For my mother, Juanita Miriam Fiander, and in memory of my father,

Chester Fiander (1913-1995).

Abstract

This thesis examines the psychological/social effects of phonetic writing and printing press technologies as they are intuitively anticipated by four mainstream, nineteenth-century British writers; these writers are Mary Shelley, Emily Brontë, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Thomas Carlyle. Marshall McLuhan and other critics have maintained that, over time, certain characteristics emerge in societies as a result of print and phonetic writing; these social/literary characteristics are the organizing principle of the present discussion. They are, in order of appearance, (a) the fixed point of view, (b) the diminished appreciation of context-bound meaning and experience, explained by McLuhan in terms of "visual" and "acoustic" sensory biases, (c) the novelistic convention of the equitone narrative voice, and (d) a linear sense of time and space. Also integral to the thesis is how the development of narrative/editorial point of view in these works showcases the aforesaid psychological effects of printed/phonetic media: Frankenstein's Robert Walton has a fixed point of view that influences the orally-rendered tales he re-tells; Wuthering Heights' narrative tandem implicitly develops the differences between Lockwood's cerebral detachment on the one hand, and Nelly Dean's context-bound involvement in the affairs of the

Heights on the other; Stevenson's ironic development of the equitone voice in The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde undermines the ethical integrity of his third-person narrator; and the editor/narrator of Carlyle's Sartor Resartus must find ways of coping with a rebellious Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, who openly criticizes the nineteenth century's linear conception of time and space. The authors in question, of course, were not media theorists who took notes from one another in this regard, in spite of their understanding of the printed word's impact on readers; therefore, no attempt will be made to demonstrate a process of any one of these writers influencing the others with respect to media awareness. The use of McLuhan's ideas to throw light upon the printed word's social impact in the nineteenth century should be of value to readers of Victorian literature, since no such sustained analysis has been attempted before with respect to the above writers.

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Introduction:
McLuhan and the Nineteenth Century

In Frankenstein, Wuthering Heights, The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Hyde, and Sartor Resartus, narrative/editorial point of view combines with the printed medium itself to make outcasts of these novels' major characters. The characters in question are Dr. Frankenstein, his creature, Catherine Earnshaw, Heathcliff, Mr. Hyde, and Diogenes Teufelsdröckh; their stories are mediated, respectively, by Robert Walton, Lockwood/Nelly Dean, Stevenson's anonymous, third-person narrator, and Teufelsdröckh's officious editor/narrator. Mary Shelley's, Emily Brontë's, Robert Louis Stevenson's, and Thomas Carlyle's characters are cast-offs from a societal/ideological set-up which derives its expectations and credo from the psychological effects of phonetic literacy in the age of the printing press's hegemony in the west. As widely-read books which traditionally have been analyzed for purposes other than those of the present discussion, the four above texts in fact show the impact of print and phonetic writing on the craftsmanship of these mainstream, nineteenth-century British writers.

All of the texts except for Sartor Resartus are discussed in chronological order: Sartor is reserved for

last because of the near-impossibility of listing it as a piece of prose fiction, and also because its explicit perspective on time places it in a category of its own--one which offers an overview of the printed, phonetic word's effects.[1] These texts do not leave any trail suggesting that they influenced one another in relation to an emerging awareness of print as a medium; thus, the chronological listing of three of the above works is not intended to show the unfolding of a literary movement. Instead, Frankenstein, Wuthering, and Jekyll and Hyde represent the early, middle, and late stages of Gothic writing in the nineteenth century, while Carlyle's Sartor represents one of the age's most influential philosophical works.

All of these books, as will be seen, are important precursors of twentieth-century writings such as James Joyce's Ulysses, a novel which impressed Marshall McLuhan with its author's precocious awareness of print's observable psychological effects. Although much has been written about Shelley, Brontë, Stevenson, and Carlyle, these writers are seldom discussed with regard to how their work sheds light on the printed book as a process rather than a mere artifact. McLuhan's writings, of course, are indispensable to such a discussion, if only because of the still controversial nature of his claims about the

printed/phonetic word's effects.[2] Therefore, an illustration of the basis for his claims is appropriate before developing them in relation to the characters and narrative strategies of nineteenth-century fiction and philosophy.

In The Global Village and Laws of Media, Marshall McLuhan came as close as he ever would to expressing, in linguistic terms, his approach to technological questions. His development of the tetrad--a series of four questions designed to probe the significance of any given "medium" (a word he defines as a technological extension of the human body)--extends naturally to language, the first technology of the human race. The four questions about media--what do they (1) enhance, (2) obsolesce, (3) reverse into (when pushed to an extreme), and (4) retrieve from the past--apply in the following way to language:

SELF-EXPRESSION THROUGH SPEECH

Enhances: Thought	Reverses into: Feeling
Obsolesces: Gesture	Retrieves: Grunts/Groans[3]

The purpose of the tetrad, as McLuhan says in Village, is "to draw attention to situations that are still in process, situations that are structuring new perception and shaping new environments, even while they are restructuring old

ones, so that it might be said that structures of media dynamics are inseparable from performance" (28). Technological media, for McLuhan, are a transformation of language from its origin in the body to a physical form within the social order. The open-ended, tetradic approach is thus a useful way of asking questions about the phenomenon of language that do not require a grand unified theory for their justification.

Because all media are "outerings" of the body, language is of more concern to McLuhan as physical "outerance" than as auditory "utterance." But even though McLuhan looks at media, in a very real sense, as manifestations of language and as creators of human environments, he remains hard to classify, strictly speaking, as a linguist.[4] Terrence Gordon comments on this issue in a chapter of his biography of McLuhan, entitled "Is McLuhan a Linguist":

> The question would have made him laugh. It needs to be unasked, because it invites an answer that accepts assumptions, divisions, and categories. It was McLuhan's business to tear these down, not build them up, much less put himself within their confines. Those who taught McLuhan to think about language (Leavis, Forbes, Richards) did not

> call themselves linguists, nor did McLuhan develop their approaches to language along any lines that present-day linguists would claim as their own. And yet, if we are prepared tc grant that psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan is a linguist because of his reconstruction of Saussure's concept of the sign, or that philosopher Jacques Derrida is a linguist because of his deconstruction of Saussure's analytical framework, then we must accord McLuhan the same honor.(337-38)

Gordon goes on to claim that McLuhan comes closer than other theorists to fulfilling Saussure's vision of subordinating linguistics to a broader field of interest (semiology), saying that "McLuhan uses language itself as a metaphor for all media...all human artifacts. This suggests that McLuhan's approach offers the prospect of integrating linguistics and semiotics in a fashion bolder than any hinted at by Saussure himself and yet compatible with the foundation he laid" (338).

McLuhan's ideas, although they are today enjoying a renaissance of sorts, are nonetheless frequently misunderstood, partly because of McLuhan's gnomic/mosaic writing style, and partly because of the deep involvement

of most westernized people in technology (such as print) on a day-to-day basis. McLuhan calls the widespread resistance to his media probes "somnambulism," and his work draws attention to the ways in which technology, mechanical and electronic, induces this quasi-hypnotic state by interfering with the "sensory ratios" of human beings. McLuhan's own way of illustrating and commenting upon the social and ideological influence of media--from the wheel to the phonetic alphabet to the computer--is to ask questions on the significance of all kinds of media as extensions of the body.

McLuhan's operating assumption is that media impact on the human senses by disrupting the sensory ratios and by pointedly amplifying human thought processes. His approach often results in provocative sayings, or "probes," which proverbially suggest the significance of media for individual lives and society as a whole.[5] "The medium is the message" is the most famous such probe; on this key subject, Gordon's comments are illuminating:

> Misunderstanding of the principle expressed by "the medium is the message" has often arisen where readers and audiences failed to make the leap with McLuhan from media of communication to <u>any</u> technological extension of the human body.

> This is surprising, in view of how infrequently he used mass communication as his starting point for discussion. When he did, he typically went on to cite the wider domain where the same effects obtain. (174)

"Media," for McLuhan, are <u>all</u> extensions of the body, from the humble knife and fork (extensions of teeth and fingers) to clothing (extension of the skin), to electronic technology (extension of the central nervous system). And, contrary to its apparently counterintuitive assertion, McLuhan's "The medium is the message" saying does not deny the reality of content.[6] Media, for McLuhan, are the "content" of one another--as the relationship of cinema to the novel, or of television to cinema, would indicate: but media also are creators of new environments, which, over time, condition the user's psychological responses to them (as well as to other users). Thus, while it is true that media convey messages and content, the users of all forms of media are a more important focus for McLuhan than media contents.

Asking questions about artificially created human environments in the name of understanding them better is McLuhan's agenda: his interest in print rests on the same basis as his interest in other media. Print is a physical,

visual extension of thought and language. To make speech and ideas into visual, phonetic symbols by means of printing press technology is to translate them into a physical medium (the printed page). McLuhan first published his views on the social and psychological effects of print and phonetic writing in Understanding Media and The Gutenberg Galaxy, but other writers, like F.M. Cornford, Eric Havelock, and Walter Ong, have, in different ways, supported McLuhan's view that phonetic writing is distinct in relation to other kinds of writing, past and present.

The psychological and physical effects of alphabetic literacy, for example, are the symptoms of what McLuhan calls "visual" space: F.M. Cornford implicitly agrees with McLuhan on this point when he attributes the invention of visual space to the ancient Greeks, but he does not name the phonetic alphabet as its formal cause. In his essay, "The Invention of Space," Cornford notes that newly-literate Greek society would soon require an infinite amount of space in order for parallel lines to exist indefinitely: "In the 6th and 5th centuries," he writes, "no distinction was yet drawn between the space demanded by the theorems of geometry and the space which frames the physical world" (220). While McLuhan would say that the

failure to draw this distinction is a direct result of phonetic literacy and the abstract, visual sensory bias accompanying it, Cornford simply notes that the ancient Greeks' newly-acquired immersion in a visual version of the world represented a major shift in societal perception.

Eric Havelock is another scholar whose studies of the ancient Greeks' departure from oral social organization led him to similar observations on the different modes of perception implicit in pre-literate and literate social organization. Plato, as Havelock writes in Preface to Plato, opposed the thought patterns fostered by oral society because

> [oral society]...constituted the chief obstacle to scientific rationalism, to the use of analysis, to the classification of experience, to its rearrangement in sequence of cause and effect. That is why the poetic state of mind is for Plato the arch-enemy and it is easy to see why he considered this enemy so formidable. He is entering the lists against centuries of habituation in rhythmic memorized experience. He asks of men that instead they should examine this experience and rearrange it, and that they should think about what they say, instead of just saying

> it. And they should separate themselves from it instead of identifying with it; they themselves should become the "subject" who stands apart from the "object" and reconsiders it and analyses it and evaluates it, instead of just "imitating" it. (47)

Havelock's precise description of the ancient Greeks' shift in social organization is referred to by McLuhan in terms of ear and eye experience. The Greeks' "world of rhythmic memorized experience" becomes, via McLuhan, an "ear," or acoustic world that stresses greater involvement of people with each other through the bonds of memory and context-bound meaning; the departure from such a world, however, instigated by the phonetic alphabet as a new technology, means entry into an "eye" world in which the self gradually comes to feel isolated from its immediate circumstances, and posits a subject/object dichotomy--all the while relying less on memory than on visually recorded abstractions and categorizations of lived experience.

Phonetic writing, in this sense, re-structures consciousness in a more radical way than other writing systems. Walter Ong draws attention to this distinction in Orality and Literacy in a discussion of the history and social effects of non-phonetic writing scripts. Sumerian

cuneiform, for instance, "grew at least in part out of a system of recording economic transactions," but, as Ong notes, "using writing to produce literature in the more specific sense of this term, comes quite late in the history of script" (86). Chinese ideogrammic writing, another non-phonetic system, uses pictures to represent human utterance, and does not possess the economy of phonetic writing; thus it only allows literacy among the elite of society who have enough leisure time (twenty years, Ong says) to learn even part of the 40,000 characters in the Chinese dictionary. Thus, although one might still deny a radical difference between the social effects of phonetic and ideogrammic writing, it would be hard, in support of such a view, to invent a typewriter with 40,000 characters (Ong 87).

Phonetic literacy's effects, as pronounced as they are, only occur over time as the alphabet infiltrates all levels of society: in ancient Greece, phonetic writing first went through a craft stage, when its chief use was for memorial engravings or letters.[7] Ong goes on to list the various ways in which phonetic writing re-structures consciousness once it is integrated within the social order. Among its major effects is its tendency to decontextualize sound:

> The...[phonetic] alphabet implies...that a word is a thing, not an event, that it is present all at once, and that it can be cut up into little pieces, which can even be written forwards and pronounced backwards: "p-a-r-t" can be pronounced "trap." [However] If you put the word "part" on a sound tape and reverse the tape, you do not get "trap," but a completely different sound, neither "part" nor "trap." (91)

The psychological effect Ong describes here--the illusion that words are substantial objects--has to do with the amplification of the visual at the expense of the aural: the world of the hearing ear takes a back seat to the world of the seeing eye. In a society with ideographic writing (pictures representing utterances), the context-bound world of memory and ear is still much more dominant than in a society which adopts the decontextualizing software of visual, phonetic writing; while in a society that relies only on consonants (such as the Hebrew alphabet), readers must retain a strong sense of the contexts from which written words spring in order to make sense of what they read.

It was because of the inroads made on memory by the introduction of writing that Plato alluded to the story of

Theuth in his Phaedrus. Theuth, in decrying writing as a new technology, was pointing to the new way of life and mode of consciousness that would inevitably attend the use of phonetic letters, both as a replacement for memory, and also as a mediating influence that would create a diminished sense of community involvement.[8] Much later in history, the two-dimensional painted art of Medieval Europe would yield to three-dimensional painting with a vanishing point--a phenomenon which McLuhan attributed to the intense amplification of the visual sense by phonetic writing and the Gutenberg press (Gutenberg Galaxy 126-27). Euclidean space and perspective in art as characteristics of "eye" culture, in turn, are complemented by the historical arrival of centre-margin power structures and nationalism--all under the influence of the book's emergence as printed artifact filled with uniform phonetic symbols (Galaxy 220-21). The opposite kind of society is the ear- and memory-based, aural/tactile realm of acoustic perception which visual cultures mistakenly tend to regard as backward. In acoustic, oral space, knowledge vital to a community is stored in the memory and preserved by means of various mnemonic conventions.[9] McLuhan's frequent references to the "visual" and the "acoustic," when he speaks of neo-oralism

in an electronic age, have to be understood in the preceding, non-literal sense.

McLuhan's distinction between visual and acoustic experience remained prominent throughout his career, as his discussion of the subject in The Global Village illustrates (6, 45, 48, 133). In addition to the visual/acoustic distinction, however, Village features an exploration of what McLuhan calls the figure/ground approach to media analysis (21-22, 25-26, 35, 45, 57, 78). Simply stated, this method refers to new technologies as "figures" operating against the "ground," or controlling environment of established technology. The phonetic alphabet, for example, when introduced by the Phonecian traders, was a "figure" which facilitated record-keeping, lists, and units of monetary exchange, all of which was alien to the former, pre-literate "ground" of memory and barter.[10] Similarly, the former "ground" of Medieval manuscript culture, with its practices of reading aloud and making each individual at a lecture into a book copyist, was eclipsed by the emergence of the Gutenberg printing press--which replaced this culture with silent reading and mass production of texts.[11]

The printing press, with its transformation of sounds into uniform, repeatable images, not only served as an

agent of major social change, as in the Protestant Reformation, but also impacted on painting in the form of 3-D perspective during the Renaissance. Further historical change ushered in by printing press technology is discussed by Harold Innis, in his Empire and Communication. Innis writes, for instance, of the newpaper's unparalleled political power during the French Revolution, the importance of printed advertising in large urban centers during England's industrial growth, and the gradual shift from print as a political/social juggernaut to the electronic medium of the telegraph in the late nineteenth century (154-170).

Clearly, McLuhan is right to encourage awareness of the social/psychological effects of media, like phonetic writing and the printing press, but he goes further than this when he suggests that any form of art--whether pictorial, musical, sculptural, or narrative--is an "anti-environment" which "talks back," in effect, to the media that impact on it. When George Stearn, for instance, asked McLuhan whether he considered his books to be "extensions" of himself, or "poetical or artistic outbursts having nothing to do with media," McLuhan replied:

> The "suggestion" is delightful and far too flattering, based, I think, on an almost ethereal

> whimsy. But it implies that I have used media analysis as a means of private self-expression. Of course when you talk back to the environment you begin to use it as means of self-expression. However, I am antienvironment. I am not in awe of media or their contents....In the sense that these media are extensions of ourselves...then my interest in them is utterly humanistic. All these technologies and the mechanisms they create are profoundly human. What does one say to people who cannot see extensions of their own bodies and faculties, who find their environments invisible? This is simply the inability to observe ordinary data. They call these same environments alien, nonhuman and search for a "point of view." Content analysis divorces them from reality.(284-85)

The spoken word becomes a strange new "environment" when it is made into a book via the phonetic alphabet and print, and as the printed, mass-produced book puts down roots in the social order, it begins to alter human sensory ratios in favour of sight, creating specific psychological effects. McLuhan's analysis of King Lear, for instance, attempts to show Shakespeare's awareness that the

technology of mapping was a societal and psychological mover and shaker, and that the (then) new art of perspective was a spin-off effect of phonetic literacy (Gutenberg Galaxy 11-17).

In this sense, McLuhan can be viewed as a deconstructive critic of art/literature--with the qualification that, for him, the linguistic "utterances" to which attention should be paid are the concrete, practical, technological media of the public and private realm. The medium of print's gradual replacement by electronic technology, for example, beginning in the mid-nineteenth and culminating in the late twentieth century, is a phenomenon with social evidence everywhere in plain view: if media can be considered linguistic "outerings," then the history of print in relation to electronic media is also a legitimate part of the history of language.

The present thesis will be an investigation of how the printed word, as linguistic utterance/outerance, influenced the creation of narrative point of view in four mainstream works of nineteenth-century British fiction. In this regard, the present concern with the craftsmanship of Frankenstein, Wuthering Heights, Jekyll and Hyde, and Sartor does not represent a somnambulistic urge to clarify their "content": on the contrary, tracing the relationship

between narrative/editorial point of view and character/plot development shows that Shelley, Brontë, Stevenson, and Carlyle possessed strong intuitive awareness of the psychology and ideology inculcated by, in McLuhan's terms, the "ground" of their era's mass-produced, phonetic-alphabet texts.

Shelley's Frankenstein, for instance, features an overriding yarn-spinner, Robert Walton, whose own literary and philosophical interests often recur in the accounts of the two primary oral sources for his tale--namely, Dr. Frankenstein and the creature he has brought into the world. The egregious regularity with which both Frankenstein and the creature echo, among other things, William Godwin's visionary right reason and Walton's own fondness for Romantic poetry (e.g. "Alastor" and "The Ancient Mariner") distinctly suggests Walton's desire to introduce a certain uniformity of perspective into the stories he re-tells (Frankenstein's and the creature's); and it is this fixity of perspective that McLuhan claims is a major effect of printing press technology on its users: Walton, that is, somnambulistically attempts to impose a fixed grid of literary allusion and philosophical truism on the tales he tells--tales that are not even his own. In the process, he reveals his own subservience to uniform

habits of thought and belief, and does not really deliver a transparent cautionary tale about science gone astray.[12] The outcasts of Walton's literate editorializing, in this sense, are Dr. Frankenstein and his creature, both of whose tales are delivered orally.

Emily Brontë's Lockwood, by comparison--as a story-teller whose fixed point of view dominates a primary oral source--inspires somewhat less suspicion than Shelley's controlling narrator. The greater part of Brontë's novel, in fact, is so well constructed that, prior to the demise of Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, Wuthering reads very much like an authentic collaboration between the literate editor, Lockwood, and the oral primary source, Nelly Dean. With the replacement of Heathcliff and the elder Catherine by Hareton and the younger Catherine, however, the generic Gothic characterization of the younger pair becomes rather ironic--especially when they are cast as advocates of a cheery future--fit to be edified and elevated by the agency of phonetic alphabet literacy. Brontë's formal agenda, because it features her awareness of the printed word's effects in relation to her characters, goes beyond realism as such.

Brontë's carefully conceived realism, even as it fulfills the visual/literate reading expectations of its

audience, simultaneously suggests the necessary absence of the world of acoustic space in a printed novel: the acoustic, after all, can only be suggested as a presence on the controlling visual ground of the printed page. Wuthering also implicitly emphasizes the dichotomy between the psychological profiles of its narrators and characters alike, who are, to varying degrees and in different ways, immersed in visual/literate and acoustic/oral worlds of perception. Brontë develops Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff as outcast characters who despise the Biblical literacy of Joseph, their tormentor, on the one hand, and who tolerate the oral and interactive Nelly Dean on the other. Lockwood writes his story while Nelly speaks hers; Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw/Linton are not portrayed as book-lovers, while Hareton (incipiently, anyway) and young Catherine Linton are. Wuthering is thus a showcase of its author's experimentalism, and transcends the Gothic genre by virtue of its ingenious formal structure.

In a similar vein of experimentation, Robert Louis Stevenson undermines what McLuhan calls the Victorian age's high-minded "equitone" narrative voice. The narration and character/plot development of The Strange Case of Dr.Jekyll and Mr. Hyde show its author's awareness of print as a dominant medium that created expectations of narrative

rectitude in the minds of a nineteenth-century British readership. In this sense, Stevenson's remarkable achievement in Jekyll and Hyde is to hoodwink his readers through knowledge of their expectations. The transmogrifying drug that allegedly changes Jekyll into Hyde becomes a highly suspicious agent of plot development as Stevenson's story unfolds: based on the many dead ends and false leads offered by the novel's narrative voices, a more likely explanation for Jekyll's sad demise and disappearance would appear to be a substance-abuse problem. Consequently, Jekyll's colleagues (one of whom is possibly the anonymous third-person narrator) wish to render this embarrassing situation obscure by suppressing evidence and playing on the public's detestation of the unattractive Edward Hyde.

Hyde, moreover, the further Stevenson's tale progresses, transcends his ostensible role as a degenerate bogey man; the possibility arises, based on the dubious reporting of his activities and deeds by self-implicating narrators, that he is just a coded reference to Dr. Jekyll's state of mind when the good doctor is thoroughly intoxicated. The professional class--to which Jekyll and Hyde's "equitone" narrator could well belong--protects its own; and among its strategies for doing so may be the

creation of false written confessions (Lanyon's and Jekyll's), which cater to reader expectation of a psychomachia in which Hyde is the evil angel. In this light, Hyde is a most interesting outcast of the literate, equitone narrator's point of view. The interest in formal experimentation which this interpretation of Jekyll and Hyde implies is consistent with Stevenson's earlier and later work. Examples of such experimental endeavours regarding narrative voice and the psychological impact of the written word itself can also be seen in Kidnapped, Treasure Island, and The Master of Ballantrae.[13]

Thomas Carlyle's Sartor Resartus, finally, which was published before the works by Brontë and Stevenson, is an essential book to consider in a discussion of literary experimentation with the uniformity-inducing medium of print. Sartor, in addition to anticipating the psychological/social effects of a neo-oral scheme of things, also features a non-linear perspective on the nature of time and space which makes its non-chronological place in the present discussion quite fitting. Formally, this work features an officious, logical editor/narrator and irreverent, poetic philosopher:[14] Carlyle's overriding narrator walks a line between satisfying the protocols of his publishing house and sustaining the force and vitality

of Teufelsdröckh's unorthodox views. Thus, the orderly presentation of philosophical views, as the cornerstone of phonetic literacy's psychological effects, takes a beating at the hands of the Clothes Philosopher, who disdains being published at all. As Carlyle draws attention to the Philosophy of Clothes as a way of experiencing the world, he polarizes his philosopher's spontaneity and holistic awareness against the logic and self-consciousness which are so important to the editor/narrator who, by virtue of his profession, is deeply involved in the use of the printed, phonetic word.

Teufelsdröckh's Philosophy of Clothes is based on insight similar to McLuhan's--namely, that all technologies are bodily extensions (the "clothes" of humanity, figuratively). Carlyle's approach, however, resembles McLuhan's only in a very broad sense. Both writers assert that we are animals who extend our bodies through the invention and use of tools; more specific to Carlyle, as a foundational assumption in Sartor, is that clothing is the "tool" (extension of the skin) with which people see fit to cover their nakedness--seeing as they are naked, not clothed, by nature (57-63). The most significant of many differences between Carlyle and McLuhan lies in Carlyle's preference for asking questions in the realm of ethics and

duty, a tendency McLuhan only approximates in his quest to help people better understand their media environment.

Carlyle, although he at times mentions how bodily extensions transform society, passes over the kind of commentary on the empirical effects of media that fascinate McLuhan, and dwells instead on how tools show the mastery of the human spirit over its material environment. As Teufelsdröckh says,

> "He who first shortened the labour of Copyists by device of Movable Types was disbanding Armies, and cashiering most kings and Senates, and creating a whole new Democratic world: he had invented the Art of Printing. The first ground handful of Nitre, Sulphur, and Charcoal drove Monk Schwartz's pestle through the ceiling: what will the last do? Achieve the final undisputed prostration of Force under Thought, of Animal courage under Spiritual." (40)

For Teufelsdröckh, human beings are more than animals because of their anomalous ability to invent and use advanced tools of all sorts so deftly. Inventions, such as the printing press and gunpowder, body forth what Carlyle regards as the indisputable miracle of human experience:

that the forces of nature actually yield to the physically extended force of the human intellect.[15]

Carlyle's transcendentalism thus covers grander territory than McLuhan's media theories, which are less concerned with the divine than with the literate foundations of a mechanistic world view. Western consciousness, for McLuhan, "is built on literacy because literacy is a uniform processing of a culture by a visual sense extended in space and time by the alphabet" (Understanding Media 88). Although both thinkers point to the transforming effects of technology like the printing press as an extension of the human body, their insights move in significantly different directions. Teufelsdröckh's fictitious life and unusual philosophy, as they are selectively presented by his editor, represent the societal and spiritual implications of amplified imaginative "sight" which sees the mysteries of the divine. McLuhan is content to deal with the societal implications of amplified physical sight and altered sensory ratios.[16]

The differences between McLuhan and Carlyle, however, are nowhere more clear than in Carlyle's fantastic web of rhetoric and allusion; in this respect, the early identification of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh (by Sartor's editor) with Melchizedek of the Old and New Testaments is

of great interest(17); for Melchizedek is synonymous, in both holy books, with the Son of God, who collects tithes from Abraham in the time of the old Covenant, and who, in New Testament times, redeems the human race with his body and blood, fulfilling the Messianic promise of Scripture. The editor/narrator enlists Melchizedek's name in an attempt to understand the "tailor" who wishes to "re-tailor" the very controlling ground of Western religious thought--as the quasi-religious tone of his rhetoric would indicate.

The editor/narrator's subsequent portrayal of the Clothes Philosopher as a holy warrior of sorts who fights and defeats the prevailing, short-sighted guardians of a mechanical-time-based society with profit-and-loss as its guiding light is thus consistent with Sartor's early evocation of Melchizedek: for Teufelsdröckh's unconventional philosophy flies in the face of publically-valorized linear thinking on the one hand, and rejects conventional notions of time and space on the other. By comparison to Carlyle's transcendental broadsides, McLuhan's often provocative sayings seem restrained. Even so, the eternal present of Teufelsdröckh's Philosophy of Clothes is, except for its numinous overtones, akin to McLuhan's emphasis on neo-oral immediacy and simultaneity

as features of the twentieth century's electronic revolution.

On the subject of living in the infinite present, Teufelsdröckh points out that "Space is but a mode of our human Sense, so likewise Time" (55): such a perspective is one with which McLuhan would most likely agree, seeing as he discusses time in similar terms--namely, the rearrangement of sensory ratios under the influence of media such as the printing press. Time, that is, as a set of characters on a piece of paper (a schedule), or as physical time piece, is nonsense to cultures that lack writing, and the quantification of time occurs hand-in-hand with the invention of alphabets--ideogrammic or phonetic (less intensely for the former, however). For Carlyle, as for McLuhan, the technological outerings of the human body produce social change: the tension between the world of the literate editorial voice and the holistically inclined Teufelsdröckh in Sartor therefore stands out as a clash between a well-established social foundation of phonetic writing and a newly-emerging world of electronic immediacy.

Carlyle's confidence in the newspaper as the forum of the future, for example, shows his intuitive grasp of how the newspaper embodies a sense of immediacy by presenting thematically and geographically unrelated stories on the

uniformly rendered, visual display-case of the printed page --thus allowing visual and acoustic spaces of thought and experience to interpenetrate. The printed word diminishes the involvement of the other senses of taste, touch, smell, and hearing as it amplifies the visual sense; simultaneously, however, the fragmented nature of newspaper lay-outs makes it all but impossible for readers to maintain a fixed point of view. Carlyle, by creating terse descriptive summaries for Sartor's chapters, playfully mimics the headline style of newspapers, and his deliberate disruption of narrative continuity parallels the similar discontinuity of newspaper stories, with their thematically diverse contents.

Quite another question is whether Carlyle foresaw how electronic technology's speed-up of communication via the extension of the central nervous system would have the effect of overcoming the printed word's dominance as a medium, whether in the form of newspapers or books. The electronic creation of a sense of immediate social communion through the agency of telegraph and telephone technologies later in the nineteenth century, that is, greatly intensified the public expectation of quick information in matters of public (if not private) concern. Information conveyed by electronic communication was less

abstract and more contextual than that delivered by machine-based, visual communication media, since the former could be conveyed almost as quickly as it happened; and such context-bound meaning as electric technology delivers is the defining quality of primary oral cultures that lack any system of writing, let alone books and libraries. (See Ong's list of oral society qualities in the Appendix.) With the even greater intensity in communication speed introduced by twentieth-century electronic innovation, the conditions for McLuhan's neo-oral "global village" emerged; and although Carlyle's need to re-define time and space overlaps with McLuhan's ideas on the same, the former did not make such profound linkages as did McLuhan with respect to technology's impact on either psychology or society.

What McLuhan discovered and drew attention to in a technologically advanced culture, Carlyle, Stevenson, Brontë, and Shelley anticipated intuitively in a less scientifically advanced culture. Carlyle, and the other writers to be considered in this study, were not, of course, alone in their inklings of the relation between the printed word and human consciousness, but space and time forbid an exhaustive look at other interesting possibilities for analysis along the lines of the present subject.[17] However, if the authors and works to be discussed

here can be considered as precursors to more radical twentieth-century writings in the vein of media awareness, then readers of nineteenth-century fiction and philosophy may benefit from the new light that such a status casts upon them.

Endnotes
Introduction

1

Eric McLuhan, in The Role of Thunder in *Finnegan's Wake*, classifies Sartor as a Menippean satire, or one which sets out to disrupt the sensibilities and expectations of its readers. Further attention will be given to this idea in Chapter Four.

2

Anthony Burgess' rejection of McLuhan's claims regarding the social/ideological effects of print is a good example of such misunderstanding (Burgess 9-33). Other critics, such as Jonathan Miller, dispute McLuhan's claims about the sensory effects of television, while John Fekete makes McLuhan out to be a technological determinist. Terrence Gordon rebuts the views of the former and the latter in McLuhan: Escape into Understanding. See Gordon for critiques on Miller (209-15) and Fekete (302-03).

3

This is a tetrad created by Terrence Gordon in Escape Into Understanding (337).

4

Glenn Wilmott's McLuhan: Modernism in Reverse, for example, attempts to categorize McLuhan's thought by placing it at the rupture point between modernism and post-

modernism. Wilmott's book, although well researched, associates McLuhan too closely with the influence of I.A. Richards and the New Critics: Richards is an undeniable influence on McLuhan's development, but the pupil goes much farther than the teacher in this case. Wilmott's dismissal of most of McLuhan's work after The Mechanical Bride also involves a determined effort not to consider seriously his definition of media as bodily extensions in works such as The Gutenberg Galaxy, Understanding Media, and especially The Laws of Media.

5

As Gordon writes, on the origin of McLuhan's sometimes cryptic style, "McLuhan's predilection in later years for aphorisms and the tentative statements he would call 'probes' may be attributable directly to his study of Bacon and to what he learned of Bacon through I.A. Richards at Cambridge" (105).

6

McLuhan, in fact, frequently refers to the content of narratives such as that of King Lear--albeit in order to show how even Shakespeare possessed a strong awareness of developments in his own media environment, such as the map, the clock, and 3-D perspective. See Gutenberg (11-17).

7

As Ong writes in Orality and Literacy, "Only around Plato's time in ancient Greece, more than three centuries after the introduction of the Greek alphabet, was this stage transcended when writing was interiorized enough to affect thought processes generally" (94).

8

See Plato's Phaedrus (96). This passage from Plato is a bone of some contention, for Jacques Derrida views the myth as a quintessential example of Western logocentric bias (i.e., the privileging of speech over écriture--écriture being the system of pure difference, in a linguistic sense, that involves the appreciation of absence rather than the transcendent "presence" supposedly guaranteed by speech acts. See Of Grammatology (43). Impossible as it is to do justice to such a question in an endnote, it should be observed that McLuhan professes no animus against Derrida's linguistics: McLuhan, that is, sees no guarantee of transcendent truth either in speech or "writing," nor does his deliberately disconnected, mosaic approach bear the mark of the metaphysical agenda despised by Derrida. It is enough to say that the work of McLuhan, Ong, Havelock, and Milman Parry has established legitimate differences between

oral and literate societies; the observations of Theuth may be taken at face value as reminders of those differences.

9

See Appendix.

10

This statement is not meant to imply that the invention of money is caused exclusively by the introduction of phonetic writing. As Derrick DeKerckhove's comments would indicate, in The Skin of Culture, money as a medium of exchange was a part of non-phonetic cultures too (22-26). The common sensory bias introduced by both phonetic and other kinds of writing, however, is still a visual one; hence the propensity for people from both phonetic and ideographic writing cultures gradually to abandon their oral/tribal localism, and to develop, over time, larger nations with center/margin authority structures, as well as bureaucracies presided over by literate elites, and money as an efficient medium of exchange. See Harold Innis' The Bias of Communication, for example, for a discussion of how writing and the availability of papyrus coincided with the expansion of the ancient Egyptian empire, also a non-phonetic culture(31, 35).

11

Even though Elizabeth Eisenstein, in The Printing Press as an Agent of Social Change: Communication and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe, is somewhat skeptical that the printing press has the effects claimed by Marshall McLuhan, she acknowledges the social changes brought about through print and the age of literacy it created: "One cannot treat printing as just one among many elements in a complex causal nexus, for the communications shift transformed the nature of the causal nexus itself. It is of special historical significance because it produced fundamental alterations in prevailing patterns of continuity and change....The printing press laid the basis for both literal fundamentalism and for modern science. It remains indispensable for humanistic scholarship. It is still responsible for our museum without walls" (273-74). Eisenstein's association of print both with the advent of modern science as well as with the expectation of uniformity sounds remarkably like the sayings of McLuhan himself.

12

See Theodore Ziolkowski, "Science, Frankenstein, and Myth." Ziolkowski repeats a common impression of Shelley's

novel when he comments that it is "a cautionary tale against science divorced from ethical responsibility"(43).

13

In Treasure Island, Jim Hawkins' and Dr. Livesay's narrative accounts differ amusingly in their estimation of Squire Trelawney and his gardener, but the novel's plot is driven by the discovery of a map; the map, as McLuhan comments in Gutenberg, "was...a novelty in the sixteenth century...and was key to the new vision of peripheries of power and wealth....More important, the map brings forward at once a principal theme of King Lear, namely the isolation of the visual sense as a kind of blindness" (11). The technology of mapping encourages the illusion of possession in its creation of dividing lines where none exist. The urge to possess the treasure revealed by the map, in turn, divides the treasure-seeking groups against each other as they compete for possession of both map and treasure. Other examples of plots driven by awareness of the written word's effects are Kidnapped and Master of Ballantrae: in the former, the will of David Balfour's father is crucial to David's kidnapping and ultimate enfranchisement as a gentleman of property who seeks justice for Alan Breck and his brother James. As such, the written word shows its potential for uniting political

factions as unlike as the Jacobites and Whigs (at least in theory). In Ballantrae, Henry Drurie, brother to the Mephistophilean James Drurie (the "Master"), goes to his grave with a pamphlet stashed in his breast pocket--one which slanders his own reputation and glorifies his brother as a Jacobite stalwart. Throughout the novel, Henry stays home on the estate of Ballantrae, attending to paperwork and suffering immensely, while James never appears to be tied to such mundane concerns of literate society--except for higher matters of culture and philosophy.

14

The problematic issue of just who is the overriding narrative voice of Sartor will be briefly addressed at the outset of Chapter Four.

15

For Teufelsdröckh, such a phenomenon is beyond explanation. As he says in Sartor, "'Let any Cause-and-Effect Philosopher explain not just why I wear such and such a Garment, obey such and such a Law; but even why I am here, to wear and obey anything'" (36). This passage is just one of many that suggest Carlyle's perspective on the miraculous: the short version of his view in this regard is that miracles need not be viewed as aberrations from the laws of nature, but rather as examples of natural laws that

have not as yet been (and perhaps never can be) discovered. See "Natural Supernaturalism," and Harrold's footnoted comments (257).

16

For McLuhan, in Media, the amplification and physical extension of any given sense organ, body part, or psychological process results in a "narcosis," or numbing of the same (51-52). People influenced by such "numbing," in turn, tend to be insensitive to the perceptions of those whose bodies are not extended in the same way. Hence, in tribal cultures "not yet abstracted [from the full gamut of sense-life] by literary and industrial visual order, nudity is merely pathetic"; but, adds McLuhan, "to the highly visual and lopsided sensibility of industrial societies, the sudden confrontation with tactile flesh is heady music indeed" (116).

17

Dickens' Our Mutual Friend, for example, aside from the importance of literacy as a factor in its plot development, contains a considerable number of passages that contrast the visual and the tactile, with implications similar to those of Shelley, Brontë and Stevenson.

Chapter One
Frankenstein and his Creature: Outcasts of the Fixed Point of View

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein features Robert Walton as a literate editor in a position of control over the orally rendered information he receives from Dr. Frankenstein and his creature. The narrative Walton creates from this material, however, is one which strongly suggests that he is deliberately falsifying the tales he retells by imposing his ideological and literary biases on these stories. The strong presence in the novel of generic Gothic conventions, the implicit endorsement by Frankenstein and the creature of Godwinian benevolence (practically identical to Walton's), the suggestive description of Frankenstein in terms of Percy Shelley's Alastor, the similarly suggestive rendering of the creature in terms of Milton's Satan, and the suspiciously universal rejection of the creature's ugliness, all suggest the influence of an editor attempting to assimilate Frankenstein's and the creature's narratives to a point of view more recognizable to the reading public.

Walton's education via the printed word and phonetic alphabet, as Marshall McLuhan might say, is a strong influence in his decision to impose his literate biases on stories that are not his own. In this sense, Frankenstein's

ingenious set-up of narrative voices and of Walton's influence on them shows Shelley's ability to recognize intuitively one of the phonetically written word's chief psychological effects: namely, its tendency to inculcate in its users an abstracted fixity of purpose that is divorced from the particulars of experience. The ambiguities that arise from Frankenstein's and the creature's stories, of course, may also be understood in terms of the difficulties Shelley herself felt while writing Frankenstein: Shelley may have introduced the editorial voice of Walton as a mediating influence that would provide interesting interpretive possibilities, or perhaps she was simply unable to unravel and harmonize all the strands of allusion she introduced to her tale, and thus invented Walton to inherit the responsibility, as it were, of authorship. In either case, Victor Frankenstein and his creature ultimately become the outcasts of Walton's single-mindedness as he attempts to resurrect his failed ambition of creating a memorable piece of writing.

The fixed point of view that writers like Walter Ong and Marshall McLuhan associate with phonetic literacy differs from the context-bound, oral/tribal point of view in its generation of conclusions that stay in place, contrary to the frequent absence of such fixity in experience itself.

Walter Ong, writing about the fixed perspective that Marshall McLuhan associates with literacy and the printing press, observes that "Print creates a sense of closure not only in literary works but also in analytic philosophical and scientific works"(35). Explaining this phenomenon further, he says that

> With print came in the catechism and the "textbook," less discursive and less disputatious than most previous presentations of a given academic subject. Catechisms and textbooks presented "facts" or their equivalents: memorizable, flat statements that told straightforwardly and inclusively how matters stood in a given field. By contrast, the memorable statements of oral cultures and residually oral manuscript cultures tended to be of a proverbial sort, presenting not "facts" but rather reflections, often of a gnomic kind, inviting further reflection by the paradoxes they involved....
>
> A correlative of the sense of closure fostered by print was the fixed point of view, which as Marshall McLuhan has pointed out ... came into being with print. With the fixed point of view, a

> fixed tone could now be preserved through the whole of a lengthy prose composition. The fixed point of view and fixed tone showed in one way a greater distance between writer and reader and in another way a greater tacit understanding.... At this point, the "reading public" came into existence--a sizable clientele of readers unknown personally to the author but able to deal with certain more or less established points of view. (134-135)

Textbooks like William Godwin's Enquiry Concerning Political Justice or John Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding, written, as they were, when the printing press and phonetic alphabet era were dominant media, could depend on the curious (and growing) reading audience referred to by Ong as willing recipients of Godwin's rationalism or Locke's empirical logic.

For that matter, the reading public was also receptive to the literary conventions of the popular Gothic novel, such as the genteel manners connected with courtly love and the use of the supernatural in plot development. As Frankenstein unfolds, Walton's acquaintance with the ideological preferences of Godwin and Locke becomes apparent, as does his fascination with Gothically-influenced

literature, such as Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." Thus considered, Walton's previous lack of a compelling story-line as a vehicle for his ideological/literary baggage is something which Frankenstein's appearance remedies. The intertwining of Walton's reading preferences with the narratives of Frankenstein and his creature suggests that he exercises a free hand with the tales that are delivered into his power.

Walton is a character who has always been "passionately fond of reading" (14), and who writes to his sister, Margaret Seville, from an intensely private point of view. He is also an adventurous man who tends to imagine himself in rather grand terms, contrary to his actual existence as a social unknown. In this sense, Walton is a narrator who attempts to make his life conform to the greatness of the human soul as he perceives it in works such as Milton's Paradise Lost and Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner", among others. His immersion in such narratives suggests the printed, phonetic word's tendency, over time, to isolate the individual self from the sense of immediate involvement in experience that characterizes pre-literate cultures.

As Ashley Montagu writes, in Man: His First Million Years,

> It is necessary to understand that nonliterate

> peoples identify themselves very much more closely with the world in which they live than do the literate peoples of the world. The more "literate" people become, the more they tend to become detached from the world in which they live. What happens <u>is</u> reality to the nonliterate. If ceremonies calculated to increase the birth of animals and the yield of plants are followed by such increases, then the ceremonies are not only connected with them but are part of them....An educated white man finding himself suddenly deposited in the Central Australian desert would be unlikely to last very long. Yet the Australian aborigine manages very well. The aboriginals of all lands have made adjustments to their environments....(76)

Walton's trip to the North Pole, in spite of the glory and Romantic attraction which this literate character attributes to it, falls apart easily under the impact of Dr. Frankenstein's unforeseen arrival. Walton, as a man of letters, clings to the romance of his enterprise even after Frankenstein bluntly warns him of his folly, thus evincing the fixity of his perspective in the novel's early stages (27). His intense interest in literature as he proceeds on

an unpredictable adventure not only influences the tone of Walton's letters to Margaret Seville, but also the tone he brings to his meeting with the novel's namesake.

One of the first details that suggests Walton's tendency to impose the resonance of literary convention on lived experience is his first encounter with Dr. Frankenstein (who, we learn, is pursuing the creature he has made and is at this point nearly frozen to death): "Before I come on board your vessel," says the doctor, "Will you have the kindness to inform me whither you are bound?"(24). Walton's narration here sounds less like a ship's captain relating a bizarre occurrence in the far north and more like a would-be novelist, intent on writing a stylized story; [1] for a man at death's doorstep who decorously asks which way his ship of salvation is heading exemplifies the superhuman gallantry characterizing highly conventionalized romance and Gothic genres. This description of how Walton first encounters Dr. Frankenstein, however, merely sets the table for further detail which suggests both the overriding narrator's still-burning ambition to be a writer and also his editorial officiousness.

The episode of Frankenstein's dream, for example, which occurs on the heels of the doctor's success in creating

life, has the ambience of Gothic melodrama and supernaturalism:

> I slept, indeed, but I was disturbed by the wildest dreams. I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel. I started from my sleep with horror; a cold dew covered my forehead, my teeth chattered, and every limb became convulsed; when, by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the window-shutters, I beheld the wretch....(56-57)

This passage's unmistakeable Gothic elements are consistent with the epic and highly conventional gallantry of the greeting scene Walton has already provided. Similarly, the chattering of teeth, the convulsion of limbs, and the entrance of a quasi-supernatural being are Gothic elements

which would be indispensable to a published novel's success --conveniently enough for Walton [2].

The wedding-night scene also brings the Gothic elements of suspense and horror in Frankenstein's story to the boiling point. Frankenstein's effusions upon seeing Elizabeth, for example, when she has just been brutally murdered by the creature, are reminiscent of his morbid dream recollections, but with a much more perfunctory conclusion:

> Great God! Why did I not then expire! Why am I here to relate the destruction of the best hope, and the purest creation of earth? She was there, lifeless and inanimate, thrown across the bed, her head hanging down, and her pale and distorted features half covered by her hair. Every where I turn I see the same figure--her bloodless arms and relaxed form flung by the murderer on its bridal bier. Could I behold this, and live? Alas! life is obstinate, and clings closest where it is most hated. For a moment only did I lose recollection: I fell senseless on the ground. (189)

A man's fainting spell is, of course, a deviation from the more commonly portrayed female fainting spells in Gothic tales. The sheer novelty of such a detail, however,

suggests the inventive hand of Walton the frustrated writer whose desire for literary fame may be a far from extinguished ambition. More importantly, the creation of such a fantastic Gothic story suggests Walton's position as the overriding editor who reconstructs Frankenstein's story according to his own literate interests.

At the beginning of the expedition Walton has launched, for instance, it is clear he believes in a social philosophy which strongly resembles William Godwin's in Enquiry Concerning Political Justice. This bias can be seen in his story of the humane and altruistic lieutenant who bestows his fortune on a young woman and her lover, in spite of having been rejected as a lover by the woman in question (Shelley 18-19). Here is Godwin's explanation of the need for such altruism as the lieutenant's:

> The good of my neighbour could not...have been chosen, but as the means of agreeable sensation. His cries, or the spectacle of his distress importune me, and I am irresistibly impelled to adopt means to remove this importunity. The child perceives, in his own case, that menaces or soothing tend to stop his cries, and he is induced to employ, in a similar instance, that mode of the two which seems most within his reach. He thinks

> little of the sufferings endured, and is only uneasy at the impression made upon his organs. To this motive, he speedily adds the idea of esteem and gratitude, which are to be purchased by his beneficence. (180)

In Godwin's view, benevolence is the inevitable result, both of childhood experience and adult reflection; Walton's story of the selfless lieutenant is thus an endorsement of how right reason guides one to make difficult decisions. Aside from Walton's brief anecdote, however, which is told in about four hundred words, there is no subsequent reference to the lieutenant for the rest of the novel, and Shelley's narrator offers little more about the lieutenant's character except to say tersely that he is now "as silent as a Turk" (19); this ambiguous comment could suggest the lieutenant's stoicism, serenity, or even bitterness. Thus, it is legitimate to say that Walton's implicit belief in a Godwinian ideal impels him to depict a lieutenant whose situation could be quite different from what he would have us believe; conveniently enough, the lieutenant himself can not be appealed to for confirmation or denial of how Walton portrays him.

The novel's references to Godwinian ideals do not end with the enigmatic story of the lieutenant. One sees the

delineation of such ideals shortly afterward, too, in Victor Frankenstein's story of his family. Frankenstein's story of his mother Caroline, for instance, features the future Mrs. Frankenstein selflessly ministering to her sick father when she is discovered by Frankenstein's father; Caroline's altruism assumes an even stronger hue of Godwinism when she and her husband rescue Justine from poverty and bring her into their family. Justine herself, when she is falsely accused of murder and faces a shameful punishment, never defends herself at all, let alone in a way that would implicate the family that has adopted her (81-82). One may ask here whether it is coincidental for such selfless behaviour as Caroline's and Justine's to occur in a story (Frankenstein's) being re-told by a narrator who has already laid his cards on the table regarding the rightness of Godwinian altruism.

Continuing the pattern of Walton's editorial preferences emerging in what is supposed to be Frankenstein's story is the strange resemblance between Dr. Frankenstein and Percy Shelley's Alastor. As Maurice Hindle writes, in a commentary on the similarity between the two,

> Mary Shelley has Frankenstein say, in his more "scientific" vein, that "To examine the causes of life we must first have recourse to death." He

> thus determines to "observe the natural decay and corruption of the human body"; but "to examine the cause and progress of this decay" he is "forced to spend days and nights in vaults and charnel houses." (xxii, xxiii)

Like Alastor, Dr. Frankenstein is fascinated with the corruption of death, and like Alastor, he is one whose "conciliatory and gentle" manners fill Walton and his sailors with "sympathy and compassion"(26). Walton goes on to extol Frankenstein's apparently sympathetic reaction to nature's beauty, implicitly likening him to Alastor:

> Even broken in spirit as he is, no one can feel more deeply than he does the beauties of nature. The starry sky, the sea, and every sight afforded by these wonderful regions seems still to have the power of elevating his soul from earth. Such a man has a double existence: he may suffer misery, and be overwhelmed by disappointments; yet, when he has retired into himself, he will be like a celestial spirit, that has a halo around him, within whose circle no grief or folly ventures. (28)

The same earnestness that has informed his praise of the humane lieutenant is evident in Walton's implicit likening

of Frankenstein to Alastor; but whereas the lieutenant is mentioned only once, with no way of confirming whether he is worthy of Walton's praise, Frankenstein's central position in Walton's re-told tale will not let him fit easily into the mould the novel's overriding narrator prepares for him.

Frankenstein's own narrative, for example, later creates an impression of himself that undermines Walton's association of him with Alastor; one assumes that the doctor, as a man of the high character described by Walton, should feel more sympathy toward the creature than is evident during his carefree rambles with Clerval. Generally, however, no such sympathy emerges in Frankenstein's story. Frankenstein, about four months after deserting the "daemon" he has created, and after having had a nervous breakdown, behaves in a way that trivializes his recent horrific experience. He comments that during his convalescence, "The present season [of spring] was indeed divine"; later, he describes his pleasure-seeking bouts with Henry Clerval, and notes that

> ... the flowers of spring bloomed in the hedges, while those of summer were already in bud; I was undisturbed by thoughts which during the preceding year had pressed upon me, notwithstanding my

> endeavours to throw them off, with an invincible burden....
>
> We returned to our college on a Sunday afternoon: the peasants were dancing and everyone we met appeared gay and happy. My own spirits were high, and I bounded along, with feelings of unbridled joy and hilarity.(68)

Frankenstein's ethereal pleasure in identifying so strongly with nature is at odds with the disturbing trauma he has just been through. It is unclear in this passage whether Frankenstein himself actually has told his own story in the way that it is rendered--for the above lines can ring true only if one does not consider his disturbing neglect of sympathy for the being he has recently created.

Further indication that Walton is possibly smuggling in his own narrative under the cover of Frankenstein's story is that Walton and every other character who encounters the creature are united in rejecting the creature's ugliness. In this light, Walton's own, impenitent confession of revulsion at the creature's ugliness is revealing. After preparing his sister for a description of the creature in the most extreme way, Walton tells her that he had to avert his eyes upon first seeing it, so loathsome was its appearance to him; and when Walton approaches it, he adds

that "I dared not again raise my eyes to his face, there was something so scaring and unearthly in his ugliness"(211). This confession reveals the inveterate bias against ugliness of the narrator who gets the last word in all the novel's crucial points--such as the incident when the creature covers Frankenstein's eyes so that his creator does not have to look at him while speaking (98), or the creature's own, unqualified self-rejection upon first seeing his reflection in a pool (110). Walton's editorial influence seems designed to make everyone detest the creature's appearance as much as he does.

When the creature first comes to life, for instance, Frankenstein expresses his negative response with details such as the "yellow skin" that "scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath," not to mention the "watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same color as the dun white sockets in which they were set, his shriveled complexion, and straight black lips" (56). Undermining this apparent phobia against ugliness, Frankenstein's narration informs us that the doctor himself has selected the creature's facial characteristics as "beautiful," and his limbs "in proportion"(56); hence, it is hard to explain how the creature can be a shock for Dr. Frankenstein, who has put him together in the first place:

> Oh! no mortal could support the horror of that countenance. A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch. I had gazed on him while unfinished; he was ugly then; but when those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, it became a thing such as even Dante could not have conceived. (57)

Even more inexplicably, Frankenstein deserts the creature without so much as an attempt to observe closely the successful outcome of a stupendously successful scientific experiment. Neither does such a reaction to the creature sound as though it belongs to the broad-minded scientist described earlier by Walton. Why indeed should the allegedly cultivated and beneficent doctor harbor this intense dislike toward a creature whose very existence would appear to promise him unrivalled fame?

This pervasive response to ugliness casts a similar light on Frankenstein's reaction to his brother's death and Justine's execution. Frankenstein's story shows that he is anything but resolved over how to deal with the creature when it begins to murder his friends and family. Oddly, however, after the creature himself--loathsome appearance and all--tells Frankenstein that he has murdered William and framed Justine, Frankenstein speaks the novel's most

sympathetic words for his creation, brief though they are:

> His tale, and the feelings he now expressed, proved him to be a creature of fine sensations; and did I not as his maker, owe him all the portion of happiness that it was in my power to bestow? (141)

But yet again, sympathy dissolves into contempt when Frankenstein continues his comments:

> I compassionated him and sometimes felt a wish to console him; but when I looked upon him, when I saw the filthy mass that moved and talked, my heart sickened and my feelings were altered to those of horror and hatred. (142)

It is reasonable to say that Frankenstein's sympathy might well vanish here because the creature has murdered William and victimized Justine, not simply because of the creature's ugliness. Instead, the same fixed reprobation of ugliness emerges, suggesting a controlling editorial influence which switches the narrative's emphasis away from a more credible characterization of Frankenstein's reaction to a tragic loss. Walton's nausea at physical deformity obtrusively replaces a more appropriate narrative development of Frankenstein's grief when the doctor loses a brother (William) and a family friend (Justine).

Walton's intrusive efforts to cast Frankenstein in the role of his friend, one whose views are much the same as Walton's, also suggests aggressive editorial control on Walton's part. Frankenstein, for example, calls Walton his friend early in the novel after Walton confesses his own want of a soul-mate. Running contrary to the possibility of such a friendship is the awkward presence of Frankenstein's dire warnings against Walton's enterprise. These warnings are passionate rejections of Walton's fanatical zeal and curiosity. The first occurs in response to Walton's comments about his own ambition as an explorer and scientist. Walton solemnly declares that

> One man's life or death were but a small price to pay for the acquirement of the knowledge which I sought for the dominion I should acquire and transmit over the elemental foes of our race.(27)

Frankenstein's reply--"Do you share my madness?"--would appear to set the stage for at least a short and intense debate between the two characters, but no such scrimmage occurs.[3] Just as unconvincing is how Frankenstein's first warning to Walton segues to a cozy, Gothic chat--"Prepare to hear of occurences which are usually deemed marvellous..." (29). This transition is less than credible, especially

with Walton the frustrated writer in the background as controlling editor.

Similarly unpersuasive is Frankenstein's second warning to Walton about the danger of scientific ambition, which occurs after Frankenstein sees that Walton is curious about the practical details concerning the creature's revivification. Walton, of course, has now heard Frankenstein's story in its entirety, but his comments reveal that he is conspicuously unreformed about the perils of tinkering with nature. After relating Frankenstein's deeply troubled reaction, he quickly drops the episode, along with all further reference to his own absurdly inappropriate curiosity, and resumes his narrative on the poor doctor with more of his now-familiar rhetoric about needing a high purpose and a soul-mate with whom to share it (27-28).

The third warning, which occurs on Frankenstein's deathbed, is patently ambiguous, and embodies two contrary points of view--that of the reformed scientist who regrets his life's work, and that of the impenitent scientist who is bound, mind and soul, to the work he has done:

> "The forms of the beloved dead flit before me, and I hasten to their arms. Farewell, Walton! Seek happiness in tranquillity, and avoid ambition,

> even if it be only the apparently innocent one of distinguishing yourself in science and discoveries. Yet why do I say this? I have myself been blasted in these hopes, yet another may succeed." (210)

The Frankenstein of home and hearth is evident here, as is the character who extols the unending delights of scientific inquiry and experiment. Logically, the latter should represent the curious, scientific Frankenstein prior to the creature, while the former should represent his penitential state of mind after the disaster his work has wrought upon home and hearth. The gallant, Gothic tone of the passage, however, parallels that of Walton's first encounter with the doctor on the ice floes--once again raising the possibility of a relentless editor who recycles literary conventions to tell a tale that caters to reader expectations.

Walton's toil as the officious editor and would-be author suggests itself further when he speaks of his collaboration with the story-telling Frankenstein. According to Walton's later observation, for instance, the only change Frankenstein has made in his narrative account of the meeting is to amplify the "life and spirit" of conversations with his "enemy" the creature. Yet, in these very conversations, to which Frankenstein has allegedly paid

his sharpest attention as co-editor, the doctor comes off with very little dignity:

> "Devil," I exclaimed, "do you dare approach me? and do not you fear the fierce vengeance of my arm wreaked on your miserable head? Begone, vile insect! or rather, stay, that I may trample you to dust...." (96)

Walton would appear to have re-told the doctor's story of this meeting with the creature by drawing on Gothic conventions that he knows to be accessible to a contemporary reading audience, creating a Frankenstein who sheds the sensitivity of Alastor, and dons the manic bravado of Horace Walpole's Manfred. Frankenstein's address to the creature in his first meeting with it borders on the absurd. He knows the creature is physically superior to him, so his words, on this level, are mere bluster. As far as moral indignation is concerned, Frankenstein assumes much: how can he know the creature even knows how to speak, let alone that it is capable of understanding his anger? And where is his Alastorian sympathy for a fellow living being--especially one of his own creation?

The generic Gothic strain in this passage is complicated by the words of a creature whose reply to his maker first recalls Godwin, and then John Milton's Satan.

This medley of allusion points to a Walton who is having trouble co-ordinating the different literary sources he is smuggling in:

> "I expected this reception," said the daemon, "All men hate the wretched; how, then, must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things! Yet you, my creator, detest and spurn me, thy creature, to whom thou art bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us....How dare you sport thus with life? Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you and the rest of mankind....but if you refuse, I will glut the maw of death, until it be satiated with the blood of your remaining friends." (96)

The creature's speech to his creator, for the most part, marks him as a model of decorum and Godwinian right reason. He insists on the necessity of both his own and Frankenstein's "duty" as he persuades the doctor to grant his wish for a mate, but the ominous, Satanic threat with which his speech concludes contradicts Godwin's abhorrence of such coercion. The inconsistency in the creature's personality is explicable in terms of an editor who throws together philosophical and literary sources in an effort to gain the response of a readership that recognizes them.

In addition to suggesting the sometimes inept hand of an officious Walton, however, the amalgam of sources that emerges in the portrait of the creature and his creator also points to the tendency of literate individuals like Walton to impose their own ill-fitting biases on oral perception and self-expression. Frankenstein and the creature, although they are not, of course, members of oral cultures, relate their tales using the spoken word--a process which would involve reliance on memory, redundancy, and homeostasis, among other features that accompany oral performance. In this regard, Walter Ong comments on how literate individuals/societies inevitably misrepresent oral tales and thought processes:

> Though words are grounded in oral speech, writing tyrannically locks them into a visual field forever. A literate person, asked to think of the word "nevertheless," will normally (and I strongly suspect always) have some image, at least vague, of the spelled-out word and be quite unable ever to think of the word "nevertheless" for, let us say, 60 seconds without adverting to any lettering but *only* to the sound. This is to say, a literate person cannot fully recover a sense of what the word is to purely oral people. In view of this

> pre-emptiveness of literacy, it appears quite impossible to use the term "literature" to include oral tradition and performance without subtly but irremediably reducing these somehow to variants of writing. (12)

A translation of any oral performance into the medium of writing can thus be expected to feature more than a few stylistic alterations, such as the transitional words and phrases of formal prose. Walton's version of the stories he re-tells goes much further than this, however, featuring ideological/philosophical ideas endorsed by Walton himself.

For example, in the opening of the creature's supposed narration of his own story, the implications of John Locke's tabula rasa are prominent and the creature's account is suspiciously sympathetic to Locke's empiricism:

> "It is with considerable difficulty that I remember the original era of my being: all the events of that period appear confused and indistinct. A strange multiplicity of sensations seized me, and I saw, felt, heard, and smelt at the same time; and it was, indeed, a long time before I learned to distinguish between the operations of my various senses....
>
> Soon a gentle light stole over the heavens,

> and gave me a sensation of pleasure. I started up and beheld a radiant form rise from among the trees. I gazed with a kind of wonder. It moved slowly, but it enlightened my path, and I again went out in search of berries. I was still cold when under one of the trees I found a huge cloak, with which I covered myself, and sat down upon the ground. No distinct ideas occupied my mind; all was confused." (100)

While the creature's story, as it moves along, evokes Locke as if his written work embodied truth transparently and inevitably, one might expect that any truth revealed by this newly-created life would be unexpected and unpredictable; in fact, Frankenstein's creature lives up to Walton's literate acceptance of the tabula rasa much too obviously to be plausible. The possible influence of Walton's controlling, editorial presence here actually competes with the pathos of a rejected creature recounting his past.

One sees further possibility of Walton's literate education contaminating the creature's tale when it accidentally acquires Plutarch's Lives, Milton's Paradise Lost, and Goethe's The Sorrows of Werther. Walton, that is, as meddlesome editor/writer, would appear to be unconsciously manifesting anxiety over his own literary

influences as he mediates the creature's story. Walter Ong discusses such an anxiety in terms of print culture's unique mind-set:

> Print culture...tends to feel a work as "closed," set off from other works, a unit in itself. Print culture gave birth to the romantic notions of "originality" and "creativity," which set apart an individual work from other works even more, seeing its origins and meaning as independent of outside influence, at least ideally. When in the past few decades doctrines of intertextuality arose to counteract the isolationist aesthetics of a romantic print culture, they came as a kind of shock. They were all the more disquieting because modern writers, agonizingly aware of literary history and of the *de facto* intertextuality of their own works, are concerned that they may be producing nothing really new or fresh at all, that they may be totally under the "influence" of others' texts.... Manuscript cultures had few if any anxieties about influence to plague them, and oral cultures had virtually none. (134)

Walton admirably fulfills Ong's portrait of the anxiety-laden, literate author: as twice-removed mediator of the

creature's tale, he adds layer after layer of literary allusion to the story he handles, indicating, in the process, the influences of his own ambition and education. Locke's empiricism reveals Walton's philosophical side. Paradise Lost represents the poem Walton could never equal or surpass, while Goethe's Werther represents the widespread eighteenth-century hysteria of those who react to literature as sensitively as Walton.

Walton, however, does not therefore emerge as a reflection of eighteenth-century sensibility. On the contrary, his display of overt sensitivity to so many literary/philosophical influences becomes rather suspect as they appear and re-appear in the tales of Frankenstein and the creature. It has already been seen, for instance, how his knowledge of Godwin conveniently permeates the points of view of both Frankenstein and the creature. In the DeLacey episode, however, the quite anti-Godwinian rejection of the creature when Felix and Agatha re-enter the cottage is bizarre--for the old (and manifestly benevolent) DeLacey must at least have an inkling of the creature's loneliness and sincerity; yet he and his family, even after their perhaps forgiveable first rejection of him, show not the slightest indication that they realize the mistake they have made. Such bigotry as apparently attaches itself to the

DeLaceys does not mix well with the Godwinian enlightenment they display elsewhere. Walton's imposition of various learned sources on his material, besides inadvertently betraying his own hatred of ugliness, also results in a noticeably uneven effect on the stories he mediates.

An epitome, for instance, of how the disparate literary allusions in Frankenstein clash occurs when the creature recognizes that there is no place for him in a society that embodies such biases as he has encountered:

> Nature decayed around me, and the sun became heatless; rain and snow poured around me; mighty rivers were frozen; the surface of the earth was hard and chill, and bare, and I found no shelter. Oh, earth! how often did I imprecate curses on the cause of my being! The mildness of my nature had fled, and all within me was turned to gall and bitterness. The nearer I approached to your habitation, the more deeply did I feel the spirit of revenge enkindled in my heart. (135)

The creature vengefully enters the role of Satan in Paradise Lost, conveniently enough for Walton, whose ambition in any case has been to rival Milton's epic. The longer Walton tinkers with the stories of his narrators, the more his influence clashes with their tales, and the more literary

influences he introduces as a kind of damage control. After all, besides suggesting Milton, the first few lines above are also reminiscent of Byron's "Darkness."

Undermining the creature's Satanic rhetoric, however, are his heart-rending pleas for understanding, which make him into a strange combination of victim and guinea pig at the altar of scientific progress, with no source of human sympathy, as is the case when he laments Frankenstein's and humanity's hostility towards him:

> "Shall I respect man when he contemns me? Let him live with me in the interchange of kindness; and, instead of injury I would bestow every benefit upon him with tears of gratitude at his acceptance. But that cannot be; the human senses are insurmountable barriers to our union." (140)

These lines appear to represent an editorial attempt to create a sense of understanding for the creature, for he is depicted as the victim of a science of which he knows nothing; rather than clarifying the rest of the narrative about Frankenstein and his creature, however, the above passage instead creates an effect of confusion and inconsistency. The human senses are the basis for human perception in Godwin's philosophy, just as they are in Locke's--but as far as the creature is concerned, the senses

are untrustworthy; hence, the creature's ostensible doubt of the tabula rasa and human perfectibility undermines his own, earlier-seen, naive belief in the senses as conduits both of "wonder" and of rational understanding.

As the novel draws to a close, the creature's Godwinian impulse to sacrifice himself for the good of the human race thus rings oddly--if not falsely, considering all he has been said to have suffered. The most authentic note in his final words occurs when he refers to Walton as a man who seems "to have a knowledge of my crimes and... [Frankenstein's] misfortunes" (213). In effect, this passage shows the creature seeing the seeing eye that reports his own story twice-removed--and his use of the word "seem" in relation to what Walton actually knows appears as a detail that Walton has let slip by, inadvertently undermining his authority as editorial voice. The creature, in referring to the story that Frankenstein must have told to Walton, ruefully comments,

> "But in the detail which he gave you...he could not sum up the hours and months of misery which I endured, wasting in impotent passions. For while I destroyed his hopes, I did not satisfy my own desires. They were forever ardent and craving; still I desired love and fellowship, and I was

> still spurned. Was there no injustice in this...? Why do you not hate Felix, who drove his friend from the door with contumely? Why do you not execrate the rustic who sought to destroy the saviour of his child? Nay, these are virtuous and immaculate beings! I, the miserable and the abandoned, am an abortion, to be spurned at, and kicked, and trampled on. Even now my blood boils at this injustice." (213)

The reference to the Werther-like experience of unfulfilled desire, the words about the not-so-Godwinian DeLacey family, and the by-now familiar posture of the vengeful Satan figure come together like a roll-call of literary influences Walton has used in depicting the creature. One may, in fact, ask whose voice comes through here. Is it that of a scientifically revivified amalgam of body parts who has not been able to come to terms with his suffering, or is it that of a frustrated writer/editor who is still struggling to hold together a collage of allusion to literature, philosophy, and popular science of the age?

The answer is both and neither: although Shelley's use of Walton as an overriding editor/mediator was perhaps a result of too much material to handle via a more conventional third-person narrative voice, it is legitimate

to say that she was aware of the interpretive possibilities inherent in her narrative set-up. In any case, the decontextualized representation of experience via the age's dominant medium of print and phonetic writing is an influence that impacts on Walton's suggestive portrayal of both Frankenstein and the creature: with the medium of print comes a readership's expectation of a coherent point of view which wraps up loose ends and explains all. The one constant feature of Walton's overriding narrative point of view, however, resides in his unsuccessful attempt to impose his own literate/visual preferences on two oral/acoustic narratives. In this sense, Frankenstein is an intriguing showcase of its author's intuitive response to the effects of the medium she used.

Endnotes
Chapter One

1

Facilitating this literary falsification of human experience is the decontextualization of experience which occurs through the agency of phonetic writing, as commented on by Walter Ong in Orality: "By isolating thought on a written surface, detached from any interlocuter, making utterance in this sense [via phonetic letters on paper] autonomous and indifferent to attack, writing presents utterance and thought as uninvolved with all else, somehow self-contained, complete" (132).

2

Frankenstein's dream also deals with the excruciating memory of how his mother dies while nursing his step-sister Elizabeth back to health. In this way, the passage manages to suggest Walton's preoccupation with his own family situation: for his letters reveal that he is close to his sister Margaret, and that the two of them are orphans as well. Walton, as an orphan, coincidentally creates a story featuring a variety of orphans, such as Frankenstein, Elizabeth, Caroline, Justine, and, most ominously, the creature Frankenstein brings to life.

3

Walton's narrative explains the failure of such a confrontation to emerge in terms of Frankenstein's poor health--but such an explanation is weakened by Frankenstein's ability later on to stroll the deck of the ship, and even to stir the blood of the deck-hands with a passionate speech about, of all things, the inherent rightness of Walton's enterprise (207): such a speech would be more appropriate coming from the healthy (and staunchly committed) Robert Walton than from the unhealthy and supposedly sick-at-heart Dr. Frankenstein.

Chapter Two
Visual and Acoustic Space in Wuthering Heights

While Frankenstein presents an editor/narrator whose perspective as a literate citizen heavily influences the oral tales he mediates, Wuthering Heights presents an overriding story-teller who has a more formidable oral source, Nelly Dean. Brontë's novel, although its narrator, Lockwood, has no less fixed a perspective than Robert Walton, also deals suggestively with the disjunction between linear and holistic modes of thought; the former and latter, in Marshall McLuhan's terms, correspond respectively to the domains of "visual" and "acoustic" space.[1] Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, the novel's notorious figures of rebellion, initially clash with the fixed thought patterns that govern behaviour in their environment, and eventually find ways to manipulate the unfriendly world around them in their favour: ultimately, however, they become outcasts from a literate world which resists their desire to inhabit acoustic space. Brontë's Heathcliff and Catherine seek ways of re-orienting themselves within literate society, only to seek total escape through socially-stigmatizing channels as the novel concludes. Their preference for the open, acoustic space of the moors, as opposed to the literate restrictiveness imposed by Joseph's scriptural teachings at the Heights, makes them outcasts of literacy: both

Heathcliff and the elder Catherine draw attention to themselves as characters of memorable pathos and passion on the one hand, and as embodiments of how orality and acoustic space are excluded by literate trains of thought on the other.

Wuthering is also narrated by story-tellers who, in different ways, draw attention to the distinction between the time-based, sequential and visual space of literacy and the fluid, multi-centered space of orality. Lockwood, for instance, is a bed-ridden and scholarly journal-writer with a patently literate perspective,[2] while Nelly Dean is a mobile and self-educated spinner of sophisticated oral tales. Lockwood and Nelly Dean, as collaborators who create a meticulous ambience of realism, also produce a curiously disjunctive narrative effect. Lockwood valorizes the visual space of the printed text; thus, he offers a detached and often inaccurate interpretation of what he sees. Conversely, Nelly offers a hybrid perspective which differs markedly from Lockwood's because she is at home both in the literate space of books and in the fluid, acoustic space of action and involvement with Heathcliff and Catherine.

Infiltrating both narrators' tales, however, is a grid in the background of Wuthering's events, one in which the novel's characters and events double and triple for each

other with noticeable regularity. This effect, in addition to suggesting the repeatability and uniformity claimed by McLuhan as effects of the printing press and phonetic alphabet, also helps to foreground the remarkable individuality of characters like Heathcliff and the elder Catherine, not to mention the novel's two chief narrators. No less ironic is the noticeable fall-off in intensity embodied by Catherine Linton and Hareton Earnshaw. These characters, as doubles of Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, suspiciously valorize the literate world of books as the foundation of a better tomorrow, suggesting both the possible touch of Lockwood as overriding, literate narrator, and Brontë's touch as mischievous author, as she demonstrates her awareness that books and the printing press have a dominant influence on the world unfolding around her.

The disjunction between Lockwood and those whose lives he chronicles is also the disjunction between the visual and the acoustic. McLuhan's intricate definition of these terms in Laws of Media emphasizes the sensory bias introduced by amplification of sight and hearing respectively.[3] Walter Ong, however, explains the distinction between the two terms in simpler language; in Orality, he outlines the fluidity that characterizes acoustic space, as opposed to the stasis characteristic of visual space:

> There is no way to stop sound and have sound. I can stop a moving picture camera and hold one frame fixed on the screen. If I stop the movement of sound, I have nothing--only silence, no sound at all. All sensation takes place in time, but no other sensory field totally resists a holding action, stabilization, in quite this way. Vision can register motion, but it can also register immobility. Indeed, it favors immobility, for to examine something closely by vision, we prefer to have it quiet. We often reduce motion to a series of still shots the better to see what motion is. There is no equivalent of a still shot for sound. An oscillogram is silent. It lies outside the sound world.(32)

The privileging of sight over sound, as has been seen, is the chief effect of the printed text as an extension of the eye: the visual domain creates expectations of uniformity and stasis; the acoustic domain is fluid, with no expectation of fixity or linearity. Disjunction between the two occurs when one is privileged over the other.[4] Lockwood, as overriding narrator, inhabits the first domain and privileges the visual by writing down the history of Wuthering Heights in his journal. Nelly, as oral *raconteur*

of Wuthering Heights's past, walks a line between the visual and acoustic. Heathcliff and Catherine, however, privilege the acoustic domain to a much higher degree than any other characters, and thus ensure their ultimate fate as outcasts from a literate social/religious domain which demands acknowledgement, if not obedience.

Disjunction on a formal level may be seen in Wuthering's realistic treatment of time and space: the text's freeze-framing of topography and time operates in ironic counterpoint with the acoustic fluidity of characters like Heathcliff and Catherine, who manifestly despise the printed word.[5] Charles Percy Sanger, for example, in "The Structure of Wuthering Heights," outlines how it is possible, through careful attention to direct and indirect references in the novel, "to ascertain the year, and, in most cases, the month of the year in which every event takes place...."[6] A. Stuart Daley, moreover, in "The Moons and Almanacs of Wuthering Heights," shows how references to phases of the moon in the novel act as a means of "reckoning time and noting visibility as well as marking seasonal and religious periods of the year (336). Daley explains the novel's chronology by an analysis of the moon's appearances, and also shows how Brontë used the almanacs of 1826 and 1827 as a basis for important episodes.

Realism as a nineteenth-century phenomenon in art and literature, as Derrick DeKerckhove notes, was a movement that accompanied the rise of photography. The freeze-framed snapshot effect of the photograph emerged simultaneously with the idea that "realistic fiction provided models for people to deal with reality" (119). Wuthering Heights, however, goes beyond merely providing "models" of realistic characterization: for Bronte's extreme realism in crafting a story about outcasts like Heathcliff and Catherine, who prefer the fluidity and freedom of acoustic experience, is analogous to the imposition of three-dimensional, visual perspective on two-dimensional acoustic space. In this regard, DeKerckhove writes that

> The most visible and, perhaps, the most important effect of the alphabetic revolution was, in my opinion, the invention of perspective. Perspective, or the art of representing space proportionally in three dimensions, is a direct projection of the literate brain. It is the inverted mirror-image of the organization of the literate consciousness. Contrary to popular opinion, there is absolutely nothing natural about perspective. It is a very contrived way of representing space. Take a look around you and

> you'll see that, although you can probably impose a perspectivist grid on your surroundings, nothing obliges you to do so, and nothing in what you see now proposes a vanishing point. (Skin of Culture 30)

Like the "realism" of artistic perspective, the mesmerizing grid of realistic detail in Wuthering Heights represents Lockwood's intense effort to transfer to the pages of his journal the experiences of characters dwelling in Wuthering Heights. A notable contrast thus emerges between Lockwood's visual/literate perspective and that of the characters his journal reduces to writing. Heathcliff and Catherine, who despise Sunday book-learning and love to ramble on the moors, are (relatively speaking) much closer to acoustic/oral experience than Lockwood, their literate mediator.

A good encapsulation of such a contrast is the episode in which Heathcliff guides Lockwood back to the Grange in hostile weather (25). Heathcliff's effortless navigation around the area's treacherous false bottoms is the antithesis of Lockwood's ineptitude and helplessness on the moors. Lockwood, out of his element, trusts the guiding signposts and discovers they do not guarantee safety in the snow drifts. Heathcliff, however, is at home on the moors

and disregards the signs, manoevering effortlessly around dangerous spots. The difference between the environments in which each character is at home underlines the sharp difference between the static nature of the visual (immobile signs as ineffectual guides) versus the fluid nature of the acoustic (Heathcliff as adaptable, mobile guide who is immersed in acoustic space).

Lockwood, then, as one might expect from an inhabitant of visual space, draws a glaringly inaccurate picture of Heathcliff on first meeting him. Lockwood initially casts Heathcliff as the opposite of another generic image--"a homely, northern farmer, with a stubborn countenance, and stalwart limbs set out to advantage in knee-breeches and gaiters"--but Lockwood's subsequent attempt to do Heathcliff some justice suffers from the same inclination to describe him platitudinously:

> ...Mr. Heathcliff forms a singular contrast to his abode and style of living. He is a dark-skinned gypsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman --that is, as much a gentleman as many a country squire: rather slovenly, perhaps, yet not looking amiss with his negligence, because he has an erect and handsome figure--and rather morose--possibly some people might suspect him of a degree of

> under-bred pride--I have a sympathetic chord within that tells me it is nothing of the sort; I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling--to manifestations of mutual kindliness. He'll love and hate, equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence to be loved or hated again.... (5)

Lockwood's "instinct" is little more than a warehouse of stereotypes from which he draws in an effort to pretend he understands the people and events of his experience even as he commits repeated blunders in their midst.[7] Wuthering Heights shows clearly that Heathcliff is nothing like Lockwood's description of him. His sullen acceptance of Hindley's bullying, his ability to shift for himself in difficult circumstances during his three-year absence, and his indifference to ethical norms as he achieves his aims, are the characteristics of a chameleon-like man governed by willfulness, passion, and adaptability rather than the static restrictions of a society founded on Procrustean mores. Lockwood, however, misunderstands even himself as he labours under literate presumptions: he sees himself as a virile, combative and misanthropic person, while his confessions establish him as quite the opposite.[8]

Lockwood is thoroughly grounded in typography and literacy, as can be seen in the style of his scholarly journal, in which he pedantically interprets the meaning of Wuthering Heights (4), and in which he makes Latin notations such as N.B. as he records observations (7). Under the illusion that he inhabits a personal, private space--even when in the company of others--Lockwood resists meaningful interaction with people. As Ong writes,

> Print was...a major factor in the development of the sense of personal privacy that marks modern society. It produced books smaller and more portable than those common in a manuscript culture, setting the stage psychologically for solo reading in a quiet corner, and eventually for completely silent reading. (130-31)

The private visual space of the printed word informs Lockwood's search for information as he strengthens the narrative line into which he wishes to freeze-frame Heathcliff and Catherine. Unlike Lockwood, the latter two inhabit a world in which written records, arguments, and structures are virtually meaningless except as modes of deference to or manipulation of the world they live in. Lockwood's "ground"--the controlling environmental influence he does not question--is the verbal, private space of

literacy and typography which is the controlling ground of nineteenth-century British civilization.

The dream episode in which Lockwood occupies the late Catherine Earnshaw/Linton's bedroom at Wuthering Heights epitomizes his frustration as a literate individual who not only has a special love for the uniform typography of printed books,[9] but who has trouble dealing with the intrusion of Catherine's handwriting in the margins of the printed text he peruses, even though he is curious enough to read it. As Lockwood discovers, Catherine Earnshaw/Linton has struggled desperately against the diminished view of experience offered by the books in her room. Lockwood finds she has scribbled furiously in the margins of The Sermons of Jabes Branderham, protesting her frequent incarceration by Joseph and Hindley, and dreaming of her outings with Heathcliff on the moors--in an environment that suggests the freedom of acoustic space.

As McLuhan and Bruce R. Powers write in The Global Village,

> For hundreds of thousands of years, mankind lived without a straight line in nature. Objects in this world resonated with each other. For the caveman, the mountain Greek, the Indian hunter (indeed, even for the latter-day Manchu Chinese),

> the world was multi-centered and reverberating. It was gyroscopic. Life was like being inside a sphere, 360 degrees without margins; swimming underwater; or balancing on a bicycle. Tribal life was, and still is, conducted like a three-dimensional chess game; not with pyramidal priorities. The order of ancient or prehistoric time was circular, not progressive. Acoustic imagination dwelt in the realm of ebb and flow, the logos. For one day to repeat itself at sunrise was an overwhelming boon. As this world began to fill itself out for the early primitive, the mind's ear gradually dominated the mind's eye. Speech, before the age of Plato, was the glorious depository of memory. (36)

Heathcliff's and Catherine's heady sense of freedom on the moors, with all the nuance of the "resonant" and "gyroscopic" world of acoustic, oral culture described so sensitively by McLuhan, is virtually non-existent for Lockwood as he settles into Catherine's room. He reads Catherine's writing with scholarly interest and literate/visual prejudice, but with no understanding of her need for freedom and interaction.

Thus, after glimpsing three of her handwritten scrawls

on the window ledges--"Catherine Earnshaw Catherine Heathcliff Catherine Linton" (15)--Lockwood nods off to sleep and is tormented by a dream in which the written/scratched names come swarming at him in no particular order and from all directions:[10] his typographic, visual reduction of the world undergoes a lapse, not only because his conscious mind gives in to the uncontrolled realm of sleep, but apparently because his last glance before nodding off sees him taking in Catherine's graffiti on the window ledge. Further illustration of how unsettled Lockwood becomes when he is absorbed into the fragmented, non-literate world of sleep is evident in his subsequent dream about the ponderous religious tome by Jabes Branderham--which has also been defaced by Catherine's handwriting.

During this dream, he has a nightmare in which he is oppressed by an interminable reading from Branderham's "text" of seventy times seventy sermons--"each fully equal to an ordinary address from the pulpit." In the dream, he attempts to overthrow the tyranny of Branderham's printed sermon, and thus becomes the "first of the seventy first, the man whose sin need not be pardoned" (19). "Good God!" he writes, describing the Branderham dream, "what a sermon; divided into four hundred and ninety parts...and each

discussing a separate sin!" Lockwood is moved to protest, and addresses Branderham, saying

> "Sir... sitting here, within these four walls, at one stretch, I have endured and forgiven the four hundred and ninety heads of your discourse....The four hundred and ninety-first is too much. Fellow martyrs, have at him! Drag him down, and crush him to atoms, that the place which knows him may know him no more!" (19)

The result of Lockwood's protest against Branderham's and the congregation's fidelity to the printed word is that he is singled out by the church-goers and cudgeled. His puny attempt at rebellion is perhaps an indication of how he subconsciously wishes to be like the rebellious Catherine, who has brazenly defaced Branderham's text, but the dream underlines how helpless he is to overcome his own socialized privileging of typography, even in the world of dreams. Similarly, the dream following on the heels of the Branderham sermon features Catherine herself obtruding into Lockwood's subconscious, and represents even more intensely the impression Catherine's handwriting has made on his private visual world.

In his dream, Lockwood aggressively breaks the window next to where he sleeps in an effort to shut out Catherine's

intrusive presence, which insinuates itself as the tapping sound of a tree limb on the window (20); instead, Lockwood winds up in a grim struggle with her as she grips his hand and insists on "getting into" and throwing into disarray the "text" which is Lockwood's well-ordered, logical mind (just as she has defaced the window ledge and Branderham's book). Lockwood's only escape is to force himself to wake up and shake off the threat to literate uniformity and fixity represented by Catherine's scribblings. Heathcliff's subsequent, irrational acceptance of Catherine's alleged "presence" in the room contrasts sharply with Lockwood's peevish complaints about the disturbing dream he has had. Wuthering's famous dream-sequence thus reinforces the novel's pervasive sense of disjunction between the anarchic personalities of Heathcliff and Catherine (who are most at ease in the acoustic space of the moors) and the comparatively docile mind-set of the literate Lockwood, who is most at ease while awake and reading undefaced books.

Disjunction also informs the first exchange Lockwood has with Nelly Dean after he escapes from Wuthering Heights's hostile environment. Unlike Lockwood, Nelly is mobile: her position as housekeeper, first at Wuthering Heights and next at Thrushcross Grange, involves her intimately with the dynamic orphans, Heathcliff and

Catherine. In this sense, her narrative emerges from a space of involvement and interaction, as opposed to the prostrate, uninvolved visual space from which the ill Lockwood's narrative mostly comes. From the beginning, Nelly is involved as go-between for Heathcliff and Catherine as Heathcliff becomes an object of Hindley's and Joseph's contempt. Nelly has the thankless task of facilitating Heathcliff's communion with Catherine both before and after Heathcliff's three-year absence, as can be seen when Heathcliff is punished for assaulting young Edgar Linton with applesauce, and later, when Heathcliff unexpectedly returns to visit Catherine at Thrushcross Grange (45 & 73-74).

In the latter episode, for example, Nelly defuses Catherine's joy at Heathcliff's return by allowing her to greet him alone: this strategy, even though calculated to give Edgar Linton time to prepare himself for the entrance of his rival, is unappreciated by Linton, who scolds Nelly for her decision (73). Nelly's judgement later on in allowing a meeting between Heathcliff and the distracted Catherine (after Heathcliff has been barred from admittance to Thrushcross Grange) involves her intimately in another no-win situation with Edgar Linton.[11] Hence, Nelly's narrative has the signature of direct involvement with those

whose story she tells, involvement that includes the necessity of making difficult personal and professional decisions. She writes from an active perspective with respect to Heathcliff, Catherine, and other characters: the story she tells to Lockwood is also interactive in the sense of granting Lockwood input as she proceeds.[12] Unlike Lockwood, she is not hampered by the chains of a primarily literate perspective, even though it is not alien to her.

Nelly's "acoustic" involvement in the history of Wuthering Heights, as opposed to Lockwood's detachment from it, shows Nelly to be a hybrid inhabitant of both oral/acoustic and literate space. Nelly is a canny narrator who has read most of the books in the library at Thrushcross Grange,[13] and yet who also has had minimal formal education, being a "poor man's daughter" (49). As we later see, her penchant for reciting folk rhymes from memory during times of stress--such as when the baby Hareton, having been dropped by the drunken Hindley, narrowly escapes injury--suggests her sympathy for oral tradition and culture (as opposed to direct inhabitation of it):

> It was far in the night, and the bairnies grat
> The mither beneath the mools heard that. (59)

Ian Jack notes that Brontë probably quoted this couplet from her own memory--since her version of it differs slightly

from Sir Walter Scott's in The Lady of the Lake.[14] It thus seems likely Brontë had the mnemonic feature of folk tradition in mind when she included this fragment, and wished to associate her home-spun narrator with such an oral society trait: in this way, Brontë presents Nelly's oral/literate mind-frame as a foil to Lockwood's bookwormish literacy.

Nelly is a perfect foil for Lockwood: for the latter attempts to impose the grid of convention--the fixed point of view of the literate mind-frame--on situations he either does not understand or lacks direct involvement in, as is evident in his ridiculous belief that the younger Catherine could be in love with him. Nelly, however, attempts to use the persuasive power of narrative to influence the behaviour of Heathcliff, as well as the ideological power of social convention and decorum to influence the elder Catherine. In this sense, Nelly, as acoustic/literate hybrid who warns the two orphans against their courses of action, appears as a level-headed Cassandra who is seldom taken seriously.

For example, Nelly's interview with Catherine about her reasons for marrying Edgar Linton, as the concealed Heathcliff listens, is essentially an attempt to convert Catherine to a more socially-propitious mind-frame, as opposed to the wildly acoustic mind-frame that eventually

culminates in Catherine's insanity. Nelly's "catechism" is a list of worldly-wise questions designed to show Catherine the right reasons and the wrong reasons for marriage. "You love Mr. Edgar," says Nelly,

> "because he is handsome, and young, and cheerful, and rich, and loves you. The last, however, goes for nothing--You would love him without that, probably; and with it you wouldn't, unless he possessed the four former attractions." (61)

Nelly continues, in spite of Catherine's resistance to her questioning, cautioning her that Linton "won't always be handsome, and young, and may not always be rich." To which Catherine replies "He is now; and I have only to do with the present--I wish you would speak rationally."(61)
Ironic here is Catherine's "rational" preference for bourgeois respectability, for her ulterior motive is to help the other-than-bourgeois Heathcliff; her claim that she has "only to do with the present" is a classic characteristic of the so-called irrational mind-frame inhering in oral culture.

As Walter Ong observes, "By contrast with literate societies, oral societies can be characterized as homeostatic....That is to say, oral societies live very much in a present which keeps itself in equilibrium or

homeostasis by sloughing off memories which no longer have present relevance" (46). Ong illustrates this quality of "primary," or bookless oral culture by commenting that

> In recent years among the Tiv people of Nigeria, the genealogies actually used orally in settling court disputes have been found to diverge considerably from the genealogies carefully recorded in writing by the British forty years earlier....The later Tiv have maintained that they were using the same genealogies as forty years earlier and that the earlier written record was wrong. What had happened was that the later genealogies had been adjusted to the changed social relations among the Tiv: they were the same in that they functioned in the same way to regulate the real world. The integrity of the past was subordinate to the integrity of the present. (48)

Catherine's privileging of her "present" preference for Edgar Linton as a partner in marriage represents a spontaneous reaction to her changed environment (i.e., she and Heathcliff are no longer children): her "present" decision to marry Linton is at odds with her much deeper "past" emotional bond with Heathcliff. Catherine rejects

the sensible option Nelly proposes because her plan to marry Linton is consistent with what she sees as an overriding present reality.

Like Heathcliff, Catherine imagines she will gain mastery over the restrictive environment she chooses to inhabit. What neither Catherine nor Heathcliff counts on is the potential of the overriding literate social order to drive them mad as they attempt to manipulate it in their own favour.[15] Thus, Nelly's advice goes unheeded by the headstrong elder Catherine, who reacts subversively to Nelly's rational catechism by offering a narrative of her own. The narrative is based on a dream she has had about being in heaven:

> "I was only going to say that heaven did not seem to be my home; and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth; and the angels were so angry that they flung me out, into the middle of the heath on the top of Wuthering Heights; where I woke sobbing for joy....I've no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn't have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now; so he shall never know how I love him; and that, not

> because he's handsome, Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same, and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire." (62)

Catherine's assertion that Heathcliff is "more myself than I am," and that Linton's soul is so radically different from her own establishes an antithesis, not only between her (and thus Heathcliff) and Linton, but also between her/Heathcliff and Thrushcross Grange. In heaven/Thrushcross Grange dwells respectability, bourgeois partnership, material affluence, and above all, isolation from the "acoustic space" of the moors. Catherine's story is thus an unwitting prophecy of the disaster awaiting both her and Heathcliff at the Grange because of their inability (ultimately) to conform to its (or society's) restrictions in the way that Nelly advises them to do.

Nelly also tries to convert Heathcliff to a more balanced perspective early in the novel, when, prior to dinner at Wuthering Heights, she tells a story to help the young Heathcliff overcome his resentment toward Hindley and Edgar Linton. Nelly's story to Heathcliff, however, fails because of Heathcliff's obsessive and unrealistic desire for the return of his freedom with Catherine in a wild,

countryside setting, free of literacy's shackles. After admonishing Heathcliff not to envy Linton's looks, Nelly spins a tale which appears to set Heathcliff on a socially-acceptable path. "Who knows," she says,

> "but your father was Emperor of China, and your mother an Indian queen, each of them able to buy up, with one week's income, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange together? And you were kidnapped by wicked sailors, and brought to England. Were I in your place, I would frame high notions of my birth; and the thoughts of what I was should give me courage and dignity to support the oppressions of a little farmer!" (44-45)

Heathcliff, after having been wrenched in one direction by Nelly's warm, interactive, oral yarn, is pulled in quite another direction by the subsequent entrance of Hindley Earnshaw, and the young Edgar Linton, an entrance which again shows Brontë's ability to dramatize the difference between the thought processes and reactions to experience of her characters.

Linton's impudent remark about the locks of hair over Heathcliff's eyes provokes Heathcliff's assault on Linton with the hot apple sauce, and leads to Heathcliff being beaten and confined by Hindley. Linton, when scolded by

Nelly for talking to and provoking Heathcliff, speciously protests that he [Linton] only said something about him (46). Linton, in spite of the literate belief he has absorbed from his nineteenth-century education, that truth is unchanging and static, yields to the overwhelming "acoustic" impulse to euphemize his sarcastic remark for the sake of minimizing his present humiliation. Wuthering Heights is an unstable environment because its occupants oscillate between literate stasis and acoustic fluidity. Nelly's balanced advice and decisions, whether in relation to Heathcliff and Catherine or Linton and Hindley, are a source of stability, and a positive influence in a troubled household.

The importance of acoustic space in relation to visual space as it has been outlined so far is complicated by the lack of any lengthy descriptions in Brontë's story of Heathcliff's and Catherine's "acoustic" experiences on the moors. Margaret Homans explains the absence of such descriptions in terms of "repression" and "sublimation." Homans draws attention to the few brief passages in Wuthering Heights dealing with the moors--such as Catherine's scribbling a "diary" in the margins of Branderhams's sermons, or Heathcliff's account of the same "scamper" on the moors in Chapter Six, or the imagery used

by Catherine to describe an episode on the moors with Heathcliff (95). These passages, because they are so infrequent and brief, constitute the "repression" of nature, the dynamics of which Homans explains:

> To use nature as a figure is to make nature secondary to what it describes, and to describe someone by means of figures--or with language at all--is to impose a limitation of perspectivism or metaphor that reduces whatever is primal in that character.... (12)

While Homans' concern here is with the repressed as a source of the sublime, it is also quite arguable Brontë omits detailed accounts of "primary" experience to emphasize its inexpressibility via phonetic writing; in doing so, she also associates her Heathcliff and Catherine with the violence of natural forces, as if to emphasize their outsider status in the repressive literate environment they are tied to. Heathcliff and Catherine's unconventional relationship to the nineteenth-century prose fiction genre, however, can easily be seen in other ways: they do not marry; they do not happily receive a problem-solving inheritance; and their deaths, like their lives, are socially stigmatized with no hope of any redemption other than Lockwood's unconvincing literate eulogy.

The ultimate lack of compromise in the life/narratives of Heathcliff and Catherine--the former's suicide by starvation and the latter's insanity--generates their socially-stigmatized fates, and also highlights the two characters as outcasts of the freeze-framed visual space of the nineteenth-century novel. When acoustic freedom of movement and thought becomes impossible, for instance, Heathcliff becomes passive and longs for death: his suicidal longing, in this sense, is an uncomfortable detail for his nineteenth-century audience to deal with. The "change" that comes over Heathcliff once his plot of vengeance is close to fulfillment signals that he, like Catherine before him, is abandoning the visual space of books, the sane scriptural space of Nelly's homespun wisdom, and the linear space of his age's empirical and utilitarian ideology. Heathcliff is also lost and confused in the enclosed space (Catherine's bedroom at the Heights) in which he eventually starves himself to death. As he says, "I take so little interest in my daily life, that I hardly remember to eat and drink" (245). Later, in confirmation of how he rejects the book-learned wisdom of his upbringing, he mocks Nelly's prudish reminder to consult the Bible for wisdom (253).

Somewhat like Heathcliff, Catherine's escape from the visual/literate social setting she inhabits (not to mention

her "revenge" on her oppressors, Heathcliff, Linton and Nelly) involves the casting off of life itself so that she may be far "beyond" the living, and have more power over them than when she herself lived (124). Of the three supposed oppressors, however, Nelly alone is able to survive Catherine's posthumous influence, for the hybrid literate/acoustic space she inhabits gives her social stability that is lacking in antithetical characters like Linton (literate) and Heathcliff (acoustic).[16] Catherine's inability to adopt Nelly's stable course of compromise puts her mind in a mode of wild oscillation in which visual and acoustic spaces of perception are irreconcilably polarized.

At the outset of her insanity, for instance, Catherine cannot recognize her own reflection in the mirror, suggesting a total immersion in acoustic space that dissolves self-consciousness and resists the enclosure of a room. Like an animal curious about its reflection's elusiveness, Catherine becomes confused to the point of distraction; her enclosed, civilized environment becomes alien to her as she longs for past experiences on the moors with Heathcliff in unenclosed, acoustic space (122-23). Because the instability of the Wuthering Heights household emerges from the osscilation of its inhabitants between visual and acoustic space, Lockwood's literal definition of

"Wuthering" at the novel's outset is ironic. His association of "atmospheric tumult" (4) with the word "Wuthering" is a legitimate, but strictly surface empirical observation which betrays the literate impositions he brings to the narrative he creates, from start to finish; for Wuthering Heights's conclusion is one in which Lockwood's literacy appears to triumph as an overriding narrative influence. One sees this, for instance, when the overriding narrator conflates the static quietude he himself seeks with that of the deceased Catherine and Heathcliff, who seek, no doubt, even in death, the fluidity and freedom of acoustic space.

But the influence of Lockwood's literate mind also casts the novel's ostensible hope for future developments in an extremely ironic light. The younger Catherine and Hareton, for example, are poised both to inherit the estate of Wuthering Heights, and to become life partners in marriage as Brontë's narrative ends; the fulfillment, in the process, of the nineteenth-century literary clichés that have been, for the most part, avoided in the previous stories of Heathcliff and the elder Catherine, now suggests the influence of Lockwood as literate editor who controls his sources in the same way as Robert Walton did Frankenstein's and the creature's. A subtler (and more

pervasive) form of Lockwood's influence as the controlling narrator, however, is the novel's persistent doubling and tripling of characters and scenes--a process which visually emphasizes even further the printed text's repeatability and uniformity--qualities which Lockwood is able to impose on his experience when he writes, although not, as has been seen, when he dreams.

In Wuthering, the frequent emergence of character/situation duplication/triplication not only suggests a controlling narrator, Lockwood, whose literacy impels him, perhaps unconsciously, to impose generic literary stylization on a tempestuous story that is at odds with his bookish personality, it also breeds an atmosphere of uniformity and continuity--characteristics likewise bred by the printing press and phonetic alphabet.[17] Lockwood, for example, occupies the deceased elder Catherine's bed while staying at Wuthering Heights, as does Heathcliff in the novel's later stages(15 & 254). In this sense, Lockwood doubles as both Catherine and Heathcliff; and later, when Lockwood occupies Catherine's bed at Thrushcross Grange, he triples as Catherine. Similarly, Catherine Earnshaw's statement that Heathcliff is more herself than she is makes these two characters into absolute doubles for each other as their lives unfold.

These are only some of the more obvious examples: the pattern of doubling and tripling occurs in seemingly insignificant details such as the proliferation of nameless servants who act out identical roles as messengers between Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights for different reasons and for different characters, or the detail of the old servant-woman smoking a pipe and speaking the same dialect as Joseph when Lockwood unexpectedly returns to Thrushcross Grange (231). The list goes on: Isabella as Heathcliff's prisoner at Wuthering Heights is doubled first by Nelly and then by the younger Catherine when Heathcliff incarcerates them at the Heights in order to force the young Linton to marry the young Catherine Linton (205). When Lockwood fantasizes about the younger Catherine, she doubles as the anonymous young woman whose love Lockwood rejected before coming to Wuthering Heights (5); later, the elder Catherine triples as Lockwood's unknown and unrequited lover when Lockwood decides, in a narcissistic fantasy, that he and Catherine Earnshaw could never have gotten along as lovers. Heathcliff doubles as Hareton's guardian when Hindley Earnshaw dies, and as the younger Catherine's guardian when Edgar Linton dies; and Nelly Dean doubles in the same role of Hareton's and Catherine Linton's guardian/protector when Heathcliff dies.

The younger Catherine, similarly, before her troubles at Wuthering Heights, doubles as the young Catherine Earnshaw before Heathcliff's trouble-causing arrival--just as the younger Catherine frequently doubles as the elder Catherine whenever she repeats anything the elder Catherine has done as a child--such as sitting in the same chair at Wuthering Heights that Catherine Earnshaw occupied in her childhood. The younger Catherine and Hareton first double as the young Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw when they are forced to live together in an oppressive atmosphere (as do the younger Catherine and the young Linton in a similar parallelism); and the young Catherine Linton and Hareton in their scampers on the moors double as Heathcliff and Catherine when the latter couple are both dead and allegedly haunting the moors again, tripling themselves in relation to their living successors (255).

W.B. Yeats, in a brief essay called "The Emotion of Multitude," comments on this interesting phenomenon of doubling (if not tripling) in literary works; in the essay, he notes how resonance emerges from authorial duplication of characters and scenes. "The Shakespearean drama," he writes,

> gets the emotion of multitude out of the sub-plot...[and] copies the main plot, much as a

> shadow upon the wall copies one's body in the firelight.... It is so in all the plays, or in all but all, and very commonly the sub-plot is the main plot working itself out in more ordinary men and women, and so doubly calling up before us the image of multitude. " (215)

In Wuthering Heights, however, the "emotion of multitude" that Yeats speaks of is carried to an extreme via Brontë's grid of duplication, triplication, and sub-plotting. Hareton and the younger Catherine, in the process, fall rather short of the satisfying resonance to which Yeats refers, and begin instead to resemble diminished copies of the characters they serve to double. These doubles of Heathcliff and Catherine emerge at the novel's conclusion as aspirant, property-owning, literate citizens--a destiny unlike any to which their more compelling "originals" could be linked. As Brontë's story ends, they struggle over the burning issue of book-learning as they contemplate the living world, while Heathcliff struggles with the suicidal hope of being reunited with the elder Catherine in death. Hence, the irony which Hareton and the younger Catherine bring to Wuthering's conclusion is palpable.

As for Brontë herself, a possible clue as to why she, as the final puppet-master, created such a complex

interpretive scenario may be seen when the younger Catherine complains to Nelly about Hareton stealing her books:

> "...he has no right to appropriate what is mine, and make it ridiculous to me with his vile mistakes and mis-pronunciations! Those books, both prose and verse, were consecrated to me by other associations, and I hate to have them debased and profaned in his mouth! Besides, of all, he has selected my favorite pieces that I love the most to repeat, as if out of deliberate malice!" (228)

The younger Catherine's anger suggests that Brontë, her creator, had similar feelings about having her work appropriated by those who would not understand her. Thus, she buried her anomalous and disturbing characters, Heathcliff and Catherine, beneath a network of Gothic and romance conventions which fit them so poorly and made it difficult to imagine them as uniquely as Brontë herself did.

Brontë protects that which is "consecrated" to her (her imaginative world) by the manipulative use of "other associations" (the Gothic/realist conventions into which she places her imaginative creations). Similarly, her polarization of the world inside and outside of books shows a certain intuitive grasp of how books and literacy

constitute a controlling environment; thus, she mocks a readership too somnambulistic to perceive her own rather advanced agenda. In this way, Wuthering's author has the luxury of secretly commenting on the reading habits of an audience which obligingly accepts her novel's unusual narrators and its oddly ill-fitting conventions of romance and the Gothic, for Brontë's fictitious world evinces sharp awareness of visual/literate reading habits--while hinting at a world of acoustic space which can only be suggested as a "figure" on the "ground" of the printed page.

Endnotes
Chapter Two

1
The sense of unpheaval and displacement in Wuthering Heights has been noted by Nancy Armstrong, although for different reasons. She writes that the novel asks questions "in one set of literary conventions that cannot be answered by the other, which is to say what most critical readings deny, that it is an essentially disjunctive novel." Armstrong discusses philosophically hostile positions regarding the rejection of 1840's fiction in the face of a utilitarian tradition that gives rise to literary realism (365). The classification of Wuthering, that is, rests upon Heathcliff and the distinction between romance and realism highlighted by his character. Thus, "the breakdown of such primary cultural differences in Brontë's fiction gives rise to whole questions of genre. Brontë, by taking the conventions of an earlier literature as the subject matter of a new kind of fiction...demonstrates that fiction could no longer be written from the Romantic viewpoint and still be considered a novel" (366-67).

2
It is interesting that Brontë consigns Lockwood to immobility while listening to Nelly Dean's story on his sickbed (formerly the dynamic Catherine's), for such passivity is the fate assigned by Aeschylus to the god-

protagonist of Prometheus Bound, who according to myth introduced the phonetic alphabet to ancient Greece. Derrick DeKerckhove, in "A Theory of Greek Tragedy," looks at Aeschylus's Prometheus Bound as an embodiment of disjunction between ancient Greece and the oral society which predated it under the influence of the phonetic alphabet. The cerebral Prometheus, according to DeKerckhove's reading, is "the archetypal figure of Western man, repressed, long-winded, uptight, narcissistic and morbidly intellectual." In Brontë's story, Lockwood appears to be Prometheus bound, while Nelly is Prometheus unbound.

3 In Laws of Media, McLuhan elaborates on the nature of visual space: "Visual space is a man-made artefact, whereas acoustic space is a natural environmental form. Visual space is space as created and perceived by the eyes when they are abstracted or separated from the activity of the other senses. With respect to its properties, this space is a continuous, connected, homgeneous (uniform), and static container. Visual space is man-made in the basic sense that it is abstracted from the interplay with other senses and their specific modes. This abstraction occurs by the agency of the phonetic alphabet alone: it does not occur in any culture lacking the phonetic alphabet. The alphabet is the hidden ground of the figure of visual space"(22).

[4] Walter Ong, Orality and Literacy, (32). Historically, the acoustic and the visual realms of perception have existed together uneasily, mostly because of ideology and politics, even though the two domains need not be thought of as mutually exclusive. Ong comments in this regard on the "still less than total" ascendancy of the phonetic alphabet in cultures like Korea and China (42-43): the pictographic scripts of these countries emerge from oral, acoustic experience, whereas the phonetic scripts they have appropriated (or which have appropriated them) emerge from the abstract and visual qualities that characterize phonetic-alphabet culture.

[5] Cf. Catherine's diary entry, in which she records how she took her "dingy volume by; the scroop, and hurled it into the dog-kennel, vowing...[she] hated a good book" Wuthering (17). Heathcliff follows suit, kicking his foot against the "Broad Way to Destruction." Also noteworthy is the subversive use to which the book is put by the younger Catherine. Catherine threatens Joseph by wielding a "dark book" and playing on his superstitious nature (12). The younger Catherine, unlike Joseph, is not a slave to the printed word; hence, Joseph cannot dominate her.

6 Sanger also notes that the "ten or twelve legal references" in Wuthering "are sufficient to enable us to ascertain the various legal processes by which Heathcliff obtained the property [of Wuthering Heights]" (333). Sanger concludes, saying that "there is, so far as I know, no other novel in the world which it is possible to subject to an analysis of the kind I have tried to make" (335).

7 J. Hillis Miller comments on Lockwood's misinterpretation of what he sees as being the "situation of someone who is attempting to make sense of events by narrating them.... His errors are a warning to the over-confident reader" (379). According to Miller, the "text itself" turns both Lockwood and the novel's readers into "detectives." Lockwood's visual space of thought and experience makes acoustic experience into a mystery which must be, as it were, translated into visual terms for him. His multiplying errors emphasize how awkwardly he inhabits the acoustic realm.

8 Especially the confession in Wuthering: Lockwood describes a painful memory of how he once cringed at the thought of intimacy with a certain young woman, giving him a reputation for coldness--"how undeserved, I alone can

appreciate" (5). Likewise, Lockwood's manly combativeness in the face of Heathcliff's arrogance is merely pathetic (6); Lockwood's misanthropy, in turn, may be more legitimately construed as the boredom of a man who is out of touch with human experience and passion.

9

Carol Jacobs comments that Lockwood's dreams are about his exclusion from Wuthering Heights and his displacement as direct narrator (353). She also claims that Nelly's narrative is "a commentary made possible by setting off Lockwood as that which lies outside the fictional realm" (354). Jacobs notes that Lockwood "imagines he has located a haven in what proves to be the very centre of dislocation" (359). All critiques, like the present one, because they occupy visual/literate space, are like the "first of the seventy first" sins of Branderham's sermons, and must endlessly vie with all other possible readings. All readers--at least while they read--are Lockwoods who repress the acoustic realm. For a more traditional (and literate) interpetation of Lockwood's slumber in Catherine's bed, see Edgar F. Shannon Jr.

10

While the swarming of names in all directions when Lockwood dreams suggests his subconscious repression of non-linear acoustic space, Frank Kermode speaks of the order in

which the names first appear as the true linear sequence of events in the elder and younger Catherine's lives: "When you have processed all the information you have been waiting for, you see the point of the order of the scribbled names, as Lockwood gives them: Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Heathcliff, Catherine Linton. Read from left to right they recapitulate Catherine Earnshaw's story; read from right to left, the story of her daughter, Catherine Linton." See "A Modern Way with the Classics" (415-34, 418, 419, 421).

11 See John Fraser's sympathetic reading of Nelly's character, defending her against charges of diabolical meddling. Nelly, he says, is merely a good servant whose behaviour is consistent with her household duties (87).

12 Ong writes that in oral cultures, "Narrative originally lodges not in making up new stories but in managing a particular interaction with this audience at this time--at every telling the story has to be introduced uniquely into a unique situation, for in oral cultures an audience must be brought to respond, often vigorously" (41,42). Nelly, then, adapts the tenor of her story to Lockwood's perspective as much as possible in order to get the "vigorous" response she successfully obtains from him. Nelly's story, with its greater fidelity to experience, also up-stages Lockwood's

"outsider" account and even subordinates it, although Nelly's story is not the overriding narrative.

13 Nelly tells Lockwood that "You could not open a book in this library that I have not looked into, and got something out of also; unless it be that range of Greek and Latin, and that of French...."(49). The housekeeper's origins in unlettered society has grounded her in the acoustic realm, while both her natural curiosity and access to the Thrushcross Grange library has ushered her into an appreciation of the visual realm too.

14 See Ian Jack's endnote to p. 76 in Wuthering (347).

15 As Patsy Stoneman notes in her introduction to Wuthering, Catherine and Heathcliff are "continually pushing against an encircling framework of religion, propriety [and] social expectations" (xv). Unlike Nelly Dean, neither is able to maintain equanimity within society. Heathcliff and Catherine buy into social protocols in the belief that they will gain mastery over a literate environment, and they both succeed, if only temporarily. Their final inability to compromise is consistent with their wish to fulfill a fantasy of purely acoustic experience; hence, their socially stigmatized fates.

16

Edgar Linton's death, unlike Heathcliff's or Catherine's, is not disruptive, either to society or to the prose fiction genre of the period. He dies with his wife's name on his lips, saying he is going to meet her; then he dies so "blissfully" that "'None could have noticed the exact minute of his death, it was so entirely without a struggle'" (215). Linton's death, like his life, is gentlemanly, and fulfills the reader expectation that fictional characters be virtuous in the face of death. Interestingly, Brontë creates a strong contrast between Linton's literacy, and his wife's animosity towards the same, as can be seen in Catherine's remark when Nelly tells her Linton is too busy to see her: "Among his books!... And I dying!" (94). Nelly, of course, has misinformed Linton about how serious Catherine's illness is, but Brontë would appear to be suggesting here that literacy can detach otherwise well-meaning people from the realities of experience.

17

The doubling and tripling in Wuthering has been commented on by J. Hillis Miller, who emphasizes the deferral of meaning inherent in a sign system, and the reader's existential responsibility in responding to the same (378-93). Miller, however, does not discuss repeatability or

uniformity as phenomena which arise with the visual space created by printing press and phonetic alphabet as hardware and software technologies, respectively.

Chapter Three
Undermining the Equitone Narrator in Jekyll & Hyde

Robert Louis Stevenson's approach in The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is to experiment with the printed text's psychological effects in relation to plot and narrative voice. The repulsive character, Mr. Hyde, is an outcast whose apparent inclusion within a power structure founded on literacy occurs only through narrators who tell his story for him; in this sense, he is reminiscent of the unsightly creature in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, as well as Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw in Wuthering Heights. The pseudo-science of Jekyll's confession, moreover, in conjunction with various gaps in the story preceding it, opens up the possibility that Mr. Hyde is a non-existent bogey-man, invented for the purpose of deflecting attention away from a Dr. Jekyll who has a substance-abuse problem. As Stevenson's tale advances, the overriding, third-person narrator becomes conspicuous by virtue of possible (and compromising) involvement in the story he tells. The narrator of Jekyll & Hyde, because of such a possibility, loses the high-minded aura of authority traditionally associated with nineteenth-century narration; his plausible involvement in a compromising scenario mediated by himself

undermines what McLuhan calls a print-inculcated, nineteenth-century expectation of "equitone" narration.

The perception that Stevenson's purpose in Jekyll and Hyde is primarily to dramatize a struggle between good and evil is only partially true at best when one considers the novel's plot and main characters in relation to the overriding narrative voice Stevenson creates. The third-person narrator's access to private conversations and information suggests his personal acquaintance with the characters whose experiences he relates, as well as his own possible involvement in the scandal of Dr. Jekyll: in this sense, the narrator's re-telling the "facts" of the story he presents involves "hiding" behind the literary convention of the omniscient narrative voice. The narrator's purpose in this deception is, quite possibly, to hide the specter of Henry Jekyll's drug addiction--as he implicitly comments on substance abuse as an issue which is at the heart of this implausible, quasi-scientific tale of metamorphosis.

The tendency of critics in Stevenson's time to interpret Jekyll and Hyde as a psychomachia of sorts within the soul of the noble but flawed character of Dr. Jekyll is a natural holdover from the printed word's initial use in Medieval Europe.[1] This function was one of disseminating a spiritual/intellectual education to the public via the mass

production of texts, as the manuscript culture of medieval times gradually gave way to print culture. The highly popular Pilgrim's Progress, for example, although not a medieval work, had a religious tone consistent with that of many texts rolling off the early printing presses; and Progress continued to be popular well into the nineteenth century. As McLuhan writes in Understanding Media,

> Until 1700 much more than 59 per cent of all printed books were ancient or medieval. Not only antiquity but also the Middle Ages were given to the first reading public of the printed word. And the medieval texts were by far the most popular. (156)

The ambiguous development of plot in Jekyll and Hyde maintains the possibility for Stevenson's readership of a fantastic, almost magical drug, reminiscent of alchemical science as revealed to the literate public by the early printing press. Stevenson's creation of a quasi-supernatural plot and atmosphere echoed the printing press's initial function as mediator of occult knowledge from the past on the one hand, while, on the other hand, setting up a third-person narrator whose possible involvement in the events he relates is overshadowed by the dazzle and intrigue of the near-magical story he tells.

In addition to the inculcated expectation of a spiritual dimension in books disseminated during the outset of the age of print, and beyond to the nineteenth century, the mass-produced printed word also created for the public a sense of uniformity which

> ...reached also into areas of speech and writing leading to a single tone and attitude to reader and subject [which] spread throughout an entire composition. The "man of letters" was born. Extended to the spoken word, this literate equitone enabled literate people to maintain a single "high tone" in discourse that was quite devastating, and enabled nineteenth-century prose writers to assume moral qualities that few would now care to simulate. (162)

The "equitone" voice McLuhan refers to, however, is only superficially similar to the voice of Stevenson's anonymous third-person narrator in Jekyll and Hyde. The confident, apparently clear-sighted equitone voice with which the novel begins unravels quickly the more this narrator's integrity is compromised by the prospect of his involvement with the characters whose activities and preferences he describes.

According to the evidence of Jekyll and Hyde's title, and the narrator's own eye and ear for incriminating detail,

the novel's mediator is perhaps a lawyer chronicling a particularly "strange case" for the British public. This "lawyer's" perspective, as his story and character portraiture reveals, is just as ambiguous as the motives and personalities of the characters he depicts. The third-person lawyer/narrator's description of Mr. Utterson, for instance, not only ironically conveys the idea that Utterson is a cynical man with a dark cast of thought, it also suggests an observant narrator whose knowledge of Utterson comes from some social experience and/or association with him:

> Mr. Utterson the lawyer was a man of a rugged countenance, that was never lighted by a smile; cold, scanty and embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary, and yet somehow lovable. At friendly meetings, and when the wine was to his taste, something eminently human beaconed from his eye; something indeed which never found its way into his talk, but which spoke not only in these silent symbols of the after-dinner face, but more often and loudly in the acts of his life. (29)

Shortly after this passage, the narrator offers a pithy indication of Utterson's brand of humanitarianism, evident

in his saying--"I incline to Cain's heresy... I let my brother go to the devil in his own way" (29). If such philanthropy is the "something eminently human" characterizing Utterson's beneficence, then Stevenson's story-teller appears to be quietly mocking him as he draws on memories of Utterson's "after-dinner" moods. The narrator's irony, however, as well as his possible association with Utterson as a dinner guest, is easily camouflaged by the public expectation of a morality tale told by anonymous mediation.

Likewise, the conversation of Enfield with Utterson which quickly succeeds the opening description of the latter, shows that the overriding narrator, in spite of his access to privileged detail, is not simply a conventional, omniscient story-telling voice: his apparent familiarity with the intimate conversation of two men as secretive as Enfield and Utterson suggests both his personal acquaintance with them and his own possible presence during their conversation. The narrator himself allows for the possibility of his own officious, information-scrounging presence when he mentions how Enfield and Utterson often say little during their walks together and how they "would hail with relief the appearance of a friend."

The possible silent presence of the overriding narrator while Utterson and Enfield's conversation unfolds suggests his complicity in a murky scenario: for Enfield's story has a number of gaps which his kinsman, Utterson, helpfully brings to his attention as their exchange concludes. For example, Enfield's claim to have witnessed Hyde's alleged crime of treading on a small girl at three in the morning raises the issue of how Enfield himself has happened to be in such a place and at such a time on his way home. Enfield refers to his point of departure at this hour as the "end of the world," and this phrase, as Alan Sandison comments in Robert Louis Stevenson and the Appearance of Modernism, refers suggestively to London's late-night dens of iniquity, where honourable gentlemen like Enfield should not be seen. Similarly, even while the inauspicious hour of three in the morning causes one to ask what Enfield is doing out at such a time, another question is what the young girl on whom Hyde "tramples" is doing out at this time of the morning.

Adding further weakness to Enfield's story is his comment that the young girl's family are so close by as to appear almost as soon as the alleged crime has been committed. Enfield's awkward revelation of his own dubious whereabouts as he tells a story condemning Mr. Hyde may be seen as an indirect plea to Utterson, the experienced

advocate, for advice as to what to say should he ever be questioned. The third-person narrator, as a possible silent companion, may in turn be at the root of the highly suggestive exchange between Enfield and Utterson, who are aware of an observant presence and thus choose their words carefully.

So far, then, Jekyll and Hyde's narrator may gain knowledge of the story he tells by moving in the same personal/professional ranks as the characters he describes: thus considered, he is a story-teller who becomes contaminated by his familiarity with these friends and acquaintances. The creation of such a mediating voice marks Stevenson's novel as one that mischievously corrupts the equitone narrative presence under the very noses of a somnambulistic readership. The corruption at the professional level of society suggested by such a scenario also brings to mind Britain's political environment in 1885, when Jekyll and Hyde was written. As Alan Sandison writes,

> Stevenson could not but have been aware of the intense debate which went on about sexual morality, sometimes very publicly. In August of that year there was a huge demonstration in Hyde Park with one speaker holding forth on the theme that "our public men shall be pure," the sort of

> demand that Jekyll would have us believe drove him to create Hyde. Shortly after this rally, the Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed dealing with, inter alia, prostitution, the age of consent and male homosexual behaviour. It was on to this measure that the notorious Laboucherie Amendment was grafted, bringing within the law all forms of male homosexual activity whether conducted in public or in private. Such a context as this furore provides makes the reticence and furtiveness of Utterson and his circle even more aggressive. (253)

In view of the intolerance for deviant behaviour evident in the Laboucherie Amendment, the "reticence" and "furtiveness" of professional men like Utterson, Enfield, or Lanyon provide grounds for viewing them as suppressers of any truth which might expose of one of their own to public censure. The narrator, too, if one considers the many dubious events he fails to question openly, such as Utterson's suppression of Sir Danvers Carew's letter to him, is subject to the same suspicion.

In this sense, Enfield's suggestive use of the name "Hyde" may be a clever way of referring implicitly to the proclivities of a man he does not wish to name openly:

therefore, the name "Hyde," far from referring to Jekyll's alter-ego, is plausible as a code word for the "hidden" activities of Dr. Jekyll himself--as opposed to the evil doppleganger who emerges as a literary decoy; and although Sandison is right to point to sexual practices as a potential source of dishonour for a privileged member of society like Henry Jekyll, the particulars of Dr. Jekyll's case point less obviously to sex-related matters than to drug-related ones. Hence, the story that unfolds--in which poor Henry Jekyll has invented a miraculous drug that literally transforms him into someone opposite in character and appearance--sounds like a coded reference to the embarrassing reality of Jekyll's addiction to a narcotic substance; its nature, however, like many other details in the novel, is next to impossible to pigeon-hole.

The substance which causes Jekyll's demise may be laudanum (opium mixed with alcohol), which was widely available in the nineteenth century. Virginia Berridge and Griffith Edwards discuss the widespread use of opium in England until 1868, after which restrictions were still quite minimal:

> Going to the grocer's for opium was often a child's errand. In a large family, a harrassed mother would send the eldest child, often kept at

> home to nurse younger brothers and sisters, out shopping....Many [dealers] accepted that some, at least, of their customers would be dependent on opium. If a large quantity was asked for, it was the custom to ask if the purchaser was in the habit of taking the drug and was accustomed to it. (31)

Access to opium would not, of course, be a problem for a medical doctor like Stevenson's Jekyll. From the common worker, to prostitutes, to the elderly, to people with toothaches, gout, or, as in De Quincey's case, gastro-intestinal disorders, opium was available from professional and non-professional sources alike. In spite of the relative lack of social concern surrounding the sale of opium, however, a stigma was also attached to its use--a stigma which caused Coleridge to claim he used it for strictly medicinal purposes, and which, in 1849, caused proprietors of grocery and corner stores to disclaim knowledge of the drug to a Morning Chronicle reporter, notwithstanding the lists in their windows of different forms of the substance (Berridge 31).

Opium use, while it might explain Jekyll/Hyde's (or Enfield's) late night adventures in the nether regions of London, still does not explain the murderousness associated

in this novel with the substance "invented" by Henry Jekyll. More conceivable as a drug which complicated Jekyll's life in a disastrous way would be alcohol: addiction to it, and to opium, might well produce a Jekyll whose escapades would require both discretion and damage-control efforts on the part of concerned friends and colleagues. If references to Mr. Hyde are disguised references to the disgraceful state into which Dr. Jekyll falls when intoxicated/stoned, the uniformly vague narrative descriptions of Mr. Hyde's physical appearance suggest the refusal of all concerned (including the overriding narrator) to refer directly to an intoxicated Dr. Jekyll. Stevenson's equitone narrator, if he can be interpreted as a conniving presence in the midst of such a scenario, necessarily becomes a less high-minded figure in the process.

In this regard, the repeated focus on Hyde's ugliness in the third-person narrator's presentation of "facts" may be his clever method of diverting attention from gaps in the unfolding story--a tale which counts for its success on the public expectation of a mystery which will be satisfactorily resolved. Enfield's observations on the way Hyde looks, for instance, are echoed later by Utterson and Dr. Lanyon (among others, including Jekyll himself):[2]

Hyde's physical appearance inspires contempt without

exception. "He is not easy to describe," says Enfield, in response to a question from Utterson,

> There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary-looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. No sir; I can make no hand of it; I can't describe him. And it's not for want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment. (34)

In this, as in other descriptions of Hyde, both the characters and narrator avoid direct reference to particulars which would give a face to the name of the man being described, suggesting that the overriding narrator is recounting the "facts" in order to avoid direct reference to detail which might incriminate Jekyll. The consistent lack of concrete detail in the various descriptions of Hyde, however, might also suggest that the narrator is not very good in his act of deception.

Enfield's account, for example, of an anonymous doctor's reaction to Hyde, makes no issue of Hyde's sobriety

or lack thereof, let alone Enfield's. As he says to Utterson:

> Well, sir, he [the doctor] was like the rest of us: every time he looked at my prisoner [Mr. Hyde], I saw that Sawbones turned sick and white with the desire to kill him. I knew what was in his mind, just as he knew what was in mine; and killing him being out of the question, we did the next best. [They obtain financial recompense for the girl's family] (31,32)

The unlikelihood of Enfield's being out for an stroll and encountering an entire family and a doctor at three in the morning fades into the background as he foregrounds the ugliness of a man he describes as evil incarnate; Enfield's failure to make an issue of whether Hyde has been drinking, besides suggesting his own possible lack of sobriety at the time, confirms his bias against a character about whom very little of a definite nature is ever known.

Meanwhile, the third-person narrator goes unnoticed, even though his recounting of the story as a whole includes more than one suspicious and unsubstantiated emphasis on Hyde's repulsiveness; similarly, the narrator's refusal to comment openly on details that might incriminate professional men makes him into a legitimate object of legal

scrutiny. With such considerations in mind, the equitone purity of the narrator becomes rather ambiguous; in the process, Stevenson implicitly mocks a print-indoctrinated readership that is addicted to a de-mystifying narrative voice of superior moral insight.

Stevenson, by providing room for complicity between his narrator and the character Mr. Utterson, and by refusing to tidy up the many gaps in his story, takes liberties with the tightly-plotted detective novel structure: his writing, as Alan Sandison suggests, anticipates twentieth-century experimentalism in the vein of the de-plotted novel. Walter Ong comments on the nineteenth-century genre of detective-story writing in Orality:

> Writing, as has been seen, is essentially a consciousness-raising activity. The tightly-organized, classically plotted story both results from and encourages heightened consciousness, and this fact expresses itself symbolically when, with the arrival of the perfectly pyramidal plot in the detective story, the action is seen to be focused within the consciousness of the protagonist--the detective....Once the textual problem is solved, everything else falls into place....

The novel with a tidy process of de-mystification was more

the rule than the exception in the nineteenth century (perhaps today as well, with regard to the best-seller list). Ong, in his discussion, contrasts such writing against works by authors such as Joyce, Kafka, Beckett or Thomas Pynchon to exemplify what he calls "the deplotted story of "the late-print or electronic age" (154). In this sense, the ambiguous presentation of evidence in Jekyll and Hyde helps to create a similar, de-plotted effect in Stevenson's story. The chapters from "The Carew Murder Case" through to "The Last Night," for instance, serve not only to chronicle Hyde's demise, but also to preface a supposed unraveling of the novel's mysteries--one which never really emerges.

The lack of answers to questions implicitly posed by the novel's events is due in large part to an increasingly corrupt narrator's taciturnity and the terse secrecy of the characters. Utterson's visit to Jekyll, for example, soon after his conversation with Hyde, sheds no light on the unlikelihood of Utterson having agreed to draft a will for a man [Hyde] about whom so little is known. Although counsellors then, as now, would no doubt draft such documents without personal considerations, Utterson, in the context of Stevenson's story, appears to have a personal

interest in the matter. His rage against the will is clear enough:

> This document had long been the lawyer's eyesore. It offended him both as a lawyer and as a lover of the sane and customary sides of life, to whom the fanciful was the immodest.... "I thought it was madness," he said, as he replaced the obnoxious paper in the safe; "and now I begin to fear it is disgrace." (36)

In spite of his personal opposition as Jekyll's friend, Utterson has drafted Jekyll's will with Hyde as beneficiary. Thus, when Utterson's extremely brief interview with Jekyll on this subject occurs, and Jekyll yields nothing at all in the way of hard information about Hyde, let alone his reasons for naming him heir to a vast estate, one's credulity is strained--at least in relation to the mysterious doubts that Utterson feels. The third-person narrator's dark silence adds to the suspicious quality of the interview, for at moments like this a Gothic story-teller usually stirs the pot, if only a little.

But Stevenson's narrator remains tight-lipped to the point of complicity--and the story he tells remains vital mainly because of the intriguing secret being offered as the prize for continuing to read to the end; this aura of

secrecy is unrelenting, and permeates every new event and character. The narrator's invocation of omniscient privilege while peering into Utterson's mind, for instance, suggests that the lawyer (and, implicitly, the narrator) may have something to "Hyde":

> ...the lawyer...brooded awhile on his own past, groping in all the corners of memory, lest by chance some Jack-in-the-Box of an old iniquity should leap to light there. His past was fairly blameless; few men could read the rolls of their life with less apprehension; yet he was humbled to the dust by the many ill things he had done, and raised up again into a sober and fearful gratitude by the many that he had come so near to doing, yet avoided. And then by a return on his former subject, he conceived a spark of hope. "This Mister Hyde, if he were studied," thought he, "must have secrets of his own: black secrets, by the look of him; secrets compared to which poor Jekyll's worst would be like sunshine." (42)

When Utterson examines his own conscience, there is palpable irony in the narrator's inappropriately sympathetic description of the lawyer's alleged thoughts. The idea that "few men could read the rolls of their life with less

apprehension" is complicated first by Utterson's ruthless stalking of Hyde, then by his outright lie to Hyde about Dr. Jekyll having confided Hyde's whereabouts, and finally by his extortion scheme for finding out Hyde's "black secrets."

Utterson also ruthlessly suppresses evidence related to Hyde's murder of Sir Danvers Carew: this can be seen in his treatment of testimony from the maid-servant who lives alone and not far from the river where Carew is murdered. The maid-servant is a woman inclined to romantic day-dreaming, and has no one to corroborate what she tells about the murder she says she has witnessed; she leaves a glaring gap between the time she witnesses the murder at eleven p.m. and the time at which she recovers her consciousness sufficiently (two a.m.) to be able to report it (47). Also significant is how the maid-servant's account--in which Hyde inexplicably flies into a rage after appearing to ask directions from Carew--resembles the same rather perfunctory story rendered by Enfield at the novel's outset, in which Hyde "tramples" a young girl and is described as a "damned juggernaut."

The overriding narrator winks his eye at the sameness of parallel accounts of Hyde's behaviour--just as he remains silent on Utterson's concealment of the letter that Carew had been carrying the night of the murder, which is

addressed to Utterson (47-50). Neither Utterson nor the narrator reveal anything of the letter's sealed contents; nor does Utterson reveal to anyone that he himself had once made a gift to Jekyll of a walking stick identical to Hyde's murder weapon (48). These gaps are suspicious in relation to how the novel's overriding narrative voice has previously proved to be a possible source of misinformation as he advances an increasingly gap-ridden tale. The character who should be drawing attention to the gaps, for instance--Utterson, the experienced attorney--also fails at every point to examine the weakness of the maid-servant's story. The narrator's failure to acknowledge any such anomalies, and his refusal to comment on evidence that is less than convincing makes his taciturnity into a great source of irony. The narrator walks a line between ironic observation and complicity in suppressing evidence, while Utterson's ominous silence further erodes his position as a pillar of society.

The narrator's knowledge of Utterson's strategems and supposed secrets needs explanation--seeing as his omniscience is as suspect as his equitone purity. No such explanation ever emerges, however, apparently confirming some degree of complicity on the narrator's part in the events he describes. The narrator would appear to be a major

culprit in matters of hiding vital information, as one also sees in the stinginess of his characters when it comes to sharing vital information--such as Lanyon's refusal to disclose to Utterson the specifics of a recent interview he has had with an increasingly reclusive Dr. Jekyll, or the odd fact that Utterson holds back information from his own cousin, Enfield, about Hyde's residence being the back way into Jekyll's house. The hoarding of information in the name of control may have its origin in a furtive and elusive narrator who is involved in the story in an undetermined (and undeterminable) way.

With access to documents, some degree of control over circumstances is possible in the scenario Stevenson creates, and such access to the printed word, in this tale, is necessary to bring Mr. Hyde to heel. Hyde's solvency, for instance, is inseparable from Henry Jekyll's written endorsement on cheques, and Hyde's future depends on his status as an heir in Jekyll's will; Utterson also controls Hyde's fate (which, in any case, amounts to Jekyll's fate) by his access to the letter Hyde later writes to Jekyll. Guest, (Utterson's clerk), also has document-knowledge which is particularly incriminating--for his expertise in graphology shows that Jekyll's and Hyde's handwriting specimens are practically the same, and suggests that Jekyll

has forged for Hyde. Utterson's response to this adversity is to hide the letter supposedly written by Hyde to Jekyll--and also, one assumes, the letter written by Carew to Utterson.

An important reason for Utterson's (or is it the narrator's?) opposition to Hyde at every turn (even before the murder of Carew) is that Hyde manages, at least for a time, to exist both outside and inside the literate scheme of things. In the former case, documents recording birth and death, place of occupation, family relationships etc. are all missing from Hyde's profile (a fact which would not be odd if Hyde were low-born, but what can legitimately be said about his origins in any event?). In the latter case, Hyde is named as heir in Jekyll's will and has access to the printed exchange medium of money without visible source of employment, or so we learn from the narrator. Such an existence is intolerable to Utterson, but his rage can be more realistically construed as the anger he feels against a Henry Jekyll whose substance-abuse problem has allowed his life to go out of control--and with reckless disrespect to the realm of printed documents. The attorney's rage, whatever its true source, reaches its climax in the "Last Night" chapter, one which contains a variety of detail that depicts both Utterson and Jekyll's butler, Poole, rather

suspiciously, and one which again allows for speculation on how deeply, and in what way, Stevenson's mysterious narrator may be involved.

In this chapter, Utterson is informed by Poole that Dr. Jekyll has been murdered by Mr. Hyde, who now skulks, unseen, in Jekyll's laboratory; Utterson, on hearing this, joins the butler in a vigilante-style invasion of the intruder's lair. Again, the details offered prior to the breaking down of the resident's door are equivocal. The ambiguity of the narrative voice clouds the transparency of a tale about good versus evil, even while the print-inculcated public's need to see a mystery solved is simultaneously intensified and frustrated by this chapter's deliberate lack of clarity. When Poole first contacts Utterson, one can reasonably assume that an unknown person is sequestering himself in Jekyll's home; but when Poole insists that the person in the room is Hyde, Utterson's eagerness to believe him is rather odd--to the degree that he, as an advocate of the law, is willing to stage a violent incursion on a possibly innocent man's privacy.

Poole, however, who has not received much narrative attention, now appears to be almost as "aggressive" and "furtive" as Enfield, Lanyon, and Utterson have all previously appeared to be. The "note of something like

triumph" that is heard in the butler's voice when he begins to persuade Utterson that the house's mysterious resident may be Hyde, however, may suggest a bias other than Poole's: perhaps it is the narrator's. Poole's avid desire to flush out the hidden person he believes is Mr. Hyde, although understandable, seems like something cunningly placed by the officious narrator to carry the plot forward. In spite of all this, and in spite of the pathetic appeal for mercy from the "voice" which cries--"Utterson...for God's sake, have mercy!"--the vigilante butler and lawyer break down the door, only to discover no evidence of foul play other than the suicide of the room's occupant, which their very break-in has, apparently, precipitated. (Is it indeed Hyde? Is there even such a person?)

Unsurprisingly, the discovery of documents in the room (including Jekyll's confession) revives both Utterson's and a readership's expectation of a revelatory dénouement which will untangle all of the story's many unanswered questions. If one assumes, however, that the evidence discovered by Utterson is also part of the factual foundation for the tale told by the anonymous narrator, then to what degree can Utterson be trusted as a source of facts--especially when his information contains as many anomalies as have been discussed so far? Whose body, for example, is really

discovered in Jekyll's room, in view of no existing documentation to establish even the birth and personal history of a man named Hyde (50)? Why the coziness and neatness of the room in which the resident has been nefariously preparing tea? What of the "blasphemies" scrawled in "a pious work" in the room entered by Utterson and Poole--a work "for which Jekyll had several times expressed a great esteem"--when there is no evidence in Jekyll's own account for any such esteem regarding religious works? And what of the fact that Utterson alone has already been confidently referred to (by the increasingly un-equitone narrator) as a man who does read such works, albeit unenthusiastically (35)?

Another question is whether the written evidence already discussed emerges untampered-with in the hands of the secretive Utterson. Among Utterson's resources in engineering such a deception is a clerk (Mr. Guest) who may be skilled in forging documents (54). The transparency of Dr. Lanyon's and Dr. Jekyll's posthumous written confessions is thus far from certain, and so there is room for the possibility that their "confessions" have been subjected to a controlling hand--one which creates a pseudo-explanation of the mysteries which have preceded them. Lanyon's confession, for instance, includes the incredible

description of Hyde's transformation into Jekyll via the ingestion of a drug. Does Lanyon, then, by virtue of such a strange revelation, share Jekyll's evident insanity by testifying to the truth of such a tale, or has the wily interpreting hand of Utterson, or the narrator, or both (with the assistance of Mr. Guest) intervened and created an alternative scenario, one which, though implausible, makes for a good scandal and protects people with reptuations?

In the latter case, the details of the physical transformation in both accounts are extremely curious: In Lanyon's story, the symptoms described by the doctor when Hyde drinks his potion sound like those of withdrawal from an addictive drug. In this sense, it is worth considering that a safe way for a man in Jekyll's position to come down from a case of severe addiction would be via the protection of a medical friend's private quarters and vow of confidentiality, both of which Lanyon can provide. Here is Lanyon's description of Hyde's transformation into Jekyll:

> ...he reeled, staggered, clutched at the table and held on, staring with injected eyes, gasping with open mouth; and as I looked, there came, I thought, a change--he seemed to swell--his face became suddenly black, and the features seemed to melt and alter--and the next moment I had sprung

> to my feet and leaped back against the wall, my arm raised to shield me... my mind submerged in terror....for there before my eyes--pale and shaken, and half fainting...there stood Henry Jekyll! (80)

The tentativeness of the language in this passage--"there came, I thought, a change," "he seemed to swell," "the features seemed to melt and alter"--makes it difficult to say just what Lanyon does allegedly see, especially when he refuses to give any particulars at all about his ensuing conversation with the Mr. Hyde who is now Dr. Jekyll. Like so much other indefinite detail in the novel, the language of Lanyon's (supposed) confession more realistically represents the possibility of Henry Jekyll having had an addiction problem, and not the "strange case" of Jekyll having had a drug-induced, physically dissimilar, evil twin. Seen in this light, it is virtually impossible to avoid attributing some sort of skullduggery to the authenticity of the confessions with which the novel ends.

A possible motive for Mr. Utterson and the narrator to replace such a sordid story of drug addiction with the more exotic one of body/mind metamorphosis would be the prospect of inheriting Jekyll's estate, which, we discover, does go to Utterson, coincidentally the man in possession of

Jekyll's will. The narrator, too, however ironic his story-telling is, may, for the same reason, be conniving with Utterson in rearranging the facts of the case--such as the confessions--through Mr. Guest's forgery. The two written confessions which conclude Jekyll and Hyde, that is, can only resolve the mysteries that have developed if one overlooks their pseudo-science, their repetition of Enfield's unconvincing story, their omission of any new facts on Carew's murder (or the letter he was carrying), and their strange repetition of vague descriptions of Mr. Hyde's appearance, among other matters.

As in Lanyon's account, Jekyll's drug-induced transformation contains violent detail, suggesting an officious, outside hand which influences both narratives. Jekyll prefaces his description by ruminating on the repression that dominates his public life and the ecstasy that usage of the drug promises. In these reflections, however, Jekyll's philosophical observations on the "dual" nature of human beings are less pertinent to the mystery of his "case" than his sense of freedom when under the influence of whatever substance he is using:

> The most racking pains succeeded: a grinding in the bones, deadly nausea, and a horror of the spirit that cannot be exceeded at the hour of

> birth or death. Then these agonies began swiftly to subside, and I came to myself as if out of a great sickness. There was something strange in my sensations, something incredibly sweet. I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul. I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine. (83,84)

Just as in Lanyon's confession, the first few lines' emphasis on pain and trauma evoke symptoms of withdrawal from a potent narcotic; curiously, however, the passage yields quickly to a description of the euphoria that characterizes opium or morphine use. The insistence in the passage on violent symptoms is consistent with the need of whoever is writing the confession to associate feelings of pain and guilt with what otherwise appears to be a pleasurable experience. The writer, in a self-revealing comment, condemns the "innocent freedom of the soul" caused

by the drug's influence as being a "tenfold more wicked" experience than his "original evil"--which implicitly suggests that his sober state of mind is <u>also</u> a less than desirable one. Hence, the "dualism" which this document invokes is less a genuine philosophical meditation than a complicated way of expressing what is ostensibly a guilt-ridden Jekyll's penitence for irresponsible behaviour--something to which a public readership would give its approval, even as its desire for a story about the struggle of good against evil is satisfied.

Lending further irony to the "Full Statement of the Case," however, is a self-referential quality in the writing of the document. Stevenson recognizes the irony of Jekyll's indoctrination in the thought habits and expectations of phonetic literacy as he (or whoever it may be who is supposed to be writing) pretends to unravel and explain the "strange case" that is of so much concern. Jekyll (or more likely the Utterson/narrator tandem) melodramatizes his own life, treating it like a sensational, continuing saga; writing and death become equivalent here, showing Stevenson's grasp of how phonetic writing decontextualizes the acoustic resonance of human experience. Especially ironic in this passage is its suggestion that life ends with

the laying down of the pen (and hence begins when the pen is poised to be used in writing).

> Nor must I delay too long to bring my writing to an end....Half an hour from now...I know how I shall sit shuddering and weeping in my chair...or continue...to pace up and down this room....Will Hyde die upon the scaffold? Or will he find the courage to release himself at the last moment? God knows; I am careless; this is my true hour of death, and what is to follow concerns another than myself. Here, then, as I lay down the pen, and proceed to seal up my confession, I bring the life of that unhappy Henry Jekyll to an end. (97)

However Jekyll's or Lanyon's confessions are construed, it is relatively unimportant that any theory about the "true" story of Henry Jekyll be vindicated, simply because Stevenson, as a writer familiar with the conventions of narrative point of view and detective story plotting, (not to mention the legal niceties of interpreting documents)[3] leaves no real way of finding out any such truth--he simply creates provocative leads which are cut off and spirited away, as if to the darkest "most private" corner of Utterson's safe. The effect of Jekyll and Hyde's handling of narrators, plot and characters is thus quite ambiguous

and offers little in the way of illuminating resolutions to any dark areas it creates.

Stevenson is aware of the dead end to which he leads his readers, just as his irony in equating writing with death reveals a sophisticated grasp of the written/printed word's effects in relation to a readership. As Ong comments, on how writing restructures consciousness,

> One of the most startling paradoxes inherent in writing is its close association with death. This association is suggested in Plato's charge that writing is inhuman, thing-like, and that it destroys memory. It is also abundantly evident in countless references to writing (and/or print) traceable in printed dictionaries of quotations, from 2 Corinthians 3:6, "The letter kills but the spirit gives life" and Horace's reference to his three books of Odes as a "monument" (Odes iii.30.I), presaging his own death, on to and beyond Henry Vaughn's assurance to Sir Thomas Bodley that in the Bodleian Library at Oxford "every book is thy epitath"....The paradox lies in the fact that the deadness of the text, its removal from the living human lifeworld, its rigid visual fixity, assures its endurance and its

> potential for being resurrected into limitless living contexts by a potentially infinite number of living readers. (81)

It has previously been seen how Edward Hyde, as he appears in Lanyon's and Jekyll's written confessions (and elsewhere), may be a fiction invented to protect Henry Jekyll (and others) from scandal; the "resurrection" of Hyde by whoever reads the confessions is thus the resuscitation of whatever expectations and biases a reader brings to the act of reading/reviving phonetically rendered words on the page.

But the elusive quality of Hyde's voice as a character also parallels Lanyon's and Jekyll's voices, which are permanently "hidden" by literal death, as well as by the metaphorical death of writing. In a similar fashion, the novel's third-person narrative voice functions as a self-mediated character on the printed page, whose "death" by writing inadvertently casts his supposed high-mindedness in an unflattering light. The inexplicable mysteries surrounding Hyde have the implicit effect of involving characters other than him in scandal, such as Utterson, Enfield, Jekyll, Lanyon, Carew, and other, less significant figures. Of all those whose ostensible virtue suffers in this tale, however, perhaps the character most painfully

affected, if the least noticed, is the one of the nineteenth century's most trusted background phenomena, the equitone narrator himself.

Endnotes
Chapter Three

1

The incredible ending of Jekyll & Hyde was noted by the novel's earliest critics, such as Andrew Lang, E.T. Cook and James Ashcroft Noble. Lang refers to the mind/body transformation as "pseudo-science" (55); Cook notes that Stevenson "overshoots the mark...by being not merely strange, but impossible, and even absurd when the explanation is given" (100); and Noble, who seems to be mistaking Jekyll & Hyde for a well-conceived, if fantastic, realist novel, tempers his critique by saying that "all" in the novel "is accounted for more or less credibly" (55). The above three reviewers assume that Stevenson is catering to public expectation of a tale with a conventional moral, centering on one flawed member of the professional class.

2

Among those who make this routine observation about Hyde are the maidservant who witnesses Carew's death and the landlady at Hyde's residence. The servants at Jekyll's residence also appear to be full of revulsion when he is described as being in their midst.

3

Stevenson studied at Edinburgh university to be an attorney before beginning his writing career.

Chapter Four
Sartor Resartus: Literate Narrator, the Printed Medium, and Melchizedek

The overriding narrative voice of Thomas Carlyle's Sartor Resartus represents a principled, equitone authority figure, much more reliable than the narrator of Jekyll and Hyde. Unlike Stevenson's narrator, who becomes shrouded in suspicion the more he leaves the events of his story unexplained, Carlyle's third-person speaker becomes almost as lovable as Teufelsdröckh the more he mediates his philosopher's life and times. Sartor's narrator, however, is also a source of ambiguity: for he may be an artificial voice who refers to himself, with self-conscious humour, as a separate entity ("the editor"), or he may be the voice of Carlyle enjoying his literary hoax, one who is indeed quite separate from the high-minded person he refers to in his prose as "the editor." To deal with this issue at any length might well uncover even more riddles and require a thesis unto itself; it is, in any case, legitimate enough to accept this ambiguous feature of Sartor as something which adds to its enigma, for the equivocal identity of Sartor's overriding voice is consistent with Carlyle's delight in paradox. To avoid pointless confusion, it will thus be as well to refer to Sartor's overriding voice as the narrator who sometimes stuffily refers to himself as "the editor."

Sartor relies for its effect upon a constant tension between its mediating voice, or narrator, as public servant who knows the requirements of the publishing industry, and Diogenes Teufelsdröckh as radical author who refuses to cater to such expectations. Because its editor/philosopher set-up disrupts the conventional expectations of its readership, a work like Sartor can be classified as Menippean satire, according to Eric McLuhan, in The Role of Thunder in *Finnegan's Wake*. "As an active form," he writes, "a Menippean satire goes to any extreme necessary in order to frustrate objectivity or detachment on the part of the reader" (5). McLuhan elaborates on the role of Menippean satire in relation to the evolution of western technology--specifically, here, the printing press:

> Numbing of sensibility and the interplay of technology and culture have long been central concerns of serious Menippean satire. The first has its roots in Cynicism and manifests itself through the tradition in the various tactics Menippists deploy to jolt the reader awake. The second has its roots in both Menippism and grammar [grammar here meaning the study of the divine logos], and may be dated from Varro or Apuleius or Martianus Capella....With its roots in Cicero,

> Quintilian, and St. Augustine, the alliance between these two sciences of language remained the basis of medieval humanist culture until the next major technology arrived, the printing press.... The mid-sixteenth century saw a sudden spate of Menippean responses to new forms of culture born of Ramism and the printing press.(11)

As a work that insists on disrupting its readership's numbed sensibilities, and as a respectful send-up of German Romantic philosophers, Sartor belongs to the Menippean mode of satire as outlined by McLuhan. Similarly, Teufelsdröckh's metaphorical reading of "Nature" as a "Volume...whose Author and Writer is God" (258) reveals both Carlyle and his Clothes Philosopher to be practitioners of the ancient (and Medieval) science of grammar, the purpose of which was to interpret the divine book of nature. Reinforcing the Menippean mode of satire (in the sense of drawing attention to interplay between print technology and nineteenth-century culture) is Carlyle's early identification of Teufelsdröckh as a Melchizedek figure; this is a characterization which casts Teufelsdröckh in the role of preacher whose gospel transcends literacy and the printed word.

The identification of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh with Melchizedek begins early in Book One of Sartor, when the narrator gropes for ways to describe the enigmatic personality of his philosopher: the mystery and distance that keep the narrator from feeling comfortable with him, however, also lead him to call Teufelsdröckh a "Wandering Jew."(17; 156) The paradox of the double name is a familiar feature of Sartor, as the difference between "Diogenes" and "Teufelsdröckh" indicates: Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's name (translated "Born of God" and "Devil's Dung") is a yoking-together of qualities that are opposite, yet interdependent; it is a name that suggests both the book's narrator/Clothes Philosopher tandem as co-dependent opposites, as well as Teufelsdröckh's conception of interpenetrating divine and material worlds.

The Wandering Jew, as C.F. Harrold comments in a footnote, is the shoemaker of legend who "refused Christ permission to rest when he passed his house on the way to the Cross, and was therefore condemned to wander until the Judgement Day" (Sartor 17-18). Melchizedek, however, is "A minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man." (Hebrews 8: I) Melchizedek is the high priest of Salem to whom Abraham of the Old Testament paid tithes (Genesis 14: 17-24), and St. Paul

refers to this priest as Jesus, God's Son (Hebrews 7: 1-3). Melchizedek, in short, is the alpha and omega, the way and the truth and the light. The new covenant that Melchizedek represents is described in terms of the unwritten law of the spirit:

> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. (Hebrews 8:2,10)

The written symbols of scripture are recorded as a witness to the spiritual message of redemption, and part of humanity's final redemption is to cast off dependency on the physically represented word as a source of wisdom. With the word of God written in the human heart, "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Revelation 21:3), and former conceptions of time as measured by the sun and moon pass away (Revelation 21:23; 22:5).

Teufelsdröckh as a symbolic character is, in a quite diminished sense, analogous to Melchizedek--for Carlyle's philosopher ushers in a new covenant of the spirit which transcends the decontextualized version of experience offered by the written word. The technology of writing, as Walter Ong puts it, "initiated what print and computers only

continue, the reduction of dynamic sound to quiescent space, the separation of the word from the living present, where alone spoken words can exist"(83). As such, Teufelsdröckh's conception of time differs from that of the narrator, for the former lives in a world of the here-and-now, in which fulfillment of ideals is the rule rather than the exception. The spiritual nature of time in Teufelsdröckh's universe defies the mechanization of time in the nineteenth century, and runs contrary to industrial England's exploitation of time for the sake of efficiency and profit, producing the spiritually bankrupt "cash nexus," which Carlyle speaks of in Past and Present (32; 141; 179).

Teufelsdröckh, for instance, does not see time in terms of schedules and business, but in terms of duty: one discovers one's duty by living in what he calls the "everlasting now," and by seeing time and space as mere illusion.

> "Nevertheless, has not a deeper meditation taught certain of every climate and age, that the WHERE and WHEN, so mysteriously inseparable from all our thoughts, are but superficial terrestrial adhesions to thought, that the seer may discern them where they mount up out of the celestial EVERYWHERE AND FOREVER: have not all nations

> conceived their God as Omnipresent and Eternal; as existing in a universal HERE an everlasting NOW? Think well, thou too wilt find that Space is but a mode of our human Sense, so likewise Time; there is no Space and no Time: We are--we know not what;--light-sparkles floating in the aether of Deity!" (Sartor 55: emphases Carlyle's)

Tension thus emerges between Teufelsdröckh's here-in-the-moment philosophy and the mechanical version of time that the narrator has learned to expect from his culture. The narrator's reactions to Teufelsdröckh's unorthodox views on time range from describing them as "bordering on the impalpable Inane" (74), to dismissing them as "unsuited to the general apprehension" (193). Teufelsdröckh, for his part, emphasizes that human experience itself is an unacknowledged miracle in the eternal present; because of this remarkable stance, he forces the issue that a printed revelation of such a miracle is a paradox--because of the clash between the ever-unfolding nature of the living moment and the uniform, abstracted version of this miracle offered on the printed page.

The narrator's conception of time and space is the normal one for a citizen of a phonetically literate society; he is confused, however, by Teufeldröckh's fervent desire to

promulgate a fragmented cosmology that undermines the seamless Newtonian time/space continuum. What Teufelsdröckh anticipates intuitively, as he later speaks of "Time" as an eternal present, McLuhan describes in terms of the distinction between literate/print-inculcated consciousness and oral/tribal consciousness.[1] Time as a material extension of a human psychological process is real enough to the literate culture of Carlyle's (or our) day, but no one is born with the expectation of seeing or reacting to clocks as inevitable environmental realities; McLuhan explains this in Media:

> Time measured not by the uniqueness of private experience but by abstract uniform units gradually pervades all sense life, much as does the technology of writing and printing. Not only work, but also eating and sleeping, came to accommodate themselves to the clock rather than to organic needs. As the pattern of arbitrary and uniform measurement of time extended itself across society, even clothing began to undergo annual alteration in a way convenient for industry. At that point, of course, mechanical measurement of time as a principle of applied knowledge joined

> forces with printing and assembly line as a means of uniform fragmentation of processes. (Media 136)

The immediacy that characterizes the transcendent experience of time spoken of by Teufelsdröckh echoes the sense of immediacy characterizing pre-literate societies.[2] The hapless narrator thus functions as a kind of Everyman in the age of print who struggles with a perception of time alien to him, one which is implicit in Teufelsdröckh's "spiritual Picture of Nature." The narrator's world of logic and schedules is inseparable from his literate education and ideological expectations; Teufelsdröckh as Melchizedek sees through the limitations of a literate conception of time, and his prophetic sayings border on the apocalyptic.

Thus, the interplay that develops between Sartor's narrator and its philosopher/author implicitly associates the printed medium of the publishing industry with the system and logic of a conventional conception of time--while the idiosyncratic Teufelsdröckh presents a paratactically rendered philosophy of clothes which flies in the face of the narrator's conventional desire for logical connections. Such interplay is evident when the narrator/editor complains about Teufelsdröckh in "Prospective":

> Daily and nightly does the Editor sit (with green spectacles) deciphering these unimaginable

> Documents from their perplexed cursiv shrift; collating them with the almost equally unimaginable Volume which stands in legible print. Over such a universal medley of high and low, of hot, cold, moist and dry, is he here struggling (by union of like with like, which is Method) to build a firm Bridge for British travellers....nor is there any supernatural force to do it with; but simply the Diligence and feeble thinking Faculty of an English Editor, endeavouring to evolve printed Creation out of a German printed and written Chaos, wherein, as he shoots to and fro in it, gathering, clutching, piecing the Why to the far-distant Wherefore, his whole Faculty and Self are like to be swallowed up. (79-80)

The narrator/editor attempts to create--by means of a "printed creation"--a "bridge" between Teufelsdröckh's unsystemic thinking, and the British public's expectation of a logical system. Teufelsdröckh's metaphorical perception of time elsewhere causes the narrator to remark that "here" he first feels the pressure of his task," because of the "untried, almost inconceivable region, or chaos" which Teufelsdröckh's philosophy represents (51): Teufelsdröckh's

rhetoric, such as the idea that time is "a loom on whose "warp and woof...all our Dreams and Life-visions are painted" (55), is informed by the possibility of holistically awakening to transcendent truth as a sporadically-glimpsed, yet ever-present reality.

Time is an issue of importance in Sartor, not only because it is necessary to see beyond the "clothing" of space and time for a glimpse of the divine, but because it is just as necessary to see beyond the printed word as a medium for expression of truth, whether transcendent or mundane, for print is also a kind of "clothing" that shifts speech from its origin in the here-and-now of lived experience to the pages of books manufactured through the use of movable types. Hence, Sartor's printed illustration of self-renunciation implicitly suggests that such fulfillment occurs in a world other than that of the printed word.[3] Printed characters tend to induce a sense of cerebral detachment rather than epiphanic involvement with the "celestial everywhere and forever." In this sense, Teufelsdröckh's depiction of time in the age of print as an environment or prison (127), as appearance and illusion (260), curtain of reality (261), and a wonder-hider (263), suggests a world-historical rejection of the industrial age's anxiety-laden conception of time, and is consistent

with Sartor's suggestive linkage of Teufelsdröckh's name with that of Melchizedek, the priest of the spiritual covenant to be written in the hearts of human beings at the end of time as we know it.[4]

In the first reference to Teufelsdröckh as "The son of Time," for instance, the narrator humorously imparts heroic and religious proportions to Teufelsdröckh as champion of the fight against mechanism, saying that "Necessity will not stop," and "neither can he [Teufelsdröckh], a Son of Time" (121). Similarly, in "Pedagogy," the narrator selects an appropriate passage by the Clothes Philosopher himself, who heroically refers to "Time" being closely guarded by "Bailiffs" in "Gehenna" (or Tophet), the Biblical locale for hell-fire (107), and the narrator's reference to Teufelsdröckh as a "Son of Time" at the beginning of the "Everlasting No" (157) also helps to cast him as a quixotic hero who must face and overcome the "devouring" Time spirit of England's mechanical, print-dominated age (127).[5] As Teufelsdröckh suggests in "The Everlasting No," the "heaven-written law" of God is vastly more important than any printed documents of any age, philosophical or not:

> "Thus, in spite of all Motive-grinders, and Mechanical Profit-and Loss Philosophies, with the sick ophthalmia and hallucination they had brought

> on, was the Infinite nature of Duty still dimly present to me: living without God in the world, of God's light I was not utterly bereft my as yet sealed eyes, with their unspeakable longing, could nowhere see Him, nevertheless in my heart He was present, and His heaven-written Law stood legible and sacred there." (162)

For prominent philosophers in Carlyle's day (Adam Smith, Bentham, John Stuart Mill), the mechanization of the world and of time via clocks and calendars is progressive and inevitable--but Teufelsdröckh polarizes "Mechanical Profit-and-Loss Philosophies" against the "Infinite nature of Duty" because measured clock-time is used primarily for profit, while God's timeless, heaven-written law is a redemptive and spiritual reality. To a utilitarian such as Jeremy Bentham, duty is not divine (Sartor xx), and to a scientist like LaPlace, the mysterious universe may be explained with the right amount of information (4). For Teufelsdröckh, the opposite is true, and he backs up his belief with heroic action.

When the "Everlasting No" chapter finally comes to its climax, for example, Teufelsdröckh becomes akin to Melchizedek again when he invokes the image of Tophet, resurrecting in the process the spectre of mechanized time,

and suggesting that he, as a "Child of Freedom," will liberate celestial "Time" from the mechanistic prison of Tophet. "'What'" he asks himself,

> "...is the sum total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will or can do against thee....Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it! And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not fear or whining Sorrow was it, but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance." (167)

The re-introduction of Tophet as an image in this heroic passage recalls its first ominous use in "Pedagogy," and suggestively re-affirms the importance of Time as a factor in this important chapter's doctrine of self-renunciation. Adding to the Biblical mood established by Tophet is the imagery of fire-baptism with which Teufelsdröckh's transformation is described.

To a literate audience, the apocalypse is an event which lies far away, at the end of history, but in "The Everlasting No," the end of (material, quantifiable) time becomes a present reality, one in which Teufelsdröckh, as

the new Melchizedek, rejects the mechanical, profit-and-loss version of time which oppresses humanity.

> "The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'; to which my whole Me now made answer: 'I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'
> It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual birth, or Baphometic Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man." (167-168)

To be baptised into the Christian faith is to be submerged in water and hence made into a child of God, but Teufelsdröckh re-casts the imagery of Christian baptism in the new metaphorical "clothes" of "fire" and "manhood" as he associates the Christian conception of eternity with an eternal present which is lived in this world and not the next. The "whole Me" which declares emancipation is the naked physical body prior to its immersion within the "Devil's" technological society (Tophet) that alters the sensory ratios with the "clothes" of literate perception.

To see the present moment in this way is to see experience and time itself from a quasi-religious perspective. Teufelsdröckh is "outcast" and miserable in

relation to Time's mechanism and duration in a literate culture, and thus is reminiscent of Melchizedek, the Messiah who is rejected by a people who disbelieve his gospel. Both Teufelsdröckh and Melchizedek are ultimately victorious, the former over the Everlasting No (a negative spirit which denies transcendent freedom from mechanized time), and the latter over sin and death. Carlyle outlines the Clothes Philosopher's glorious triumph over secular time (a mechanized illusion created by the printing press or the clock) in the bizarre narrative of "The Everlasting Yea." In this chapter, Carlyle's narrator continues the portrait of Teufelsdröckh as one whose insight into Time's divine nature makes possible the profound act of self-renunciation, as well as the discovery of duty in the here-and-now.

Integral to this portrait is the idea previously developed in Sartor, of Teufelsdröckh as a borderline religious figure who is destined to make such discoveries. In a sense, the narrator's ironic tone in presenting the Clothes Philosopher's rhetoric is a reminder of his position as the tolerant spokesman for the status-quo--one who is less interested in Teufelsdröckh's infinite present than in walking the line between controversy and literary respectability. From the perspective of what is and is not acceptable to the reading public, then, Teufelsdröckh

appears to fulfill the "Wandering Jew" role as much as that of the more heroic Melchizedek--for the narrator often makes frustrated-sounding comments on his philosopher's difficult sayings. Teufelsdröckh's crucial insights regarding the "Infinite" in the human spirit, for example, are described by the narrator as outside his ability to interpret.[6]

After the crescendo of rhetoric in "The Everlasting No" and "The Everlasting Yea," for example, the narrator's tone stops just short of disapproval, which is more than a little anti-climactic--especially in the face of Teufelsdröckh's grand claims that misery and happiness alike emerge from humanity's potential for greatness, and that the insatiable desire in the infinite human spirit makes self-renunciation a necessary step in the search for a divine sense of duty. The narrator's dry reaction is to remark that

> Without pretending to comment on which strange utterances, the Editor will only remark, that there lies beside them much of a still more questionable character; unsuited to the general apprehension; nay wherein he himself does not see his way. Nebulous disquisitions on Religion, yet not without bursts of splendour; on the "perennial continuance of Inspiration"....We select some fractions by way of finish to this farrago. (193)

Here, Carlyle's self-described "discursive" narrator reacts with discomfort as well as sympathy to the volatile Teufelsdröckh: his intuition tells him Teufelsdröckh's insights are brilliant, but his ideologically influenced need for a logical philosophical system tells him Teufelsdröckh is possibly a fraud.[7]

The narrator reacts in a similar fashion to Teufelsdröckh's ruminations on George Fox, founder of the Quaker movement. Teufelsdröckh compares Fox's "Leather Hull"--a suit he falsely claims was sewn together and worn by Fox himself--to the tub worn by the Greek philosopher Diogenes, noting that Diogenes had "scornfully" preached of humanity's "dignity and divinity," while Fox, (unhistorically) clad in a leather suit, preached of the same, "not in Scorn, but in Love" (212).[8] The narrator, however, asks whether "the Professor has his own deeper intention" in this depiction of Fox, "and laughs in his sleeve at our strictures and glosses" (213). This broad hint shows how Carlyle is pointing to the inevitable differences of perspective between Sartor's literate narrator and holistic Clothes Philosopher; the narrator cannot make up his mind as to whether Teufelsdröckh is the time-conquering Melchizedek or the despised "Wandering Jew"

whose bizarre reappraisals of historical figures like Fox cast him in the role of charlatan or trickster.

The narrator's suspicion of Teufelsdröckh continues in the chapter called "Symbols," when Teufelsdröckh's "high-soaring delineations" are cut short by the logical narrator, who describes his author's thoughts on symbols as being "on the verge of the inane" (220); but by now the narrator's see-saw between censure and praise for his philosopher's ideas has assumed the status of a principle of sorts--such that any theory or phenomenon in Sartor, once introduced, implies its absent opposite.[9] The narrator's reason for cutting Teufelsdröckh short on this occasion, for instance, is the Clothes philosopher's depiction of Time as an influence that "adds" to "the sacredness of Symbols" even as it "defaces or even desecrates them" (224).

Teufelsdröckh refers specifically here to the work of Homer, which he thinks has "not ceased to be true," and yet which is no longer "our Epos"--or cultural/ideological reference point (224). Teufelsdröckh's recognition that Homer's significance is undecideable casts him as the antithesis of the narrator, who, by virtue of his censorship, appears to seek a stable centre of meaning (Homer as a resonant, trans-cultural symbol). In this light, the dual nature of Teufelsdröckh as Melchizedek and

Wandering Jew can easily be seen as an appropriate expression of Sartor's dualism, as can the difference between the narrator's relatively fixed conception of time and Teufelsdröckh's trans-historical conception of it. While the narrator's frequent skepticism casts Teufelsdröckh in the role of a societally and ideologically rootless Wandering Jew, his "shuddering" admiration of Teufelsdröckh's quasi-biblical rhetoric (250) casts the Clothes Philosopher as a latter-day Melchizedek, and, at least temporarily, weakens the narrator's position as a commentator who respects the prudence and protocol of publishing houses.

The narrator's posture as skeptical representative of literate expectations, for instance, begins to transform into notable adulation under the influence of Teufelsdröckh's observations in "Organic Filaments," when the Clothes Philosopher sees the newspaper as a "pulpit," and its writers as the "new Clergy of the Mendicant Orders [or general population]" (252). The newspaper, that is, although it is a product of a mechanical and materialistic Industrial Age, is nonetheless an expression of holistic perception because of the side-by-side, simultaneous presentation it gives of different kinds of stories from wide-ranging times and places. The newspaper represents a

hybrid media, on the borderline between sequentiality (the uniform, phonetic letters which decontextualize experience) and holistic immediacy (stories appearing side by side with no artificial narrative connections)--and reflects the importance of the present moment. Sartor's anticipation of the immediacy and speed-up in communications inherent in the newspaper shows how Carlyle sensed the nature of the new psychological response both to time and to language itself. Confirming Carlyle's insight in this regard, not long after Sartor's publication, was the invention of the telegraph (1844), which would intensify the immediacy of newspaper reporting that much more.

McLuhan's development of electronic technology's effects over a century later were, of course, considerably different, but not without echoes of Sartor's world of holistic perception:

> Our new electronic technology that extends our senses and nerves in a global embrace has large implications for the future of language. Electric technology does not need words any more than the digital computer needs numbers. Electricity points the way to an extension of the process of consciousness itself, on a world scale, and without any verbalization whatever. Such a state

> of collective awareness may have been the preverbal condition of men. Language as the technology of human extension, whose powers of division and separation we know so well, may have been the "Tower of Babel" by which men sought to scale the highest heavens. Today, computers hold out the promise of a means of instant translation of any code or language into any other code or language. The computer, in short, promises by technology a Pentecostal condition of universal understanding and unity. The next logical step would seem to be, not to translate, but to by-pass language in favour of a general cosmic consciousness which might be very like the collective unconscious dreamt of by Bergson. (Media 83-84)

McLuhan's prophecy of a "Pentecostal condition of universal understanding and unity," via electric technology's ability to "by-pass language," has a metaphorical resonance similar to that of Sartor's chapter on symbols when Teufelsdröckh offers observations in praise of wordless deeds. Just as McLuhan speaks of a silent and electronically induced "collective awareness" that transcends the mechanical age of the printing press, Teufelsdröckh's adage--"Speech is of

Time, Silence is of Eternity"--suggests the quasi-religious transcending of speech acts which are mired in the schedules and calendars of the visualized and materialized version of time.[10]

Teufelsdröckh's grand pronouncement on silence in "Symbols" is consistent with the priestly aura of Melchizedek that Carlyle has chosen to link to his name. Even though Teufelsdröckh is only a secular and sometimes buffoonish figure, the scope of his insight is no less prophetic or world-embracing than that of the Hebrew Melchizedek, for the itinerant priest of the old and new testaments ushers in the fulfillment of a redemptive covenant that by-passes all worldly institutions and societies, whether they are founded on orality or literacy. In its place, Melchizedek brings a new heaven, a new earth, and a new song (Revelation: XXI:1, V:9). Similarly, Teufelsdröckh's mystical reference to the "silence" which is of "eternity" suggests a process of renewal which is comparable to, although not as world-shaking as, Melchizedek's; this renewal of human consciousness is the subject of "Natural Supernaturalism," a chapter in which the tension between literate/secular narrator and priestly/holistic author is as strong as ever.

For the narrator, acceptance of Teufelsdröckh's philosophy must be qualified, as he says in "Natural Supernaturalism," by "what utmost force of speculative intellect is in him," as well as by "judicious selection and adjustment" (255). The narrator presents Teufelsdröckh's point of view according to his prudent awareness of the philosophical tone expected by a literate readership: the narrator's comments thus contain an ironic edge that suggests his awareness of the publishing protocols founded on the literate consciousness that "clothes," and cannot do justice to, Teufelsdröckh's transcendent sayings. The narrator's gently ironic tone also pervades the description of Teufelsdröckh's victory over the "Phantasms" of "Time and Space":

> ...for with these also he now resolutely grapples, these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed. (255)

Here, the narrator's praise of Teufelsdröckh creates a mock-beatific aura for him which echoes the Clothes Philosopher's paradoxical embodiment of both Melchizedek and the Wandering

Jew. On the one hand, the narrator's language is cosmic and glorious, while his tone is satirical (in a friendly way). Teufelsdröckh, on the other hand, while not representing the advent of a new heaven and new earth in the New Testament style, implicitly mocks the prudence of his literate narrator and audience with the pronouncements he is to make in "Natural Supernaturalism."

Teufelsdröckh's analogy of the Minnow, for instance, is an attempt to evoke the limits of human knowledge and the vast potential of humanity's limitless imagination, contrary to a nineteenth-century readership's belief in a predictable universe and the virtue of stern rational thought:

> "To the Minnow every cranny may have become familiar: but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-Winds, and Monsoons, and Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (unmiraculously enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasureable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Aeons of Aeons." (258)

However well the minnow knows its own tiny part of the world, forces exist beyond its comprehension which impact on its existence. But humanity has the gift of imagination, and thus is able to see that the natural phenomena governing the "Creek" it lives in are all part of "the mysterious Course of Providence through Aeons of Aeons."

In the above passage, as in those which follow, Teufelsdröckh requites his narrator's irony with some of his own: for just as time and space, in the Clothes Philosopher's view, are to be seen as illusions perpetrated by a materialist world-view, the sensory world of Nature is to be seen as a "Volume," or book--but not like any book his narrator, publisher or readers have considered before. This volume, as he writes, is one

> "...whose Author and writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man, so much as well know the Alphabet thereof? With its Words, Sentences, and grand descriptive Pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through Solar Systems, and Thousands of Years, we shall not try thee. It is a Volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true Sacred-writing; of which even Prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your Institutes, and Academies of

> Science, they strive bravely; and, from among the...hieroglyphic writing, pick out...some Letters in the vulgar Character, and therefrom put together this and the other economic Recipe, of high avail in Practice." (258)

The "Words" and "Sentences" of the "Volume" which is the universe itself can only be deciphered piece-meal, if at all, by prophetic human beings. Teufelsdröckh can only suggest the cosmic mystery he revels in by leaving his sayings unconnected and mysterious, for his philosophy is understood by virtue of what he leaves unsaid. This is why Teufelsdröckh advocates study of "writing" which is not writing at all--the "celestial hieroglyphs" of the universe itself: as such, the Philosopher of Clothes is an outcast of the then-dominant technologies of phonetic writing and the printing press, and of philosophical writings which emphasize the quantifiable and the visible.

And so Teufelsdröckh's narrator, who oscillates between the appearance of understanding the Philosophy of Clothes and the need to explain it persuasively to the reading public, is left with the task of explaining the usefulness of this philosophy in relation to his society's social/ideological environment. The narrator's irony in doing so here, and throughout Sartor as a kind of principle,

is inevitable. His comments in "Circumspective," for instance, suggest the difference between Teufelsdröckh's unwriteable philosophy and that of a profit-driven society, many of whose philosophers believed that the true and eternal laws of economy and experience could in fact be written in rational prose. The narrator reinforces this social satire when he suggests that Teufelsdröckh should reveal his revolutionary philosophy in the unlikely setting of "many a literary Tea-circle" to an audience which no doubt would receive it with contempt:

> In the way of replenishing thy purse, or otherwise aiding thy digestive faculty, O British Reader, it [Teufelsdröckh's philosophy] leads to nothing, and there is no use in it; but rather the reverse, for it costs thee somewhat. Nevertheless, if through this unpromising Horn-gate, Teufelsdröckh...have led thee into the true Land of Dreams; and...thou lookest, even for moments, into the region of the Wonderful...then are thou profited beyond money's worth; and hast a thankfulness towards our Professor; nay, perhaps in many a literary Tea-circle wilt open thy kind lips, and audibly express that same. (269-70)

In a sense, the narrator who shows himself capable of such

exquisite irony becomes the very "bridge" which he has previously referred to as a necessity in understanding Teufelsdröckh: he is neither a lackey for his century's ideological perspective nor the same earnest advocate of transcendentalism as is his Clothes Philosopher. As a result, his ironic voice emerges chiefly because he inhabits two worlds--the grandiose one of considering Teufelsdröckh's doctrine of the eternal present, and the pedantic one of functioning in a print-dominated world which has yet to encounter the speed-up of thought and experience that electricity would introduce to the western world.

As Sartor concludes, the narrator expresses his response to Teufelsdröckh as "a mingled feeling of astonishment, gratitude and disapproval" (292). "Regret," he says, over Teufelsdröckh's idiosyncratic philosophy,

> ...is unavoidable; yet censure were loss of time. To cure him [Teufelsdröckh] of his mad humours British Criticism would essay in vain: enough for her if she can, by vigilance, prevent the spreading of such among ourselves. What a result, should the piebald, entangled, hyper-metaphorical style of writing, not to say of thinking, become general among our Literary men! (293)

The narrator's apparent fear of Britain's literary

establishment adopting Teufelsdröckh's use of metaphor, ellipsis, and parataxis masks his amused acceptance of the implications of Teufelsdröckh's Philosophy of Clothes, for society sheds technologies in the same way that people shed styles of clothing; thus, the coy narrator at least seems to have learned that the printing press is just one in a long succession of technologies that inhabit past, present, and future, and all at the same "time."

Carlyle's anticipation of the printed medium's psychological effects finds expression less in his explicit commentaries on such an issue than through the way he sets up Sartor's tension between narrator/editor and author/philosopher. For he creates a bemused, ironic narrator who appears to remain non-committal about acting on Teufelsdröckh's exhortations, and yet who sees how Teufelsdröckh's approach undermines print's influences of linearity and uniformity; he also creates a sage whose mock-priestly prose defeats the British public's expectation of a quiet, cerebral reading experience in a quiet corner. Such an expectation, however, as has been seen, represents little more than the nostalgia of an age in which the continuity- and uniformity-inducing medium of print is beginning to give way to the social/ideological fragmentation and context-bound immediacy which are symptoms of the electronic future.

Endnotes
Chapter Four

1

McLuhan maintains, in Understanding Media, that it is the visual emphasis on repeatability and uniformity engendered by the printing press that made possible the social dominance of the clock, with its similar segmentation of time and transformation of the human psyche: "Historians agree on the basic role of the clock in monastic life for the synchronization of human tasks. The acceptance of such fragmenting of life into minutes and hours was unthinkable, save in highly literate communities....For the clock to dominate, there has to be the prior acceptance of the visual stress that is inseparable from phonetic literacy....With universal literacy, time can take on the character of an enclosed or pictorial space that can be divided and subdivided. It can be filled in. 'My schedule is filled up.' It can be kept free: 'I have a week free next month'" (142).

2

See Understanding Media (136). Oral cultures, in the absence of the printed word or libraries, live very much in the present. Time is "measured" according to natural cycles of sunrise/sunset and the phases of the moon. As Walter Ong says of "primary" oral cultures in Orality, "You know what

you can recall" (33): all knowledge of any value to the pre-literate tribal unit resides in the present moment alone in the form of remembered knowledge. The printed, phonetically represented word on the page creates a mass of recorded knowledge too enormous for any one person to master, and institutes a literate culture in which vital knowledge is not as immediately accessible as in oral cultures.
3

In tribal cultures, as McLuhan writes in Media,"...experience is arranged by a dominant auditory sense-life that represses visual values. The auditory sense, unlike the cool and neutral eye, is hyper-esthetic and delicate and all-inclusive. Oral cultures act and react at the same time. Phonetic culture endows men with the means of repressing their feelings and emotions when engaged in action. To act without reacting, without involvement, is the peculiar advantage of the Western literate man" (88). Working in thematic opposition to this immediacy, however, is Sartor's foregrounding of the long, drawn-out editorial processing of Teufelsdröckh's work, which suggests, in turn, the deferral of meaning in relation to doctrines/theories disseminated via the printed word.

4

Carlyle's enthusiasm for the native genius that brings technology into the world is attended by his assessment of living speech's phonetic inscription as a "miraculous" invention. This enthusiasm appears to carry with it the unfortunate assumption that literate cultures are advanced and that pre-literate cultures live in ignorance. See On Heroes and Hero Worship: "It is the greatest invention man has ever made, this marking down the unseen thought that is in him by written characters. It is a kind of second speech, almost as miraculous as the first" (264). From McLuhan's perspective, Carlyle would appear to be too much a man of his age to appreciate as fully as he could just how deeply the phonetic alphabet infiltrates his and society's consciousness.

5

Carlyle probably did not have in mind that the citizenry throw away its watches and disregard schedules, for example, but the implications of his rhetoric are certainly consistent with such revolutionary practices.

6

Even the editor's most sympathetic remarks on Teufelsdröckh--after the Clothes Philosopher once again describes time as a "Loom" in the aftermath of the

everlasting Yea--serve to emphasize the editor's cerebral isolation from Teufelsdröckh's dynamic approach to the issue of time. The editor/narrator's comments in Part Three regarding his anxiety over Teufelsdröckh's less than logical philosophy bear out such a characterization of the narrative voice Carlyle offers as Teufelsdröckh's foil. See Sartor, "The Everlasting Yea" (206).

7

Carlyle's narrator points to the last-mentioned possiblility in the "Pause" chapter, in which he openly questions whether Teufelsdröckh's autobiographical scraps are merely a practical joke, perpetrated by a man whose "under-ground humours, and intricate sardonic rogueries, wheel within wheel, defy all reckoning" (202). Also significant in this regard is the chapter on "Church Clothes": religion's effect and importance, according to this chapter, is indispensable to society's functioning--just as the Pericardial and Nervous Tissue are indispensable to the body's functioning. Religion's significance thus lies on a holistic level: it is a "ground" within which the "figure" of society lives and moves. This chapter, as C. F. Harrold notes, "is of fundamental importance" because "it expresses the very purpose for which Sartor Resartus was composed: to rehabiliate religion for modern man by

vindicating its essential truth and showing the need of new forms for expressing it" (214). The conventional, literate narrator, however, refrains from any comment whatever on the important chapter, aside from sniffing at it somewhat petulantly.

8

The narrator ponders whether Teufelsdröckh is literally urging the rest of society to don suits of leather as an expression of fidelity to Fox's (unhistorical) endorsement of the Clothes Philosophy; but he concludes that, even if society had done such a thing, its individuals would inevitably wear different types and colours of leather suits, so that "all the old Distinctions" supposedly obliterated by such a clothing revolution would be "reestablished" (213).

9

In this passage (as in many others), Sartor also anticipates the linguistics of Derrida--although for Carlyle, the importance of the transcendent would be difficult to reconcile to the practice of deconstruction.

10

See Ong, in Orality, on the difference between present and past conceptions of time: "It appears unlikely that most persons in medieval or even Renaissance western Europe would

ordinarily have been aware of the number of the current calendar year--from the birth of Christ or any other point in the past....In a culture with no newspapers or other currently dated material to impinge on consciousness, what would be the point for most people in knowing the current calendar year?" (97, 98).

Conclusion:
The Ear of the Present and the Eye of the Past

The nineteenth-century writers discussed in this thesis are precursors to early twentieth-century authors for whom the printed, phonetic-alphabet text was also a repository of social/ideological implications. Prominent among the latter is James Joyce, whom Marshall McLuhan admired for his awareness of how the printed text fossilizes readership expectations within its visual matrix of decontextualized sounds. McLuhan thought Joyce's work to be an anti-environment for observing the inroads being made on print by the immediacy and neo-orality of the dawning electronic age. Joyce always resisted the protocols of publishing houses; the parataxis and stream-of-consciousness which characterized his writing was, in fact, integral to his strategy of rebelling against the ideological constrictions inherent in the printed text as a dominant social medium.

In Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, for instance, Stephen Dedalus's ultimate refusal to comply blindly with the literate power structure of the church makes him as much an outcast of literacy as any of the protagonists covered in this study. But Joyce's narrative set-up, in this novel, also showed how the medium of print could comment, inadvertently or not, upon itself. The third-person

narrator of the autobiographical Portrait is, of course, an older and dryly ironic version of Stephen; this older and wiser narrator appreciates, to a greater degree than his younger counterpart, how the printed medium transforms perception, producing the illusion of "Euclidean" space.[1] For instance, when Stephen is reading the verses he has written in the flyleaf of his geography text, he ponders not only his written name, but the nature of the universe itself:

> He read the verses backwards but then they were not poetry. Then he read the flyleaf from the bottom to the top till he came to his own name. That was he: and he read down the page again. What was after the universe? Nothing. But was there anything round the universe to show where it stopped before the nothing place began? It could not be a wall but there could be a thin thin line there all round everything. (27)

Stephen's idea that there could be a "thin thin line...all round everything" at the edge of the universe represents the conception of a spherical cosmos--one opposite in nature to the uniform, continuous space which, according to McLuhan, emerged from the phonetic alphabet's influence on the thinking of ancient Greek mathematicians.[2] In other words,

Stephen's conception of the "line" that forms the universe's boundary is a geometrical construct stemming from his literate education which suggests how the abstraction of infinite Euclidean space *infiltrates* the young Dedalus's untutored (and actually more scientific) idea of a spherical universe.

Because Joyce keeps Stephen's strong connection with the concrete particulars of everyday perception close to his readers' attention, his writing works against such an abstraction as a "line" which encloses the universe. To this end, Joyce's introduction of stream-of-consciousness to the medium of print shows his awareness of the difference between acoustic, in-the-moment experience--the nature of which his writing attempts to suggest--and the decontextualized version of it via the phonetic symbols of the printed novel. Thus, an implicit commentary on print as a medium emerges from Joyce's narrator, who looks back on his own life and describes the significance of his own thoughts during an earlier time.

Joyce's innovative approach to the novel continues the similar practices of writers like Shelley, Brontë, Stevenson, and Carlyle. Of these four, Carlyle's work in Sartor overlaps most with the iconoclasm of Joyce's writing by virtue of its unusual and satirical emphasis on

nakedness. In this regard, it has been suggested by Declan Kiberd that Joyce represents greater honesty with respect to the body than do writers from the Victorian age:

> Joyce saw earlier than most, that the modern cult of the body had been made possible only by a century of cozy evasion; and his close analysis of Bloom's daily actions exposed the laughable inadequacy of both attitudes. Like Lawrence, Joyce wanted to afford the body a recognition equal to that given the mind, but to a post-Victorian generation which had lost this just balance, both men appeared to elevate the body above all else. Devotees of Lawrence, for their part, have sometimes argued that the anatomization of the body, on which the ground-plan of Ulysses is based--an organ per chapter--represents the ultimate abstraction of the human form. This might be felt to be true of the plan, but not of the actual reading of any chapter of Ulysses, where the interest invariably centres on the ways in which the characters experience their own bodies. (xvi)

There are many nineteenth-century works to which Kiberd's comments do apply, but the Victorian writers in the present

discussion show awareness of the body in ways that at least *crack* the mould of their century's prose fiction genre. In Frankenstein, the body of the creature is an undeniably disturbing and powerful presence; in Wuthering Heights, the body emerges in highly suggestive and emotional scenes, such as sickness (the elder Catherine's, Edgar Linton's, and Heathcliff's suicidal variety), physical conflict (Heathcliff and Edgar Linton), and lurid physical embrace (Heathcliff and Catherine before Catherine's death; Heathcliff's necrophilia); in Jekyll and Hyde, the human body becomes inseparable from the novel's ambience of transformation, mystery, and scandal; and Carlyle's question as to whether anyone of his time could "figure a naked Duke of Windlestraw (Wellington?) addressing a naked House of Lords" (Sartor 62) compares favorably with the farts and urinations in Joyce's Ulysses (in this regard, one might also look at Chaucer.)

The body is, of course, essential to McLuhan's views on media as extensions of the same. Joyce, like McLuhan, and in varying ways, the writers of this study, foregrounds the human body in his work and explores how the enhancement of one sense at the expense of the other results in different psychological effects.[3] The unique responses of Shelley, Brontë, Stevenson, and Carlyle to the body thus run parallel

to their unique, if intuitive, responses to the printed medium via creative narrative strategies; for this reason, their works deserve to be seen as precursors to more advanced efforts in the next century by writers like Joyce. The subject of literacy's "outcasts" today--whether in the world of fiction or fact--is a vast one. In a 1960's Playboy interview, for instance, McLuhan once commented on how the persecution by authorities of hippie tribalism represented the "revenge of a dying culture against its successor"(66). In the context of the interview, it is evident that the "dying culture" referred to was that of print/phonetic literacy; plainly, for McLuhan, the attitudes and reactions of the literate mind extend well outside the realm of literature or art, and his views on such matters are available in works such as The Mechanical Bride and The Executive as Drop-out, among others.

Literacy, of course, is still alive and well, but its dominance is, as McLuhan would no doubt agree, more than questionable. The speed-up of human psychology and behaviour under the influence of electronic technology is attested to by current books on this phenomenon, such as James Gleick's Faster: The Acceleration of Just About Everything. The appeal for an understanding of technology that is evident in books like Gleick's, however, is not

unique to this (or, one hopes, the next) century. Shelley, Brontë, Stevenson, and Carlyle, as has been seen, are writers whose implicit awareness of print and phonetic writing is still worth considering, however long ago their works were created. If this thesis can lead to similar discussions of other such writers from still other times and places, then perhaps it has served a useful purpose, even in an age of artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

Endnotes
Conclusion

1

F.M. Cornford, in "The Invention of Space," uses the phrase "Euclidean space" to refer to the limitless expanse of space in all three dimensions which is required to support the illusion of geometrical constructs such as parallel lines. Cornford's discussion of infinite space as a fiction of antiquity is supported by the sciences today, which show that space and time (and geometry) are human constructs.

2

McLuhan makes this claim in his major works, beginning with Understanding Media, but F.M. Cornford inadvertently supports Mcluhan when he traces the belief in infinite space "back to the Greek philosophers of the three centuries between Thales and Euclid, but no farther" (217). The chronology of Cornford's historical discussion of infinite space/time as a social construct (from the 6th to 3rd centuries B.C.) parallels the chronology of the phonetic alphabet as it infiltrated ancient Greek society.

3

One sees this clearly in Ulysses, when Joyce opposes the "ineluctable modality of the visible" to the "ineluctable modality of the audible"(45).

Appendix

Characteristics of Pre-literate Societies

Walter Ong, in Orality and Literacy (37-49), lists the social characteristics that typify oral, pre-literate cultures, based on the research of Milman Parry and Richard Luria. Ong notes that oral societies are

1. Additive--repeatedly using "and" instead of a variety of transitional words and phrases (37).

2. Aggregative rather than analytic, with their "reliance on formulas to implement memory"--formulas such as parallel terms, phrases or epithets (38).

3. Redundant or "copious," which "keeps both speaker and hearer on the track"--in the absence of texts to refer to if one has missed anything (38, 39).

4. Conservative or traditionalist: "Oral societies must invest great energy in saying over and over again what has been learned arduously over the ages" (41).

5. Close to the human lifeworld, "Oral cultures know few statistics or facts divorced from human or quasi-human activity." Hence, even their lists are colourful, graphic and dynamic, such as the list of ships in the Illiad (originally oral in nature).

6. Agonistically toned: "Proverbs and riddles are not used simply to store knowledge but to engage others in verbal and intellectual combat" (44).

7. Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced: "Writing separates the knower from the known and thus sets up conditions for `objectivity' in the sense of personal disengagement." Oral societies encourage strong identification with characters in stories (45, 46).

8. Homeostatic: "Oral societies live very much in a present which keeps itself in equilibrium or homeostasis by sloughing off memories which no longer have relevance"--unlike print cultures which have dictionaries and encyclopedias" (46, 47).

9. Situational rather than abstract: "Oral cultures tend to use concepts in situational, operational frames of reference that are minimally abstract in the sense that they remain close to the living human lifeworld" (49).

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