love triangles, friendships forged through the trials and tribulations of high school life, and the like" (Prough 94). Pinoko constantly has her affections towards Black Jack rebuffed because she possesses the body of a child. She cannot do anything to change her appearance. A "collision" would seem to arise between the meeting of the shoujo and shounen readings of Black Jack and Pinoko's relationship. According to Susan Napier, shounen reading would see Pinoko as "the perfect non-threatening female, the idealized daughter/younger sister whose femininity is essentially sexless" (qtd. in Gwynne 330). Pinoko's characterization is accurately shoujo, but her appearance belies her roles and agency within the manga. Pinoko in all previous chapter of *Black Jack* illustrate her as a young girl, but she

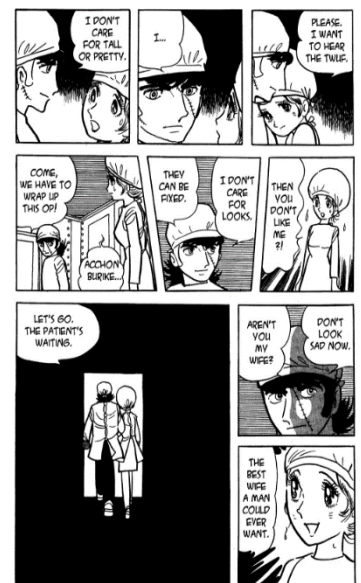


Figure 3

becomes a licensed nurse to help Black Jack; she is also the cook and of the house. While Pinoko occupies an “idealized daughter/younger sister” role within the narrative, she defies restrictions from society.

We witness Black Jack confronted by his assistant Pinoko (in figure 3) as an adult and not a girl. Pinoko can transcend her status as a representation of a typical shoujo character by literally growing up. The chapter follows the genre trends of a shoujo manga and positions Black Jack as the main love interest of the heroine to examine relationships within a dream. Tezuka’s “The SL Called Life” offers a progressive read of women with the shounen genre, and it follows the plot conventions of a shoujo manga. Figure 5 illustrates Black Jack and Pinoko talking about beauty, and Pinoko is insistent on hearing the doctor confess his love. Black Jack refutes Pinoko’s assumption that now as a “tall and pwetty [sic]” adult that he will affirm his love for her. Pinoko, like the nurse from “Your Mistake,” embodies the internal and external desires of patriarchal beauty expectations.

Nevertheless, Black Jack says, “I don’t care for tall or pretty . . . I don’t care for looks. They can be fixed” (Tezuka 305). Black Jack again refuses to define a relationship through the lens of desire and beauty standards he knows are artificial. Instead, he sees Pinoko as a “woman” rather than a “female” that needs to self-negate to continue their companionship. Black Jack invites Pinoko to aid him with surgery, thus accepting Pinoko’s professional status as a nurse, albeit her looks are that of a young girl in the real world. Moreover, figure 5 closes with Black Jack referring to Pinoko as “the best wife a man could ever want.” Black Jack acknowledges their relationship because of the growth of understanding between them within the dream. Their relationship



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Figure 5

transcends stereotypical romances of melodrama and takes on the form of companionship both personally and professionally. The narrative refutes a stereotypical ending of finding love after becoming beautiful and noticed. Black Jack always saw Pinoko as a partner in life outside the societal and shoujo expectations of romance.

Black Jack critiques gender roles, and Chu's "females" illustrate the degree to which women become the object of desire for men and society. Meanwhile, Pinoko and Kisaragi are "women" who refuse to self-negate and receive Black Jack's acceptance as individuals. *Black Jack* depicts the pressure for women to become "females," and "women" face obstacles towards acceptance within society by not conforming to artificial conceptions of beauty. Black Jack may help women achieve "female" status, but he does so out of their desire to be accepted, which Chu argues is the internalized misogyny. Neither "women" nor "females" are entirely content, but Black Jack's acceptance of Pinoko and Kisaragi open a progressive path. By being aware of self-negation, we may aid "women" by accepting their desires and avoid foisting our expectations on them. It will take the combined efforts of men and women to erase misogyny and self-negation from society. *Black Jack* warns us of the dangers of complicity by showcasing how limiting sexism is for men and especially women.

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The Victimization of Women within Bond's *Lear* and the Intersectional Gap within Bond's
 "Social Morality"

Edward Bond is an award-winning playwright that adapted *King Lear* into a play about the excessive use of aggression and violence by humanity. Bond delivers his message by caricaturing women as only evil beings that become victims and oppressors. Bond positions the titular Lear as our lens for experience and change, and we glance over the roles of Lear's two daughters. Bond articulates within the preface that "Lear did not have to destroy his daughters' innocence, he does so only because he doesn't understand his situation" (LXV). Bond argues that Lear is at fault for teaching violence to rule over society but claims Lear is not at fault for corrupting his daughters. Hence, Lear's daughters become vehicles for a violent cycle without further characterization beyond tyrannical rulers. An adaptation does not need to redress every error or fault within the original; however, Bond adapts *King Lear's* three daughters to showcase the cyclical nature of violence as learned and repeated from Lear. However, Bond is at fault for failing to redress the unredeemable status of the daughters. The three daughters have no role beyond copying the means of oppression that Lear began, and their roles indicate a lack of intersectional commentary about gender. Bond decides to have Lear destroy his two daughters to teach the audience and Lear and offer society a path towards reconciling the violence that erupts within the narrative. *Lear* preserves the victimization of women and caricatures to achieve Bond's argument about "social morality:" a response to the state's behavior, where "irrational" rulers perpetrate violence, and people accept violence as the normal reaction to dissent (Bond LXI). Women are limited because Lear perpetuates an irrational, violent rule until his usurpation by his daughter Bodice and Fontanelle. Later, Cordelia becomes a victim of the violence used to justify socialized morality that Bond credits as the play's root problem with society (Bond LXI).

Cordelia has the opportunity to develop further an intersectional space for commentary on gender politics within Bond's theory of socialized aggression. However, Bond decides to forgo the opportunity and position women as only antagonists to Lear. I argue that Bond's social morality primarily victimizes and corrupts women, yet Bond seems to relinquish responsibility for further explaining Lear's roles for gender.

Bond intended to adapt a masterpiece and update the protagonist Lear, for Bond's "Rational Theatre:" "Theatre, when it's doing what it was created to do, demonstrates order in the chaos, the ideal in the ordinary, history in the present, rational in the seemingly irrational" (qtd. in Jones 506). The "irrational" element in Bond's plays and *Lear* is the corruptive nature of society, seemingly a totalitarian state/monarchy. Bond's use of "rationality means socialism instead of capitalism or fascism" (Hern xiii). Bond's adaptation brings society and people into conflict, so Bond's Lear realizes that the state he ruled over is causing suffering. The wall is the symbol of human suffering, prejudice, government, and society's corruptive influence.

After being blinded in prison, Lear kneels by the wall he was building and realizes the suffering and corruption he perpetuated. Lear says, "I am the King! I kneel by this wall. How many lives have I ended here?" (Bond 66). Bond can redress what he saw as the flaw within Shakespeare's *King Lear* by providing a bleak resolution. Lear dies as he attempts to deconstruct the wall independently by acting on his desires to better society. Lear draws the interest of a lone worker as the play closes (Bond 88). Scholarship and Bond showcase a strong interest in developing the protagonist Lear whereas Fontanelle, Bodice, and Cordelia are secondary. Bond consistently uses these women to develop Lear's awareness of corruption, as Lear declares, "Men destroy themselves and say it's their duty? It's not possible! How can they be so abused? Cordelia doesn't know what she's doing! I must tell her—write to her!" (67). Daniel Jones

highlights Cordelia's role in proliferating suffering by continuing the wall's construction (508). Jones notes that a power imbalance is created between Lear and Cordelia when Lear espouses the deconstruction of the wall.

As an oppressor and victim, Cordelia becomes secondary to the usurped king because Bond positions "irrational" and "rational" characters along gendered lines. Casting Lear as rational overshadows Cordelia's potential development from victim into rational ruler; instead, she remains an irrational oppressor. While Cordelia rose to power after Fontanelle and Bodice's tyrannical rule, Cordelia is a direct victim of violence as power shifts from Lear to his two daughters. A rebellion begins, and Cordelia rises to the rebel leader, then ruler. However, she continues to perpetuate the construction of the wall and uses violence to curb dissenters. Cordelia, Fontanelle, and Bodice are rulers that mirror Lear's irrational, violent rule from the beginning of the play. Meanwhile, a newly rational Lear lives as a pauper that openly dissents from the rule of Cordelia's government. Lear becomes rational by advocating for political reform, yet the irrational plagues Cordelia to rule violently to achieve her ends. Bond establishes rational and irrational characters to create conflict and highlight pervasive violence within society. However, Bond accomplishes his message along gendered lines that cast all major female characters as irrational and violent without the possibility to change or redeem themselves.

While Bond needed to create conflict between irrational and rational characters, an adaptation should offer commentary on the gendered conception of rational and irrational characters. Jones can contextualize Bond's approach to rationalizing an unjust society that Lear rules over. However, Jones fails to contextualize the subordination of women within Bond's "dialectic of aggression:" an imposition of violence that is socially moralized by people and

irrationally concluded by the state (Bond LXV). Unfortunately, Bond fails to position women within roles beyond caricature or obstacle for Lear to learn and overcome on his path towards realization. Women are cast as both victims and oppressors to fulfill the “dialectic of aggression” that Lear utilized during the play’s opening. Major female characters only enter the plot to become obstacles or a means for Lear to learn, so Cordelia, Bodice, and Fontanelle become interchangeable evils for the sake of Lear’s enlightenment and redemption.

Bodice and Fontanelle secure power through violence, and the way they display power render them as shallow-evil caricatures. After Bodice and Fontanelle capture Warrington, they brutally torture him (Bond 14-16). The violence is juxtaposed with a performance of gender roles when Bodice is knitting as the torture of Warrington is ongoing. It is chilling that the pair can go from hoping to marry Warrington to maiming him (Bond 10-11). Bodice then takes the needle to stab Warrington in the ear, and finally, they leave. Bond illustrates the fulfillment of the “dialectic of aggression” by torturing Warrington, while Bodice and Fontanelle, as representatives of the state, remove a political dissident that sided with King Lear. There is no positive or progressive reading of Bodice and Fontanelle, and the two are cast as irredeemable even though their politically fueled violence results from Lear’s example. Lear is redeemed, but his daughters cannot be, nor can Cordelia exist as anything other than a ruthless ruler.

Bodice and Fontanelle are a worse derivative adaptation of Goneril and Reagan. Bodice and Fontanelle operate within Bond’s narrative as caricatures within act one, which Bond describes as “a world dominated by myth” (Bond LXVI). Two violent sisters use duplicitous means and torture to secure power, so we as an audience associate women as especially corruptible to power. Bodice and Fontanelle repeat Lear’s “irrational” revel in their newly attained political power through violence. The sisters act for selfish reasons and are inserted as

flat antagonists to Lear while he begins his life as a pauper. Power flips like in many Shakespeare plays, but clearly, this isn't for comedic effect. Bodice and Fontanelle are representatives of Bond's "dialectics of aggression:" ". . . it [a child] does not get the reassurance it needs, and in its fear, it identifies with the people who have power over it. That is, it accepts their view of the situation, their judgment of who is right and wrong-- their morality . . . social morality" (Bond LXI). As a parent, Lear fails to provide the reassurance to nurture and rear his daughters, so they become susceptible to his destructive "social morality." Bodice and Fontanelle serve as the play's initial derivative of King Lear's brand of corrupt "social morality." The sisters learn firsthand when Lear had a laborer executed for slowing the progress of his wall (Bond 4). His daughter bore witness and adopted this same cool cruelty to affirm their brand of moral justice. Bodice and Fontanelle inherit Lear's legacy by perpetuating a corrupt "social morality" that repeats violence as a means for further political motivations and consolidating power.

Bond's Lear shapes the conditioned response to inflict violence on dissidents by having his daughters witness the execution of a worker, and the narratives repeat violent act after violent act because of Lear's reign normalizing a corrupt "social morality." According to Bond:

social morality-- now has all the force of the fear and panic that created it. Morality stops being something people want and becomes what they are terrified to be without . . . It is a threat, a weapon used against their most fundamental desire for justice, without which they are not able to be happy or allow others to be happy . . . They are obsessed with a need for censorship. . . . (Bond LXI)

Social morality is learned behavior, according to Bond. Hence, dissidents are the victims of irrational rulers. Bodice and Fontanelle spread this corruption of morality within the play and act to mitigate political rivalry by cutting out Warrington's tongue (Bond 15). The silencing of

dissidence is a motif within *Lear* and pairs with Bond's "dialectics of aggression" as a tool for maintaining the "law and order" and perpetuating injustice within society (Bond LIX). Bond's characterization of Bodice and Fontanelle is an extension of Lear's "irrationality," and Lear's daughter copies of Lear that happen to be women. The play eschews gendered commentary on "rational" or "irrational" goals. Instead, Fontanelle and Bodice are a facsimile of Lear's "irrational" self. The presence of Bodice and Fontanelle are narrative necessities to force Lear to reconsider and reach "rationality, and the daughters serve no other purpose.

Women are the ultimate victims of "social morality," and "irrational" rulers meet a violent end to realize the cycle of violence. Ultimately, Bodice and Fontanelle are captured by the rebel Cordelia's forces and executed within the dungeon that imprisons Lear. While Lear indoctrinated his daughters with the "dialectic of aggression," Cordelia becomes a victim of violence that accepts a corrupt "social morality." The rape of Cordelia upends her notions of moral justice, and she states, "when we have power, these things won't be necessary" (Bond 45). "These things" include killing the enemy soldier offstage that solidifies her acceptance of the corrupt "social morality" and its continued brutality. Women witness and feel a corrupt socialized morality, and their reaction is to enter into the "dialectics of aggression" and meet violence with violence. While Bond's message of power corrupting morality crosses gender lines, the redemption within the play is for Lear alone as Bodice, Fontanelle, and Cordelia remain trapped within Lear's original cycle of violent autocracy.

While Cordelia transitions from victim to rebel ruler, her powerlessness becomes abused power. Women become brutalized and brutalize. I agree with Ruth F. Ledebur's response to Cordelia's rape, "Even though women in Bond's plays are apt to commit deeds of extreme cruelty, those that are committed against them appear to be even more degrading" (60).

Cordelia's rape transforms her from an innocent wife and expectant mother to a victim of social morality. Ledebur writes, "rape, the ultimate violation of female integrity" (60). Ledebur explains that "domination" of one sex over the other tips the balance of the sexes and further problematizes Bond's gender politics within *Lear* (Ledebur 60). Cordelia's characterization and learned "social morality" are a direct result of violence within society. Even at the pinnacle of power, Cordelia continues perpetuating violence by rationalizing a corrupt "social morality" that Lear introduces. There is no redemption or escape from Cordelia's characterization of a victim to an autocrat. Bond adapts King Lear's final daughter as another token woman within the "Rational Theatre." Lear's final antagonist is a victim of his "irrational" facsimiles in Bodice and Fontanelle, and Cordelia succeeds in having Lear killed for repeating the dissent of Lear's first executed worker. Cordelia remains a victim that will continue to victimize others for the sake of a learned corrupt "social morality."

Jenny S. Spencer articulates the strong tie between Bond's *Lear* and *King Lear* while highlighting the specific points criticized and potentially misinterpreted. Spencer offers another analysis of *Lear* because Spencer believes the problem is comparing both works; when comparing "the conception of tragedy which mediates it," it would better allow entry into Bond's approach to his adaptation (81). Hence, Spencer offers a possible solution to Bond's subordination of women. Spencer argues the need for Bond's work to be "re-read" by understanding what Shakespeare has done with *King Lear*, which allows Bond's adaptation to create "a new narrative with strictly contemporary relevance." However, this contemporary relevance is about political states, justice, and socially corrupt morality. There is no space for women's issues or the intersectional nature of writing about women and politics due to Bond's focus on social conflict. While Spencer talks about *Lear* as an adaptation, Spencer's criteria for

an adaptation are not explicit. Although, Linda Hutcheon's criteria for adaptation showcase the shortcomings of Lear's daughters: "An acknowledged transposition of a recognizable other work or works. A creative and interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging. An extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (8). Bond's adaptation may doom and limit women because of its strong connection to the Shakespeare version. The echo of misogyny and subordination of women is bound within Bond's cyclical violence that especially victimizes women.

Cordelia fails to portray an agent of power and change from a female perspective and becomes another autocrat wielding power for her learned "social morality." Cordelia's husband reaches out to Lear to stop speaking against the new state. He futilely argues that the new government will be different even though they use similar tactics of violence. Bond writes, "I watched, and I said we won't be at the mercy of brutes anymore, we'll live a new life and help one another. The government's creating that new life- you must stop speaking against us" (83). When Cordelia pleads with Lear to stop fomenting dissent within the populace, it is another act towards censorship that began with Bodice and Fontanelle silencing Warrington. We know that Cordelia is operating under the same corrupt "social morality" that Lear, Bodice, and Fontanelle used to affirm control. Bond's adaptation necessitates a "salvaging" of Lear's daughters' characterization role beyond victims (Hutcheon 8). Otherwise, we continue to victimize women for the narrative fulfillment, when adapting women can add nuance and depth to the overall denouement of the play.

Lear fails to provide guidance or commentary on the intersectional gap within the gender politics of the narrative. Bodice, Fontanelle, and Cordelia become victims and victimizers for the play's corrupt "social morality." Bond's adaptation of *King Lear* fails to "salvage" Lear's

daughters. Instead, the narrative relies on the daughters as caricatures and tokens for the former “irrational” Lear. Bond’s treatment of Cordelia is especially wasteful because she wins the war against Lear’s “irrational” facsimiles: Bodice and Fontanelle. However, she prolongs the corrupt “social morality” that leads to her victimization. Meanwhile, Lear attains a “rational” understanding of the evils of violence and advocates for change, yet he becomes another victim of Cordelia’s autocratic rule. Bond’s *Lear* is a failed adaptation of *King Lear* because the play misses every opportunity to utilize the female characters in a role beyond victim, token, and victimizer.

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“Fascism, Memory, and Antisemitism:” The Linkage between Memory and Trauma

A memory haunts and traumatizes. It is common knowledge that fascism was a shelter for racial purity and antisemitism, but the connection between Nazi Germany and Medieval England unpacks the roots of trauma. W.G. Sebald's *The Emigrants* displays the overlapping reservoirs of trauma that braid together post-WWII Germany and Medieval England as simultaneous temporalities of prejudices and trauma. Sebald's narrative examines the resulting memory and trauma associated with surviving and remembering the Holocaust. The memory and trauma are stored within graveyards and landmarks to honor the loss. People inherit generational trauma secondhand through postmemory as the conduit. I argue that Sebald's *The Emigrants* encapsulates the generational trauma and memory underpinned by the braiding of prejudice across time, and the practice of postmemory further traumatizes future generations.

Geraldine Heng's concept of “braiding” pre-modern and contemporary temporalities is essential to examine the memories of the Holocaust (22). Braiding allows us to see the overlap between the pre-modern and contemporary forms of prejudice as simultaneous temporalities linked. For example, Medieval England and Nazi Germany are known for racial purity and state-sanctioned antisemitism. Both exist as overlapping temporalities where the medieval presence informs our understanding of Nazi Germany's discriminatory practices. The concept of braiding is essential for analyzing Sebald's *The Emigrants* because the narrative braids past and present to examine memories of trauma. There is an inescapable connection between the past and present captured within *The Emigrants*. For example, Sebald's efforts to add veracity to his text by placing photos of people illustrate the linkage between image and memory and the possible credulity we give towards photos. Sebald must include realistic images; otherwise, we may doubt the story. The photos are anchors for remembering trauma across time. Heng's braiding is

essential for framing our reading of Sebald because we can consider the past and present as simultaneous.

Pre-modern cultural practices gave validation and reason to the oppression of Jews and the idea of racial purity that later became adopted by fascist regimes. Helen Young talks at length about the roots of a racial obsession during Medieval Anglo-Saxon culture, “These characteristics included certain martial masculinity, racial purity stemming from the long practice of endogamy . . .” (43). Its simplicity was effective, and Mussolini even adopted an akin racial doctrine that targeted Jews for ostracism (Kertzer & Mokosch 463). Once introduced to a different culture and people, the cultural braiding of racial purity does not have a contemporary link to buttress its newly established history. Fascist regimes appropriate medieval practices to target vulnerable minorities for violence, and fascist Germany incorporated medieval notions of racial purity to establish a hierarchy of race to oust the Jews and others.

To escape prejudice, people would do their best to pass in public. Passing in terms of racial identity is discussed in both Heng’s work and Sebald’s novel for the sake of survival and avoiding punitive or prejudiced treatment. In Heng’s book *England and the Jews*, she writes:

But did a Jew in fact disappear as a Jew – leaving his/her race behind – and transubstantiation into a Christian at conversion? Historians point to sticky residues that uneasily remained. Sometimes the residues took the form of a permanent marking by name, in which a person would be stuck with his/her erstwhile state of Jewishness. (61)

Antisemitic fervor and racial purity certainly spurred on isolating and singling out Jews in pre-modern and contemporary society. However, passing raises multiple selves within a singular person and creates a temporal rift between identities. Passing does not preclude trauma. Passing becomes another facet of trauma to endure as the denial of self-identity is a repression of the self.

While prejudice remains, certain members of the minority pass with less prejudicial treatment based on their features and abandoning their minority identity in public and private life. The practice of passing still exists, and the act of passings remains a partial escape from prejudice. It seems, as is the case, with the designation “convert,” Jews were still able to be singled out for prejudicial attention when it suited demagogues (Heng 61-62). Passing limits the external abuses of prejudice; however, it creates a different form of trauma by the necessity of accepting another alias as a means for survival or marginal success.

While passing does not prevent trauma, Sebald showcases the power of combining memory and image to realize a generational look at trauma after WWII and the Holocaust. Trauma transcends time because of the severity of state-sponsored racialized violence that braids the medieval and post-WWII era. Memory is a direct reservoir for built-up generational trauma. Sebald’s accounts of traumatic narrative exploration illustrate and write about the conflicting situation of being traumatized and being without direct traumatic experience that earlier family or people survived. Sebald asks us how the mere knowledge of proximate trauma entails a marking of residual inherited trauma. While no two experiences are the same, to witness the trauma of genocide is different from experiencing it secondhand; however, both events leave an impact and an unresolved memory of trauma. To this extent, trauma is infectious and spans generations, and Heng’s braiding contextualizes the generational trauma as simultaneous.

Generational trauma is bound together by the traumatization of people across time. Cathy Caruth argues, “the traumatized, we might say, carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess” (5). In order to relieve the burden of history, we utilize, as James Young notes *postmemory*: “a narrative hybrid that interweaves both events of the Holocaust and the ways they are passed down to us” (qtd. in

Baumgarten 267). Sebald's text begins on the foundation of racialized trauma braided across time, and survivors cannot process generational trauma. Sebald constructs a narrative that does not overwhelm audiences with the history of trauma; instead, we learn of the effects and how trauma passes through postmemory.

While the graveyard acts as a vehicle for postmemory, Sebald's protagonist imagines the departed family member (224). Touching the gravestone, the protagonist becomes emotional, "I imagined her pen in hand all by herself, bent with bated breath over her work; and now, as I write these lines, it feels as if I had lost her, and as if I could not get over the loss despite the many years that have passed since her departure" (224). While postmemory is a means to communicate trauma, we see postmemory traumatize the observer. Caruth states, "To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event" (4-5). Sebald characterizes his protagonist as possessed by the image of the departed writing. The gravestone serves as a conduit for the transfer of postmemory at the cost of re-traumatizing visitors. Sebald lingers on gravesites so that we can witness the protagonist's reaction. When the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is visited, Sebald touches upon the residual "oppressiveness and misery" of standing outside (140). Merely visiting a graveyard or holy site does not constitute the passage of postmemory. Sebald emphasizes the accumulated waste in the streets and ravines of the holy city (140). Sebald draws attention to the lack of respect for the dead and historical significance for the city as a site of generational memory.

Memorial sites like the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are spaces that collect traumatic memories for the next generation. Postmemory is a means to honor the dead, but people leave with a residual generational trauma by remembering the dead. Sebald may not offer answers to trauma, but the narration of trauma through memorials and holy sites enables audiences to

witness the effects of postmemory. In *The Emigrant*, three lives are explored and given ostensible veracity through photos; however, the images act as another touchstone for witnessing and mixing memory with fiction to fill in the stolen absences from the past. Memories of the Holocaust results as memory tendrils that possess survivors and future generations through the transfer of postmemory. However, fictive retellings grounded in historically informed narratives do not dishonor the memory of the lost. Instead, it informs survivors and contemporary readers of the potentialities of people that were lost. Memorial sites hold names and dates, and spaces for the lost unknowns; Sebald is re-enkindling a space of absence to honor the forgotten and missing by combining fiction and photos.

Sebald narrates postmemory and residual trauma experiences across generations because we cannot forget the loss. By establishing pre-modern history as a starting point of trauma, we braid the pre-modern and contemporary histories alongside the past trauma for contemporary audiences. Sebald's approach towards postmemory and landmarks of trauma connect the past/present and attempts to recognize the braid up of history while untangling a space for new discussion towards understanding trauma and memory. By uncovering the roots of prejudices in Medieval history, we can see prejudice anchored across time. The rise of fascism and antisemitism are constant threats that exist as temporalities that can appear today. By honoring the memories of trauma, we must be vigilant against the inevitable rise of prejudice tomorrow.

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