Beyond the Monomyth:
Jung and the Children's Book in the Adult Imagination

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Robinson College

23rd December 2022

This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any work that has already been submitted before for any degree or other qualification except as declared in the preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the Faculty of Education Degree Committee.

Abstract: *'Beyond the Monomyth: Jung and the Children's Book in the Adult Imagination', Andrew Peter McCormack*

I developed my interest in Jungian theory and children's literature when I began investigating literature which embeds the children's book within adult storyworlds. My meta-level analysis of the children's book in the adult cultural imagination evidenced a deep relationship between core Jungian concepts and the construction and consumption of the children's book, which I argue has come to function as an inheritor to myth, legend, folklore and the fairytale in providing a shared lexicon of images by which individuals and communities come to and continue to understand themselves and one another.

My research evidences how four core Jungian concepts - that of the complex; the inner or eternal child; the shadow; and the collective unconscious - are illustrated, dramatised, and challenged by cultural depictions of the children's book in adult fiction, thereby demonstrating the deep interconnection between Jung and the children's book. This thesis seeks to reveal and explore the depth of the relationship between Jungian theory and the children's book, which has been overshadowed in both the literary academy and the popular imagination by an undue focus on the monomyth template - or hunting for iterations of the hero's journey - developed by post-Jungian thinkers, and a reductive dilution of Jungian concepts de-contextualised from Jung's own rich, multi-faceted and challenging philosophy and psychology.

Frank McLynn asserts in his 1996 biography of C.G. Jung that Jung 'never wrote anything significant on child psychology', and 'always found the subject a bore' (517). A significant gap in the literature evidences an acceptance of this misreading of Jung's work, which this thesis seeks to address. The publication in 2010 of *Children's Dreams*, notes from Jung's seminars on the subject given between 1936 - 1940, provided me with a methodological as well as conceptual starting point for this project. It is true that Jung did not analyse the dreams of children per se, but his attention to the dreams of children as remembered by them in adulthood speaks to my thesis that the symbolic children's book functions in parallel to the remembered childhood dream: as a nexus of images and ideas of significance to one's self-perception and interaction with others in broader social networks and cultures throughout the life cycle. Children's literature scholarship and childhood studies, too, are in the midst of a deepening engagement with cross-generational networks and the phenomenon of recursive adult

engagement with the culture of childhood. Thus this intervention speaks in a timely way both to Jungian communities and to scholars of children's literature and culture.

I challenge McLynn's assertions that Jungian theory is of little interest to scholars of children's literature and the culture of childhood, and its inverse: that children's culture offers little foothold for the serious Jungian scholar. My method for analysis draws upon the recent work of Jungian literary theorist Susan Rowland, whose conviction 'that Jungians can aid the study of literature while literary critics can similarly inform Jungian psychology' (2019: 1) offers an alternative to the monotonous monomyth method - or what Terence Dawson terms 'instant Jung' (2008: 290) - responsible for Jung's recent relative elision from the literary academy. Jung is conspicuous for his absence, in particular, from the field of psychoanalytic children's literature scholarship: the 2000s saw the publication of Karen Coats's Lacanian study *Looking Glasses and Neverlands* (2004), and the 2010s Kenneth Kidd's *Freud in Oz* (2011), which address Jung's influence in the field only cursorily. Kidd's assertion that 'not a few Jungian analyses of the fairy tale and other genres are vulgar and reductive, missing out on the complexities of Jung's actual discourse' (2011: 11) articulates part of the challenge I aim to meet in this project, in bringing Jung's actual discourse into dialogue with contemporary texts of significance to the study of children's literature.

As my analysis will show, the neglect of Jung within the academy of children's literature has not impeded the potential for the relationship between Jungian theory and the children's book to flourish in the hands of artists and authors. The children's book functions, instead, in the adult imagination as a particularly rich site for the dramatisation of the maturation process, and thus as a literalisation of Jung's concept of individuation, or the integration of consciousness and the unconscious in the achievement of psychic selfhood. By contextualising the symbolic children's book within adult culture I interrogate the potential this provides for interaction between real children and the remembered child of the now-adult reader and author. The index of the children's book can be read as a focalising point within the life cycle: a multivalent nexus offering the potential for the reader's self-knowledge to deepen and change while the text remains ostensibly the same. In Jungian teleology, one looks back so as to look forward, and one looks forward so as to better navigate the present. The implications of my work suggest the Jungian lens as one of crucial significance to understanding children's literature: what it has done, what it is doing, and what it might yet go on to do.

Preface

A citation in chapter two of this thesis refers to a book review of which I am co-author: Hunter, M. & McCormack, A. (2022). 'Book Review: No Kids Allowed by Michelle Ann Abate'. *Literature & History*, 30: 2.

Acknowledgements

This doctorate is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Maria McCormack (1958 - 2022). Thank you, for everything.

I would like to thank the AHRC and Robinson College for funding this research and for facilitating additional training at the Jung Institut, Zurich among myriad other opportunities for which I am deeply grateful, and the British Council and UKRI for supporting me during my Fellowship at the John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Thank you to my supervisor Dr. Zoe Jaques of Homerton College, University of Cambridge and Dr. Christopher Hauke of Goldsmiths College, University of London for their guidance, and for their time and patience in reading my many early drafts of each chapter. Thanks, too, to Dr. Alistair Swiffen and Dr. Natalie Lancer, for their support at the beginning and at the end of this project.

I have been so touched by the encouragement of colleagues old and new as I have made my journey through the course of my doctorate, and am very grateful for the generosity of time and spirit so many scholars have shown in listening to my ideas and in offering advice and inspiration. ‘One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings’ (C.G. Jung, C.W. 17: 249).

Thank you to my family and my friends, without whom none of this would have been possible at all, and a final thank you to the artists, thinkers and writers who have set me on, and keep me journeying deeper down, this endlessly enriching path.

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Introduction

This project is a tapestry I began with two threads: that of children's literature, and that of Jungian theory. This thesis argues that the two are already interwoven in the cultural consciousness: the texts I analyse show the patterns stretched over the loom of the adult imagination on which they have been tightly bound by artists, and can be perceived and appreciated by audiences and readers. It falls to me in this introduction, however, to unpick them in their separate critical colours. First I will provide a brief overview of the development of strands of research in children's literature scholarship most pertinent to my study here, and then an overview of the somewhat threadbare relationship between contemporary children's literature criticism and Jungian literary theory. After making the case for the timeliness of an intervention in bringing these two connected but critically estranged schools of literary criticism into fruitful methodological relationship with one another, I conclude by providing a brief overview of the four chapters which give shape to my analysis. On my finished tapestry we will see depicted the Jungian concepts of the complex; the inner or eternal child; the shadow; and the collective unconscious. Each multifaceted concept is interrogated through their representations in three texts, drawn from the genres of history, comedy, tragedy and futurity respectively. Together they dramatise my perception of the symbolic children's book as inheritor to a Jungian understanding of myth, legend, folklore and the fairytale, and their enculturating work in exploring and integrating the psyche in the adult imagination.

A note here first, though, on the terminology I have selected of the 'adult imagination'. In referring to adult literature I describe that from which children are intentionally excluded as audience or participant. Some critics navigate articulation of the disjunction between child and adult literatures by referring to the latter as 'mainstream', 'normative' or 'grown-up' to avoid confusion with sexually explicit material labelled with the adjective 'Adult'. My use of the 'adult imagination' in this project refers to multimodal contemporary fiction popularly received (either commercially or critically) by adults in the Anglosphere from the 1970s onward, roughly concomitant with the development of the field of children's literature research as a discrete branch of literary enquiry in its own right. The texts on which I draw are unified by their focus on the symbolic children's book, despite their modal and generic disparity. As a literary scholar, my interest lies primarily in close reading art as text. As such, analyses of film, television, graphic novels and plays alongside poems, short stories and novels are centred primarily on dialogue and the written word. The rich multimodal possibilities of the diverse art which contributes to the dramatisation of the children's book in the adult imagination merit further

attention in a study of visual media which lie beyond the boundaries of this present thesis, while evidencing here the rules and assumptions by which it is understood as a discrete symbol across form and genre.

A note, too, on my use of the word symbol or, more accurately, index. I borrow 'index' as a semiotic term from the lexicon of the logician and philosopher Charles Sanders Pierce (1932): unlike a sign or symbol, an index shows evidence of what's being represented (a good example being smoke denoting or implying fire), rather than assigning a single, fixed meaning to that thing itself. The potential multiplicities this concept encodes in a literary sense chimes with C. G. Jung's definition of 'the true symbol' as something which 'should be understood as an expression of an intuitive idea that cannot yet be formulated in any other or better way' (C.W. 15: 105)[1] rather than a 'sign' of fixed meaning. I find this definition a stimulating challenge in complicating any conception of the children's book as a fixed object or icon in the cultural imagination, reflected as such in adult fiction. Conceptualising the children's book as symbol in this Jungian sense will allow me to consider its potentialities as an index rather than icon, signifying more than one single fixed meaning, thus deepening my enquiry into the protean and multi-potentiate roles the children's book plays in the adult imagination.

Into the Abyss: Contextualising Children's Literature (and Children's Literature Criticism) in the Adult Imagination

Anxieties as to the status and definition of a 'children's literature' are built into the foundations of children's literature scholarship. Marah Gubar's argument that we should 'give up on this arduous and ultimately unenlightening task of generating a definition without giving up on the idea that "children's literature" is a coherent, viable category' (2011: 210), echoes Roger Sale's playful aphorism, by which Gubar bolsters her position, that 'everyone knows what children's literature is... until they're asked to define it' (1978: 1). Adult literature in which a children's book appears, however, is quite clearly that which children's literature is not: everyone within the storyworld of a text in which a children's book features understands it to be such, without necessarily defining it. Adult literature can become, then, a parameter by which the children's books which appear within it can be understood, if not defined.

[1] Embedded citations drawn from *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* [C.W.] will hereafter be styled Volume number: Paragraph number (e.g. [15: 105]).

Jacqueline Rose's claim, foundational to her psychoanalytic theory of children's literature's 'impossibility' is that '*Peter Pan* has never, in any easy way, been a book for children at all' (1984: 1). This acknowledgement still leaves room for the fact that although '*Peter Pan* was not originally intended for children' (5), it nevertheless did *become* a 'children's book [*Peter and Wendy*]', or was (mis)understood to have been one all along, with the attendant assumption as to the established public understanding of what makes a children's book. Rose's claim for the impossibility of children's fiction despite her selection of *Peter Pan* (the children's story originally caged within J. M. Barrie's adult novel *The Little White Bird*) as her case study on which to base her argument risks some irony. This selection contributes specifically to my thesis here that texts for adults featuring, or about, texts for children provide a means of understanding what sets these bodies of work apart – certainly within the fictional worlds of these adult stories, and, also, in the real world in which they both are written. That '[the story of *Peter Pan*] first appeared inside a novel for adults' and that 'in order for it to become a work for children, it was extracted from its source [in] an unmistakable act of censorship', in turn, by Rose's own argument, 'shows what cannot, or must not, be allowed to get into fiction for children' (5).

Whereas 'the definers and the antidefiners', per Gubar's formulation, argue either for children's literature's impossibility or for nailing down its defining characteristics, 'the idea that all children's texts share even a single trait that remains the same over time and across cultures is', for Gubar, 'untenable' (210). My project in contributing to this defining debate of children's literature studies is not seeking to identify traits which remain the same over times and across cultures, but rather to contextualise what is defined as, or understood to be, a children's book within an adult story world - a *particular* time and place - and to consider its, potentially changing and contradictory, resonances therein. By treating authors of contemporary fiction which concerns itself with the children's book as theorists of children's literature, this research will shed light on the (culturally, tempero-spatially specific) world in which these texts are written and (initially) received (or reinterpreted), and its (cultural, tempero-spatially specific) understanding of the children's book and its properties. In doing so, we can understand the role(s) children's books are understood to play in contemporary culture, and how this cultural understanding is rooted in popular Jungian discourse. I will review Jung and existing scholarship on the relationship between his theories and the construction and reception of children's literature specifically in due course; first, I will continue my survey of the relationship between the children's book and the adult culture in which it is embedded.

In our present society, the popular understanding of what constitutes a children's book would appear to be in rude health, judging by the contemporary publishing boom in what Michelle Ann Abate describes as 'juvenile-styled texts intended for an adult readership' (2020: 3). The current glut of parodies and nostalgic homages to the children's book necessarily play against an established archetypal image of what the children's book *should* be (or usually *is*) in subverting it so successfully. A year before I undertook this project, booksellers calculated *Five on Brexit Island*, a parody in the style of Enid Blyton, to have been the bestselling British book over the Christmas period (Press Association, 2017), and it has been impossible since then to walk into any bookshop or stationer in the U.K. without catching sight of merchandise inspired by the 1970s *Ladybird* books. Figures recently released by U.K. book sales monitor Nielsen indicate that '10.5 million works of children's fiction [almost 40% of total sales] were bought for readers aged 17 or over in 2018' (Ferguson, 2019). Not only parodies and homages to children's books appeal to contemporary adults' senses of humour and nostalgia, then: the children's books they parody and to which they pay homage are in increasing demand in their own right to adult audiences. Francis Spufford's *The Child That Books Built* (2002) can perhaps be traced as an early popular contributor to the concept of the children's book as a cultural object of commercial and philosophical importance for both children and adults in the recent literary imagination, as attested by its more recent spiritual sister-texts in Lucy Mangan's *Bookworm: a Memoir of Childhood Reading* (2018) and Katherine Rundell's *Why You Should Read Children's Books, Even Though You Are So Old and Wise* (2019).

Excluding the child, or rather, real child readers, from children's literature research is a source of some tension in debates shaping the field of children's literature studies today, with lines often drawn between 'book-centred' and 'child-centred' camps (Jones, 2006: 229). Research which also seeks to exclude the children's book itself from its parameters, analysing instead the adult imagination whence and in which the children's book exists whilst still ostensibly contributing to the field of children's literature studies, provokes yet more resistance. Perry Nodelman's primary, rather affronted, criticism of Virginia Blum's *Hide and Seek: The Child Between Psychoanalysis and Fiction* (1995) is in the 'lapse' he similarly identifies in Reinhard Kuhn's *Corruption in Paradise: the Child in Western Literature* (1982): that 'the child of Blum's subtitle turns out to be a child represented by adults for adults in adult texts'. Blum, in Nodelman's critique, 'so totally ignores children's fiction that she doesn't even feel called upon to notice or justify the fact that she has done it. For a children's literature critic like me, that makes this book about children in fiction seem very odd indeed' (1998: 125).

My decision not to analyse children's texts, but rather to research adult texts in which they contribute a significant function, seeks to step beyond the boundaries of traditional children's literature criticism and address the 'fundamental questions' which Sarah Wadsworth sees 'organizing the subject' today:

> How do children's literature and the criticism devoted to it contribute to the ways we understand history, culture, psychology, art, and other branches of humanistic and social-scientific thought? What impact does the study of children's culture have on the ways we think about and interact with children and other adults, both on the individual and social levels? In what ways is it productive to think of children's literature scholarship as both distinct from and integrated with work in other disciplines as well as literary studies more broadly? (2015: 332)

In order to contribute to what should be a broader, and more capacious, field than that which Nodelman posits in responding to Wadsworth's challenges, the contemporary children's literature critic must research beyond children's texts and children's responses to those texts.

In developing her more recent and influential 'kinship' model of cross-generational, collaborative child/adult research in the field of children's literature scholarship (2016), I do not think that Marah Gubar intended to exclude research which seeks to contextualise an understanding of the symbolic resonance of the children's book within the adult imagination from the field of academic interest in children's literature and childhood studies. While the field of children's literary criticism continues to deepen its recent interest in adulthood and its relationship to children's literature – notably via Margaret Mackey's *One Child Reading* (2016); Vanessa Joosen's *Adulthood in Children's Literature* (2018); *Reinventing Childhood Nostalgia: Books, Toys, and Contemporary Media Culture* (ed. Elizabeth Wesseling, 2018); and Alison Waller's *Rereading Childhood Books: A Poetics* (2019) - these studies' primary aims are not, however, to contextualise the children's book as a multivalent symbol within the broader arena of adult culture.

My interest in researching an (almost) solely adult relationship with children's books is realised visually in George Dunlop Leslie's 1879 painting, *Alice in Wonderland*. In it, a woman's gaze is lost in the copy of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* from which she is, ostensibly, reading aloud to a young girl. Maria Tatar describes how 'the woman appears lost in the pleasures of the written words' (2009: 8), but it is the child who absorbs Tatar's attention. Tatar's articulation of this scene, and those of parent-child reading more generally, as a 'contact zone', defines itself against Adam Gopnik's earlier formulation of the 'conflict zone' between child and adult in the shared reading site. To Gopnik, this image would illustrate a parent who

‘wants to get back’ to the childhood conjured up by the children’s book from which she reads; its intended reader, the child-listener, ‘wants to get out’ (1996: 96). Rather, however, than necessarily using the children’s book as a means of looking back to their own childhood, I posit that the adult figure in Dunlop’s painting may well, too, be looking forward – and not necessarily in either contact or conflict with the child, whom she seems almost to have forgotten, so engrossed is she in her own reading. As much as the children’s book, for adults, can be read as a means of looking back, so too can it be figured as a tool of wisdom and profundity in furthering the adult’s own active journey of maturation or, in Jungian terminology with specific reference to the integration of the psyche’s disparate constituent parts, individuation.

The central focus of this visual image is the children’s book. This painterly technique, of choosing a central, focalising image within a larger frame, echoes the similarly painterly literary technique of the *mis-en-abyme* (literally, ‘setting into the abyss’) which characterises the texts I have chosen to form the basis of my study. Like in Dunlop Leslie’s painting, the children’s book as an engrossing object both for and in the adult imagination is the focus of my attention, as are the writers and readers visibly or implicitly pictured within a literary framing narrative. As Carolyn Steedman has argued that the figure of the child as literary construct in literature for adults often allegorically represents the interiority of the adult self (1995: 1-20), so too do I wish to build a case that the children’s book, as literary construct in literature for adults, plays a similar role for dramatising C. G. Jung’s teleological conceptualisation of the psyche in the adult imagination. The transformation of the children’s book from object to symbol in the adult imagination requires a kind of palimpsestic over-writing, to borrow a concept from Gerard Genette (1982), by which the children’s book most often, I will argue, comes to be read as embodying the Jungian understanding of the psyche’s structure.

Brian Attebery’s claim ‘that fantasy, as a literary form, is a way of reconnecting to traditional myths and the worlds they generate’ (9) speaks to my thesis that the children’s book, rather more specifically, is embedded in the adult imagination in ways which help to construct its perceived Jungian connection to ‘traditional myths and the worlds they generate’. Like the ‘outsider-scholar’ in ‘the typical situation since the Brothers Grimm... who collects texts from the insider-informant but then publishes those texts with full editorial and interpretive control’, the author of adult texts who mines the children’s book as evocative mythological symbol tends to redefine ‘the shape and meaning of the stories, which thereby become timeless and anonymous, rather than personal and purposeful. They can become whatever the interpreter wants them to be’ (16) via the affordances of mis-en-abyme. Just as, ‘stripped of their original

contexts, myths are easily turned into propaganda or self-help manuals' (17), so too might be the children's book. Whereas Attebury uses 'the popularity of Joseph Campbell's [post-Jungian] monomyth' to 'testif[y] to the ease of the latter transformation', in this project I explore how the children's book provides a site in the adult imagination for the dramatisation of core Jungian concepts central to Jung's teleological worldview beyond the hero's journey or monomyth so central to post-Jungian archetypal literary criticism.

Attebery's engagement with 'Freudian or Jungian commentators', whom, he asserts, 'always and only find what the psychoanalytic model tells them to expect' (19), serves to dismiss them, while he simultaneously posits that 'the fundamental premise of fantasy is that the things it tells not only did not happen but *could* not have happened. In that literal untruth is freedom to tell many symbolic truths without forcing a choice among them'. This claim appears to resonate, however, within a Jungian context, in which 'symbolic truths', as things essentially unknowable, are therefore embedded with choices for interpretation appropriate for each reader rather than one single meaning:

> Whether a thing is a symbol or not depends chiefly on the attitude (q.v.) of the observing consciousness; for instance, on whether it regards a given fact not merely as such but also as an expression for something unknown [...] The attitude that takes a given phenomenon as symbolic may be called, for short, the symbolic attitude. It is only partially justified by the actual behaviour of things; for the rest, it is the outcome of a definite view of the world which assigns meaning to events, whether great or small, and attaches to this meaning a greater value than to bare facts. (6: 818-819)

Jacqueline Rose shares with Attebery the assertion that the 'structure of stories within stories ('en abime')' makes the stories which employ it 'stor[ies] about story-telling itself' (1984: 22). Contemporary authors who set the children's book, specifically, within the abyme of their adult stories, then, can be read, quite deliberately, as symbolic theorists of children's literature. My project is not to conflate the telling of stories with children's literature, nor to analyse the representation of storytelling in its broadest sense, but is centred specifically on the symbolic children's book and the contexts in which is appears; the critical context, in a work of fiction-theory, comprises the world in which it is set. These constructed worlds can never truly be divorced from our own, and that of their author/ theorists, but rather reflect, complicate, and challenge the realities we experience.

Analysis of the children's book within the adult imagination via texts in which children's books are contextualised en-abyme provides a means of analysing theoretical, critical settings at a level of remove from analysis of primary texts as products of those settings. This methodology

of situating the individual within the collective echoes, too, my thesis as to the role of the children's book in the adult imagination as both symbol for the personal unconscious of its authors or readers, and as a modern receptacle for the myths, fairytales and folklore which constitute the literary equivalent of Jung's conceptualisation of the collective unconscious. I will now move to develop the somewhat cursory attention heretofore paid to the relationship between Jungian theory (and, specifically, Jungian literary criticism) and children's literature within the field to date in the next stage of this introduction.

Stories for the Jung: Jung and Children's Literature

The influence of Jungian and post-Jungian theory on children's literature and how it is conceptualised in the contemporary adult imagination strikes me as so pervasive as to now receive very little actual notice, acknowledgement, or critical attention. I both first suggested and began gathering evidence for this claim at a conference of UK-based children's literature PhD researchers at Seven Stories, the UK's National Centre for Children's Books, in 2019. Although this Centre takes its name from Christopher Booker's post-Jungian theory as to the seven archetypal story structures (2005), this allusion accepts as given Jung's influence on our conceptualisation of literature, and in particular literature for children, without citing Jung himself. Jung, or, rather, again, post-Jungian archetypal literary theory in its distilled form via Joseph Campbell, Robert Bly, Christopher Booker, founder of archetypal psychology James Hillman and, most recently, Jordan Peterson, has come to be significantly influential, too, in the production as well as the reception of children's literature via its core conceptual template of the hero's journey or monomyth. While Campbell and his followers have been rightly criticised for reshaping myth and folklore to suit the post-Jungian monomyth theory in critical quarters (see Attebery, 2013: 19), in popular culture it is widely embedded as a means of not only understanding but actually generating stories, particularly in children's literature and in Hollywood screenwriting (see Snyder, 2005; Vogel, 2007; Klick, 2012). Children's literature scholar Kimberly Reynolds notes that '[m]any writers – particularly of juvenile fantasy – have [...] drawn substantially on Jung's system of archetypes – the symbols by which he believed the conscious and unconscious communicate' to justify her view that although ''Freud's ideas have cascaded through culture; by contrast, those of his some-time friend and colleague Carl Jung are less familiar. Arguably, however, they have had greater impact on children's literature writing

and criticism' (2011: 44), an opinion shared by most children's literature scholars who elaborate little further than this consensus.

The historical tensions between Freud and his 'some-time friend and colleague' Jung have survived into the attention received by both thinkers in respectively popular and critical quarters, a division of importance when thinking about the processes by which children's books are written and published for children as part of a commercial industry driven, largely, by profits, but theorised by adults writing from the intellectual space of the university. 'Carl Jung's face stares out from covers in every book shop that sells psychology, New Age, mythological or self-improvement titles', wrote Burne (1996): 'Sigmund Freud, fellow founder of the psychoanalytic movement, may have wooed intellectuals with his dark theories of infantile sexuality and the rampant id, but it is Jung who has cornered the middle-of-the-road self-improvement market. He is the Frank Sinatra of psychoanalysis - established, approachable, offering the comfort of myths and meaning in a mechanistic world' (1996). Whereas most historical, and almost all contemporary psychoanalytic criticism of children's literature repeats Reynolds' brief nod to Jung's importance to children's literature, it tends to focus instead on Freudian and post-Freudian readings. Within the past two decades, two very different studies by respected American scholars of children's literature have turned to psychoanalysis to analyse children's literature. Most recently, Kenneth Kidd considered the relationship between predominantly Freudian psychoanalytic theory and children's literature from a cultural-historical perspective in *Freud in Oz* (2011). Karen Coats used Lacanian concepts of subjectivity and desire as a lens through which to (re)-read canonical children's books in *Looking Glasses and Neverlands* (2004), arguing in favour of a Lacanian reading methodology in understanding the significance of children's textual encounters in the constitution of their own subjectivities and the shaping of their desires.

Jung, then, is conspicuous by his absence from these two major recent studies: Kidd prefaces his neglect of Jung with Richard Noll's assertion that 'Freud may still be the genius of choice for the learned elite of the twentieth century, but it is clear that in sheer numbers alone, it is Jung who has won the cultural war and whose works are more widely read and discussed' (1994: 6), and Jacqueline Rose's assertion that Jung 'has in fact been much better received than Freud in relation to children's literature' specifically (1984: 18). Kidd asserts, however, that 'as with Freudian readings, not a few Jungian analyses of the fairy tale and other genres are vulgar and reductive, missing out on the complexities of Jung's actual discourse' (2011: 11). Since so much of Jungian theory, and specifically that of its application to literary concerns, have

supplanted Jung himself and been developed by post-Jungian thinkers and theorists, the pernicious problem of reductive, uncritical and often problematically-biased 'instant Jung', as articulated by Jungian literary scholar Terence Dawson (2008: 290), has prevented Jungian and post-Jungian criticism from moving much beyond the very fair suspicion that when adhering to theories of archetype, you will always be able to find what you are already looking for.

For Coats, the primacy of the validity for a Lacanian literary application is rooted in Lacan's attention to 'language [as] the system of symbolic representation that [he] most priveleges' (2004: 2). To an extent, therefore, Lacan can be read as having contributed significantly to Freud's rehabilitation as literary-cultural theorist, by building upon his ideas in an explicitly literary application. Coats articulates the charge against pre-Lacanian psychoanalytic criticism of children literature which draws on Freud and Jung's 'more familiar models' of analysis as being 'less implicated in historical and cultural variations' (5) than Lacan's model, more concretely and specifically applied to analysis of language. As, per Coats, 'Western culture has built its religious traditions, its academic traditions, and its popular culture on the basis of the book' (33), I can understand her keenness to reapply the particularly literary-friendly theories of Lacan to real children's books. However, while Coats's project 'to read certain canonical children's texts and genres in light of Lacan's theory' (5) is achieved convincingly, the overall impression already concluded by Coats, Kidd, and the earlier theorists they cite in turn, is that it is Jung's theories which have already won the battle for the children's book in the popular imagination. By analysing the theories already imported into the story worlds of contemporary adult texts articulating assumptions as to the role of children's books in (adult) culture, then, my method will not necessarily be to import or convince readers of my own Jungian readings, but to analyse how fictional children's literature is perceived to operate or interact with its readers and culture within a fictional world under Jungian auspices in order to draw inference as to its real place in our own.

The traditional Jungian analyses of children's literature to which both Kidd and Coats allude are described by Maria Nikolajeva as assuming each given text to be (only) 'a reflection of an individual's internal processes'. In these readings, fairytales are 'external pictures of internal reality' (singular); 'archetypal figures in stories' are to be read (only) as 'projections of the protagonists' inner qualities rather than people existing in an external reality' (2005: 87). Nikolajeva's gloss on this vision of 'a Jungian perspective' as something fixed, and finished, in her seminal *Aesthetic Approaches to Children's Literature* has been influential in the conflation of post-Jungian approaches to literary analysis. For analyses of fairytales and children's literature

in particular, these patterns of post-Jungian literary theory tend to dilute and simplify, too, the work of Jung's disciple and contemporary Marie-Louise Von Franz. Although scholars of both fairytales and children's literature might balk at this process of conflation between the two, Von Franz's exploration of the concept of the *puer aeternus* in Antoine de Saint-Exupery's *The Little Prince* builds directly on Jung's theories as to the fairytale and child archetype. Von Franz's foundational claim for the Jungian study of fairy tales (and by extension, contemporary children's literature) is that 'in myths or legends, or any other more elaborate mythological material, we get at the basic patterns of the human psyche through a lot of the cultural material. But in fairy tales there is much less specific cultural-conscious material, and therefore they mirror the basic patterns of the psyche more clearly'. Her claim to this authority comes directly from 'Dr Jung [himself, who] once said that it is in fairy tales that one can best study the comparative anatomy of the psyche' (1970: 15). Neither Von Franz nor Jung suggest, however, that one's literary analysis need end with arrival at yet another iteration of the hero's journey or an excavation of the monomyth template. The 'basic patterns of the human psyche' which Von Franz excavates in the fairytale are plural; the 'anatomy of the psyche' Jung seeks in fairytales is qualified, in Von Franz's recollection, as comparative, not absolute.

Elliott Gose, one of the most engaging Jungian critics of children's literature writes in his analysis of *Where the Wild Things Are* that '[b]ehind the excitement' [of the 'quest narrative' for children] lie patterns and depths of which the child – and sometimes the author – is unaware...' (1988: 84); '[t]he reader is invited to share a world of imagination with the implicit offer that he or she may thereby come in contact with a potential that lies below the surface nature of each of us' (115). Margery Hourihan cites Huck *et al.* (1987: 339) in their claim that '[a]dults may find, in [fantasies] and similar stories, many of the collective images or shared symbols called archetypes by the great psychologist Carl Jung. Children will simply recognize that such a fantasy is "true"'. Hamida Bosmajian summarises: 'what makes the Jungian approach so attractive to interpreters of children's literature is that the theory assumes an original wholeness that can be regained after alienation is overcome. This coincides with the comic resolution of so many narratives for children and young adults' (2011: 132). Reynolds concurs that 'Jung's narrative of personal development emphasizes the need for separation and individuation as part of maturation, but sees these as part of a quest to restore psychic wholeness' (2011: 32).

The key Jungian concepts to have influenced children's literature derive, then, from the concept of 'individuation': the 'integration' of conscious and unconscious (both with respective 'personal' and 'collective' dimensions) in the constellation of the archetype of the 'Self' (see

Leigh, 2015: 97). In addition, the theory of both personal and familial/cultural 'complexes' and the images by which we encounter 'archetypes' (namely the inner or 'eternal child' and 'the shadow') are of significance to my study of the children's book here, and its contribution to the development of both individual psyches and collective cultures. As David Leigh summarises:

> Within this complex structure of the individual, the main goal is to integrate these elements by a process called 'individuation', or becoming an un-divided fully conscious Self [...] For Jung, this process usually occurs in two stages: youth and middle age. In youth, one develops the extroverted side of the personality through using well one's education, work, marriage, etc. In middle age, one develops the introverted side of the personality by means of uniting the opposites within the psyche through reflection, dream analysis, spiritual exercises, therapy, etc. The overall movement of the later part of life is called the transcendent function, which brings all these structures of the Self into full individuation and integration on a higher level. (2015: 97)

This notion, of the teleologically forward-facing adult reaching back to the tools of childhood in order to further their individuation is one set out by Ursula K. Le Guin (1975: 143) (specifically with regard to the integration of the shadow), who makes a persuasive case for the children's book as link between the two most important states of life as Jung saw them. We can see, then, why the children's book resonates so powerfully in the adult imagination: in it lies a means for the adult to re-access childhood experience, symbolising the transcendent function and the path towards individuation.

This idea would certainly resonate with Francis Spufford's adult reflections on his childhood reading, in which he states that children's books

> [...] help form the questions we think are worth asking; they shift around the boundaries of the sayable inside us, and the related borders of what's acceptable; their potent images, calling on more in us than the responses we will ourselves to have, dart new bridges into being between our conscious and unconscious minds, between what we know we know, and the knowledge we cannot examine by thinking. (2002: 21–22)

This aspect of Jungian theory, which posits that the individual moves forward and must work with the tools around them in order to individuate and become whole even without fully understanding them provides a different teleology to that of Freud and Lacan. Children's books, to the adult Jungian, can provide a means of forward-looking self-development. This difference in perspective and focus between Freud and Jung is articulated thus by Richard Webster:

> […] whereas Freud was constantly mistrustful of the Unconscious, seeing it as a residue of childhood which should be repressed and sublimated, Jung saw in the non-rational elements of human experience a source of dark fertility and potential healing. He refused to follow Freud in dismissing ritual and mysticism as neurosis

> and did not always share his therapeutic interest in the past. Whereas Freud was interested in the acorn – in the supposed infantile origins of a neurosis – Jung became more and more interested in the oak. To a much greater degree than Freud he began to focus on present conflicts and the future – on the 'life-task' which remained to be accomplished. (2005, 383-4)

The Jungian, as opposed to Freudian, Lacanian, or Rose-ian view of the children's book would, by this analogy, be as sunlight and good soil: the means of nurturing the oak just as much as the acorn. Despite Terence Dawson's charge that 'far too much Jungian criticism has become an exercise in endless reiteration about the collective unconscious or the shadow or individuation or the trickster or soul or whatever [and thus] Jungian criticism has become reductive and distressingly predictable' (2008: 286), it has nevertheless contributed to the rise of perhaps the most powerful, not to mention controversial, popular academic in the world today.

Jordan Peterson, an avowed admirer and disciple of Jung, weaponises his post-Jungian readings of *Frozen* (324); *The Little Mermaid* (43; 325-26); *Peter Pan* (140; 192); and *Sleeping Beauty* (43, 132-33, 324, 325) in support of his *12 Rules for Life* (2018). His lectures on *Pinocchio* and *The Lion King* have been viewed millions of times on YouTube, to which gushing reviews attest the persuasive power of his reductive, pop-Jungian readings of children's stories. He writes explicitly of his technique thus: 'there is a story for children, *There's No Such Thing as a Dragon*, by Jack Kent, that I really like. It's a very simple tale, at least on the surface. I once read its few pages to a group of retired University of Toronto alumni, and explained its symbolic meaning' (270). His ideologically, personally motivated readings, or explanations of *the* (singular) 'symbolic meaning', of children's stories are hidden under the guise of explainable universality, endorsed by the smiling, avuncular image of Jung as self-help guru and respected, historically significant thinker, similarly manipulated by Peterson in bolstering his own work and positioning himself as decoder of the symbolic wisdom (or hidden ideologies) in books for children, of significance to adult experience.

Although the general consensus among the academy has long since been that Jungian criticism is 'primarily psychological or anthropological, and thus lacking in specifically literary interest and standards' and, at that, of dubious psychological/anthropological validity (Leigh, 2015: 106), Jung is nevertheless still of central significance to popular processes of both the writing, and reception and analysis, of children's literature. Wimsatt and Brooks might have concluded their analysis of 'Myth and Archetype' in *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, 'to the question [...] as to whether the new "myth" criticism possesses a special key for literary interpretation, the answer of Jung would seem to be an emphatic no' (1957: 720). But it is Jung,

nevertheless, who is still being turned to by the public and in the popular imagination for the keys to the psyche that he offered. For David Leigh, 'the psychological or anthropological goal of too much Jungian criticism is to arrive at a verification of Jung's own theories' (2015: 106); for G. S. Kirk: 'Jung's ultimate aim is the "stasis" of symbolism rather than the "dynamism" of narrative', an idea cited by Coupe to support his charge that 'Jung want[ed] all myths to point towards his own model of harmony' (1997: 146). Returning to Jung himself provides a useful means of interrogating this complicated and perhaps unfounded legacy: that by claiming a single symbolic meaning which can be discovered through an archetypal reading of literature (be that literature 'bad or good' (Leigh: 106)), one can run with it to the exclusion of all others. Per Dawson's challenge to reinvigorate Jungian studies, returning to Jung may well be not only the most useful way to avoid 'instant Jung', but also the best means of interrogating how this reductionism has taken root.

Certainly, Jung himself wrote that 'in myths and fairy tales, as in dreams, the psyche tells its own story'; 'being a spontaneous, naïve, an uncontrived product of the soul, the fairy tale cannot express anything except what the soul actually is'; and that 'myths, fairytales and dreams are a revelation of the unconscious' (9i: 400). From the principle of this final quote, however, Susan Rowland infers that 'Jung is most immediately a textual critic in something not far from the literary sense [,f]or he claims to generate his theory from reading the psyche's texts, be they dreams or collective sources in myths and fairytales' (2018: 76). Rowland seeks to address Jung's 'marginalisation' within the literary academy (11), and echoes Terence Dawson in proposing a new way of *doing* Jungian literary criticism. Both Rowland's respect for, and Dawson's own work, in Dawson's critical analysis of the mis-en-abyme structure of *Wuthering Heights* contributed to my own decision to focus on the framing of the children's book within broader, adult structures. By contextualising one story's influence upon another framed within it, per Rowland, 'here is no simple equation of Jungian individuation, with the story told by a character who follows Jung's typical sequence of shadow, animus or anima and wise old person. Rather, the effective protagonists are not those focused upon by the surface structure or consciousness of the work. It is the *second* Catherine (Linton) in *Wuthering Heights*, in Dawson's tour de force chapter, whose psyche is mapped out for us in the tortured relations of the earlier generation of Earnshaws, Lintons and Heathcliff' (80).

The importance of the concept of the mis-en-abyme, and, indeed, of the distinctions between child and adult literature, implicitly underwrite and complicate, too, Jung's own methodology in analysing and theorising 'children's dreams'. In the notes from his seminars on

children's dreams given 1936-1940, Jung states that 'we will deal primarily with the dreams of children' (2010: 1). 'All of the dreams with which we will concern ourselves [in the seminar]', however, 'have been contributed by the participants. In most cases they were remembered by adults from their childhood, and were not obtained from the children themselves...' (ibid). Jung then, participated in a similar project to that which I propose through a similar method of close reading texts written *by* adults *for* adults concerning processes of (dream/literary) literacy in childhood. The recent publication of the notes on Jung's seminars on children's dreams for the first time in 2010 provides a concrete challenge to Frank McLynn's assertion in his 1996 biography of C.G. Jung that Jung 'never wrote anything significant on child psychology', and 'always found the subject a bore' (517). While I firmly disagree that Jung didn't write anything of significance to child psychology, it is significant nevertheless to note that his attention to real children is often eclipsed by his writing on the relationship between childhood and adulthood, or rather by his attention to the roles and functions of remembered or unconscious childhood memories in the adult psyche. Thus my intervention, which seeks to illuminate the significance of Jung's writing on childhood through its embedded significance in texts for adults which centre themselves on the symbolic index of the children's book.

Methodologies: Close Reading On The Couch

Having considered the context of my work and begun to outline my method, or approach, then, I now offer a brief overview of how I will conduct my analysis. Having started my enquiry into the phenomenon of of children's books in the adult cultural consciousness by first finding those texts and being guided by the concerns therein to contextualise them most appropriately within a critical tradition, it is only fitting, perhaps, that I should return to a close enquiry *of* those texts not only to seek information, but to sharpen, refine, and indeed be guided as to what the questions I should be asking of these texts are. In furnishing a robust methodology of textual analysis or close reading as research method, Catherine Belsey argues that:

> [...] while research entails unearthing information, it is the textual analysis that poses the questions which research sets out to answer. The reverse process tends to distort the text. And since the project of cultural criticism is to understand the texts – or rather, to read the culture in the texts [...] the appropriation of the text to illustrate a prior thesis seems to miss the point. Of course, in practice, it is never quite that simple: once the knowledge is lodged in your mind, it becomes part of

> what you bring to the text. But in principle, my idea is that the text has priority; ideally, the text sets the agenda. (2005: 167)

With this in mind, I was struck by Belsey's assertion that text must take priority, in clear opposition to the charge against much contemporary psychoanalytic or archetypal criticism, in which analysts are likely, more often than not, to find exactly what they are looking for. Terence Dawson, in setting out his agenda to press the reset button on post-Jungian criticism by returning to Jung's original essays in literary criticism, highlighted one of Jung's exhortations to 'take the text for what it is', almost in a direct warning to his critical descendants. Thus 'not surface but depth' forms the paradox at the heart of Jungian criticism: Jung, Dawson argues, had an enormous respect for the texts he examined, but his interest was always in trying to uncover the unconscious dynamics responsible for them. In other words, 'in all his textual criticism, his concern was with trying to identify and understand a hypothetical subtext or *ur*-text that might have determined the surface narrative' (2008: 290). How, then, can one ''take the [text] for what it is' and yet *do more* than colour an otherwise standard reading of it with Jungian claims?

A marriage between the methodologies of the literary analyst and proponent of close reading Catherine Belsey and the Jungian seeking to return to Jung Terence Dawson finds its roots in Belsey's own acknowledgement that when 'we address a question posed by the text [or] in other words, we start from a problem', we are using 'a method of textual analysis owe[d] ultimately to psychoanalysis'. 'It is only the caricatures of psychoanalysis', she asserts, 'that present it as claiming the key to all mythologies'. In Belsey's view, the 'main value of psychoanalysis to cultural critics is not so much in its conclusions and explanations as in its way of reading'. 'Freud', per Belsey, 'listened attentively, and not only to surface narrative. He worked on the assumption that a deeper or more subtle meaning was to be found in unlikely places [-] we do not have to agree with his solutions', however, 'to admire the method' (2005: 170). Much as I myself do not agree that children's books are 'unlikely places' in which to find deeper or subtle meanings, analysing their selection as framed elements implied as such within the larger body of adult culture sheds light on both the painting and the frame, or the embedded text and its context. Central to my method, then, will be analysis not only of the embedded children's book, but instead analysis in tandem with the adult text in which it appears and, indeed, the culture in which it is produced and received.

One of the primary charges against psychoanalytic criticism, and particularly Jungian/archetypal criticism, is a tendency to generalise grand, universal messages from small, local symbols: it will be important to my research not to focus only on a tree and forget the

wood, nor to assume that a forest, indeed, can be grown from every sapling. Dawson, not himself a student of children's literature as a specific field of academic enquiry, nevertheless borrows from Lewis Carroll to illustrate another of the paradoxes responsible for a parallel criticism against psychoanalytic literary criticism and pop-Jungianism - that of their potential for myopic focus only on the experience of the hero archetype and his (often problematically gendered) monomyth template at the exclusion of all other, and often much richer, readings. Details must be contextualised within the texts in which they operate as, per Dawson, 'whilst an interest in the hero might, if I may borrow from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* […] provide an intriguing analysis of the grin, it will tell us nothing about the cat' (2008: 290). Through close reading and literary analysis of a text, then, one might aim to be more neutrally *descriptive* of the phenomena we identify therein, rather than *proscriptive* as regards to what we might *like* to find and extrapolate from within the culturally specific text to comment on the grand, the universal, and the eternal.

Susan Rowland describes 'close reading' as 'literary studies' signature methodology' (2019: 43), a methodology which resembles the Jungian concept of 'amplification' in its 'respect for image as other' via its 'hermeneutical work on images', and as a method which has 'the potential to change who we are'. The concept of amplification certainly resonates with my project of closely reading details within larger works in order to shed light not only on those frames but on the implicit critical positions they reveal their authors as having taken as theorists of children's literature in our own world. This interplay between closely reading fine detail and contextualising it within a larger whole has been at the forefront of my mind throughout my research, in response to Rowland's 2019 intervention with *Jungian Literary Criticism*, 'and the work it sponsors', which goes 'two ways'. First, 'it is designed for those who want to use Jungian ideas to develop an understanding of literary texts'. It 'also aims to help Jungian clinicians, scholars and therapists to explore literature as a means to developing their practice, either in writing or in the consulting room. Indeed, a key theme of [Rowland's] book is such reciprocity, that Jungians can aid the study of literature while literary critics can similarly inform Jungian psychology' (1). By returning to an enquiring exploration of Jung's own, often dense, difficult and complex writing and the Jungian concepts therein we can hopefully sidestep and move beyond 'instant Jung' towards a new way of doing Jungian literary studies, of mutual benefit to both scholars of Jung and of children's literature.

A final note, here, with regard to my corpus selection. From an approach rooted in attention to detail, I have settled on three core, contemporary texts (all of which have received

critical and commercial success, or assumption into mainstream culture) per chapter from which to analyse the relationship between the symbol of the children's book and the multifaceted aspects of a particular Jungian concept. The boundary between scholarship pertaining to children's and adults' texts, provided me, too, with a natural temporal boundary in the generation of my corpus: I will analyse texts published from 1970 onwards, in rough conjunction with the development of children's literature studies as an established field within the literary academy and the establishment of the International Research Society for Children's Literature in 1971. These have been selected from a much larger corpus which I generated via a methodology laid out by Melissa Terras (2018: 25), who provided a useful framework for the production of a substantial corpus of primary texts in an arena of interest similar to my own.

Terras' project was to build a near-exhaustive corpus of represented academics within picture-books, and in doing so Terras employed methods of searching for keywords pertaining to her topic via online library records which proved tricky to transfer to my specific search terms. 'Fictional children's books', 'fictional children's authors', 'represented children's books', 'children's books within adult books' and cognate searches returned only very broad results, primarily works of fiction for children rather than fictional works of fiction-within-fiction. However, borrowing Terras's method of corpus-building through additional dialogue with colleagues and contemporaries via social media, and indeed through personal and professional conversations more generally, has proven to be fruitful, and enabled me to build a sample corpus of around 100 texts. Not all recommended texts matched my specific interests, in terms of the boundaries I imposed on my corpus for analysis in order to make my primary sources both more manageable and more meaningful. Nevertheless, having a wider corpus from which I selected my twelve core texts has provided me with a rich resource with which to draw parallels or, indeed, to problematise conclusions I may reach about the uses of children's books vis-a-vis the theories presented in my core texts. Let us turn now, then, to a brief introduction to the core Jungian concepts explored in each of my chapters, and an overview of their dramatisation - and, indeed, challenges to and complications of their definitions - via the core texts of my analysis.

Project Overview: Core Concepts and Literary Contexts for Analysis

I have organised the core texts which form the basis of my analysis by generic groupings, which reflect the distinctions of Shakespeare's first folio - history, comedy and tragedy - with a final

chapter unified by the concept of futurity. The texts which constitute my first chapter dramatise the shifting forms of the children's book over the past century in the United Kingdom and United States, and those which provide the basis for my analyses over the next two chapters are drawn more explicitly from the comedy genre and the horror domain, with its concomitant dramatisation of tragedy and trauma. All three of these chapters dramatise the concept of futurity in their focus on the image of the child and the symbol of the children's book, and as such my final chapter will analyse texts drawn from the science fiction genre which makes its concerns with futurity explicit. In each chapter I analyse three texts in order to interrogate the multifaceted aspects of a core Jungian concept dramatised in the site of each text's intradiegetic children's book, offering insight both into Jung's contribution to our cultural conceptualisation of the children's book and its properties and to a deepened appreciation for these influential theories which have too often been reduced and simplified in the popular imagination.

The first chapter in this study traces a history of the modern children's book, from its genesis in the Victorian and Edwardian eras which Jackie Wullschlager terms children's literature's 'golden age' (1995), via its mid 20th form in the reading primer, to the blockbuster young adult series of the early 21st century. The three texts which form the basis of my analysis are A.S. Byatt's *The Children's Book* (2009), Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) and Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* (2012). I have organised these texts in the chronology of their settings in order to explore Jung's concept of the complex, moving from first a consideration of the constellation of a familial complex in the form of the *puella/puer aeternus* in an individual child reader in Byatt's text to that of the cultural (racial) complex in Morrison's child reader. Finally, I will analyse the constellation of both a familial and cultural complex (that of contrasexual marriage) in a child reader who grows into adulthood, as dramatised by Gillian Flynn. My analysis in this chapter is influenced in particular by Terence Dawson's concept of 'effective protagonism' (2004), which allows me to focalise my study on the relationship between the children's book and its primary reader in each text, with this relationship working in parallel to the constellation of the respective complexes in each effective protagonists' psyche. My chronological approach evidences the shifting forms of the children's book, while evidencing the continued role it plays as an external vessel for the containment of adult anxieties which are passed on to the next generation of readers, akin to myths, fairytale, and folklore, in the enculturation process and the constellation of familial and cultural complexes.

Analysing the dramatisation of the psychic transferral of adult anxieties into child readers in my first chapter leads me next to explore its inverse, through exploration of the concept of the

inner (or *eternal*) child alive in the adult characters of comedic texts. In this chapter I analyse iterations of the children's book which provide a site for adult readers to healthily integrate their childish aspects within the adult psyche, and which provide a contact zone for mutually nourishing dialogue between both child and adult readers. I draw my examples from film and television in the often critically neglected genres of romantic and situational comedies, tracing iterations of what A.S. Byatt might describe as 'childish adults' (2003) and their aetiological opposite, figures whom Angela Carter might describe as 'wise children' (1991), in *You've Got Mail* (1998); *The Simpsons* (1989 - present) and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* (2015 - 2020). I explore how these figures might find synthesis in the journey from child or childish adult reader to adult author, and the Jungian concept of teleology to which this speaks. Through analyses of iterations of the childish adult and wise child embedded in these three texts, I contribute to defining debates in the field of children's literature pertaining to cross-generational tensions which characterise both the construction and consumption of children's literature itself, and its status as a distinct arena of scholarly enquiry within the literary academy. I explore the paradox of the children's book as an object at once simple and complex; formulaic and profound; cherished and derided, and develop my methodology drawing on Jung's analysis of 'children's dreams' remembered in adulthood in navigating and understanding these dichotomies.

The inner child functions as one of what Ursula K. Le Guin characterises as the 'group of fascinating figures, much livelier than Freud's grim trio of Id, Ego, Superego' which Jung saw populating the psyche (1975: 143). The inner child's companion in the personal unconscious, the shadow, forms the core concept at the heart of my next chapter, alongside analyses of the child image in its abandoned aspect, and the mother archetype. This third chapter identifies the relationship between the children's book and the shadow aspect of the psyche in texts which dramatise tragedy and trauma drawn from the horror genre. Horror provides a generic domain particularly suited for exploration of the disjunction between the rational and sublime, a relationship which both Jungian theory and the particular affordances of the children's book are well-suited for navigation. I analyse the shadow in its personal and collective aspects in Jennifer Kent's film *The Babadook* (2014), Matthew Holness's short story *Possum* and its cinematic adaptation (2008; 2018), and Martin McDonagh's 2003 play *The Pillowman*. The integration of both one's inner child and one's shadow are steps on the journey of individuation, and I conclude this chapter with analysis of the Self aspect of the healthily individuated adult. By exploring the bibliotherapeutic processes by which this integration might be achieved, or is dramatised as having the potential for such, I explore the relationship between symbolic and archetypal stories

and the storeys of the unconscious per Jung's conceptualisation of the psyche's structure. In doing so, I argue for the children's book's assumed status as inheritor to the cultural role of the fairytale in particular, and its lineage in folklore, myth and legend.

Complexes, the inner child, and the shadow are aspects of the unconscious. For Jung, '[w]e cannot apply our notion of time to the unconscious', as 'there everything lies together, so to speak' (2010: 360). The absence of time in Jung's conceptualisation of the unconscious leads me to an analysis of the collective unconscious in my fourth and final chapter, and to a consideration of the children's book as what Mikhail Bakhtin describes as a 'chronotope', a symbol of 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature' (1981: 84 - 85). There I consider the union between consciousness and the unconscious the symbolic children's book provides, as a site in which might be dramatised what Jung describes as the *transcendent function*. I analyse iterations of the children's book embedded in Alan Moore's graphic novel *V for Vendetta* (1982 - 1989), Neal Stephenson's *The Diamond Age* (1995), and Stephen Spielberg's film *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* (2001), and the sites these provide for interrogation of the monomyth or hero's journey template, and its limitations. I explore the processes of interpretation central to analyses of the children's book as *visionary text*, and its radical potentialities for envisioning new futurities. Central to these possibilities are the cross-generational contact zone of shared reading, and the disruption to aetonormativity a teleological understanding of these reading experiences might facilitate. This discussion contextualises children's literature in the broader cultural systems in which it is produced and consumed, and as such I open up my analysis from the purely literary in this chapter to explore the materialist implications of Jungian literary theory's influence on the technologies by which we now construct and consume literary media in our own world.

Finally, I offer some conclusions encouraging the dialogue I believe to be possible between Jungian theorists and scholars of children's literature and culture, and for which I argue throughout this thesis. The children's book is a multifaceted symbol in the adult imagination, and reflects Jungian concepts in both challenge and dramatisation. I hope the contributions I make here to new ways of doing Jungian literary criticism and to childhood studies will provide fruitful starting points for future inquiry which similarly understands these projects to be both intertwined and mutually rewarding.

Chapter 1) On Complexes and the Children's Book: A Recent History in Fiction

'The via regia to the unconscious', Jung wrote, 'is not the dream, as [Freud] thought, but the complex, which is the architect of dreams and of symptoms. Nor is this via so very "royal," either, since the way pointed out by the complex is more like a rough and uncommonly devious footpath' (8: 210). The concept of the complex is one of C. G. Jung's best known contributions to the modern lexicon, familiar to anyone who has despaired of an inferiority complex in oneself or criticised a superiority complex they have perceived in another. In the *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences*, the complex is defined as 'an unconscious[ly] organized set of memories, associations, fantasies, expectations, and behavior patterns or tendencies around a core element which is accompanied by strong emotions. It is derived from early developmental experiences which have a problematic or even traumatic character circling around unresolved needs and topics' (Roesler, 2017). Jung describes the complex as something which 'can have us' in its grip, rather than as something which one might possess in a proprietary sense. As, for Jung, 'every constellation of a complex postulates a disturbed state of consciousness', 'an active complex puts us momentarily under a state of duress, of compulsive thinking and acting, for which under certain conditions the only appropriate term would be the judicial concept of diminished responsibility' (8: 200). In this chapter I will explore the processes by which complexes come to constellate in the psyches of three child characters via the metaphor of their relationships to the children's book.

In A. S. Byatt's *The Children's Book* (2009), we observe the constellation of a personal, familial complex in the psyche of Tom Wellwood, via his relationship to a story, *Tom Underground,* written for him by his mother. The imagery of this intradiegetic story is explicitly that of a fairytale *bildungsroman*. Its dramatisation of the heroic monomyth thus might well lend itself to traditional Jungian literary criticism were it to be read in isolation, but its contextualisation in Byatt's novel sees it function instead in parallel to Tom's psychic collapse under the weight of an inherited familial complex. Byatt's novel serves as a fitting starting point for my study given its setting in Victorian and Edwardian Britain, in what Jackie Wullschlager describes as 'the golden age' of the contemporary children's book as we might recognise it today (1995). *Tom Underground* echoes Lewis Carroll's first title for the manuscript of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (*Alice's Adventures Under Ground*), and much of its imagery echoes that of Charles Kingsley's *The Water-Babies, A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby*. Its closest real-world analogue, however, might be that of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, a text which as we have already seen is central to the development of children's literature as a field of academic enquiry

via Jacqueline Rose's 1984 intervention in *The Case of Peter Pan: Or, The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*.

The influence of Rose on children's literature criticism might itself be characterised as something of a constellating complex, as might indeed its project of seeking to define children's literature. In this sense, we can similarly trace a complex at work in the symbolic children's book which I argue throughout this project is understood in the cultural consciousness as an inheritor to the myth, the folktale and the fairytale. I will develop this thesis more fully in the third and fourth chapters of my study, wherein I will consider the fairytale complex which possesses the symbolic children's book, and their intertwined entrenchment in the popular imagination. Given the generic structure of my project here, however, rather than devote much of my analysis to *Tom Underground*'s shared lineage with the fairytale and its parallels to Victorian and Edwardian children's literature, I will instead move forward to find echoes of *Tom Underground* at play in later iterations of the children's book dramatised in the intradiegetic texts of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, which takes as its setting the United States in the mid twentieth-century, and Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*, set in the contemporary US. In chronological order of my study here, we next find evidence of the relationship of similarities shared between *Tom Underground* and the *Dick and Jane* series of reading primers which are embedded throughout Morrison's novel in dramatising the constellation of the cultural racial complex in their child reader, Pecola Breedlove.

In settling on 'a working definition of children's literature', Marah Gubar draws on the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, and his use of 'the example of games to illustrate how a category can exist even when the diverse array of things belonging to it - board games, Olympic games, the game of catch - have no one thing in common; rather, a complicated network of similarities crop up and disappear as we compare and contrast different types of games' (2011: 212). The *Dick and Jane* reading primers which contribute to the constellation of the cultural racial complex in Morrison's intradiegetic child-reader are not richly symbolic bildungsromans which would necessarily lend themselves to traditional Jungian literary criticism in isolation. Their contextualisation, however, in the developing psyche of Pecola via Morrison's broader narrative illustrates the same enculturating role as once might have been played by myth, folklore or the fairytale - or an archetypal children's book of 'the golden age' - in that of another child reader, in another place, and at another time. Indeed, the influential role of reading primers in the developing psyche are attested to by the current boom in parodies of the *Ladybird* series in the United Kingdom, which might evidence regret or ridicule toward the reading material issued to

children of previous generations alongside or instead of the more positive quality of nostalgia. I analyse in this chapter and throughout my study fictional embedded children's books alongside real texts which we might read for ourselves in our own world: that both real and fictional texts work according to the same rules further attests to a working definition of the children's book in both symbolic and literal senses.

I conclude this chapter with analysis of the constellation of both a personal, familial complex and a relationship to the cultural complex of marriage in the psyche of Amy Eliot Dunne in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl.* Amy is the only of the three characters I investigate here who survives childhood, and can thus experience a warped sensation of nostalgia in revisiting her childhood reading material. As a now-adult reader contextualised in the near modern-day setting of Flynn's novel, the children's book to which Amy bears significant relation might be read as an analogue to the contemporary phenomenon of the multimodal children's franchise. Thus might we trace both a history of the modern children's book as we conceptualise it today through the central embedded texts in the three narratives which form the basis of my analysis in this chapter, alongside an exploration of the potential it offers for dramatising the concept of the complex's constellation in an individual child reader.

The Children's Book: Establishing the Effective Protagonist of the Family Drama

The Children's Book follows the inter-generational dynastic entanglements of a primarily English extended family over the course of the late-Victorian and Edwardian eras, and the First World War (1895-1918). One of the central characters of the novel, Olive Wellwood, was loosely modelled on the English children's author, E. Nesbit. Like Nesbit, who dedicated each of her stories to her own children, Olive, too, is a successful children's author. In addition to her public work, Olive also writes private stories for each of her children, which she nevertheless 'plundered […] sometimes, for publishable situations, or people, or settings, but everyone understood that the magic persisted because it was hidden, because it was a shared secret' (81). Olive's preconceptions, and eventual misconceptions, as to the private inner life of her eldest and favourite child, Tom, are fictionalised in a story which eventually comes to be called *Tom Underground*. To Tom's horror, Olive's decision to dramatise Tom's private story as a play sees it become a hugely popular, universalised success in the vein of

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, *Peter Pan*, *The Wind in the Willows* or *Winnie-the-Pooh* - all stories, at one time, similarly dedicated by their authors to real children. Tom's relationship with his mother, and his relationship to the world around him, is shattered irrevocably by this betrayal of trust, and the continuing imposition of his mother's own vision of Tom's private childhood self onto his public adult reality. In an echo, perhaps, of Peter Llewlyn-Davies or Alistair 'Mouse' Grahame - muses of J.M. Barrie and Kenneth Grahame, respectively - Tom commits suicide in the shadow of his mother's enormous literary success with the story she had initially written for him.

In developing his own model of post-Jungian literary criticism, Terence Dawson coined the term 'effective protagonist'. He uses this as a focalising lens for his analysis of novels, using the concept of the effective protagonist to describe 'an axial character to which all the events of the novel can be related, without exception: even those events in which the effective protagonist takes no part reflect an aspect of a process affecting him or her'. For Dawson, 'the effective protagonist is the character that determines both the structural and psychological coherence of the entirety of the narrative in question' (2004: 9); thus Tom emerges as *The Children's Book*'s effective protagonist. It is his relationship with Olive, and the eponymous children's book by which this is dramatised which functions as the determiner of both *The Children's Book*'s structural and psychological coherence. My analysis seeks to show how Jung's conceptualisation of the burden faced by many children who must 're-enact under unconscious compulsion the unlived lives of [their] parents' (6: 307) is dramatised through the central relationship between Tom and Olive, and is embedded, in particular, in the symbol of the children's book Olive writes for Tom. 'Nothing', wrote Jung, 'exerts a stronger psychic effect upon the human environment, and especially upon children, than the life which the parents have not lived' (15: 4).

Jung's insistent belief that 'the things which have the most powerful effect upon children do not come from the conscious state of the parents but from their unconscious background' (17: 84) can be explored in the parallels between both Olive and Tom's respective childhoods. Whereas the reader observes Tom growing up over the course of the novel, Byatt deepens the reader's understanding of Olive's personal psychology by alluding to key influences and experiences in her own childhood. In a passage in which the reader is first introduced to Olive's writing process, and her co-authoring of *Tom Underground* with a young Tom visiting her in bed, we read that '[s]he herself had had a book, as a child, Hans Andersen's *Tales*[.] It was probable, Olive thought, that the whole complicated wanderings of

Tom underground had started with her own childish fear of Thumbelina's mole-tunnel' (83). Although Olive's mother 'had read to her' from Andersen's *Tales*, we are told that the 'storyteller' in Olive's childhood was instead her father, Peter, a miner:

> It was Peter, who came home for his tea, his clothes stiff and black with coal-dust, his eyes and lips red in his coal-black face, his fingernails broken and engrained with jet. He took Olive on his knee, after his bath, and told her tales of the world underground' (84).

We are told that after the death of her parents, a desperately unhappy Olive became a maid, where she 'lived in two stories'. In one of these stories, Olive imagines herself as a hero she names after her father:

> Step by step, literally, as Olive [...] performed her household tasks, Peter Piper marched into liberty, along long city roads with lurking beggars and coal-delivery men, onto a highway, through villages[.] Peter developed blisters, and Olive limped across [her employers'] kitchen. Peter was hungry, and turned aside into a field, where a kindly shepherd gave him a sandwich - no - gave him cheese, and an apple - delicious, crumbly cheese and a *hard, sweet* apple - her mouth watered. (89-90)

As Dawson points out, 'For a Jungian, the remembered past is always governed by its relation to the present' (8). Byatt's sensitivity to Olive's relationship with her parents (and unresolved loss of them) allows us to observe how Tom inherits the complexes of not only his mother, but through her, too, the complexes she inherited from his grandparents.

That Olive's mouth should water as she imagines a literary hero inspired by her father biting into an apple takes on significance hundreds of pages later, when Tom has just watched the first performance of *Tom Underground*, at the peak of Olive's literary career. Tom leaves the theatre and walks, eventually, to his death. Tom walks through London into the countryside, and rests in 'a barn, at the edge of a coppice, in stubble fields'. 'He went into a dreamless sleep and woke not knowing quite where he was, or why.' He meets an old man, who

> [...] offered him an apple, a red and yellow and juicy apple, which Tom bit into[.] He meant to exhaust himself. His body was something he observed, loping along, muscles pulling and ripping. He thought, As for my head, there has never been much in my head, not really. Full of an unreal world, he thought. (528)

Tom comes to conceptualise himself as an empty vessel, which has been filled only by his mother's imagination. Tom does not find himself in a rich forest, nor does he dream extravagant dreams. Whereas Olive imagined the moment the literary vision of her father she

constructed for herself bites into an apple as one of mouthwatering intensity, heavy with literary symbolism, its echo in reality in the experiences of her son neither nourishes Tom nor inspires him. Tom, therefore, might be read as the effective protagonist of both Byatt's *The Children's Book* and Olive's *Tom Underground*, in that the rich significance of events in Olive's imaginary life are only realised through Tom's paler experience of them in reality. As a real person rather than a tabula rasa awaiting inscription from his mother's imagination and inherited complexes, Tom is overwhelmed by the weight of the psychic burden placed upon him. Perhaps it is because of the intensity of Olive's demiurgic capacities as a skilled, spellbinding storyteller that Tom is overwhelmed; unlike his grandfather Peter and his mother Olive, Tom is not a storyteller, and is incapable of extricating himself from the literary vision of himself constructed for him by his mother.

Olive exhibits guilt, and self-knowledge as to her role in Tom's death, only after the fact. Olive's anxious thoughts during Tom's disappearance spill into the broader narrative voice of the novel thus:

> She knew him, he was her beloved son. It was *she* who had named *Tom Underground*.
>
> It was only a fairy story.
>
> It wasn't. (529-30)

That Olive's reflection as to the power and intensity of her storytelling should be framed as a realisation starkly articulated by *The Children's Book*'s omniscient narrative voice deepens the significance of both Tom as the novel's effective protagonist and of the eponymous *Tom Underground* as its central, organising artefact. *Tom Underground* charts the adventure of a young boy who seeks to rescue his shadow which was stolen from him as a baby; he journeys through underground mines with a series of companions from whom he learns about himself. This fictional Tom undergoes the hero's journey, and emerges from it an individuated whole, reunited with his shadow and in touch with the unconscious aspects of himself represented by his companions. Tom Wellwood never ventures underground, either literally or psychologically in *The Children's Book*, but he kills himself by walking into the sea:

> […] into the waves and the lashing wind, the flying froth and the sinewy down-draft. He was still walking, in his socks, on the pebbles, soaked to the skin, when he slipped, and the wave threw him into the current. He didn't fight. (523)

Tom's abandonment of his personal integrity into the sea, which Jung described in symbolic terms as 'the favourite symbol for the unconscious, the mother of all that lives' in his essay

on the child archetype (9.i: 299), echoes his fictional counterpart's descent into the earth, in turn a warped subversion of his grandfather's escape from the realities of his life as a miner into fantastical stories for his young daughter.

On the literary recurrence of the hero's journey into the underground cave, Jung saw reflected 'projections of a process which takes place within us' (2018: 187-8) as we undertake the difficult work of resolving our own inherited complexes. Of this work, Jung wrote, too, that:

> It is of course not possible for parents to have no complexes at all. That would be superhuman. But they should at least come to terms with them consciously; they should make it a duty to work out their inner difficulties for the sake of the children. (17: 219)

Olive's shifting of her father's, and her own, desire to live in the symbolic world of stories onto Tom (reflected in the names she selects for her heroes similarly shifting from Peter to Tom) is articulated by Byatt's description of Olive's response to another transformative encounter with a piece of theatre. After watching the first performance of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* with Tom, we are told that 'Olive Wellwood's reaction to theatre was always to want to *write* - now, immediately, to get into the other world, which Barrie had cleverly named the Never Never Land' (464). Olive's unwillingness to make conscious her own complexes, and instead project them into a literary cypher of her son undertaking that work for her leads, ultimately, to Tom rejecting the project of striving for personal autonomy and individuation entirely. 'Nothing is more stunting than the efforts of a mother to embody herself in her child,' wrote Jung, 'without ever considering that a child is not a mere appendage, but a new and individual creature, often furnished with a character which is not in the least like that of the parents and sometimes seems to be quite frighteningly alien' (17: 222). That Tom's abandonment to the sea feels 'quite frighteningly alien' to Olive is ironic, in that Tom's final act of escape from his individual experience into a collective other is a literalisation of his mother's literary practice in having Tom descend underground. Whereas Olive loses herself in stories to escape from the psychological and practical realities of her life, Tom escapes from her stories by abandoning any claim he might have pressed to an individuated life of his own.

The mixing of metaphor between the underground and the deep sea speaks to 'the whole complicated wanderings of Tom underground' having 'started with [Olive's] own childish fear of Thumbelina's mole-tunnel' (83), and its culmination in the real Tom's

self-abandonment to the sea. In *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (2016), Donna Haraway draws on imagery strikingly similar to that associated with Tom and his literary counterpart in *The Children's Book*. In writing of the chthulecene and the cthonic child, Haraway writes of the 'tentacular' as 'squid, jellyfish… fungal tangles, probing creepers, swelling roots, reaching and climbing and tendrilled ones' (32). Haraway focusses on 'the practice of thinking' in her work on 'staying with the trouble', but presents 'storytelling' in a radically different way to Olive's warped practice of enforcing a story onto Tom as a means of escaping the trouble of confronting her own complexes and unconscious. Rather than making kin with Tom as an individual in his own right, Olive relegates his cthonic literary-cypher back underground as an avatar for her own neglected individuation. 'It matters what thoughts think thoughts', writes Haraway, 'it matters what stories tell stories'. For Haraway, 'storytelling' is 'crucial to the practice of thinking, which must be thinking-with'. Unfortunately, 'storytelling' remains for Olive a form of escapism and abandonment; Tom never sees his mother's story as a means of 'thinking-with', but rather as a means of thinking for.

Haraway's attention to the tentacular influence of thinking passed down through writing and storytelling is reflected in her acknowledgement that 'Ursula Le Guin taught me the carrier bag theory of storytelling[.] Her theories, her stories, are capacious bags for collecting, carrying, and telling the stuff of living' (39). Le Guin was herself a reader of Jung, and acknowledged his influence on her thinking in an essay on another of Hans Christian Andersen's fairytales, *The Child and the Shadow* (1975). The imagery in Andersen's story of *The Shadow* is echoed in *Tom Underground*. Le Guin reflects on her childhood reading of Andersen's shadow story in adulthood, and what she learned about herself through this reading experience. Neither Olive nor Tom, however, ever achieve such synthesis between the symbolic potential of stories with learning about oneself through them.

The Children's Book does offer, nevertheless, an alternative dramatisation of 'thinking-with', and of confronting 'the stuff of living' through storytelling to that offered us by the explicit narrative of Tom, Olive, and *Tom Underground.* By reading *The Children's Book* through the lens of Tom as its effective protagonist, 'even those events in which the effective protagonist takes no part reflect an aspect of a process affecting him or her' (8). Here is an excerpt of a conversation between two characters whose lives intertwine with Olive and Tom's, which takes place in parallel to the public success (and private disaster) of Olive's publication of Tom's secret story. Florence, a childhood contemporary of Tom's

growing up in England, is in conversation with her soon-to-be fiancé Gabriel, in whom she finds a nurturing relationship during the crisis of her own transition to adulthood (the extract bears citing at length). Here Gabriel tells Florence:

> [Gabriel]: 'My parents were - are - psychoanalysts. In Vienna. They sent me to the Burgholzi in Switzerland, to talk to Herr Dr Jung. They thought it was an essential part of living, to be psychoanalysed. I earned my bread there, as I do here, helping. I was telling my dreams to Dr Jung and also to Dr Otto Gross who was telling his dreams to Dr Jung and hearing Dr Jung's dreams in return. They were angels wrestling, you must understand.' He paused. 'I dreamed the wrong dreams.'
>
> [Florence]: 'Wrong in what way?'
>
> [Gabriel]: 'I think they were - *timid* dreams, is that a word?'
>
> [Florence]: 'It is a good word.'
>
> [Gabriel]: 'Quiet dreams, like a cow dreaming of grass, or a squirrel of nuts. They were judged as inadequate dreams. And by listening to my silly dreams, bit by bit, those two changed my dreams. I dreamed I was stepping down stone tunnels to hidden caves, full of dragons and lions and snakes. I dreamed of the seven-branched candle - which I also did in my timid dreams, I am a Jew, the candle to me means a meal with my family - although my family had been dreamed into flesh-eating monsters and petrified women to please those two.'
>
> [Florence]: 'You are making me laugh, but it isn't funny.'
>
> [Gabriel]: 'No man has the right to dictate another man's inner life - the furniture inside his skull. They made me into someone else. An acolyte - you say acolyte? - good - of a new ancient religion. We were all dreaming the same dreams, because they were dreams that excited Herr Jung and Herr Gross.
>
> They had invented me, do you see?'
>
> [Florence]: 'I do.' (505)

In this excerpt, Byatt's imagined 'Herr Dr Jung' imposing his own analysis onto Gabriel's dreams invites a parallel reading to Olive Wellwood imaginatively imposing her own psyche onto Tom via her children's book. Both of these processes allegorise the constellation of adult complexes in children. The responsibility of both the parent and the analyst, as well as the children's author*, The Children's Book* seems to suggest, is in helping children to grow up with a connection to their own, individual unconscious. The project of parent, analyst and children's storyteller must not be that of forcing their own conscious ideas as to what those unconscious should look like (nor, indeed, their own unconscious complexes) upon children.

The relationship between real adults, real parents, and real children, is one the real Dr Jung was interested in largely in terms of how it becomes constellated in the *grown-up* child, or adult, and how it might manifest itself symbolically in dream material. In this excerpt, of course, we witness not the actual interaction between the younger Gabriel and 'Herr Dr Jung', but adult Gabriel's rather wise, humane, and forgiving recollection of the child or young man he once was under the care of 'Herr Dr Jung'. On the basis of Jung's own writing, we might infer that Jung himself would also be more interested in listening to Gabriel's adult reminiscence than 'Herr Dr Jung' appears to have been in analysing young Gabriel's childhood dreams. In 2010, Princeton University Press published *Children's Dreams: Notes from the Seminars Given in 1936 - 1940*. What is telling is that in these seminars no dreams of actual children are analysed; rather, subject to analysis are the childhood dreams remembered in adulthood by adult analysands. Unlike Gabriel, however, neither Olive nor Tom achieve emotional maturity in the sense of 'staying with' their trouble, nor do they achieve a healthy degree of self-knowledge or individuation such as that exhibited by Gabriel. To Jung, Olive and Tom would appear to remain trapped in the complex of the *puella/puer aeternus*, or 'Peter Pan' complex (see Kiley: 1983), and as such are incapable of psychological maturity without conscious recognition of the complexes destructively constellated in their psyches. A theatrical colleague of Olive's remarks on Tom's 'agony' at the performance of *Peter Pan* they attend together, suggesting that perhaps Tom 'disliked *Peter Pan* because he recognised something'. Olive's response, articulated both externally and recorded internally by omniscient narration, articulates the damage done to Tom by Olive's projection of her own unresolved complexes onto and into Tom:

> Olive said indignantly no, it was not that, she was sure it was not that, he found the play simply unappealing…
>
> …For most of Tom's life she believed she had known in her body - as though held to the boy by a myriad spider-threads - exactly where he was, how he felt, what he needed. He had been part of her, part of her had gone running with him, she had *felt* his sleep after he was tucked up. Or so she thought she had felt. (466 - 7)

Olive's emotional projection onto Tom stunts both of their emotional growth, and it is deepened by Olive's extraordinary storytelling skills.

Rather than the model of 'thinking-with' advocated by Haraway, and dramatised by Gabriel's reflections on his experiences with 'Herr Dr Jung', Olive uses stories to absorb and

subsume Tom into her own *puella aeternus* complex. The seeds of the inexorable tragedy of this are sown by Byatt in the earliest scene of Tom and Olive sharing their secret story while Tom is still a child. Olive asks Tom's advice on what might become of a new character she's dreamt up for the fictional Tom to meet on his adventures underground:

> They made the plot between them, some of the time.
>
> [Tom]: 'A lost boy. A boy who fell in by accident, down one of the shafts?'
>
> Olive considered. 'Friend or enemy?'
>
> Tom was not sure. He said he thought the intruder was not sure. He could turn out to be either. He still thought he could get out quickly, Tom told his mother, he hadn't learned how hard it was to get out.
>
> 'I'll work on it,' said Olive. (81)

Olive's work on the story is never matched by any internal psychological work, which Tom himself hints at in his suggestion that the new boy Olive introduces underground 'hadn't learned how hard it was to get out'. This scene, which initially reads as cosy and loving upon one's first reading of *The Children's Book*, gains significance in the wake of Olive's successful dramatisation of *Tom Underground* years later, and recognition of Tom as the novel's effective protagonist. As 'The dark cavern swallowed the woman-Tom' onstage, Tom in the audience 'did not think it out, but *knew* he was undergoing a trial or test. He must not for one moment, not for one second, *believe*. The test was not to be taken in by glamour, or illusion.' (523). Tom, of course, then proceeds to mimic a journey of his own after leaving the theatre, which ends in his suicide. Concurrently, the reader learns that while Tom is alone, dreaming his dreamless sleep on his journey to the sea, Olive and her husband 'read the reviews over breakfast in London. They were ecstatic' (526). It is when Olive's husband tells her that 'You are a heroine', that Olive first wonders 'what happened to Tom.' She is reassured by her husband that 'He's always going off on his own. He doesn't like crowds. He'll surface'. Her distracted response, 'I think so, yes', suggests Olive's awareness, if perhaps only on an unconscious level before confirmation of Tom's suicide, that it will be impossible for Tom to surface from the psychological underground to which she confined him, both literarily and literally. Olive's storytelling power is such that she replaces Tom as the protagonist of his own life. The monomyth of *Tom Underground* prefigures not the psychic development of Tom, but that of Olive's professional success and her own achievement of literary heroism at great cost. Thus can a reading of its contextualisation in *The Children's Book* provide a far richer analysis than can the monomythical guidance of 'instant Jung', for which Olive likely hoped when she first started it as a story for Tom.

The Bluest Eye: the Children's Book and the Cultural Complex

Olive Wellwood exerts a powerful scriptive force upon her son Tom via the story of *Tom Underground*. Tom Wellwood *stays* underground in the parallel metaphor of the psyche dramatised by *Tom Underground*, in that he is constrained from growing up and out from the familial complex in which he is trapped. I wish to move now, however, from an exploration of the constellation of complexes within a single individual passed on from a parent to consider the constellation of a cultural complex within generations of children, and the adults into whom they might grow. To do so, I will focus my analysis on embedded texts less readily associated with the traditional Jungian trappings of fantasies like *Tom Underground*, but which function nevertheless as damaging fantasies in the shaping of individual and cultural complexes. Toni Morrison interpolates and stylises excerpts from what she describes in the paratextual afterword to 1993 edition of *The Bluest Eye* as 'the incompatible and barren white-family primer' (172) throughout the novel. The reading primer, epitomised in mid-century America by the *Dick and Jane* and *Alice and Jerry* series, from both of which the novel quotes, functions as an organising aspect to the narrative structure, and literary project, of *The Bluest Eye.* Morrison's characterisation of the reading primer as 'barren' contributes significantly, too, to the imagery on which Morrison draws of the child as seed, growing as best it can in the ground in which it is planted. Here we find a parallel in Jung's own assertion that 'if a plant is to unfold its specific nature to the full, it must first be able to grow in the soil in which it is planted' (6: 761). The conceit of the primer, itself, as a barren ground hostile to the development of its 'non white-family' readers provides a means by which we see dramatised the concept of the cultural complex.

Although published in 1970, the majority of Morrison's novel unfolds in 1941, in a vision of Morrison's own home town of Lorain, Ohio, shortly before the United States entered World War II. The novel is a testament both to the universal, intergenerational destructiveness of racism, and to the legacy of slavery and institutionalised anti-black racism in the United States specifically. Although *The Bluest Eye* is largely narrated by Claudia MacTeer, Claudia focalises her own experience as a young black girl growing up in post-Depression America by telling the story of her one-time foster sister, Pecola Breedlove. Pecola, who grows up in an abusive home and a racist community, entirely dissociates from her traumatic lived reality at the conclusion of the novel. After miscarrying a baby having been raped by her father, Pecola believes that by a 'miracle' (138) she is granted what she

tells herself are ‘really, truly, bluely, nice’ blue eyes, ‘[p]rettier than Alice-and-Jerry Storybook eyes’ (155). In her afterword, Morrison writes that ‘[w]ith very few exceptions, the initial publication of *The Bluest Eye* was like Pecola’s life: dismissed, trivialized, misread. And it has taken twenty-five years to gain for her the respectful publication this is’ (173). Thus Pecola functions as the effective protagonist of *The Bluest Eye* - and, by extension, of all of its interpolated texts. The primers which interpolate *The Bluest Eye* are most likely to have similarly been ‘dismissed, trivialized, misread’ in traditional Jungian literary criticism which focusses on the symbols of the monomyth, but, nevertheless they both shape and reflect aspects of the cultural complex which constellates in Pecola. Whereas Tom Wellwood is overwhelmed by inherited complexes articulated in a richly literary *bildingsroman,* Pecola is starved by the barren-ness of the stories and opportunities available to her as a result of the cultural complex of racism.

In his own writing on the complex, Jung provides us with a context by which to understand more fully the symbolic significance of the disintegration of Tom Wellwood’s personal psyche as he is overwhelmed by an inherited complex in *The Children’s Book*, and of Pecola Breedlove as she is overwhelmed by the cultural racial complex in *The Bluest Eye*.

> [It seems to me] reasonable to accord the psyche the same validity as the empirical world, and to admit that the former has just as much ‘reality’ as the latter. As I see it, the psyche is a world in which the ego is contained. Maybe there are fishes who believe that they contain the sea. We must rid ourselves of this habitual illusion of ours if we wish to consider metaphysical assertions from the standpoint of psychology. (13: 75)

Thomas Singer, in his introduction to the recent collection *Cultural Complexes and the Soul of America*, glosses Jung’s imagery thus in the context of understanding the cultural complex specifically: ‘the psychic environment in which we swim is much more vast and determinative of how we think, feel, and behave than we might imagine from the perspective of our ego consciousness, which tends to view things as originating and centring around its own point of view[.] We do not “contain the sea” - *we swim in a psychic sea that surrounds us for better or worse*’ (2020). Pecola is described in terms reminiscent of Jung’s analogy here in the first section of omniscient narration by which we glimpse her interior psyche, but with a switch from the metaphor of the under-sea to the under-ground. In confirmation of Claudia’s introduction of Pecola to the reader as a kind, sensitive child, who ‘clearly did not want to dominate us’ (12), on Pecola’s walk to a sweetshop we are told of the:

> [...] inanimate things she saw and experienced. They were real to her. She knew them. They were the codes and touchstones of the world, capable of translation and possession. She owned the crack that made her stumble; she owned the clumps of dandelions whose white heads, last fall, she had blown away; whose yellow heads, this fall, she peered into. And owning them made her part of the world, and the world a part of her (35 - 36).

Pecola's absorption and reflection on and of the dandelions here deepens her association throughout the book with seeds and what grows from, or dies in, unforgiving earth. As Pecola 'moves down an avenue gently buffeted by the familiar and therefore loved images' of the dandelions, she wonders why 'people call them weeds? She thought they were pretty. But', she reflects, 'Nobody loves the head of a dandelion' (35). Pecola is starved of love and recognition throughout the novel by the specifical cultural complex of racism, termed most recently by Fanny Brewster *the racial complex*.

Fanny Brewster, a contemporary African-American Jungian scholar, developed the concept of the racial complex through which Pecola's eventual dissociation can be read, noting that 'Jung spoke of what I have titled the racial complex long before others were addressing this within the field of psychology' (in Singer, 2020)[2]. Brewster did so to expand upon a comment of Jung's own, dramatised and challenged in *The Bluest Eye*, that 'As a rule the coloured man would give anything to change his skin, and the white man hates to admit that he has been touched by the black' (10: 963). Brewster notes that, perhaps in part because of Jung's notable reflections but troublingly sparse expansions upon the role of race in psyche, '[t]here has been a reluctance to discuss racial complexes in our Jungian collective'. Brewster herself takes up this work, however, because 'Jungian psychology has spread its psychological seeds into the American psychic earth'. In doing so, Brewster writes that '[a]s an Africanist individual I do not have a white complex as Jung stated because I wish to be white. I have a *cultural racial complex* that embodies all that I have inherited due to this life - personal associations, the lives of my ancestors, and archetypal patterns of all that has come before' (in Singer, 2020). 'As with much of Jung's work from decades ago', Brewster notes, 'it rests with others who have an interest to deconstruct, refine, and examine for applicability his theories to our 21st-century lives[.] As we delve further into Jungian theories and concepts, it is incumbent upon us to explore, discuss, and examine those things that continue to haunt us'.

[2] Page numbers are not provided only when texts have been accessed online.

In the 20th century, Toni Morrison contributed to the work of exploring, discussing and examining what we can now refer to as the racial complex in *The Bluest Eye*. Interrogating implicitly the theory of a white complex as articulated by Jung, Morrison reflects on the genesis of *The Bluest Eye* through an early interaction with a classmate: '[w]e had just started elementary school. She said she wanted blue eyes. I looked around to picture her with them and was violently repelled by what I imagined she would look like if she had her wish' (167). In her childhood classmate, Morrison recognised 'beauty', and experienced, too, 'shock [in] the knowledge that no one else recognized it, not even, or especially, the one who possessed it'. Morrison acknowledges *The Bluest Eye* as 'my attempt to say something about that':

> …to say something about why she had not, or possibly ever would have, the experience of what she possessed and also why she prayed for so radical an alteration. Implicit in her desire was racial self-loathing. And twenty years later I was still wondering about how one learns that. Who told her? Who made her feel that it was better to be a freak than what she was? Who had looked at her and found her so wanting, so small a weight on the beauty scale? The novel pecks away at the gaze that condemned her. (172)

Morrison reflects, too, on her structural decisions via which she sought to dramatise Pecola's 'unbeing', or psychic shattering, through her narrative manipulation of the concept of 'seeing'. In doing so, she centralises the 'incompatible and barren white-family primer' in Pecola's dissociation.

> The shattered world I built (to complement what is happening to Pecola), its pieces held together by seasons in childtime and commenting at every turn on the incompatible and barren white-family primer, does not in its present form handle effectively the silence at its center: the void that is Pecola's 'unbeing.' It should have had a shape - like the emptiness left by a boom or a cry. It required a sophistication unavailable to me, and some deft manipulation of the voices around her. She is not *seen* by herself until she hallucinates a self. And the fact of her hallucination becomes a kind of outside-the-book conversation. (Ibid.).

Pecola sees no reflection of herself in the primers by which she learns both to read, and to conceptualise and contextualise her own place in the world. The loneliness of her trauma leads her to step away from the world of reality, into the internal, psychic world of images she has absorbed from picture books in which she so desperately sought recognition, solace, and belonging. The primers' exclusion of her and valorisation of singular, specific images

over all others contributes to her destruction by the racial complex, which finds constellation both in the primers and their readers.

The first epigraph to *The Bluest Eye* is an excerpt from a *Dick and Jane* primer. First, the text is presented as it would have been in the intratextual version which is read by Pecola and Claudia. It is followed by a version in which punctuation is omitted, and then a version in which all spaces between words are similarly omitted. The warping of this excerpt foreshadows the desperation with which Pecola seeks a reflection of herself within this text which describes a 'very happy' white family, who live in a 'very pretty' house and a very pretty world. In this epigraph, Morrison ventriloquises the primer asking its intradiegetic readers 'who will play with Jane?'. In doing so, upon rereading, Morrison is really asking us 'what has happened to Pecola?'. In rereading the novel through the prism of Pecola's effective protagonism, her absence from the text becomes palpable in her unhappy parallel to the image of Jane, who 'wants to play'. The images of the 'very nice' Mother, the 'big and strong Father', the cat who 'goes meow-meow', the dog who goes 'bowwow' and the friend who comes to 'play with Jane' are similarly paralleled in the novel in warped, complicated realities which disrupt the images by which Pecola is taught both how the world is and should be. Even shorter excerpts from this quotation from *Dick and Jane* which describe the characters with whom Jane interacts are sown throughout the novel. These excerpts function in incongruous, 'incompatible' parallel to sections of the narrative which explore Pecola's immediate experience and the personal histories of her family and key people with whom she interacts in shaping her experience of the racial complex. These excerpts, sans punctuation and spaces between words, but capitalised and in bold text, introduce sections of the novel written in an omniscient narrative which breaks away from Claudia's organising perspective on Pecola's experiences over the course of the year before her rape and mental dissociation. They provide a cultural lens through which to read the omniscient narration's dramatisation of the gulf between Pecola's experience of the idealised (white) literary world, and the reality in which she and her community live.

The shifting between excerpts from the primers and omniscient narration of warped parallels to characters and situations described therein show how the culturo-literary seeds sown in Pecola's psyche contribute to her dissociation. They show how her entire community was shaped, in turn, by the racial complex of which Pecola, in the narrative of *The Bluest Eye*, is the ultimate victim. It is important to note that Morrison 'did not want to dehumanize the

characters who trashed Pecola and contributed to her collapse', and that 'the extremity of Pecola's case stemmed largely from a crippled and crippling family - unlike the average black family and unlike the narrator's' (1993: 168). Not only are the distressing experiences of Pecola's life excised from the primers, however, but the existence of any other, positive alternative models to 'the barren white family' are erased entirely from the texts and images by which Claudia and Pecola are taught to read.

> **'HEREISTHEHOUSEITISGREENANDWHITEITHASAREDDOORIT ISVERYPRETTYITISVERYPRETTYPRETTYPRETTYPRETTYP…**
> (24)

Unlike the pretty house in which Dick and Jane live with their happy family, this excerpt introduces Morrison's omniscient description of the Breedloves' own home, a 'box of peeling gray', an 'abandoned store' which 'foists itself on the eye of the passerby in a manner that is both irritating and melancholy' (24). In the Breedlove home lives '[e]ach member of the family in his own cell of consciousness, each making his own patchwork quilt of reality - collecting fragments of experience here, pieces of information there' (25). There is an irony in Morrison's description of the house's furnishings 'as unimaginative as a first-generation Greek landlord could contrive it to be', and her expansive note that '[t]here is nothing more to say about the furnishings. They were anything but describable, having been conceived, manufactured, shipped and sold in various states of thoughtlessness, greed, and indifference' (25). Four pages of description of the Breedloves' home and the family who lives there follows the manic, bold, capitalised warping of the *Dick and Jane* excerpt, whereas the simplicity itself of the primer masks myriad contributions to the constellation of a cultural complex. White families with a '**VERYNICEMOTHER**' (86) and a '**BIGANDSTRONGFATHER**' (103) live in '**VERYPRETTY**' houses, the primer implies. Those who don't aren't worth teaching, this implication suggests, let alone reflecting.

The richness and compassion of Claudia's narrative voice and Morrison's omniscient narration is in stark contrast to the exclusive simplicity of the primers. Both Claudia and Morrison recognise and reflect upon the importance of stories in the development of personal and collective psyches in their respective narrative points of view, and indeed in Morrison's paratextual afterword. Pecola experiences the importance of stories, but is vulnerable, as an unskilled storyteller herself, to the constellation of troubling material in her own absorptive

psyche. As such, Pecola's experience of stories (and the pictures therein) is dramatised in distressing detail, as we read of how:

> It had occurred to Pecola some time ago that if her eyes, those eyes that held the pictures, and knew the sights - if those eyes of hers were different, that is to say, beautiful, she herself would be different[.] If she looked different, beautiful, maybe [her parents] would be different[.] Maybe they'd say, 'Why, look at pretty-eyed Pecola. We mustn't do bad things in front of those pretty eyes.'
>
> ***Pretty eyes. Pretty blue eyes. Big blue pretty eyes. Run, Jip, run. Jip runs, Alice runs. Alice has blue eyes. Jerry has blue eyes. Jerry runs. Alice runs. They run with their blue eyes. Four blue eyes. Four pretty blue eyes. Blue-sky eyes. Blue-like Mrs. Forrest's blue blouse eyes. Morning-glory-blue-eyes. Alice-and-Jerry-blue-storybook-eyes***. (33)

Pecola prays to God to '[p]lease make me disappear', and imagines herself disappearing until 'only her tight, tight eyes were left[.] Try as she might, she could never get her eyes to disappear. So what was the point? They were everything. Everything was there, in them. All of those pictures, all of those faces' (33). As Fanny Brewster points out, '[t]he image has always been of particular importance within the theoretical foundation of depth psychology' (2020). Brewster cites Murray Stein's argument that '[i]mages define the essence of psyche' as '[t]he complex is an inner object, and at its core is an image', in expanding, in turn, upon Jung's own definition of the feeling-toned complex as 'the image of a certain psychic situation which is strongly accentuated emotionally and is moreover, incompatible with the habitual attitude of the consciousness'. Through *The Bluest Eye*'s layered narrative structure and the glimpses it affords us into the relentless societal racism and familial abuse Pecola experiences and internalises, the reader of *The Bluest Eye* is shown this process of Pecola's absorption of troubling images more fully even than the intratextual witnesses of Pecola's suffering, Claudia and her sister Frieda.

More so than just witness, however, Claudia and Frieda attempt to rewrite the reality of Pecola's suffering as intradiegetic authors, by singing and casting a spell over marigold seeds they plant to symbolise the restoration of health to Pecola and the survival of her baby. We are told in a second epigraph, which follows the *Dick and Jane* excerpt, of how Claudia and Frieda 'could think of nothing but our own magic' at the time of Pecola's pregnancy and the beginning of her dissociation:

> [...] if we planted the seeds, and said the right words over them, they would blossom, and everything would be all right[.] It was a long time before my

> sister and I admitted to ourselves that no green was going to spring from our seeds[.] For years I thought […] it was my fault. I had planted them too far down in the earth. It never occurred to either of us that the earth itself might have been unyielding. (3)

The punning of Claudia MacTeer's name identifies Claudia as one of the only characters - along with her sister Frieda - never to 'dismiss[,] trivialize [or] misread' Pecola. The tears Claudia sheds from her own brown eyes over Pecola's destruction by the racial complex weren't enough to nurture Pecola in the unforgiving ground of Lorain, Ohio in 1941. Morrison's text, however, has sown a seed of its own in contributing to the shared cultural consciousness by dramatising the destructiveness of the racial complex.

Innovative narrative structures such as Byatt's in *The Children's Book* and Morrison's in *The Bluest Eye* offer readers the opportunity to contextualise and observe myriad influences and parallels to the development of one individual psyche, when re-experienced by readers through the prism of an effective protagonist. Thomas Singer notes in his recent gloss on the cultural complex that shifting one's 'point of view' can bring awareness to the constellation of collective influences in the personal psyche. This evidences the significance of literature as one of the most fertile arenas in which Jungian concepts such as the cultural complex can be meaningfully dramatised, via its potential for narrative complexity. The narrative complexity of *The Bluest Eye* is contained synecdochically within the pun of the novel's title: the 'eyes', or lenses of personal perspectives and prejudices by which we *see* ourselves and others in turn shape our conceptualisations of the 'I's by which we all *experience* ourselves and others.

The Bluest Eye shares with *The Children's Book*, too, a deconstruction of the processes by which the stories we often come to believe about ourselves are told, beyond books, by skilled adult storytellers to less sophisticated child readers. In parallel to a reflection from *The Children's Book* - that 'No man has the right to dictate another['s] inner life - the furniture inside his [or her] skull' - we observe an additional warning as to the dangers of storytelling in the contribution to Pecola's disassociation: a malicious watering, in a sense, of the dangerous seeds already sown in Pecola's psyche by the primers. The parallel of the primer's 'friend' who 'comes to play with Jane' is warped and echoed in Pecola's experience in the form of a fraudulent 'Reader, Adviser, and Interpreter of Dreams' (131), to whom she turns in desperation when she 'can't go to school no more. And […] thought maybe [he] could help [her]' (138) as a result of her pregnancy. This charlatan is a misanthrope, whose 'disdain for

people led him into a profession designed to serve them[,] a line of work that was dependent solely on his ability to win the trust of others, and one in which the most intimate relationships were necessary' (131). When Pecola asks this misanthrope to make her eyes blue, he tells her 'I am not a magician' (138), but he convinces her, by means of a sign he orchestrates by tricking her into poisoning a neighbour's dog he hates, that God has granted her a miracle. On seeing Pecola leave in the belief that her miracle has been granted, he takes 'paper and a fountain pen' and 'a bottle of ink [from] the same shelf that held the poison' and 'slowly, carefully, relishing his penmanship' (140), writes to God to tell him of his work:

> You said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and harm them not.' Did you forget? Did you forget about the children? Yes. You forgot. You let them go wanting sir, on road shoulders, crying next to their dead mothers. I've seen them charred, lame, halt. You forgot, Lord. You forgot how and when to be God.
>
> [...] That's why I changed the little black girl's eyes for her, and I didn't touch her; not a finger did I lay on her. But I gave her those blue eyes she wanted. Not for pleasure, and not for money. I did what You did not, could not, would not do: I looked at that ugly little black girl, and I loved her. I played You. And it was a very good show!
>
> [...] I, I have caused a miracle. I gave her the eyes. I gave her the blue, blue, two blue eyes. Cobalt blue. A streak of it right out of your own blue heaven. No one else will see her blue eyes. But *she* will. And she will live happily ever after. I, I have found it meet and right to do so.
>
> [...] You see? I, too, have created. Not aboriginally, like you, but creation is a heady wine, more for the taster than the brewer. (144)

This fraud's demiurgic storytelling is contributive to Pecola's disassociation, in a negative parallel to Claudia and Frieda's attempt to counter the destructive power of the embedded cultural, as well as familial, complexes of intergenerational racism which destroys Pecola with literary words and literal seeds of their own. Claudia recognises, nevertheless, the power of storytelling, and reflects in the epilogue to the novel that 'I even think now that the land of the entire country was hostile to marigolds that year. This soil is bad for certain kinds of flowers. Certain seeds it will not nurture, certain fruit it will not bear, and when the land kills of its own volition, we acquiesce and say the victim had no right to live. We are wrong, of course' (165). Morrison's paratextual description of the 'white-family primer' as 'barren' in the novel's afterword, however, hints at a hopefulness in recognising the children's book in particular as a *potential* site for nurturing, as well as choking, 'certain kinds of flowers', 'certain seeds', and 'certain fruit'.

Storytellers, *The Bluest Eye* tells us, have a role to play both in the constellation of cultural complexes, and a power in deconstructing them. Storytellers have a responsibility in the stories they tell and the worlds they reflect, and cultures have a responsibility as to the stories they value. At the peak of the use of the *Dick and Jane* primers in the 1950s, 80% of US first-grade students encountered them as part of both their literacy and literary education (Treaster: 1981). Through the civil rights movement and social changes, they remained widely used as reading primers in American and international anglophone schools between the 1930s and 1970s. Despite the introduction of a black family in the final *Dick and Jane* primer in 1965, criticisms that '*Dick and Jane* seem[ed] increasingly irrelevant to some' (Gabriel: 1996) were dismissed by Zerna Sharp, the series' creator and editor, with the response that '[t]hat's all an adult's viewpoint' (Treaster, 1981). Children's literature scholar Beverly Clark Lyon notes that '[w]e value childhood. But we also dismiss it' in her analysis of the cultural construction of children's literature in America (2003: 1). This reflection seems particularly relevant in considering Sharp's use of imagined child readers as a shield against criticism of her texts and pedagogy encoded therein. It is telling that in describing the 'stepping stone phenomenon', by which 'marginalised groups' are used as 'stepping stones' by *other* marginalised groups, Clark Lyon alludes to 'the devaluing of children and childhood'. Clark Lyon notes, however, 'less evidence' of this 'in the writings of African-American women than in the work of their white counterparts' (10 - 11). In the context of Jung's limited writing on the role of race in psyche, his reflection that '[w]e all have complexes; it is a highly banal and uninteresting fact' feels pertinent in his expansion that 'It is only interesting to know what people do with their complexes; that is the practical question that matters' (9: 175).

Robin Bernstein, in her work on 'The *Possibility* of Children's Literature' (2011, emphasis mine), notes that 'Jacqueline Rose, in her 1984 field-defining book *The Case of Peter Pan; or, the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, calls children's literature "impossible" because it is the only genre that is written by one group for another group; thus, the genre imagines the category of "child" through the simultaneous describing and hailing of a category that it is in fact creating' (163). Bernstein cites Rose's argument, which feels particularly apt in light of Zerna Sharp's remarks, 'that children's literature creates a dynamic in which the empowered "adult comes first (author, maker, giver)" and the disempowered or even colonized "child comes after (reader, product, receiver)" [1984: 1-2]' (163) in developing her theory as to the role children's literature can play in the enculturation of children as a

'scriptive' force. She uses, too, Toni Morrison's fictive description of this 'process of scripting and its racial ramifications in *The Bluest Eye*' (165) to illustrate her thesis as to the 'co-scripting, or co-producing, of play and (racialised) practices encoded [...] between literature and material culture' (167). She cites 'the narratives in Claudia's picture books combined with the materiality' of a white baby doll she is given for Christmas in telling her 'what she was supposed to do… interpellat[ing her] into a racist ideology that the novel attacks' (165). In addition to the fictive work of Toni Morrison, the work of scholars such as Clark Lyon and Bernstein in the arena of children's literature is indebted, too, to Rudine Sims Bishop's 1990 intervention at the intersection of race, diversity and children's literature in her seminal essay *Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors*:

> Books are sometimes windows, offering views of the world that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books. (1990: ix)

Despite these interventions from the United States, the 2018 'Reflecting Realities' survey conducted by the (British) Centre for Literacy in Primary Education found that of the 11,011 children's books published in the United Kingdom that year, only 4% featured a non-white hero (an increase of 3% from the previous year). As the proportion of children from ethnic minority backgrounds enrolled in UK schools stood at 33.1% in 2021, it is clear that more work remains to be done in reducing the significant gap between the lives and experiences of children and the stories and characters reflected back at them in their earliest induction to the literate, and literary, world. The symbolic importance of the children's book in the healthy development of the psyche is one which must be understood far beyond the monomyth template, but the image of the hero remains one of enormous influence in the experience of young readers. Heroes must reflect and nurture far more than one dated image - largely white, and largely male - of what heroism might and can look like.

While it is heartening to see some evidence that the work of addressing the racial complex is beginning to expand into pedagogical and publishing practices, so too must it continue in the community of Jungian scholars who contribute to the living field of analytical psychology. Fanny Brewster reflects that '[t]wo aspects of racial complexes that are exposed

through racism are emotional suffering and the pain of invisibility. These aspects combined with the struggle for identity are only a part of what needs healing within the parameters of negative racial complexes' (in Singer, 2020). In noting that 'Jung spoke of what I have titled the racial complex long before others were addressing this within the field of psychology', Brewster writes of her 'hope to further his initial idea of the complex through a Jungian lens that is willing to see and provide increased clarity into racial relations and multicultural ethnic collective issues involving racism' (Brewster, 2020).

Brewster's sentiments are echoed by another scholar working at the intersection of Jungian thought, race, and pedagogy. Canadian-Chinese Jungian scholar Kevin Lu, in an essay reflecting on his experiences in raising his mixed-race children with his British wife in the United Kingdom, writes that '[c]rucially, I have always understood Jung's psychology—despite its limitations—as a psychology of hope, and that the various complexes and archetypal patterns that tyrannically shape our behaviour can be dispelled through greater consciousness and understanding' (2020: 33). Through the 'radical hope' by which Lu defines analytical psychology, '[w]e see patterns and witness how damaging they can be (personally, sociologically and theoretically). We are also empowered with a voice to say "no" to these patterns, stopping its deleterious perpetuation'. Lu's 'wish to disrupt the status quo and to explore the ways in which Post-Jungian thinking can challenge racism finds further expression in [his] role as a teacher', as he notes that '[w]e need to radically overhaul and reflect upon the ways in which racism is proffered, whether consciously or unconsciously, through what we teach and the way we teach'. Bringing to consciousness the 'colonial mind-set embedded within analytical psychology itself' (Clarke, 1994, cited in Lu, 2020), and in children's literature, are two projects which must continue in the hope of reducing the power of the racial complex in the contemporary, collective psyche.

Gone Girl: the Childhood Complex in (Im)Maturity

Toni Morrison's artistic work in *The Bluest Eye*, and the scholarship of contemporary (non-European, non-white) Jungian scholars including Fanny Brewster and Kevin Lu, is of invaluable contribution towards understanding the damaging constellation of the cultural (racial) complex in personal experiences of childhood. Byatt's work in *The Children's Book*

accomplishes something similar in illustrating Jung's own writing as to the potentially dangerous constellation of familial complexes in individual childhoods. The effective protagonists of both of these texts, Pecola Breedlove and Tom Wellwood, however, are tragically overwhelmed by these complexes in childhood and adolescence. I wish now, then, to conclude my analyses of the complex in childhood's dramatisation by turning to a text concerned with the maturation of both familial and cultural complexes in a child who grows, in turn, into an adult.

The adult behaviour of the effective protagonist of Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* is tyranically shaped both by her upbringing, and by the cultural complex of contrasexual (heterosexual) marriage. Although this effective protagonist, Amy Elliott-Dunne, never dispels these complexes through the greater consciousness and understanding advocated by Kevin Lu as the project of Jungian self-exploration, the dramatisation of her absorption by them acts, in turn, as a warning to Flynn's readership. The innovative narrative structure which calls attention to these dual complexes - both personal and cultural - is partly responsible for *Gone Girl*'s commercial and critical success (notably unusual for a popular psychological thriller). Recognised as one of the 'literary phenomenons' of 2012, *Gone Girl* spent eight weeks in the New York Times' bestselling fiction list (Itzkoff, 2012). Its 2014 film adaptation became director David Fincher's highest-grossing film, and earned actress Rosamund Pike an Academy Award nomination for her role as its effective protagonist and eponymous 'gone girl', Amy. One broadsheet review included in the 2013 UK mass-market paperback edition enthuses that Flynn's 'unreliable narrators [guarantee] an immediate reread once her terrifying, wonderful conclusion is reached' (Flood, 2012). This advocation of the mode of reading central to Dawson's theory of effective protagonism is necessary in making sense not only of *Gone Girl*'s plot, but in making sense, too, of its effective protagonist's relationship to her own past as something to be constantly re-read and re-written.

Gone Girl follows an anaphoric structure: the first half of the novel interweaves excerpts from Amy's diary following her disappearance with the first-person narration of her husband, Nick, as he navigates the publicity her disappearance generates. Amy is identified early in the novel as the 'treasured only child of creative-genius parents. An icon of sorts, thanks to a namesake book series [...] *Amazing Amy*' (40-41). The climax of the novel's first half sees Nick arrested for Amy's murder. He is implicated in her disappearance by clues sown throughout her diary excerpts; the diary itself is found by police who similarly

investigate clues laid by Amy under the guise of an anniversary treasure hunt for her husband. The second half of the novel reveals Amy to be alive, and the orchestrator of her own disappearance and her husband's arrest in revenge for his infidelity. We are introduced to 'Actual Amy', whose first person narration replaces that of the inauthentic 'Diary Amy' she had constructed in order to lay the blame for her murder at Nick's feet.

The novel echoes, too, the poetic form of double syntax. The depth of resentment towards both her parents and her husband hinted and alluded to throughout the first half of the novel in the narrative of 'Diary Amy', is only revealed by 'Actual Amy''s obsession both with her childhood in the shadow of her parents' successful marriage by which they created, jointly, *Amazing Amy*, and with her own unsatisfactory marriage which lies in the shadow of her unfulfilled potential as the inspiration for *Amazing Amy*. The technical trope of Amy's narrative splitting (into 'Diary Amy' and 'Actual Amy', as well as via excerpts from her intradiegetic literary cypher, 'Amazing' Amy) illustrates her own fractured psyche. Amy murders a former lover in order to frame him for her abduction, thus freeing her husband Nick so she can return both to him, and to her newfound fame as a beloved literary icon matured into a public figure in her own right. The novel concludes, ominously, with Amy announcing a pregnancy by which to bind her husband Nick to their marriage, and a publishing deal by which to bind Nick to her version of the truth in the public consciousness, so as to be 'officially in control of our story' (493). Thus *Gone Girl* dramatises the cyclical perpetuation of the unresolved complex which finds an image in the children's book, heightening its destructiveness via Amy's conscious participation in its psychic constellation and (re-)construction in a literary project of her own.

Whereas the effective (child) protagonists of *The Children's Book* and *The Bluest Eye* are contextualised in the specific cultural moments of Edwardian Britain and the US's entry to World War II respectively, *Gone Girl* is set in contemporary America. It is populated by educated and culturally sophisticated (adult) characters: Amy's parents are psychologists and writers; Amy herself has a psychology degree and writes personality quizzes for magazines ('three advanced people with three advanced degrees in psychology', 69); and her husband Nick is a former writer and professor of journalism. There is an irony in *Gone Girl's* dramatisation of the most deleterious effects of unresolved complexes in this contemporary, ostensibly psychologically literate setting. Although Amy survives into adulthood, despite (or perhaps *to* spite) the psychic burden placed on her by her parents by comparison to a perfect

literary alter-ego in childhood, she comes, in turn, to participate in the perpetuation of the most damaging aspects of the cultural complex of contrasexual marriage by which this literary alter-ego was delivered.

Amy compares herself not only to her literary alter-ego throughout *Gone Girl*, but to her parents and, specifically, their seemingly perfect, mutually nourishing marriage. A hint as to the depth of (Actual) Amy's resentment towards them colours Diary Amy's recollection of a book-launch party for the latest in the series: 'a nostalgia item, intended to be purchased by women who grew up with *Amazing Amy*' (30), in which Amazing Amy gets married. Diary Amy reflects that her parents' 'love story is always part of the *Amazing Amy* story: husband and wife in mutual creative labor for a quarter century. Soul mates'. With some bitterness, she notes that her parents 'really call themselves that[.] I can vouch for it, having studied them, little lonely only child, for many years'. Her reflection that people 'say children from broken homes have it hard, but the children of charmed marriages have their own particular challenges' (30-31) is an example of the ironic understatement which strikes the reader only upon re-reading. The particular challenges Amy faces are first introduced in this key scene, although the extent of the damage they inflict upon Amy (and those around her) aren't fully appreciated until they can be re-read through the lens of Actual Amy's revelations.

The launch party is described as 'unfabulous. Off-tone'. (Diary) Amy rightly questions how one might 'throw a party for a fictional character who started life as a precocious moppet of six and is now a thirty-year-old bride to be who still speaks like a child' (30), hinting toward her own emotional and psychological immaturity which will eventually be revealed to the reader. The publication of the book itself is made necessary by financial pressure: Amy's parents are soon revealed to have 'made some serious judgment errors' (97) which lead them (and, in turn, Amy) to the brink of bankruptcy. Although Amy notes with some pride that 'a new *Amazing Amy* used to get a first print of a hundred thousand copies back in the '80s', she rationalises the lukewarm reception to *Amazing Amy and the Big Day* (and its 'ten thousand' first print copies) in that 'no one wanted Amazing Amy to grow up, least of all me. Leave her in kneesocks and hair ribbons and let *me* grow up, unencumbered by my literary alter ego, my paper-bound better half, the me I was supposed to be' (30). (Diary) Amy here hints toward resentment she might feel towards her parents' construction of this 'paper-bound better half':

> My parents have always worried that I'd take *Amy* too personally - they always tell me not to read too much into her. And yet I can't fail to notice that whenever I screw something up, Amy does it right[.] This used to drive me mad, but after I went off to Harvard (and *Amy* correctly chose my parents' alma mater), I decided it was all too ridiculous to think about. That my parents, two *child psychologists*, chose this particular public form of passive-aggressiveness toward *their child* was not just fucked up but also stupid and weird and kind of hilarious. So be it. (29)

(Diary) Amy's self-deprecating, playful reflection that her parents have 'given their daughter's namesake what they can't give their daughter: a husband!' masks her fury both as to the financial mismanagement which forced her parents to resurrect *Amazing Amy* in a marriage storyline for the nostalgia market, and her own failure in securing a perfect husband for herself first.

(Actual) Amy recasts this experience explicitly in the latter half of *Gone Girl*: rather than 'stupid and weird and kind of hilarious', Amy describes her parents as 'squatting on my psyche, earning money for themselves' (446). She blames them for having 'made me this way and then desert[ing] me', and frames her own decision to re-generate public interest in the *Amazing Amy* franchise by orchestrating her own miraculous return from the dead as a necessary recourse to their having 'siphoned off *my* money'. Their having let 'Nick bundle me off to Missouri like I was some piece of chattel' (268) speaks to Amy's fury at her own less than perfect marriage, occasioned only by the impetus of *Amazing Amy and the Big Day*. In light of *Gone Girl*'s attention to Amy's adult life via her childhood and education through the prism of her parents' marriage (and, eventually, that of her fictional counterpart's marriage *designed* as an echo of her parents'), one can find significance to the inclusion of Jung's primary writing on marriage as a psychological relationship in volume 17 of the *Collected Works*, *The Development of Personality*, alongside his essays on analytical psychology and education, the gifted child, and the significance of the unconscious in individuation.

In this volume, Jung warns against parental 'love' warping into 'ambition and will to power', writing that children born into marriages in which this change has taken place 'are practically nothing more than dolls, to be dressed up and adorned at pleasure. They are nothing but mute figures on the chessboard of their parents' egoism'. Jung describes 'the maddening thing' in such situations in 'that all this is done under the cloak of selfless

devotion to the dear child [...] But in actual fact the child is not given a grain of real love'. (17: 222). Jung's articulation of the cyclical transmutation of complexes from imperfect marriages to the children raised within them (via the case of a young girl dominated by her mother who, in turn, was likely 'unconsciously following the example of her own mother'), mirrors the irony with which *Gone Girl* concludes. Amy engineers a pregnancy against her husband's wishes in order to consolidate her own, wholly fictional, public image as a model of perfect femininity as wife and mother in order to realise and embody the image forced upon her by her parents' literary construction of *Amazing Amy*.

The violent depth of feeling with which (Actual) Amy experiences her parents' decision to publish a title in which Amazing Amy gets married is cloaked by (Diary) Amy's artfully constructed lightheartedness. Nevertheless, (Diary) Amy's attempts at humour reveal her capacity for hatred:

> *'Sheesh,' thought Amy, 'my dear fiance sure is a grouch-monster when he doesn't get his way…*' That is an actual quote. The whole book made me want to punch Amy right in her stupid, spotless vagina. (30)

Although (Diary) Amy dismisses her parents' fears 'that I might take Amy's marriage as some jab at my perpetually single state', the intersection *Amazing Amy* occupies in (Actual) Amy's psyche is a nexus of complexes touching Amy's self-image. It touches her role within her family; their financial security; and her own maturation into a woman who, despite personal accomplishments which never quite match up to her literary counterpart's, remains unmarried until she is bested at that, too, by *Amazing Amy and the Big Day*. Despite the psycho-pedagogical roots of the fictional *Amazing Amy* series, Amy herself learns nothing of ethical, moral or educational value from them. Instead, she seeks to hide her own anger and imperfection behind the mask of Amy's 'Amazing-ness' as ascribed to her by her parents.

Ostensibly, the *Amazing Amy* series - whose marketing tagline, we are told, is 'written by *two psychologists, who are also parents like you!'* (87) - is a psychological tool for parents to 'tease out' their 'child's personality traits'. Every narrative within the series includes quizzes for children to complete, aligning themselves with one of the series' cast of characters: 'a sulker who can't stand to be corrected like Brian? A spineless enabler, like Suzy? A pot-stirrer, like Joanna? Or perfect, *like Amy*?'. Given the continued popularity of Myers-Briggs-esque post-Jungian models of personality typology, one can imagine quite easily the success of a marketing gimmick which propels *Amazing Amy*'s success (and Actual

Amy's career, writing 'personality quizzes using the knowledge gleaned from [her] master's degree in psychology', 12). The early success of the series is emphasised throughout the novel - at 'one point', we are told, 'it was estimated that every school library in America had an *Amazing Amy* book' (87) - but Flynn makes *Amazing Amy*'s waning popularity evident through its sales figures and the financial distress of its authors (and inspiration). She hints, too, towards an intradiegetic cultural re-evaluation of the series which interrogates their quality and value as a teaching tool - something which Amy, as a financial beneficiary of her parents' and literary alter-ego's continued commercial success, is quick to deny.

These criticisms are slanted, primarily, towards the *Amazing Amy* series' conservative philosophy as to gender and contrasexual (heterosexual) dynamics, as implied by (Diary) Amy's list of responses to journalists' questions at the launch of *Amazing Amy and the Big Day*:

> '*I'm happily single right now, no Able Andy in my life*!'
> '*No, I don't think Amy oversimplifies the male-female dynamic*.'
> '*No, I wouldn't say Amy is dated; I think the series is a classic*.'
> '*Yes, I am single. No Able Andy in my life right now*.' (32)

The series' oversimplification of 'the male-female dynamic' in *Amazing Amy* similarly characterises much of both Diary and Actual Amy's resentful relationship with her husband Nick, which drives the primary plot of the novel. Having felt wronged by her husband, Amy goes to extreme lengths to achieve the image of a perfect marriage with her imperfect husband, rather than undertaking any of the psychological work by which she might accept Nick as he is or recognise any of her own shortcomings.

The irony of Amy (and her parents') impressive intellect and psychological credentials being put to warped, self-serving commercial use rather than any genuine positive psychic development perhaps echoes critiques of the space Jung's own psychology has come to occupy in the contemporary public consciousness. Susan Rowland describes Jung's 'radical conservatism' as a psychologist and thinker, touching explicitly on his own forays into gender politics to illustrate this convincing formulation: '[j]ust as Jung's dedication to restoring the lost feminine is ultimately in favour of shoring up the status quo, so too his experience of other cultures is dedicated to healing Western modernity rather than radically undermining it' (2019: 131). Jay Sherry describes Jung as an ever 'popular but never

fashionable thinker' due, in part, to his paradoxical status as a thinker at once 'avant-garde' and deeply 'conservative' (2016).

Amy's dedication to the image of a conservative contrasexual marriage - despite the highly unorthodox and distressing means by which this image is achieved - drives *Gone Girl*'s primary plot. It drives, too, *Gone Girl*'s exploration of the damaging cultural complex which demands of Amy a perfect marriage in parallel to the familial complex by which Amy grew up 'knowing [she] wasn't allowed to disappoint'; 'desperate to be flawless'; and conscious of her parents' casting of her as a 'symbol', 'the walking ideal. Amazing Amy in the flesh' (291-2). Amy's assumption as to the necessity of appearing perfect in her marriage to the less-than-perfect Nick is driven by this familial complex. It is telling that the excerpt we glimpse of *Amazing Amy and the Big Day* sees Amazing Amy, however, characterise her husband as a '*grouch-monster when he doesn't get his way*'. The language of monstrousness is used by Nick explicitly to describe Actual Amy, masked by her persona of Diary Amy to everyone but Nick and *Gone Girl*'s reader, when the images she seeks falls short of their realities. Nick casts Amy's parents in the demiurgic role of Dr. Frankenstein twice. First, he notes with bitterness when implicit accusations for Amy's murder land at his door from Amy's parents that they 'had raised Amy. She was literally their work product. They had created her. I wanted to say the words *Your daughter is the monster here,* but I couldn't' (306-7). Similarly, he reflects after discovering the true extent of Actual Amy's psychopathy, that:

> *You two worshipful, adoring assholes created that* thing *down the hall and set her loose on the world*. Lo, how jolly, what a perfect monster! And do they get punished? No, not a single person had come forth to question their characters; they'd experienced nothing but an outpouring of love and support, and Amy would be restored to them and everyone would love her more. (428)

The punning of 'characters' here draws attention to the gulf between Amy's literal inner self and the persona of Amazing Amy created for her by her parents, which she complicitly adopts as a literary persona by which to mask her true moral character.

That Amy's monstrousness should be cloaked in an image of perfection constructed by her parents - professionals in both psychology and pedagogy, and the authors of a hugely influential intradiegetic children's book series - dramatises Jung's warning by which he tempers 'our enthusiasm for pedagogics'. 'If', he argued:

> there is anything that we wish to change in our children, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves[.] It may be that the boot is on the other leg. It may be that we misplace the pedagogical need because it would be an uncomfortable reminder that we ourselves are still children in many respects and still need a vast amount of educating. (17: 288-9)

Jung centralises the problematic neglect of this doubt specifically 'when we set out to train our children's "personalities"'. The underground imagery which has characterised much of my analysis in this chapter finds a root, perhaps, in Jung's metaphor here of personality as 'a seed that can only develop by slow stages throughout life'. He extends this image in writing that there 'is no personality without definiteness, wholeness, and ripeness. These three qualities cannot and should not be expected of the child, as they would rob it of childhood'. In reflecting upon 'our modern education' in 1932, Jung mourns in terms strikingly resonant with characterisations of contemporary *helicopter parenting* that 'monsters' are raised by parents who 'set themselves the fanatical task of always "doing their best" for the children and "living only for them"'. Jung argues that this 'ideal effectively prevents the parents from doing anything about their own development', noting that the 'best' for which parents ostensibly aim for their children:

> [...] turns out to be the very things the parents have most badly neglected in themselves. In this way the children are goaded on to achieve their parents' most dismal failures, and are loaded with ambitions that are never fulfilled. Such methods and ideals only engender educational monstrosities. (17: 288-9)

That the seed of Amy's monstrousness should be rooted in her own childhood literary experiences echoes the underground/unconscious imagery from which Byatt and Morrison borrowed in their analyses of those experiences in childhood in *The Children's Book* and *The Bluest Eye*. Indeed, Amy's husband Nick describes her 'blooming large in my mind', 'more present than anyone else' when she was missing via the literary project of her diary (241). He blames himself for 'bringing the madness to bloom in Amy' (444), having unwittingly provided her with the means by which she could nurture the cultural marriage complex sown in her psyche by her parents in childhood. Through her marriage to Nick, Amy comes to see the demiurgic capacities exhibited by her parents in forcing upon her an 'identity that she herself didn't create' (40-41) via *Amazing Amy* as something in which she, too, can participate as a wife, a mother, and an author. Amy confides in the reader her determination to 'wear [Nick] down' in acquiescing to participation in marriage and parenthood, with Amy

at the demiurgic helm. 'I just need Nick to get on the same page so that we both agree how this story will end,' Amy muses, noting that in order for it to do so 'happily':

> In the middle of the night, I'll turn to face him and press myself against him. I'll hold myself to him like a climbing, coiling vine until I have invaded every part of him and made him mine (446 - 7).

Although Amy might allude to some semblance of peace with the fact that, after her self-orchestrated resurrection, her 'parents' publisher placed an abashed plea for another *Amazing Amy* book, and they acquiesced for a lovely fat sum', she does so only insofar as she no longer cares 'about the rebuilding of their pathetic empire, because every day I get calls to tell *my* story. My story: mine, mine, mine. I just need to pick the very best deal and start writing.' Amy's decision to call her ostensibly autobiographical book 'simply: *Amazing*. Causing great wonder or surprise; astounding', as that 'sums up my story, I think' (453), articulates the severity of her psychic split between 'Diary' Amy and 'Actual' Amy occasioned by her lifelong struggle with the 'Amazing' Amy persona. Amy chooses against undertaking any of the psychological work required in resolving this childhood splitting into a cohesive sense of self in the (im)maturity she reaches by *Gone Girl*'s conclusion. Her self-negation from the subjective, internal and individual 'Amy' in titling her own book simply '*Amazing*' compensates for her lifelong over-identification with the objective, external and collectively-agreed concept of 'Amazing' by which her existence has always been qualified by her parents. A nebulous concept scripted for her by her parents in childhood, Amy only finally assents to her embodiment of 'Amazing-ness' in adulthood when she comes to appreciate its darkest aspects, and her own writerly skills as a scriptive force in her own (adult) right as a writer. In this sense, Amy's collapse under the weight of the complexes, both familial and cultural, which constellate in her echoes the similar disintegration of *The Children's Book*'s Tom Wellwood and *The Bluest Eye*'s Pecola Breedlove. In wedding herself to the monomyth of Amazing Amy, who achieves her version of heroism in marriage, Amy instead casts herself as an anti-hero, warping (Amazing) Amy's Amazingness into its darkest aspect: '[c]ausing great wonder or surprise' to her own husband, Nick.

To borrow a concept from children's literature scholar Margaret Mackey, the 'auto-bibliographies' of *The Children's Book*'s Tom, *The Bluest Eye*'*s* Pecola and *Gone Girl*'s Amy are dominated, respectively, by *Tom Underground*, the *Dick & Jane* reading primers, and by the *Amazing Amy* series. Mackey coined the term as part of her own

auto-bibliographical work in *One Child Reading* (2016), whereby she developed a methodology for rigorous self-examination of one's literary enculturation via adult analyses of the texts one encountered in childhood. Mackey refers to this project 'as an auto-bibliography rather than an autobiography', as she:

> [...] designed it as a study of materials rather than simply a personal history. Telling a purely private narrative is not the driving impetus of this work; instead, [Mackey is] interested in creating a complex understanding of the three-way relationship between a particular life *and* named, specific texts *and* the theories that help us understand how reading works (17).

Using Jung's theories as to the constellation of the familial and cultural complex has provided me with a means of interrogating the relationships dramatised in Byatt's, Morrison's and Flynn's novels between particular children and the specific texts they encounter in childhood. The three novels I've analysed in this chapter share Jungian imagery of the underground and of the sea as metaphors for the unconscious, by which Byatt and Morrison's effective protagonists are overwhelmed. The interior constellation of familial and cultural complexes in Tom and Pecola respectively can be interrogated through their relationships to *Tom Underground* and the *Dick & Jane* primers, the intradiegetic stories through which the fatal constellation of these complexes are externalised by Byatt and Morrison. In *Gone Girl*, however, Amy's survival into adulthood sees her shift from a victim of the familial complex symbolised by her auto-bibliographical association with *Amazing Amy* to a willing participant in the cultural marriage complex (and, in turn, cyclical participation in a new iteration of her familial complex) by her construction of an autobiography, by which to bind her husband and child (and her reading public) to her own dysfunctional psyche.

Despite contemporary intradiegetic concerns as to the psycho-pedagogical value of *The Amazing Amy* series alluded to at the launch of *Amazing Amy and the Big Day*, prior to Amy's disappearance and newfound fame, Amy gloats by *Gone Girl*'s conclusion and her orchestration of murder and mass manipulation that '[s]ales for the *Amazing Amy* books have skyrocketed since my disappearance - three generations of readers have remembered how much they love me' (393-4). Such is the strength of Amy's storytelling skill that she reflects, with satisfaction, that both her parents and the nation 'lavish me with attention' upon her return: '[w]e are all laboring under a mass psychosis[.] We must take good care of me' (445). Although Nick was himself a writer, he proves no match to Amy. Nick notes with bitterness

that unlike Amy, who grew up the focus of all of the privilege and resources afforded her by her parents and the *Amazing Amy* empire, that:

> I've worked since I was fourteen years old. I didn't go to fucking tennis camp and creative-writing camp and SAT prep and all that shit that apparently everyone else in New York City did, because I was wiping down tables at the mall and I was mowing lawns and I was driving to Hannibal and fucking dressing like Huck Finn for the tourists and I was cleaning the funnel-cake skillets at midnight. (76)

The parallelism of Amy herself having been raised as an icon of children's literature whereas Nick toiled in Mark Twain's hometown as a Huckleberry Finn impersonator speaks to the damaging models of perfection which children's literature can perpetuate in valorising impossible fantasies unattainable for the majority of their readerships. The lasting impact of Amy and Nick's auto-bibliographical and autobiographical experiences in their adult realities is again framed in literary terms: although Amy tells Nick that '[y]ou're probably too old to play Huck Finn', she nevertheless seeks to reduce him to a childlike player in the script she writes for their marriage, informed by the reductive contrasexual dynamics of the *Amazing Amy* series.

Flynn uses chthonic, underground imagery to illustrate Nick's absorption into Amy's (im)mature psyche, in terms strikingly resonant of *The Children's Book*'s Olive Wellwood's absorption of her son Tom. Byatt draws upon imagery of Olive Wellwood as a skilled adult storyteller akin to a spider capable of trapping her son in her narratives, as does Flynn in casting Amy as the superior storyteller in her relationship with Nick. Despite Nick's initial hope that the police might be able to 'saw' their way through all of Amy's 'sticky cobwebby lies' (427), the strength of the narrative Amy constructs is such that instead he accepts that 'I know I'll never sleep again. I can't close my eyes when I'm next to her. It's like sleeping with a spider' (452). Byatt uses the same metaphor in dramatising Olive's self-conceptualisation as a storyteller:

> For most of Tom's life she believed she had known in her body - as though held to the boy by a myriad spider-threads - exactly where he was, how he felt, what he needed. He had been part of her, part of her had gone running with him, she had *felt* his sleep after he was tucked up. Or so she thought she had felt. (2009: 466 - 467)

Amy, too, articulates satisfaction with the predatory skill of her superior storytelling in absorbing Nick into her psyche: Amy overhears Nick attempting to counter Amy's narrative by writing a book of his own revealing the truth of her disappearance, 'clicking way late at

night on the computer. Writing. Writing his side, I know it'. Amy rests in her knowledge - 'I *know* it, I can tell by the feverish outpouring of words, the keys clicking and clacking like a million insects' (457) - that her words are capable of catching out and devouring Nick's, having been trained since childhood in the literary art of fashioning a powerful image by which to absorb others into one's desired narrative.

The imagery of being trapped underground which characterises and victimises Tom in *The Children's Book* and Pecola in *The Bluest Eye* isn't applied to Amy in childhood in *Gone Girl*. Rather, it is used to characterise Amy's ability to victimise others in adulthood in parallel to how she was absorbed into her parents' psyche when she herself was a child. 'Her brain is so busy', Nick writes of his wife, 'it never works on just one level':

> She's like this endless archaeological dig: You think you've reached the final layer, and then you bring down your pick one more time, and you break through to a whole new mine shaft beneath. With a maze of tunnels and bottomless pits. (285)

Nick, like Tom or Pecola to their respective complexes, describes himself as 'a prisoner' in Amy's narrative through her pregnancy with their child. 'Amy had me forever', Nick reflects, 'because I needed to save my son, to try to unhook, unhatch, debarb, undo everything that Amy did. I would literally lay down my life for my child, and do it happily. I would raise my son to be a good man' (459 - 460). Nick's determination to spare his child the seemingly inexorable participation in the familial complexes of the Elliotts which so traumatised Amy is framed in explicitly literary terms:

> We had spent years battling for control of our marriage, of our love story, our life story. I had been thoroughly, finally outplayed. I created a manuscript, and she created a life. (459)

His acknowledgement as to Amy's superior storytelling skill, however, is tempered by his insight into Amy's, perhaps unconscious, psychological modus operandi. His decision to participate in the sham of Amy's casting herself in the role of perfect wife and mother in parallel to her 'Amazing' literary counterpart is framed through the fear of 'Mother whispering, whispering lies' in the 'tiny pink ear' of their child: 'I could suddenly see the accusations - of molestation or abuse - and I would never see my baby, and I would know that my child was tucked away far from me' (459).

Amy's transition from child-victim of the familial complex to adult participant in its re-construction and potential constellation in those over whom she, in turn, gains influence is framed, too, in familiar imagery of the under-sea. Amy's initial plan in framing Nick for her

murder was for her drowned body to be found: 'I will travel South along the river, where I will meet up with my body, my pretend floating Other Amy body in the gulf of Mexico'. Again framing herself in conspicuously literary terms, Amy's plan was to 'sign up for a booze cruise[,] drink a giant ice-wet shaker of gin[,] swallow sleeping pills, and when no one is looking [...] drop silently over the side, my pockets full of Virginia Woolf rocks'. 'It requires discipline', Amy reflects, 'to drown oneself, but I have discipline in spades' (227). Unlike Tom and Pecola, Amy is never entirely overwhelmed by her psychic disassociation, but matures into an adult capable (dysfunctionally) of channeling her glimpse of her potential for psychic disintegration into destructive revenge on others.

Upon deciding not to kill herself, but to live and return to wreak more insidious revenge on those she feels have wronged her as a respected and influential literary figure, wife, and mother in her own right, Amy swims rather than drowns:

> I lower myself until I feel the warm water hit my thighs, my belly, my neck, and then I hold my breath and go under.
>
> I swim far and fast, stay underwater longer than I should to remind myself what it would feel like to drown - I know I could do it if I needed to - [but then] I come up with a disciplined gasp. (322)

The imagery of drowning has been transplanted from Amy to Nick, upon his discovery of Amy's potential pregnancy:

> A sense of despair washed over me. Or rather, the opposite. Not a wave coming in, rolling over me, but the ebb of the sea returning: a sense of something pulling away, and me with it. (259)

The destructive potential of the unresolved complex is literalised in *The Children's Book* by Tom Wellwood's suicide by drowning, and in *The Bluest Eye* by Pecola Breedlove's disassociation. In *Gone Girl*, its maturation in Amy is dramatised by Amy's characterisation as the sea itself, as she, in turn, absorbs both Nick, her child, and the reading public into her own fractured psyche. That Amy should have learned her own capacity for this as the victim, in turn, of her own parents' literary abilities warns, again, as to the significance of the children's book in the developing psyche of the child.

In this chapter, I have traced three texts which dramatise Jung's theories as to the constellation of complexes - both familial and cultural - in the child reader. Much of the drama of *The Children's Book*, *The Bluest Eye* and *Gone Girl* is engineered by the lingering

ill-effects of each novel's intratextual childhood reading experiences on the psychic development of their respective effective protagonists, which come to represent the constellation of unhealthy complexes in Tom Wellwood, Pecola Breedlove and Amy Elliot respectively. Tom is absorbed into the *puella aeternus* complex of his author mother in *The Children's Book* via *Tom Underground*, as is Pecola into the racial complex of her culture as reflected in the *Dick and Jane* series of reading primers which metonymise her exclusion from the institutions of family and the school in *The Bluest Eye*. While *Gone Girl*'s Amy survives to adulthood, she comes to participate in and perpetuate the unhealthy complexes of perfectionism and over-identification with the idealised persona instilled in her by her author parents, via the *Amazing Amy* series, in her childhood.

Thus in this chapter do we begin to see dramatised artistic assumptions as to the powerful scriptive role the children's book plays in the developing psyche of child readers, and continues to play in the psyche of former children who mature into adults. In my next chapter, I wish to move from analysis of the dramatisation of Jung's theory of the complex to engage more deeply with the multi-faceted concept of the 'inner child' within the adult, to which all three of these texts necessarily allude. The relationship between the 'inner child' and the children's book, embedded again as concepts and images which function specifically within broader narratives which aren't designed for the consumption of child audiences, forms the basis of my study there.

Chapter 2) Childish Adults and Wise Children in Comedy: Accessing the Inner Child through the Children's Book

The genre of texts from which I draw my analyses in this chapter are comedic. Through analyses of the 1998 romantic comedy (romcom) *You've Got Mail* and episodes of the respectively animated and live action situation comedies (sitcoms) *The Simpsons* (1989 - present) and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* (2015 - 2020), I seek to interrogate the influence of Jung's theorisation as to the psychology of the child archetype, as set out in his influential essay of the same name (1951) in which the popular modern concept of the 'inner child' finds its roots. The modern concept of the inner child as the childlike aspect of an individual's psyche which requires nurturing care and attention remains embedded in popular psychology and the psychotherapeutic lexicon due, in part, to the writing and therapeutic systems developed by Arthur Janov (1970), Alice Miller (1979), Charles Whitfield (1987), John Bradshaw (1990), Lucia Capacchione (1991), Penny Parks (1994), Richard C. Schwartz (1995), Oliver James (2002), and Stefanie Stahl (2015), among others. Across most psychotherapeutic schools which draw on the loosely defined concept of the inner child, the adult client or analysand is encouraged to heal childhood trauma and memories or recurring patterns of abuse, neglect, vulnerability and abandonment through reconnection with the positive, childlike qualities of playfulness, joyfulness, and creativity in adulthood. Systems designed for the integration of the inner child within a healthily balanced adult psyche work in mirror image to the concept of the 'Peter Pan Syndrome', coined by by Dan Kiley (1983) and of significance most notably to the contemporary work of Jordan Peterson (2018), which instead focusses on the *puer aeternus* - the shadow aspect of the divine, eternal (or 'inner') child archetype as understood and articulated by Jung.

For Jung,

> The 'child' is all that is abandoned and exposed and at the same time divinely powerful; the insignificant, dubious beginning, and the triumphal end. The 'eternal child' in man is an indescribable experience, an incongruity, a handicap, and a divine prerogative; an imponderance that determines the ultimate worth or worthlessness of a personality. (9.1: 300)

The 'incongruity' of which Jung writes in locating the 'eternal child' within the adult speaks in part to the paradox he identifies between the positive ('divine') and negative aspects (or 'handicap') of the role the inner child plays in the adult psyche. Those who work psychotherapeutically with the inner child seek to harness the former, by integrating the

positive attributes of the child image (joy, playfulness, creativity) in balancing the hyper-rational or depressed adult psyche. Those concerned with the *puer aeternus*, which manifests in the popularly received concept of the Peter Pan complex, locate their interest in the latter, in which the negative attributes of the child image (irresponsibiliy, immaturity, and dependence on others) are perceived to outweigh the adult collocations of their inverse qualities in a similarly unbalanced adult psyche.

The contemporary publishing boom in what Michelle Ann Abate describes as 'juvenile-styled texts intended for an adult readership' (2020: 3) similarly reflects the dual interpretations of the 'eternal child' in the adult psyche of which Jung writes. Parodies of classic British children's literature, most prominently the illustrated 'Ladybirds for Grown-Ups' series (which now tackle subjects such as 'The Hangover', 'The Hipster', and 'The Mid-Life Crisis') and the 'Enid Blyton for Grown-Ups' series which includes 'Five Give Up the Booze' and 'Five Go Parenting' have been met with commercial success: 'Five on Brexit Island' was cited as the best-selling book in the UK over Christmas 2016 (Press Association, 2017). While the playful recasting of serious adult concerns in the trappings of archetypal British children's series has evidently raised smiles in adult readers in touch with their 'inner child' (or, indeed, in adult recipients of these books as joke gifts unintended for actual readership), actual adult engagement with already existing children's literature has a rather more complicated history. Adult engagement with children's literature has been both lauded, as in the popular reception to adult memoirs of childhood reading such as Francis Spufford's *The Child That Books Built* (2002) and Lucy Mangan's *Bookworm* (2018), and derided, most notably in A.S. Byatt's attack on 'childish' adult readers, the *pueri aeterni* fans, of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series in the *New York Times* (2003). By extension, Byatt's denigration of the 'childish adult' readers of Rowling's work at the turn of the 21st century apply, too, to the adult readers of subsequent Young Adult franchises which have found significant cross-generational appeal, including Stepher Meyer's *Twilight* series, Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games* trilogy, and the multimedia offerings of Marvel's Studios' sprawling *Marvel Cinematic Universe*.

The children's book, then, can be understood in the same terms of paradox as Jung's image of the 'child' - as an object it is simultaneously cherished and derided when re-contextualised in the arena of adult imaginative culture. Indicative at once of a healthy connection with one's inner child, over-identification with children's literature as an adult reader could evidence a Peter Pan complex - which might (as Byatt would likely argue) be

rectified by engagement with more edifying and mature material. What makes comedy a fitting genre in which to interrogate this dual role of the children's book in adult culture is what philosopher of humour John Morreall describes as its generic hallmarks of egalitarianism: in tragedy 'the people who matter are kings, queens, and generals[:] in comedy there are more characters and more kinds of characters, women are more prominent, and many protagonists come from lower classes. Everybody counts for one' (2020). The incongruity of relocating the children's book in the genre of comedy designed for non-child audiences may be therefore less remarkable than in other genres; the 'incongruity' of the '"eternal child" in man' of which Jung writes may then, too, be best interrogated in the comedic domain. While Morreall describes 'incongruity theory' as 'the dominant theory of humour in philosophy and psychology', other philosophers of humour including Roger Scruton and Noel Carroll have instead developed 'congruity theory', with the latter writing that 'perceived incongruity is not a necessary condition for comic amusement' as, in the case of caricature, 'something corresponds to the way things are [so one] might be tempted to say that what we enjoy here are congruities, rather than incongruities' (2013: 50). There is certainly congruity between the fields of children's literature and of comedy as areas of academic enquiry, both of which are emerging now as vibrant domains which have too long been excluded from or denigrated within the broader academies of cultural and literary studies.

The children's book has a long history of rough treatment in academic culture: repeated parodic analyses of A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* series in Frederick Crews' *The Pooh Perplex* (1963) and *Postmodern Pooh* (2001) humorously skewer not only the schools of literary criticism Crews lampoons, but ridicule both the practice of serious children's literature scholarship and the possibility for meaningful and multilayered interpretation of children's texts themselves. Reflecting upon a career instrumental in the development of children's literature as a worthy and respected field of academic enquiry some ten years after *The Pooh Perplex*, Perry Nodelman mused thus:

> [children's literature] is not merely a complex literature as, say, much literary fiction for adults is; it is, more paradoxically, a complex literature in the context of its essential simplicity. But how, then, can one best work to understand or describe this literature? How can it be both simple and complicated? What are the specific natures of its simplicity and complexity? (2010: 232).

Connected to Nodelman's pertinent questions is the understanding of the field of children's literature as at once amorphous and specific, a trait or perception conflated and popularised by the recontextualisation of the children's book in adult comedy. The children's book can function as a paradoxical signifier at once for the wisdom and profundity which collocate with the positive aspects of the child image, and simultaneously with the insubstantial and immature in which its lessons are often hidden. Simplicity and complexity can be understood as two sides of the same coin in considering the image of the children's book when recontextualised in the adult imagination. In parallel to the positive reception to child*like* re-engagement with one's inner child and all of its complexities in adulthood, there runs a simultaneous risk of perceived child*ish*-ness in overidentification with the child image in one's psyche. Those suffering from this childish overidentification are likely, ironically, to miss the wise and profound points embedded in children's texts when read from an adult perspective too insubstantial or immature for their absorption.

In Linda Hutcheon's study of 'the affective dimension of irony's edge', she argues that '[u]nlike metaphor or allegory, which demand similar supplementing of meaning, irony has an evaluative edge and manages to provoke emotional responses in those who "get" it and those who don't, as well as in its targets and in what some people call its "victims"' (1994: 2). Jung's dual definition of the 'child' image is helpful here, too, in interrogating a paradox central to the field of children's literature scholarship in which, as Maria Nikolajeva points out, (fictional) 'children are allowed [-] on certain conditions and for a limited time' to 'become strong, brave, rich, powerful, and independent', while the majority of (real) 'children in our society are oppressed and powerless' (2010, 10). Jung's comfort with this paradox is likely to stem from his clear attention to the child *image* in the adult psyche which draws on the literary and cultural sources by which it has been developed, rather than on the tensions between real and imagined child-readers which often haunt the edges of children's literature scholarship. Locating my analyses of the children's book as object, symbol, or, indeed, multivalent index within the broader arena of comedy intended for non-child audiences then, seeks to examine the ironic edges of who is depicted as *getting* children's literature, and who isn't. Who can it empower, or indeed cut down to size, regardless of their age or status?

In answering this question, I will begin my study with an analysis of the two central adult characters of *You've Got Mail* - Joe Fox (Tom Hanks) and Kathleen Kelly (Meg Ryan), whose respective relationships to both their inner child and children's literature see them both

empowered and humbled by the end of the film. Next I will examine an example of the 'wise child' - to borrow a term from Angela Carter particularly apposite to an interrogation of the positive aspect of Jung's child archetype - in the child-figure of Lisa Simpson. Finally I will turn to considering the wise child's generational inverse, Byatt's 'childish adult', through the eponymous sitcom heroine Kimmy Schmidt, whose child–*like* qualities see her triumph, ultimately, over the charge of childish-*ness*. Jung writes that:

> To remain a child too long is childish, but it is just as childish to move away and then assume that childhood no longer exists because we do not see it. But if we return to the 'children's land' we succumb to the fear of becoming childish, because we do not understand that everything of psychic origin has a double face. One face looks forward, the other back. It is ambivalent and therefore symbolic, like all living reality. (12: 74)

We see this assertion dramatised in the texts I analyse in this chapter, all of which conclude their narrative journeys by having their childish adult protagonists become children's authors to varying degrees. The symbolic implication of this journey is significant in that in doing so, the protagonists I examine here recognise the capacity of the children's book in adulthood for looking forward as well as looking back, without succumbing to 'the fear of becoming childish'. The journey of child, or childish adult, reader to adult author can then be read as a representation of the individuation process, whereby an understanding that 'everything of psychic origin has a double face' - realised in adult, *authorial* participation with the children's book - signifies an integration of the inner, or eternal, child once enculturated by that same symbol within the adult psyche.

You've Got Mail: the Children's Book and the Individuation Process

Clementine Beauvais and Maria Nikolajeva recently made the case for children's literature's status now as 'one of the most dynamic fields of literary criticism and education' on the back-cover blurb of their 2017 *Edinburgh Companion to Children's Literature* by juxtaposing this assertion (and their excellent collection) against 'time [having] passed since "having a PhD in children's literature" was a funny joke in *You've Got Mail*'. *You've Got Mail* (1998) is cited by film scholar Claire Mortimer in her extensive analysis of the romantic comedy's generic hallmarks, as an archetypal narrative exemplar in which the romcom hero is

‘represented initially as a threat to the heroine by exhibiting an excess of masculinity[,] perhaps seeking to limit her potential to succeed, particularly with regard to work and other relationships’. Mortimer summarises the film’s plot by describing *You’ve Got Mail*’s male lead, Joe Fox (Tom Hanks), as ‘a smart business man whose flourishing bookshop chain leads to the demise of Kathleen (Meg Ryan)’s small independent bookshop. His aggressive and ruthless business practices allow no room for the quirky individualism and warmth of his competitor, and he destroys her livelihood’ (2010: 52). The joke cited by Beauvais and Nikolajeva comes at the end of the film, once the ‘process of transformation and education [via] the couple’s learning from one another’ is complete and, as Mortimer points out, Joe’s hypermasculinity has been ‘tempered by love, the threat being transformed into harmonious union’ (53). Joe reassures Kathleen that her former staff in the children’s bookshop she inherited from her mother are doing ‘great, really great’, having hired them to run the children’s department in the nearby branch of his national media retail business. To Joe, they’re ‘revolutionising the place. You can’t work in [the children’s] department unless you have a PhD in children’s literature’.

There is perhaps some irony in Nikolajeva and Beauvais’ misreading of *You’ve Got Mail*’s treatment of children’s literature. Mortimer describes the romcom subgenre occupying a low rung even within comedy, which ‘as a whole has rarely been seen as critically respectable as other genres’, positing that ‘perhaps it is a self-defeating paradox to ask for it to be taken seriously’ (2010: 2). Celestino Deleyto, a contemporary in Mortimer’s field of film studies and the romcom specifically, agrees on the subgenre’s perception as ‘the most crassly commercial type of product of contemporary cinema’ (2009), citing *You’ve Got Mail* as a central text in the genre’s evolution and contemporary incarnation as one of critical neglect. His description of the perceived ‘ideologically and formally rigid conceptualisations’ which characterise the subgenre’s popular reception as ‘cause and consequence of the critical tendency to overlook these films’ might well once have been applied to the academic study of children’s literature, but this is not the case in *You’ve Got Mail*’s respect for the genre. Indeed, throughout the film, Kathleen and her highly trained, knowledgeable and passionate staff match children with books which they believe will help them grow into good people. The memory of Kathleen’s late mother, who founded the whimsical independent children’s bookshop eventually run out of business by Joe’s corporate chainstore, causes former child-customers - now grown adults - to burst into tears of gratefulness for her acuity in nurturing their younger reading selves with perfectly matched texts. In support of my

argument in the previous chapter as to children's literature's capacity for inducting child readers into the specific complexes, either cultural or familial, of the books' adult donors, Kathleen rails against the crass commercialism of Joe's self-service, one-size-fits-all approach to bookselling. She reminisces that:

> it wasn't just that [her mother] was selling books… it was that she was helping people to become whoever it was that they were going to turn out and be. Because when you read a book as a child it becomes a part of your identity in a way that no other reading in your whole life does.

'Run[ning] a children's bookshop' is described in *You've Got Mail* 'as this incredibly noble thing'; Kathleen's shop is described in a newspaper campaign to save the business as 'a temple to one of the twentieth century's most profound truths: you are what you read. Save *The Shop Around the Corner*, and you will save your soul'.

In one paradoxical sense, it is Joe, and not Kathleen, who saves at least the spirit of *The Shop Around the Corner* despite not initially *getting* its appeal. By hiring Kathleen's former staff, the ethos of Kathleen's mother and *The Shop Around the Corner* is transplanted to the heart of Fox Books's new flagship store. By the film's end, not only has Joe's crass commercialism been tampered by a newfound respect for the wares he sells, but Kathleen has been freed from the burden of failing to live up to her mother's legacy as a children's bookseller to pursue her own distinct ambition of becoming a children's writer. The 'ideologically and formally rigid' rules Deleyto identified in characterising the romcom might well illustrate Jung's assertion that 'life is born only of the spark of opposites' (7: 78). As the generic conceptualisations of *You've Got Mail* require both Kathleen and Joe to learn from one another, this is dramatised by their respective relationships to the child archetype. Initially, both Joe and Kathleen are trapped in a Goldilocks dilemma: Kathleen overidentifies with her childlike aspect, whereas Joe is bullishly unsentimental and businesslike. Both, however, are to some extent labouring under the complexes of their respective families.

Kathleen feels chained to maintaining her mother's legacy despite the changed business landscape in which *The Bookshop Around the Corner* is struggling financially, and Joe is the scion of a dysfunctional business dynasty which takes pride in its disdain for the sentimentality of its customers. Per *You've Got Mail*'s generic prerogative, what Jung might have described as both Kathleen and Joe's attitude types are initially exaggerated for comedic effect: it is clear to the viewer, however, that Kathleen's lack of self-confidence in pursuing a career independent from her mother's legacy mirrors Joe's uneasy bonhomie with his

dysfunctional business partners - his father and grandfather. For Jung, 'the clearest and most significant manifestation of the child motif in the therapy of neuroses is in the maturation process of personality induced by the analysis of the unconscious, which I have termed the process of *individuation*' (9.i: 270). As Mortimer points out in her summary of *You've Got Mail*, Kathleen inadvertently befriends 'the other side' to Joe - that which he hides behind his outwardly abrasive adult persona - through the plot device of anonymous online correspondence: 'unbeknownst to them both, he has been her penpal confidante with whom she has shared her fears and experiences. He has proved himself as a worthy partner in giving her sensitive advice and emotional support' (2010: 53).

The manifestation of the child motif is literalised most explicitly in Kathleen's case of individuation, during a scene in which Kathleen sees a vision of her child self dancing with her mother around the bookshop as she closes up shop. Kathleen rebukes herself for acting 'so cheerful I would make Pollyanna throw up' during this painful process, but reflects internally (via voiceover) that 'the truth is, I'm heartbroken. I feel as if part of me has died, and my mother has died all over again, and no one can ever make it right.' The trauma Kathleen experiences in bidding goodbye to her attempt at maintaining her mother's legacy chimes with Jung's reflection that:

> [...] certain phases in an individual's life can become autonomous, can personify themselves to the extent that they result in a *vision of oneself* - for instance, one sees oneself as a child. Visionary experiences of this kind, whether they occur in dreams or in the waking state, are, as we know, conditional on a dissociation having previously taken place between past and present. (9i: 275)

Kathleen and an employee who had worked in the shop since the management of her mother reflect implicitly on this tension between past and present when Kathleen shares her decision to close down her business. Kathleen confides in her colleague that 'it feels like such a failure. It feels like I'm quitting', before tailing off with an unspoken acknowledgement of her sense of sundering her connection with the past, and her mother: '... it feels like... Mom…'. She is comforted with the response that 'keeping the store open doesn't keep your mother alive, although sometimes I think we all think it does'. Kathleen's voiceover following this scene sees her reflect that:

> Sometimes I wonder about my life. I lead a small life. Well, not small, but circumscribed. And sometimes I wonder, do I do it because I like it, or because I haven't been brave? So much of what I see reminds me of something I read in a book, when shouldn't it be the other way around?

This reflection is indicative of Kathleen's maturation as she evolves into a new stage of life, and of the particularly literary quality of her recognition of the process of individuation in which she is participating. Moving forward from the shadow of her mother's legacy as a children's bookseller, Kathleen finally follows her true passion: that of writing books for children herself.

In the process of grieving her losses - both that of her mother, and of her business - Kathleen visits Fox Books, where she initially sits dejectedly in the children's section. Overhearing an exchange between a shopper and a young staff member unable to direct the shopper to the 'Shoe books' she'd like to gift her daughter, Kathleen speaks up and draws upon her knowledge, and her passion for matching the right books to the right children. Kathleen's direction to both shopper and staff member to Noel Streatfeild's 'completely wonderful' 'Ballet Shoes and Skating Shoes and Theater Shoes and Movie Shoes' sees Kathleen begin to cry. The resonance between Streatfeild's stories of young women navigating adversity as they pursue their personal and professional passions and Kathleen's own predicament evidences the value of Kathleen's ongoing connection with her inner child. Despite the distressing circumstances by which Kathleen is forced to close her business, the viewer is reassured that Kathleen might instead, however, be beginning to navigate a more healthy relationship between her past and her newfound, independent present. Overhearing this exchange, Joe remarks beyond Kathleen's earshot that 'she has a horrible personality, she's... nice to everyone all the time. It's exhausting.' Joe's sarcasm masks a genuine respect for Kathleen's kindness and resilience, which echoes an exchange they had previously shared via their anonymised email correspondence:

> [Joe]: Do you ever feel you become the worst version of yourself? That a Pandora's Box of all the secret hateful parts - your arrogance, your spite, your condescension - has sprung open? Someone provokes you, and instead of just smiling and moving on, you zing them. Hello, it's Mr. Nasty. I'm sure you have no idea what I'm talking about.
>
> [Kathleen]: I know what you mean and I'm completely jealous. What happens to me when I'm provoked is that I get tongue-tied. My mind goes blank. Then I spend all night tossing and turning trying to think of what I should have said.
>
> [Joe]: Wouldn't it be wonderful if I could pass all my zingers to you and then I would never behave badly and you could behave badly all the time and we'd both be happy?

Kathleen and Joe's correspondence here evidences a mutual willingness to become more skilful readers of social situations, and more controlled and conscious responders to their environments. Kathleen learns to defend herself and the value of her commitment to children's literature by confronting Joe on his obnoxiousness, but this newfound confidence is reflected most notably in her boldness in striking out on her own as an author for children in her own right. Kathleen's training as a skilful reader serves both her and Joe well. Kathleen softens Joe's worst impulses to rudeness and condescension, and she comes in time to recognise the value of standing her ground and commanding respect as she embarks upon her initially frightening independent career as a writer.

'Abandonment, exposure, danger, etc. are all elaborations of the "child's" insignificant beginnings and of its mysterious and miraculous birth' Jung writes of the child image, qualifying that 'this statement describes a certain psychic experience of a creative nature, whose object is the emergence of a new and as yet unknown content' (9i: 285). In parallel to Kathleen's burgeoning artistic creativity following her decision to sell her mother's shop, Jung continues that:

> [...] in the psychology of the individual there is always, at such moments, an agonizing situation of conflict from which there seems to be no way out - at least for the conscious mind, since as far as this is concerned, *tertium non datur*. But out of this collision of opposites the unconscious psyche always creates a third thing of an irrational nature, which the conscious mind neither expects nor understands (9i: 285).

Whereas Kathleen is forced to draw on the inner reserves of resilience, compassion, and self-reliance instilled in her in childhood by her nurturing mother and the literary experiences by which she was trained in these skills, Joe learns only by observing Kathleen's flourishing, which causes on his part new engagement with introspection and maturation. 'If' - as is the case for Joe at the beginning of the film - 'the childhood state of the collective psyche is repressed to the point of total exclusion', via Jung's understanding of the child archetype, 'then the unconscious content overwhelms the conscious aim and inhibits, falsifies, even destroys its realization. Viable progress only comes from the co-operation of both' (9i: 277). Despite Kathleen's suffering as a result of Joe's business practices, Kathleen's relationship to her inner child allows her (and, in turn, Joe) to move forward with grace. 'The archetype', for Jung, 'is a psychic organ present in all of us'. His note that 'a bad explanation means a correspondingly bad attitude to this organ, which may thus be injured' feels like a fitting starting point in turning my attention now to the individuation process of Joe as dramatised in

You've Got Mail as, as Jung points out, 'the ultimate sufferer is the interpreter himself' (9i: 271).

Whereas Joe initially views Kathleen as 'horrible' and 'exhausting' in her niceness, and Kathleen herself rebukes her over-identification with the 'Pollyanna' aspect of the child archetype, Joe's emotional maturation can be facilitated only when he comes to the respect the long-neglected childlike aspect of his own psyche. *You've Got Mail* assumes a certain level of cultural literacy on the part of its audience in its presentation of Joe as someone trapped by a Peter Pan complex: an instrumental version of *Never Smile at a Crocodile* from the soundtrack to the Walt Disney company's cinematic adaptation of *Peter Pan* scores Joe's first meeting with Kathleen, when he visits her shop before realising that she is his online penpal. Joe's unsentimental denigration of Kathleen's shop - 'a bookstore so inconsequential and yet full of its own virtue' - allows him to press ahead with driving her out of business, while maintaining a pretence to unfeeling good business sense as his guiding principle in life. Whereas Joe's business acumen spurs Kathleen, painfully, to an opportunity for maturation when her 'present state' comes 'into conflict with her childhood state' as she is forced to close her mother's shop, Joe himself aligns with Jung's sketch of the man who 'may have violently sundered himself from his original character in the interests of some arbitrary persona more in keeping with his ambitions'. Such a man, to Jung, 'has thus become unchildlike and artificial, and has lost his roots. All this presents a favourable opportunity for an equally vehement confrontation with the primary truth' (9i: 275).

Whereas Joe has lost touch with the positive childlike aspects of playfulness, wonder, and curiosity, his attempt at commercial machismo is modelled on his father and grandfather with whom he works in partnership in the family bookselling trade. Joe's childhood was one of neglect: following the death of his mother, his father pursued ill-fated romantic relationships with a series of Joe's nannies. Despite Joe's public persona of an unsentimental businessman driven by advancing his family business, he shares his vulnerability and stunted emotional growth in his private correspondence with Kathleen. In writing of one's relationship to the child archetype, Jung argues that 'conscious megalomania is balanced by unconscious compensatory inferiority and conscious inferiority by unconscious megalomania'. Only 'once the reef of the second identification has been successfully circumnavigated', Jung writes, 'conscious processes can be cleanly separated from the unconscious, and the latter observed objectively. This leads to the possibility of an

accommodation with the unconscious; and thus to a possible synthesis of the conscious and unconscious elements of knowledge and action' (304). The viewer glimpses an attempt of Joe's to break free from the familial complexes of disdain for others in an exchange with his father:

> [Joe]: We're also going to have a section on West Side writers, as a sop to the neighborhood.
>
> [Joe's father]: Perfect. It'll keep those West Side liberal nut pseudo-intellectual bleeding hearts -
>
> [Joe]: Readers. They're called readers.
>
> [Joe's father]: Don't romanticize them. It'll keep them from jumping down your throat.

Here we get a sense that despite his upbringing, Joe does in fact exhibit a capacity for respecting other people, and for understanding that his business in selling books might bring value to people at the same time as generating revenue for himself.

You've Got Mail's playful presentation of Joe in terms of a villain through the musical clue of *Never Smile at a Crocodile* - aligning him with Captain Hook at the same time as hinting to his *peur aeternus* complex - is deepened by his description as 'the big bag wolf' in a news report on the campaign to save *The Shop Around the Corner*. His 'close affinity with the symbolic animal' - the crocodile, the wolf, and his own fairytale nomenclature as the heir to the Fox family of Fox Books, would for Jung personify 'the collective unconscious which is not yet integrated into a human being'. Consequently, however, it is Joe most obviously who 'signifies the potential anticipation of an individuation process which is approaching wholeness' (9i: 282). These animal descriptors are complicated by a metaphor similarly drawn from the cultural reserves of children's literature and hurled at him by Kathleen in anger: 'If I really knew you, I know what I'd find - instead of a brain, a cash register, instead of a heart, a bottom line.' By aligning Joe with a companion of Dorothy's on the yellow brick road - in search of a heart and a brain - there seems hope that Joe will be able to grow on his journey to emotional maturation, or individuation. In a scene central to Joe's transformation, he is explicitly matched with his own personally illuminating illuminated manuscript by one of Kathleen's employees (the same whom he eventually hires to manage his own children's department), and begins on his own journey as a more insightful reader of both texts and the world around him. This expert's reverent explanation to Joe of his chosen text, 'the

illustrations are hand tipped', is initally greeted by Joe's non-plussed 'and that's why it *costs* so much?'. His response, 'that why it's *worth* so much', articulates Joe's critical illiteracy, and emotional, intellectual and imaginative poverty, for the benefit of both Joe himself and *You've Got Mail*'s audience. Through this experience, however, Joe comes closer to understanding the relationship between value and worth, and begins his break from his familial complex by coming to respect the literary goods he sells, and those he employs to sell them with integrity and respect for his customers.

Joe's relationship with Kathleen, and, by extension, with the world in which Kathleen was raised, which values books as well as the people they help them grow into, is essential to his reconnection to his own damaged childhood. By giving Kathleen's vision, and the legacy of her mother, a new home at the heart of his bookshop, Joe eventually broadens access to quality children's literature. Rather than robbing the children of Manhattan's Upper West Side the chance to be matched by knowledgeable staff with books which will come to shape who they grow up to become, Joe facilitates a cheaper, yet just as special service, which provides jobs to sensitive and passionate staff, and welcomes a broader, more multigenerational audience than did the specialised *Shop Around the Corner*. Scholar of children's librarianship Andrea Immel describes the children's book's 'quarantine' in the children's department, deftly conjuring the image of a woman shopping for children's books as gifts for her nieces and nephews in evidencing its acceptance in the modern bookshop (and broader literary landscape) (2009: 21). While 'it's true all the merchandise is intended for young customers, who can avail themselves of tables and chairs whose proportions are too small for grown-up bodies', Immel point out that 'little children can comfortably access only the lower shelves of the book cases. It is the adults who can easily navigate the shelves and are therefore invited to locate – and therefore screen and select – any book. Adults will bring the material chosen mostly under their supervision to the cash register, which is also sized for the big people who pay for the books, not for the little people who will read them'. Immel's focus on the fact that 'in practice, a baby book is used together by a child and an adult, and so is more correctly a cross-written text, or one for a multigenerational audience' (25) echoes *You've Got Mail*'s navigation of the children's book as an object to which the child is of secondary, or parallel, importance: its relevance to *adults* matters, as it illuminates characters' childhood development and corresponding ability to communicate in adulthood with emotional and intellectual sensitivity, or the requirement to continue the growing and learning work of childhood in developmentally stalled, *peur aeterni*, adulthoods.

While the field of children's literary criticism continues to deepen its recent interest in adulthood and its relationship to children's literature – notably via Margaret Mackey's *One Child Reading* (2016); Vanessa Joosen's *Adulthood in Children's Literature* (2018); *Reinventing Childhood Nostalgia: Books, Toys, and Contemporary Media Culture* (Elizabeth Wesseling ed. 2018); and Alison Waller's *Rereading Childhood Books: A Poetics* (2019) - these studies's primary aims are not to contextualise the children's book as a multivalent symbol within the broader arena of adult culture. Michelle Ann Abate perhaps goes furthest in *No Kids Allowed: Children's Literature for Adults* (2020). As my colleague Madeleine Hunter and I pointed out in our review of Abate's work for *Literature and History*, '[i]n positing that the emergence of children's literature for adults is proof that "the human life span is no longer conceived as unidirectional but instead conceptualized as recursive, looping and twisting back around on itself" (4), Abate hints towards a conceptual shift which destabilises the idea of a linear pathway between the mutually exclusive states of childhood and adulthood, and in the process reveals these abstract stages to be more permeable than at first imagined' (Hunter & McCormack, 2021: 182). The work of contemporary children's literature scholars at the intersection between child and adult culture, then, might well be served by Jung's observation that:

> One of the essential features of the child motif is its futurity. The child is potential future. Hence the occurrence of the child motif in the psychology of the individual signifies as a rule an anticipation of future developments, even though at first sight it may seem like a retrospective configuration. Life is a flux, a flowing into the future, and not a stoppage or a backwash.

Of particular pertinence to the location of the child image in adult culture, especially via adult reconnection to the image of the children's book, is Jung's further point in elaboration of this paradox:

> This agrees exactly with our experience of the psychology of the individual, which shows that the 'child' paves the way for a future change of personality. In the individuation process, it anticipates the figure that comes from the synthesis of conscious and unconscious elements in the personality. It is therefore a symbol which unites the opposites; a mediator, bringer of healing, that is, one who makes whole.' (9i: 278)

The comedy genre's comfort with incongruity provides a cultural home capacious enough for the dramatisation of this paradox, and a fitting site for the contextualisation of the children's book: an object, I have argued, at once cherished and derided; simple and complex.

The relationships between childhood and adulthood, childishness and maturity, and the simultaneous simplicity and complexity encoded within the children's book - at once accessible to the child reader, yet of deeper significance to the adult *re*-reader - co-exist in the individual individuation journeys of Joe and Kathleen in *You've Got Mail*, whose union is presented as one of a promising and mutually nourishing future. As the film ends to the refrains of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* (borrowed from the soundtrack of *The Wizard of Oz*), with Joe and Kathleen at last united in the true knowledge of their respective personas and previously anonymised inner selves, the viewer is left with the sense of their Dorothy-like maturation into a couple who have learned from their journey together. The ironies which have humorously, as well as poignantly, shaped the beginning of their romance has provoked emotional responses in both partners, marking them out by the film's end as people Linda Hutcheon would describe, in her study of 'the affective dimension of irony's edge' who'"get" it'. Joe and Kathleen both break free from their potential roles as whom Hutcheon would characterise as '"victims"' of irony's edge (1994: 2), through their relationship to children's literature. Both Kathleen and Joe manage to break free from their respective complexes - that of the shadow of their families - through the positive, encouraging literary legacy of Kathleen's mother, in 'helping people to become whoever it was that they were going to turn out and be'. Both Kathleen and Joe mature from two childish adults to child*like* adults through their complicated series of romantic encounters in the context of children's bookselling. In contrast to this, I wish now to turn to a study of a comedic dramatisation of the reading experience in childhood itself, and a further facet to the intergenerational reading experience - that of the relationship between the childish adult and its archetypal counterpoint, the wise child.

The Wise Child Reading: Lisa Simpson and the Contact Zone

To counter the relationship between two initially childish adults who draw on their relationship to their inner child as dramatised in *You've Got Mail*, in this section I will interrogate a child image specifically located within an archetypal family. The animated sitcom *The Simpsons* (1989 – present) requires little introduction due to its global cultural significance. The longest-running scripted primetime television series in American history,

The Simpsons has garnered 34 Primetime Emmy awards and is frequently cited in critics' lists of top television: in 1999 it was named by *Time* magazine as the 20th century's best television series. While a decline in quality since its initial 1991-2000 'golden era' is frequently noted by television critics, *The Simpsons* has nevertheless maintained a rare level of prestige in the cultural consciousness and the academy, due in part to its modus operandi of deconstructing and analysing popular culture tropes and trends. Philosophers William Irwin, Mark T. Conrad and Aeon J. Skoble published *The Simpsons and Philosophy* in 2001 to commercial success, selling 200,000 copies, in a bid to unpack some of the show's 'irony, social criticism, and philosophical thought'. In 2016, this collection formed the basis of a popular philosophy course offered at the University of Glasgow. One British broadsheet responded to this news with little surprise, noting that 'for nearly two decades, intellectuals and philosophers have been praising Matt Groening's brilliant creation [*The Simpsons*]', and went on to argue that 'philosophy deals with the real world but at a level of generality and abstraction, aspiring to the universal rather than the particular. In that sense, philosophy always describes a kind of cartoon world' (Baggini, 2016).

The Simpsons' (literal) cartoonishness has contributed to its cross-generational appeal as well as to its egalitarian approach to pastiche and parody of subjects as diverse as American presidential politics and the reading experiences of individuals in childhood. While it frequently deals in adult themes, *The Simpsons* is marketed as a cultural property which appeals to children as much as its originally intended, more mature audience. Perhaps one reason for this cross-generational appeal is *The Simpsons*' dramatisation of a family unit, whose members provide images that are able to interrogate different facets of both child and adult archetypes. Homer Simpson, the family patriarch, is an exemplar of the *puer aeternus*: irresponsible and immature if ultimately well-meaning, his expression of the childish adult archetype is mirrored in his son, Bart. As *The Simpsons* follows a 'floating timeline', Bart never ages, remaining an eternally childish child, whose own irresponsibility and immaturity expresses one facet of the child image's relative freedom from the adult concerns of responsibility and maturity. Marge Simpson, the family matriarch, provides a foil to Homer by exemplifying wisdom, selflessness and reliability, taking on the role of parent to Homer as well as the three Simpson children. Lisa, Bart's younger sister, mirrors Marge as an eternally sensible, responsible child. The baby Maggie represents the eternal potentiality of the infant, as yet unmoulded in the style of Lisa/Marge or Bart/Homer and the respective aspects of the

life cycle they represent, frozen in eternal childhoods and middle-aged parenthoods respectively.

In Jungian terms, as 'it is in the nature of the conscious mind to concentrate on relatively few contents and raise them to the highest pitch of clarity' (276), *The Simpsons*' cartoonish abstractions can helpfully provide popularly recognisable images in giving expression to the multi-faceted aspects of the deeper archetypes each character expresses. The playwright Anne Washburn cleverly drew on *The Simpsons*' global recognisability in her script for *Mr Burns, A Post-Electric Play* (2012), a drama which imagines the archetypal characters of *The Simpsons* providing a new creation myth for the descendants of the few survivors of an early 20th century nuclear near-apocalypse. Although an analysis of this piece is beyond the purview of my project here, its assumptions as to the value of interrogating the archetypal images with which *The Simpsons* provides our own era in parallel to those of ancient myths and religious texts echoes the academic contribution I hope to make here in analysing the parallels between Jung's work on the child archetype and its contribution to contemporary children's literature scholarship.

As for Jung 'the child motif represents not only something that existed in the distant past but also something that exists *now*' (276), *The Simpsons*' never-ageing child characters can be read together simultaneously as an expression of both historical and contemporary perspectives on the role of the child in the family, society, and as expressions of the inner child in the adult psyche. Although Jung argued it to be 'a well-nigh hopeless undertaking' in tearing 'a single archetype out of the living tissue of the psyche', he notes that 'despite their interwovenness they do form units of meaning that can be apprehended intuitively' (302). As such, in this section I will focus my analysis on the presentation of Lisa Simpson in a single episode of *The Simpsons*, the plot of which centres on Lisa's experiences with a children's book. While for Jung 'clear-cut distinctions and strict formulations are quite impossible' in analysing archetypal images, as 'a kind of fluid interpenetration belongs to the very nature of all archetypes', his argument that 'their living meaning comes out more from their presentation as a whole than from a single formulation' (307) is in this instance helpful. Just as *You've Got Mail* generates a specific sense as to the value of matching an individual text to an individual child via pronouncements on the importance of children's literature to the development of healthy adults in general, analysis of a single episode of *The Simpsons* draws

upon its place within the broader continuity in which its characters and storylines are established.

In *The Haw-Hawed Couple* (2006: S18, E8), the cultural moment generated by the death of Professor Dumbledore in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series is parodied through the cross-generational reading experience, or literary 'contact zone' to borrow Maria Tatar's conceptualisation (2009), shared by Homer and Lisa. Alison Waller notes that Tatar's use of the term 'does not go any further in exploring how children might act as colonized subjects' than its roots in Mary Louise Pratt's conceptualisation of the contact zone might encourage, referring in that context to colonial encounters in which 'peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict' (cited in Tatar, 3-4). Waller points out that in 'preferring instead to concentrate on the possibilities for shared space and cultural exchange that emerge when children and adults read together', Tatar made a significant intervention in children's literature scholarship, which had prior to then been perhaps unduly anxious about the implications of Jacqueline Rose's post-Freudian conceptualisation of the adult/child literary relationship as one ultimately of molestation in *The Case of Peter Pan: Or, The Impossibility of Children's Fiction* (1984). Waller's interest in 'this methodological approach to children's literature [which] removes us from Rose's suggestion that it involves an act of molestation' is rooted in its opening up of 'the binary of child/adult' to an understanding in children's literature scholarship 'that texts and their interpretations exist on a continuum of experience and within a historical context as they speak to readers of the day before yesterday and the day after tomorrow'. Waller herself has made significant contributions to the field of children's literature scholarship through her own characterisation of children's fiction as 'a body of literature that can speak to and of human subjects across generations', noting that 'criticism does not have to be wracked with anxiety about the "real child" because in place of the psychic barrier between adult and child there is a continuum of reading experience accessed through memory and rereading' (2010: 289).

The significance of the literary contact zone between Homer and Lisa relies, to an extent, on the audience of *The Simpsons*' prior knowledge of both Homer and Lisa's already established characters. Little humour would be generated by the depiction of Marge sharing a story with Lisa, an interaction which most viewers with even passing knowledge of *The Simpsons* would imagine to be largely unremarkable in light of Marge's sensitive and caring

approach to parenting and Lisa's established characterisation as a voracious reader and precocious child savant. *The Haw-Hawed Couple* leans instead into the unlikeliness of Homer, already established as a philistine boor, taking an interest in his daughter's bedtime reading. The episode opens with the publication of the latest novel in the *Angelica Button* series - *The Simpsons'* intradiegetic cipher for the *Harry Potter* series - for which Lisa - in this case a cipher for real-world child *Harry Potter* fans - is excited. Homer's casual denigration for both the book and the cultural event of its publication ('oh yeah… this is the fantasy book that even grown-ups like. Broken, lonely grown-ups') speaks to the image of the 'childish adult', or adult fan of children's cultural properties, first conjured by A.S. Byatt in her excoriating attack on the *Harry Potter* phenomenon in an opinion piece for *The New York Times* (2003). 'What is the secret of the explosive and worldwide success of the *Harry Potter* books? Why do they satisfy children and - a much harder question - why do so many adults read them?', asked Byatt, answering the former question with her assertion that 'they are written from inside a child's-eye view'. As to the latter, Byatt concludes that 'Ms. Rowling's magic world has no place for the numinous. It is written for people whose imaginative lives are confined to TV cartoons, and the exaggerated (more exciting, not threatening) mirror-worlds of soaps, reality TV and celebrity gossip'.

In an echo of Claire Mortimer and Celestino Deleyto's assertions as to the lack of esteem with which their academic field of literary enquiry - that of the romantic comedy - is held in certain quarters within the academy and high culture, Byatt's denigration of both 'TV cartoons' and the intergenerational phenomenon of cross-generational reading, kicked off by the *Harry Potter* phenomenon of the early 20th century, characterises Byatt as someone unwilling to *get it* per Hutcheon's definition of irony's affective edge. Although *The Simpsons* effectively conveys Byatt's contempt for 'the fantasy book' that even 'broken, lonely grown-ups' like via Homer's initial dismissal of *Angelica Button* (in the place of *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, or *The Hunger Games*), it revels in the ironic unfolding of Homer's own eventual absorption within the intradiegetic literary world of the *Angelica Button* series. Byatt's dismissal of *Harry Potter*'s 'narrative clichés', and the 'dumbing down' of contemporary academic enquiry to now include 'cultural studies, which are as interested in hype and popularity as they are in literary merit, which they don't really believe exists' misses the opportunity for analysis of the contact zone cross-generational reading opens up between children and adults.

To coin an inverse to Byatt's designation of the 'childish adult', perhaps the title of Angela Carter's *Wise Children* (1991) might serve here in shifting the focus from Homer back to Lisa, as cypher for the initially intended audience of the *Angelica Button* series. Carter's novel epitomises Michelle-Ann Abate's conceit that 'the human life span is no longer conceived as unidirectional but instead conceptualized as recursive, looping and twisting back around on itself' (2020: 4). It follows a magical realist narrative in which premonitions of adulthood interweave with the childhood memories of its protagonist, creating a dizzying uncertainty in the mind of the reader as to whether its narrator speaks from a position of childhood or adulthood. The wise child, then, speaks to the facet of the child archetype of which Jung writes in noting that 'it is a striking paradox in all child myths that the "child" is on the one hand delivered helpless into the power of terrible enemies and in continual danger of extinction, while on the other he possesses powers far exceeding those of ordinary humanity' (289). While Lisa Simpson rarely faces terrible enemies or mortal danger in *The Simpsons*, she ordinarily exhibits the evolution 'towards independence' Jung contends is central to the image of the child in art and psyche, exhibiting intellect, compassion and wisdom humourously incongruent in its location in a cartoon eight-year-old. For Jung, however, the symbol of the child 'anticipates a nascent state of consciousness' for all consumers of art, and because 'the symbol of the "child" fascinates and grips the conscious mind, its redemptive effect passes over into consciousness' in the collective cultural psyche. As Jung is careful to qualify, however, 'so long as this is not actually in being, the "child" remains a mythological projection', as 'everything that man should, and yet cannot, be or do - be it in a positive or negative sense - lives on as a mythological figure and anticipation alongside his consciousness' (287).

In denigrating the childish adult, Byatt implies an ideal child reader to exist - one perhaps modelled on her own self-image of childhood, modified and perfected through the lens of adult memory - against whom the childish adult can be castigated. There is an irony inherent in my return to Byatt whose critical work provides an important contextualising function in this chapter, just as her literary work provides the basis for analysis of imported context within a fictional storyworld in my previous chapter. Her critical comments on the ideal reader here, and on what makes a work of children's literature great, echo Olive Wellwood's doomed project in attempting to shape her son Tom into the ideal reader of her own work - beloved by child and adult readers and audiences alike, but despised by and ultimately deeply damaging to Tom. Olive Wellwood represents in the world of *The*

Children's Book a 'great children's writer', but is implicitly criticised by Byatt therein for her blindness to the psychic damage she inflicts on Tom, her own problematically idealised reader.

Byatt's argument that 'in the case of the great children's writers of the recent past, there was a compensating seriousness' conjures a pantheon of authors whom one might imagine would pique the interest of the bookish, serious, and intellectually mature Lisa Simpson - perhaps Olive Wellwood or E. Nesbit among them. For the ideal wise child, and adult reader, encountering writers endorsed by Byatt - Diana Wynne Jones, Susan Cooper, Alan Garner, Ursula K. Le Guin - Byatt presumes that 'we feel we are being put back in touch with earlier parts of our culture, when supernatural and inhuman creatures - from whom we thought we learned our sense of good and evil - inhabited a world we did not feel we controlled'. Byatt argues:

> Ms. Rowling, I think, speaks to an adult generation that hasn't known, and doesn't care about, mystery. They are inhabitants of urban jungles, not of the real wild. They don't have the skills to tell ersatz magic from the real thing, for as children they daily invested the ersatz with what imagination they had. Similarly, some of Ms. Rowling's adult readers are simply reverting to the child they were when they read the Billy Bunter books, or invested Enid Blyton's pasteboard kids with their own childish desires and hopes. (2003)

It is hard here to see how Byatt could escape the charge of conjuring an ideal wise child in supporting her own bias against a book she doesn't like, nor an implication of condescension towards classes of readers who didn't share Byatt's resources and access to 'the great writers of the recent past' of whom she writes in near mythical terms.

Despite Byatt's own implicit hint towards a Jungian conceptualisation of the capacity of great writers in seemingly putting one 'back in touch with earlier parts of our culture', both Byatt and Jacqueline Rose base their analyses of contemporary children's fiction from the more critically prestigious position of Freudian analysis, necessarily dismissing Jung's more expansive vision of both the child archetype and his more lasting influence on the production and consumption of children's literature. In writing that 'not for a moment dare we succumb to the illusion that an archetype can be finally explained and disposed of', Jung evidences perhaps a more gracious attitude towards his own contributions to knowledge of value to the investigation of children's literature. As Jung points out, 'even the best attempts at explanation are only more or less successful translations into another metaphorical language. (Indeed, language itself is only an image.) The most we can do is to *dream the myth onwards*

and give it a modern dress' (9.i, 271). There is thus a refreshing egalitarianism in *The Simpson*'s dressing of the wise child facet of the child archetype in the figure of Lisa Simpson, a cartoon eight-year-old who achieves entry to MENSA in one episode, and yet in *The Haw-Hawed Couple* delights in the absorptive power of a cross-generational low-culture phenomenon, which she shares in a contact zone with a childish adult of whom Byatt would doubtlessly disapprove.

While *The Simpsons*, by its very nature, denigrates *Angelica Button and the Dragon King's Trundle Bed* for laughs at the clunkiness and formulaicism in its blatant shadowing of *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*, its absorptive and affective power is respected. *The Simpsons* focusses its parodic energies on Homer's cultural panic at being taken in, as an adult, by a children's story: the joke is that the story nevertheless teaches Homer important lessons in understanding the significant affective power of (children's) literature *as well as* the lessons themselves which these stories are so primed to teach. Using the *Angelica Button* story in which Dumbledore's parodic analogue, Headmaster Greystache, dies, provides Homer with a powerful means of confronting death and grief: his fears over Lisa's capacity to cope with this narrative twist in her beloved series are unfounded, however, as Lisa learns more from her father's unsophisticated attempts to protect her from the knowledge of Greystache's death than from the death itself.

We can observe the depth to which Greystache's death affects Homer in the dramatised bedtime re-telling of a sanitised version of the story he makes up for Lisa, in which the audience sees Homer cast *himself* as Headmaster Greystache to confront (and displace) his own fears of dying. The book, then, bleeds or seeps into Homer's personal psyche and gives expression to his anxieties around grief and dying; in turn, he transfuses some of himself – his will to live and to protect Lisa from the realities of death and dying – into his re-telling of the story for what he presumes to be Lisa's benefit. In the assumption that Lisa might not be emotionally mature enough to encounter even the fictionalised death of Headmaster Greystache, Homer has him cheat death by defying the narrative compulsion of the story and besting his intradiegetic murderer with a hodge-podge of literary cliches. At one point in the episode prior to this feat of re-writing for Lisa's presumed benefit, Homer is urged by a vision of the novel's author: 'Homer, Homer, you must read ahead! Fiction is your passion!'. The author's conflation between Homer's newfound passion for her series and her warning that he read ahead indicates that, in some sense, Homer is reading the series *for* Lisa,

as a real child for whom he cares, rather than for the mere image of a capable and emotionally resilient reader to which the regular viewer of *The Simpsons* is accustomed.

Homer's attempts to shield Lisa from the death of Greystache stem from his own absorption in the story, but are developed by Lisa's similar investment in the character: 'how would you feel if something bad were to happen to Greystache?', Homer asks her. 'It would be the day my childhood ended' is her response. At once naively serious and humourously recognisable to any former-child fan of truly absorptive fantasy, it signifies a role reversal by which the childish adult Homer must try to protect his normally emotionally sophisticated daughter. Despite Homer's best attempts to protect Lisa from the narrative reality of Greystache's death, and his self-assurance as to his success in re-writing *Angelica Button*'s ending ('now Lisa won't know about death until it strikes someone close to her'), however, Lisa is revealed to have read ahead on her own. Lisa's decision to accept her father's ending over that of the published narrative, and to indulge him in his naivety, provides a re-reversal which restores Lisa to the role of wise child, with an even greater depth of insight into the well-meaning haplessness of her unsophisticated father.

Through this dramatisation of the literary contact zone between two specific archetypal images, *The Simpsons* opens up space for interrogation of one of the central debates which has characterised the field of children's literature criticism since its beginnings some half-century since as a vibrant field of contemporary academic enquiry. Its focus on Homer's experiences as a reader rather than Lisa's, as the *intended* audience of the *Angelica Button* children's series, however, speaks more to Jung's analysis of the 'eternal child' than it does to most methodologies of scholarship in children's literature. Jung warned:

> I suspect our contemporary pedagogical and psychological enthusiasm for the child of dishonourable intentions: we talk about the child, but we should mean the child in the adult. For in every adult there lurks a child—an eternal child, something that is always becoming, is never completed, and calls for unceasing care, attention, and education. That is the part of the human personality which wants to develop and become whole. (17: 286)

By shifting my analysis of children's literature from children's texts themselves to the adult cultural properties in which they have often been re-located, I have hoped to contribute to the 'disruption of the binary of child and adult' of which Alison Waller writes, or to 'trouble it enough for Tatar's contact zone to become theoretically allowable' (2010: 274). As Waller, as well as many feminist and queer theorists have noted, 'there is a difficulty in structuring

theory around binaries because it becomes impossible to escape the terms of those oppositions and begin to explore what might lie between and within'.

Jung's methodology in *Children's Dreams* of analysing dreams 'remembered by adults from their childhood [rather than] from the children themselves' (2010: 1) here provides a challenge to Karin Lesnik-Oberstein's characterisation of children's literature criticism as one inherently characterised by the child/adult binary:

> Adult literary criticism, theoretically, has options outside itself, it can close itself down or reformulate itself within new contexts (although this is a difficult enterprise). But children's literature criticism' [which Lesnik-Oberstein bases 'on the premise of the 'real child'] collapses with the abandonment of this 'real child'. It does not have any options. Without the 'real child' it has no reason to exist. (1998: 159)

Akin to Byatt's claim that the *Harry Potter* series satisfies child readers as 'they are written from inside a child's-eye view', methodologies in children's literature criticism exemplified by the influential scholarship of Peter Hunt in the 1990s which attempt somewhat problematically to sidestep this binary, 'invite adults to read as children' by 'taking into account personal, sub-cultural, experiential, and psychological differences between children and adults' (1991: 191; 198). Without an invitation to responses from actual child readers per Lesnik-Oberstein, however, these somewhat presumptive methodologies are destined to failure. Marah Gubar's powerful proposal for a model of 'kinship' by which children's literature might be re-imagined as children and adults alike 'work together to create a more capacious critical framework that affirms our respect for children's agency as participants in culture' (2016) offers one mode of countering this tension at the heart of children's literature scholarship, but so too does Jung's method of explicitly contextualising the experience of remembered childhood in adult memory. *The Simpsons* dramatises both a literary contact zone, and a model for kinship by which both Homer and Lisa navigate their perspectives on a children's novel from their respective positions of childish adult and wise child. In this dramatisation we find a site in which we might interrogate the very constructions of an ideal children's book, an ideal child reader, and an ideal adult reader, in the terms of images by which they are realised in both the cultural and the critical imagination in *The Simpsons* and its intradiegetic analogue for the *Harry Potter* series respectively.

Childish Reader/ Childlike Author: Teleological Development in *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*

From the specific location of the cross-generational literary contact zone between the wise child Lisa and the childish adult Homer in *The Simpsons*, I wish now to turn in my final section of this chapter to analysis of another childish adult figure and her relationship to a generalised audience of intradiegetic child readers. *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* has been described as 'the first great sitcom of the streaming era' (Meslow, 2015), having aired via Netflix's streaming services between 2015 – 2020, spanning four seasons and one interactive feature-length film. The series charts the life of the eponymous Kimmy following her escape from imprisonment in an underground doomsday cult in rural America between the ages of 14 - 29, and her subsequent personal development in New York City amongst eccentric friends and colleagues. Nominated for 20 Primetime Emmy awards, the show was recognised for its fast-paced joke style, surreal humour, cartoonish characterisation, and willingness to tackle the often psychologically dark repercussions of Kimmy's abuse within the incongruous setting of a seemingly sunny sitcom. Kimmy having spent the majority of her teenage years and twenties held in a bunker before emerging into the bright lights of New York City generates much of the fish-out-of-water humour of the series, paired as it is with Kimmy's relentless optimism and her joyfully playful approach to her new surroundings. By the series' end, however, Kimmy has developed from a formerly childish reader of both children's texts and the world around her into a successful and influential writer for children. Kimmy's fantasy series (*The Legends of Greemulax*) embeds within it lessons drawn from the trauma which she herself endured in childhood to equip the series' intradiegetic child readers with the tools Kimmy lacked in navigating the dangers of the world as a 14-year-old girl. *The Legends of Greemulax*'s intradiegetic achievement of critical acclaim alongside huge commercial success dramatises Kimmy's transition from childish adult to a healthily individuated adult, whose continued capacity for childlike connection with young readers provides a channel for her creativity and an effective vehicle for her pedagogies of self-reliance and respect for others.

According to Marie-Louise Von Franz, 'Jung often quoted' Arthur Schopenhauer's statement that 'the sense of humor is the only divine quality in humans', and 'made it a great point to see if his patients had a sense of humor'. Von Franz notes Jung's reasoning that

people ‘who have no sense of humor are very difficult to treat’: of ‘even severely psychotic people’ nevertheless in possession of a sense of humour, Von Franz writes that ‘Jung would say, “Oh, take them, they have such a sense of humor. You might not cure them, but you can keep them afloat”’ (1997: 183-4). *Kimmy Schmidt* navigates similar tensions between flippancy and respect for the trauma of its central character which could be perceived in Von Franz’s recollection of Jung’s characterisation of humour here. The series’ irreverent tone sees each episode take aim at several subjects for ridicule or homage and little sensitivity for subject matter often heretofore taboo for mainstream American network television sitcoms, selecting topics as diverse as urban gentrification, cultural appropriation, unethical corporate monopolisation, drug addiction and sexual harassment in the workplace either as episode foci or as stimuli for asides and throwaway jokes. Despite *Schmidt*’s often dark plot points, however, its capacity for frank commentary on the issues Kimmy navigates with an attitude of near-perpetual optimism – available ‘only [to] a child, or an adult who lived underground for fifteen years’ as her closest friend once remarks - evidences the unique perspective of resilience Kimmy adopted in the years of her stalled, corrupted childhood in the doomsday bunker.

Although Kimmy is referred to by other characters throughout the series’ run by monikers drawn from children’s culture - ‘Amelia Bedelia’, ‘Rainbow Brite’, and ‘Ariel’ (the Walt Disney Corporation’s *Little Mermaid*) to illustrate the incongruity of her sunny disposition in facing the harsh realities of contemporary New York - it is Kimmy to whom her friends and colleagues look for inspiration and solutions to the problems they encounter. The series frequently takes aim at the American education system and the lacklustre provision which so failed Kimmy in her fictional mid-Western everytown, in an echo of AS Byatt’s disdain for the proliferation of low-quality fiction to which she attributes the contemporary phenomenon of the childish adult consumer of children’s franchises like J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series. Unlike Byatt, however, *Schmidt*’s writers afford a greater degree of respect to the literary and critical skills which Kimmy managed to develop in spite of the paucity of her access to quality reading material. Kimmy is someone who would have ‘daily invested the ersatz with what imagination [she] had’ per Byatt’s assessment, but nevertheless represents an alternative to the ‘adult generation that hasn't known, and doesn't care about, mystery’ Byatt resultantly hypothesises.

Schmidt takes its tonal lead from a character steeped in the popular children’s culture of America in 1998, the year in which Kimmy was abducted and the same year in which Meg

Ryan opined as to the lasting significance of children's literature throughout adult life in *You've Got Mail.* As such, the show makes repeated reference to the children's literature which inspired and sustained Kimmy through her suspended childhood and early adulthood in captivity. One of the few possessions Kimmy had in her backpack when she was snatched on her way home from school was Volume 12 of *The Babysitters' Club* mystery series, *Dawn and the Surfer Ghost*. Kimmy's intimate knowledge of this formulaic text - an archetypal example of a throwaway component in a commercially-motivated young adult franchise of low literary quality - nevertheless sees Kimmy triumph over an antagonist introduced to her own narrative as it unfolds in season one (S1, E2: 2015). Xanthippe Voorhees is a surly and sophisticated teenager whose wealthy family hires Kimmy as a nanny, personal assistant, and general dogsbody. Xanthippe represents a polar opposite to Kimmy's childish adult: infuriated by Kimmy's lack of cultural sophistication, Xanthippe pretends to urbane maturity with a group of spoiled friends, and seeks to bolster her own fragile ego by degrading and patronising Kimmy. Overhearing Xanthippe's claims to a summer romance, Kimmy recognises the plot of *The Babysitters' Club* novel from which Xanthippe drew her inspiration in fabricating a more interesting life for herself in a bid to impress her friends. Kimmy recognises in this the means by which she herself imaginatively accessed a glamorous teenage maturity during her years in the bunker and confronts Xanthippe, separating her from the influence of her entirely a-literary friends and their preferred intoxicants of alcohol and drugs. Despite their shared experience with *Dawn and the Surfer Ghost*, Kimmy struggles to develop a positive relationship with Xanthippe for much of the series. They achieve a degree of mutual respect only when Xanthippe transitions into her own early adulthood as a student of literature at Columbia University, and Kimmy herself has transitioned from rival to Xanthippe for the imagined maturity they both sought as child-readers to more mature critics of texts, themselves, and one another.

Kimmy's transition from childish adult to a healthily individuated adult still capable of accessing what Byatt describes as the 'child's eye view' which characterises the cross-generational success of the *Harry Potter* series echoes Peter Hunt's method of childist literary criticism which 'invite[s] adults to read as children' (1991: 191). The impossibility of a true attainment of this perspective is recognised somewhat more capaciously in the more recent scholarship of Margaret Mackey, which contextualises the possibilities of cross-generational literary kinship through a model which instead centres a version of Jung's eternal child within the adult. In *One Child Reading* (2016), Mackey's rigorous approach to

the genre of adult memoir of childhood reading charts a scholarly reconstruction and academic analysis of her own childhood reading environments and experiences from the perspective of her adult present. Mackey's explicit re-centring of adult preconceptions of children and their texts, rooted firmly in adult memory and imaginative reconstruction, shares some resonance with Alison Waller's process of 're-memorying' (2017), which similarly seeks to contextualise the influences and effects of childhood reading in the domains of adult memory and perception. Both of these are prefigured by Jung's own approach to analysis of children's dreams, as remembered by adult analysands, for the purposes of moving forward into a healthier psychological future. Mackey's thesis that reading 'involves motion, both physical and metaphorical: the reader is always "heading" somewhere' draws its inspiration from the earlier scholarship of Sven Birkerts (1994: 95); 'the pages turn; the eyes flicker. The person who pauses is, in some senses, no longer reading (though what Sven Birkerts calls "the shadow life of reading", the contemplative half-life that maintains the fictional or reflective trance, may well still be in effect)' (2016: 102). Birkerts' concept of 'the shadow life of reading' is helpful in constructing a more nuanced perspective on the binaries implied by the possibilities for an adult to truly read (or write) from a 'child's eye' per Byatt or Hunt, and speaks to the teleologies central to Jungian analytical psychology which are dramatised in Kimmy's own maturation from childish reader to childlike writer.

Schmidt is influenced formally as well as tonally by Kimmy's deep reading of ostensibly shallow children's mystery paperbacks, most explicitly so in its finale: the feature-length interactive film *Kimmy vs the Reverend* (2020). The film opens with Kimmy discovering a 'Pick-Your-Own-Journey' book (*The Mystery of the Mysterious Spy*) hidden within the lining of her childhood backpack, her last relic from the bunker. The book functions as a clue that there might indeed be *another* bunker, housing more kidnapped girls: the echo of Kimmy's own experience clinging to *Dawn and the Surfer Ghost* during her time in the bunker shadows her determination to solve the mystery of how *The Mystery of the Mysterious Spy* found its way into her backpack, and to rescue another child reader who finds herself in the same position as Kimmy once did. The film thereafter becomes an interactive 'Choose-Your-Own-Adventure' by which the viewer can influence narrative cross-roads by having Kimmy and her friends respond in different ways, with implications for the film's ultimate resolution. The importance of this heretofore forgotten, insignificant children's text becomes tantamount to the series as a whole and the characters therein, as it thus swallows

the franchise's form in its final iteration – a formal joke to match the tonal significance of choice and children's literature which characterises so much of *Schmidt*'s sensibility.

The ostensible interactivity of the film's Choose-Your-Own Adventure form disguises a central narrative which relies on Kimmy reading the book she found in her backpack: all spinoff narratives in which she *doesn't* read the book return her to an option later in the narrative to read it, as the book contains a clue hidden by its intratextual child owner which instructs Kimmy as to how she can rescue her from the bunker, and thus resolve the film. *Schmidt's* writer explains, of one scene whose potential narrative branches all lead back to Kimmy having to read the book, 'we could have these dead-ends and you get to try again, you could let Kimmy act in ways that she didn't ordinarily[.] She can abandon a baby. She can make out instead of reading a book[.] Then you get to go back and be Kimmy. But ultimately we did, whether it was for the viewers' sake or for the characters' sake, we did want the right path to be making the right, Kimmy choices' (quoted in Lewis, 2020).

In her critical analysis of the Choose-Your-Own Adventure format, Felicitas Meifert-Menhard (2013) draws upon the research of game scholar Marie-Laure Ryan (2001) to describe the illusion of choice authors create for their child readers through the formal Choose-Your-Own-Adventure narrative structures *Schmidt* pastiches in its adult interactive special:

> The sense of agency the reader perceives while moving through the textual structure is […] compromised by the inflexible arborescent organization of the narrative that generates a teleological rather than an explorative reading mechanism […] the rigid tree structure of the format 'enables the designer to maintain a strict control over the linear sequence of events' [Ryan, *Beyond Myth*]. The reader will most likely perceive this notion of control, as she is continually required to yield to the binary mechanism superimposed on the storyworld. (121)

Meifert-Menhard's arboreo/teleological characterisation of the Choose-Your-Own Adventure format echoes the language Mackey uses in her project of autobibliography: her assertion that reading 'involves motion, both physical and metaphorical', as 'the reader is always "heading" somewhere' is cited in the core section of her study, which she entitles *Paths*. The tension embedded in the Choose-Your-Own Adventure format as to the reader's perception of narrative control despite the illusion of choice parallels a central distinction between the foundational philosophies of Freudian and Jungian psychologies respectively. Michael Horne draws on Jung's assertion that 'in every adult there lurks a child—an eternal child, something

that is always becoming, is never completed, and calls for unceasing care, attention, and education', as that 'is the part of the human personality which wants to develop and become whole' (17: 286) in characterising 'Jung's theory of individuation [as] predominantly teleological' (2002: 620). Horne characterises the Freudian framework as a theory of 'psychic causality', and identifies Freud's 'determinist' approach to psychology as the root of 'teleologist' Jung's 'break' - or branching off - from the foundations of Freudian psychoanalysis.

Whereas working with the concept of the inner child within an aetiological Freudian framework would presuppose a traumatised, biographical child still at destructive play within the neurotic adult psyche, for Jung neuroses arise because of problems the adult is experiencing in the present in working towards an individuated future. Re-connection with the eternal child, for Jung, is a means by which the adult might re-access the teleological drive towards wholeness and futurity which it represents. Jung articulated his own position *contra* Freud himself in language resonant to our specific literary study here, too:

> It is very suspicious [...] that patients often have a pronounced tendency to account for their ailments by some long past experience, ingeniously drawing the analyst's attention away from the present to some false track in the past. This false track was the one pursued by the first psychoanalytic theory. But to this false hypothesis we owe an insight into the determination of neurotic symptoms which we should never have reached if the investigators had not trodden this path[.] We owe to this 'error' a method of inquiry of incalculable importance. (2012: 50).

Kimmy herself is characterised throughout *Schmidt* as utterly determined in pursuing a positive future, as the narrative branches which all ultimately lead to 'the right Kimmy choices' in *Kimmy vs the Reverend* attest. Although Kimmy's worldview is deeply informed by her past, the resilience and optimism which sustained her in the bunker is what drives her ever forward, and motivates her in her determination to help others.

Prior to the Choose-Your-Own-Adventure special, *Kimmy vs the Reverend*, *Schmidt* parodies the 1998 romantic comedy *Sliding Doors* (S4, E9: 2019). The following exchange concludes the episode in which Kimmy imagines, in parallel to Gwyneth Paltrow's experiences in the film, an alternate timeline in which she had never accompanied her abductor to the bunker where she was imprisoned for fourteen years.

> [Kimmy's friend]: Hey, do you ever wonder how your life might've been different if you'd never gotten in that van? I mean, just one little moment - if you…
>
> [Kimmy]: No. There's no point. I've been through a lot of terrible stuff that I wish had never happened. But I still have to believe that this is where I'm meant to be, because if I didn't... I'd go crazy.

Kimmy's ability to make peace with her past and move forward into the future does not mean that she represses or forgets the experiences that have shaped her. Rather, she values and respects the child she once was, while challenging the paths down which she was led as an innocent and a-critical reader of the dangerous world around her. Kimmy's ability to channel that compassion for the child she once was sees her rescue not only the child-reader of *The Mystery of the Mysterious Spy* around which *Kimmy vs the Reverend* centres, but also to help a generation of new readers of her own intradiegetic series, *The Legends of Greemulax*, in their own journeys to maturation.

Schmidt is explicit, throughout its run, in contextualising Kimmy's abduction and subsequent trauma via the misogynistic entitlement which motivated her abductor, the eponymous and self-proclaimed 'Reverend' of the interactive series finale, and the sexism of her society, both in her midwestern hometown of 1998, and in the metropolis in which she builds her new life decades later. It is with regret that I can't reframe my focus on the central texts analysed in this chapter through the lens of gender politics for the purposes of my project here, but these are of course deeply embedded in Joe's relationship with Kathleen in *You've Got Mail* - and, to a lesser extent, in Homer Simpson's aetonormative assumptions as to his daughter's inability to encounter themes of death and grief in an age-appropriate text, despite both her cultural and literal literacy far exceeding his own. Having opened this chapter with a brief overview of the often denigrated and hard-won place of scholarship on both children's literature and the comedy subgenre of the romantic comedy (or, as it is often crudely gendered, the 'chick-flick'), however, there might just be space to draw a parallel here between Kimmy's attempts to be taken seriously as a writer in an industry dominated by men within the world of *Schmidt*, and the experiences of many of my predecessors in the fields of children's literature and comedy studies who have fought for their valuable subjects' critical interrogation and inclusion within the academy. *Shmidt*'s dramatisation of Kimmy's mission to contribute to a fairer, kinder, and more egalitarian future through the professionalisation of her hard-won optimism, creativity and compassion in a career as a

successful children's author, however, is refreshing in its explicit framing of Kimmy's contribution to tackling misogyny and sexism in the next generation of readers.

Andrea Immel describes how the children's book, given as a gift, can symbolise adult desires to 'promote reading as the disinterested pursuit of self-knowledge and self-control for the individual's psychological, moral or spiritual well-being, and, indirectly, that of society' (2009: 25). There is an echo here both of philosopher Yi-Fu Tuan's characterisation of the power relationship between adults and children as one potentially of 'dominance and affection' (1984), and of Perry Nodelman's work in the field of children's literature specifically on the concept of the 'hidden adult' (2008).

Tuan's conception considers the relationship between adults and children as one potentially of both dominance (by definition of the conditions of childhood and its inherent dependencies) and affection, attesting to the 'new expanse of life' which can become available to recipients of that power (i.e., children encountering challenging and nourishing literature written for them by adults) as a result of adult attempts to 'try to control a child [...] only so that he or she may grow and prosper' (1984: 176). Nodelman's conceptualisation of the adult agenda 'hidden' in the shadows of children's literature by adult authors is troubled, however, by *Schmidt*'s dramatisation of Kimmy's decision to become a writer. By casting light explicitly on Kimmy's reflections as she embarks on her writerly career - 'grownups don't just wake up one day and decide they'll write a book that's gonna fix everything… if I want to change the world, I've gotta start by changing myself' (S4, E6: 2018) - *Schmidt* instead draws on the audience's knowledge of the 'shadow-life' of reading which sustained Kimmy throughout her captivity in evidencing her conscious recognition of the important role children's authors can play in the maturation and psychic development of their child readers. Thus the space Kimmy occupies as a childish adult within the world *Schmidt* creates allows her to act as surrogate for both controlling adult author and experimental child*like* reader of her own bibliotherapeutic work. Kimmy's explicit articulation as to her desire to assert dominance over the emotional/intellectual development of her child readership exposes, too, the project of *Schmidt*'s creators in their explicit intention to have (adult) viewers make 'the right, Kimmy choices' in navigating the interactive special, which takes its form from a children's book reliant on adult simulation of child agency in modelling making good choices.

Kimmy is first inspired to start her children's series after synchronistically observing a group of adult *Harry Potter* fans playing Quidditch in a park, while reflecting on how she can communicate her vision for a more compassionate world. After one player describes *Harry Potter* to Kimmy as 'the most important book series of my childhood, and current-hood', Kimmy reflects:

> This is a *book*… and these guys liked it so much when they were boys that they're still doing *this*… in *public* […]. If a book can do that, imagine if it had a *positive* message. (S4, E6)

While the implicit criticism of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (or, perhaps more accurately, criticism of its author's well-publicised comfort with social and political controversy) is made humourous via Kimmy's automatic assumption as to the series' negative messaging despite never having read it, the series which Kimmy goes on to write and the fame to which it propels her is clearly based in parallel to Rowling's own career. In one palimpsestuous nod to this parallel, Daniel Radcliffe - the actor who portrayed Harry Potter himself in the film series inspired by Rowling's works - plays the role of Kimmy's husband in the final scene of *Kimmy vs the Reverend*. Per Rowling's success, Kimmy's *Legends of Greemulax* series, in which monsters represent cultural biases, intolerance and misogyny and are bested by compassionate, egalitarian and resilient child-heroes, becomes at first a word-of-mouth success, and eventually a global phenomenon. Kimmy herself is made aware of her series' burgeoning popularity and the success of her project in writing it 'to change the world' for the better only when Xanthippe - by this time living independently as a college student - inadvertently encourages Kimmy with inspirational advice at once simple and profound lifted from the pages of her own book. Xanthippe explains to Kimmy that her newfound compassion, resilience and optimism - qualities in Kimmy which she once despised - are 'from this book I'm reading, for, like, the third time. And it's *not* a kid's book. I mean, I got it from [Xanthippe's pre-teen brother], but it's like an allegory for gender politics[.] Everybody at Columbia [University]'s reading it' (S4, E6).

In *Kimmy Schmidt* then, as in *The Simpsons* and *You've Got Mail*, we find dramatisations which can contribute to our collective attempts under the auspices of literary criticism to respond to Perry Nodelman's articulation of children's literature as 'a complex literature in the context of its essential simplicity' (2010: 232). Stephen Thomson's assertion that 'writing for children easily becomes the pretext for recovery of a lost simplicity in writing' (1998: 262) is well-supported by the difficulty one faces in responding to

Nodelman's challenges arising from the simplicity/complexity paradox: 'how, then, can one best work to understand or describe this literature? How can it be both simple and complicated? What are the specific natures of its simplicity and complexity?' (Nodelman 2010: 232). Thomson's allusion to the concept of a 'lost simplicity in writing' is echoed in his characterisation of the assumptions - so playfully subverted by the comedic texts that I have analysed here - that 'the texts that will facilitate this will be shorn of the excess and clutter associated with adult civilisation; they will speak to the child with a voice that is simple and direct' (1998: 262). Here we find resonance with Jung's writing on the 'eternal child' who 'lurks' 'in every adult', and his comfort with paradox in illustrating the archetype of the child image in the adult psyche, and the complicated literary cultures by which it is given expression. While Jung notes that 'clear-cut distinctions and strict formulations are quite impossible' in his field of analytical psychology, **'**seeing that a kind of fluid interpenetration belongs to the very nature of all archetypes' does not preclude one from perceiving 'their living meaning [come] out more from their presentation as a whole than from a single formulation' (9i: 301). Jung's general pronouncement on the nature of the archetype (in this case in the context of the child), that 'it persists throughout the ages and requires interpreting ever anew', could well be applied to the multivalent index of the children's book, contextualised in both adult culture and the academy as at once puzzling simple and complex; formulaic and profound; cherished and derided.

Just as it 'is a well-nigh hopeless undertaking to tear a single archetype out of the living tissue of the psyche; but despite their interwovenness they do form units of meaning that can be apprehended intuitively' (9i: 302), a study of the children's book as coherent, yet ultimately unknowable, symbol which exists in the adult psyche positions it within the lineage of myth, legend, folkloric artefact, and fairytale. Its cross-generational role in the lifelong process of individuation works both forwards, in enculturating children to the social psyche in which they are raised, and backwards, in offering a means of re-connection in adulthood to the essence of 'psychic wholeness' accessible only through the integration of the eternal child in the individual adult psyche. 'Wholeness', for Jung, 'is never comprised within the compass of the conscious mind - it includes the indefinite and indefinable extent of the unconscious as well'. Like the fairytale, and its cultural inheritor the children's book, Jung notes that:

> Our dreams are continually saying things beyond our conscious comprehension[.] We have intimations and intuitions from unknown sources.

> Fears, moods, plans, and hopes come to us with no invisible causation. These concrete experiences are at the bottom of our feelings that we know ourselves very little; at the bottom, too, of the painful conjecture that we might have surprises in store for ourselves. (9i: 299)

Jung's assertion that 'we meet the child archetype in spontaneous and in therapeutically induced individuation processes' (9i: 303) can be applied to the contemporary publishing phenomenon of adult engagement with children's literature, and to the concomitant processes of adult bibliotherapy dramatised throughout this chapter. The transformative potential of this trend is perhaps realised most vividly among my examples here by Kimmy Schmidt's at once simple and profound realisation that 'grownups don't just wake up one day and decide they'll write a book that's gonna fix everything… if I want to change the world, I've gotta start by changing myself'. Kimmy's process of maturation from childish adult reader of texts to child*like* adult author dramatises, too, Jung's thesis that 'a more or less gradual separation from and objectification of the 'child'" aspect of one's unhealthy 'personal infantilism' can be 'accompanied by an intensification (sometimes technically induced) of fantasy, with the result that archaic or mythological features become increasingly apparent' (9i: 303). The children's fantasy books which Kimmy writes mask the shadow of her childhood trauma, but are designed to do so consciously in a simultaneous mode of adult bibliotherapy and sophisticated pedagogical instruction to train and warn child readers against that which Kimmy suffered.

Whereas Kimmy's writerly inducement of the intensification of her past experiences into her future hopes for a new generation of readers is realised positively in her manipulation of archaic and mythological features - monsters overcome by wise child heroes - I wish now to turn to an exploration of another archetype's expression in the multivalent symbol of the children's book, contextualised once again in the adult imagination. Whereas Jung notes that the (child) 'hero's main feat is to overcome the monster of darkness' in his essay on *The Psychology of the Child Archetype* which has served as my primary resource here, in my next chapter I wish to explore the inverse of 'the long-hoped-for and expected triumph of consciousness over the unconscious' the image of the Child archetype expresses (9i: 284). The comedic texts I have analysed in this chapter see positive resolutions for both their childish adult and wise child protagonists. The relationship between the children's book and the archetype of the Shadow, however, forms the basis for my next exploration of texts. These are drawn largely from the horror genre, and their dramatisation of tragedy and trauma

illustrate projects of individuation for their heroes often less successful than those depicted in the domain of comedy.

Chapter 3) Tragedy, Trauma and Healing: Encountering the Shadow in the Children's Book

In the previous chapter, I argued that the children's book functioned in comedic texts as a means for childish adults to healthily integrate the inner child more consciously within the psyche, marking a transition from the negative connotations of child*ish*ness to the rich state of child*like*ness. As an aspect of the personal unconscious, the inner or eternal child is accessed via engagement with the archetype of the Child which, as we have seen, is helpfully and readily facilitated by individual, adult engagement with the children's book. I refer here to the children's book in its collective sense as a multivalent symbol, articulating the collective imaginative affordances of its myriad iterations when a specific, personally resonant text is matched to the right reader at the right time. The children's books with which Joe and Kathleen engage in *You've Got Mail* are drawn from the American and European canon of children's classics; the *Angelica Button* series and *The Legends of Greemulax* encountered in *The Simpsons* and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* are thinly veiled allusions to J.K. Rowling's contribution to the modern children's fantasy canon via her *Harry Potter* series. Whereas the aspect of the psyche we encountered in texts drawn from the comedy domain facilitated intradiegetic adult readers' re-engagement with the playful, creative aspects of the inner child, I wish now to turn to the role of the children's book in integration of the shadow aspect of the psyche. In this chapter, I will engage with the children's book as contextualised within the domain of adult horror fiction and its iteration, specifically, as an inheritor to the cultural legacy of the folktale and fairytale. First, though, it will be useful to provide a gloss on the parallels I identify between Jung's articulation of the structures of the unconscious and the parallel this provides to the children's book's evolution from its roots in the folk or fairytale, and the shadow life these traditions continue to live in the modern children's book.

Jung imagined the unconscious psyche as layered by personal experience as well as collective, historical inheritance, most famously and discretely through the metaphor of a house which he conceptualised via a profound and visionary dream image. The upper stories of the house represented, to Jung, the personal unconscious (1964: 55): each room would be furnished according to that which is 'hidden' and repressed' within the personal psyche (9: 422). We can imagine these rooms providing a dwelling place for neglected aspects of one's personal psyche; in the case of *You've Got Mail*'s Joe Fox, one might visualise his child

aspect inhabiting one of the upper rooms of his personal unconscious prior to the events of the film. On this same upper, personal level of the psyche, Jung describes a dwelling for the personal 'shadow', a personification of 'the '"'negative'" side of the personality, the sum of all those unpleasant qualities [which one wishes] to hide' (7: 103, note 5). The shadow, in this personal aspect, embodies everything that an individual 'has no wish to be' (16: 470). In this way, the personal shadow functions as what James Hall describes as an 'identity structure' (1983: 14), similar to the proto-conscious aspects of the persona, the ego or self, and the inner or eternal child.

Jung, however, extended the metaphor of the shadow as a personified aspect of the personal unconscious, by locating its genesis within 'a collective shadow figure, a summation of all the inferior traits of character in individuals' (9i: 484). In 'one corner' of the cellar to which Jung descended in his dream-house:

> [he] saw an iron ring on a stone slab. [He] pulled up the slab and saw yet another narrow flight of steps leading to a kind of cave, which seemed to be a prehistoric tomb, containing two skulls, some bones, and broken shards of pottery. Then [he] woke up. (1964: 43)

From this image, Jung conceptualised the psyche's collective aspect: its strata descend, like the storeys of a house, from the personal unconscious, to the familial and cultural complexes we explored in chapter one, and backwards through the processes of enculturation which marked our ancestors' experiences until the 'ultimate ramifications' of this model 'reach back into the realm of our animal ancestors' (9i: 422).

In her 1975 essay *The Child and The Shadow*, Ursula K. Le Guin meditates on the Jungian archetypal shadow and the images in which it finds expression, and their relationship to children's literature. Her description of the shadow as one of the 'group of fascinating figures, much livelier than Freud's grim trio of Id, Ego, Superego' (143) which Jung saw populating the psyche is helpful here, as we transition from reflection on the relationship between the children's book and the inner child dramatised in the comedy domain to the relationship between the children's book and the shadow dramatised by texts drawn from the horror genre. Rendering the shadow 'the other side of our psyche, the dark brother of the conscious mind', Le Guin traces images by which we might first have come to understand the Jungian concept of the shadow via literary examples. Le Guin's location of dramatisations of the shadow in 'Mowgli's Grey Brother; the werewolf; the wolf, the bear, the tiger of a

thousand folktales' (143) echoes Jung's own respect for the capacity of fairytale, folktale, legend and myth as a means of reaching back, literarily, almost to 'the realm of our animal ancestors'.

Fairytales scholars - notably Ruth Bottigheimer (2009), Jack Zipes (2012), and Marina Warner (2016) - detail the cross-generational oral folkloric tradition's evolution to the fairytale, and the genesis of the modern children's book from these ancient roots. Maria Tatar, most appropriately for the focus of this chapter, notes the fairytale's transition from a means of providing symbolic language for dramatising the personae of the unconscious to its role in a 'pedagogy of fear' by which children were enculturated to the norms and customs of later societies (1987). The processes of sanitisation she traces from the oral folktale, via the literary fairytale, to contemporary re-tellings of archaic stories for modern audiences of Disney's cinematic canon anticipates A.S. Byatt's lament as to a similar process of sanitisation she perceived specifically in children's fantasy in her essay on *The Childish Adult*. Byatt cites Le Guin, alongside Susan Cooper and Alan Garner - two authors noted for the influence of Jungian theory on their work for children (Bryan: 2017; Garner: 1968) - among 'the great children's writers of the recent past', arguing that in 'reading writers like these, we feel we are being put back in touch with earlier parts of our culture' (2003). Here we might find evidence for Le Guin's claim that C.G. Jung might be 'the psychologist whose ideas on art are the most meaningful to most artists' (141), as well as for the lineage Le Guin posits the children's book can claim from the fairytale, folktale, legend, and myth, and the parallel this illustrates to Jung's conceptualisation of the collective unconscious.

Hans Christian Andersen's fairytale, *The Shadow*, forms the primary basis of Le Guin's respect for the cross-generational power of literature, ostensibly for children, in providing a site for adults by which they might encounter opportunities for psychic development. In characterising Andersen's fairytale as an 'extraordinarily cruel story' Le Guin poses and responds to a question particularly pertinent to my study here:

> Is it a story for children?
> Yes, it is. It's a story for anybody who's listening. (140)

Le Guin explicitly resists the fallacy of attempting a childist reading of Andersen's fairytale per Peter Hunt's invitation for 'adults to read as children' (1991: 191), locating her relationship to the story and its symbolic power in the domain of her adult memory.

> What does it mean to children? Do they 'understand' it? Is it 'good' for them[?]
>
> I don't know. I hated it when I was a kid. I hated all the Andersen stories with unhappy endings. That didn't stop me from reading them, and rereading them. Or from remembering them. (141)

Le Guin suggests that 'the great fantasies, myths and tales are indeed like dreams', as 'they speak *from* the unconscious *to* the unconscious, in the *language* of the unconscious - symbol and archetype' (141). The basis for her assertion here lies in her analysis of the imagery of Andersen's fairytale, in which she reads a dramatisation of the clash between 'Reason' and 'Beauty and Poetry' (140), noting that their personification within Andersen's story doesn't reduce them to 'allegorical figures'. Rather, 'they are symbolic or archetypal figures, like those in a dream', as are the man and his shadow from which he becomes estranged in Andersen's narrative. Although the protagonist of Andersen's tale 'confronts his dark self', 'instead of asserting equality or mastery [over his shadow], he lets it master him'. The fracturing which Andersen's *The Shadow* dramatises means that 'neither of them, without the other, can approach the truth', and 'Reason' remains unreconciled with 'Beauty and Poetry'.

Jungian film theorist Christopher Hauke locates a similar dramatisation of the gulf between 'Reason' and 'Beauty and Poetry', and attempts to reconcile these, in his study of the contemporary horror film as a parallel to 'Jungian distrust in the achievements and the place of human consciousness in Nature' (2015: 736). Hauke notes that throughout his writing, 'Jung makes it quite clear that the material and technological benefits brought about by scientific rationality over the last 500 years have come at great cost to the human psyche itself. In objectifying our orientation towards nature to better examine and exploit the world, we have cut ourselves off from that world' (737). Hauke quotes Jung who points out that:

> The ordered cosmos [which modern man] believes in by day is meant to protect him from the fear of chaos that besets him by night – his enlightenment is born of night-fears!' (15: 148).

Hauke notes Jung's anxiety that by cutting itself off from engagement with the inner realities of the unconscious, and from assuming mastery over the external world of nature is actually possible, the version of rationality privileged by Enlightenment thinking runs the risk of 'gradually inhabit[ing] a world of shadows - projections [of neglected 'unconscious contents'] that fall far short of the "objective" and "rational" which Enlightenment thinking believed it had achieved' (cf: C.W. 7: 72-75). In 'encountering and enjoying horror', therefore, Hauke argues that 'what is being sought is a transcendence of the limits of rational consciousness and an experience of the sublime' (736).

The texts on which I centre my analysis in this chapter, then, provide doubly impactful imaginative dramatisations of the psychic work of shadow integration, in their layering of symbolic fairytale books within the context of the sublime adult horror story. The three narratives I have drawn from horror stories expressed in different media - *The Babadook* (2014); *Possum* (2008/2018); and *The Pillowman* (2003) - are concerned with the resolution of tragedy and trauma in the psyche of adult characters through their engagement with intradiegetic (fictional) children's books. Each text - respectively a film, short story (and its cinematic adaptation), and a play - take their titles from the eponymous characters of each texts' central fictional fairytales. The characters of 'Mister Babadook' in Jennifer Kent's 2014 film, 'Possum' in Matthew Holness's 2008 short story (and its cinematic counterpart), and 'The Pillowman' in Martin McDonagh's 2003 play each draw on aspects of the collective Shadow, but are personalised in relation to the defining trauma of their intradiegetic authors, who constitute the respective protagonists of each text I analyse here.

Whereas in the comedy domain, Kimmy Schmidt's connection with her inner child allows her to confidently relocate her trauma as a survivor of kidnap via the affordances of the children's book as a means of warning children about the dangers of the real world, the intradiegetic authors of these three texts re-encounter and are challenged by their trauma in texts they write for themselves. The children's books they write provide a means by which they might accommodate the role personal tragedies still play in their psyche, by personifying these traumas in the symbolic language of the fairytale shadow. Their stories dramatise the role their own shadows play within their personal psyches in the arena of the children's book, long-since established as a suitable site for such self-exploration as the cultural inheritor of the folk and fairytale. Each text evidences Le Guin's thesis that 'the language of fantasy' is not just valuable in 'writing for children' (144), but rather 'the natural, the appropriate

language for the recounting of the spiritual journey and the struggle of good and evil in the soul' (147). Let us turn first, then, to the struggle of good and evil dramatised in the soul of 'Mister Babadook's' intradiegetic author, Amelia, in Jennifer Kent's *The Babadook*.

Aspects of the Archetype: the Abandoned Child and Shadow Mother in *The Babadook*

The British Journal of Psychiatry's review of *The Babadook* (2014) as a 'Grimm-Jungian fairy tale' (Busgeet, 2016) speaks well to the sense that the film functions in two interconnected layers. The evocative portmanteau 'Grimm-Jungian' used thus adjectivally is reminiscent, too, of Le Guin's location of the fairytale as the richest cultural space for exploration of Jung's concept of the shadow. *The Babadook*'s primary narrative dramatises the events of a few weeks in the lives of Amelia and her son Samuel in the run-up to Samuel's seventh birthday, which he shares with the anniversary of his father's death. Amelia carries unresolved trauma from the sudden death of her husband who was driving her to hospital to deliver Samuel, the tragedy of which has been deepened by a dysfunctional relationship with her son. Throughout this primary narrative, Amelia is shown to struggle with her feelings of guilt concomitant to the resentment she feels towards Samuel for the role his birth played in her husband's death. The secondary narrative, which comes to consume the former at the film's climax, dramatises Amelia's possession by the eponymous Babadook, whom both Amelia and the film's audience first encounter within the pages of a mysterious children's book (*Mister Babadook*) which appears in the family home. The former narrative can be read as a Jungian parable, whereby Samuel and Amelia illustrate the 'abandoned' aspect of the child archetype and the shadow aspect of the mother archetype respectively. The latter relocates a grim, Grimm-style fairytale from a European kingdom to contemporary suburbia via the intradiegetic bogeyman narrative of *Mister Babadook*.

Philip Pullman cites the inspiration for his writing process as a re-teller of 'Grimm Tales' (2012) in poet James Merrill's characterisation of fairytales - 'the kinds we recall from Grimm/ Jung, Verdi, and the commedia dell'arte' - as peopled by 'conventional stock figures', told in 'unseasoned telling', untroubled by 'fancy narrative concoctions'. Pullman extrapolates from this that 'one might almost say that the characters in a fairy tale are not actually conscious'; rather, 'the most fitting pictorial representation of fairytale characters' lie

not in ‘beautifully illustrated editions’ but instead in ‘little cardboard cut-out figures’ which allow ‘their part in the drama [to] be easily read from a distance’. Certainly, the secondary narrative which unfolds in the cardboard cut-out pop-up pages of *Mister Babadook* adheres to this thesis in dramatising Amelia’s possession by her personal shadow. The film complicates, however, Pullman’s assertion that ‘only one side is visible to the audience, [because] that is the only side we need’ by contextualising the significance of *Mister Babadook*’s secondary narrative in the psyches of Amelia and Samuel. The ‘fancy narrative concoctions’ afforded by *The Babadook*’s cinematic medium deepen the impact of *Mister Babadook*’s intradiegetic fairytale narrative: the charcoal hues of its pop-up illustrations colour the entire film’s palette; special effects and haunting music absorb the film’s viewer in the horror Amelia and Samuel experience in encountering the text and its central character, who escapes the confines of his book and terrorises the family within their own home.

The Babadook literalises Perry Nodelman’s influential assertion that ‘the simple text’ of narrative designed for child audiences ‘implies an unspoken and much more complex repertoire that amounts to a second, hidden text’, that which he calls a ‘shadow text’ (2008: 8). Nodelman wonders ‘if a child would be equally aware of this shadow text’, and bases his assertion - ‘the obvious answer to that question seems to be “No.”’ - in the agenda of the ‘hidden adult’ author. The (children’s) ‘author’s assumption about the limited abilities of the implied audience’, for Nodelman, is the ‘reason for the simplicity’ of the surface narrative of children’s texts. While this position chimes with the dramatisation of Kimmy Schmidt’s clear objectives for the enculturation of a new generation of child readers in the positive qualities of self-reliance and respect for others in the analysis of my previous chapter, the trauma Amelia experiences which goes on to inform her work is not, initially, brought to the same position of conscious integration as it is in the case of *Schmidt*.

The Babadook’s writer and director, Jennifer Kent, reflected explicitly on the film’s origin as an exploration of the repressed unconscious:

> I feel that it is very important as a person to face the difficulties in oneself and in one's own life - to face the shadow side. I am always fascinated by people who don't do that, and who manage to suppress everything. So that was the entry point for me. I thought: what would it be like to follow a character who really suppresses some of the terrible events in her life, and then has to face them. Then it just made sense to me that the best way to explore that would be in the realm of a horror film (quoted in Risker, 2016).

The terrible event which marks Amelia's life is the loss of her husband. Amelia raises Samuel as a single parent, and attempts to suppress the resentment she feels towards her son whose birth is irrevocably tied up with the loss of her handsome, artistic husband: she struggles to make ends meet in an unfulfilling job; to manage Samuel's increasingly concerning behaviour at school and at home; and to navigate relationships with family and friends from whom she feels isolated in her unresolved grief. The revelation, early in the film, that Amelia once had a creative career as a children's writer implicates Amelia in the artistic authorship of *Mister Babadook*. Amelia is shown at one point in the film reading Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*, a book which cites Jung's theory that 'The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect but by the play instinct acting from inner necessity. The creative mind plays with the objects it loves' (1992: 45). It is perhaps telling that *Mister Babadook* takes its form as a big, red book, in an echo of Jung's own *Liber Novus*, similarly written and illustrated in testament to a time of Jung's own engagement with the creative unconscious. The primary genesis of the story, and the Babadook's dramatisation of Amelia's suppressed rage, resentment, grief, and trauma, however, lies not in Amelia's imagination, but in Samuel's.

Samuel is described as a deeply perceptive child: 'he sees things as they are, that one', an old friend of Amelia's assures her. The film opens, however, with Samuel alienating himself from his classmates and extended family, as well as a tired Amelia, by an obsession with an unseen, unnamed monster he imagines threatening his and his mother's safety. Amelia is informed by a doctor that Samuel is 'very committed to the monster theory', and the doctor thus diagnoses Samuel as 'suffering a high level of anxiety'. In his essay on *The Psychology of the Child Archetype*, Jung considers the child image in its 'abandoned' aspect as representative, in the adult psyche, of the unresolved tension between the conscious and the unconscious:

> Since, however, the solution of the conflict through the union of the opposites is of vital importance, and is moreover the very thing that the conscious mind is longing for, some inkling of the creative act, and of the significance of it, nevertheless gets through. From this comes the numinous character of the 'child'. (9i: 285)

Samuel's monster obsession is given form and name by the mysterious appearance of *Mister Babadook* on his bookshelf. Amelia reads it to Samuel before bed, and appears, initially, completely non-plussed as to its origins. The viewer observes this scene prior to the revelation of Amelia's previous life as a children's author, and the film slowly hints at

Amelia's unconscious authorship while leaving open the possibility as to the book's supernatural origins. Samuel's identification of a shadow aspect to his mother's personality, however, and her recognition of the abandoned aspect of the child archetype in him, can be read as the seed for Amelia's re-engagement with her previously abandoned profession.

Like the archetypal image of the child, that of the shadow can be interpreted as what Jung would describe as a 'uniting symbol' when first planted by Samuel in Amelia's mind. Some awareness on Amelia's part as to her contribution to Samuel's anxiety can be read in the guilt she feels for Samuel's increasing isolation from friends and family due to his growing monster obsession, and her own fantasies of abandoning Samuel or - under the influence of the Babadook - murdering him. Samuel's burgeoning psychic awareness identifies this suppressed resentment in his relationship with his mother, and his fears of abandonment might well have led Amelia to recognise in him what Jung describes in writing of the Child image in its abandoned aspect thus:

> A meaningful but unknown content always has a secret fascination for the conscious mind. The new configuration is a nascent whole: it is on the way to wholeness, at least in so far as it excels in 'wholeness' the conscious mind when torn by opposites and surpasses it in completeness. For this reason all uniting symbols have a redemptive significance. (9i: 285)

Amelia initially dismisses Samuel's fears ('the Babadook isn't real, Samuel. It's just something you made up in your stupid little head'), and indeed the film similarly initially depicts the Babadook as an external supernatural entity, visible only to Samuel. Eventually, however, Samuel's ultimate survival and Amelia's redemption depends on her recognition that she herself has come to be possessed by the Babadook. Amelia's task, then, is to integrate her unconscious capacity for harming Samuel into consciousness, and to counter the unconscious influence of her own disassociated 'Babadook' shadow aspect on her psyche with conscious creativity of her own.

Amelia's dawning realisation as to her potential authorship of the text of *Mister Babadook* is hinted at by her circuitous explanation to the police, to whom she turns in exasperation after a repaired copy of the *Mister Babadook* text she had torn up and binned after first reading it to Samuel appears on her doorstep. 'Someone sent me a children's book' initially prompts smirks from the police, until her revelation that 'it contained violent and graphic images of my child and me being murdered'. When asked to produce the book for inspection, however, Amelia admits to having burned it: her charcoal stained hands point the viewing audience to her authorship of the chiaroscuro-hued text in the first instance. The

policeman's enquiry, 'how do you know it's the same person?' when Amelia informs him of a threatening phonecall echoing lines from the book, is answered by Amelia's frustrated 'because of what he wrote in the book'. Amelia's increasing sense of isolation and abandonment echoes that which the viewer had initially perceived in Samuel and the repeated dismissal of his fears; it speaks, too, to a dawning recognition in Amelia as to her own unresolved sense of abandonment by her husband following his sudden and traumatic death. It is at this point that Amelia begins to take seriously Samuel's insistence as to the threat posed to their safety by the Babadook. Amelia's eventual identification with Samuel as an image of the Child archetype in its abandoned aspect here resonates with Jung's assertion that:

> Out of this situation the 'child' emerges as a symbolic content, manifestly separated or even isolated from its background (the mother), but sometimes including the mother in its perilous situation, threatened on the one hand by the negative attitude of the conscious mind and on the other by the *horror vacui* of the unconscious (9i: 286).

Jung's location of the Child image in its abandoned aspect in mythology and literature is noted for its association with 'Mother Nature': the abandoned child is 'pregnant with the future, signifying a higher stage of self-realization' when integrated into the psyche. 'That is why Nature, the world of the instincts', Jung writes, takes the 'child' under its wing: it is nourished or protected by animals' (286).

After Amelia returns home from her visit to the police, her possession by the Babadook escalates to the film's climax. 'The inferiorities constituting the shadow', as Jung points out, 'reveals that they have an emotional nature, a kind of autonomy, and accordingly an obsessive or, better, possessive quality' (9ii: 15). The seeds of the form Amelia's possession will take have been sown by the opening scene of the film, as *The Babadook* opens with Amelia reading Samuel a version of *The Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf*. As Aviva Briefel points outs, 'despite [the] intended whimsy' of the fairytale's opening which Amelia reads - 'A long time ago - just yesterday, in fact - there were three little pigs, and one nasty, big wolf' - the 'warped temporality of the story's opening evokes the dizzying repetitions and strange chronologies of parenting' (2017: 4). This loving scene is warped and echoed when Amelia is at her most overcome with her resentment of Samuel - she howls at Samuel's door 'let me in, let me in, you little pig', when she has been possessed by the Babadook. Samuel's alignment with the animal protagonists of the fairytale with which

Amelia had equipped him before her possession by the Babadook provides him with his repeated warning to Amelia: 'don't let it in'. Having considered now how Amelia's recognition of Samuel as an image of the archetypal child in its abandoned aspect perhaps sparked her unconscious creative urge to pen *Mister Babadook*, we must now turn to how Amelia herself comes to embody the shadow aspect of the mother archetype in Samuel's eyes - and indeed, in the eyes of the viewer, who witness Amelia transform into a monstrous host for the Babadook whom she does, indeed, 'let in'.

In *Psychological Aspects of the Mother Archetype*, Jung asserts that:

> The aetiological and traumatic effects produced by the mother must be divided into two groups: (1) those corresponding to traits of character or attitudes actually present in the mother, and (2) those referring to traits which the mother only seems to possess, the reality being composed of more or less fantastic (i.e., archetypal) projections on the part of the child. (9i: 159)

Jung notes that he himself made 'it a rule to look first for the cause of infantile neuroses in the mother', as he claimed to know 'from experience that a child is much more likely to develop normally than neurotically, and that in the great majority of cases definite causes of disturbances can be found in the parents, especially in the mother'. It is unfortunately not my project here to critique Jung's numerous shortcomings in gendered sensitivity, but *The Babadook*'s focus on Amelia and Samuel's deeply troubled mother/son relationship provides a site for interrogation of the influence of his theory in the cultural imagination, regardless of its clinical validity.

'The contents of the child's abnormal fantasies can be referred to the personal mother only in part', Jung nevertheless remarks:

> since they often contain clear and unmissable allusions which could not possibly have reference to human beings. This is especially true where definitely mythological products are concerned, as is frequently the case in infantile phobias where the mother may appear as a wild beast, a witch, a spectre, an ogre, a hermaphrodite, and so on. It must be borne in mind, however, that such fantasies are not always of unmistakably mythological origin, and even if they are, they may not always be rooted in the unconscious archetype but may have been occasioned by fairytales or accidental remarks. (9i: 159)

Amelia and Samuel's shared language of fairytales provides the arena in which the shadow of Amelia's repressed trauma - her unresolved grief and resentment of Samuel - is first given form, in the text of *Mister Babadook*. Samuel's commitment to the 'monster theory' can thus be read as an attempt by Samuel to communicate his own unconscious recognition of his

mother's shadow aspect to Amelia herself, in a language her unconscious would recognise despite her conscious dismissals of Samuel's fears.

The embedded text of *Mister Babadook* operates under what the poet A.E. Stallings would characterise as 'fairytale logic' (2010). The eponymous Babadook informs the first reader of his story, Amelia, that 'the more you deny me/ the stronger I get.' This particular conceit echoes directly Jung's assertion that:

> Everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is. (11: 131)

The scene in which Amelia first reads the story, aloud to Samuel, allows the viewer of *The Babadook* to witness Amelia's realisation that a cardboard cut-out pop-up representation of Amelia herself depicts the Babadook's intradiegetic addressee. The book opens with a small pop-up figure of Mister Babadook entering a representation of Amelia's house, and the narrative depicts his growing in size and strength as he takes possession of her: 'you start to change when I get in/ the Babadook growing right under your skin.'

The ominous implications of *Mister Babadook* prompt a horrified Amelia to flick through the pages of the text she had started reading to Samuel, before a cut scene sees her attempt to comfort a now hysterical Samuel with the happy ending to what the audience imagines is a favourite fairytale more familiar to their bedtime reading routine. Amelia's growing terror as she turns the pages of a story ostensibly unknown to her literalises early scholar of children's literature Barbara Bader's characterization of the picturebook's especial quality of 'the drama of the turning page' (1976: 1). Contemporary picturebook theorist Mary Galbraith argues that, paradoxically, 'under the protective cover of a children's storybook, primal scenes that would otherwise stay buried can surface without being consciously recognised' (2000: 638). Her thesis that the picturebook, re-encountered in adulthood, can make explicit 'a "primary survival schema" developed in childhood' is cited by Kenneth Kidd in support of his belief that 'the picturebook can function as an expression or distortion of trauma for adults as much as (perhaps more than) for children' (2011: 192). These critical positions seem to align with Nodelman's theorisation of the children's book as a receptacle of 'shadow texts' of greater significance to adult authors than intended child readers. *The Babadook*, however, depicts Amelia as an author unwitting not only of *Mister Babadook*'s unsuitability for children, but of her own actual authorship of the text, and her disassociated alignment with her own shadow, whom she gives form via the specific affordances of the picturebook medium.

The fairytale conceits of the Babadook's seeking entry both to Amelia's house and her psyche ultimately dramatised in the film's climax are anticipated by the narrative of *Mister Babadook*'s warning of his arrival with 'a rumbling sound and three sharp knocks/ ba-ba-ba-DOOK DOOK DOOK'. After the scene in which Amelia destroys the book following her traumatic bedtime contact zone of shared reading with Samuel, its re-arrival on her doorstep is heralded by three sharp knocks. The final third of the film dramatises a version of the narrative anticipated by the text of *Mister Babadook*: the eponymous entity is shown to have gained access to Amelia's house via her basement, and takes possession of Amelia in her bedroom. The significance of Jung's imaginative structuring of the psyche in the form of a house of many storeys is richly evoked in *The Babadook*'s climax. Amelia, under the monstrous possession of the Babadook, warns Samuel to 'run, run, run, as fast as you can': her recourse to the language of their shared stories illustrates Le Guin's assertion as to the capacity of the fairytale in speaking '*from* the unconscious *to* the unconscious, in the *language* of the unconscious - symbol and archetype' (1975: 141). Amelia's descent into the unconscious, dramatised by her possession by the Babadook, is literalised by her descent into the basement, where she seeks to hunt down the fleeing Samuel. Jung's vision of the psyche's structural descent from storeys housing aspects of the personal psyche - in this instance, Amelia's personal shadow - to the lower storeys of the collective unconscious parallels the individual text of *Mister Babadook*'s lineage: from the shared familial lexicon of Amelia and Samuel's bedtime reading to the older stories whence the archetype of the bogeyman resides.

'The concept of the archetype, which is an indispensable correlate of the idea of the collective unconscious', Jung explains, 'indicates the existence of definite forms in the psyche which seem to be present always and everywhere' (9i: 89). He notes that 'mythological research calls them "motifs"' in distinguishing between the archetype and the image by which they come to be known in consciousness. The research of modern mythologist Marina Warner into the bogeyman motif is particularly relevant to my analysis here of the Babadook's implied genesis: both in the personal unconscious of his author Amelia, and the collective well from which her she unconsciously drew as a reader (and writer) of stories for children. Per Warner:

> The predominant b-stem in the semantic family of words that evoke fear could be related to the Indo-European stem that gives 'big', (titanic), on the one hand, and on the other, produces many words for older, authority figures (Indian babu, Russian baba) as well as pet words for father (Italian babbo). Like 'mamma', the sound is one of the earliest to be pronounced by babies[.]

> Thus the b-sound that dominates the expression of bogeyman terrors is associated in English and in the Indo-European group with relations between children and their elders. (1998: 60)

The onomatopoeic aspect of the Babadook's embodiment alerts Samuel to Amelia's possession by her bogeyman shadow: the 'talk, talk, talk' for which she berates him aurally echoes the 'dook, dook, dook' which first heralded the Babadook's arrival at their door.

Warner's note that the emphasis of modern bogeyman tales 'has shifted: from a threat to the child from outside forces to the threatened and threatening quality of child-rearing and the conflicts between parents and children' (30-31) is similarly dramatised by the film. The Babadook's demand that Amelia 'bring me the boy', however, is what prompts Amelia's eventual exorcism of his unconscious influence over her behaviour. Her response, that 'you mean Samuel… stop calling him the boy', marks Amelia's recognition of the personal realities of hers and Samuel's lives which have been overcome by that of her personal shadow, so deeply repressed as to have been strengthened by the collective depths which inspired its form. 'The change of character brought about by the uprush of collective forces is amazing', Jung noted: '[a] gentle and reasonable being can be transformed into a maniac or a savage beast. One is always inclined to lay the blame on external circumstances, but nothing could explode in us if it had not been there' (11: 25). The film's literalisation of the layers of the psyche through the film's claustrophobic climax within Amelia's house further hints that Amelia and Samuel will indeed survive their brush with the collective shadow, once Amelia has recognised the reality of her possession.

While the Babadook's supernatural strength is implied to have arisen from the depths of denial and suppression to which he was pushed as Amelia's personal shadow aspect, once he reveals himself to Amelia, she exhibits the same inverse capacity for strengthening her conscious ability to integrate and manage the shadow aspect of which she been previously unaware. At the moment of the Babadook's greatest power over Amelia, and her near-complete possession by him, Amelia is tied up by Samuel in the basement. Thus restrained, Amelia vomits an inky black substance while shrieking in the animalistic register of the Babadook, implying the beginning of her exorcism of his archetypal power. She escapes, but as she chases Samuel upwards through the storeys of the house, Amelia seems to regain somewhat more of her consciousness. The expulsion of the inky substance in the basement hints towards the particularly literary quality of Amelia's possession, and similarly provides Amelia with the means by which the Babadook can be conquered.

Amelia faces a final confrontation with the Babadook in the upper story bedroom to which Samuel is dragged by the Babadook once he has been expelled from Amelia's body, and returned to his external supernatural form. Amelia faces the Babadook and, in an echo of the fairytale logic by which the Babadook operates, informs him that 'this is my house. You are trespassing in my house.' At this command, the Babadook illuminates Amelia in blinding white light, before fleeing from Amelia, and Samuel whom she has protected by positioning herself between her son and her shadow. Here the film dramatises Jung's articulation as to the healing process of shadow integration:

> To confront a person with his shadow is to show him his own light. Once one has experienced a few times what it is like to stand judgingly between the opposites, one begins to understand what is meant by the self. Anyone who perceives his shadow and his light simultaneously sees himself from two sides and thus gets in the middle. (10: 872)

As an adult author for children, well-versed in the logic of fairytales, Amelia can be read as someone literarily 'in the middle', as well in light of her literal positioning between the adult shadow of the Babadook and her young son, Samuel. Writing twenty years after Marina Warner's assertion that 'the toys, films and storybooks of today's children's culture reflect like two-way mirrors our expectations of children and our images of ourselves in potentia [;] in the late twentieth century they are populating children's lives – and those of adults, too – with monstrous alter egos' (1998: 30-31), film scholar Jessica Balanzategui argues specifically that *The Babadook* dramatises:

> [...] the fear that the supposedly fictional, 'childish' bogeymen of children's culture are slipping into the adult real in insidious ways, and [it] is their very depiction in children's art and stories which functions as their channel for this slippage. (2018: 286)

In this way, then, it is only through Amelia's adult re-engagement with the rules of children's art and stories by which the Babadook can be contained: the 'insidious ways' by which the bogeyman first slipped in to Amelia's adult reality was by her unconscious surrender to the archetypal shadow, or in fairytale parlance - by her letting it in. Amelia's insistence on the use of Samuel's specific, personal name, instead of the unspecific, archetypal 'boy', and her assertion as to the Babadook's uninvited trespass in 'her house' indicates a re-location from Amelia's identification with the world of story, or the collective storey of the shadowy unconscious, to the specific reality of her (and her son's) experience.

Balanzategui asserts in conclusion to her study of the uncanny figure of the child in twenty-first century (adult) horror films that:

> the sleep of reason produces monsters, but they overtly becomes monsters not simply *of* childhood, but *shared* between child and adult, suggesting a renunciation of the empty inscrutability of childhood 'innocence' and thus the beginnings of a breakdown in the overdetermined binary separation between child and adult realms. (2018: 287)

The 'sleep of reason' of which Balanzategui writes echoes the language of darkness and light with which Jung wrote of the shadow, a personal and collective aspect of the psyche which has grown stronger since a turn in emphasis towards a purely rational use of the mind above all since the Enlightenment. The children's book specifically offers a means by which the shadow might be confronted by both child and adult readers, thus preparing child readers for the later process of shadow integration facilitated by adult re-engagement with children's culture in which the potential horrors of the unintegrated shadow is first conceptually encountered.

'Filling the conscious mind with ideal conceptions is a characteristic of Western theosophy, but not the confrontation with the shadow and the world of darkness', Jung writes: '[o]ne does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious' (13: 335). Amelia's confrontation with the Babadook, occasioned by Samuel's introduction to her of the terrifying agency of her repressed shadow aspect, sees her conclude the film by managing her relationship with the grief and trauma she still feels over the loss of her husband. In a closing sequence characterised by bright daylight and white clothing in marked contrast to the shadowy hues of earlier in the film, it is revealed that Amelia now occasionally visits the Babadook, who has taken up a quieter, contained residence in Amelia's basement. Amelia visits him and feeds him with worms collected by Samuel from the garden: she acknowledges the Babadook's continued, but significantly reduced power ('it's alright, it's alright, shhh'), and quietens him, before returning to Samuel, with whom she finally celebrates his birthday. Her response to Samuel's question, 'am I ever going to see it?': 'one day, when you're bigger', alludes to a recognition that Samuel, too, will develop a shadow of his own as he matures, and the film's conclusion points to a healthier adulthood for both Amelia and Samuel. The film is thus resolved with an endorsement of Jung's assertion that if a person, such as Amelia, can be cured from the neurosis of a shadow 'considerably intensified' by suppression, 'it is necessary to find a way in which [her] conscious personality and [her] shadow can live together' (11: 12).

Following the success of the film, Jennifer Kent published a real-world completed version of the *Mister Babadook* text as it had appeared in the film. The book concludes, as we might also assume does its intradiegetic counterpart at Amelia's hand:

> Whether adult or child best to give me a HOME
> Put the welcome mat out with a room of my OWN
> And accept that I'm here and from you
> I have GROWN. (Kent, 2016)

This rhyme is illustrated with a depiction of Samuel and Amelia standing outside their house, hand in hand, while a contained Babadook waves from a basement window in their home. Thus the film literalises the power of story as a means of accessing, and managing, the deeper storeys of the psyche which house the shadow in both its personal and collective aspects.

Centring the Image: Integrating the Shadow of Trauma in *Possum*

Possum, a 2018 film directed by Matthew Holness, adapted from his short story of the same name written for the 2008 Shirley Jackson Award-winning anthology collection *The New Uncanny: Tales of Unease*, echoes *The Babadook's* exploration of the relationship between stories and the storeys of the psyche, and shares its literalisation of the shadow text. Rather than a story of unconscious possession, however, *Possum* dramatises the conscious decisions of an artist in personifying his personal shadow, and its collective dimensions. Originally conceptualised as an artistic response to Freud's 1919 essay on *The Uncanny*, collection editor Ra Page notes participating authors' in *The New Uncanny*'s tendency to elaborate on Freud's 'frustratingly cursory' reference to the figure of the double in literature via Jung's 'more elaborate thesis for the double [:] The Shadow' (2008: xii-xiii). Reflecting on the trend of authors turning to the accoutrements of childhood - dolls, toys, and puppets - as their starting points, Page reflects that when these artefacts 'become a repository for a more dangerous, contagious version of the child's malady, [*then*] it becomes Jung's shadow'. Holness's original short story serves as a shadow text embellished in turn for his film script of *Possum*: both narratives follow a disgraced children's puppeteer, Philip, who returns to his childhood home following the introduction to his act of a grotesque puppet named Possum.

The film adaptation of the short story literalises the concept of the shadow text by introducing a children's storybook authored and illustrated by Philip which recounts Possum's genesis: *Possum, and How He Came Into the World*. Excerpts from the book pepper the film's script, read aloud by Philip in voiceover and in dialogue with Maurice, his former guardian and abuser who still occupies Philip's home, having moved in following the death of Philip's parents in childhood. Like in *The Babadook*, *Possum* utilises the imagery of the locked downstairs room as a symbol for repressed trauma. Unlike *The Babadook*, however, the bogeyman figure suppressed in Philip's psyche is revealed in the film's climax as his former guardian. Philip frees another boy Maurice has abducted and locked away, killing his abuser in the process. The 'malady' of Philip's childhood is thus revealed to have been the sexual abuse he suffered following the loss of his parents: the 'dangerous, contagious version' of this suppressed trauma is what finds its shadowy form in the figure of Possum. Philip's repeated confrontations with the seemingly independent and animate Possum, and his frequent revisitation of the text in which he was first conceptualised, initially seem to hint toward a *Babadook*-like implication that Philip might be possessed by this shadowy other, and be himself responsible for the abduction of the missing schoolboy alluded to throughout the film. Ultimately, however, *Possum* dramatises instead Philip's process of making conscious his trauma in order to break the cycle of abuse which he himself suffered, rather than his possession by or participation in continuing generational trauma.

Unlike in *The Babadook*, and indeed unlike in the texts I explored in the first chapter of this study - *The Children's Book, The Bluest Eye* and *Gone Girl* - Philip is not depicted in childhood as a reader of an enculturating text. Rather, *Possum* dramatises Philip's deepening relationship to an (ostensible) children's text which he himself produces and consumes as author, illustrator, and reader. In this way, the children's book's imaginative status as an incubator for the transmission of familial and cultural complexes is complemented, but complicated and challenged. In *Possum*, the intradiegetic children's book functions as a site in which the now adult Philip can consciously work through his repressed memories of childhood trauma in the symbolic and affective language of the fairytale. Although the film does not specify whether the text was written by Philip in childhood or adulthood, nor whether Philip has sought publication for the text, his clear discomfort at its discovery by Maurice indicates its status as a private text. Certainly, like the text of *Mister Babadook*, the haunting charcoal-hued illustrations and frightening narrative of *Possum, and How He Came Into the World* is clearly inappropriate for both intra- and extradiegetic child readers beyond

the context of the adult horror text. ‘You can’t show that to children’ Maurice tells Philip when reading aloud a suitably grotesque excerpt from his book: ‘look at Possum, there he lies/ children, meet his lifeless eyes. See his nasty eyes and tongue/ when he wakens, watch him run’. The irony of Maurice’s admonishment as to the unsuitability of Philip’s private text for an actual child readership bites upon the film’s revelation of Maurice as Philip’s childhood abuser, as does the significance of the warning tone which permeates *Possum, and How He Came Into the World*’s intradiegetic narrative.

Education and media researcher David Buckingham discovered through an empirical study of children’s responses to age-appropriate children’s horror films a similar response to adult viewers’ perception of adult horror films: that horror provides a site for working therapeutically through negative feelings and emotions, providing a cultural space associated with maturity and daring in which these can be confronted (1996: 111-112). Children in Buckingham’s study describe consuming stories which frighten them as a challenge to themselves to ‘conquer fear’, leading Buckingham to posit horror as an important element in coping strategies for dealing with negative emotions and experiences in the real world beyond the page or screen. Contemporary research by children’s horror researcher Catherine Lester draws a comparison between Buckingham’s study with horror scholar Brigid Cherry’s investigation into the motivation behind adult consumers of horror who describe scaring themselves to prove their own courage (2009: 159). ‘If horror’s pleasures can so often stem from the childishness it draws out in its adult viewers’, Lester suggests, ‘then not only is children’s horror not an “impossible” sub-genre, but it is an entirely logical one’ (2016: 28). The film dramatises Philip’s attempts to simultaneously heal the eternal child which lives on in suffering in his psyche, while confronting and integrating the shadow aspect of childhood trauma personified by the figure of Possum through adult engagement with the frightening text of *Possum, and How He Came Into the World*.

Philip is represented as stunted in his emotional development for the majority of the film. He makes repeated visits to his primary school as if to confess to the abduction (or to seek belated help for his own abuse), where he regresses to a childlike state, stammering and addressing teaching staff as ‘miss’ and ‘sir’. His confusion between the contemporary abduction of the missing schoolboy and his own childhood trauma hints towards Philip’s perhaps having participated in the same cycle of abuse, and raises suspicion from the school and the police. Philip’s final confrontation with Maurice however, sees Maurice tauntingly wonder ‘a man now are you, boy?’, before Philip kills him to rescue the schoolboy whom

Maurice has abducted in an echo of his abuse of Philip. Jung's description of the child archetype as an anticipation of 'the figure which comes from the synthesis of conscious and unconscious elements in the personality[:] a symbol which unites the opposites; a mediator, bringer of healing, that is, one who makes whole' (9i: 314) describes the childlike Philip, as he reconciles the wounded boy he was with the good man he has become. Philip does so through integration of both his wounded inner child and his shadow in his conscious psyche, via the ultimately healing externalisation of his grief and trauma represented by the figure of Possum. Jung wrote that 'the essential thing is to differentiate oneself' from unconscious contents:

> by personifying them, and at the same time to bring them into relationship with consciousness. That is the technique for stripping them of their power. It is not too difficult to personify them, as they always possess a certain degree of autonomy, a separate identity of their own. Their autonomy is a most uncomfortable thing to reconcile oneself to, and yet the very fact that the unconscious presents itself in that way gives us the best means of handling it. (1963: 187)

Holness opens his short story with Philip describing the fear with which he initially came to regard Possum when he first introduced him to his puppet show thus:

> I had him devouring other characters without warning, perhaps even my hero or heroine… he was a rule unto himself, and now he was beginning to do things I couldn't allow. (19)

Philip therefore realises the threat Possum poses both to himself and his child audience if left unchecked or unintegrated back under Philip's psychic control. He does so in the process of creation itself, and far sooner than does *The Babadook*'s Amelia, who dismisses the Babadook's potential reality as an uncontrollable aspect of her own shadow until her ultimate possession by it.

Philip glimpses in the puppet he creates 'my half-buried likeness' (25), indicating a conscious recognition of Possum as an articulation of his own shadow aspect, and the threat Possum could well pose to his psyche should he not be consciously integrated, and Possum's growing autonomy addressed. Jung's warning that 'it is a frightening thought that man also has a shadow side to him, consisting not just of little weaknesses and foibles, but of a positively demonic dynamism' is dramatised in both the *Babadook* and *Possum*, but the latter's rejection of Philip's potential possession by Possum indicates a greater degree of conscious engagement with the shadow on Philip's part than Amelia's. Whereas Amelia's

possession by the Babadook threatens both her safety and Samuel's, the climax of *Possum* sees Philip liberate another child from abuse. Jung writes that:

> The individual seldom knows anything of [the potential dynamism of the unchecked shadow]; to him, as an individual, it is incredible that he should ever in any circumstances go beyond himself. But let these harmless creatures form a mass, and there emerges a raging monster; and each individual is only one tiny cell in the monster's body, so that for better or worse he must accompany it on its bloody rampages and even assist it to the utmost. Having a dark suspicion of these grim possibilities, man turns a blind eye to the shadow-side of human nature. (7: 35)

In this instance, Jung refers to the participation of individuals in the collective shadow aspect to cultures and societies. Holness has spoken explicitly about his vision for *Possum* as a response to the revelations of institutional complicity in the child abuse perpetrated by British entertainer Jimmy Savile, which came to public attention only after his death in the 2010s. Holness's description of Philip as a representative for 'all those abuse survivors whose silence was enforced' (quoted in Shoard, 2018) speaks to the film's dramatisation of a personal exorcism or externalisation of tragedy and trauma in the figure of Possum. *The Babadook*, conversely, depicts the dangers of the internalisation of trauma, and the concomitant threat of possession by the unconscious shadow when it seeks external validation.

The primary tragedy dramatised by *The Babadook* which shapes Amelia's life is the loss of her husband in adulthood; the shadow which stalks Philip in *Possum* finds its roots in the dual childhood tragedies of his parents' death and his subsequent abuse at Maurice's hands. Both Amelia and Philip, however, give shape and form to their respective traumas through the affordances of the picturebook. Amelia's vomiting up of a blank inky substance in her exorcism of the Babadook once she recognises her shadow possession and the threat she poses to her son is echoed in *Possum*'s dramatisation of Philip's crisis as he questions his capacity for having harmed the missing schoolboy. Philip is shown to feel stalked and hunted by Possum, and fearful of his potential possession, but is washed by an inky black rain before returning to confront Maurice and liberate the abducted schoolboy. This striking imagery is indicative of the integration Philip has undertaken of the shadow aspect of the trauma and grief Possum has come to represent for him, through the artistic mediums of writing and illustration. Glimpses of *Possum, and How He Came Into the World* show the book's hand-drawn qualities in charcoal and ink, giving voice and form to Philip's trauma: 'the parcel opened, out it sprang/ the black-long legged Possum-man/ children run, he'll eat and

smother/ any child without a mother'. The haunting poetry of Philip's authorship recognises in the figure of Possum the threat un-integrated trauma poses should the shadow attain mastery over the psyche, and serves as a warning which Philip heeds. It leads Philip, too, to protect a future victim of Maurice's from the trauma and abuse endured and suppressed by Philip until its articulation in the image of Possum.

Nicholas Mazza, an American pioneer of poetry therapy still active in its continuing development as a therapeutic treatment, wrote in 1987 alongside Christina Magaz and Joanne Scaturro on how 'for the abused child, poetry offers a channel to speak of feelings when all other channels appear closed' (87); 'the differential use of poetry in the treatment of abused children has promise as an ego-supportive technique that facilitates self-expression and fosters a sense of validation and control' (91). By the 2000s, 'the major types of expressive and therapeutic uses of literature' detailed in the *British Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* included 'expressive writing; therapeutic uses of literature in psychotherapy, counselling and cognitive therapies; therapeutic storytelling; bibliotherapy; poetry therapy; [and] the use of metaphor' (Byrt & McArdle, 2001: 517). Ursula K. Le Guin anticipated these bibliotherapeutic practices in her 1986 essay *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*, in which she argued that:

> [...] the natural, proper, fitting shape of the novel might be that of a sack, a bag. A book holds words. Words hold things. They bear meanings. A novel is a medicine bundle, holding things in a particular, powerful relation to one another and to us. (1986: 152-3)

The imagery of the 'parcel' as a container out of which might spring 'the black long-legged Possum-man' in Philip's ego-supportive text, *Possum, and How He Came Into the World*, is repeated in both the intradiegetic narrative of the book, and in the cinematic presentation of his struggle to integrate the shadow-aspect of his own grief and trauma Possum personifies.

Both Holness's short story and film literalise Le Guin's conceit of story as a sack or bag for holding meaning, via the bag in which Philip attempts to keep hidden the monstrous puppet he constructs of Possum from the illustrations in his book. The ominous narrative of *Possum*'s intradiegetic text, in which Philip's traumatised shadow-aspect first gained its shape and form, anticipates Philip's fears as to Possum's capacity to escape both the holding mechanism of the story and the literal bag in which he hides its puppet form thus:

> Here's a bag, what's inside?/ Does he seek, or does he hide?/ Can you spy him, deep within/ Little Possum, black as sin…/ Bag is open, growing wider/

> What's inside, man or spider?/ Little boy, don't lose your way/ Possum wants to come and play.

The narrative's warning ('wait a while my little child/ for what is playing dead/ Possum with his black balloon/ will eat you up in bed') is dramatised in repeated, viscerally horrible montages whereby the Possum puppet is shown to escape from its bag in Philip's bedroom to stalk and frighten him. The 'little child' whom Philip's narrative addresses is, it seems, the eternal child who lives still in Philip himself: the film shows Possum's legs slowly emerging from the bag at the foot of Philip's own bed. Possum's nomenclature and the intradiegetic narrative's reference to its 'playing dead' indicates the threat the unintegrated shadow plays to the healthy psyche, despite its capacity for relative dormancy when repressed and undisturbed.

Philip carries the puppet he constructs of Possum around with him in a bag he frequently tries to hide or destroy, without success, when he begins to fear that Possum is breaking free from both his psychic and literal containment to 'eat' Philip 'up'. The film depicts Philip throwing the bag containing Possum into a reservoir, and abandoning it in the roots of an old tree in a forest near his home. The cinematic Philip's actions echo those of his literary progenitor:

> [Philip] kicked [Possum] around in the wet mud for a while, wondering whether it was worth burying him permanently beneath the mud. Then [Philip] remembered the digger, packed him up in [his] bag, and walked home. (26)

Jung's description of 'the dark sea of the unconscious' (48) is echoed in Philip's attempt to drown or bury Possum; his attempted abandonment in the forest speaks to a specific vision of the forests of fairytales and folklore as a symbol intertwined with the Jungian concept of the collective unconscious in the literary imagination. 'Different schools of therapy of course produce different forests' argues Francis Spufford in his meditation on the influence of childhood reading in adulthood:

> The Freudian unconscious, therefore the Freudian forest, is a firmly individual affair. It contains only those unacknowledged fears and desires that our own life has laid down there. It's a private wood, growing differently in everybody. Jung's collective unconscious, on the other hand, provides a shared forest. A million separate paths lead into the one terrain. Then, we don't just tell parallel stories, or dream similar dreams. We tap an elemental experience: an idea verging on mysticism or magic if you let it be more than a metaphor. The place, of course, in which such a metaphor can become concrete less problematically is – a story[.] (2002: 14)

Philip's initially failed attempts to contain Possum within both bag and story lead him next to attempt to abandon it in the forest, to drown it in the river, and to bury it underground. In Jungian terms, then, we see a dramatisation of Philip's attempt to suppress his already consciously personified personal shadow deeper and deeper in the strata of psyche, before accepting its recursive and persistent reality via confrontation and integration.

The image which Philip gives to Possum belies its nomenclature. Its spidery form is impactful in conveying Philip's horror at his haunting, however, for the collective of *Possum*'s reading and viewing audience. Arachnophobia has been proven scientifically to affect between 3.5 and 6.1% of the global population (Müri & Schmidtt, 2009), and the image of the spider is one long associated with folklore and fairytale as well as modern horror. The final image we see from *Possum, and How He Came into the World* is an illustration of Possum's long spidery legs emerging from a child version of Philip's head. Thus we see the impact of Philip's deep suppression of his trauma: the form his personal shadow takes is one deeply intertwined with the imagery of the collective cultural imagination, from which it re-emerges in Philip's psyche in adulthood. Fairytale scholar and disciple of C.G. Jung's Marie-Louise Von Franz describes how 'a spider indicates spinning, the spinning of fantasies' (1980: 98); Jung himself draws on the imagery of the spider in describing the capacity of the un-integrated shadow as 'an unconscious factor which spins the illusions that veil [one's] world. And what is being spun is a cocoon, which in the end will completely envelop [one]' (9ii: 18). Jung writes that 'the archetype is an element of our psychic structure and thus a vital and necessary component in our psychic economy'. His warning, however, that 'it represents or personifies certain instinctive data of the dark, primitive psyche, the real but invisible roots of consciousness' (9i: 217) echoes in *Possum*'s dramatisation of Philip as an artist struggling to bring to consciousness an image which articulates his sense of shadow possession, or potential envelopment within a web spun by a personal shadow aspect so deeply suppressed as to have been strengthened by the collective strata of the unconscious.

Donna Haraway's conceptualisation of the 'chthulucene' is helpful here in our consideration of *Possum*'s dramatisation of the complex relationships between one's personal past and present and that of the collective, and the imagery by which this is realised of the underground and the animal so resonant in children's literature. Of relevance, too, to my application of Haraway's work to the unconscious terrain of the psyche dramatised by *Tom*

Underground in AS Byatt's *The Children's Book*, is the etymology Haraway notes for this concept:

> Chthulucene [...] is a compound of two Greek roots (khthôn and kainos) that together name a kind of timeplace for learning to stay with the trouble of living and dying in response-ability on a damaged earth. Kainos means now, a time of beginnings, a time for ongoing, for freshness. Nothing in kainos must mean conventional pasts, presents, or futures. There is nothing in times of beginnings that insists on wiping out what has come before, or, indeed, wiping out what comes after. Kainos can be full of inheritances, of remembering, and full of comings, of nurturing what might still be. (2016: 2)

Haraway notes that the image of the spider is best-suited to articulating the concept of 'sympoiesis', or 'making-with' she proposes in navigating the chthulucene, as its 'tentacularity is symchthonic, wound with abyssal and dreadful graspings, frayings, and weavings, passing relays again and again, in the generative recursions that make up living and dying' (33). Haraway's conceptualisation of the chthulucene is resonant with Jung's vision of the unconscious as 'a boundless expanse full of unprecedented uncertainty, with apparently no inside and outside, no above and no below, no here and no there, no mine and no thine, no good and no bad'; a 'deep well' which one accesses through the 'tight passage', the 'narrow door' of 'meeting with one's own shadow' (9i: 45).

Alongside the personal shadow and the inner child who populate the uppermost, personal strata of the collective unconscious, Jung envisions an overarching component of the personal psyche: the symbol of the Self. The Self symbolises the synthesis of the unconscious with consciousness via the process of individuation, similar to that undertaken by Philip in his confrontation with Possum. Jung writes that:

> We can hardly escape the feeling that the unconscious process moves spiral-wise round a centre, gradually getting closer, while the characteristics of the centre grow more and more distinct. Or perhaps we could put it the other way round and say that the centre— itself virtually unknowable— acts like a magnet on the disparate materials and processes of the unconscious and gradually captures them as in a crystal lattice. (12: 325)

It is 'for this reason', to Jung, that the Self or centre is:

> [...] often pictured as a spider in its web [,] especially when the conscious attitude is still dominated by fear of unconscious processes. But if the process is allowed to take its course [...] then the central symbol, constantly renewing itself, will steadily and consistently force its way through the apparent chaos of the personal psyche and its dramatic entanglements. (12: 325)

In *The Ecocritical Psyche* (2012), Susan Rowland anticipates the work of Haraway and her conceptualisation of the Chthulucene via a literary-Jungian lens. Rowland's argument that 'Jung's work offers new ways of questioning the assumed alterity of human/non-human' is rooted in 'his vision of the psyche's "wholeness"' which 'challenges and seeks to mitigate the harmful effects of excessive alterity'. For Rowland, Jung's 'approach is dedicated to reconciliation with the "other" in all its guises' as 'terror of the other is actually a horror of the untamed portions of our own psyche' (155). Drawing on the work of Jerome Bernstein, Rowland argues that for those, like Philip:

> [...] for whom trauma is their portal to the borderland, to a new kind of consciousness with nature, their wounding must be addressed. What therapy does, Bernstein shows, is to make a 'trauma story', a narrative form substantial enough to hold the pain and enable healing (2010: 145-9). 'Trauma stories' are necessary for those whose egos have been damaged in early childhood by abuse or neglect. (85)

'For the purposes of re-making Western consciousness', on a collective scale, however, Rowland proposes that 'trauma stories are not enough. Their efficacy is limited because they largely operate within the narrow territory of the Western ego'. Here I find an echo of Hauke's understanding of Jung's view that horror might provide a cultural space in which the post-Enlightenment Western mind can encounter the irrational and sublime. Rowland extends this position in arguing that 'the myth' of Enlightenment rationalism which shapes the modern Western psyche 'that has gone too far in evolving a successful creature can be re-wound. If a story has been distorted then, given the mythical core of consciousness, story is also the way back'. What is required in order to do so, Rowland echoes Bernstein in suggesting, 'is nothing less than a new origin story' (85).

The imagery of 're-winding' damaging stories via stories written anew resonates with the spider imagery of *Possum, and How He Came into the World* - the origin story Philip conceptualises for his personal shadow. So too does Rowland's conclusion that:

> Within the psychic potency of individuation narratives generated in therapy new origin stories occur at a deeper level than trauma stories.
>
> Characteristic of a new origin story is the sense of it stemming from sources outside the ego. Of course, in Jungian terms, the new origin story is the gift of the self; it is psychic being as a gift from the other. New origin stories are the self fully employed in its function of originating ego consciousness.
>
> [...] Where Freudian psychoanalysis concentrates upon the trauma stories we need to deal with Oedipal anxieties, the Jungian map of the soul directs us to the possibility of re-balancing the founding myths of consciousness. (86)

Philip's construction of a children's book as a means of processing his personal trauma draws on the collective language of myth and folklore in locating a genesis for *Possum, and How He Came Into the World* in a creation story which hints at the shared roots of both the personal and collective shadow. In *Possum*, Philip's personal shadow of trauma and abuse can be decontexualised from his specific experience in order for him to rescue future generations from the abuse he suffered, by anticipating the development of a parallel shadow in the new schoolboy abducted by Maurice. The imagery Philip produces of Possum's spidery legs growing forth from his own child-head dramatises, then, Jung's empowering suggestion that:

> If [one] only learns to deal with [one]'s own shadow [then one] has done something real for the world. He has succeeded in shouldering at least an infinitesmal part of the gigantic, unsolved social problems of our day (11: 83).

Philip's successful integration, rather than possession, of the shadow which personifies the trauma and abuse he suffered in childhood as an adult artist does not deny the power of the shadow. Rather, the form it takes in his final illustration indicates that via his personification of Possum, Philip has gained access to a Self image capacious enough to recognise his shadow aspect alongside that of his inner child in a unified and consciously articulated whole. These three aspects - that of the shadow, the inner child and the Self - comprise some of the 'group of fascinating figures, much livelier than Freud's grim trio of Id, Ego, Superego' identified by Le Guin which Jung saw populating the psyche (1975: 143). Philip encounters and integrates these identity structures through the site of a personal children's book, in which he brings them to consciousness and personification via both his own artistic auspices and the particular affordances of the form's symbolic language as inheritor to the fairytale, folktale, myth and legend as means of access to archetype and the unconscious in its unified, interconnected entirety.

The Shadow as Self: Trauma and Temporality in *The Pillowman*

Unlike the shadow figures of the Babadook and Possum, the eponymous *Pillowman* of Martin McDonagh's 2003 play functions more explicitly from his introduction within the world of the play as a cypher for its lead character's individuated Self than as a suppressed or

shadow aspect of his psyche. Katurian, the play's lead and author of the intradiegetic *Pillowman*, articulates the primary plot of the play thus: '[a] writer in a totalitarian state is interrogated about the gruesome content of his short stories and their similarities to a number of child-murders that are happening in his town' (41). The play dramatises a number of Katurian's dark fairytales which provide secondary narratives central both to the play's plot and as illuminations of Katurian's traumatised psyche. *The Applemen*, *The Tale of the Town on the River* and *The Little Green Pig* are revealed as the three stories to have inspired not Katurian, however, but Katurian's brother to have 'test[ed] out how far-fetched they were' (50): he admits to Katurian that: 'all the things [he] did to all the kids [he] got from stories [Katurian] wrote and read out to [him]' (51). The play thus quickly resolves any hint that Katurian himself might be a victim to shadow possession. Rather, two of Katurian's stories in particular: *The Writer and the Writer's Brother* and *The Pillowman* itself, give insight into the processes by which the psyches of both Katurian and his brother were fractured in the first place, and the experiences in childhood which shaped the men into whom they have grown. The former dramatises the trauma and abuse Katurian and his brother experienced in childhood, while the latter illustrates Katurian's integration of the shadow this has cast over his life, and his maturation into a compassionate, as well as complicated and conflicted, man and artist.

The story of *The Writer and the Writer's Brother* dramatises both Katurian's genesis as a writer, and contextualises his brother's obsession with Katurian's stories and the murders he commits. Stage directions have Katurian 'sitting on a bed amongst toys, paints, pen, paper, in an approximation of a child's room, next door to which there is another identical room, perhaps made of glass, but padlocked and totally dark' (31). While Katurian claims to 'hate any writing that's even vaguely autobiographical', he admits *The Writer and The Writer's Brother* to be 'the only story of mine that isn't really fiction' (76): it dramatises his parents' horrendous abuse of Katurian's brother in a bid to inspire Katurian to genius as a writer. The story details 'an artistic experiment' conducted by Katurian's parents, 'an artistic experiment which has worked' (32-33), whereby Katurian's parents 'showered nothing but love, kindness, warmth, all that stuff' on Katurian (31), and 'tortured [his brother] for seven straight years' (33). The sounds of his brother's torture inspire the stories written by both the intradiegetic child-writer and the biographical child-Katurian:

> They got better and better, due to all of the love and encouragement, as is often the case, but they got darker and darker, due to the constant sound of child-torture, as is also so often the case. (32)

The story concludes with the writer discovering the corpse of this tortured brother 'in whose hand there lay a story, scrawled in blood': 'a story that could only have been written under the most sickening of circumstances, and it was the sweetest, gentlest thing he'd ever come across' (34). The 'truer' biographical story, however, reveals Katurian to have discovered his own brother, 'alive, as such, but brain-damaged beyond repair'. Katurian, we learn, murdered his parents upon discovery of their project and cared for his brother in the intervening years prior to the events of *The Pillowman*.

Throughout the play, Katurian describes his brother as 'just a child' (24). In caring for him, we see Katurian attempt to literalise Jung's assertion that:

> [...] if [one] only learns to deal with [one]'s own shadow [then one] has done something real for the world. He has succeeded in shouldering at least an infinitesmal part of the gigantic, unsolved social problems of our day. (11: 83)

Katurian's brother and his experiences are presented dramatically and literally in shadow alongside those of Katurian and the writer in *The Story of the Writer and the Writer's Brother*. The 'gigantic, unsolved social problem' at the heart of *The Pillowman* is that of child abuse: Katurian's brother is a victim of his parents' abuse as are, ultimately, the children he murders. The policemen interrogating Katurian and his brother are similarly revealed to have been victims of abuse in childhood. One claims to be 'tired of everybody round here using their shitty childhoods to justify their own shitty behaviour':

> *My* dad was a violent alcoholic. Am *I* am violent alcoholic? Yes I am, but that was my *personal* choice. I freely admit it. (80)

Katurian, too, is a victim of his parents' abuse. He is the only adult, however, to exhibit any integration of the shadow this trauma casts upon every character in the play. The intradiegetic story of *The Pillowman* functions, then, not primarily as an expression of either the individual shadow of trauma and abuse which haunts Katurian, nor the collective shadow of child abuse which permeates the play: rather, it dramatises the process of shadow integration itself, and the individuated journey towards Selfhood which Katurian, solely among the cast of the play, achieves.

Katurian's intradiegetic cypher in *The Writer and The Writer's Brother* is described as having 'his own little room in a big house in the middle of a pretty forest' (31): it is there that

‘the seeds of creativity were implanted in him from an early age and it was writing that became his first love’. As we discover, the ‘seeds of creativity’ implanted in both the writer and Katurian are the love and encouragement of his parents, as well as a burgeoning awareness of the shadow aspect of this love and encouragement housed both literally and literarily alongside him in the figure of his brother. That Katurian should turn to the language of fairytale is fitting per Maria Tatar’s articulation of the form’s capacity for providing ‘tableaus of aggression in its most brutish folkloric forms (1987: xxvii): the stage directions for the play present the abuse dramatised by the fairytale-esque story, in tableau, as Katurian narrates the *The Writer and the Writer’s Brother* before its revelation as near-biography. Its setting in the forest speaks to its dramatisation of a collective as well an individual narrative of trauma, which speaks to the collective shadow of childhood suffering through its localisation in the specific forest of Katurian’s childhood. As Jung writes:

> We know that the wildest and most moving dramas are played not in the theatre but in the hearts of ordinary men and women who pass by without exciting attention, and who betray to the world nothing of the conflicts that rage within them except possibly by a nervous breakdown. What is so difficult for the layman to grasp is the fact that in most cases the patients themselves have no suspicion whatever of the internecine war raging in their unconscious. If we remember that there are many people who understand nothing at all about themselves, we shall be less surprised at the realization that there are also people who are utterly unaware of their actual conflicts. (7: 425)

Katurian is presented as an ‘ordinary’ man: he works in a local abattoir and as a carer for his brother, alongside his career as a writer of dark and gruesome fairytales. Katurian, however, finds in his writing a theatre in which he can dramatise the conflicts which rage within his heart, and bring the shadow of the trauma and abuse he and his brother suffered to consciousness. Katurian initially claims: ‘I just write stories!’ (29) when accused with the murders which mimic those of his fairytales. He tells the interrogating policemen:

> A great man once said, ‘The first duty of a storyteller is to tell a story,’ and I believe in that wholeheartedly. Or was it ‘The *only* duty of a storyteller is to tell a story’? Yeah, it might have been ‘The *only* duty of a storyteller is to tell a story.’ I can’t remember, but anyway, that’s what I do, I tell stories. No axe to grind, no anything to grind. No social anything whatsoever. (7)

Prior to the policemen’s connection between the murders and Katurian’s stories, he wonders whether he is being interrogated for sedition via a perception of their potential to be read for political undertones: ‘are you trying to say that I’m trying to say that the children represent something? [...] That the children represent The People, or something?’ (12), in a rejection of

Nodelman's claims as to the children's book as a site, always, for the secondary articulation of a shadowy, 'adult' text (2008).

The 'theme' of Katurian's stories is identified by the policemen as 'some poor little kid gets fucked up' (15). Katurian denies this as a 'theme', arguing simply that 'some of them have come out that way. That isn't a theme' [...]:

> Katurian: I don't have themes. I've written, what, four hundred stories, and maybe ten or twenty have children in?
>
> [Policeman]: Have *murdered* children in.
>
> Katurian: So, what, this is about stories with murdered children in? Do you think I'm trying to say, 'Go out and murder children?'
>
> [Policeman]: 'I'm not saying you're trying to say 'Go out and murder children.' (*Pause*.) Are you trying to say, 'Go out and murder children'?
>
> Katurian: No! No bloody way! Are you kidding? I'm not trying to say anything at all! That's my whole thing [...] If there are children in them, it's incidental. If there is politics in them, it's incidental. It's *accidental*. (16)

Despite his insistence to the contrary, however, Katurian's stories function consistently in opposition to the sweet, gentle story he imagines the Writer's Brother to have written despite his torture. The gruesome fairytales he writes allow him to process and come to terms with the realities of the suffering his brother (and he) endured, with *The Pillowman* in particular functioning as a 'story in lieu of a prayer for his brother' and, by extension, for all of the children both real and fictional who suffer at the hands of adults in their childhoods (102).

> In *The Child and The Shadow,* Usula K. Le Guin articulates her belief that, as a child:
>
> I had somewhat less conscious mind than I have now. But I had as much, or more, of an unconscious mind, and was perhaps in better touch with it than I am now. And it was to that, to the unknown depths in me, that [fairytales] spoke; and it was the depths that responded to and, nonverbally, irrationally, understood it, and learned from it. (141)

She roots this articulation in the work of Jung's colleague Jolanda Jacobi, who expanded upon Jung's conceptualisation of the shadow to suggest that:

> [...] the development of the shadow runs parallel to that of the ego; qualities which the ego does not need or cannot make use of are set aside or repressed, and thus they play little or no part in the conscious life of the individual.

> Accordingly, a child has no real shadow, but his shadow becomes more pronounced as his ego grows in stability and range. (1962: 107)

Katurian's brother is never presented as though possessed by the shadow of his own trauma and suffering in childhood, but rather as an adult developmentally stunted in a form of stalled perma-childhood occasioned by his abuse. He does not murder children in retribution for his own abuse, nor to punish Katurian: his innocent claims to have acted them out purely as a result of having heard them narrated by Katurian rings true in light of his cognitive dysfunction. The third child whom he abducts, in illustration of this, is co-erced into a re-enactment of one of Katurian's only cheerful stories, and comes to no harm. The policemen who interrogate Katurian and his brother, on the other hand, are shown to be in unhealthy relationship to their respective shadows which have only grown stronger since their maturation into adulthood. Both use violence and intimidation in their interrogation techniques and delight in summary executions sans trial. They admit to motivation in their careers for the opportunities they are afforded in exacting revenge against perpetrators of crimes against children, above the pursuit of justice, or protection of the child-victims themselves whose fates they investigate. As one states in one lengthy monologue:

> I'll tell you what there is about me. There is an overwhelming, and there is an all-pervading, hatred… a hatred… of people like you. Of people who lay even the littlest finger… on children.
>
> [...] I admit it, sometimes I use excessive force on an entirely innocent individual.
>
> [...] You know what? I would torture [Katurian] to death just for *writing* [stories like Katurian's], let along acting [them] out. So, y'know what?
>
> *[The policeman] takes out from the cabinet a large, grim-looking battery with electrodes attached.*
>
> …Fuck what your mum and dad did to you and your brother. Fuck it. I'd've tortured the fuck out of them if I had them here, just like I'm gonna torture the fuck out of you now too. (77-78)

Katurian's brother is depicted in the quasi-innocence of an adulthood stalled developmentally as a result of his abuse in childhood, then, in parallel to the policemen who are depicted in the corrupted adulthoods of former victims of childhood abuse who have never found peace. Katurian's more balanced, mature, and clear-eyed acceptance of what happened to him, and condemnation of what similarly happens to others, however, is reflective of the integrative work he has undertaken in reconciling himself to both his individual shadow and the

collective shadow of abuse. This personal worldview, and Katurian's capacity for channelling this into his art, is articulated most clearly in the story of *The Pillowman*.

The Pillowman is an intradiegetic meditation on the troubled temporal relationship between childhood trauma and the adult psyche. Its central character, however, is not a representation of the Shadow in quite the same sense as that of the Babadook or Possum, in that he personifies not repressed trauma, but the process of adult recognition of childhood trauma in and of itself. The intradiegetic narrative of *The Pillowman* haunts the play, but not Katurian's psyche: rather, the figure of the Pillowman provides a fictional cypher for Katurian akin to the figure of the child-writer in the near-autobiographical *The Writer and His Brother.* The Pillowman himself, made entirely of pillows, is described as having 'to look soft and safe, because of his job, because his job was a very sad and a very difficult one':

> Whenever a man or a lady was very very sad because they'd had a dreadful and hard life and they just wanted to end it all, they just wanted to take their own lives and take all the pain away, well, just as they were about to do it, by razor, or by bullet, or by gas, or…
>
> [...] the Pillowman would go to them, and sit with them, and gently hold them, and he'd say, 'Hold on a minute,' and time would slow strangely, and as time slowed, the Pillowman would go back in time to when that man or that lady was just a little boy or a little girl, to when the life of horror they were to lead hadn't yet quite begun, and the Pillowman's job was very very sad, because the Pillowman's job was to get that child to kill themselves, and so avoid the years of pain that would just end up in the same place for them anyway: facing an oven, facing a shotgun, facing a lake. (44)

Katurian recites this story to his brother shortly before killing him, too, by suffocation with a pillow, after his brother confesses to the murders of children inspired by Katurian's stories - doing so, perhaps, to end his brother's lifelong unresolved trauma, and to protect future generations of children. Katurian also reveals suffocation by pillow to have been the method by which he killed his parents, upon his discovery of the torture they inflicted on his brother, in his first, doomed attempt to save him. The form Katurian's shadow-aspect takes, then, resonates to an extent with Jung's formulation that 'everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is' (11: 131). Katurian clearly recognises the role trauma and suffering has played in his life, and how childhood abuse can mar entire adult lives: thus he conceptualises a literary alter-ego designed to prevent that suffering, and one which is soft and gentle rather than dark and threatening.

Katurian's brother is specific in aligning Katurian with the figure of the Pillowman in directing Katurian's re-telling of the story shortly before he, himself, is smothered: '[d]o your mouth smiley like the Pillowman's mouth is' (43) he requests of Katurian. Jung's direction to 'imagine someone who is brave enough to withdraw all his projections' conjures as image, for Jung and his implied reader:

> [of] an individual who is conscious of a pretty thick shadow. Such a man has saddled himself with new problems and conflicts. He has become a serious problem to himself, as he is now unable to say that they do this or that, they are wrong, and they must be fought against[.] (11: 140)

For Jung:

> this confrontation is the first test of courage on the inner way, a test sufficient to frighten off most people, for the meeting with ourselves belongs to the more unpleasant things that can be so long as we can project everything negative into the environment. But if we are able to see our own shadow and can bear knowing about it, then a small part of the problem has already been solved: we have at least brought up the personal unconscious. (9.i: 44)

As the shadow 'cannot be argued out of existence or rationalized into harmlessness' Jung argues that 'this problem is exceedingly difficult, because it not only challenges the whole man, but reminds him at the same time of his helplessness and ineffectuality'. Katurian's recognition of the cold comfort his stories of childhood suffering might bring in articulating the suffering of so many positions him as the only character in the play truly cognisant of this collective shadow to adult culture. Katurian is positioned in parallel to the policemen and his brother, who might similarly illustrate Jung's note that 'strong natures - or should one rather call them weak? - do not like to be reminded of this, but prefer to think of themselves as heroes who are beyond good and evil'. Katurian recognises the complicated morality by which he killed his parents to save his brother, and the reality that this act led to the suffering of his brother's child-victims, murdered in echoes of his stories. This recognition allows him some peace, however, in 'being honest, truthful, and in accord with reality'. For Jung, 'this prepares the ground for a compensatory reaction from the collective unconscious' (9.i: 44): Katurian is not haunted or possessed by shadow figures personifying guilt, but rather conceptualises a figure offering compassion and an articulation of the realities of grief, sorrow and suffering which are the lot of some to bear through no action of their own.

Thus we see the tragedy of his own life which Katurian embeds in the figure of the Pillowman: the genesis of his dark fairytales are rooted in his attempts to communicate the horrors of child abuse to which he responded by murdering his own parents in order to care for his tortured brother. In our reading of *The Pillowman* and its eponymous intradiegetic fairytale, then, we find some truth in Katurian's insistence that his stories are not what the policemen attempt to characterise as 'a pointer': 'on the surface [they are] saying this, but underneath the surface [they are] saying this other thing' (19). The surface of Katurian's stories are also their depth. Katurian's goal is not to encourage child abuse: rather, to recognise the horrors of it, and to reflect this unflinchingly in his stories. Katurian's fairytales, then, echo Philip Pullman's assertions as to the peculiar capacity of the fairytale for psychological exploration via their very shallowness. Fairytale scholar Maria Tatar considers the genesis of the modern children's fairytale in cross-generational or adult culture in her argument that:

> When folktales retreated from workrooms and parlors to take up residence in the nursery, something was lost in the move. The tales may not have forfeited their hold on the imagination of young and old alike, but they did lose many of the elements that accounted for their appeal to adults *qua* adults, rather than as parents, guardians, or teachers. (3)

Katurian's stories function in the shadow of the modern children's book, then, in that their intended audience is not child-centric: the language they use is that of the oldest, unsanitised forms of fairytale in which children who suffer are not always rewarded with happy endings. *The Pillowman*, thus, resonates with Tatar's reflection that:

> It is nothing short of astonishing that we reflect so little on the stories read to our children - stories that so many of us acknowledge as having a profoundly formative influence on our childhood selves. As adults, we may never be able to get the stories just right for the child, but once we begin to recognize the ways in which we have failed to rewrite old stories - or failed in our rewritings of them - we may also be prepared to drop the pretense of being preachers, educators, or therapists, and to give our children stories in which they truly figure as heroes and heroines. (xxvii - xxviii)

Katurian recognises in his child characters heroism in, and despite, their suffering at the hands of adults: he writes his stories not for children, however, but for the inner children who remain within the psyches of adult readers.

Katurian's own conceptualisation of the inner child in the adult is present in *The Pillowman*, which concludes with the Pillowman recognising his own strength in accepting the reality of the suffering he observes only after forfeiting it:

> See, when the Pillowman was successful in his work, a little child would die horrifically. And when the Pillowman was unsuccessful, a little child would have a horrific life, grow into an adult who'd also have a horrific life, and *then* die horrifically. So, the Pillowman, as big as he was and as fluffy as he was, he'd just go around crying all day long, his house'd be just puddles everywhere, so he decided to do just one final job and that'd be it. So he went to this place beside this pretty stream that he remembered from a time before [...]. (45 - 46)

The Pillowman takes pity on his child-self to prevent his own life of suffering, but upon this narrative twist:

> The last thing he heard was the screams of the hundred thousand children he'd helped to commit suicide coming back to life and going on to lead the cold, wretched lives that were destined to them because he hadn't been around to prevent them, right on up to the screams of their sad self-inflicted deaths, which this time, of course, would be conducted entirely alone. (47)

The Pillowman here then complicates the characterisation of the Bogeyman I have explored earlier through the shadow personae of Amelia and Philip in *The Babadook* and *Possum* respectively. Marina Warner concludes her study of the bogeyman motif in noting that 'babies and children are in greatest danger not from strangers, but from their own families': from this she concludes that 'the bogeyman no longer always brings death as such, but deals in the new coinage of psychological death: child abuse' (384). The conceit of pre-emptive childhood death as a mercy to counter anticipated suffering which characterises *The Pillowman* recognises in the act of living through childhood abuse into adulthood a form of heroism, which aligns the psychic figures I have analysed so far of both the (wounded) inner child, and the shadow. The monomyth of (anti-)heroism in which Katurian participates, then, despite the tragedy of his and his brother's story, is not one which necessarily ends with the achievement of archetypal literary heroism which vanquishes the shadow. Katurian's complicated (anti-)heroism is inherent not only in his encounter with the shadow and the inner child, but in those unconscious or shadow aspects of the psyche, at times, themselves, via his integration of them within a unified Self which survives into adulthood.

By drawing on Jung's secondary conceptualisation of the shadow as a repository for all of that which is hidden and repressed, including the inner child of one's individual experience and a recognition of inner children living within all adults, a deeper sense of *The Pillowman*'s dramatisation of Jung's concept of the shadow in this broader, collective articulation all-encompassing of the unconscious in its entirety can be gleaned from a parallel

reading of Katurian's story. Re-reading of *The Pillowman* is deepened when considered alongside Jung's argument that:

> We cannot apply our notion of time to the unconscious. Our consciousness can conceive of things only in temporal succession, our time is, therefore, essentially linked to the chronological sequence. In the unconscious this is different, because there everything lies together, so to speak. To some extent, in the unconscious we all still live in the past; in a way we are still very little children, and often only very little is needed for the "child" to come to the surface. At the same time, we are standing in the shadow cast by a future, of which we still know nothing, but which is already somehow anticipated by the unconscious. (2010: 360)

Significantly, Jung's writing here is in the context of childhood dreams remembered in adulthood, not in the contemporaneous dreams of children themselves. As to Katurian's anticipation of his stories' reception, McDonagh concludes *The Pillowman* with a monologue from Katurian following his execution at the hands of the policemen: 'for reasons known only to himself, the bulldog of a policeman chose not to put the stories in the burning trash, but placed them carefully with Katurian's case file, which he then sealed away to remain unopened for fifty-odd years' (103-104). In this way, Katurian's stories outlive him as a result of their ability to speak comfortingly to the inner child within their adult readers: an effect, perhaps, of Katurian's unconscious wish to comfort the inner children still living in the psyches of now-adult victims of abuse.

Despite threats from the policemen that Katurian's stories will be burned, Katurian's belief in the value of his storytelling is shared by the policemen, one of whom admits to Katurian shortly before his execution that 'some of your stories are very good too. I did like some of them'. The policeman tells Katurian that:

> There was something about 'The Pillowman' that stayed with me. There was something gentle about it. (*Pause*.) And the idea of, if a child died, alone, through some accident, he wasn't really alone. He had this kind, soft person with him, to hold his hand and whatnot. And that it was the child's choice, somehow. Made it somewhat, reassuring, somehow. That it wasn't just a stupid waste. (92)

The play concerns itself metatextually throughout the interactions it dramatises between Katurian, his brother and the policemen with the concept of stories' endings. The ending to his own story which Katurian witnesses after his death through the affordances of McDonagh's dramatic conceit at once echoes his assertion that 'there are no happy endings in

real life' (59), while complicating this as, contrary to his expectation, Katurian is survived by his stories and an aspect of him lives to see this after death. Earlier in the play, Katurian had attempted to explain to his brother his philosophy that the version of *The Writer and His Brother* in which the Writer's Brother dies had some form of happy ending thus:

> Katurian: What was left in your hand when you died? A story. A story that was better than any of *my* stories. See, 'The Writer and the Writer's Brother'... *you* were the writer. *I* was the writer's brother. That made it a happy ending for you.
>
> Katurian's brother: But I was dead.
>
> Katurian: It isn't about being or not being dead. It's about what you leave behind. (60)

Katurian's fairytales, then, both explicitly and implicitly, provide a chronotope which encode at once a dramatisation of the trauma which shaped his past, and a means of speaking, still, of that trauma to future readers.

The location of the children's book as a site in which the fairytale survives as a shadow influence, and its status as an inheritor of the fairytale's capacity to function chronotopically as both literary symbol and actual means for adult readers to engage with their own psychic aspects of the inner child, shadow and individuated Self, provides the stimulus for the final chapter of my study here, and the role of the children's books in texts concerned explicitly with the dramatisation of futurity. The concept of futurity is inherently embedded in all three of the texts I have analysed in this chapter, and indeed throughout this study, in the two-way street the children's book offers for the child in anticipating their future, and the adult in revisiting their past. The children's book functions as a particularly fertile site for its dramatisation, as an explicit symbol of temporal and psychological interaction between the child, the adult, and the inner child remembered within the adult, which transcends the personal significance of the processes of individuation the children's book dramatises by communicating in the archetypal language of the collective unconscious in which 'we all still live in the past', while 'standing in the shadow cast by a future, of which we still know nothing, but which is already somehow anticipated' (Jung, 2010: 360).

Chapter 4) A Chronotope of Teleology: The Children's Book in Futurity

The concept of the collective unconscious remains one of Jung's best known contributions to the contemporary cultural psyche - what Antony Stevens describes both as Jung's 'most significant departure from Freud', and his 'most important single contribution to psychology' (1994: 47). Jung's characterisation of the collective unconscious as what Stevens summarises as a 'psychic heritage', 'common' to all of humanity, was first conceptualised in his dream of the house discussed in chapter three. Although Jung argued for the existence of this common psychic heritage, symbolised as the deepest cellar opening up from the house of individual consciousness, he was sensitive to the layers of specific cultural heritages and individual experiences which rest upon this universally collective foundation. For Jung:

> Our individual consciousness is a superstructure based on the collective unconscious, of whose existence it is normally quite unaware. The collective unconscious influences our dreams only occasionally, and whenever this happens, it produces strange and marvellous dreams remarkable for their beauty, or their demonaical horror, or for their enigmatic wisdom'. (17: 208)

As Terence Dawson points out, '[t]here is good reason to insist that the relation between a dream and the dreamer is comparable to that between a text and its author' (2004: 8), and as such can we read glimpses of culturally specific iterations of the collective unconscious through what Jung describes as the *visionary* text as I will argue in this chapter.

The genre from which I draw my three texts for analysis in this chapter is science fiction. Concluding my study of the role of the children's book as symbol in the contemporary cultural imagination feels apt in a genre which concerns itself explicitly with an exploration of literal (imagined) futurity, and in which the children's book is used as an index which represents the collective unconscious in its dreamlike chronotopic capacity for teleological reflections of both the half-remembered past and its potentialities for shaping (re-)imagined futurities. The chronotope is a concept borrowed from the lexicon of Mikhail Bakhtin, and describes 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature' (1981: 84-85). Embedded in the symbolic children's book is a sense of Jungian teleology, in its significance to children looking forward, and to adults looking back *in order* to look forward to their continuing development in maturity. 'Childhood is important', for Jung:

> [...] not only because various warpings of instinct have their origin there, but because this is the time when, terrifying or encouraging, those far-seeing dreams and images appear before the soul of the child, shaping his whole destiny, as well as those retrospective intuitions which reach back far beyond the range of childhood experience into the life of our ancestors. (8: 98)

The 'dreams and images' to which Jung refers here can be read literally and figuratively, in reference to the stories by which children are enculturated to their presents and inducted to their potential futures, with the roots of these texts' dream images lying in the lives of earlier, adult authors. The association of the embedded children's books with days gone by while pointing to imagine futurities are heightened when located in the generic space of science fiction, and in the three texts I analyse here: Alan Moore's graphic novel *V for Vendetta* (1982 - 1989); Neal Stephenson's novel *The Diamond Age: Or, A Young Lady's Illustrated Primer* (1995); and Stephen Spielberg's film *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* (2011) . Not only do the children's books embedded in these texts function as intratextual relics of the personal histories and reading experiences of the characters who populate Moore's, Stephenson's and Spielberg's texts; their significance becomes totemic of the forgotten or half-forgotten histories of the futuristic societies imagined therein, and contribute to the ways by which their intradiegetic readers conceptualise new futurities.

In each of the texts I analyse here, we find adult characters reflecting on both their individual pasts and the collective pasts of their cultures via the children's book. This trope works in parallel to Jung's writing on how:

> [...] in later years, [when] we return to the memories of childhood we find bits of our personality still alive, which cling round us and suffuse us with the feeling of earlier times. Being still in their childhood state, these fragments are very powerful in their effect. They can lose their infantile aspect and be corrected only when they are reunited with adult consciousness. (12: 81)

In the latter two texts which form the basis of my analysis here, I argue that we might observe the inverse of this reflection, as children interacting with these same intradiegetic texts anticipate and are prepared for their navigation of personal futures and their contribution to social change and future cultures. Thus are dramatisated cross-generational tensions in interaction with the children's book, as adults seek to re-interpret remembered pasts symbolised by the children's book, and both adults and children extrapolate or challenge future trajectories for themselves and their cultures on the basis of these same texts.

The parallel between the text and the dream is heightened by both of their genesis in the unconscious, a site in which Jung argues against chronologies as we understand them in the waking state, thus complicating the binary between child and adult by conceptualising the child *in* the adult and the future adult *in* the child via their interaction with the children's book. In his work on children's dreams remembered in adulthood, which can be read in parallel to my project in this study in locating the children's book in the adult imagination, Jung writes that:

> Childhood dreams still remembered by adults are not just any dreams, but have been preserved by memory because they completely contain human life in either longer or shorter periods. When we have a cursory glance at such a dream, at first we do not understand why it has been remembered. If we are able to trace it back, however, we can in most cases find clues as to why it has gained such importance. If things have made a deep impression on us in childhood, we may assume that something highly important lies within what impressed us as such, or that a very important event happened in the neighbourhood of what we kept in our memory, something which is meaningful for the whole later course of life. (2010: 136)

The central embedded text in *V for Vendetta* is Enid Blyton's *The Magic Faraway Tree*, a deeply conservative text set at odds with the revolutionary and utopic themes of Moore's graphic novel. The central characters whose relationship I analyse with this text are older than its initially intended readership: thus Moore dramatises the remembered children's book's capacity for significant re-interpretation in adulthood. The fictional children's text embedded in *The Diamond Age* is the eponymous *Young Lady's Illustrated Primer* of the novel's full title. This embedded text is considered by Stephenson at the nexus between its child readers and its adult author, and performs a teleologically significant role in the psychic development of both its audience and its artist-creator. The dramatisation of the children's book in Stephenson's novel offers a materialist perspective on the production of children's texts as inheritors to the collective of myth, folktale and the fairytale, and provides a point for reflection on the relationship between Jung's concept of the collective unconscious and modern digital technology. Finally, the text I will explore at the heart of *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* is Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio*, which locates in this story our culturally constructed notions of what constitutes real human experience.

Although *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer* is a fictional text, it draws explicitly on real children's books with which Stephenson's real-world reader will be familiar, as well as functioning as a database for (Western) myth, folklore, and fairytales. Both *The Magic*

Faraway Tree and *Pinocchio* are canonical children's texts likely already to be well-known to Moore's readership of *V for Vendetta* and to the audience of Spielberg's *A.I.*: *Artificial Intelligence*. The location of these specific children's books or, in Stephenson's case, familiar aspects of generic children's literature borrowed from numerous influences, in the three texts I analyse here contributes to the collective sense that children's stories speak to both their child readers and their adult re-readers in the right ways at the right times in one's aetiological development. In extending the parallel Jung and the Jungian literary critic identifies between texts and dreams, we might find new significance in Jung's argument that the children's book as *visionary* text speaks on behalf of the collective unconscious when *interpreted* appropriately by a knowledgeable and critical reader, committed to their teleological journey of individuation.

Jung notes that one experiences 'dreams and waking dreams', and warns his reader to 'take the trouble to observe them', as 'one could almost say that every dream, in its own manner, carries a message'. As gifts from the collective unconscious, these texts 'posse[ss] the solution' to any number of crises:

> [...] the collective unconscious which sends you these dreams already possesses the solution: nothing has been lost from the whole immemorial experience of humanity, every imaginable situation and every solution seem to have been foreseen by the collective unconscious. You have only to observe carefully the message sent by the unconscious and then decode it. Analysis helps you to read these messages correctly. (1992: 231)

I will explore now the processes of readerly analysis by which the characters who populate Moore, Stephenson and Spielberg's texts interpret the children's books embedded in these narratives of futurity, arguing that they do so in order to learn lessons from their personal and collective cultural pasts to navigate the anticipated intradiegetic futurities of their respective storyworlds.

V for Vendetta: the Children's Book as Visionary Text

Alan Moore's decorated career as a graphic novelist is bookended by *V for Vendetta* (1982 - 1989) and *Providence* (2015 - 2017). In the latter, his final graphic novel (to date), Moore literalises 'Professor Jung's ideas' by having his characters descend into 'caves, cellars and

such' (*Providence* #2) in order to encounter the collective unconscious 'as a literal underworld' (*Providence* #7). In this graphic novel, as Jake Poller points out, 'the Jungian notion of the basement as a metaphor for the unconscious' is "reversed"', as 'the unconscious is in fact a metaphor for the occult real of the dreamworld, which is constantly breaking through' into the 'human reality' of *Providence*'s protagonist (2021). The protagonist of Moore's final graphic novel is overwhelmed by his engagement with a 'very different world that may precede or even underlie our own' which he conceptualises explicitly via Jung's writing on the collective unconscious, characterised intradiegetically as expressing 'the way that dreams or impulses of which we are not consciously aware may underlie our waking actions' (*Providence* #2).

Moore's interest in the unconscious influence of 'dreams or impulses' on 'waking actions' which finds explicit expression in *Providence* is seeded more subtly, however, in his first collected work as a graphic novelist: *V for Vendetta*. In this early work, Moore symbolises engagement with the collective unconscious not by literal descent into caves and cellars, but by the literary and temporal descent of adult re-engagement with the literature of childhood. *V for Vendetta* (written in the 1980s) imagines the future England of 1997 as a totalitarian state, in which a fascist government rules over a fractured United Kingdom following nuclear catastrophe and a devastating pandemic. The political regime in *V for Vendetta* is challenged by the eponymous V, a culturally sophisticated and urbane revolutionary who draws upon history and literature in shaping both his appearance (inspired by Guy Fawkes) and his anarchist philosophy (articulated via the unlikely source material of Enid Blyton's *The Magic Faraway Tree*).

Moore's interest in the unconscious influence of 'dreams or impulses' on 'waking actions' which finds culmination in *Providence* is first alluded to in the liminal space of a bedtime 'contact zone' (Tatar, 2009) illustrated in *V for Vendetta*. At the opening of the graphic novel, V rescues a young woman, Evey, from the corrupt and dangerous patrolling of London's streets under totalitarian rule. The remainder of the narrative traces Evey's tutelage under V and maturation into 'Eve', climaxing with her assumption of the 'V' identity following V's suicide which brings down England's fascist government. Evey's education and partnership with V begins with her traumatic rescue from the police, and continues with her participation in a dangerous sting operation. In a subsequent scene visually articulated with sleepy chiaroscuro in contrast to the hectic and vivid colouring of Evey's rescue(s) from

danger, V reads Eve a comforting and familiar bedtime story: Blyton's *The Magic Faraway Tree*. Despite Blyton's critical unpopularity and increasing contemporary disregard in light of her xenophobia and regressive views on class, gender and race, *The Magic Faraway Tree* remains one of Britain's best-known and best-loved children's books, having finished at number 66 in the last major poll of the country's favourite novels for readers of all ages (BBC: 2003). As such, it is at once surprising but understandable that V might choose so familiar a story in lulling a traumatised teenaged Evey to the unconsciousness of sleep following her harrowing waking experiences. On the other hand, one might well initially be puzzled that the revolutionary V would offer comfort through a children's novel by so infamously conservative an author.

The political environment in which V and Eve live is culturally repressive: tellingly, Blyton's books have escaped the censure of *V for Vendetta*'s government, which cruelly others ethnic and sexual minorities from its bigoted vision of Englishness. As early as 1958 in our own world, even conservative cultural commentators expressed alarm at Blyton's representation of her texts as 'completely English', and standing 'for the English way of life'. Colin Welch, an eventual deputy editor of the right-leaning *Daily Telegraph*, expressed anxiety in the wake of Blyton's reflections that her readership should be 'absorbing English standards and English morals' from her works, decrying that it should be in Blyton's 'querulous, irritable, and humourless[,] witless, spiritless, snivelling, sneaking' characters that 'the children of England are expected to find themselves reflected' (Welch: 1958). Sam Leith of the similarly right-leaning *Spectator* noted in 2021 that Blyton's name, 'whether it raises a damp eye of nostalgia or a sneer of deprecation - remains in our culture the byword for a particular image of England' via her 'tales of plucky, white, very middle-class children romping off for adventures in an idealised English countryside that tended to affirm the basic safeness and rightness of their world' (Leith, 2021).

Alan Moore's selection of Enid Blyton's *Magic Faraway Tree* as a central embedded text in *V for Vendetta* thus fulfils several functions: V's reading it to Eve illustrates V's care for her and their quasi-familial relationship; it contributes to the graphic novel's treatment of a warped, nightmarish, yet specific vision of insular Englishness; and, thirdly, it comments on the role of children's literary texts in the enculturation of children into the collective (un)conscious of their cultures. Raya A. Jones notes that '[e]ducators and Jungian analysts alike tend to put fairytales in one basket with myths and legends', while noting 'that those

types of narratives were sharply differentiated in their indigenous contexts' - contexts in which oral storytelling played and plays a more significant cultural role than in the modern (or Moore's imagined future) West. Whereas myths, or 'sacred tales' are noted by anthropologists to play 'a most important function[,] closely connected with the nature of tradition, with the continuity of culture, with the relation between age and youth, and with the human attitude to the past' in indigenous societies, they are distinguished therein from the 'mere fireside tale', told 'for amusement in social gatherings' (2008: 79). Blyton's *The Magic Faraway Tree* is one of Blyton's fairy stories, within an oeuvre additionally comprised of a range of mystery tales, school stories, and picturebooks. Moore's inclusion of a scene in which V reads this to Evey as she slips into the unconscious realm of sleep later gains political significance in the narrative when the story is recast to illustrate V's conscious vision of an anarchic utopia, subverting while affirming the fairytale or children's story's potential in the West to mimic the important functions of the folktale in indigenous cultures.

The children's book in the adult text of *V for Vendetta* thus functions as a chronotope in representing explicitly 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature' (Bakhtin, 1981: 84-85). Analysis of the children's book as chronotope is particularly suited to my analysis here of children's books embedded in texts concerned with futurity. As Clementine Beauvais writes, '[c]hildren are synonymous with the future, and this future that they represent is thus also, through them, the "property" of a number of (often conflicting) adult groups - parents, teachers, politicians'. As such, the children's book is a particularly politically charged site, as it is one which encodes the enculturating passing of the political, moral and ethical baton from one generation to the next. Children's literature, for Beauvais, provides:

> an area of heightened adult responsibility where those adults who do not feel the need to explain their political inclinations and ethical and religious beliefs are much more likely to be asked to do so than if they were writing for adults. The simple definitive transitiveness of children's literature - that it is *for* children - suffices to create an externally-enforced notion of responsibility and accountability for one's work' (2015: 182).

Although Beauvais argues convincingly that the 'categorisation of one's book as a children's book is enough to put one's book under specific political and ethical scrutiny', her attention to the 'power of children's-literature interpretive communities' in shaping the reception of a text is of particular significance to V's interpretive re-writing of Blyton's conservative text as the allegorical basis for illustrating his competing visions of anarchy. He does so in

opposition to the (un)conscious assumptions of conservatism which shaped the literature with which he grew up, if one operates under the assumption that *The Magic Faraway* tree is a favourite text from V's own childhood. Its *potential* for reinterpretation provides V with inspiration in shaping his revolutionary adulthood.

The excerpt of *The Magic Faraway Tree* we glimpse V reading to Eve recounts, initially, a conservative chronotopic adventure in itself, in which the child-protagonists return from the carnivalesque treetop to the mundane reality which awaits them at the bottom.

> 'Let's dig an enormous castle! cried Moon-face. 'Then we can all sit on the top of it when the sea comes in.'
>
> 'We couldn't,' said Silky [a fairy], suddenly looking sad. 'Why not? Why not?' cried Jo in surprise. 'Isn't this the *Land of Do-As-You-Please*?'
>
> 'Yes,' said Silky. 'But it's time we went back to the Faraway Tree. This land will soon be moving on - and nice as it is, we don't want to live here forever.
>
> 'Gracious no,' said Jo. 'Our mother and father couldn't possibly do without us…'. (91)

In this excerpt can be read an echo of *V for Vendetta*'s overarching warning against the infantilisation of a nation by a paternalistic, totalitarian government which parallels the children's return to the bottom of the tree and the world of their parents. The elegaic tone of this conclusion to Blyton's chapter in which the protagonists of *The Magic Faraway Tree* enjoy themselves in the 'Land-of-Do-As-You-Please' is particularly suited to V's narration. His tutelage of Eve is marked by a recognition that her transformative, carnivalesque experiences in training with V in his personal Land in which he Does-As-He-Pleases (the auspiciously named and Jungian-resonant 'Shadow Gallery' where V lives) will set her apart from the home community from which she has stolen away. Eve is destined, in continuitive turn, to protect and lead the country which remains at the roots of their Land of Do-As-You-Please in the Shadow Gallery, once V himself has died. Eve is not destined to return, like Blyton's protagonists, to the paternalistic rule from which she has escaped at the top of the metaphorical 'magic faraway tree' with V.

V repeats this same excerpt of *The Magic Faraway Tree* in a crucial stage of Eve's training later in the narrative (133). As Eve comes to rely more and more on V's tutelage, V abandons her to fend for herself by leading her outside in a blindfold. Upon following V's voice then removing her blindfold, Eve discovers that V's narration of Blyton is recorded,

and that he has disappeared from the street. Here Eve begins her psychic internalisation of V and his philosophy as she matures into his successor. The recording of his narration of Blyton concludes, dramatically: 'I'm not your father, Evey [...] Your father is dead' (133 - 4). V's new, personalised conclusion to the Blyton chapter enhances its first appearance in the text, which trails typographically off into ellipses while Eve sleeps. The awoken Eve now realises the significance of her own experience in warped parallel to the children of Blyton's *Magic Faraway Tree*. Unlike them, she is unwilling and unable to return to the society symbolised by Blyton's 'mother and father' who await the children at the bottom of the tree, just as she is unable to return to the security of V's patronage. Thus an encoded, unconscious and revolutionary potential reading of Blyton's children's story is brought to consciousness in the now-adult Eve. When we next glimpse V's copy of *The Magic Faraway Tree*, a matured and fully trained Eve is packing it away along with the rest of her childish things, as she tells V that 'I don't need them any more' (264). This scene opens the graphic novel's third act, which takes as its title 'The Land of Do-As-You-Please'. The reader of *V for Vendetta* is assumed, like Eve, to grasp the subversive significance of V's re-interpretation of Blyton's source text as an allegory for the utopic potential of an anarchic society as envisaged by the end of the graphic novel. The warning to adult self-sufficiency *The Magic Faraway Tree* provides is thus unearthed by its interpretive recontextualisation. V awakens its revolutionary potential from the (un)conscious, conservative assumptions under which it was written and (initially) consumed.

The political significance of V's interpretive work in reading aloud to Eve culminates when V alludes explicitly, once more, to Blyton's oeuvre in the graphic novel's final act, which takes as its title 'The Land of Do-As-You-Please'. After the completion of Eve's training and her maturation as a worthy successor to the 'V' persona, V heightens his sabotage of the totalitarian regime under which they, and England, are living. Upon hearing of the ensuing 'riot and uproar' on the radio in the Shadow Gallery, Eve asks of V: 'is *this* anarchy? Is *this* the Land of *Do-As-You-Please*?'. V's response incorporates a chapter title from another of Blyton's novels in the *Enchanted Wood* series, with which Eve (and the reader of *V for Vendetta*) is presumably familiar. 'No', he answers:

> *This* is only the Land of *Take-What-You-Want*. Anarchy means 'without leaders'; not 'without order'. With anarchy comes an age of *ordnung*, of *true* order, which is to say *voluntary* order' (278).

As Marina Warner writes, ‘metamorphosis defines the fairy tale’ (1995, xvi); thus, V interpretively re-imagines a parallel reading to Blyton’s archetypally conservative *Enchanted Wood* series, recasting her children’s novels in the protean mould of the fairy-tale genre from which they draw. Maria Nikolajeva has described children’s literature, profoundly, as a body of literature produced ‘by those in power for the powerless’ (2010, 8). As such, the revolutionary, empowering and largely authorially unconscious potential seeded in Blyton’s anodyne stories, when read more deeply than via their surface level, might be glimpsed by the reader of *V for Vendetta* as they are, indeed, by V. Nikolajeva cites the carnivalesque, to borrow another concept from Bakhtin pertinent to *V for Vendetta*, as an essential component to the revolutionary power of the children’s story, which feels particularly apt in application to one of Blyton’s rigidly boundaried texts:

> Children in our society are oppressed and powerless. Yet paradoxically enough, children are allowed, in fiction written by adults for the enlightenment and enjoyment of children, to become strong, brave, rich, powerful, and independent – on certain conditions and for a limited time. (2010, 10)

The carnivalesque potentialities so restrictively encoded by Blyton in *The Magic Faraway Tree* (via the limiting device of the temporally unstable tree) are offered by V to Eve, and the England she is destined to lead, without restriction. *The Magic Faraway Tree* thus provides a model for how future realities *might* be (re-)imagined, rather than merely glimpsed and accepted as an impossibility via children’s texts rigidly boundaried by conservative passivism or generic convention.

The sense that an unconscious, revolutionary potential lies beneath the surface of the conservatively enculturating children’s novel echoes Jung’s conceptualisation of the ‘visionary’ text, a narrative which gives voice to the psychic concerns of a time or place, or as in Moore and V’s usage, which *can* give voice to the psychic concerns of a specific time and place when re-contextualised therein. In his analysis of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Jung wrote that ‘[l]ike every true prophet, the artist is the unwitting mouth-piece of the psychic secrets of his time, and is often as unconscious as a sleep walker’ (15: 184). Andrew Maunder, in his recent biography of Blyton, wryly notes that Blyton was part of the same literary ‘class of [19]22’ as Joyce, having published her first book in the same year as both *Ulysses* and TS Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (2021). As to Blyton’s ‘unconsciousness’ as a writer, the conservative cultural commentator Colin Welch cited Blyton’s denial of allegations aroused by ‘the scale of her activities’ in his excoriating attack on Blyton in the 1950s, noting

suspicions ‘that she must be a corporate entity, or even some sort of electronic brain’ given the volume of her literary output. He cites, too, Blyton’s own simultaneously self-effacing and self-congratulatory comment in response to these allegations, noting her claim that ‘[o]nce I get started [...] I’ve just got to go on and on. Oh, I love it[.] Stories flow from my imagination like cotton from a reel.’

The imagery of an ‘electronic brain’ and Blyton’s own technological/industrial simile for her semi-unconscious writing process echoes anxieties as to the automisation of cultural production decried by Blyton’s colleague in the ‘class of ‘22’, T.S. Eliot, for whom the ‘automatic hand’ of industrialised Britain was indicative of the ‘Waste Land’ dramatised in his poem. Cognitive psychologist Samuel Wineburg might here offer some pertinent analysis of the imagery by which anxieties as to the future are articulated by the key culturo-literary artefacts through which we encounter the past. Through his research in cognitive psychology, Wineburg suggests that ‘texts are not “processed” as much as they are resurrected’. As such, ‘the image of reader and information processor or computer device, which often dominates current discussions of reading, seems less apt than another metaphor: the reader as necromancer’ (2001). V’s necromantic interpretive work in recasting Blyton’s children’s book as one which offers a key to understanding competing, adult visions of anarchic utopia aligns with Roland Barthes’ influential assertion that ‘we know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single “theological” meaning (the “message” of the Author-God) but a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash’ (1977: 146). Per Barthes’ conceptualisation, ‘a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination’. By this formulation, then, V reaches back past Blyton, the dead Author-God of *The Magic Faraway Tree*, and into the unconscious past from which Blyton drew in turn in her generation of this source text, which V resurrects and recasts for a future readership through new interpretation. V does so in opposition to the intradiegetic totalitarian government of *V for Vendetta* which relies on the surveillance and analytic/predictive powers of an AI supercomputer in its decision-making. Choosing a whimsical children’s book about an organic, enchanted wood as a source of political inspiration arms V and Eve with a form of empowered, interpretive magic, oppositional to and more flexible than the mechanical and unfeeling formulas favoured by the government he seeks to overthrow.

Despite the sprawling, magical earthiness of Blyton’s setting in *The Enchanted Wood*, Blyton herself spoke about her writing process in the industrialised, mechanical terms of

cotton flowing from a reel. Blyton's self-description as a storyteller who writes as though powerless to stop stories' self-expression, automatically inspired as if from sleep, chimes with Jung's distinction between the 'mode of artistic creation' which he calls '*psychological*', in opposition to the '*visionary*' (15: 139). 'The psychological mode', in participation of which Blyton demurs, works for Jung:

> with materials drawn from man's conscious life - with crucial experiences, powerful emotions, suffering, passion, the stuff of human fate in general.

'All this', per Jung's definition of the psychological creative process:

> is assimilated by the psyche of the poet, raised from the commonplace to the level of poetic experience[.] The raw material of this kind of creation is derived from the contents of man's consciousness, from his eternally repeated joys and sorrows, but clarified and transfigured by the poet.

Conversely, in articulating the 'visionary' mode of artistic creation (in whose lineage Blyton aligns herself), 'here everything', for Jung:

> [...] is reversed. The experience that furnishes the material for artistic expression is no longer familiar. It is something strange that derives its existence from the hinterland of man's mind, as if it had emerged from the abyss of prehuman ages, or from a superhuman world of contrasting light and darkness. (15: 141)

Jung's characterisation of this mode of creation allows for the visionary text to arise 'from the timeless depths', and for its existence to be characterised as one 'pregnant with meaning' (141). The visionary potential of Blyton's *Magic Faraway Tree* is identified by V, who from this unlikely source encountered in the 'contact zone' of 'contrasting light and darkness' which characterises bedtime reading draws forth a powerful political allegory repressed by Blyton in her rigidly structured, but ultimately (ostensibly) unconsciously created stimulus.

Sheila Ray notes that in *The Magic Faraway Tree*, Blyton, not usually marked for the originality or creativity of her writing, struck on a resonant, ancient image evocative of the Norse 'tree of life', Yggdrasil (1982: 141). Blyton's recasting of this significant mythic tree in the more anodyne 'enchanted wood' of her typically one-dimensional fiction is perhaps at the root of this novel's particularly long-lasting success in the psyche of the British reading public. In the first chapter of this project, I analysed the underground and undersea imagery which intertwine both Jung's theory of the complex, and contemporary fiction's contextualisation of the children's book as constellated in child readers. The embedded texts

in this chapter on futurity, however, point towards children's books' potential as routes by which children, and adults, might achieve greater consciousness. Readerly, interpretive reflection on the artistic wellsprings of 'visionary' texts which draw on the stimulus of the (culturally specific) collective unconscious from which they come, or in which they are recontextualised, can do much for readers who become disenchanted in adulthood with the culturally biased literature they remember so fondly from childhood. As such, the imagery drawn upon by Moore in having V read to Eve from *The Magic Faraway Tree* implicitly shifts from that of the chthonic and subterranean, to that of climbing to the vistas of the treetops (from which it can be observed when 'the sea comes in').

Moore has V recognise the revolutionary potential embedded within an unassuming, culturally conservative but enormously influential classic of British children's literature, and 'wake up' its latent transformative potential. It becomes a call to arms for consciousness and independence from the restrictive adult authority symbolised by the 'mother and father' initially resisted (but ultimately affirmed) by Blyton's intradiegetic protagonists upon their return from the treetop. Eve and V don't stay in their personal Land-Of-Do-As-You-Please in the Shadow Gallery indefinitely, but instead seek to remove the chronotopic boundaries to utopia implied by the mechanics of Blyton's magic Faraway Tree. From *their* experiences of liberty, protected in the Shadow Gallery from the prying eyes of *V for Vendetta*'s fascist government, Eve and V bring back down to the ground with them the licence for England's subjugated population to awake from their unconscious acceptance of totalitarianism, and to do as they please once more.

In writing of the collective unconscious, Jung theorised that:

> [...] the mind has grown to its present state of consciousness as an acorn grows into an oak or as saurians developed into mammals. As it has been, so it is still, and thus we are moved by forces from within as well as from without. (18: 553)

Jung expands on this arboreal imagery in a form of psychological/literary seminar given on a collective reading of Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. In one recorded seminar, Jung entered the discussion of the participants on the imagery of the tree to state that:

> It is the tree that nourishes all the stars and the planets; and it is the tree out of which comes the first parents, the primordial parents of

> humanity, and in which the last couple, also representing the whole of humanity, are buried.
>
> That of course means that consciousness comes from the tree and dissolves into the tree again - the consciousness of human life.
>
> And that surely points to the collective unconscious and to a collectivum. (2014: 1433)

Jung's conceptualisation of the tree as symbol for both the past and futurity, and indeed for consciousness itself, works in parallel to the archetypal image he sketches of the child. His insistence that the tree 'is always the symbol of the end as well as the beginning' via the acorn/oak tree analogy can similarly be applied to his description of the role of the child image in psyche. In the *Red Book*, Jung precedes an illustration [image 138] of his vision of the tree of life by writing of the darkness from which the tree grows:

> How much future the depths carry! Are not the threads spun down there over millennia? Protect the riddles, bear them in your heart, be pregnant with them. Thus you carry the future. (130)

As Shonu Samdasani points out in his commentary, '[i]n Norse mythology, the norns spun the threads of fate at the foot of Yggsdrasil, the world tree', another iteration of which Jung drew cradling and supporting an image of the mandala [image 131], a symbol for the individuated, conscious human Self, in its uppermost branches. The imagery by which Blyton described her writing process in the creation of *The Magic Faraway Tree*, spinning threads from the unconscious into nurturing, enculturating stories for what Nikolajeva would describe as the 'enlightenment and enjoyment' of children, takes on new significance in the light of this Jungian worldview. Its significance is one implicit in *V for Vendetta*, which sees V use Blyton's stimulus as a means of re-awakening the unconscious potential of a nation raised on Blyton to new political consciousness. The leader of the fascist England which V seeks to overthrow conceptualises V's opposition in decidedly less empowered arboreal terms: '[o]ne twig could be broken', he assures himself, but '[a] bundle would prevail. Fascism… strength in unity. I believe in strength. I believe in unity' (37-38). Whereas this (ultimately doomed) leader thinks of his citizens through the fractured synecdoche of twigs, V's project in uniting his fractured nation is achieved by drawing upon the rich, resonant arboreal imagery from a beloved children's story.

In writing of the role of trees (or 'tree-as-friend') in children's literature, Zoe Jaques points out a similar 'sentimentalism' to Jung's, Blyton's, and V's, which 'permits a tree

sentience while simultaneously encoding it as servile' to humanity and its consciousness (2014: 112). Jaques notes that in children's literature:

> [...] trees have long held a kind of nascent posthuman potential. They point to the ways that the environment is of superior importance to the individual life of man, while also, as a source of heat and shelter, sustaining that very life. (115)

Writing of children's literature from a Jungian and ecocritical perspective, Susan Rowland draws on novels in which 'the garden, as a sacred space of the unconscious' (2012: 167) is central: Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, and CS. Lewis' *Narnia* series. Rowland's interest in the theory of complexity evolution parallels Jaques' in the posthuman. Rowland and Jaques locate in the symbolic significance of trees in literature their ability to represent both the individual and the collective experience, and identify their significance to survival in both the past and the future. As Rowland notes, 'drawing the embodied psyche into writing spawns a living creativity in the reading psyche' (175). Despite Blyton's personal conservatism, the richness of her fantastical *Magic Faraway Tree* in continuing the lineage of visionary literature from which the image of the tree has borne fruit nevertheless inspires V in re-interpretation of its revolutionary potential. Rowland's analysis of 'the radical and conservative elements' (164) of Hodgson Burnett and Lewis' texts feels strikingly pertinent to Moore's own re-visionary re-appraisal of Blyton in *V for Vendetta*.

Whereas for Rowland *The Secret Garden* 're-balances myths of consciousness in the narrative and yet finally "disguises" its ecocritical revolution via social Conservatism', the revolutionary potential of *The Magic Faraway Tree* lies in its unconsciously encoded visions of (potential) socio-political (re-)structure. Rowland points out that 'if complexity evolution includes literature, because it extends a tentacle into culture, then "children's literature" is not a closed system or absolute category. Children's literature has to be an "open system" nested in other cultural systems' (148). Texts like *V for Vendetta* provide us with a site in which the interconnection of contemporary, Western children's literature with the revolutionary potential of myth, dreams, and engagement with the collective unconscious is dramatised. Alongside the tree, and the child, the children's book functions in the contemporary collective psyche as a powerful image. Unlike the tree, and the child, however, the children's book remains an agent in its individual, actual form - even in so unlikely a text as *The Magic Faraway Tree* - in uniting symbols into a new form of mythic expression, providing continuity, inspiration, and the potential for revolutionary re-vision in futurity.

The Algorithmic Unconscious: The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer in *The Diamond Age*

The Diamond Age: Or, a Young Lady's Illustrated Primer (1995) exemplifies precisely a work of (science) fiction which exists within the open system, posited by Susan Rowland, which sees the blending and blurring of boundaries between children's fiction and the broader body of literature to which it belongs with the cultures in which it is produced and consumed. While its author Neal Stephenson made newspaper headlines in 2022 when Mark Zuckerberg announced the rebranding of Facebook to 'Meta Platforms' and his company's foray into the 'metaverse' - a term coined by Stephenson in 1992's *Snow Crash* - a lesser known but equally influential link between Stephenson's fiction and contemporary real-world technology started with *The Diamond Age*.

Amazon's Kindle, the dominant product in the e-reader market – to the extent of 72% market-share in 2022 (Errera, 2022) – was based upon and inspired by Stephenson's intradiegetic children's book, the eponymous *Young Lady's Illustrated Primer* of *The Diamond Age*'s full title. Journalist, author and Amazon historian Brad Stone notes that the 'early engineers' of Amazon's Kindle 'thought of the fictitious textbook in the novel as a template for what they were creating' (2013: 218), rendering both *The Diamond Age* and its intradiegetic primer visionary texts per Jung's formulation in strikingly quantifiable ways. Amazon's Kindle was originally given the codename 'Project Fiona' in homage to a recipient of one of the first three fictional primers central to the narrative of *The Diamond Age*: indeed, Stone argues that '[i]n a sense, the knowledge-starved Fiona of Stephenson's fictional world became Amazon's patron saint in its risky journey into the digital frontier' (219).

Fiona Hackworth, daughter of the primers' intradiegetic author/engineer Charles Hackworth, is honoured today by an office building at Amazon's headquarters which bears her name, and 'fiona' remains embedded as an Easter egg in the URL for the 'Manage Your Kindle' section of Amazon's website (Sloan, 2014). This interplay, between a fictional children's book inspired by Jung's concept of the collective unconscious and how we now consume literary material, matters to children's literature studies (and, indeed, to Jungian interest in the concept of the collective unconscious and emerging algorithmic technology), especially in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic of the early 2020s which saw children confined to home with digital literary and cultural resources achieving primacy above the traditional spaces of the classroom, library, and bookshop. As literacy researchers Margaret Merga and Saiyidi Mat Roni pointed out, years before this acceleration of the trend they

identified via government mandated social isolation and shelter-in-place directives throughout the pandemic, '[y]oung people [were already] gaining increasing access to devices through school-promoted programs; parents face aggressive marketing to stay abreast of educational technologies at home; and schools and libraries are increasing their eBook collections, often at the expense of paper book collections' (2017).

Despite the hyper techno-futurist setting of *The Diamond Age*, in which nanotechnology has essentially brought all of nature to the position of servility described by Jaques in her work on the symbolic role of trees in children's literature, Stephenson's intradiegetic primer is deliberately archaic in its conceptualisation, if not in its construction. Described by one of its narrators as 'rather dark and weird by the standards of contemporary children's literature' as 'not many people were into that whole Grimm Brothers scene anymore' (134), the frontispiece of the primer as we first encounter it echoes, too, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Secret Garden* and the luscious arboreal imagery analysed by Rowland:

> On the first page of the book was a picture of a little girl sitting on a bench. Above the bench was a thing like a ladder, except it was horizontal, supported at each end by posts. Thick vines twisted upon the posts and gripped the ladder, where they burst into huge flowers.
>
> [...] The girl had a book open on her lap. The facing page had a little picture in the upper left, consisting of more vines and flowers wrapped around a giant egg-shaped letter. But the rest of that page was nothing but tiny black letters without decoration. (93)

The world imagined in *The Diamond Age* is one in which human reliance on nature for resources has been superseded by technological innovation: the nation state and global diplomacy has been dismantled and replaced with cultural tribes or 'phyles' governed by a Common Economic Protocol. Nanotechnological innovation has made the compilation of matter - the transformation of atoms into food, clothing, shelter, and energy - cheap and efficient via a globalised 'Feed' from which any material can be constructed, making entertainment the primary nexus for commercial competition and innovation. 'There are only two industries', reflects an employer of Nell, *The Diamond Age*'s central protagonist and another recipient alongside Fiona of one of Hackworth's three original primers:

> There is the industry of things, and the industry of entertainment. The industry of things comes first. It keeps us alive. But making things is easy now that we have the Feed. This is not a very interesting business anymore.

> After people have the things they need to live, everything else is entertainment. Everything. (372)

The human touch becomes prized in this hyper-technological world, and 'phyles' organise themselves by cultural and spiritual affiliation to give meaning to their lives in response to such material plenty. While the future imagined in *The Diamond Age* holds the potential to true posthuman, post-national and post-social egalitarianism in that every individual has free access to the materials necessary for survival, Stephenson describes familiar inequality engineered by its inhabitants to disrupt *The Diamond Age*'s utopian possibilities, which are in turn embedded into the educative and enculturating aspect of its entertainment economy.

At the apex of *The Diamond Age*'s global society sits the 'Atlantan' phyle, a neo-Victorian tribe who position themselves atop this new social strata by regulating access to the 'Feed' by which matter might be compiled. They protect themselves from the masses of 'thetes', the general population unaligned with a specific cultural, ethnic or religious phyle, in enclaves organised according to Victorian socio-cultural structures. The New Atlantans are reigned over by a Queen Victoria II, whose government is administered by powerful techno-industrialists. One of these leaders, the 'Equity Lord' Alexander Chung-Sik Finkle-McGraw, tasks an engineer with the construction of a book for his granddaughter Elizabeth - the third recipient of one the three original primers alongside Fiona and Nell.

Finkle-McGraw chooses his subordinate employee Charles Hackworth for this task, on the basis of his having 'studied English literature in college' (22). As Lord Finkle-McGraw reflects, Hackworth is 'not one of those who followed the straight and narrow path to engineering'. Indeed, it is the combination of Hackworth's literary interest and technological prowess which earmarks him for the development of Finkle-McGraw's personal pet project, in an echo of Jung's own interest in myth, folklore and literature which evolved from his training in the discipline of psychology. Finkle-McGraw is 'determined that [his granddaughter] Elizabeth shall be raised differently' from her peers. 'In order to raise a generation of children who can reach their full potential', Finkle-McGraw reflects, 'we must find a way to make their lives interesting' (23). Although Hackworth 'must remind' Finkle-McGraw that he is 'an engineer, not a child psychologist', his literary and technological credentials place him 'in charge' of the project of *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer*, for which Finkle-McGraw has 'reason to believe' he is 'perfectly suited' in making the lives of its readers interesting (23).

Despite Hackworth's protestations as to his non-existent training as a psychologist, he exhibits what Robert Guyker describes as 'Jungianesque ambitions and behavior' (2018) throughout the novel. One of Stephenson's many plots interwoven throughout *The Diamond Age* sees Hackworth assume the moniker of 'The Alchemist', as the technology he creates in coding *the Young Ladies' Illustrated Primer* unlocks a means of unconscious psychic communication between a group of artists and bohemians who live, often literally, underground, beneath New Atlantan enclaves. The imagery of the underground and the undersea is used throughout Stephenson's novel in association with this phyle, the Drummers, with whom Hackworth spends a decade refining the technology which finds its first iteration in *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer* he originally designs for Lord Finkle-McGraw's granddaughter. Thus the imagery of the visionary poet as 'unconscious as a sleepwalker' and Colin Welch's anxieties as to the 'electronic brain' he attributed to Enid Blyton are realised quite literally in Stephenson' *Diamond Age*. Prior to his descent to the Drummers' underground and underwater system of tunnels and caverns and his transformation into The Alchemist, Hackworth makes two copies of his own 'electronic brain' in the form of Elizabeth's original primer: one he gifts to his daughter Fiona, and one falls into the hands of a young thete girl, Nell, born into in an abusive and chaotic environment just beyond the confines of Hackworth's Atlantan enclave. These three girls form the first 'generation of children who can reach their full potential' through training with the primer. Of these three, Nell emerges at the novel's climax as the primer's most successful pupil, and becomes the leader of a new tribe comprised of the primer's second generation of students.

Hackworth designs the original primer in opposition to the low-quality immersive 'ractives' which have become ubiquitous in the world of *The Diamond Age*, interactive films modelled on the lowest common denominators of popular culture: action films, murder mysteries, and pornography. While most of these rely on computer-simulated actor-avatars and play along the lines of basic scripts with limited branching options according to individual users' tastes, the wealthiest customers can pay to hire real actors and actresses to participate with them in more immersive and sophisticated storyworlds. Allusion is made to 'high-priced educational ractives' (122) made available to the children of affluent parents who can afford professionals to work as narrators of these educational as well as entertaining texts. Miranda is one such actress who develops a quasi-maternal relationship with Nell as the narrator of her primer, bringing life to her personal text as engineered by Hackworth. Nell's story, excerpts of which are interwoven throughout *The Diamond Age*, tells of the

adventures of ‘Princess Nell’: a monomythical hero’s journey which initially reflects, and then comes to influence Nell’s real-world experiences. On the primer, Miranda reflects on having ‘spent a lot of time with kiddie ractives, both as a child and as a governess, and the superiority of this thing was palpable - like hefting an antique silver fork when you’d been eating with plastic utensils for twenty years’ (135). There is, as Miranda thinks to herself, ‘an ineffable quality to some technology, described by its creators as concinnitous, or technically sweet, or a nice hack - signs that it was made with great care by one who was not merely motivated but inspired. It is the difference between an engineer and a hacker’ (144).

Hackworth’s primers transcend the realm of entertainment in meeting Finkle-McGraw’s brief: to give the primers’ readers ‘a gift that would supply the ingredient missing’ in normative education: ‘subversiveness’ (81-2). Hackworth reflects that ‘Finkle-McGraw, the embodiment of the Victorian establishment, was a subversive. He was unhappy because his children were not subversives and he was horrified at the thought of Elizabeth being raised in the stodgy tradition of her parents. So now he was trying to subvert his own granddaughter’. Hackworth conceptualises this realisation as a ‘seed’, ‘germinating in his mind’ which ‘bloomed’ into the primer, hinting toward Hackworth’s unusual connection with what he terms explicitly the ‘collective unconscious’ of folklore, mythology and children’s literature from which he constructs the primer as an educative as well as entertaining tool for its child readers. As Clementine Beauvais writes, ‘[t]he pleasurable pedagogical text, arguably, allows the reader to defer some of the delight of experience, wisdom, and knowledge to the utmost end of the text, and to be gratified immediately in multiple little ways in the process’. For Beauvais, as for the intradiegetic architects of *The Diamond Age*’s primers:

> The children’s text, as a pedagogical enterprise, may thus be only successful when it manages to contain both the pleasure of the process as subversively counter-educational and the pleasure of the closure as satisfactorily educational. The child’s project emerging out of this tension is kindled, not stifled, by pedagogy. (2015: 196)

The language of the cthonic and subterranean, of roots and seeds and the germination of concepts and ideas which might yet come to bloom, collocates with the unconscious. It finds its complement in the taming and transformation of this imagery into that of the materials which might be produced by harnessing nature’s potential for human use, in parallel to the process of individuation: ‘hacking’ into the unconscious to achieve greater consciousness.

Trees can be climbed for landscapes to be surveyed and conquered; they can become kindling for fire; and can tame the seas through the construction of ships.

In one of Nell's first experiences with the primer, Miranda narrates for her 'the story of Princess Nell in a nutshell' (109). In this overview, the infant Nell glimpses where the primer's story will ultimately end: with her intra-primer avatar, 'Princess Nell', becoming a great Queen after a long and arduous quest to attain keys by which she might unlock the Dark Castle in which her brother is locked. Nell finishes the primer in early adulthood, having trained with the primer in the prized neo-Victorian skills of self-reliance, industry, and technological innovation. After narration of the 'nutshell' of the story which will guide Nell throughout childhood and adolescence, evocative of the acorn/oak tree chronotope which hints towards Nell's later achievements, Nell participates in her first lessons from the primer via its 'ractive' training, akin to the immersive mechanics of contemporary video gaming. 'Princess Nell', Nell's intra-primer avatar, is explained to have 'bobbed like a cork on the ocean' after the shipwreck which killed her royal parents, 'until the mermaids came and found' her (124). On the island on which she washes up, Princess Nell comes to consciousness: she, and Nell herself, are taught to read via Miranda's narration and a friendly raven who flies down to visit her.

When Princess Nell is instructed to make a fire, Nell asks the primer: '"What's kindling?"'. This interactive questioning pauses Princess Nell's story, immerses Nell herself in the primer's storyworld, and hints towards the potentially empowering technology which might be inspired in our world from this scene of 'kindling'.

> A gust of wind came up and blew a few dry leaves in her direction. She learned that the fire could spread from dry grass to leaves. The stem of a leaf was basically a small dry twig, so that gave her the idea to explore a little grove of trees and look for some twigs. The grove was densely overgrown, but she found what she was looking for beneath an old dead bush.
>
> "Good!" [her borther] said, when he came back and found her approaching with an armload of small dry sticks. "You found some kindling. You're a smart girl and a good worker." (137-8)

Nell is consistently praised by the primer, via Miranda's narration and its intradiegetic characters who mirror her real-world acquaintances, when the kindling of its instruction catches fire in Nell's extradiegetic development:

> "Very good! Nell, you are a clever girl, and you have much talent with words. Can you spell *raven*?"

> Nell hesitated. She was still blushing from the praise.'. (96)

The relationship Nell develops with the primer is thanks in large part to the dedication of Miranda, who 'by sacrificing her career and much of her life' in order to read to Nell, 'became Nell's mother'. Fiona develops a similarly intense relationship with her primer, as her father shapes and narrates the stories Fiona experiences during his time underground with the Drummers. In 'the case of Elizabeth', as Finkle-McGraw reflects, 'the racting was done by hundreds of different performers'. Elizabeth does not become as 'interesting' as Fiona, or Nell: from this Finkle-McGraw regrets that '[i]t was not a part of the original plan that the ractor would be important' (367). The contact zone the primer generates between its child reader and the interactive story database it contains is one which must be managed, then, by an adult co-reader.

We are told how Nell's book, via Miranda, 'spoke in a lovely contralto[.] It rose and fell like slow surf on a warm beach, and when Nell closed her eyes, it swept her out into an ocean of feelings' (95). Nell is never abandoned there, however, in that 'ocean of feelings', as the purpose of the primer is to act as an intermediary between the unconscious world of pure entertainment, and the consciousness of education. The primer uses the analogy of Nell playing with her toys to explain this to her before beginning the story of Princess Nell:

> The girl who looked like Nell had a book on her lap. "For some time Nell had been putting them to bed without reading to them", the book continued, "but now the children were not so tiny anymore, and Nell decided that in order to bring them up properly, they must have bedtime stories.". (95)

Perry Nodelman argues that 'there would be no such thing as children's literature [...] if adults did not believe that children are different enough from adults to need a special group of books and imagine a category to contain them' (2008: 139). The purpose of the primer, in contrast to this characterisation of children's literature as a limiting construct in service of aetonormativity, is to train a young reader throughout childhood in order to mature into an 'interesting' adult: an adult who would, in turn, change the world to the benefit of a new generation of children. While the primer is designed to participate in the tropes of the category of children's literature to absorb and entertain its child readers while it teaches, its ultimate goal is to inspire in its reader a way of thinking without categories, boundaries, and containment. The primer thus works as a two-way conduit for transcendent thinking. While it inspires its child readers, it also provides its adult co-readers - and in particular its author/engineer Charles Hackworth - with a means of accessing the language of symbols,

magical thinking and imagination. Access to these allows Hackworth to develop the 'subversive technology' (409) which the primer unlocks in the subterranean caverns of the Drummers.

Although Hackworth claims to be 'just a nanotechnological engineer', his daughter Fiona offers evidence to the contrary via her own experiences with the primer, narrated for her by Hackworth as Nell's is by Miranda.

> 'That's not true, Father! You're ever so much more than that. You know so many stories - you told me so many, when you were gone, remember?'
>
> 'I suppose so,' he allowed, strangely diffident.
>
> 'And I read [the primer] every night. And though the stories were about faeries and pirates and djinns and such, I could always sense that you were behind them. Like the puppeteer pulling the strings and imbuing them with voices and personalities. So I think you're more than an engineer. It's just that you need a magic book to bring it out.'. (409)

In the figure of Hackworth, then, is a dramatised version of Nodelman's concept of the 'hidden adult' of children's literature. Hackworth's research in the subaltern space of the Drummers, in which he exists in a hallucinatory, often largely unconscious state, is dramatised and worked through via the stories he tells Fiona in her copy of the primer. Hackworth comes to the conscious realisation that he himself is the mysterious Alchemist, 'a nanotechnological researcher of some sophistication[,] thought to be developing a product that is of interest to more than one of the Powers' (409) through conversation with Fiona, who identifies the 'subversive technology' being developed by the Alchemist as 'the Seed'. When Hackworth asks her how she knows about the Seed, she informs him:

> 'You told me about it, Father. You told me it was a dangerous thing, and that Protocol Enforcement mustn't allow it to be created. And besides…'
>
> 'Besides what?'
>
> She was on the verge of reminding him that her dreams had been filled with seeds for the last several years, and that every story she had seen in her Primer had been replete with them: seeds that grew up into castles; dragon's teeth that grew up into soldiers; seeds that sprouted into giant beanstalks leading to alternate universes in the clouds; and seeds, given to hospitable, barren couples by itinerant crones, that grew up into plants with bulging pods that contained happy, kicking babies. (409)

Unlike Nodelman's 'hidden adult' who seeks to 'contain' their child reader through a narrative designed ultimately to re-inforce the aetonormative structure of adult/child subservience, Hackworth produces in the primer a site in which the child reader and adult interpreter of the 'magic book' can both learn from its symbolic narratives. Rather than operating, per Nodelman, 'in ways that work to deprive children of their individual voices in the name of an acceptable childlikeness' (2016: 267), Hackworth's primer uses the symbols and images of children's literature as a shared language meaningful both to children and to former children in the child/adult contact zone of shared reading.

The centrality of the contact zone between child reader and adult co-reader represented by Hackworth/Fiona and Miranda/Nell's relationship to the primer goes some way toward subverting the homogenization or universalization wrought by archetypal literary criticism in reducing Jung's theory of the collective unconscious to the tired template of the (Western) hero's journey monomyth. Hackworth does conceptualise the primer, explicitly, as 'a catalogue of the collective unconscious' (107), explaining its development to Finkle-McGraw through the image of the archetypal characters and scenarios awaiting activation in the 'enormous switching system and database' of its 'computational machinery' (65). He challenges its characterisation by Finkle-McGraw as a 'database of folklore' (106), however, by explaining his reasoning in this precise distinction with unusual sensitivity to the charges against the essentialist reductionism which characterises much of post-Jungian archetypal criticism. Hackworth notes that 'Folklore consists of certain universal ideas that have been mapped onto local cultures':

> In the old days, writers of children's books had to map these universals onto concrete symbols familiar to their audience - like Beatrix Potter mapping the Trickster onto Peter Rabbit. This is a reasonably effective way to do it, especially if the society is homogeneous and static, so that all children share similar experiences.
>
> What my team and I have done here is to abstract that process and develop systems for mapping the universals onto the unique psychological terrain of one child - even as that terrain changes over time. Hence it is important that you not allow this book to fall into the hands of any other little girl until Elizabeth has had the time to open it up.'. (107)

Hackworth stresses repeatedly the importance of the primer's bonding with an individual reader:

> At the moment, it's looking for a small female. As soon as a little girl picks it up and opens the front cover for the first time, it will imprint that child's face and voice into its memory -

> [...] And thenceforth it will see all events and persons in relation to that girl, using her as a datum from which to chart a psychological terrain, as it were. Maintenance of that terrain in one of the book's primary processes. Whenever the child uses the book, then, it will perform a sort of dynamic mapping from the database onto her particular terrain.'. (106)

Raya A. Jones uses the example of a contact zone between a Navajo storyteller and a European settler family in the Americas in order to explore the importance of the concept of cultural context to the construction and analysis of literary texts. This sense of contextualisation is crucial to any attempt to 'read' the concept of an acultural, universal collective unconscious through an archetypal lens. Jones uses this example as a 'cautionary tale about importing other cultures' fairytales, myths and legends into the curriculum', noting 'our culture's tendency to see things in terms of its own categories' as a form of what might be termed 'cultural myopia'. Jones notes that 'Cultural attitudes are communicated not only in the contents of stories, but also in how stories are contextualized' (2008: 78-79). Jones builds her argument, appositely, on a case study in which Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit* captured the imagination of a researcher's son. 'When particular stories happen to captivate us', Jones hypothesises, 'it could be that their archetypal imagery resonates with our inner state at the given time'. In positing that 'the self' might be 'defined as contingent on having a *story* about oneself' (emphasis mine), Jones' suggestion that 'the conception of the self as narrative or narrative-like overlaps' overlaps convincingly with Jung's conceptualisation of 'the Self (capital S)' as 'a broader theoretical concept, referring to the totality of the psyche - conscious and unconscious, innate and acquired elements together' (84).

Jones provides, too, a gloss on Jung's concept of 'projection' which might prove useful in considering how re-reading *The Diamond Age* might help us to problematise the real-world implications of the changes to reading its real-world technological offspring, the Kindle, has effected. In considering 'story attachments', Jones points out that:

> [...] in Jungian theory [*projection*] is a necessary and positive mechanism towards individuation. An unconscious element of one's personality is brought to consciousness only when seen in other people and is recognized as a projection, as opposed to regarding it as a trait of the other person[.] It could be hypothesized that story attachments both in children and adults reflect a similar process of projection; and that this process is aided by one's recognition that the protagonists and their adventures are make-believe. (84)

Central to the primer's function in *The Diamond Age*, then, is a recognition as to the importance of the adult role in mediating children's engagement with the enculturating text. Hackworth acts as a hidden adult who mediates the collective unconscious, drawing forth from it the most pertinent and culturally intelligible opportunities for learning tailored to images and scenarios individually significant to each reader. Nell, Fiona and Elizabeth's relationship to the primer is contextualised specifically for them, both in respect to their cultural experiences and through the contact zone they share respectively, to different degrees, with experienced adult co-readers. The process of individuation from the collective to the personal, then, requires the individualisation of cultural experiences specific to the context of each subject. The triangular relationship between Hackworth and the primers' readers, mediated by the primer itself, finds a parallel in Jung's articulation of the *puer aeternus* archetype. The *puer aeternus* as conceptualised by Jung here can be read in the nexus of the primer, or the children's book more generally as symbol in the cultural imagination:

> That higher and 'complete' (*teleios*) man is begotten by the 'unknown' father and born from Wisdom, and it is he who, in the figure of the *puer aeternus* [...] represents our totality, which transcends consciousness. (11: 742)

Drawing on literary examples from Goethe's *Faust* to Christ's 'Except ye little children', Jung argues that 'what is meant' by the *puer aeternus* 'is the boy who is born from the maturity of the adult man, and not the unconscious child we would like to remain'. The primer's function as a contact zone in which adults can re-connect with unconscious material through the co-reading experience with children who connect, instead, with images which give form to that which is becoming conscious in them articulates its chronotopic potential as a site for both looking backwards and looking forwards.

One of the losses of Jungian theory's popular characterisation via the lens of post-Jungian archetypal literary criticism has been the process of homogenisation which boils the 'database of the collective unconscious' recorded by European folktales and fairytale, as well as global indigenous myth and legend, into the restrictive, often gendered and racialised monomyth or (white, male) 'hero's journey' template. What marks Nell's use of the primer is its personalisation to Nell's experiences and circumstances as she escapes from a life of poverty and abuse as a non-tribally affiliated 'thete' to the privilege of a privately-educated neo-Victorian, atop the social strata of *The Diamond Age*'s imagined world. From her expensive, personalised training via the specific, neo-Victorian and anglophone focussed

‘database of the collective unconscious’ recorded in her primer, Nell attains Queenship as the leader of a new phyle.

Nell’s followers are some quarter of million Chinese girls, abandoned by their families in favour of male siblings in an echo of real-world geo-politics which sees the prioritisation of male children within family structures due to their economic potential as breadwinners in a (politically) gendered system of labour. Nell’s new tribe are raised by versions of the primer made in the image of Nell’s, from which they are reverse-engineered, valorising Nell’s personal experiences above those from a vastly different cultural and socio-economic background who don’t have access to the expensive technology and resources which makes Nell’s experience with the primer so unique and empowering. Nell’s personal experiences prompt the primer to incorporate educative twists in ‘Princess Nell’s’ story from which she might learn and translate into real-(intradiegetic)-world action: this specificity in accessing the database for *relevant* parallels from which Nell might learn is missing from the homogenised experience of the primer shared by her fledgling tribe, who thus miss out on the primer’s specifically personalised teleological function in opposition to a universalised monomyth template. Here can be read a parallel to the bias encoded in our own, extradiegetic real-world technology which uses data analytics and algorithms to ‘to provide customers with products and services, pay content providers and improve the reading and shopping experience’ - per a spokeswoman for Amazon consulted in an investigative piece which sought to bring clarity to Amazon’s data-mining processes in the generation of personal and collective Kindle analytics for each user and its userbase as a whole (Paul: 2020).

Unlike the *Young Ladies’ Illustrated Primer* as it was originally envisaged by Finkle-McGraw and Hackworth, the Kindle, like the primer’s second-generation iteration which inculcates Nell’s new tribe of readers, cuts out the role of mediating adult - parent, teacher, or librarian - in the contact zone of literary experience in childhood. As digital literacy researcher Tully Barnett points out:

> The impact of the construction of a reading community as a social network within the digital space provided and owned by the bookseller - a bookseller that, as we have seen, is having a profound influence on every aspect of the book industry from production to reception - is a marker of the technological and market-driven construction of the spaces for the reception of texts in digital reading. (2014)

Barnett notes that the Kindle's public notes and highlighting functions, as examples of the new 'kinds of reading engagement' occurring through digital interfaces 'can have very little to do with reading or with the text in many cases, and may have only a cursory connection in many more'. Barnett's argument that these 'reading communities tend to produce a "conversation about" or even "conversation near" rather than "reading of" the texts' is convincing in light of the cottage industry which has sprung up around children's publishing for the e-book market, a process which has been heightened by the conditions for at-home reading necessitated by the Coronavirus pandemic of the early 2020s. The time may be ripe now for the 'further research' Barnett advocates into 'how these technologies are reconfiguring the act of reading for twenty-first century uses', and whether 'social reading on the Kindle' might conflate 'reading about books or reading next to the book for the reading of the book itself', in parallel to how hunting for iterations of the monomyth in fiction might occlude far richer and more significant Jungian readings.

Jason Bainbridge explains the concept of 'toyesis' - a phenomenon facilitated by technological advancements in children's culture whereby 'a text's origins are erased altogether' in service of an economic model which seeks to 'increase the cultural circulation (or shelf-life) of properties and occasionally even enable them to jump media platforms and survive in entirely new textual environments' (2017). Bainbridge conceptualises 'toyesis' as the end point of 'toyetics', wherein 'a media property suitable to be merchandised across a range of licensed tie-ins' is valorised above all others for its commercial opportunities beyond the page or screen. Companies such as K-Lytics have formed in order to exploit the commercial opportunities explicitly afforded by the 'E-Book Surge During the Lockdown' (2020) - the title of a report purchasable by aspiring children's authors who seek to maximise their chances of publishing with Amazon through analysis of the most purchased, and most toyetic, children's e-books on Amazon's digital Kindle marketplace. K-Lytics' advertising notes that:

> With so many kids and parents staying at home [during the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020-22], the search volume on Google for 'ebooks for kids' grew by a factor of 10! This surge directly translated into increased sales of children's books on Amazon. The store's top 100 bestseller list, which is usually occupied by romance, mystery, thriller and suspense, sci-fi, and select few nonfiction titles, suddenly featured children's books all over the place. And one format benefited the most: e-books for kids! The share of e-books in the kids' bestseller lists doubled. (2020).

K-Lytics makes no mention of artistry, pedagogy or authorial intention beyond the commercial imperative of 'the good news' that 'the COVID-19 crisis has only amplified a trend that was already there: a steady rise in e-books for children over time'. Despite clear scholarly evidence that physical books surpass digital competitors in both pedagogical and interpersonal metrics, such as 'engagement' with text, 'child-initiated communication' and 'story recall' (Courage & Richter, 2017), the 'sales statistics' tracked by organisations such as K-Lytics 'suggest', for many aspiring authors, 'too big an opportunity to go undetected'. Companies like K-Lytics promise that aspiring authors can 'get ahead of their competition', 'SAVE TIME, WRITE MORE', and tailor their work to what is most likely to earn money by aligning their output with what's currently exhibiting the 'highest sales rank improvement' via Amazon and Kindle's analytics. The formula of the hero's journey appears, for Kindle, to have been reduced further yet - to a commercial formula which replicates that which already sells, sans innovation or sensitivity to the needs of its child readers.

K-Lytics' promise of access to its '[t]op 100 title database with all key book data points including 'all book descriptions for further plot research and reference', and performance analysis of 'more than 450 kids' book categories in search of the highest-selling segments and low-competition market niches' is designed explicitly to identify the most commercially viable lowest common denominator product of children's literature, requiring the least intellectual or artistic effort for maximum reward through hacking the Amazon algorithm. The UK Information Commissioner's Office's Code of Practice for Online Services, including 'Age Appropriate Design', has been statutory since 2021. It cites as the core for online services for children the 'best interests of the child' (ICO, 2020). Despite this, Kindle's marketplace is evolving into a digital space designed to reward authors who bypass the knowledge of parents, teachers, librarians, and colleague artists, to take their direction from market imperatives driven by analytics and sustained by recommendation algorithms. This algorithm can be characterised, then, as a new 'hidden adult' in the market of children's literature. Unmediated by knowledgeable adult co-readers, the texts produced for optimal commercial return within the Kindle's market structure are at once influenced by what has come immediately before, and will influence that with which it is immediately replaced.

The contents of the Kindle's literary database for children more closely resembles, then, Bainbridge's articulation of 'toyesis' or Baudrillard's concept of the 'simulacrum' (1981), than *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer*'s promise as a 'catalogue of the collective

unconscious'. Rather than a teleological starting point for the literary career, maturation and enculturation of a child reader, the Kindle might be characterised, instead, as a glimpse into the recent past of publishing history for children designed for commercially-motivated adults. The Kindle might draw its inspiration from *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer*, but the commercial nexus in which it exists prioritises the replication of trends in toyetic storytelling and their commercial opportunities for adults above the literary and personal development of the child reader. Instead of a database which nourishes its reader via the opportunity to engage in an adult-mediated contact-zone with the most personally resonant symbols of the collective unconscious, per *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer*, the Kindle has in effect created a secondary, semi-conscious commercial collective for its parent company. In the world of *The Diamond Age*, the quality of the book matters more than the technology which facilitates it. In light of this evidence, however, there is a troubling indication that the archetypal image of *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer* has perhaps become somewhat unmoored in terms of its formal influence on the development of technology which shapes our own modes of constructing and consuming children's literature in the real world from its archetype of the *truly* ideal children's book.

In writing of the collective unconscious and the archetypal images through which it might be encountered, Jung singled out significantly and influentially 'myth and fairytale'. He notes, however, that in these 'we are dealing with forms that have received a specific stamp and have been handed down through long periods of time'. For Jung then, the 'term "archetype"' 'designates only those psychic contents which have not yet been submitted to conscious elaboration and are therefore an immediate datum of psychic experience' (9.i: 6). In Nell's final experiences with the primer, she encounters a cypher for Hackworth himself, who reveals himself to be the primer's 'hidden adult' through imagery connotative of the Wizard of Oz. Granting Nell access to the intradiegetic machine which represents the workings of the primer itself - 'Wizard 0.2' - and an interactive version of Hackworth's processes represented as a library, Nell is, in turn, able to learn how to construct new versions of the primer for new audiences.

> The Book of the Book contained a complete set of plans for a magical book that would tell stories to a young person, tailoring them for the child's needs and interests - even teaching them how to read if need be. It was a fearsomely complicated work, and Princess Nell only skimmed it at first, recognizing that to understand the particulars might take years of study. (463)

Ironically, the imagery of the Wizard of Oz would cease, for Jung, to be truly archetypal in that its meaning would be understood by Nell, via her conscious elaboration of its significance in symbolising Princess Nell's individuated transition from child reader to adult author. *The Wizard of Oz* itself, paradoxically, is encoded within the primer by which Nell comes to understand its symbolic potential.

Unlike the algorithm of the Kindle which recommends texts to child (and adult) readers on the basis of new texts' similarities to those which readers have already encountered, the primer brought Nell into contact with challenging material she was encouraged to explore, question, and investigate alongside the adult co-readers of Princess Nell's intradiegetic companions and Miranda's narration. After finishing the primer, and discovering, in turn, its workings, Nell encounters Hackworth in the undersea cavern of the Drummers. Unlike Hackworth, however, Nell chooses to return to the surface, and to assume her roles as leader of the phyle of the primer's second generation of readers, and as the architect of the next generation of primers. As such, *The Diamond Age* can be read as a narrative which dramatises the children's book as a chronotope not only of the cycle between adult author and child reader, but of the individuation process - from unconscious object of one's culture to conscious subject in participation within it, too. The difficulty of this transition, and the centrality of the children's book in its facilitation, forms the basis of the final study in my project here.

Blue Fairies and Images of 'Reality': Psychological Wholeness and (Im)Maturity in *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*

A.I.: Artificial Intelligence (2001), named by a 2016 poll of international film critics conducted by the BBC as one of the hundred greatest films of the twenty-first century (BBC: 2016), is an American film inspired by British science fiction writer Brian Aldiss's short story *Supertoys Last All Summer Long* (1969). Initially conceptualised for adaptation by Stanley Kubrick, the film was completed after Kubrick's death under the direction of Stephen Spielberg, who wrote the screenplay inspired primarily by a screen-story draft by British science fiction writer Ian Watson. (With this complicated and collaborative production history in mind, I'll refer namely to Spielberg as the creative decision-maker behind the final

production of *A.I.*). Like the storyworlds of *V for Vendetta* and *The Diamond Age* previously explored in this chapter on the representation of the children's book in imagined futurity, the future *A.I.* initially imagines is recognisable as a projection from our own present - characterised as it is by inequality, political instability, climate change, public health crises, and the emergence of technologies designed by humanity in response to (while perhaps contributing to the perpetuation of) these challenges.

In *A.I.*'s imagined future, as we are told in introductory narration, 'after the ice caps had melted because of the greenhouse gases, and the oceans had risen to drown so many cities along all the shorelines of the world', 'millions of people were displaced, climate became chaotic' and 'hundreds of millions of people starved in poorer countries'. The ease with which 'hundreds of millions of people' are dispensed in this introduction illustrates one of the dangers storytelling encodes in elevating narratives which reflect the experiences of only some iterations of humanity above those of others in the name of universality. At the same time, however, *A.I.* dramatises the value of a shared language of images which have become associated with otherwise inaccessible aspects of humanity's collective unconscious, and which have been developed through popular narratives, in contributing to individual conceptualisations of psychological wholeness.

The 'high degree of prosperity' which we see survive in the film's setting of the United States is a result of the 'legal sanctions to strictly limit pregnancies' instituted by 'most governments in the developed world' in response to the deaths of these nameless millions who populated, presumably and troublingly, what *A.I.*'s audience must infer to be an undeveloped world. As a result of these restrictions, robots - or 'mechas' in the parlance of the film - 'who were never hungry and who did not consume resources beyond those of their first manufacture' have become an essential 'economic link in the chainmail of society'. The end of the film, however, sees humanity replaced by the descendants of these early generation mechas and the artificial intelligence by which they initially operated. 2,000 years after the core drama of the film has played out, David (Haley Joel Osment) - the first iteration of 'a robot who can love' - is encountered by mecha-descendents: alien-like life-forms which evolved from this human invention.

David thus literalises both Nell's process of individuation in Stephenson's *The Diamond Age* and the primer's journey from unconscious object of culture to subject in its

evolution, as a chronotopic descendent of a culture who becomes both an antecedent to the next, and a link between the two. In this way, David himself can be read as a text, with his childhood (literary) experiences informing the interest taken in him by a new generation of readers, who take up and participate in the narrative of *Pinocchio* with which David becomes obsessed. These mecha-descendents take the form of 'the Blue Fairy' via which to communicate with David, consciously fulfilling an imitation of the *transcendent function* described by Jung in granting David peace and a sense of psychological wholeness by simulating an experience for him in which he is loved as a 'real boy'. After a brief exploration of the material of the *A.I.*'s narrative, I will explore Jung's concept of the transcendent function and its dramatisation in the film - a dramatisation which is illustrative, too, of the enculturating role of children's literature and its images in both an individual child, and the broader culture with whom they share a collective language of images and narratives.

As David is an 'original', the last surviving mecha to have known 'living people', he is dubbed by the mecha-descendents as 'the enduring memory of the human race, the most lasting proof of their genius'. In an inverted parallel to Tom Wellwood, the effective protagonist of the first text I analysed in this thesis who dissolves his personal integrity at the climax of A.S. Byatt's *The Children's Book* by drowning himself literally in that literary symbol of the unconscious, the sea, David is frozen underwater for 2,000 years. In opposition to Tom's desire for the cessation of his individual personhood, however, David's wish, like that of Carlo Collodio's *Pinocchio* (1883), is to become a 'real boy'. As a mecha safely protected in an underwater submersible rather than an organic child, however, David waits for millennia to communicate his wish to Coney Island's drowned statue of the Blue Fairy (or Collodi's Fairy with Turquoise Hair, via her 1940 iteration in Disney's *Pinocchio*). David's obsession with the Blue Fairy stems from a literary contact zone with Monica, the woman he comes to regard as his mother, the wife of an employee of the Cybertronics Corporation whose own biological son lies in a coma as the film opens. David is the first mecha designed by Cybertronics' director, Professor Hobby, as not only a 'perfect simulacrum, articulated in limb, articulate in speech, and not lacking in human response', but 'a robot who can love'. For Professor Hobby, fittingly named a 'doll-maker' in analogy to the pupper-maker Gepetto of Collodi's 1883 ur-text:

> [...] love will be the key by which they [mechas] acquire a kind of subconscious never before achieved. An inner world of metaphor, of intuition, of self motivated reasoning. Of dreams.

Professor Hobby selects Henry and Monica Foyer-Swinton from his thousands of employees for the 'in-house testing' of David because of the 'family tragedy that may qualify [them] above the rest': the comatose state of their biological son, Martin. Our first encounter with Monica is in a literary contact zone with the comatose Martin, to whom she is reading from Michael Morpurgo's *Outlaw: the Story of Robin Hood*. In her grief at Martin's unresponsiveness, Monica activates David's capacity to love her in Martin's stead via an 'imprinting protocol' by which 'the robot child's love would be sealed, in a sense hardwired, and [Monica would therefore] be part of him forever'.

The primary tension of David's life, once activated, sentient, and capable of unlocking the 'kind of subconscious never before achieved' by any mecha, the 'inner world of metaphor, intuition, of self-motivated reasoning' and 'of dreams', arises when Martin awakes from his coma, and resumes his primacy, above David, in Monica's affection. Martin orchestrates Monica's participation in a damaging literary contact zone with David, by insisting that Monica 'read to us' from Collodi's *Pinocchio*, as 'David's going to love it'. Spielberg implies this experience to be one of utter absorption for both its child and adult participants, via montage in which Monica is shown reading to the boys in the idyllic setting of a boat lazily navigating a tranquil lake, and then in the children's bedroom. The symbolic settings of both the boat and the bed contribute to the imagery I have explored throughout this study of the navigation between the unconscious and consciousness afforded by literary experience, a relationship central to Jungian literary criticism, in which we find, as Terence Dawson asserts, 'good reason to insist that the relation between a dream and the dreamer is comparable to that between a text and an author' (2004: 8).

As Dawson continues, however, 'if literary criticism wants to apply a methodology evolved within the discipline of psychology, it must also remember that its subject is not a person, but a text'. The text which informs David's waking (and, eventually, his actual) dreams, is that of Collodi's *Pinocchio*, first encountered in this literary contact zone designed by Martin to disrupt David's psyche by encouraging him to draw parallels between Pinocchio's literary experience as a puppet who would be a real boy, and his own literal experience, as a mecha who would be a real boy. Martin's resentment of David's new place in his mother's affection leads him to select *Pinocchio* as a means of asserting his pre-eminent status within the Foyer-Swinton family, awaking in David an existential anxiety as to his inferiority in comparison to Martin's status as Monica's 'real', biological son. Were David,

indeed, a biological child, the psychological fracture he experiences at this stage in his development could perhaps be resolved later in life, were he to achieve greater emotional and intellectual maturity. As a robot designed to stay forever a child, however, the healing process termed by Jung the *transcendent function* by which unconscious trauma is resolved through conscious integration - and which Jeffrey Miller describes as 'the core of Carl Jung's theory of psychological growth and the heart of what he called individuation, the process by which one is guided in a teleological way toward the person one is meant to be' (2004: xi) - must be literalised and externalised at the level of David's understanding.

Indeed, the excerpts of *Pinocchio* we glimpse Monica reading to the boys act as precursors to, and provides a lens through which to understand, the primary dramatic elements of *A.I.*'s narrative, prompted by the rupture between David and Martin as they compete for Monica's attention. The first excerpt, in which Pinocchio is threatened with destruction by the showman who perceives him as 'nice dry wood' which 'will make a nice fire for my roast' foreshadows David's abandonment by Monica, and his own subsequent brush with 'show business' as the star attraction at a 'Flesh Fair' where he is similarly threatened with destruction by an anti-mecha human mob. The second excerpt narrates the episode in which Pinocchio 'went to bed, and fell asleep', 'dreamt he saw the fairy, lovely and smiling', and 'awoke, full of amazement' at his transformation into 'a real boy, just like other boys'.

The translation of Collodi from which Monica reads speaks directly to David (and Martin) in the interlocutory style identified by David Rudd (2000) as characteristic of some of children's literature's most absorptive qualities. The location of David within Monica's narration - '*You can imagine* how astonished he was when he saw he was no longer a puppet' (emphasis mine) - hints at David's burgeoning self-interiority, furnished from scratch by the story he has encountered in this transformative literary contact zone. It also foreshadows the film's resolution, by which the mecha-descendents of the artificial intelligence of which David is the first example - 'a robot who can love' - grant David an experience of the numinous joy Pinocchio experiences upon becoming a real boy, by facilitating a simulation through which David can experience the unconscious opposite of his capacity to love: the experience of being loved. These futuristic A.I. organisms take the form of the Blue Fairy to communicate with David, and to facilitate a form of the 'ancestor simulation' posited by futorologist Nick Bostrum (2003) in which they might observe David's interactions with an

idealised vision of Monica whose affection is reserved solely for him. From the day they facilitate in which David - 'the enduring memory of the human race'- is at play with his memories of Monica, the A.I. life-forms can, in turn, learn, by observing first-hand 'human beings and that thing they call "spirit"', 'the key to the meaning of existence' - via a simulation in which David's conscious desires (specifically, to be loved) are united with his unconscious programming, to love.

Through the form of the Blue Fairy, the A.I. life-forms explain to David their fascination with the 'million explanations' which they know 'human beings had created [for] the meaning of life in art, in poetry, in mathematical formulas'. Both the content of the 'Blue Fairy''s dialogue with David in this scene, and its method of delivery, echo explicitly Jung's conceptualisation of the transcendent function as a means of reconciling the unconscious with consciousness. As Sue Mehrtens points out:

> Never much of a math student, Jung discovered the mathematical analog to his use of 'transcendent function' when he was well into his years of noting, using, and writing about the transcendent function in psychology. In a later edition of his essay *On the Psychology of the Unconscious*, Jung added a note to [paragraph 121, in which the transcendent function is explained in Jungian terms]: 'I discovered only subsequently that the idea of the transcendent function also occurs in the higher mathematics, and is actually the name of the function of real and imaginary numbers.' As mathematicians use the term, it refers to 'nonalgebraic' concepts. (2017)

Throughout this study on the relationship between art, namely in the form of children's literature, and Jungian theory, I have argued for children's literature's particular capacity for exploring the profundity of the human experience through the simultaneous simplicity and complexity of its narratives and symbols. As Spielberg's mecha-descendent life-forms point out at the conclusion of *A.I.*, because David was 'created to be so young', what they are trying to communicate to him 'might be hard for [him] to understand'. While David is uneducated in mathematics and robotics, he is enculturated nevertheless in the human epoch of his creation via the literary contact zone by which he came to encounter the story of *Pinocchio*. Thus, the mecha-descendents (which, to the audience, appear like the aliens of which Jung himself might have written in his work on the psychological significance of Flying Saucers to the collective cultural imagination of the 1950s, C.W. 10; 18), mathematically manipulate themselves to take the form of the Blue Fairy via which they might communicate with David in a mutually nourishing dialogue.

Jung described the transcendent function as 'the process of coming to terms with the unconscious' (7: 121). The mecha-descendents utilise the narrative device fulfilled by the Blue Fairy in *Pinocchio* in the intradiegetic reality of the far future Spielberg imagines in *A.I.*, by granting David a simulation of his wish to, like Pinocchio, become a 'real boy'. There may well be some conscious knowledge on David's part that the simulation granted to him by the mecha-descendents is not the reality of which he had dreamed - '[i]f you want for my happiness, then you know what you have to do' - but it does grant him an experience, nevertheless, of a union between his longstanding, unconsciously programmed desire to be loved by Monica as she did her own, 'real' son, and a conscious participation in, at least, a simulation of it. While the Blue Fairy in *Pinocchio* might be read symbolically as the transcendent function at work in the mind of a maturing Pinocchio, for David just an interaction with a mathematically manipulated image of the Blue Fairy is enough for him to experience a glimpse of the healing experience of wholeness he needed, through being loved in return.

The sense of wholeness David experiences in the final scenes of the film, enjoying his day with the simulation of Monica created for him by the mecha-descendents, dramatises Jung's definition of 'the meaning and purpose' of the 'process' of the transcendent function, whereby there is 'the production and unfolding of the original, potential wholeness', 'in all its aspects', of 'the personality hidden away in the embryonic germ-plasm' (7: 186). Here again are the narratives and symbols of children's first experiences with literature valued: Jung's allusion to acorn/oak tree imagery speaks to the significance of a shared language between the child-cypher David and his mecha-descendents provided by Collodi's *Pinocchio* and the image of the Blue Fairy, which gives a tangible image to the complexity of the (2,000 years more mature) A.I.'s interest in David. Similarly, David is abandoned by Monica in the woods: the imagery of both the undersea and underground attaches itself to David as an image within the intradiegetic world of *A.I.* as a key to humanity's lost unconscious, despite his inorganic make-up. To return to another statement of Jung's I considered briefly in exploring the significance of the symbols produced by the artificially intelligent primer in Neal Stephenson's *Diamond Age* for its child readers, for Jung:

> [A] well-known expression of the archetypes is myth and fairytale. But here too we are dealing with forms that have received a specific stamp and have been handed down through long periods of time. The term 'archetype' thus applies only indirectly to the 'representations colléctives,' since it designates

> only those psychic contents which have not yet been submitted to conscious elaboration and are therefore an immediate datum of psychic experience. (9.i: 6)

The relationship between the art of children's literature and its capacity to give meaning to our experience of the world through its time-stamped and culturally familiar symbols and narratives is one under contemporary scrutiny by scholars of children's literature, in reaction - perhaps in part - to the work done by post-Jungian influences on Western mass-media which have centred the (often white, often straight, often male) protagonist of the hero's journey or monomyth template in popular entertainment.

The centrality of the story of *Pinocchio* to *A.I.* illustrates a match for David to the perfect text: one which allows him to draw a galvanising parallel between the story of a wooden boy and his own status as a mechanical boy yearning to be real. 2022 sees the release of both Guillermo Del Toro's adaptation of *Pinocchio*, and the Walt Disney company's live action adaptation of its own 1940 re-telling of Collodi's tale on the Netflix and Disney+ streaming platforms respectively, just three years after Matteo Garrone's 2019 cinematic re-interpretation of the tale. The affective power of *Pinocchio*'s symbolic narrative in which its protagonist achieves 'reality' via a wave of the Blue Fairy's wand clearly continues to speak to contemporary audiences. It is important, however, to recognise the narrative and characters in this story as symbolic images which articulate psychic processes - culminating in an individuated experience of the union of consciousness with the unconscious - in which all readers might participate as co-readers and interpreters of the tale anew, in new images and personal experience.

African-American children's literature scholar Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, in her 2019 re-centring of non-white heroes of contemporary popular child and young adult entertainment franchises, *The Dark Fantastic*, asks whether:

> […] the cartographies of dreams [are] truly universal? When we dream inside the storied worlds of printed and digital books, fanfiction, fanart, fan videos, television shows, movies, comics, graphic novels, online fandom communities, and fan 'cons,' do those worlds offer all kinds of people escape from the world as we know it? Could they offer catharsis for some of our most pressing human problems? Might they help us collectively imagine our world anew? (2)

‘Since’, as Thomas continues, ‘today’s young people are as likely to be engaged in virtual social worlds as they are in face-to-face communication, the ways that stories are told and retold in convergence culture are more significant than ever for shaping the collective consciousness’ (3). Jung is careful, however, to articulate a difference between the collective consciousness - a tangible, knowable collective trend - and the collective unconscious, which is knowable, initially, only through the language of image and symbol. The work of Thomas in advocating for greater conscious engagement with the symbols and images of children’s literature speaks to Jung’s specific advocation for engagement with the symbols and images of personal significance to our own imaginations and fantasies, which offer us a greater insight to the older, culturally-specific unconscious influences not yet fully conscious to us in our contemporary, waking lives.

Chicana cultural theorist, queer theorist and feminist theorist Gloria Anzaldúa argued that ‘[n]othing happens in the “real” world unless it first happens in the images in our heads’ (1990: 2), in anticipation of the seriousness with which the images which populate contemporary children’s literature are now being treated by Thomas, and in an echo of that with which the images of myth and fairytale were in turn treated by Jung in the previous century. The persistence of a children’s story which concerns itself, specifically, with the *experience* of the real, evidences its symbolic value, but its specific iteration in the figure of Pinocchio - or, in *A.I.*, in the figure of David - should not preclude new and more expansive iterations of that narrative for new, and different, audiences. Alison Kafer, a specialist in queer, feminist, and disability theory, writes that:

> The futures we imagine reveal the biases of the present; it seems entirely possible that imagining different futures and temporalities might help us see, and do, the present differently. (2013: 85)

The anxieties articulated by Anzaldúa and Kafer, and by Thomas in the specific arena of children’s literature, echo a sensitivity articulated by Jung as to cultural specificity in which he himself wrote as an able-bodied, heterosexual, white, male gentile in 20th century Europe, working in the empiricist and rational field of medical science. As Jung wrote:

> Under normal conditions, every conflict stimulates the mind to activity for the purpose of creating a satisfactory solution. Usually - i.e., in the West - the conscious standpoint arbitrarily decides against the unconscious, since anything coming from inside suffers the prejudice of being regarded as inferior or somehow wrong. But in the cases with which we are here concerned it is tacitly agreed that the apparently incompatible contents shall

> not be suppressed again, and that the conflict shall be accepted and suffered. (11: 780 - 781)

Like Jung, *A.I.*'s intradiegetic author of David's consciousness is Professor Hobby - a straight, white, Western male steeped in a culture which, unlike Jung himself, privileges rationality and utility over art and imagination. The art which provides Hobby and David with a shared language is similarly the work of a European male, Carlo Collodi, just as *A.I.* itself is a collaborative product of the shared input of a team of men united under the eventual aegis of Stephen Spielberg (himself something of an image of post-Jungian archetypal storytelling, as Dan Hassler-Forrest (2020) and Chris Dumas' (2012) critiques of 'the Spielberg-industrial complex' attest). Like these artists and visionaries specifically significant to our own experience in the contemporary West, Hobby nevertheless values the transcendent significance of art, dreams, and the unconscious to understanding the human experience in its entirety. Hobby's desire to create a mecha which can love, and dream, however, is not quite universal in its execution, in an echo of the monomyth's tendency to valorise the experience of one specific hero above all potential others. Both *A.I.*'s audience and David learn, in a scene in which David meets Professor Hobby, that he was created as a means by which Professor Hobby might resurrect his own dead son. Hobby's vision, then, to create a mecha who can love and dream, and thus rival humanity in its experience of reality, is deeply specific, if couched in universalist terms.

If Hobby's son, the cherished child of a wealthy, white, heterosexual techno-industrial who sits atop the social strata of 'the developed world' with which we are presented in *A.I.*, can still die, then Spielberg similarly embeds within *A.I.* an allusion to the untold stories of those 'hundreds of million of people [...] in poorer countries' who died amidst the 'chaotic' effects of climate change of which we are informed in the film's introductory narration. Unlike Professor Hobby's son, however, their struggles for selfhood are never resurrected in a mecha built in their image. Both Pinocchio and David's literary and literal quests to achieve selfhood as 'real' boys can be contextualised as articulations of a universal human desire, which have found only their most recent, specific images in Western fiction which has centred male European-American protagonists above all other iterations of collective humanity. The '"rules of reality"' of which African-American theorist of speculative fiction Sami Schalk writes (2018: 17) in referencing 'speculative fiction' as 'any creative writing in which the rules of reality do not fully apply' are of especial significance, then, to contemporary fiction which draws on the story of *Pinocchio* as metaphor for 'our *constructed*

notions' (emphasis mine) of what constitutes a '"real"' human experience. The influence of the specific images which give form to archetypal patterns of maturation into adulthood via children's literature in the monomythic mode is explored more fully in Stephenson's *Diamond Age*, in which *The Young Lady's Illustrated Primer* is designed explicitly to draw on stories such as *Pinocchio*, but to rewrite them in the image of its reader.

Jung's attention to the centrality of 'unconscious material' in the work of 'unfolding our original, potential wholeness' via the transcendent function, a core component in the process of individuation or experience of one's subjective reality, can be interpreted then, refreshingly, through the contemporary lenses provided by scholars such as Thomas and Schalk - and artists including Stephenson - which value the images and narratives of children's literature and speculative fiction in which it might be embedded as crucial components in the make-up of the contemporary (and future) collective consciousness. The children's book can give expression to the dream and perhaps, in turn, go on to contribute to what dreams might shape future culture. The relationship between the children's book and the dream is similarly conflated, somewhat, by Professor Hobby throughout *A.I.* Like Professor Hobby, Jung recognises that 'the most readily accessible expression of unconscious processes is undoubtedly dreams'. For Jung, however:

> [...] in general, dreams are unsuitable or difficult to make use of in developing the transcendent function, because they make too great demands on the subject. We must therefore look to other sources for the unconscious material[:] unconscious interferences in the wake state, ideas 'out of the blue,' slips, deceptions, lapses of memory, symptomatic actions, and spontaneous fantasies[.]. (8: 152 - 154)

It is telling that the transcendent function in *A.I.* should be literalised for David 'out of' the intertextual form of the Blue Fairy, via the dreamlike source material of a children's story. Often media which imagines futurity in all of its head-spinning complexity turns to the comforting and familiar images of children's literature in order for its audiences to conceptualise its premises through a shared language of images simultaneously understood to be both simple and complex: chronotopes from childhood resurrected in adult remembrance, and the fuller, adult knowledge of their construction, at one time, by other adults for other children. The Carrollian image of the 'white rabbit' and the 'rabbithole' down which the protagonist of the Wachowskis' *Matrix* franchise delves was as familiar to audiences of *The Matrix* (1999) as was the Blue Fairy to *A.I.*'s, speaking simultaneously as both do to archetypes beyond and behind the images to which they give form.

While the dramatic scene in which Monica abandons David in the woods is couched explicitly in the lexicon David has absorbed from *Pinocchio*, the dialogue expresses the unsophisticated way with which David engages with images which he mistakes for articulations of reality:

> David: Mommy, no! Mommy! MOMMY! Mommy, if Pinocchio became a real boy and...and I become a real boy can I come home?
>
> Monica: But that's just a story, David.
>
> David: But that story tells what happens!
>
> Monica: Stories are not real! You're not real!

Professor Hobby learns of David's abandonment, and recognises David's obsession with the Blue Fairy to reveal a deeper desire for an experience of real selfhood, understood by David in the terms of being loved by Monica as much as she does her 'real', biological son, per his unconscious programming to love. As such, Hobby confesses to David that he orchestrated David's eventual homecoming to Cybertronics' headquarters, and more specifically Professor Hobby's own library, by embedding directions to him should any user of the 'Dr Know' database make enquiries as to the location of the Blue Fairy. Hobby's correct assumption is that it is via the image of the Blue Fairy that David recognised a (potential) means to achieving the psychological wholeness he desires - to be loved in return - through her literary ability to confer 'reality' upon a subject.

'Dr. Know' (voiced by Robin Williams) functions intradiegetically, to an extent, within the world of *A.I.* in less-sophisticated parallel to *The Young Ladies' Illustrated Primer* in Stephenson's *The Diamond Age*. An interactive literary database of 'author(s), factual text(s) or fictionalized text(s) (1st or 3rd person)', accessible to users of 'usual literacy range from primal level to the post doctoral', Dr. Know can answer general questions on the 'usual span of styles from fairy tale to religious, who's who, or where's where - or, flat fact'. David's enquiries as to the location of the Blue Fairy, her nature, and the processes by which she might make 'a robot into a real, live boy' activate a secret programme, however, embedded in Dr. Know's database which guides David to Professor Hobby. Hobby informs David of his belief that, by finding him, he is indeed 'a real boy', and that he himself 'by all reasonable accounts' is therefore David's 'Blue Fairy', or the 'hidden adult' author of David's

nascent selfhood. David's inability to grasp the implications of Hobby's confession, and the significance of his status as the first truly sentient mecha made in the image of a real, living boy – incapable of growing up and into psychological maturity – has already been hinted at by the comparative understanding of an adult mecha companion, Joe (Jude Law), with whom David encountered Dr. Know. Dr. Know's answer to David's question – 'who is Blue Fairy?' – is a quotation from 'Pinocchio, by Carlo Collodi':

> […] you must know that the child with blue hair was no other than the good hearted fairy who had lived in that wood for more than a thousand years...

David's excited assumption that 'that's her!' is tempered by his adult mecha companion's sophisticated qualification - 'it was an example of her. But I think we're getting closer…'. David's inability to understand the Blue Fairy's status as an image amplified in his own mind by Professor Hobby via Dr. Know, not the transcendent function itself which he believes she embodies, facilitates his over-literalisation of the Blue Fairy and her power. Thus, only the technology of the mecha-descendents he encounters 2,000 years later can facilitate the interaction with the *image* of the Blue Fairy for which he had yearned since first encountering her in the literary contact zone with Monica and Martin in which he heard the story of *Pinocchio.*

For Professor Hobby, who similarly over-literalises and reduces the Blue Fairy's power as an image of the transcendent function to one of a magic wand which merely confers the heart's uppermost conscious desire:

> The Blue Fairy is part of the great human flaw to wish for things that don't exist. Or to the greatest single human gift - the ability to chase down our dreams. And that is something no machine has ever done until you.

Professor Hobby's repeated insistence that 'until you were born, robots didn't dream, robots didn't desire, unless we told them what to want' belies hints as to the awakening self-reflexity the audience observes in the mecha companions David encounters on his own hero's journey. The sophistication of the adult sex-worker mecha Joe who cares for David and accompanies him to visit Dr. Know is recorded by David and thus observable by their mecha descendents. Joe's parting words to David 'I am… I was', echo the assertion of David's companion Teddy, a mecha teddy bear, that 'I am not a toy', in defiance of Monica's designation of him as such. Both Joe and Teddy, and numerous mecha whom David encounters, hint toward a burgeoning selfhood and a desire for individuation and achievement of psychological wholeness beyond

a *Pinocchio*-esque yearning for a magic wand to be waved to confer the experiences of being 'a real boy'. The arrogance of Professor Hobby's definition of 'the greatest human gift' as 'the ability to chase down our dreams' denies the validity of inward exploration in favour of outward achievement: he sees David's tragic obsession with the story of *Pinocchio* as the realisation of his own desire to have his son return to life, but neglected to encode in him the potential for psychological maturity and personal individuation. Professor Hobby's desire to see a mecha replacement of his son attain genuine selfhood, via the overtly literalised metaphors of *Pinocchio*, supplants the potential for voices other than David's to articulate their experiences of a monomythical story in which they are not cast in a heroic role. Thus Jung's warning that 'one should never forget that one dreams in the first place, and almost to the exclusion of all else, of oneself' (10: 321) feels particularly apt in dialogue with the important work of scholars such as Anzaldúa, Kafer, Schalk, and Thomas, who seek to draw attention to the centring of privileged voices in the construction of the narratives by which we come to conceptualise ourselves (and the child consumers of media).

Unlike Professor Hobby, and Monica who ultimately abandons David, the mecha-descendents who discover David are not only enthralled by the opportunity he presents for learning, but respect his desires and wishes, and the fragility of his nascent selfhood, through the programming by which his intelligence is frozen in eternal childhood. The film's concluding narration informs us that following the advanced mechas' facilitation of his perfect day with Monica, 'the everlasting moment he had been waiting for', 'David went to sleep too. And for the first time in his life, he went to that place where dreams are born'. In a sense, then, David can be read as having died; attained true individual selfhood as he understood it; or surrendered to a re-absorption by his own (and, via the mecha-descendents' observation, the collective) unconscious in an attempt to experience a different form of reality: that of inward exploration. Jung's definition of the transcendent function as 'the process of coming to terms with the unconscious' (7: 121) provides a lens through which to understand the parallel between the surrender of Tom Wellwood to the sea in this study's opening to chapter to that of David's surrender, under the sea, to sleep, in its conclusion. Unlike Tom, however, whose mother is bereft by a suicide for which she was, in part, responsible - by stifling Tom's individual selfhood via absorption into her own familial complexes - David's surrender of his individual selfhood to the collective is facilitated by analogues of more competent adult co-readers in the contact zone by which they make his literary desires literal.

Marah Gubar's powerful proposal for a model of 'kinship' is of resonance here, by which children's literature might be re-imagined as children and adults alike 'work together to create a more capacious critical framework that affirms our respect for children's agency as participants in culture' (2016: 310). That the metaphor Gubar conjures should include within it the image of a cross-generational and cross-cultural kin-*ship* might go some way, too, to re-appraising what Jung's theories as to the sea of the unconscious and psyche might offer us in navigating futurities collectively. Children's literature provides a means by which children are enculturated into the human journey for selfhood or individuation by visionary artists and authors. Unfortunately, it might also provide a means by which children are made to feel excluded from that journey when the narratives and participants in children's literature become images too proscriptively assigned to archetypes and aspects of the psyche via an over-reliance on monomythological readings. The children's book as symbol, then, offers an index by which adults might enquire after the meaning of consciousness in its myriad iterations and images, and a cartography which must never stop growing, nor centre itself too literally on the experiences of a culturally designated hero - constructed as a reflection, in turn, of only one expression of the human experience of culturally specific reality.

Conclusion: On the Multifaceted Symbol of the Children's Book, and its Reflections of Jungian Theory

The theories of C. G. Jung are alive and deeply embedded in our culture: Jung's lexicon of concepts are bound up with how we understand ourselves. In this study, I've deeply analysed just four of his influential ideas in some of their multifaceted detail: that of the complex; of the inner or eternal child; the shadow; and the collective unconscious. All of these pertain to the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious, and as such I argue find a particularly resonant site for their dramatisation and interrogation in the symbol of the children's book when contextualised in the adult imagination. The children's book embedded in adult culture has many functions. Crucially amongst these, it acts as a means for adults to re-access their half-forgotten personal histories and experiences in childhood which, for Jung and Jungians, go on unconsciously to shape who we become. It functions by its inverse, too, for children to anticipate the collective cultures in which they will go on to participate and the personal psyches they will develop. Revisiting these unconscious childhood influences is a crucial stage in the adult attainment of greater self-knowledge or, in Jungian parlance, in the process of individuation: becoming one's full, potential self. The symbolic children's book provides a reminder that the personal and familial situations in which we are raised have been shaped by the half-forgotten histories and experiences of our earlier collective cultures, from the influence of our parents and grandparents and their immediate and extended families and societies, to the national cultures in which they were raised, and on down the ancestral lineage to time immemorial. In this sense, the children's book functions then as an inheritor to myth, legend, the folktale and the fairytale, as a vessel for retaining and dramatising forgotten knowledge and human theories of the psyche and formation of the self. As a symbol, it represents the means by which cultures replicate themselves through storytelling, and the enculturation of new generations in both stories about themselves, and the means by which those stories are told.

Through a process of close-reading contemporary texts which embed the children's book within their narratives for adults, I've provided a macro-level view of the cultural role the children's book is popularly understood to play in both child and adult experience. I've done so by drawing on a broad range of diverse media, allowing for analysis of the represented children's book across multimodal forms of contemporary artistic expression. This contributes to central debates in children's literature scholarship, a field wrestling with a

complex of its own in defining its central object of study and reckoning with the cross-generational nexus in which it exists, in the shadow of folklore and the fairytale. I have sought to contribute, too, to the burgeoning subgenre of cross-generational enquiry within the boundaries of children's literature scholarship, with its concomitant interest in adult memory of childhood reading experiences, the phenomenon of adult readership of children's texts and the parody of children's literature, and the contact zone between adult writers and both child and adult co-readers embedded in the site of the children's book. I've done so through micro-level analyses of textual detail, which sheds light on the closely intertwined relationship between Jungian theory and the children's book as understood and theorised by contemporary authors and artists who contribute, in turn, to our popular collective conceptualisations of what the children's book is, does, and might yet go on to do.

The relationship between Jungian theory and both the construction and consumption of children's literature has been somewhat cursorily acknowledged without an extended analysis within the field until now. Perhaps this is because of too rigid an acceptance of what Jungian literary criticism *can* do on the basis of what it *has* done prior to the modern interventions of Jungian literary critics Terrence Dawson and Susan Rowland. An undue focus on tracing iterations of the monomyth in analyses of fairytales and children's fantasy in particular has relegated it to the sidelines of debate in contemporary children's literature scholarship. The richness and complexity of Jung's own writing can too easily be, and often has been, elided and obscured by conflation with post-Jungian methods of archetypal criticism. A more capacious mode of Jungian literary criticism must move beyond a game of trope-spotting and a structuralist matching of characters and narratives to established literary archetypal images in order to provide explorations of Jung's concepts in the richness of their dramatisations and interrogations in fiction, and in appreciating Jung's contribution to how literature today is conceptualised, constructed, and consumed.

Rowland's attention to the potential for reciprocity in finding a new way of doing Jungian literary criticism has shaped my project here in attempting to speak both to scholars of children's literature in Jungian terms, and to clinicians working in the psychotherapeutic space with specific interest in Jung's contributions to theories of children and childhood. The relatively recent publication of Jung's seminars on children's dreams - or, more precisely, adult recollection of children's dreams - informed my decision to analyse the children's book as it is embedded within adult culture. A deeper study of children's texts themselves might

well prove fruitful in exploring more fully Jung's writing on child development in isolation, although my focus for exploring childhood has in this project been through the lens of adult re-construction of childhood's concerns per the starting point of Jung's own work on children's dreams.

Jung has become a victim of his own success, to an extent, in the entrenched currency his terms still have in the modern lexicon despite the publication of new collections which deepen how we might engage with Jung and his complex ideas. His concepts are far richer and deeper in their multifaceted aspects than have been allowed in popular use and in earlier criticism which focusses to its detriment on matching the narratives of children's fiction to the monomyth template as a parallel to the process of individuation. The popular familiarity of many of Jung's concepts have seen them become embedded alongside the children's book in fictional narratives, where they often reflect only one facet of their more capacious potentialities when re-contextualised in Jung's own writing. It has not been my project here to attempt insight into the psychologies of the authors of children's narratives, nor to argue for the validity of the process of individuation Jung conceptualised which has been well-dramatised by analyses of the hero's journey monomyth. Rather, Jungian theory has provided a context for my study as well as a methodology, inspired as close-reading is by psychoanalysis (or analytical psychology) per Catherine Belsey's assessment. A rewarding future study in continuing this work might then, too, be an analysis of texts which reference Jung explicitly alongside their intratextual reflections of the symbolic children's book. Just as I complete this project, Stephen King has embedded a fictional academic text on Jungian literary criticism, *The Origins of Fantasy and Its Place in the World Matrix: Jungian Perspectives*, in his most recent best-seller, which explicitly takes as its central trope the eponymous *Fairy Tale* of its title (2022).

The entrenchment of Jungian concepts with the construction and consumption of the children's book in the adult imagination ought, too, to point towards further research into Jung's contribution to our understanding of child psychology, or, rather, the popular understanding of child psychology as it is reflected in the culture as a facet of understanding the child *in* the adult. Jung's influence on modern conceptualisations of the self is undoubtable; critical analysis of Jung's own writing is crucial in expanding and unpacking how his concepts have come to their position of well-worn use in the modern lexicon. The troubling rise of popular academics such as Jordan Peterson who cite Jung while participating

in the same project of condensing, conflating and flattening out much of the nuance of Jung's own writing through self-serving analyses of children's texts must be countered by work which centres the rich and multifaceted aspects of Jungian concepts which have been simplified in the process of their cascading through the culture. Interrelated with this work is a confrontation with many of the problematic aspects of Jung's work, including his most conservative aspects of racism and sexism. In this project I have sought to include the voices of many non-white and female critics as well as authors, who have taken up the project of interrogating and challenging Jung's ideas while engaging with their influence and the potentialities of his best, and most progressive contributions to how we conceptualise ourselves in the modern world. I have been inspired in doing so by similar important work unfolding in modern Jungian scholarship as well as in many of the critical conversations which are shaping the future of children's literature, which might be deepened by a timely engagement with Jung's contributions to the field in all of their complicated complexity. It is not enough to acknowledge Jung's influence on children's literature and to then dismiss this through reluctance to engage either with Jung's personal shortcomings, or the limitations of traditional Jungian literary criticism.

In both Jung's writing, and a modern Jungian worldview informed by the contributions of diverse scholars and artists inspired by Jung, we find expansive and exciting modes for both conceptualising and challenging how we understand ourselves and our relationships to others. In engaging with the potentialities of Jung's radicalism and the expansive possibilities of the concepts he developed, however, one must also pay due attention to the conservatism which has perhaps contributed to the reluctance with which he has been acknowledged within the field of children's literature criticism until now. Moving away from the structuralist perspectives which have shaped Jungian literary criticism since Jung's death in a new way of doing Jungian literary criticism speaks to Roland Barthes' post-structuralist characterisation of texts as a fabric, or 'tissue' of quotations or citations (1977: 146). At play in the construction and consumption of the children's book today, then, are both Jung's conservatism and the radicalism of his ideas. It is my hope that he might continue to be brought more fruitfully into dialogue with many of the vibrant conversations characterising contemporary scholarship in children's literature moving forward.

Over the course of my project here, I have engaged to greater and lesser extent with some of the debates which are currently animating the field of children's literature research,

including work in ecocriticism, posthumanism, the expansion of the canon to include non-white and indigenous voices and those of female and queer contributors, and in materialist approaches to children's literature which consider the technologies by which it is both produced and consumed. I hope deeper engagement with parallels to the important work being undertaken in these lines of enquiries in Jung's own writing might provide the starting point in furthering my work as a scholar of Jungian theory, cultural-literary criticism, and children's literature. I find in all three of these fields a means of interrogating the world in which we live via respect for the cultures through which we experience it. Through enquiring into both the contexts in which fiction is produced and consumed and the methodologies by which it is interrogated might we find a richer way in moving forward while navigating the complexities which characterise the cultural psyche: a sea, as Jung might put it, in which we all swim.

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