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The Injured Man – Made and Unmade:
Physical Trauma and Masculinities in Britain and America
from the *Fin de Siècle* to the Post-War Period

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Abstract

This thesis considers the work of Robert Louis Stevenson, J. M. Barrie, W. H. Davies, D. H. Lawrence, Ernest Hemingway, and William Faulkner, exploring how each writer uses physical damage to the male body as a vehicle through which cultural concerns with models of masculinity can be exercised; and these models differ, given the forty-five year gap between the publication date of the first novel examined (*Treasure Island*, 1883) and that of Chapter 3's primary focus, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928). The breadth of this timeframe allows for a comprehensive study of somatically damaged men at crucial periods in British history and, in the case of the post-war period, of Anglo-American culture as a whole.

Many of the injured bodies focused upon in this thesis have received plentiful scholarly attention, yet there remains an absence of critical material which places these bodies as a central facet of their respective texts, rather than as supplementary motifs. This study pays particular attention to the importance of these bodies with regards to masculine identity, offering a fresh insight into the works of the aforementioned authors.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	iii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	iv
<i>Introduction</i>	v
<i>Chapter 1: Robert Louis Stevenson & J. M. Barrie</i>	
Amputated Masculinity	1
i. The Empire: Propaganda and Piracy	7
ii. Hierarchical Trauma	25
iii. Long John Silver: Domestic Fallibility	36
iv. Hook's Hook: Fearing the Reaper	45
v. The Crocodile's Pursuit and Unsettling Binaries	49
vi. Sexual Violence and Phallic Threat	60
vii. Coda: The Role of Jim and the Failure of Hook	64
<i>Chapter 2: W. H. Davies</i>	
A Bespoke and Unattainable Masculinity	69
i. Gendered Autobiography	73
ii. Davies's Descartes	83
iii. Damaged Bodies and Masculine Loss	94
iv. The Lost Sex: 'Hell for Women Made'	109
v. Coda: A Manhood Unachieved	114
<i>Chapter 3: D. H. Lawrence</i>	
Broken Bodies and Gendered Space	119
i. Pastoral Power	128
ii. The Home Front	136
iii. Blindness and the Untranslatable War	147
iv. Symbols of Damage	154
v. Clifford Chatterley: Playing at War	162
vi. Oliver Mellors: Unshakable Conflicts	167
vii. Coda: England's Masculine Void	176
<i>Chapter 4: Ernest Hemingway & William Faulkner</i>	
The Wounded Veteran, Home and Away	179
i. Jake Barnes: The 'Human Punching-Bag'	192
ii. Rural Respite and the Home Retreat	204
iii. Donald Mahon: Jealousy and Disgust	212
iv. An Unwanted Return	221
v. Coda: Helpless Men and New Women	236
<i>Afterword</i>	242
<i>Bibliography</i>	255

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Abbreviations

AST	W. H. Davies, <i>The Autobiography of a Super-tramp</i>
BPP	Sigmund Freud, 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle'
CB	R. J. Stonesifer, <i>W. H. Davies: A Critical Biography</i>
CGV	Robert Louis Stevenson, <i>A Child's Garden of Verses</i>
CP	W. H. Davies, <i>The Complete Poems of W. H. Davies</i>
DM	Joanna Bourke, <i>Dismembering the Male</i>
GT	Judith Butler, <i>Gender Trouble</i>
JW	W. H. Davis, <i>Johnny Walker, Tramp</i>
LCL	D. H. Lawrence, <i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i>
LD	W. H. Davies, <i>Later Days</i>
LS	Carlos Baker, <i>Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story</i>
OBM	D. H. Lawrence, 'On Being a Man'
PL	Harry T. Moore, (<i>The Priest of Love: A Life of D. H. Lawrence</i>)
PW	J. M. Barrie, <i>Peter and Wendy</i>
SA	Elaine Showalter, <i>Sexual Anarchy</i>
SAR	Ernest Hemingway, <i>The Sun Also Rises</i>
TI	Robert Louis Stevenson, <i>Treasure Island</i>
U	Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny'
WW	W. H. Davies, <i>A Weak Woman</i>

Introduction

This study aligns the injured body with constructions of masculinity, and this pairing of the body with gender has been the subject of attention from both gender and disability-focused scholars. Alison Kafer has argued that ‘Disability and gender are inseparable; each is constantly negotiated through the other.’¹ Russell Shuttleworth similarly claims that ‘in everyday interaction the comportment of the body and sundry corporeal habits and interpersonal practices are seen as expressing gender’ while Bonnie Smith believes that further integration of the two disciplines has significant scholarly potential: ‘The coming together of disability and gender studies provides exponential intellectual excitement’.²

Gender theorists have also articulated the relationship between the two fields. Judith Butler explains how:

gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements and enactments of various kinds constitutes the illusion of an abiding gendered self.³

R. W. Connell directs this analysis into a specifically masculine model: ‘True masculinity is almost always thought to proceed from men’s bodies – to be inherent in a male body or to express something about a male body’.⁴ There is evidently a scholarly space within which the physical body and its interaction with masculinity can be further explored. Concepts of masculinity are always inseparable from the male body, and it is fitting how sexual politics and masculine conceptions form such integral parts of the constructions of these narratives. The

¹ Alison Kafer, ‘Inseparable: Gender and Disability in the Amputee-Devotee Community’ in Bonnie G. Smith & Beth Hutchison (eds.), *Gendering Disability* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 107-18, p. 109.

² Russell P. Shuttleworth, ‘Disabled Masculinity: Expanding the Masculine Repertoire’ in Bonnie G. Smith & Beth Hutchison (eds.), *Gendering Disability* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 166-78, p. 167; Bonnie G. Smith, ‘Introduction’ in Bonnie G. Smith & Beth Hutchison (eds.), *Gendering Disability* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 1-6, p. 1.

³ Judith Butler, ‘Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory’, *Theatre Journal*, 40/4 (1988), 519-31, p. 519.

⁴ R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 45.

readings in this thesis are appropriately informed by the work of several disability studies theorists, with a notable debt owed to Barnes & Mercer's *Disability*, which articulates the critical landscape of the field and offers a particularly useful summation of cultural representations of disabilities. Disability studies plays an informative role in a study that will illuminate how physical trauma not only has tangible effects upon the afflicted man (which always forces an interaction with that man's masculine identity), but also how these writers use somatic damage as a metaphor for cultural concerns over the contemporary condition of masculinity.

Since Terry Eagleton speculated that 'there would no doubt soon be more bodies in literary criticism than on the fields of Waterloo', there has indeed been an influx of critical responses to literary representations of non-normative bodies, as Petra Rau summarises:⁵

'The body' has become a focus of renewed academic interest in the last thirty years [... The] Humanities has focused on recognizing the body as a historically shifting cultural construction that signifies within a multiplicity of overlapping and intersecting discourses: medicine, law, religion, art and literature, even engineering.⁶

There are plentiful examples throughout this thesis of the illuminating work which appears in this field after Eagleton's prophecy, but this study owes one of its largest debts to an earlier publication. In *Body Work*, Peter Brooks states that his 'main concern throughout is with the creation of fictions that address the body, that embed it in narrative, and that therefore embody meanings: stories on the body, and the body in story.'⁷ Brook's approach to literary representations of the body is closely aligned to my own, using it as a means through which symbolic meaning can be explored, and while Freudian focus marks a major difference

⁵ Terry Eagleton, *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 17.

⁶ Petra Rau (ed.), *Conflict, Nationhood and Corporeality in Modern Literature: Bodies-at-War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 1.

⁷ Peter Brooks, *Body Work: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. xi.

between his methodological approach and my own, *Body Work* nevertheless remains an important accompaniment to this thesis.

There is a consensus concerning the increase in body-focused criticism, but the growth of masculinity studies within the same period should be considered monumental in comparison, as Bryce Traister notes in his summary of academic interest towards masculinity during the nineties:

Judging from the sheer number of titles published, papers solicited, and panels presented in the last ten years concerned with the analysis of masculine gender, it would appear that ‘masculinity studies’ has emerged as a discipline unto itself. Masculinity, one might say without irony, is everywhere.⁸

There are many such contributions to ‘masculinity studies’ to which this thesis is heavily indebted. Elaine Showalter’s impact upon this field is renowned, with *Sexual Anarchy*’s focus on the *fin de siècle* making it a particularly useful resource for this study.⁹ Michael Flood *et al.* have produced a comprehensive overview of scholastic approaches to masculinity, with their *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* offering valuable cross-disciplinary summaries of masculine modalities.¹⁰ While it does not offer deep analysis of varied masculinities, it does illuminate the ways in which masculinity interacts with, and is shaped by, a host of institutions, epochs, and historical events. James Mangan & James Walvin’s *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America* has been of great benefit considering this study’s approach, while Butler’s work on the performative aspects of gender is evoked several times within this study as a lens through which these texts can be re-examined.¹¹ The methodology for this thesis is broadly historicist and so Joanna Bourke’s

⁸ Bryce Traister, ‘Academic Viagra: The Rise of American Masculinity Studies’, *American Quarterly*, 52/2 (2000), 274-304, p. 274.

⁹ Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (London: Virago, 1992).

¹⁰ Michael Flood, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Bob Pease & Keith Pringle (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2013).

¹¹ J. A. Mangan & James Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain, and the Great War has been a vital text, with her assessment of history through the male body supporting my similarly themed literary assessments.¹² Nevertheless, this historicism leads to criticism which is predominantly underpinned by detailed textual analysis, with some of the most valuable insights stemming from specific words, sentences and, in the case of *The Sun Also Rises*, omissions. In this respect, Paul Fussell's eminent work, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, has proven to be a valuable resource, particularly in relation to chapters 3 & 4.¹³

Given the focus of this thesis, it is important to produce a description of masculinity that remains consistent throughout the exploration of the various literary works in this study. This is not to suggest that there is a uniform version of masculinity that can be applied to all texts here. On the contrary, the primary aim of this thesis is to examine the relationship between the damaged male body in relation to a host of masculinities that are constructed, or at least refined and distinguished from one another, according to their historical and social context. It is, however, important to identify those supposed masculine traits which consistently appear in the chosen texts of this thesis.

The selected authors enjoy a host of historical, philosophical, and artistic differences from one another, and there is, accordingly, a variance in the modes of masculinity that are presented in their respective literary works. Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish a set of features that are consistently shown to be integral to the construction of masculinity amongst these writers. Specifically, there is regular interaction between masculinity and concepts of power, competition, and hierarchy, as well as with the importance of physical space and travel.

¹² Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain, and the Great War* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996).

¹³ Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

Examples of enhanced masculinity also depend, to some extent or another, upon the exclusion of women. The work of Bettina van Hoven and Kathrin Hörschelmann is useful in this regard:

hegemonic definitions of masculinity receive their legitimacy from the marginalization of other forms of masculinity, such as those of different social classes, ethnicities, sexualities, ages or abilities. The latter are almost always characterized as more feminine, thus highlighting the other dynamic of hegemonic masculinity: its contrast with, and assumed superiority to femininity.¹⁴

The difference between ‘abilities’ is highly pertinent to a study focussing on disability and physical trauma, but the other differentiators mentioned here regularly present themselves in the selected texts of this thesis.

Returning to masculinity’s association with power and competition, it is helpful to turn to Ruth Bleier, who suggests that this association is grounded in prevailing misconceptions of evolutionary biology:

popular theories of human evolution, such as Man-The-Hunter, start with implicit assumptions about the biological basis of [masculine] behaviours and characteristics and the existence of a woman’s ‘nature’. They then construct earliest evolutionary history according to an idealized image of modern industrial societies. Their central actor is the fearless, aggressive, creative, and dominant male.¹⁵

Arthur Brittan notes that while the scientific evidence for these assumptions may well be lacking, the characteristics that Bleier lists as central actors to the figure of the dominant male persist in contemporary constructions of hegemonic masculinity:

Perhaps the most popular image of masculinity in everyday consciousness is that of man the hero, the hunter, the competitor, the conqueror. Certainly it is the image celebrated in Western literature, art and in the media [...] Despite the reaction against biology in the social sciences, there can be no doubt that this view remains dominant in the Western world [...] Although men are no longer hunters, their behaviour [...] still exhibits the same competitiveness.¹⁶

¹⁴ Bettina van Hoven & Kathrin Hörschelmann, ‘Introduction: From Geographies of Men to Geographies of Women and Back Again?’ in Bettina van Hoven & Kathrin Hörschelmann (eds.), *Spaces of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2005), 1-16, p. 8.

¹⁵ Ruth Bleier, *Science and Gender: A Critique of Biology and its Theories on Women* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984), p. 135.

¹⁶ Arthur Brittan, *Masculinity and Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp. 77-78.

This view remains dominant, too, in the majority of texts examined in this study. Whether it is the competition between pirates for hierarchical dominance in Chapter 1, the physical prowess of one man over his love rival in Chapter 2, Clifford Chatterley's undignified reliance on Mellors in Chapter 3, or the engagement with hunting as a masculine act (and the rivalry that goes along with it) in Chapter 4, these writers all incorporate competition between men as a means to achieve a respected masculine authority.

Geographical space and travel are closely linked insofar as their relation to masculine construction is concerned; and in the writings included within this thesis, they incorporate the exclusion of women as a further pre-requisite for masculinising exercise. With regards to space and travel, this thesis has benefited greatly from John Tosh's focus on Victorian society. Describing the late-nineteenth century 'flight from domesticity', Tosh explains that:

Among the professional and business classes who had lived by the code of domesticity for two generations or more, there was evidence of growing restlessness [...] For them, domesticity no longer represented a fresh vision of comfort and reassurance, but a straightjacket.¹⁷

Tosh is admittedly focused on a specific society and epoch, and it is a focus which ostensibly informs the first chapter of this thesis. However, the suffocation of domesticity is present throughout the works selected here. The crew of the *Hispaniola* appreciate the masculinising opportunities offered to them by adventure in *Treasure Island* (Chapter 1), but so too does W. H. Davies in both his biographical and his fictional prose (Chapter 2). D. H. Lawrence (Chapter 3) consistently presents the oppressive nature of domesticity, often positioning it in opposition to rejuvenating outdoor spaces, a trope also utilised by Hemingway (Chapter 4). Indeed, Chapter 4 is deeply concerned with space and travel, focussing on the differences presented by

¹⁷ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 172.

Hemingway and Faulkner by virtue of their decisions to set their seminal post-war novels in Europe and America respectively.

Given that travel is associated with masculinity during this time period, it is worth noting that women were largely excluded from this activity, and there are plentiful examples within this thesis of masculinising travel being *dependent* upon the exclusion of women.

Christopher Gittings highlights the nineteenth-century trope of ‘women [who] remain at home in the centre of empire waiting for, and subordinate to the soldier hero who ventures forth for the benefit and protection of both the metropole and the passive woman,’ while van Hoven and Hörschelmann supply a historical context which suggests that this theme was as much of an experienced reality as it was a literary motif.¹⁸ With reference to the Royal Geographical Society, they highlight the ‘relationship between British imperialism, British masculinity and British dreams of adventure into the ‘geography of the unknown’’ (p. 2), noting that ‘women’s position in science was negligible’, and that they ‘were not permitted membership of the RGS until 1913’ (p. 3). This institutionalised attempt to block female travel only highlights the activity’s standing as a male-only space.

This thesis deals with masculinity through the lens of physical trauma, and this inevitably leads to interactions with disability studies and prominent scholars within the field. While this thesis is primarily focused upon close textual analysis, it does intersect with recent theories of disability, as well as contributing original analysis of the ways in which the injured body is often utilised in literature for its symbolic worth. Nick Watson and Simo Vehmas describe the shift that has taken place in the last decade, with disability studies moving ‘beyond sociology and social policy, arguably the two most important disciplines in its early

¹⁸ Christopher E. Gittings, ‘Introduction’ in Christopher E. Gittings (ed.), *Imperialism and Gender: Constructions of Masculinity* (New Lambton: Dangaroo, 1996), 1-8, p. 2.

development, and has become fully interdisciplinary'.¹⁹ David Bolt has also commented upon this connection, proposing that 'the study of disability is bound to enrich the study of culture. If stereotypes become tropes in textual representation, does it not follow that studies of the one enhance those of the other?'.²⁰ Moreover, Bolt laments the lack of attention afforded to disabled characters by critics in the humanities:

Disabled characters frequent most if not all primary texts studied in the humanities but that level of representation is not reflected in the critical responses; it is often the case that the topic of disability is avoided, and generally so that any engagements are not informed by disability studies (p. 344).

This critical gap is exactly the area in which this thesis seeks to operate. Far from being avoided, physical trauma guides the reading of all of the primary texts within this study; and these engagements are very much informed by disability studies, which in turn helps to produce illuminating readings of texts which have all too often seen the trope of the injured body neglected in the critical responses to them. Margrit Shildrick offers a potential explanation for this hesitancy amongst critics to engage with non-normative bodies, suggesting 'that any compromise of mental or physical organisation or stability, any indication of interdependency and material connectivity, grounds – for the normative majority – a deep-seated anxiety'.²¹ It is therefore fitting that we see this very same anxiety play out *within* the selected texts of this study.

The alignment of disability and masculinity which takes place within this thesis is fitting in many respects, not least because of their shared tendency to position their participatory members into hierarchies. Julie Anderson's work on British responses to the

¹⁹ Nick Watson & Simo Vehmas, 'Disability Studies: Into the Multidisciplinary Future' in Nick Watson and Simo Vehmas (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies* (New York: New York, 2020), 3-13, pp. 3-4.

²⁰ David Bolt, 'The Metanarrative of Disability: Social Encounters, Cultural Representation and Critical Avoidance' in Nick Watson and Simo Vehmas (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies* (New York: New York, 2020), 336-48, p. 344.

²¹ Margrit Shildrick, 'Critical Disability Studies: Rethinking the Conventions for the Age of Postmodernity' in Nick Watson and Simo Vehmas (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Disability Studies* (New York: New York, 2020), 32-44, p. 34.

injured veterans of the First World War is particularly pertinent to this thesis. She demonstrates the connection between masculinity and the wounded body, explaining that there were organisations whose ‘main function was to provide support for the men and in doing so help to renegotiate their masculine identity’.²² Anderson also illustrates the importance of *how* a body is injured, as well as the differences between two specific types of injury, by focusing on blindness and amputation, which are also the most prevalent disabilities addressed in this thesis:

the ways in which disability was caused had important ramifications for its place on the hierarchy of disablement, and the public’s perceptions of such disability as deserving. The blind body is in the majority a whole one, unlike that of the amputated body, and therefore elicited different responses (p. 42).

Anderson not only focuses upon the hierarchies that exist between disabilities, but also on those which exist *within* the same disability. She demonstrates how blindness has its own hierarchical structure, explaining that the blind beggar is viewed as being at the bottom of this hierarchy in the post-war period, with the employed blind somewhere in the middle (they are ‘still objects of pity’), while the men of St Dunstan’s – a charity which supported blind veterans – were ‘cultural signifiers of heroism’ (p. 50). This is highly relevant, suggesting that symbolic worth is placed upon an injury not just for what that injury is, but, more importantly, for how it is obtained.

This conflation of the embodied injury with its symbolic presentation is a primary concern of this thesis. While this study assesses a variety of different injuries, there are two categories which frequently reappear: blindness and amputation. Both of these conditions have also received the theoretical and historical attention that make a reading of them as

²² Julie Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain: ‘Soul of a Nation’* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 43.

symbolically valuable a worthwhile and credible undertaking. Monbeck's work on blindness suggests that there has been a uniform and perpetual response to the condition:

attitudes towards blind people are a result of a reaction not so much to the fact of blindness, of someone not being able to see, as to the meaning of blindness, its symbolic significance.²³

Monbeck is forthright in his assessment that the symbolic significance of blindness outweighs its embodied experience, and that it is a significance that has 'varied little throughout history or from culture to culture' (p. 117). While its significance may well be permanent, the symbolism of blindness varies greatly even within the timeframe of this study, depending on the historical context of the respective text, and it is with charting these changes that this thesis is concerned. As we will see, the sharp increase in the embodied reality of blindness in the post-war period makes it a far less suitable symbol of masculine authority than it is at the *fin-de-siècle*.

Erin O'Connor's focus on amputation and prosthesis demonstrates the symbolic importance of this kind of disability in the same way that Anderson and Monbeck illustrate this with regards to blindness. Discussing both Britain and America in the period between the Industrial Revolution and the Great War (which, fittingly, is a large part of the period covered in this thesis), O'Connor explains how 'dismemberment became a kind of symbolic index of modernity in ways that crossed national boundaries'.²⁴ Moreover, O'Connor makes the link between male amputation and masculine identity explicit:

anxieties about amputation's effect on identity took on expressly gendered contours over the course of the nineteenth century [... and] raised [questions] about the relationship of physical stability to selfhood [that in turn] encoded more pointed anxieties about the place of the male body in determining men's gender identity (p. 744).

²³ Michael E. Monbeck, *The Meaning of Blindness: Attitudes Toward Blindness and Blind People* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 117.

²⁴ Erin O'Connor, "Fractions of Men": Engendering Amputation in Victorian Culture', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 39/4 (1997), 742-77, p. 745.

This conflation of somatic anxiety with gender identity has obvious and pertinent connections with the focus of this thesis, but O'Connor expands further upon her point in order to reaffirm how the embodied experience of the amputee in no way exists separately to the injury's symbolic value. More accurately, the former leads to the latter, with troubling repercussions for the injured man's sense of masculine identity:

Victorian ideals of health, particularly of male health, centered upon the concept of physical wholeness: A strong, vigorous body was a primary signifier of manliness, at once testifying to the existence of a correspondingly strong spirit and providing that spirit with a vital means of material expression. Dismemberment disrupted this physical economy. It unmanned amputees, producing neurological disorders that gave the fragmented male body – or parts of it anyway – a distinctly feminine side (O'Connor, p. 744).

Chapter 1 of this thesis complicates O'Connor's reading of amputation during the Victorian period. There are plentiful examples in *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* of the emasculating effects of amputation, but they exist alongside instances where those same amputations masculinise the afflicted man. Hook's advanced prosthetic, for example, is indicative of the nineteenth century 'idea of a perfectible body undergoing progressive improvement'.²⁵

Similarly, when Sigmund Freud argues that 'Man has [...] become a prosthetic god', and that when 'he puts on all his auxiliary organs he is truly magnificent: but those organs have not grown on him and they still give him much trouble at times', he is highlighting the complexities of the prosthetic and its influence upon the human body.²⁶ This contradiction is exercised in all of the texts included within this thesis.

²⁵ Lennard J. Davis, 'Constructing Normalcy: The Bell Curve, the Novel, and the Invention of the Disabled Body in the Nineteenth Century' in Lennard J. Davis (ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997), 9-28, p. 14.

²⁶ Sigmund Freud, James Strachey (trans.), *Civilization and its Discontents* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), p. 42.

This nuanced use of amputation and prosthetics as a theme is the primary focus of the first chapter and so there is no need to expand on it here, but the valuable correlation which exists between O'Connor's work and this thesis is in the attention given to the symbolic importance of this kind of disability. O'Connor further illustrates the value of focusing on amputation and prosthesis within literary studies:

Capable of constructing the fragmented body as essentially whole [...] the artificial limb stands as an absolutely material form of fiction making, a means of restoring the integrity of the self by passing off a made-up anatomy as real (p. 758).

Amputation and prosthesis are suitable literary tropes because they are, themselves, a narrative inscribed upon the body. The missing limb hints at a story waiting to be told, while the effective prosthetic is able to cover up that same history. This sentiment is prevalent throughout literary representations of visible disability and, fittingly, it is presented in all of the texts chosen for this study.

There is evidently a theoretical precedent for reading disability as symbolic, rather than focusing predominantly on its embodied impact, and this will be the typical direction taken by this thesis. There are, however, some more general theoretical issues with which disability studies is concerned that this thesis will aim to expand upon. A large proportion of this study looks to address some of the concerns voiced by Sarah S. Jain concerning prosthesis:

the concept of prosthesis gives rise to a set of key questions: Which bodies are enabled and which are disabled by specific technologies? [...] How might the prosthesis produce the disability as a retroactive effect? Where and how is the disability located, and in whose interests are 'prostheses' adopted?²⁷

Chapter 1 will explore the class differences between Long John Silver and Captain Hook. The latter acquires a tool which ostensibly improves his body, while Silver's lack of prosthetic

²⁷ Sarah S. Jain, 'The Prosthetic Imagination: Enabling and Disabling the Prosthesis Trope', *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 24/1 (1999), 31-54, p. 33.

causes fear in others and both symbolic and embodied complications for himself. Similarly, the hook which apparently benefits its eponymous owner eventually leads to his demise. Disabilities (and this is particularly true of *Treasure Island*), exist in certain geographical spaces and are diminished in others. The same can be said of Clifford Chatterley and his electric wheelchair, the focus of Chapter 3.

This thesis is broadly divided between two iconic, albeit interconnected epochs. The start and end points of the *fin de siècle* are notoriously evasive, with the ostensible certainty offered in the title of Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst's *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History C. 1880-1900* challenged by its inclusion of work published as early as 1870 and as late as 1920.²⁸ This thesis will nevertheless continue under the assumption that 1880 gestures the beginning of the *fin de siècle*, as Helen Goodman's assertion that 'By the 1880s, fears about the mental and physical degeneration of the British population were gaining pace' aligns both thematically and historically with the earliest work studied here; and given the dramatic cultural and societal shifts that are caused by the Great War, this thesis will also acknowledge 1914 as marking the end of the *fin de siècle*, just as it signals the beginning of the most significant event of the early twentieth century.²⁹

The selected authors were primarily chosen for this study because of their innovative depiction of damage to the male body, although the interconnected relationships and interactions which exists between them is useful for understanding how these selected writers are already in vague constellation with one another. Each author offers a critique of their contemporary forms of masculinity through their representations of injured men, using physical

²⁸ Sally Ledger & Roger Luckhurst, *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History C. 1880-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). This includes the following essays mentioned in-text: T. H. Huxley, 'On the Physical Basis of Life' [1870], 223-25; E. D. Morel, 'The Story of the Congo Free State' [1920], 166-68.

²⁹ Helen Goodman, 'Masculinity, Tourism and Adventure in English Nineteenth-Century Travel Fiction' in Thomas Thurnell-Read & Mark Casey (eds.), *Men, Masculinities, Travel and Tourism* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 12-27, p. 14.

affliction as a metaphor for societal concerns. W. H. Davies admittedly differs to an extent, as his own amputation plays a prevalent part in his writing, so much of which is biographical; but it is the undeniable influence of biography in his novels and poetry that illuminates the importance of somatic trauma as a symbolic feature, inseparable from Davies's version of idealised masculinity. Davies also had a fleeting friendship with D. H. Lawrence, a potentially trivial fact considering their differences in literary standing, but one that is nevertheless an example of how even the critically neglected Davies still demonstrates a tangible interaction with other writers included within this study.³⁰

Stronger examples of this kind of association exist elsewhere. *Peter and Wendy* owes a substantial debt to *Treasure Island* and it is therefore appropriate to assess the narratives alongside one another, a pairing which is strengthened by Barrie's panegyric appraisal of Stevenson's writing: 'No man has written in a finer spirit of the profession of letters than Mr Stevenson.'³¹ Claire Harman explains that Barrie's letters 'charmed [Stevenson] and prompted extravagant replies' while Frank McLynn surmises that 'Barrie worshipped Stevenson'.³²

Keith Sagar demonstrates the influence that Stevenson had on Lawrence's work, while Eve Sedgwick notes that 'At the age of twenty-five, D. H. Lawrence was excited about the work of James M. Barrie' (although this enthusiasm eventually waned).³³ Hemingway was also interested in Stevenson's writing, with Frederick Svoboda speculating that Stevenson 'seems to have defined for [Hemingway] his boyhood version of a world of men without women'.³⁴

³⁰ See the following for an account of the friendship between D. H. Lawrence and W. H. Davies: Lawrence Hockey, *W. H. Davies* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1971), pp. 92-93.

³¹ J. M. Barrie, 'Robert Louis Stevenson' in Jenni Calder (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Critical Celebration*, (Totowar: Barnes & Noble Books, 1980), 67-71, p. 68.

³² Claire Harman, *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography* (London: Harper Collins, 2005), p. 426; Frank McLynn, *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography* (London: Pimlico, 1994), p. 5. Chaney also notes the important influence that Stevenson had on Barrie: Lisa Chaney, *Hide-and-Seek with Angels: A Life of J. M. Barrie* (London: Arrow, 2006), p. 58.

³³ Keith Sagar, 'D. H. Lawrence and Robert Louis Stevenson', *The D. H. Lawrence Review*, 24/2 (1992), 161-65; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 182.

³⁴ Frederick Joseph Svoboda, *Hemingway and The Sun Also Rises: The Crafting of a Style* (Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 1983), p. 70.

In addition to Stevenson, Hemingway confessed to having been influenced by another writer in this study: ‘Without having ever met D. H. Lawrence, he admitted to having learned from his writing a few tricks about describing landscapes.’³⁵ Svoboda places this pairing within a critical context, making the comparison between *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and *A Farewell to Arms* and demonstrating the cultural shift that takes place in the post-war period: ‘[They] deflate Victorian sentiments as to love and war [... and] also anticipate and minister to the sentiments of the “make love not war” generation of the 1960s and after’ (p. 5).

This development from the Victorian to the post-war era further justifies the time-period selected for this study, with Lawrence (the focus of Chapter 3) also bridging the Georgian poetry of Davies (the focus of Chapter 2) with the modernism of Hemingway and Faulkner (the focus of Chapter 4).³⁶ Hugh Underhill demonstrates the Georgian elements of Lawrence’s poetry while Bloom argues that ‘Lawrence marks a middle path between modernism and the Georgian vision and indeed it should be said marks a modernism peculiarly English’.³⁷ The Englishness of Lawrence’s modernism complements the American modernists in this study, with each chapter exploring how British and American writers respond to the war. Mark Spilka even compares the damaged bodies of Barnes and Chatterley: ‘Just as Hemingway moved from a piece of shrapnel in his scrotum to Jake Barnes’s missing penis [...] so Lawrence moved from his own tubercular debility to Clifford Chatterley’s paralysis from the hips down.’³⁸

McLynn compares Stevenson to Faulkner, demonstrating the influence that both men had on other writers, before saying that Stevenson ‘was twenty years too early to be a D. H.

³⁵ Carlos Baker, *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (London: The Literary Guild, 1969), p. 293.

³⁶ Interestingly, some of Lawrence’s poetry appears in the same Georgian collections as Davies’s: *Georgian Poetry: 1913-1915* (London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1916) & Sir Edward Marsh (ed.), *Georgian Poetry: 1918-1919* (London: Poetry Bookshop, 1919).

³⁷ Hugh Underhill, *The Problem of Consciousness in Modern Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992), pp. 21-64; Clive Bloom (ed.), *Literature and Culture in Modern Britain: Volume One: 1900-1929* (London: Longman, 1993), p. 27.

³⁸ Mark Spilka, ‘Lawrence Versus Peeperkorn on Abdication; or What Happens to a Pagan Vitalist When the Juice Runs Out’ in David Ellis & Ornella De Zordo (eds.), *D. H. Lawrence: Critical Assessments, Volume III* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1992), 127-44, p. 134.

Lawrence' with relation to the former's writing on sex (p. 6). *Soldiers' Pay* is now often regarded as one of Faulkner's weaker novels, and this is reflected in its critical landscape. However, upon publication it was generally well received, even prompting a reviewer of the *Evening Standard* to namecheck Hemingway and Lawrence as being inferior to Faulkner, saying that no debut novel in the past thirty years 'had attained such perfection'.³⁹ Cleanth Brooks is also complimentary, calling it 'a remarkable first novel'.⁴⁰ The interactions that take place between Faulkner and Hemingway are critically well-established and summarised in Chapter 4, although it is worth noting that the index of Blotner's mammoth, two-volume biography of Faulkner contains over 70 entries under the heading 'Hemingway', a clear enough indication that the association between these two men is significant.

The primary texts chosen for this thesis were selected because of their varied and, often, innovative treatment of physical trauma and its relationship with masculine identity. Nevertheless, it is worth paying some attention to the fact that all of the authors included within this study are male, something which takes on added significance considering the major thematic concern – masculinity – that is being explored here.

With perhaps the exception of the Chapter 1, each other author's writing on masculinity can be linked to his own experiences, albeit to varying degrees. As Chapter 2 will demonstrate, Davies's writing is inseparable from both his own personal history (specifically his amputated leg), and the masculine traditions in which he was raised. Hemingway and Faulkner also include biographical aspects in their writing. while Lawrence's essay writing demonstrates a keen preoccupation with the status of masculinity in post-war England. For these men, writing becomes a therapeutic undertaking, and this is particularly true of their literary depictions of gender. The concerns that these authors had regarding their own masculine identity can be

³⁹ Joseph Blotner, *Faulkner: A Biography* [volumes I & II] (London: Chatto & Windus, 1974), p. 661.

⁴⁰ Cleanth Brooks, *William Faulkner, New Encounters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 5.

exercised and explored within their writing, which are in themselves a collection of informed fictions, wherein the reshaping of personal experiences can become a kind of tonic for the author.

This is particularly evident in Davies's creation of the overtly biographical Henry Soaring, who is a large focus of Chapter 2. Davies's decision to reduce the severity of his amputated leg here – Soaring only has a missing toe – is symbolic of the restorative function of Davies's writings on his own masculinity.

Chapter 4 offers a significant exploration of Hemingway and Faulkner's war experiences, and how these are exercised through the characters of Jake Barnes (*The Sun Also Rises*) and Julian Lowe (*Soldiers' Pay*). The biographical links between Hemingway and Barnes have been made frequently in critical responses to this novel but, within this thesis, an extra focus is placed on how the specificities of Barnes's wound articulate the war's impact upon masculine identity, which is in turn inseparable from Hemingway's own masculine make-up. Similarly, Faulkner's own unease at his failed attempt to join the war effort is characterised by Julian Lowe and the jealousy that he feels for Donald Mahon's injured body.

In terms of an author's exploration of his own masculine identity, Lawrence certainly does this less overtly than Davies, Hemingway, or Faulkner. However, Chapter 3 demonstrates the ways in which Lawrence uses his fiction as a form through which his post-war agitation concerning gender can be explored.

Given the attention afforded to these authors and their use of their literary work to exercise concerns regarding their own masculine identity, as well as with the state of masculinity more generally, it is inevitable that this thesis would be quite different were it to include works from female writers. After all, given the obvious relationship that exists between the concepts of masculinity and femininity, a reading of masculine portrayal from female

authors may have resulted in a less personal, and thus more objectively critical representations of masculinity.

For the majority of the authors included within this thesis, the concept of masculinity is as pertinent to their lives as it is to their writing, and so there is an unavoidably cautious nature to its depiction. The extent to which self-preservation is at play in their writing makes up a considerable area of focus for this thesis, and it is itself worthy of exploration precisely because of its potential for producing disingenuous and warped versions of masculinity. Nevertheless, the inclusion of female writers would have offered an added insight into the masculinities of the covered period, and it is important to concede that their absence does result in certain limitations for this thesis.



Chapters 1 & 2 focus on British literature of the *fin de siècle*, a period of substantial masculine instability:

Opportunities to succeed at home and in the Empire were not always abundant [...] What was most alarming to the *fin de siècle* was that sexuality and sex roles might no longer be contained within the neat and permanent borderlines of gender categories [...] Where, men asked themselves, were they placed on the scale of masculinity? Were they dangerously close to the borderline? (SA, p. 9).

Chapter 1 follows an increasingly popular critical trend in pairing Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Barrie's *Peter and Wendy*, with both texts interacting with the societal concerns described by Showalter. There is a plethora of similarities that can be drawn between the two narratives but the most pertinent to this study, and perhaps the most apparent in general, is the presence of the authoritative and piratical amputee. Kevin Carpenter highlights the importance of this

presence in *Treasure Island* by referring to its original working title (*The Sea Cook*) and concluding that ‘it would therefore seem that the character and doings of Long John Silver were the main focus of interest in the novel’.⁴¹ Likewise, Barrie’s original title for *Peter and Wendy* (*The Great White Father*) evokes a nationalist imperialism which informs the narrative.⁴²

The physical condition of Long John Silver and Captain Hook has most recently been linked to their masculine identity by Ryan Sweet, who argues that the pirates’ amputations produce a ‘hyper-masculinity’ in the ostensibly afflicted men.⁴³ Sweet’s focus stems predominantly from a disability-studies perspective, while my reading utilises a more formal approach to analysis, illuminating the way in which these somatic afflictions paradoxically masculinise the afflicted man while simultaneously threatening that same emboldened masculinity.

Treasure Island and *Peter and Wendy* both interact with contemporary concerns regarding the British Empire, which is itself inseparable from masculine identity at the *fin de siècle*. The competitiveness of empire-building amongst Europe’s colonial powers began far earlier than the nineteenth century, but it always harboured a distinctly masculine character: ‘in the scramble for colonies that takes places from the sixteenth century onwards, we can observe the invidious process of masculine rivalry write large: ‘my empire’s bigger than yours.’⁴⁴ There is, nevertheless, a change in attitudes towards the empire during the *fin de siècle*. The reasons for this are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 1, but the fear of masculine

⁴¹ Kevin Carpenter, *Desert Isles and Pirate Islands: The Island Theme in Nineteenth-Century English Juvenile Fiction: A Survey and Bibliography* (Peter Lang, 1984), p. 83.

⁴² Sir John Alexander Hammerton, *Barrie: The Story of a Genius* (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Company, 1929), p. 321.

⁴³ Ryan Sweet, ‘Pirates and Prosthetics: Manly Messages for Managing Limb Loss in Victorian and Edwardian Adventure Narratives’ in Joanne Ella Parsons & Ruth Heholt (eds.), *The Victorian Male Body* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 87-107, p. 89.

⁴⁴ Jade M. Nobbs, ‘History, Colonisation’ in Michael Flood, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Bob Pease & Keith Pringle (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2013), 269-73, p. 272.

fragility is entertained at the highest levels of public discourse during this period, with state sponsored programmes developed in response to this apparent threat, including a ‘persistent attempt to seize the school system for Imperialism masquerading as patriotism’.⁴⁵ The entanglement of schoolboy experience with imperial preparation is embodied by the Etonian Captain Hook. Dr Warre, the headmaster at Eton from 1884-1905, introduced a special scheme of lessons in order to prepare the ‘boys destined for the army’, while the physical body was of great concern to esteemed British figures of the day:⁴⁶

The linking of character (and physique) to national and imperial safety was important. Both Baden-Powell and Prime Minister Lloyd George said: “You cannot maintain an A-1 Empire on C-3 men” (using the language by which army recruits were medically classified).⁴⁷

The bodies of Hook and Silver critique this exact concern, demonstrating how the kind of adventure that is apparently designed for the somatically superior man is a constant threat to that same body.

Chapter 2 will examine the critically neglected W. H. Davies with a particular focus on how his own amputation (he lost a leg while attempting to board a train in Canada) influences his presentation of masculinity. Of the limited resources that do exist on Davies, the vast majority are biographical, with the likes of Lawrence Normand and Lawrence Hockey drawing upon Davies’s autobiographical texts in order to refashion a biography that has already been comprehensively covered by Stonesifer and by Davies himself.⁴⁸ R. J. Stonesifer’s biography is a valuable contribution to Davies’s critical landscape, offering illuminating insight to the writer’s personal values, which undoubtedly have a large impact upon Davies’s work.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1938), p. 217.

⁴⁶ Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte, *A History of Eton College (1440-1910)* (London: Macmillan, 1911), p. 532.

⁴⁷ Martin Burgess Green, *The Adventurous Male: Chapters in the History of the White Male Mind* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), p. 82.

⁴⁸ Lawrence Normand, *W. H. Davies* (Bridgend: Seren, 2003).

⁴⁹ R. J. Stonesifer, *W. H. Davies: A Critical Biography* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963).

Stonesifer also dedicates a significant proportion of his work to critical analysis, but there nevertheless remains a large deficit in scholarly attention directed towards Davies's writing. In establishing Davies's attitudes towards masculinity, it soon becomes clear that his amputation blocks him from ever personally assuming the ideal version of masculinity that he develops within his work. It is the subject with which his writing is most concerned, to the extent that the very act of writing itself becomes a gendered concern. Mangan & Walvin, in their discussion of British and American masculinity, inadvertently encapsulate Davies's experiences of masculinity:

Victorian manliness [...] developed a swift and ubiquitous influence throughout the 'Anglo-Saxon' territories. Well before the Great War, on both sides of the Atlantic, proponents of the ideal had securely ensconced themselves in dominant positions in society (p. 2).

Davies, who lived on both sides of the Atlantic, is a proponent of this kind of manly ideal inasmuch that his writing celebrates a distinctly pre-war masculine mode. His injury, however, restricts him from attaining this masculine level. Davies's work demonstrates a persistent tension between these two facts, the result of which is that neither Davies, nor any of his male characters, can ever achieve an idealised masculine status, just as Davies himself never secured the kind of societal or literary respect that he felt he deserved.

Chapters 3 & 4 analyse post-war writings which respond to the war and the corresponding cultural shifts that resulted from it. Malcolm Cowley utilises Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and its protagonist (Frederick Henry) in order to articulate his own his own experiences as a member of the 'lost generation':

the country of [Henry's] boyhood was gone and he was attached to no other. And that, I believe, was the final effect on us of the war [...] When we first heard of the Armistice we felt a sense of relief too deep to express, and we all got drunk [...] On the next day, after we had got over our hangovers, we didn't know what to do, so we got drunk. But slowly, as the days went by, the intoxication passed, and the tears of joy: it appeared that our composite fatherland was dissolving into quarrelling statesmen and oil and

steel magnates. Our own nation had passed the Prohibition Amendment as if to publish a bill of separation between itself and ourselves; it wasn't our country any longer.⁵⁰

Cowley's biographical experiences evoke several episodes within the work of Hemingway, Faulkner, and even Lawrence. The disillusion felt towards America is overtly illustrated in *The Sun Also Rises*, while *Soldiers' Pay* is an exposition of the 'separation' between the American veteran and his homeland that Cowley describes. The sentiment of a nation 'dissolving into quarrelling statesmen and oil and steel magnates' is as relevant to *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and Lawrence's English midlands as it is to Cowley's America.

In exploring both British and American writing, a view emerges of how two of the war's most powerful allies and belligerents reacted to a refashioning of masculinities following the conflict's devastating fallout. Lawrence, Hemingway, and Faulkner all use the damaged male body as a metaphor for these concerns. Through Clifford Chatterley (*Lady Chatterley's Lover*), Maurice Pervin ('The Blind Man'), Jake Barnes (*The Sun Also Rises*), and Donald Mahon (*Soldiers' Pay*), these writers manufacture physical ailments in order to demonstrate the kind of post-war gender concerns hinted at by Donald Mrozek:

the war created a strong, though temporary, male preserve which radically simplified the definition of manliness by radically reducing its association with sexual activity and cross-gender relationships.⁵¹

The temporality described here is not a temporality of the rejection of heterosexual interaction. Each of the aforementioned characters returns from war with injuries that problematise sexual activity, so the only temporary aspect is the suggestion that this reduced association is masculine. Chatterley, Barnes, and Mahon all remain unable to engage in sexual activity in the post-war period as a result of their bodies, and this is both a major threat to their individual

⁵⁰ Malcolm Cowley, *Exile's Return: A Literary Odyssey of the 1920s* (New York: Viking Press, 1956), pp. 46-47.

⁵¹ Donald J. Mrozek, 'The Habit of Victory: The American Military and the Cult of Manliness' in J. A. Mangan and James Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 220-41, p. 233.

masculine statuses, as well as acting as a symbolic portrayal of cultural and authorial concerns regarding post-war masculinity. Joane Nagel highlights the role of women during war, and it is a concept with which these texts interact:

The intersection between manhood and war is a space that is occupied not only by men. Women are partners in the 'men at/ as war' project. Men depend on women to provide a logic for war, a purpose for fighting, a gender foil against which manliness is animated and contrasted. If men are the battlefield, women are the homefront.⁵²

There can be little doubt that such an intersection existed at the beginning of the Great War, but one of the most prominent aspects of each of these novels is how they undermine the validity of this intersection upon the protagonists' return from the front. The men may have gone to fight under some valorous duty, but they do not return to the kind of woman whom Ivor Novello urged at the time to 'Keep the Home Fires Burning'.⁵³ Instead, pre-war optimism is replaced by post-war reality. The injuries sustained to these men restrict them from reinvigorating their previous relationships, symbolising the isolation and disillusionment which Gertrude Stein believes to be symptomatic of the 'lost generation'.

Chapter 3 uses the symbolism of Clifford Chatterley's paralysis as a means through which post-war masculinity of the returned soldier can be investigated. In 1966, Louis Battye argued that:

Out of all the flood of words that, since the famous trial of 1960, have lapped and gurgled round this book, comparatively few have been devoted to [Clifford's] war-smashed body and consequent impotence.⁵⁴

This problematic gap in Lawrentian criticism still requires attention, despite the work of George Levine, who notes that 'Like Frankenstein's monster [... Clifford] is no longer human,

⁵² Joane Nagel, 'War' in Michael Flood, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Bob Pease & Keith Pringle (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2013), 626-29, p. 626.

⁵³ Ivor Novello & Lena Guilbert Ford, 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' on *Ivor Novello: The Ultimate Collection* (Prism: 2003), track 22.

⁵⁴ Louis Battye, 'The Chatterley Syndrome' in Paul Hunt (ed.), *Stigma: The Experience of Disability* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), 3-16.

but merely pieced together mechanical fragments’ or James Cowan, who refers to Clifford as a ‘puppet figure’, existing purely as a symbolic entity.⁵⁵ Chapter 3 will develop and critique these ideas, addressing the absence of Lawrentian research that focuses specifically on somatic issues; but the readings of Levine and Cowan do mark a significant shift from the earlier literary periods covered in chapters 1 and 2. Tamara Ketabgian explains that ‘the Victorian novel [...] fostered the explosive growth of industrial metaphor’ of the unity of man and machine.⁵⁶ In the post-war period, Clifford Chatterley serves to subvert this metaphor, and this hints at the change in attitudes towards masculinity that were formed by the Great War:

By the time Europe stood on the brink of war in 1914, a new masculinity had developed [...] When acting on behalf of their homeland [...] a form of] masculinity that privileged honour, aggression, and violence [determined] how real men comported themselves.⁵⁷

The association between violence and ‘real’ manliness that develops at the beginning of the war is shown by Lawrence to be at best unsustainable and at worst entirely futile and misguided.

Rather than expanding upon the critical trend of positioning Clifford and Mellors in opposition to one another (Mark Kinkead-Weekes, for example, refers to them as ‘Sir Impotent [and] Mr Potency’), Chapter 3 will illuminate how each man represents two halves of the injured veteran’s experience.⁵⁸ While Clifford must come to terms with the physical trauma inflicted upon him during the war, Mellors represents Lawrence’s belief in the hopelessness of British masculinity in the post-war period. Frank Kermode explains that Lawrence ‘believed

⁵⁵ George Levine, “Lady Chatterley’s Lover” in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Modern Critical Views of D. H. Lawrence* (New York: Chelsea House, 1986), 234-37, p. 234; James C. Cowan, *D. H. Lawrence’s American Journey: A Study in Literature and Myth* (Cleveland: Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1970), p. 84.

⁵⁶ Tamara Ketabgian, *The Lives of Machines: The Industrial Imaginary in Victorian Literature and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), p. 6.

⁵⁷ Thomas W. Gallant, ‘History, Europe, Early Modern to 1917’ in Michael Flood, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Bob Pease & Keith Pringle (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2013), 273-76, p. 276.

⁵⁸ Mark Kinkead-Weekes, ‘Eros and Metaphor: Sexual Relationship in the Fiction of Lawrence’ in Anne Smith (ed.), *Lawrence and Women* (London: Vision Press, 1978), 101-21, p. 119.

himself to be living in a time of cosmic crisis', something which Lawrence expands upon with reference to the Great War:⁵⁹

They fought and risked their lives for this; partly out of idealism, partly out of desire to vindicate their own manhood. And the best men died, knowing they'd better seek their lost manhood in the grave, since idealism obviously would never give it back to them. And certainly democracy wouldn't.⁶⁰

Men who went to war either died, returned traumatised (in this case it is a physical trauma, represented by Clifford), or, like Mellors, they returned disaffected. Chapter 3 considers *Lady Chatterley's Lover* alongside Lawrence's short story 'The Blind Man'. Maurice Pervin, the blind veteran and protagonist, suffers from physical trauma as well as many symptoms consistent with shellshock. This story ties in well with Nagel's description of the gendered aspects of war as it reproduces the battlefield/ homefront dichotomy back in England, with Maurice masculinised during the moments he spends in the coded, war-like farm buildings, and emasculated for those periods in his domestic home. This symbolism of space is a Lawrentian trope: 'Places, for Lawrence, were important for their 'spirit', for what they meant and could symbolise.'⁶¹

With both chapters 3 and 4 focusing on the Great War's aftermath, there is an inevitable interaction between them – Svoboda even compares the experiences of Jake Barnes and Clifford Chatterley (p. 201). The critical attention afforded to Hemingway and Faulkner's first novels differs greatly, with *The Sun Also Rises* receiving substantially more consideration than *Soldiers' Pay* despite their glaring similarities: 'In subject, [*Soldiers' Pay*] is a translation of *The Sun Also Rises* to a small town in Georgia: the wounded soldier, the frustrated woman, the

⁵⁹ Frank Kermode, 'Lawrence and the Apocalyptic Types' in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Modern Critical Views of D. H. Lawrence* (New York: Chelsea House, 1986), 59-71, p. 61.

⁶⁰ D. H. Lawrence, 'On Being a Man' in Michael Herbert (ed.), *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine: And Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 211-22, p. 220.

⁶¹ Simonetta de Filippis, 'Lawrence of Etruria' in Peter Preston & Peter Hoare (eds.), *D. H. Lawrence in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 104-20, p. 105.

sterility of lust, the failure of all traditional values'.⁶² With both novels tracing the post-war experiences of wounded American veterans, the treatment of masculinity is particularly important to assess. Ben Wadham explains the link between the military and masculinity, something which is of particular importance to these novels:

Armies and their core business, war and violence, are literally and symbolically masculinist practices. Symbolically, the acts of invasion, killing, and violation are masculinist. They represent the practices of control, domination and authoritarianism.⁶³

If violence, and in particular violation, are to be accepted as masculinist practice, then the wounded soldier exists as a figure of tension. He is both the enforcer and victim of masculine violence; and if it is masculine to violate then the gendered aspects of being the victim of that same violation requires exploration. Jake Barnes and Donald Mahon embody this tension, while also acting as emblems of the 'lost generation'. In *The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, *Soldiers' Pay* receives just two mentions, the first of which appears in a chronology of the author's work and describes the novel as 'a "lost generation" story centering on the betrayals of a war-wounded aviator'.⁶⁴ Halford Luccock echoes this, arguing that *Soldiers' Pay* portrays 'the violent reaction of disillusion over the war', while Watkins describes Mahon as having been 'ruined' by it.⁶⁵ The association between the lost generation and *The Sun Also Rises* is widely known, with Greg Forter linking Jake Barnes's injury to a societal loss of manhood, arguing that his wound serves to define 'the lost generation as one that has lost its phallic inheritance'.⁶⁶ Fighting as Americans in a predominantly European war results in a

⁶² Otis B. Wheeler, 'Some Uses of Folk Humor by Faulkner' in Linda Wagner-Martin (ed.), *William Faulkner: Four Decades of Criticism* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1973), 68-82, pp. 71-72.

⁶³ Ben Wadham, 'Armies' in Michael Flood, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Bob Pease & Keith Pringle (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2013), 24-26, p. 24.

⁶⁴ Philip M. Weinstein (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), xvi.

⁶⁵ Halford Edward Luccock, *American Mirror: Social, Ethical and Religious Aspects of American Literature* (New York: Macmillan, 1940), p. 71; Floyd C Watkins, *The Flesh and the Word: Eliot, Hemingway, Faulkner* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), p. 175.

⁶⁶ Greg Forter, *Gender, Race, and Mourning in American Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 59.

different post-war experience for Jake Barnes and Donald Mahon than it does for the English Clifford Chatterley and Maurice Pervin. In *Soldiers' Pay*, Faulkner focuses on 'the trauma of war, felt at home and after the fact by demobilized soldiers and civilians in turn'.⁶⁷ Robert Hamblin calls the novel Faulkner's 'contribution to the Lost Generation novel, [tracing] the painful adjustment that Donald Mahon and other soldiers must make in returning to a homeland largely unaffected by the tragic experiences of war'.⁶⁸

Hemingway's Barnes remains in Europe, as a veteran for whom 'country' has become one of the many concepts which has 'been shattered by the brutal and disillusioning spectacle of the slaughter of the First World War'.⁶⁹ With reference to *The Sun Also Rises*, Robert Stephens explains Barnes's rejection of America:

Protagonists choose escape when the menace of the world seems too great and the stature of the man too small to challenge the order of things and when the man is still too rebellious or too horrified to accept things as they are.⁷⁰

The bodies of Barnes and Mahon signify the fragility of post-war masculinity for the American veteran, regardless of where he ends up after the war.

Any attempt at finding a unified presentation of physical damage within the works of these authors is misguided. For some characters, carnal injury signifies a masculine essence belonging to the afflicted while for others it is emblematic of a loss of hegemonic manliness. More often, the wound symbolises a combination of both, with masculine superiority existing

⁶⁷ Pearl James, *The New Death: American Modernism and World War I* (Charlottesville, The University of Virginia Press, 2013), p. 135.

⁶⁸ Robert W. Hamblin, 'Mythic and Archetypal Criticism' in Charles A. Peek & Robert W. Hamblin, *A Companion to Faulkner Studies* (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 1-26, p. 12.

⁶⁹ Ann Massa, *American Literature in Context, IV: 1900-1930* (London: Methuen, 1982), p. 160.

⁷⁰ Robert O. Stephens, 'Ernest Hemingway and the Rhetoric of Escape' in Richard E. Langford & William E. Taylor (eds.), *The Twenties: Poetry and Prose: 20 Critical Essays* (Deland: Everett Edwards Press, 1966), 82-86, p. 82.

alongside emasculation (or at least the threat of it), with each half of this paradoxical pairing exercising itself at different moments and in different contexts.⁷¹

There is, however, one trend that is made apparent when these selected texts are read alongside one another. Chapter 1 showcases a *fin-de-siècle* tendency to use amputation as a masculinising symbol. While this thesis seeks to challenge Sweet's assertion that Silver and Hook are made 'hyper-masculine' by virtue of their disabilities, it is clear that their injuries are, to a large extent, responsible for the afflicted men's heightened masculine prestige. As this thesis moves from chapter to chapter, we see a change in the response to towards physical trauma. In the selected texts, male injury is always connected to masculine identity; but the masculinising impact of the trauma sustained by Long John Silver and Captain Hook does not apply to the injury sustained by W. H. Davies, or to the wounds of the post-war figures who are the focus of Chapters 3 & 4. The differences for this are explored throughout this thesis, but they can broadly be split into two categories.

The symbolic use of amputation differs greatly between Chapters 1 & 2 because of the formal production of the respective works. The fictional plots of *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* give Stevenson and Barrier greater license to explore the potential symbolic value of disability than that which is available to Davies, whose prose work is always influenced by his biographical experiences and, more pertinently, often includes details about the physical trauma that he sustained during his life. Davies's own concepts of masculinity will be explored in Chapter 2, but it is enough to say here that he would have viewed it as facetious to claim that his amputation signified a heightened masculine prestige in the way that it does for Silver and Hook.

⁷¹ The term 'emasculation' is used throughout this study to describe a lack of, or a moving away from, the hegemonic masculine standards in the particular work being analysed. Unless otherwise stated, it does not refer to a phallic injury or a depletion of virility. This point is revisited in more detail in chapter 4, with relation to Hemingway's use of 'emasculation' when discussing Jake Barnes.

Secondly, and with regards to Chapters 3 & 4, *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* were produced during a period where the sight of an amputee or of a blind person was highly uncommon when compared to the aftermath of the First World War. Not only does this allow the afflicted character to shock his peers with his non-normative body (a technique utilised by many of the injured pirates in *Treasure Island*), but it can also exist as a predominantly symbolic theme in the reader's consciousness. In these texts, disability is presented with a kind of frivolity that becomes wholly inappropriate during the post-war period (the focus of Chapters 3 & 4). The same kind of tension that is present between Davies's work and the texts of Chapter 1 is being manifested here too. *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* can detach their symbolic treatment of disability from any embodied reality by setting their narratives in distant (and in the case of *Peter and Wendy*, fanciful) locations and epochs, and by choosing the kind of characters – pirates – that readers were never likely to encounter. It is impossible for Davies, an amputee, to achieve this same level of distance in his biographical writing, just as it is for the post-war writers who are the attention of Chapters 3 & 4.

If the First World War did indeed represent 'a crisis of masculinity' – and the works of Lawrence, Hemingway, and, Faulkner that are studied in this thesis support exactly this – then the previous association between masculine prestige and physical trauma can no longer serve the same purpose that it previously had done.⁷² It is a partnership that has been corrupted by the war and its consequences. The amputee in fiction cannot be used as an emblem of masculine accomplishment at a time when the amputee in reality is all too commonly seen, and all too commonly suffering from both the physical *and* the social complications caused by the war.

⁷² George Robb & W. Brian Newsome, 'Introduction: Rethinking World War I: Occupation, Liberation, and Reconstruction', *Historical Reflections*, 42/3 (20016), 1-8, p. 5.

This thesis seeks to establish the evolution of this literary trope from the *fin-de-siècle* to the post-war period, charting how historical, geographical, and personal contexts shape the symbolic economy which ties physical trauma with masculine prestige.

1

Robert Louis Stevenson and J. M. Barrie: Amputated Masculinity

I should like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow; –
Where below another sky
Parrot islands anchored lie.¹

Like the medical practice that it reflects, the presence of amputation in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century literature is under continual development. The *fin de siècle* did not invent the literary amputee, but it did produce a new type of dismembered man, one whose affliction mirrored the cultural concerns of his creation. This literal impairment exists as a metaphor for the complexities of masculine identity during a period of substantial imperial concern: ‘Men made the Empire, according to countless stories consumed by late Victorian and Edwardian readers, and, according to other stories just as numerous, the Empire made men.’²

Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* and J. M. Barrie’s *Peter and Wendy* provide particularly convincing demonstrations of how somatic damage highlights the connection between masculinity and the British Empire at the *fin de siècle*. The obvious candidates for the embodiment of this link are Long John Silver and Captain Jas. Hook, both of whom encapsulate certain aspects of the imperial ideal. The former is often referred to as ‘the man with one leg’ while the latter is nominally defined by his bodily condition. Not only does Hook’s surname refer to his prosthetic, but the preferred form of his forename is the kind of abbreviation that Butler focuses on in relation to physical trauma in Cather’s *My Antonia*: ‘As an abbreviation, [‘W’] is clearly cut back’ in an enactment of ‘the scene of castration/ decapitation that Jim

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, *A Child’s Garden of Verses* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1922), p. 10.

² Bradley Deane, *Masculinity and the New Imperialism: Rewriting Manhood in British Popular Literature, 1870-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 94.

performs'.³ The use of 'Jas.' serves a similar purpose, reinforcing the importance of Hook's amputation to his identity.

The positioning of their injuries, as well of those of other characters, reveals something about the masculine status of each character. Showalter is referring to *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in the following excerpt, but it is equally relevant to *Treasure Island*:

In representing the effects of splitting upon the male body, Stevenson drew upon the advanced medical science of his day [...] the right frontal brain lobes, which controlled the left side of the body, were subordinate [...] Individuals in whom the right hemisphere predominated had to be low on the evolutionary scale [... European scientists] characterized one side of the brain and body as masculine, rational, civilized, European, and highly evolved, and the other as feminine, irrational, primitive, and backward (SA, p. 114).

This left-hand/ right-hand dichotomy is managed in two ways in *Treasure Island*. In terms of the novel's amputees, Stevenson specifically reduces the left-hand side of their bodies. Silver is missing his left leg while Black Dog is missing fingers from his left hand. This makes these men more right-heavy, emphasising the importance of that half of the body and thus masculinising them. Bones's scar on his right cheek works in the same way. The bodies of Silver and Black Dog are defined by what is missing on the subordinate left-hand side, whereas Bones's scar is a masculinising *addition* to his right-hand side. This dichotomy holds gendered connotations aside from somatic injury as well, and it will be alluded to several times throughout this chapter. *Peter and Wendy* also engages with this idea, as demonstrated by the following exchange between Peter and John regarding Hook's amputation:

'Then he can't fight now?'

'Oh, can't he just!'

'Left-hander?'

'He has an iron hook instead of a right hand, and he claws with it.'⁴

³ Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 151.

⁴ J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan: Peter and Wendy and Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2004), p. 43.

Unlike Silver, Hook's lost hand is replaced by a prosthetic that is an improvement on what was there before. The right-hand side of Hook is emphasised to the extent that John's enquiry ('Left-hander?') is ignored by Peter in order to bring the conversation back to the threatening weapon on Hook's masculine right-hand side.

Sweet refers to the 'hyper-masculinity' that exists in Hook and Silver, linking this to their bodily condition. It is undoubtedly the case that both men exude a heightened masculinity over their peers, but to describe them as 'hyper-masculine' is to disregard the examples of masculine failure that occur as a direct and paradoxical consequence of the same injuries that grant them their masculine superiority. This contradiction makes it impossible to apply any kind of permanent masculine identity to Hook or Silver, let alone one of an ideal or 'hyper-masculinity'; and their movement between a masculine spectrum is representative of the precarious nature of masculinity at the *fin de siècle*. Sweet argues that:

the disabled pirates depicted in late Victorian and Edwardian adventure stories display an alluring form of hyper-masculinity that enables them to continue pirating in spite of their physical impairments (p. 89).

This is certainly true of Hook and Silver, but their piracy is unfulfilled. Neither man secures the bounty (be it treasure or the death of Peter Pan) that they crave. The injured men of these narratives are regularly positioned as the masculine frontrunners amongst their peers, but to say that they have achieved a masculine identity that they are content with is to misunderstand the motives of their respective pursuits. Jenni Calder, after discussing the wreckage on Attwood's island in Stevenson's *The Ebb-Tide*, questions whether '*Treasure Island's* treasure is also a wreckage? A metaphor here for moral as well as physical disintegration'.⁵ There is undoubtedly a symbolism attached to the buried treasure on Skeleton Island. The act of

⁵ Jenni Calder, 'The Eyeball of the Dawn: Can We Trust Stevenson's Imagination?' in William B. Jones Jr. (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson Reconsidered: New Critical Perspectives* (London: McFarland, 2003), 7-20, p. 16.

securing the treasure would guarantee the masculinity that Silver and the rest of the *Hispaniola*'s crew are seeking, while Hook's desire to rid the Neverland of the lost boys is an attempt to eradicate the persistent reminder of childhood that haunts him, with both narratives taking place within a framework of imperial instability. These characters require detailed analysis into how their amputations influence their masculine standing, but their depleted bodies also hint at a missingness that pervades these narratives in both a corporeal and thematic sense.

Silver and Hook are certainly lacking, as all of their male contemporaries are, for they have been unsuccessful in their hunt for an idealised manhood. Crucially, however, their masculinity has not been completely lost along with their flesh. While the tangible body is depleted, the ethereal masculinity becomes distilled within a reduced vessel. It is this condensed and strengthened version of masculinity that gives the amputee his authority over his less afflicted peers. However, as we will see, these same injuries that strengthen Silver and Hook simultaneously symbolise the fragility of masculine identity in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Given the prevalence of late nineteenth-century pro-Empire propaganda, particularly movements such as the 'Boys' Empire League' targeted at adolescents, a rereading of *Treasure Island* as a text saturated with colonial concerns is required.⁶ Critical responses to the novel have regularly argued for its pro-Empire stance but a reading that places bodily damage at its forefront reveals how Stevenson uses injury as a means to question the status of masculinity at a time when masculinity and the Empire were intrinsically bound to one-another. Published at the beginning of a period that would be retrospectively defined by Europe's 'Scramble for

⁶ MacKenzie explains how '[the] members [of the Boys' Empire League] were taken on patriotic visits, subjected to imperial lectures and sermons, and were expected to develop an interest in, and collect information about, one particular colony. No doubt this was to encourage emigration, and indeed there was much emigration propaganda in the juvenile journals'; John MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 205.

Africa', the final push into the unknown, *Treasure Island* asks us to consider a complex notion unique to this epoch: if a British form of masculinity is asserted by men exploring new lands and conquering them, then what happens when there is nowhere left to colonise?⁷ 'Expansionist activity reached a crescendo with the 'scramble for Africa' in the 1880s and 1890s' and so the *fin de siècle* man can still go out, yet he returns, like Silver, literally (if not symbolically) less of a man than when he left.⁸ Marah Gubar correctly asserts that the novel 'hardly [...] encourages young people to journey out into the world to make their fortunes'.⁹ Yet 'fortunes' is an ambiguous term that demands clarification, as the 'fortune' that *Treasure Island's* characters are seeking has a negligible connection with financial prosperity. Flint's elusive booty instead signifies an equally evasive masculinity.

J. M. Barrie's *Peter and Wendy* is another island narrative with a similarly villainous pirate amputee. Captain Hook's prosthetic becomes a weapon as well as a domestic tool, improving his body and undoubtedly resulting in an elevation of his masculinity; and yet, it is ironically the origin of his amputation that threatens the very masculinity that his claw affords him, with Peter Pan cutting off the hand and feeding it to a crocodile who relentlessly pursues Hook until his death, threatening to dismember him further. Hook's role as an amputee is the primary lens through which to view the connection between masculinity and the physical body in this text, but Peter's position as the novella's amputator is also significant. In these moments, be it when he chops off Hook's hand, or when he slices off parts of the lost boys' bodies so that they continue to fit into their entrance to the treehouse, he enacts a social reality of the Edwardian period – the impossibility of achieving an idealised masculinity.

⁷ Chamberlain explains how 1869 - 1914 was a period of major European colonisation in Africa. Muriel Evelyn Chamberlain, *The Scramble for Africa* (Harlow: Longman, 2010), pp. xii – xviii.

⁸ Cannon Schmitt, 'The Sun and Moon were made to give them Light: 'Empire in the Victorian Novel' in Francis O'Gorman (ed.), *A Concise Companion to the Victorian Novel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 4-24, p. 9.

⁹ Marah Gubar, *Artful Dodgers: Reconceiving the Golden Age of Children's Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 73.

In addition to the personal and societal impact of Hook and Silver's amputations, *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* must also be considered, in part, from a disability studies perspective, focusing on the recurring trope of the physically afflicted villain. Lorraine Fletcher, in taking issue with depictions of Long John Silver in cinematic adaptations, articulates the importance of the physical form in character representation, and explains that 'Far from being the genial rogue of popular recall, and of all film versions, he is genuinely terrifying.'¹⁰ While Silver and his crew hunt for a manhood symbolised by buried treasure, Hook's attempt at achieving his desired form of masculinity relies upon the extermination of the 'Proud and insolent youth' which Peter Pan and, to a lesser extent, the lost boys represent (*PW*, p. 129). In eradicating the youthful half of the boy/man binary, Hook can destroy any reminder and, indeed, any possibility of boyhood, leaving manhood as his only alternative.

The two texts demonstrate the challenges to *fin de siècle* perceptions of masculinity that accompanied the uncertainty of the Empire. By establishing the prominence of Empire-focused literature aimed at children and young-adults during this period, and by highlighting those features of *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* that engage with imperial concerns, a view emerges of how the symbolism of somatic damage is not limited to the literal impairment of Hook's hand or Silver's leg. In addition to the personal impact of those afflicted, these amputations also act as a threat to masculinity at a time when the means to become a man – imperial expansion – was most under threat.

¹⁰ Lorraine Fletcher, 'Long John Silver, Karl Marx and the Ship of State', *Critical Survey*, 19/2 (2007), 34-47, p. 39.

i. *The Empire: Propaganda and Piracy*

The link between boys' fiction and the British Empire at the *fin de siècle* is well documented. Its prevalence betrays its importance as masculinising propaganda, such as in the work of H. Rider Haggard, whose 'protagonists are manly heroes, for whom Empire represents a revitalizing escape from a commercial, effeminate home life'.¹¹ Madhudaya Sinha echoes this claim in arguing that 'the Africa of *She* [...] is] an integral component of [the] cultural apparatus of British imperialism and its mechanisms of propaganda, subordination and control at the *fin de siècle*'.¹² Heidi Kaufman argues that in *King Solomon's Mines*, Haggard 'attempts to legitimize imperial theft by suggesting that white men have a responsibility to take what they have discovered and fought for'.¹³ His characters 'dive deeply into African darkness and emerge shaken but refreshed'.¹⁴ Haggard's contemporary and friend, Rudyard Kipling, 'moved Empire from the margins of English fiction to its center' while Park notes that 'Scarcely one of the proliferating studies of "Orientalism" leaves *Kim* undiscussed'.¹⁵ Berinkey hints at a kind of inevitability surrounding Kipling's literary representation of the Empire: 'Kipling's life, surroundings and character were such, that he could not help being an imperialist and militarist, but he could not help being an artist too'.¹⁶ G. A. Henty is perhaps the most forceful of *fin de*

¹¹ Julia Reid, 'Gladstone Bags, Shooting Boots, and Bryant & May's Matches': Empire, Commerce, and the Imperial Romance in the 'Graphic's' Serialization of H. Rider Haggard's *She*', *Studies in the Novel*, 43/2 (2011), 152-78, p. 153.

¹² Madhudaya Sinha, 'Triangular Erotics: The Politics of Masculinity, Imperialism and Big-Game Hunting in Rider Haggard's *She*', *Victorian Masculinities*, 20/3 (2008), 29-43, p. 29.

¹³ Heidi Kaufman, 'King Solomon's Mines?: African Jewry, British Imperialism, and H. Rider Haggard's *Diamonds*', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 33/2 (2005), 517-39, p. 519.

¹⁴ Norman A. Etherington, 'Rider Haggard, Imperialism, and the Layered Personality', *Victorian Studies*, 22/1 (1978), 71-87, p. 87.

¹⁵ Benita Parry, 'The Contents and Discontents of Kipling's Imperialism', *New Formations*, 6 (1988), 49-63, p. 51; Clara Claiborne Park, 'Artist of Empire: Kipling and *Kim*', *The Hudson Review*, 55/4 (2003), 537-61, p. 538; Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (London: Penguin, 2011).

¹⁶ Irma Berinkey, 'Rudyard Kipling, Ends and Means of his Art', *Hungarian Studies in English*, 5/6 (1944), 33-40, p. 33.

siècle writers as far as the Empire is concerned, with Mark Naidis labelling him an ‘imperial propagandist’, an idea developed by Robert Huttenback:¹⁷

The stirrings of public awareness of Empire made the imperial proconsul an increasingly popular figure in the children's literature of the day, and no author of books for the young was read with greater avidity than George Alfred Henty. Henty based about twenty-five of his books on incidents in British imperial history, and in them he broadcast his views on imperialism and the men who established and increased the British Empire.¹⁸

Aside from novels, ‘Boys’ periodical literature has been acknowledged as one of the cultural forms upon which the effects of imperialism were most evident’.¹⁹ Patrick Dunae supports this, explaining that:

At schools, in church groups, in recreational associations - at almost every turn boys were exposed to the imperial idea. Of the many sources of imperial sentiment that pervaded Victorian-Edwardian boy life, however, few were as prominent or as inspiring as popular literature.²⁰

Robert MacDonald makes the link between propaganda and masculinity in the boys’ papers explicit, explaining how the ‘code of manliness had shifted from a concern for purity and Christian self-sacrifice, to instructions for good citizenship; what was being emphasized by 1900 was that a boy should be a lover of his country’.²¹ The issue here is that these examples of propaganda routinely rely upon imperial expansion as a masculinising tool during a period where the opportunities to build the Empire are becoming increasingly limited. Moreover, the occupation of previously treasured colonies is questioned at this time. A prominent example of this appears in *The Expansion of England* (published in the same year as *Treasure Island*),

¹⁷ Mark Naidis, ‘G. A. Henty’s Idea of India’, *Victorian Studies*, 8/1 (1964), 49-58, p. 49.

¹⁸ Robert A. Huttenback, ‘G. A. Henty and the Imperial Stereotype’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 29/1 (1965), 63-75, p. 63.

¹⁹ Christopher Banham, ‘England and America Against the World’: Empire and the USA in Edwin J. Brett’s ‘Boys of England’, 1866-99’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 40/2 (2007), 151-71, p. 151.

²⁰ Patrick A. Dunae, ‘Boys’ Literature and the Idea of Empire, 1870-1914’, *Victorian Studies*, 24/1 (1980), 105-21, p. 105.

²¹ Robert H. MacDonald, ‘Reproducing the Middle-Class Boy: From Purity to Patriotism in the Boys’ Magazines, 1892-1914’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 24/3 (1989), 519-39, p. 526.

where Sir John Seeley concedes that the efforts to manage India ‘vastly increases [Britain’s] dangers’.²² The *fin de siècle* and, in particular, the art that would come to symbolise it, introduced an unsettling predicament for its imperial leaders. The perceived deprivation present in the emerging aesthetic decadence of the period was incompatible with the values championed by British imperialists, who marketed their endeavour as wholly virtuous, believing it to be ‘the greatest moral and material Fact in human history’.²³ The imperial response to such a threat was to bombard young boys with an overwhelming array of pro-Empire propaganda, with an emphasis on maturing them into an idealised masculinity:

The whole shift towards a more obviously patriotic programme was part of an emerging imperial consciousness, in which, at a popular level, the answer to the dangers of a decadent society was the strengthening of the Empire. The young had to be given ‘character’ to make them fit and willing to serve in the imperial cause (MacDonald, p. 520).

This indoctrination was exercised through several channels, but a substantial emphasis was placed on the production of didactic journals and papers aimed specifically at boys, through which ‘Empire enthusiasts were making a play for the hearts and minds of young readers’ (Gubar, p. 71). The astoundingly high number of publications offered an ostensible choice to the consumer, but the values that were expressed differ minimally from one periodical to the other.²⁴ The advocacy of Empire underlines the majority of the boys’ papers in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and they had a wide readership, with ‘at least one and

²² Sir J. R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London: Macmillan and Co, 1883), p. 11.

²³ George Griffith, *Men Who Have Made the Empire: From William Duke of Normandy to Cecil Rhodes of Rhodesia* (London: C. A. Pearson, 1897), p.xiv. See Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen-Nineties* (London: Penguin, 1939), p. 55 for an account of the perception of decadence at the *fin de siècle*.

²⁴ The list of publications includes, but is not exclusive to, the following papers, many of which demonstrate their patriotic agenda in their titles alone: *The Bad Boys’ Paper*; *Boys of England: A Young Gentleman’s Journal of Sport, Travel, Fun and Instruction*; *Boys’ Standard*; *Boys’ World*; *Our Boys’ Paper*; *Wild Boys of London*; *Boys of England*; *Young Men of Great Britain*; *Rovers of the Sea*; *Young Gentleman’s Journal*; *Rover’s Log*; *Sons of Britannia*; *The Young Britain*; *The Young Englishman*; *Boys of Empire*; *Boys’ Champion*; *Boys’ Leisure Hour*; *Boy’s Own Paper*; *Union Jack*; *Comic Cuts*; *Answers*; *Halpenny Marvel*; *Pluck*; *The Boy’s Friend*; *Captain*; *Boys’ War News*; *Boys’ Realm*; *The Boys’ Herald*; *Gem*; *Magnet*; *Dreadnought*; *Boys of our Empire*; *Chums*; *The Bonnie Boys of Britain*; *Boys’ Champion Paper*; *Comrades*; *Boys and Girls*; *Boys of the United Kingdom*; *Young Briton’s Journal*; *British Boys’ Paper*; *Boys of the Isles*; *Boy’s Graphic*; *Rover*.

a quarter million' boys reading *Boy's Own Paper* a week.²⁵ They aimed to persuade their readers to help build and strengthen the Empire when they came of age, and Daniel Bivona explains that this was never of greater concern to the Victorian middle-classes than it was during the late nineteenth century:

the Victorian middle class became increasingly preoccupied with the fear that Britain was not up to the challenge of competition with its imperialist rivals in Europe [...] By the time the "Scramble for Africa" was inaugurated by the Congress of Berlin in 1885, many would come to see success in the game of Empire as the chief indicator of economic and social health (or illness).²⁶

It is unsurprising that the reaction to such anxiety was to reinforce and develop the output of propaganda to Victorian and Edwardian society:

The romancers' focus on character [...] was in keeping with the avowed aims of Victorian boys' fiction and its implicit imperial ideology. This fiction made the Empire attractive to its readership and described those aspects of character-of manhood-needed to serve it. As England's imperial dominance gave way to anxiety about that dominance in the late century, that vision of manhood shifted from philanthropic to militaristic.²⁷

However, for the boy who was the target of this campaign, a far more personal concern was being manufactured. The 'shift' described by Lisa Honaker is evidenced in the first edition of *Young Men of Great Britain*:

It may be said [...] that] the name of the "Young Men of Great Britain" is a passport throughout the world [...] We] look upon the name as expressing that class of daring and intellectual spirits from which have sprung our Statesmen, our Orators, our Soldiers, our Sailors, and our Men of Science. From these spring the makers of our laws, and the defenders of our homes. From these spring the noble hearts who walk fearlessly over the waters, and who from pole to pole have made the name of England glorious.²⁸

²⁵ John Springhall, 'Building Character in the British Boy: The Attempt to Extend Christian Manliness to Working-Class Adolescents, 1880-1914' in J. A. Mangan & James Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 52-74, p. 65.

²⁶ Daniel Bivona, *British Imperial Literature, 1870-1940: Writing and the Administration of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 13.

²⁷ Lisa Honaker, "One Man to Rely On": Long John Silver and the Shifting Character of Victorian Boys' Fiction', *Journal of Narrative Theory*, 34/1 (2004), 27-53, p. 28.

²⁸ Edwin J. Brett, *Young Men of Great Britain*, 1/1 (1872), p. 12.

For the young man of Great Britain, there is the very clear expectation that he become a politician, an academic, or a soldier. The first two are impractical goals for the majority to achieve. Soldiering, however, is not only realisable, but it is also afforded the same respect here as those less attainable professions. The above passage, through the repetition of ‘spring’ and ‘sprung’, cements the notion of growing or ageing into these masculine roles of responsibility and veneration. Yet, the soldiering that is being advocated is unambiguously linked to Empire building and, as Bivona indicates through his reference to the Scramble for Africa, there is nowhere left to conquer. Through the creation of Skeleton Island and the Neverland, Stevenson and Barrie set their narratives in purposefully ambiguous and fanciful spaces. In doing so, they expose the absence of unexplored landmass at the *fin de siècle* and bring the texts’ shared imperial message to the surface; namely, the question of how boys can access a masculine adulthood when the means to attain this no longer exist. The answer for the male characters of *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* is that they do not. Sarah Gilead’s analysis of the Neverland, that the ‘true paradox of the ‘never’ in Neverland is in its double meaning of stark denial – on the one hand, the refusal to conceive of its own end and, on the other, the absolute reality of death’, is an echoing of imperial consciousness at the *fin de siècle*, torn between a patriotic assurance in the Empire’s unending success and the concerning reality of an endeavour in decline.²⁹

The presence of the Empire in these texts is symptomatic of the periods in which they were produced. Tania Zulli asserts that ‘No branch of knowledge was excluded from the colonial discourse’ in the Victorian period before citing Gayatri Spivak’s summary of the influence that the Empire had on British culture:³⁰

²⁹ Sarah Gilead, ‘Magic Abjured: Closure in Children’s Fantasy Fiction’, *PMLA*, 106/2 (1991), 277-93, p. 286.

³⁰ Tania Zulli, *Colonial Transitions: Literature and Culture in the Late Victorian Age* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), p. 21.

[It] should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English.³¹

The somatic damage that is so central to both *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* serves paradoxical purposes, advertising the experience of masculinising adventure while simultaneously warning against it. Edwardian society feared 'a decline in manners and morals, Empire and nation' and this decline is represented in *Peter and Wendy* by its setting – the Neverland.³² A reference to the Australian 'bush', the Neverland is a setting which positions the unknown (the 'bush') within the known colonial space (Australia).³³ The island has several features of an imperial target. The lagoon and the 'wild beasts' present an exotic setting while the redskins, assumedly the island's native population, hunt down the pirates led by James Hook.³⁴ There is a reimagining here of James Cook's experiences in Hawaii, and the association between piracy (Hook) and imperialism (Cook) is shown to be as negligible here as it is in *Treasure Island* (while the similarity in their names is surely more than a coincidence). The creation of a fantasy island reflects the lack of available space left to explore on the globe, as well as Edwardian concerns over the Empire's stagnation. Paul Fox describes the Neverland as 'a playful nod to the impossibility of locating Peter's home as real or unreal at any point in time' before asking whether "'Neverland" [is] a place name or a statement that there cannot ever be such a place'.³⁵ *Treasure Island* touches upon these same concerns, but an imaginary

³¹ Gayatri Spivak, 'Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism', *Critical Enquiry*, 12/1 (1985), 243-61, p. 243.

³² Helen C. Long, *The Edwardian House: The Middle-Class Home in Britain, 1880-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).

³³ F. J. Harvey Darton, *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life* (London: British Library, 1999), p. 309.

³⁴ For a convincing argument that the redskins are native to the Neverland, see Clay Kinchen Smith, 'Problematizing Piccaninnies, or How J. M. Barrie Uses Graphemes to Counter Racism in *Peter Pan*' in Donna R. White & C. Anita Tarr (eds.), *J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children's Classic at 100* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 107-24, p. 114.

³⁵ Paul Fox, 'The Time of His Life: Peter Pan and the Decadent Nineties' in Donna R. White & C. Anita Tarr (eds.), *J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children's Classic at 100* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 23-45, p. 27.

island does not fit with the narrative or with the state of late nineteenth-century imperial expansion. In setting his novel at an unspecified date during the eighteenth century ('the year of grace 17-' p. 3), Stevenson sets up his narrative at a time when much of the world was still unexplored, with Rosalind Williams demonstrating how the island is an amalgamation of a variety of foreign features:

According to the plot, it should be vaguely somewhere in the Caribbean, but this location does not match the landscape described in the story [...] It draws upon the European cultural tradition of stories set on remote islands [...] but it also has the look and feel of the California coast.³⁶

Skeleton Island has a universality which makes it impossible to place, stimulating the compulsion for adventure which was becoming harder to satisfy at the *fin de siècle*. The Californian element, coupled with the vague eighteenth-century date, hints at a nostalgia for lost colonies that Loxley touches upon. She suggests that by setting the novel in the eighteenth century, Stevenson engineers a 'recreation of a lost past' and presents 'an expression of a side of British Imperialism that admires and wants to recreate a specific moment of its colonial history, providing a locus for nostalgia'.³⁷ Stevenson does not need to create a new space in the same fanciful way that Barrie does, because so much of the world's space *was* new, at least to the imperial adventurer at that time. However, the use of islands in these texts does more than appease imperial urges: 'Islands provide an appositely 'child-like' space which boys can easily circumnavigate without revealing any lack of manful maturity.'³⁸ Islands can offer a venue upon which masculinising activity is carried out, but they are also infantile spaces, and so that same masculine activity is perennially undermined. Stevenson plays on this dynamic in 'Pirate Story'. 'Afloat in the meadow by the swing' the narrator asks:

Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat,

³⁶ Rosalind H. Williams, *The Triumph of Human Empire: Verne, Morris, and Stevenson at the End of the World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 290-1.

³⁷ Diana Loxley, *Problematic Shores* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. 151.

³⁸ Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World* (London: Harper Collins, 1991), p. 94.

Wary of the weather and steering by a star?
Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,
To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malibar? (CGV, p. 7).

The children's activity in the poem is a distinctively English form of play. The final line ('The wicket is the harbour and the garden is the shore') relates to cricket, with the sport's connotations of Englishness and imperialism well founded.³⁹ Stevenson, in repeating this theme in his writing, demonstrates an evident interest in the relationship between adventure, play, and the formation of masculinity.



Hook and Silver are striking because of their amputations, and the somatic damage that they have received provides them with respect and a masculinising authority over their peers. It is those same amputations, however, that paradoxically threaten them at other moments, while the texts' remaining males mirror this conflict, being sound in body but invariably lacking an intangible masculine spirit that seems inherent in Hook, Silver, and other physically afflicted characters.

Barrie and Stevenson rely upon the archetypal man that the boys' papers perpetuated, taking this model and deviating deliberately and emphatically from it with their own characters, through whom they parody and criticise the British Empire. Hook is the ostensible embodiment of imperial success; aristocratic and an Old Etonian, his piracy and anti-British sentiments

³⁹ See the following: Keith A. P. Sandiford, 'Cricket and the Victorian Society', *Journal of Social History*, 17/2 (1983), 303-17.

contravene the ostensible expectations of a man of his background. However, he also reflects the paradoxical nature of imperial teaching in the Edwardian period:

The paradox was that the social group which actually serviced the Empire (the public school élite) was prevented by the counterweight of their own classical-linguistic privilege from allowing [...] the subjects appropriate to the ideology of imperialism into their school.⁴⁰

There is a conflict here between the imperial expectations of upper-class men like Hook and the lack of preparation that they have been offered for the exercise of carrying out those same expectations. Hook showcases this tension.

While Silver cannot claim a background so intertwined with imperial pursuit, he is nevertheless able to convince others that he is of sound moral standing, something that his piratical colleagues are unable to do. Trelawney ruefully refers to his meeting with Silver as a ‘remarkable stroke of fortune’ (p. 44), before Livesey pairs him with Smollett as the only other honest man recruited for the voyage. Trelawney objects to this comparison on the misinformed basis that Silver is more trustworthy than the captain, making the link between manliness and Englishness that informs the entirety of the novel:

“Trelawney,” said the doctor, “contrary to all my notions, I believed you have managed to get two honest men on board with you—that man and John Silver.”

“Silver, if you like,” cried the squire; “but as for that intolerable humbug, I declare I think his conduct unmanly, unsailorly, and downright un-English,” (p. 57).

Moreover, both authors complicate the division between imperial adventure and piracy, resulting in a damning portrayal of how the former is merely a state-endorsed version of the latter. Barrie does this overtly through Hook’s aristocratic heritage, but Stevenson is more subtle in his method. In either case, the use of amputees as prominent figures informs the texts’ presentation of *fin de siècle* masculinity. Many of *Treasure Island*’s characters share

⁴⁰ Jacqueline Rose, *The Case of Peter Pan, or The Impossibility of Children’s Fiction* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), p. 122.

similarities with non-fictitious pirates, but physical impairment is often used as the basis for these connections. Given that those same afflicted characters enjoy masculine dominance over their peers and given the satirical link that is made between Empire-building and piracy, a view of *fin de siècle* masculinity emerges that dismisses the popular beliefs in the Empire as being both a virtuous endeavour and a masculinising tool. Instead, these narratives (in particular *Treasure Island*) highlight the disingenuous nature of imperial pursuit through the implicit proposition that those who have the strongest claim to masculine superiority are those who have sustained physical damage during overtly piratical activity. This feature is reinforced by the pathos employed by Silver and Pew in attributing their respective afflictions to supporting the Empire and, in doing so, gaining the sort of trust that makes their sympathisers vulnerable to the threat of the injured pirates. Pew sardonically claims to have ‘lost the precious sight of his eyes in the gracious defence of his native country, England – and God bless King George!’ (p. 19). It is more than likely that Pew has lost his sight during conflict and there is a play on words with ‘England’ here. The eighteenth-century buccaneer Edward Seegar ‘adopted [England] as a pseudonym once he turned pirate’, and it is Edward England who Pew’s old crew-mate, Silver, talks about sailing alongside.⁴¹ By merging these two versions of ‘England’, Stevenson reinforces the bond between piracy and the nation-state. Jim is convinced by Pew’s story, addressing the pirate as ‘my good man’ (p. 19), while Silver uses a similar reasoning for his amputation that Trelawny finds to be equally convincing:

Long John Silver, he is called, and has lost a leg; but that I regarded as a recommendation, since he lost it in his country’s service, under the immortal Hawke. He has no pension, Livesey. Imagine the abominable age we live in (p. 45).

The deference that Trelawny and Jim pay to Silver and Pew may well be misplaced, but it is evidently borne out of an admiration for their masculine endeavours in the pursuit of nation

⁴¹ David Marley, *Pirates of the Americas, Volume I: 1650 – 1685* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2010), p. 583.

strengthening. Arnold White, writing in 1901, argues that in order to achieve manhood one must experience ‘solitude, hardship, suffering and sorrow [...] and contact with the realities of life’.⁴² Silver and Pew display these hardships through their carnal deficiencies. Mangan supports this, arguing that virility and masculinity were inextricably linked. However, he is not referring to sexualised virility but, rather, a virility ‘exemplified by stoicism, hardiness and endurance’.⁴³ Mangan links this to militarised patriotism, which is the exact concept hijacked by Pew and Silver in order to achieve veneration. Kenneth Wilson takes this further, arguing that the sort of injuries sustained by Pew and Silver do more than simply symbolise their apparent military experience:

dying for Britain and the Empire [was] the strongest possible value [during the 1890s]; it is an act of superior character, bravery, and selflessness. These fictional events can, more importantly, be read as symbolically redeeming the heavy British [...] The actual, historical disaster is recuperated, and given a new form: not of [...] British military incompetence, but of an honourable, valiant, and heroic sacrifice for the Empire.⁴⁴

Amputation is more than a token piece of evidence for somebody’s national service. It is the physical manifestation of sacrifice that can elevate the afflicted to a position of reverence that far exceeds the corporeally unscathed. The legacy of Lord Nelson demonstrates the way in which bodily loss can be used to purchase veneration. Nelson, having lost an eye in an attack on Corsica and his right arm due to an injury sustained during battle in the Canary Isles, was immediately valorised after his death, with O’Gorman highlighting ‘the cult of the great man’ which was posthumously perpetuated.⁴⁵ David Cannadine argues that Nelson is the most admired hero of British military history, ascribing this to, amongst other traits, the admiral’s

⁴² Arnold White, *Efficiency and Empire* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1973), pp. 288-89.

⁴³ J. A. Mangan & James Walvin (eds.), p. 1.

⁴⁴ Kenneth Wilson, ‘Fiction and Empire: The Case of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’, *Victorian Review*, 19/1 (1993), 22-42, p. 39.

⁴⁵ For an account of Nelson’s injuries, see John Steven Watson, *The Reign of George III, 1760-1815* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 429; Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History, 1688-1832* (London: Arnold, 1997), p. 332.

characterisation as ‘the wounded and disabled figure who triumphed over every obstacle and adversity’.⁴⁶

The predominant response to the supposed imperial experiences of Pew and Silver is a mixture of pity and respect, and the pirates indulge in this until they see the opportunity to reveal their true intentions. For Pew, it is when he is close enough to Jim that he can take his hand ‘in a moment like a vice’ (p. 20). Richard Dury demonstrates the importance of this episode, going as far as to conclude that Pew is ‘characterised by his hand’. While his blindness is the more important feature, Pew is demonstrably instilled with a deep carnal importance.⁴⁷ Silver must be more patient than Pew but, when mutiny is suggested, he demonstrates his clear-headedness to his restless shipmates:

“We can steer a course, but who's to set one? That's what all you gentlemen split on, first and last. If I had my way, I'd have Cap'n Smollett work us back into the trades at least; then we'd have no blessed miscalculations and a spoonful of water a day. But I know the sort you are (p. 69).

Silver and Pew’s use of the Empire to convince others of their decency is unambiguous, but the subtle depth that Stevenson employs in relation to the novel’s other characters (including those who are ostensibly non-piratical) is noteworthy. The significance of this connection lies in the novel’s use of somatic damage to mock the impact of the British Empire. Physical affliction is often an important factor in linking *Treasure Island*’s characters with their historical counterparts. The added suggestion that their injuries are a result of conflict with imperial forces indicates that, rather than the establishment’s forces offering an avenue to manhood at this time, it is in fact its opponents that can more readily provide this. That is not

⁴⁶ David Cannadine (ed.), *Admiral Lord Nelson: Context and Legacy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 1.

⁴⁷ Richard Dury, ‘The Hand of Hyde’ in William B. Jones Jr. (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson Reconsidered: New Critical Perspectives* (London: McFarland, 2003), 101-16, p. 105.

to say that Stevenson is genuinely advocating piracy to his readership, but he is illustrating that superior (or at least equal) models of masculinity are found elsewhere to the imperial archetype.



The link between piracy and *Treasure Island*'s characters is not limited to the aforementioned cases of Pew and Silver. Another wounded authoritarian, Billy Bones, enjoys the faintest slither of purity, which comes from the 'livid white' scar across his cheek. Thomas Gale's eighteenth-century document explains the relationship between pirates and the navy, which leads to the assumption that Bones's injury was inflicted by a member of Britain's military:

no Sums of Money can be thought by a Parliament more Justly and more Reasonably to be Raised and Paid, than such Sums as immediately tend to the Protection and Security of the Commerce of the Kingdom [...] and for the Destroying of Enemies or Pirates, who make it their Business to Prey on the Commerce of the Nation.⁴⁸

Despite being in opposition to the Empire, Bones has it to thank for his masculine essence. In a novel where physical damage is a pre-requisite for manhood, the Empire inflicts exactly that upon Billy Bones, despite Bones sharing the motive of the crown's own naval force. Harry Kelsey has shown how one of Britain's most celebrated nautical sons – Francis Drake – was little more than a pirate with royal advocacy:

Queen Elizabeth and her ministers had managed to organize the West Country pirates into a body of adventurers with a "peculiar legal status" [...] Drake had spent most of his life as a pirate, and even when he was on official expeditions, he never lost an opportunity for taking a foreign ship as a prize.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Thomas Gale (Firm), *Reasons for giving encouragement to the sea-faring people of Great-Britain, in times of peace or war, for the more effectually destroying enemies or pirates at all times. And For Distressing the Commerce of the Subjects of Spain at this Time. With Some of the many remarkable actions between the English and Spaniards at Sea* (London: printed for J. Millan, 1739), p. 13.

⁴⁹ Harry Kelsey, *Sir Francis Drake: The Queen's Pirate* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 372.

The actions of Drake and those of the pirates in *Treasure Island* are, in many respects, indistinguishable. What separates them is not their behaviour but simply the flag under which they sail. The narrative subverts 'definable distinctions between such standard polarities as 'good' and 'evil', 'honest' and 'dishonest', 'villainy' and 'legality', 'civilisation' and 'barbarity' (Loxley, p. 151). Drake and Silver share many similarities, including an injured leg, which Joy Paige elaborates on through her summary of a fight which took place near Panama: 'During the fight [...] Drake was shot in the leg. Injured and bleeding, he continued on, determined not to let his injury slow him down'.⁵⁰ This account notably resembles Silver in his attempt to outrun the remaining pirates: 'The work that man went through, leaping on his crutch till the muscles of his chest were fit to burst' (*TI*, pp. 210-11). Sydney Robjohn's 1877 account of Drake's experiences in Panama makes a direct reference to the same incident that Paige cites, so it is entirely plausible that Stevenson would have been aware of this event prior to writing *Treasure Island*. This connection is strengthened once Robjohn explains the lineage of Drake's cousin and close associate, John Hawkins: '[John] Hawkins was the son of William Hawkins, Esq., of Plymouth, by his wife Joan, daughter of William Trelawny, Esq. of Cornwall'.⁵¹ Jim takes the name 'Hawkins' while Trelawny, Esq. becomes the squire, Trelawney. In a letter to W. E. Henley (who, incidentally, was a major influence for the character of Long John Silver), Stevenson compares the squire to 'the real Tre', Edward John Trelawney, a friend of Byron and Shelley.⁵² However, he concedes that the character of 'Trelawney is [...] several thousand sea-miles off the lie of the original' (*ibid.*, p. 225), and the final representation of the squire is a blend of the privateer/pirate dichotomy that gives him a duality similar to that of other Stevenson characters (Showalter notes that in *Dr Jekyll and Mr*

⁵⁰ Joy Paige, *Sir Francis Drake: Circumnavigator of the Globe* (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2003), p. 37.

⁵¹ Sydney Robjohns, 'Buckland Abbey and Sir Francis Drake', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6 (1877), 267-97, p. 271.

⁵² Robert Louis Stevenson; Bradford A. Booth & Ernest Mehew (eds.) *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson* (London: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 225.

Hyde, ‘Not only the personality of Jekyll, but everything else about the book seems divided and split’ *SA*, p. 109). The historical Hawkins’s father and grandfather were named William, and so it is fitting that the first paternal character that the reader is shown alongside Jim is known by the truncated diminutive of William; Billy [Bones]. Jim barely affords his father, or his father’s death, a mention in his narrative. He chooses, instead, to dedicate his first two chapters to Bones, and even attempts to justify his sorrow at Bones’s death by claiming it was a reminder of his father’s passing: ‘as soon as I saw that he was dead, I burst into a flood of tears. It was the second death I had known, and the sorrow of the first was still fresh in my heart’ (*TI*, p. 21). Jim’s claim that he is mourning his biological father is unconvincing, but what is also evident is how Bones has acted far more paternally towards Jim than Mr Hawkins has done. Bones pays Jim a weekly allowance, albeit begrudgingly, for the simple (but vital) task of looking out for a one-legged man. Moreover, he inadvertently provides for Jim and his mother after he has died. While the incompetent Mr Hawkins ‘never plucked up the heart to insist on having more’ money from his guest (*TI*, p. 6), Bones leaves more than enough treasure to cover his debt, as well as a map that promises further riches. He provides for Jim in a way that his father does not and, in doing so, usurps Jim’s father’s paternal position: ‘Fathers controlled the purse strings [in Victorian England], and hence were able to determine their sons’ disposable income’ (Tosh, p. 121).

Taking the connection between Drake’s entourage and Jim further, it becomes clear that there must also be a link between Trelawney and Jim, as the historical Trelawny was the grandfather of the historical Hawkins. In forging Jim out of the ostensible respectability of the Squire and the piratical nature of Silver, Stevenson has recreated a Drake-like character: Jim becomes a buccaneer of aristocratic patronage, seeking ill-gotten treasure under the command of the social elite. This association is supported further when examined alongside W. E. Henley and Stevenson’s play, *Admiral Guinea*, where the aptly named ‘Mrs Drake’ runs the Admiral

Benbow.⁵³ As it is Jim's mother who runs the same inn in *Treasure Island*, this is clearly another reference to the link between Jim and Drake who, incidentally, also share geographical roots. William Hardesty III and David Mann have shown that the Admiral Benbow is situated 'on the sea coast of Devon or Somersetshire', while we learn in *Admiral Guinea* the exact location of the inn; Barnstaple, Devon.⁵⁴ Drake was born in Tavistock, Devon, and the importance of the connection between Drake and Jim is that, rather than the pirates of *Treasure Island* representing evil, and the other group of men, headed up by Smollett, representing good, there is evidently a moral blur:

The heroes are quick to behave piratically, while the pirates – particularly their leader, Long John Silver – act out a parody of conventional middle-class rectitude. From its outset, in short, *Treasure Island* blurs distinctions on which the ideological work of respectable pirate stories had depended.⁵⁵

Claims that the Empire offers masculine fulfilment are mocked not only by the authoritative positioning of the novel's pirates, but also by the piratical link of the text's ostensibly good characters, such as Trelawny and Jim. Masculinity cannot be achieved by imperial activity because this kind of activity is becoming increasingly limited at the *fin de siècle*. Instead, the most superior form of masculinity belongs to those men who go out and return physically damaged. They do not achieve the societal expectations of imperial success, but they arrive home with signifiers of adventure. The crucial point, however, is not to assume that these signifiers guarantee an idealised form of manhood, or the kind of 'hyper-masculinity' that Sweet advocates. Masculine growth is prevalent in *Treasure Island* but no character returns from his voyage with a masculinity that both himself and society can be content with.

⁵³ W. E. Henley & Robert Louis Stevenson, *Admiral Guinea: a drama in four acts* (London: Heinemann, 1897).

⁵⁴ William H. Hardesty III & David D. Mann, 'Historical Reality and Fictional Daydream in "Treasure Island"', *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, 7/2 (1977), 94-103, p. 95.

⁵⁵ Bradley Deane, 'Imperial Boyhood: Piracy and the Play Ethic', *Victorian Studies*, 53/4 (2011), 689-714, p. 696.

Barrie's merging of piracy and the British establishment is more visible than Stevenson's. Hook's schooling and aristocratic background position him as an icon of Edwardian imperialism, while the internationalism of his crew is indicative of the way in which Empire and piracy appear synonymous in the text:

Here [... with] pieces of eight in his ears as ornaments, is the handsome Italian Cecco, who cut his name in letters of blood on the back of the governor of the prison at Gao. That gigantic black behind him has had many names since he dropped the one with which dusky mothers still terrify their children on the banks of the Guadjomo. Here is Bill Jukes [...] who got six dozen on the Walrus from Flint before he would drop the bag of moidores; [...] and the Irish bo'sun Smee [...] and many another ruffian long known and feared on the Spanish Main (p. 47).

There is an Italian who has spent time in the Malian region of Gao. 'The gigantic black', nameless, is as mysterious as his origins. Barrie fabricated 'the Guadjomo' which, with its 'gigantic black' and its 'dusky mothers', alongside its crude name, would seemingly be located somewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, evoking the contemporary fear following the Scramble for Africa – if there is nowhere left for young men to conquer, what else is there to do other than to create the Guadjomo, or the Neverland, for that matter? Smee represents the tense relation between the Empire and Ireland, while the references to Italy, Spain, and Portugal, not to mention the French-occupied Mali, all signify the British imperialists' fear of their colonial competitors. The pieces of eight, the Spanish Main, and the moidores point to Europe, or even to the South-American territories colonised by the Portuguese and Spanish, with the use of foreign currency also acting as an indicator of imperial travel in *Treasure Island*.

In Billy Bones's sea-chest, Jim finds 'an old Spanish watch and some other trinkets of little value and mostly of foreign make [... as well as] five or six curious West Indian shells' (p. 25). We learn later that Flint was active in Spain and Trinidad (p. 36), and so the reader can trust Jim's analysis of the chest's contents; but what qualifies Jim to make such judgements? After-all, this is a boy young enough to have nightmares about a one-legged bogeyman that he

has never encountered (p. 5). It is jarring to see a boy of his background making accurate valuations of such foreign items (Pew confirms that, other than the map, the chest's contents are of little value, p. 29). Stevenson, in gifting Jim this knowledge, dislodges the reader's rhythm and forces us to examine the obvious significance of these articles. Additionally, Silver's marriage to a 'woman of colour' (p. 46) hints at Caribbean exploration while his parrot, Flint, has travelled to Goa, as well as 'Madagascar, and at Malabar, and Surinam, and Providence, and Portobello' (p. 63), with Neil Rennie noting that 'The parrot's career is an authentic pirate's career' comparing the similarities between Flint's fictional travels and the factual exploration of Edward England.⁵⁶ Fletcher also alludes to the internationalism of Captain Flint's old crew (p. 37). The crews display their history of travel just as Hook and Silver display their amputations. The hook and the stump are not so different from the pieces of eight that Cecco wears on his body. Aside from the fact that his ears are evidently pierced (a self-inflicted, albeit minor, wounding), the coins have the same effect as the amputations, symbolising the respective man's masculine activity, and the attachment of coins is particularly fitting, acting as a pirate's equivalent to a soldier's medal. Similarly, in appropriating his superior's name and attributing it to his pet, Silver is able to reimagine their relationship, reversing their hierarchical positions in a public display of his own masculine superiority.

The synonymous status of Empire and piracy is strengthened towards the end of *Peter and Wendy* as Hook attempts to persuade the Darling boys to join his crew. The boys are aware that Hook's activities are compatible with contemporary patriotic ideals, and their only caveat is that they be allowed to incorporate a nationalistic allegiance within their piracy:

"Shall we still be respectful subjects of the King?" John inquired.

Through Hook's teeth came the answer: "You would have to swear, 'Down with the King.'"

Perhaps John had not behaved very well so far, but he shone out now.

⁵⁶ Neil Rennie, *Treasure Neverland: Real and Imaginary Pirates* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 183.

“Then I refuse,” he cried, banging the barrel in front of Hook.

“And I refuse,” cried Michael.

“Rule Britannia!” squeaked Curly (p. 120).

Jim English refers to a ‘prevailing sentiment of imperialism that characterized the Edwardian era and that it had the potency to excite and inspire children and adults alike’ and the tendency towards glorification of the Empire is present within this passage.⁵⁷ The boys’ responses to Hook echo Bivona’s account of the Boy Scout movement, which Robert Baden-Powell hoped would:

[Ensure] that British middle-class youth were inculcated with the seemingly antithetical tribal values of national and group loyalty which he saw as essential to the survival of the British Empire (Bivona, pp. 196-97).

The irony of this episode is in the way in which the boys aggrandise the very nobility that Hook represents. The separation between piracy and Empire is repeatedly narrowed throughout the text: the pirates’ damaged bodies act as a warning to those seeking manhood through imperial adventure. The masculinising extent of this enterprise is a depleted body (with its admittedly masculinising signification), but while wounding allows entrance into the texts’ masculine spheres, the claim that it guarantees a hyper-masculinity is demonstrably false.

ii. *Hierarchical Trauma*

In *Treasure Island*, wounds determine a character’s position in the novel’s masculine hierarchy. Billy Bones, the novel’s first authoritarian, is described in arrestingly somatic terms. Bones, with the bodily connotations of his name, is introduced as ‘the brown old seaman with the sabre cut’ with hands that are ‘ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails; and the sabre

⁵⁷ Jim English, ‘Empire Day in Britain, 1904-1958’, *The Historical Journal*, 49/1 (2006), 247-76, p. 248.

cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white' (p. 3). Even his luggage alludes to the physical body – 'his sea-chest following behind him in a *hand-barrow*' (p. 3, emphasis added). Yet, despite the numerous examples of damage to the body, Bones does not appear to be physically reduced. On the contrary, he is described by Jim as being 'tall, strong, heavy' (p. 3). He dominates the Admiral Benbow during his stay, terrifying its patrons with his stories and acquiring 'a party of the younger men who pretended to admire him [... and would say that] there was the sort of man that made England terrible at sea' (p. 6). His position as an authoritarian is only ever threatened by men who have themselves suffered physical damage. Jim informs the reader that Bones 'was only once crossed' (p. 7), referring to an argument with Dr Livesey who, we later learn, 'served his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, and got a wound [...] at Fontenoy' (p. 102):

The old fellow's fury was awful. He sprang to his feet, drew and opened a sailor's clasp-knife, and balancing it open on the palm of his hand, threatened to pin the doctor to the wall.

The doctor never so much as moved [...]

Then followed a battle of looks between them, but the captain soon knuckled under, put up his weapon, and resumed his seat, grumbling like a beaten dog [...]

Soon after, Dr. Livesey's horse came to the door and he rode away, but the captain held his peace that evening, and for many evenings to come (p. 8).

The presence of Livesey, himself a wounded serviceman, turns the otherwise boisterous Bones into a defeated and retiring figure. Bones is otherwise a bully, asserting his masculinity over the 'quiet country' patrons of the inn, but he is unable to do so over a man like Livesey, who is equally well-travelled and, crucially, wounded himself. This is the first of three confrontations between Bones and other injured men. Notably, the more obvious and ostensibly debilitating the man's affliction, the more threatening their presence is to Bones's masculine position.

Despite early allusions to Long John Silver ('the man with one leg'), the first of Bones's former shipmates to appear in the novel is Black Dog, who identifies both himself and Bones by their respective physical wounds:

'He has a cut on one cheek [...] has my mate Bill. We'll put it, for argument like, that your captain has a cut on one cheek – and we'll put it, if you like, that that cheek's the right one. Ah, well! I told you. Now, is my mate Bill in this here house?' (p. 10).

The use of 'the man with one leg' as a descriptor for Silver seems appropriate given the extent of this carnal damage, but Black Dog demonstrates how even the least afflicted pirates are defined by their wounds. It matches Jim's own introduction of Bones, in which he immediately references the pirate's physical injuries. The text perpetually reinforces the importance of bodily damage to masculine identity, with Black Dog using his own injuries as a symbol of the men's past history, as well as a form of identification:

'Come, Bill, you know me; you know an old shipmate, Bill, surely' said the stranger.

The captain made a sort of gasp.

'Black Dog!' said he.

'And who else?' returned the other, getting more at his ease. 'Black Dog as ever was, come for to see his old shipmate Billy, at the Admiral Benbow inn. Ah, Bill, Bill, we have seen a sight of times, us two, since I lost them two talons' holding up his mutilated hand (p. 11).

Black Dog, with a more dramatic injury than Livesey, achieves a more debilitating response from Bones than the doctor previously produced:

The captain spun round on his heel and fronted us; all the brown had gone out of his face, and even his nose was blue; he had the look of a man who sees a ghost, or the evil one, or something worse (p. 11).

The drained face of Bones displays his masculinity disappearing in the presence of his manlier adversary. While Livesey's riposte results in social embarrassment for Bones, the sight of Black Dog with his 'mutilated hand' triggers a far more dramatic physical deterioration.

In both cases, the otherwise macho Bones is undermined by other injured men. In regaining his strength, and in chasing Black Dog away, Bones demonstrates a resurgence against his wounded adversary, but he soon suffers a debilitating stroke. Livesey reappears and draws a 'great deal of blood' from Bones and, despite saving his life, Livesey informs Jim that he has 'drawn blood enough to keep [Bones] quiet awhile' (p. 15) – thus ensuring that even when they are assisting Bones, his fellow wounded men find a way to weaken him. Bones is able to partially recover from his stroke, but his confrontation with Black Dog is shortly repeated with the arrival of the blind Pew:

The poor captain raised his eyes, and at one look the rum went out of him and left him staring sober. The expression of his face was not so much of terror as of mortal sickness. He made a movement to rise, but I do not believe he had enough force left in his body.

'Now, Bill, sit where you are' said the beggar. 'If I can't see, I can hear a finger stirring. Business is business. Hold out your left hand. Boy, take his left hand by the wrist and bring it near to my right.'

We both obeyed him to the letter, and I saw him pass something from the hollow of the hand that held his stick into the palm of the captain's, which closed upon it instantly (p. 20).

The sight of Black Dog takes the colour from Bones's face while Livesey literally takes blood from his body. Pew similarly drains Bones, instantly sobering him by his mere presence, with his impact upon Bones and Jim described by Julia Reid:

He is the nightmare of every child, and perhaps of every adult – the deformed stranger, apparently harmless, even feeble, offering friendship and requesting help, and suddenly demonstrating unexpected reserves of cruel strength.⁵⁸

Pew dictates proceedings, puppeteering the bodies of Jim and Bones so as to deliver the black spot.

⁵⁸ Julia Reid, *Robert Louis Stevenson, Science, and the Fin de Siècle* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 73.

It is not that Pew is so debilitated by his blindness that he is unable to simply pass a piece of paper to Bones. Rather, Pew is flexing his control over the two other male characters, demonstrating his masculine authority over them as ‘both obeyed him to the letter’. Far from being debilitated by his blindness here, Pew is at pains to point out the benefit of his condition, boasting that he ‘can hear a finger stirring’, while Bones lacks the strength to stand. The dominance that Pew has over Bones and Jim lingers on after he has left the Admiral Benbow:

It was some time before either I or the captain seemed to gather our senses, but at length, and about at the same moment, I released his wrist, which I was still holding, and he drew in his hand and looked sharply into the palm (p. 21).

Pew’s injury has entrenched within him a masculinity which, in turn, has granted him a level of control over Jim’s body. It is as though Jim is awaiting permission to release Bones’s wrist. However, it is also an injury that Pew later wishes he had imparted upon Jim: ‘that boy! I wish I had put his eyes out!’ (p. 29). Pew, still searching for the masculinising treasure, acts in such a way that echoes the children of Sigmund Freud’s case studies:

As the child passes over from the passivity of the experience to the activity of the game, he hands on the disagreeable experience to one of his playmates and in this way revenges himself on a substitute.⁵⁹

Pew’s evocation of Freud extends beyond his wish to transfer his negative experience onto somebody else. Freud dedicates a large portion of ‘The Uncanny’ to Hoffman’s ‘The Sand-Man’, a story that centres on the protagonist’s fear of losing his eyes, which Freud says is a particularly prominent fear:

the fear of damaging or losing one’s eyes is a terrible one in children. Many adults retain their apprehensiveness in this respect, and no physical injury is so much dreaded by them as an injury to the eye.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Sigmund Freud, ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’ in Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (eds.), *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 168-74, p. 170.

⁶⁰ Sigmund Freud, ‘The Uncanny’ in Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (eds.), *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 154-67, p. 160.

Freud goes on to assert that the eye, more than any other organ, is linked with the castration complex.⁶¹

Pew wants to unman Jim in a display of the paradoxical nature of somatic damage in the novel. Pew's injury represents an exclusive masculinity while simultaneously signifying a kind of emasculation. Even Israel Hands attempts to transfer his bodily loss onto someone else, as Fletcher explains with reference to Hands' Jewish ancestry:

He nicks Jim with his knife in 'a mere pinch of skin' near the join of shoulder and neck in a symbolic transferred circumcision or failed ritual sacrifice, as Jim faces him 'on the cross trees' of the mast (p. 42).

Jim is aware of the restrictions of youth but, through his altercation with Israel Hands, he is able to demonstrate a masculine value that exceeds his opponent. Fletcher demonstrates how Jim's masculinity is asserted, comparing his exchange with Hands to Fagin's control of Oliver Twist:

But where Oliver is terrified into compliance by Fagin's knife, Jim as the older and more manly young hero asserts his masculinity, shoots off both pistols, and Israel drops into the sea (p. 42).

The key factor at play here, and something that Fletcher omits, is that the 'mere pinch of skin' that Israel's knife pierces results in a masculinising and automated response from Jim: 'In the horrid pain and surprise of the moment – I scarce can say it was by my own volition, and I am sure it was without a conscious aim – both my pistols went off' (p. 166). Leder explains that:

In pain, the body or a certain part of the body emerges as an *alien presence*. The sensory insistence of pain draws the corporeal out of self-concealment, rendering it thematic [...] Yet at the same time pain effects a certain alienation [...] The painful body is often experienced as something foreign to the self.⁶²

⁶² Drew Leder, *The Absent Body* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 76.

Stevenson takes the phenomenon described by Drew Leder to an extreme during this episode, with Jim's wounding taking control of his body in an act that raises his masculine standing to that of the novel's other wounded men. This elevation is accordingly temporary – unlike the injuries sustained to the aforementioned pirates, Jim's wound is 'neither deep nor dangerous' – but it is nevertheless a further example of how somatic damage masculinises the characters of *Treasure Island*.

It is no coincidence that the three men who challenge Bones's authority have each suffered physical injury. They are contrasted in the early stages of the novel by Jim's father. Mr Hawkins's meekness is a trait that Jim sees as a contributor to his father's premature death:

still my father never plucked up the heart to insist on having more [money]. If ever he mentioned it, the captain blew through his nose so loudly that you might say he roared, and stared my poor father out of the room. I have seen him wringing his hands after such a rebuff, and I am sure the annoyance and the terror he lived in must have greatly hastened his early and unhappy death (p. 6).

There is a relevance to the visceral undertone in Jim's expression here. His father's reluctance to metaphorically 'pluck' up his heart positions him in direct masculine contrast to Livesey, Black Dog, and Pew, who have all importantly experienced physical affliction. When Jim and his mother are attempting to recruit men to defend the Admiral Benbow against the pirates, Mrs Hawkins refers to those who refuse as 'chicken-hearted men' (p. 23) which compounds the relevance of the idiom that Jim uses earlier (through the association between plucking and chicken). It is the foreignness of Bones, Black Dog, and Pew that separates them so starkly from these men – both their status as geographical outsiders and the foreignness of their bodies. The three pirates demonstrate a kind of masculinity that is alien to the local people, but their weaknesses are soon exposed. In the case of Bones, the black spot does more than forecast death – it delivers it:

'Ten o'clock!' he cried. 'Six hours. We'll do them yet' and he sprang to his feet.

Even as he did so, he reeled, put his hand to his throat [...] and] fell from his whole height face foremost to the floor [...] The captain had been struck dead by thundering apoplexy (pp. 20-21).

There is a masculine spirit in Bones's plan to contest the judgement of his former shipmates, but his body is unable to exercise his desire. The interactions with Livesey, Black Dog, and Pew have weakened him to such an extent that the mere promise of execution is enough to kill him. Yet, despite the effect that Black Dog and Pew have over Bones, neither man can claim the kind of 'hyper-masculinity' that Sweet reserves for Silver, and for good reason. Black Dog may well invoke fear in Jim and Bones, but he is predominantly characterised as a perennial escapee, literally running out of view of the novel's primary narrator (Jim) and thus disappearing from the text itself. After his skirmish with Bones he 'showed a wonderful clean pair of heels and disappeared over the edge of the hill in half a minute' (p. 12). He returns to the Admiral Benbow with the remainder of the pirates, but once again he disappears within 'half a minute' from the moment that danger seems imminent: 'the buccaneers turned at once and ran [...] one seaward along the cove, one slant across the hill [...] so that in half a minute not a sign of them remained' (pp. 30-31). Black Dog's final act is to flee once more, this time from Silver's inn after Jim recognises him as the 'tallow-faced man, wanting two fingers' (p. 50).

Black Dog has a masculine presence that stems from his injured hand, but he displays too much cowardice to be considered one of the text's overtly masculine characters. Nevertheless, his constant running evokes P. K. Longmore's work on disability: 'What we fear, we often stigmatize and shun and sometimes seek to destroy. Popular entertainments depicting disabled characters allude to these fears and prejudices'.⁶³ Given this apparent propensity

⁶³ P. K. Longmore, 'Screening Stereotypes: Images of Disabled People in Television and Motion Pictures' in Alan Gartner & Tom Joe (eds.), *Images of the Disabled, Disabling Images* (New York: Praeger, 1987), 65-78, p. 66.

towards destruction, it is fitting that all of the impaired pirates in *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* are either killed (Pew and Hook) or flee (Black Dog and Silver) from their respective texts. To be afflicted is to be assured of an eventual exclusion from one's narrative base.

Pew has a similar struggle in his attempt at achieving an idealised manhood, albeit for different reasons. Just as Bones and Jim acquiesce to Pew's instructions, so too do his fellow pirates, assuming the position of underlings to their blind leader:

“Down with the door!” he cried.

“Aye, aye, sir!” answered two or three; and a rush was made upon the Admiral Benbow, the lantern-bearer following; and then I could see them pause [...] But the pause was brief, for the blind man again issued his commands [...]

“In, in, in!” he shouted, and cursed them for their delay.

Four or five of them obeyed at once, two remaining on the road with the formidable beggar (p. 28).

The pirates' failure in capturing Bones's map prompts Pew to situate his blindness in opposition to the unafflicted bodies of his colleagues:

‘Oh, shiver my soul’ he cried, ‘if I had eyes!’ [...]

‘You have your hands on thousands, you fools, and you hang a leg! [...] There wasn't one of you dared face Bill, and I did it – a blind man!’ (p. 30).

There is a resentful tone to Pew's accusatory reprimand. More than mentioning his blindness, Pew idiomatically refers to the working bodies (hands and legs) of his fellow pirates, as well as hinting at their cowardice. He is suggesting that somatic excellence is no guarantee of competency or bravery, but it is his unfinished clause (‘if I had eyes!’) that acts as a catalyst for his downfall. The immediate response to this line demonstrates the beginning of Pew's masculine decline:

This appeal seemed to produce some effect, for two of the fellows began to look here and there among the lumber, but half-heartedly, I thought, and with half an eye to their own danger all the time, while the rest stood irresolute on the road (p. 30).

Pew deems his unfinished clause to be a rhetorical suggestion, but he makes a fatal mistake in allowing his men to contemplate its meaning. Pew believes that he would have competently secured the map with the benefit of sight. However, a different interpretation has been undertaken by his underlings who now understand that ‘if [Pew] had eyes’ then he would not be any different to them. There is a collective realisation that Pew’s authority over the men stems entirely from his carnal injuries, and once the men become conscious of this, Pew’s power over them dissipates:

‘Hang it, Pew, we've got the doubloons!’ grumbled one.

‘They might have hid the blessed thing’ said another. ‘Take the Georges, Pew, and don't stand here squalling.’ [...]

These, in their turn, cursed back at the blind miscreant [... and] threatened him in horrid terms (p. 30).

Pew’s loss of masculine authority is appropriately followed by his death, a death for which his blindness is to blame. The injury which had previously guaranteed his authority results in his demise immediately after his influence is lost. The approach of Livesey and his armed revenue officers provokes an exodus from Pew’s former underlings, highlighting the disabling effects of Pew’s blindness for the first time:

Him they had deserted, whether in sheer panic or out of revenge for his ill words and blows I know not; but there he remained behind, tapping up and down the road in a frenzy, and groping and calling for his comrades [...]

[Pew] made another dash, now utterly bewildered, right under the nearest of the coming horses (p. 31).

Selina Bonnie argues that when disabled people are portrayed in the media, it is ‘often as the recipients of charity, evil characters in movies or tragic victims of illness or accident’.⁶⁴ Pew embodies all three of these archetypes. He gains Jim’s trust as a beggar, before demonstrating an evilness that is only extinguished by his tragic and accidental death.

Bones, Black Dog, and Pew are unable to sustain the masculine authority that they originally demonstrate, and in the case of Pew, this loss of authority is directly linked to his blindness. While their claim to masculine excellence is short-lived, the introduction of Silver allows for a more detailed and comprehensive case study of the physically damaged man and the positioning of his masculinity in *Treasure Island*.

Silver is the most authoritative of the injured pirates and, fittingly, he has the most prominent physical affliction of any of the novel’s characters. Silver embodies adventure. Even his parrot (itself a signifier of travel) sit on Silver’s body as though it is an extension – perhaps even a mutilation – of it. Silver is positioned as a terrifying figure, with his injury consistently linked to the fear with which he is associated. This connection between fear and power reflects Battye’s work on disability, especially when Silver’s authority over Pew is considered: ‘For some obscure Jungian reason, blindness hasn’t the same sinister associations that physical abnormality has in the collective unconscious’ (p. 10). The two pirates who have fallen out of favour with Silver confess their fear of him to Jim, referring to the physical aspect that they find most forbidding. The otherwise frugal Bones employs Jim, paying him to keep his ‘weather-eye open for a seafaring man with one leg’ (p. 5), repeatedly referring to Silver by his physical impairment. Bones’s fear is matched later by Ben Gunn, who is horrified at Jim’s mentioning of Silver:

‘Not a man – with one – leg?’ he gasped.

⁶⁴ Selina Bonnie, ‘Disabled People, Disability and Sexuality’ in John Swain, Sally French, Colin Barnes, & Carol Thomas (eds.), *Disabling Barriers, Enabling Environments* (London: SAGE, 2004), 125-32, p. 125.

‘Silver?’ I asked.

‘Ah, Silver!’ says he. ‘That were his name.’

‘He's the cook, and the ringleader too.’

He was still holding me by the wrist, and at that he give it quite a wring.

‘If you was sent by Long John’ he said, ‘I'm as good as pork, and I know it’ (p. 94).

Whenever fear is shown towards Silver, it is always directed at his stump. This is the case for Gunn just as it is previously true of Bones and his warning of a ‘one-legged man’ and also of Jim, who has nightmares of being chased by a monstrous, one-legged figure (p. 5). Before he has even met Silver, a fear of his injury has been established. It is not that the leg itself is necessarily frightening, but such a defining feature on such a threatening character inevitably becomes an icon of fear. His somatic state contributes to his authoritative position amongst the novel’s other men, but it paradoxically forces him into situations where any claim to a hyper-masculinity becomes unattainable.

There are plentiful examples of where Silver’s hierarchical dominance is evident. His first appearance in the novel sees him demand that Black Dog is chased after fleeing his inn and Harry, a patron of The Spy-Glass, ‘leaped up and started in pursuit’ while another, Ben, follows upon Silver’s request (p. 50). There is a farcical nature to this scene that makes their obedience all the more noteworthy. Silver and Black Dog are associates and the latter is presumably known by his chasers as well, as despite Ben being ‘a good runner’ (p. 50), he and Harry return without Black Dog. Silver’s relationship with the other men means that they do not question the absurd when it is asked of them. Silver has more than authority here; he has control. But while he may at first appear to be a figure of hyper-masculinity, he does show symptoms of a failed manliness and, consequentially, a waning authority over others. The spaces in which these weaknesses are exposed is significant, and often linked to the same amputation that grants him authority elsewhere.

iii. *Long John Silver: Domestic Fallibility*

Honaker argues that Silver is ‘the very picture of domesticity’ (p. 39), and it is within the domestic space that Silver is most in control. While the *Hispaniola* does not exemplify domesticity, its function when at sea cannot allow it to exclusively symbolise adventure either. The boat serves to advance the crew’s masculinising voyage, but it also acts as a protector against the volatility of nature. The sea ensures that the enforced confinement of the boat creates a space where domesticity, however minimal, still exists, and Silver embodies this more than any other through his role as the ship’s cook. Honaker notes the success with which Silver has established his domestic setting in Bristol (p. 39), and his competency is displayed in the *Hispaniola*’s galley too, where he has made modifications to counter any impairment caused by his amputation:

He had a line or two rigged up to help him across the widest spaces – Long John’s earrings, they were called; and he would hand himself from one place to another, now using the crutch, now trailing it alongside by the lanyard, as quickly as another man could walk. Yet some of the men who had sailed with him before expressed their pity to see him so reduced (p. 62).

Silver’s ability to adapt, to move as efficiently as any other man, is symptomatic of a distinctly British idea of masculinity that is appropriately characterised by W. E. Henley’s ‘Invictus’ – ‘In the fell clutch of circumstance / I have not winced nor cried aloud’ embodying the Victorian spirit of the stiff upper-lip, the veneration of stoicism in the face of adversity.⁶⁵ As Sweet states, both Hook and Silver ‘adapt remarkably well to their physical impairments, displaying to their readership how a manly man ‘should’ respond to physical loss’ (p. 96). In the domestic setting of the ship’s galley, Silver ensures that his amputation does not debilitate him; but it is that

⁶⁵ W. E. Henley, ‘IV: To R.T.H.B.’ in John Howlett (ed.), *Invictus, Selected Poems and Prose of W. E. Henley* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2018), p. 59.

same setting that prompts his colleagues to view him as having been ‘reduced’. Silver, we are told, moves as competently as anyone else, so it is not a physical reduction that is being referred to but, rather, the inevitable reduction that is a consequence of Silver’s domesticated position onboard the *Hispaniola*. Lynne Walker explains how ‘Woman in her role as wife and mother was the keystone of the “moral” Victorian home’, while Annmarie Adams, Marjorie Garber, and Beverley Gordon articulate the association between the home and the female body.⁶⁶ Stevenson compounds this association towards the end of novel through the boyish Jim, who admits his own physical limitations:

Two of the bars, slung in a rope's end, made a good load for a grown man – one that he was glad to walk slowly with. For my part, as I was not much use at carrying, I was kept busy all day in the cave packing the minted money into bread-bags (p. 215).

More significant than Jim’s incompetence at transporting the gold is where the packing of the treasure takes place. Stevenson places Jim in a domestic space (the cave being Ben Gunn’s home). The link between the female body and domesticity is evident given the yonic nature of caves, while Jim’s packaging of the treasure into bread-bags extends the scene’s domestic connotations further. Nevertheless, despite the correlation between femininity and domesticity, it is while onboard the *Hispaniola* that Silver is most in control of his colleagues: ‘All the crew respected and even obeyed him’ (p. 62). The lapse in Silver’s authority occurs once he has left the comfort of domesticity behind and lands on Skeleton Island with his fellow pirates.

The treasure that the voyagers are seeking promises more than material wealth. Its capture offers the attainment of a masculinity that has evaded the novel’s characters, with the treasure’s status as a masculine prize alluded to throughout the text. Jim’s account of the

⁶⁶ Lynne Walker, ‘Home Making: An Architectural Perspective’, *Signs*, 27/3 (2002), 823-36, p. 826; Annmarie Adams, *Architecture in the Family Way: Doctors, Houses, and Women, 1870–1900* (Montreal, McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996); Marjorie Garber, *Sex and Real Estate: Why We Love Houses* (New York, Pantheon, 2000); Beverley Gordon, ‘Woman’s Domestic Body: The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age’, *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31/4 (1996), 281-301.

treasure ties it alongside imperial adventure and the aforementioned masculinity that is central to such an endeavour:

English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Georges, and Louises, doubloons and double guineas and moidores and sequins, the pictures of all the kings of Europe for the last hundred years, strange Oriental pieces stamped with what looked like wisps of string or bits of spider's web [...] – nearly every variety of money in the world must, I think, have found a place in that collection (*TI*, p. 215).

This listing serves the same purpose as Bones's sea-chest, or Barrie's description of the pirates in *Peter and Wendy*. The variety of the treasure suggests that exploration *itself* is a treasure; that it can offer a masculinising experience; but the association between the treasure and masculinity is made prior to the *Hispaniola*'s crew setting sail: 'And the amounts increase, you see, as he rose in rank' (p. 37), is Livesey's explanation of how Bones's share of treasure was distributed in proportion to his authority. Trelawney admits that it is the act of searching for the treasure that excites him, rather than the financial possibilities that the treasure itself represents: 'Hang the treasure! It's the glory of the sea that has turned my head' (p. 45). The monetary value of the treasure is inconsequential when considered alongside the masculinising adventure that its acquisition guarantees. Meanwhile, Silver's desperation for the treasure is explained by Ben Gunn's retelling of its initial burial to Jim:

I were in Flint's ship when he buried the treasure; he and six along – six strong seamen. They was ashore nigh on a week, and us standing off and on in the old *Walrus*. One fine day up went the signal, and here come Flint by himself in a little boat [...] But, there he was, you mind, and the six all dead – dead and buried. How he done it, not a man aboard us could make out [...] Billy Bones was the mate; Long John, he was quartermaster; and they asked him where the treasure was (p. 95).

The readjustment of Gunn's first sentence emphasises the strength of the men who accompanied Flint onto the island. The only example of repetition in this passage relates to the six seamen again, with Gunn twice mentioning that they are dead, emphasising the point that the existence of a 'strong seaman' is now also dead. The desire of Bones and Silver to regain the treasure is as much an attempt at fulfilling an unfinished masculine adventure as it is an

enthusiasm for financial prosperity; and in situating the final and most crucial stage of this adventure on a desert island, Stevenson demonstrates the debilitating elements of Silver's amputation that have, until this point, gone relatively unnoticed. The kind of structural support offered by the galley is non-existent on the island while the sandy terrain produces unique difficulties for a one-legged person, something that Silver himself is conscious of, as he demonstrates in his address to Jim shortly before their arrival on Skeleton Island:

'You'll bathe, and you'll climb trees, and you'll hunt goats, you will [...] Why, it makes me young again. I was going to forget my timber leg, I was. It's a pleasant thing to be young and have ten toes, and you may lay to that. When you want to go a bit of exploring, you just ask old John, and he'll put up a snack for you to take along' (pp. 73-74).

Silver's belief in the island as a masculinising space is evident here, as are his masculine limitations, which are attributed to his amputation. The list of opportunities that he promises Jim are all examples of an unadulterated engagement with nature, but it is an engagement that is unavailable to Silver himself. Remembering his physical state, the best that Silver can offer is a kind of domestic servitude, ensuring that Jim is well-fed prior to any excursion that he may indulge in while ashore. Hayden Ward's reading of Jim's involvement in the adventure is on display here:

It is as though, in making Jim their collaborator, they [the adults in the novel; Bones, Silver, Trelawney, Livesey, Smollett] are trying to summon up these lost powers of youth's integrity in themselves.⁶⁷

Silver's masculine decline on the island is demonstrated in two ways; through his loss of authority and through the exposure of his physical affliction, with the island's topography making his amputation difficult to manage: 'What with the steepness of the incline, the thick tree stumps, and the soft sand, he and his crutch were as helpless as a ship in stays. But he stuck

⁶⁷ Hayden W. Ward, "The Pleasure of your Heart": "Treasure Island" and the Appeal of Boys' Adventure Fiction', *Studies in the Novel*, 6/3 (1974), 304-17, p. 308.

to it like a man in silence' (p. 123). While his dignified response is described in notably masculine terms, the stoicism which has until this moment in the text been synonymous with Silver soon dissipates:

'Give me a hand up!' he cried.

'Not I' returned the captain.

'Who'll give me a hand up?' he roared.

Not a man among us moved. Growling his foulest imprecations, he crawled along the sand till he got hold of the porch and could hoist himself again upon his crutch' (pp. 126-27).

For the first time in the novel, Silver demonstrates the debilitating state that his affliction can relegate him to. Robert Kiely notes that at this point in the novel, 'Smollett speaks to Silver as though he were a bad boy, not only naughty, but bungling in his attempts at villainy.'⁶⁸ This infantilisation of Silver further highlights the emasculating nature of this episode. 'Not a man among us moved' is contrasted with the lamentable crablike movement of Silver as he attempts to regain a dignified stance; and the most arresting example of his masculine loss is exhibited soon after, during his escape from the mutineers:

I tell you, but Silver was anxious to keep up with us. The work that man went through, leaping on his crutch till the muscles of his chest were fit to burst, was work no sound man ever equalled (pp. 210-11).

This visceral description of Silver, his chest 'fit to burst' through physical endeavour, demonstrates the pressurised masculinity that exists in his reduced body, as does Jim's analysis of his efforts exceeding that of any physically sound man; but regardless of the evidence of masculine spirit on display here, Jim notes how Silver falls behind the rest of their party, and details the physical exertion that has been expended in his failed attempts to keep up with them:

⁶⁸ Robert Kiely, *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 78.

he was already thirty yards behind us and on the verge of strangling when we reached the brow of the slope [...] we four sat down to breathe, while Long John, mopping his face, came slowly up with us (p. 211).

Silver's impairment has become disabling on the island, having previously been largely inconsequential to his domestic life. In his description of the social model of disability, Tom Shakespeare explains that:

the experience of disabled people is dependent on social context, and differs in different cultures and at different times. Rather than disability being inescapable, it becomes a product of social arrangements, and can thus be reduced, or possibly even eliminated.⁶⁹

This distinction is clearly represented in the contrast between Silver's competency in his rigged-up galley compared to the exposure of his impairment that takes place on Skeleton Island; and running parallel to the physical decline is his diminishing authority as the novel's most masculine character. In the company of the remaining pirates, Jim records a series of threats to Silver's authority, building in severity. Silver successfully defends himself against several charges, but he is nevertheless emasculated by the combination of bodily affliction and the eventual loss of his authority. The initial challenges to Silver follow a formula. Firstly, an objection is raised by one of his underlings. Silver then refutes the relevant claim, before reminding the men of his superior position and, finally, suggesting physical confrontation as the means to appease the conflict. The first example of this occurs after Tom Morgan's attempt to stab Jim:

'Then here goes!' said Morgan with an oath.

And he sprang up, drawing his knife as if he had been twenty.

'Avast, there!' cried Silver. 'Who are you, Tom Morgan? Maybe you thought you was cap'n here, perhaps. By the powers, but I'll teach you better! [...] There's never a man looked me between the eyes and seen a good day a'terwards, Tom Morgan, you may lay to that' (p. 179).

⁶⁹ Tom Shakespeare, *Disability Rights and Wrongs* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 29.

Silver's response is effective in quieting Morgan, but it results in a further challenge from the rest of the men:

Morgan paused, but a hoarse murmur rose from the others.

'Tom's right' said one.

'I stood hazing long enough from one' added another. 'I'll be hanged if I'll be hazed by you, John Silver.'

'Did any of you gentlemen want to have it out with *me*? [...] Take a cutlass, him that dares, and I'll see the colour of his inside' [...]

Not a man stirred; not a man answered.

[...] 'I'm cap'n here by 'lection. I'm cap'n here because I'm the best man by a long sea-mile. You won't fight [...] then, by thunder, you'll obey' (pp. 179-80).

His captaincy, and thus authority, is attributed to him being 'the best man' amongst the group. These outward responses from Silver are authoritative and convincing, but there is an anxiety that he reveals to Jim, out of earshot of the others:

'Ship gone, neck gone – that's the size of it. Once I looked into that bay, Jim Hawkins, and seen no schooner – well, I'm tough, but I gave out' [...]

'I'll save your life – if so be as I can – from them. But, see here, Jim – tit for tat – you save Long John from swinging.'

I was bewildered; it seemed a thing so hopeless he was asking – he, the old buccaneer, the ringleader throughout (p. 181).

Jim remarks on the 'hopeless' nature of Silver's bartering, and that is an apt adjective. Not only does Jim see his request – to avoid being hanged – as 'hopeless' given Silver's actions, but Silver himself is betraying the hopelessness of his situation. As he speaks to Jim, his underlings are preparing a black spot that will demand the election of a new captain. The response to this is typical. Silver listens to their complaints and refutes them with ease, before offering them the chance to fight him ('One more word of your sauce, and I'll call you down and fight you' p. 187) before re-establishing his masculine dominance: 'You lost the ship; I found the treasure. Who's the better man at that?' (p. 187). But despite the reassertion of his authority, Silver recognises that in losing the ship, his plan is doomed. Moreover, he admits that his masculine

‘toughness’ had dissipated upon this realisation. His tenure as captain has seen him lose the very thing that he is tasked with commanding in a ridiculing portrayal of his masculine state.

The culmination of the decline in Silver’s authority occurs at the site of the excavated treasure, in the aptly entitled chapter ‘The Fall of a Chieftain’. Despite the development of discontent amongst the pirates, Silver retains his masculine authority up until this moment. Learning that the masculinising treasure has gone, Silver’s ability to control his underlings diminishes. The mutineers undergo the realisation that Silver’s authority has predominantly been a performance. The absence of treasure symbolises Silver’s masculine failure, and so it is unsurprising that Silver’s authority over the pirates disappears at this moment:

What a moment that would be when the suspicions of his followers turned to certainty, and he and I should have to fight for dear life – he, a cripple, and I, a boy – against five strong and active seamen! (p. 197).

The pirates conspire to kill Silver and Jim, only for the pair to be saved by Livesey and his men. Silver later concludes that he would have been killed had it not been for Jim’s company:

‘Ah’ said Silver, ‘it were fortunate for me that I had Hawkins here. You would have let old John be cut to bits, and never given it a thought, doctor.’

‘Not a thought’ replied Dr. Livesey cheerily (p. 212).

From the moment that the pirates find the excavation point, Silver is reliant on the boyish Jim and, through him, other men (Livesey, Gunn etc.) in order to protect him. This is an arresting departure from the self-determining character that has existed up until this point. To label Silver as ‘hyper-masculine’ is to ignore the latter stages of the group’s adventure, where his masculine authority is stripped from him. Accordingly, the disrespectful tone with which Silver addressed his previous underlings is appropriated by Smollet’s men and redirected at Silver himself: ‘none treated him better than a dog’ (p. 216). Silver’s departure from the text

is notably unheroic. The remaining crew find themselves ashore in Spanish America where they are treated to a condensed version of the masculinising imperial experience:

[We] were immediately surrounded by shore boats full of Negroes and Mexican Indians and half-bloods selling fruits and vegetables and offering to dive for bits of money. The sight of so many good-humoured faces (especially the blacks), the taste of the tropical fruits, and above all the lights that began to shine in the town made a most charming contrast to our dark and bloody sojourn on the island (p. 218).

The ethnic variety and the introduction of tropical food is a bombardment of the adventure that Jim and his companions had sought. In contrast, this sensually enlightening episode is taking place at the same time as Silver is fleeing the *Hispaniola* on a shore boat. The crew are said to be 'pleased to be so cheaply quit of him' (he takes a bag of treasure with him) and they hear 'no more' of him (p. 219).

Silver's introduction in the novel comprises repeated allusions, building to a climactic and theatrical entrance, appearing 'out of a side room' just as an actor may approach the stage from the wings (p. 49). The mode of Silver's entry is also utilised by Black Dog and Pew in their reintroductions to Bones. Black Dog hides behind a door in order to surprise his old colleague ('You and me'll just go back into the parlour, sonny, and get behind the door, and we'll give Bill a little surprise' p. 11), while Pew directs Jim with specific lines and actions that must be followed: 'Lead me straight up to him, and when I'm in view, cry out, "Here's a friend for you, Bill,"' (p. 20). In each case, the pirates make a dramatic display of their depleted bodies. Conversely, Silver's exit from the novel is scarcely noted by Jim. His initial masculinity ensures him a comprehensive introduction, but his loss of authority grants him an accordingly inconspicuous departure. He is 'spirited away from the conclusion, made to vanish without a trace' (Loxley, p. 154), in the same way that Black Dog flees, and Pew is unceremoniously trampled.

iv. *Hook's Hook: Fearing the Reaper*

Jim's initial fear results from the deformation of Silver's body, repositioning the latter's remaining leg to create a monstrous figure hunting Jim while he sleeps. The fear of Silver is attributed here to the grotesque state of his amputation, while for Hook, it is the professional precision of his prosthetic that makes his injury so terrifying. It is an ever-present weapon that Hook is ever-willing to employ, as the unfortunate Skylights learns:

Skylights lurches clumsily against him, ruffling his lace collar; the hook shoots forth, there is a tearing sound and one screech, then the body is kicked aside, and the pirates pass on. He has not even taken the cigars from his mouth (p. 50).

There is a calm efficiency in this killing that is not present during Silver's murder of Tom. While Silver is a physical threat *despite* his amputation, Hook creates fear as a result of his injury. He wields a masculinity over his underlings, with Sweet suggests that the prosthetic hook contributes to this authority:

In many instances, the loss of a body part is reflective of injuries sustained while performing piratical duties, as in the case of Silver and Hook. In these instances, the prosthetics and/or assistive technologies that are used stand as unwanted yet alluring trophies of their violent escapades (pp. 95-96).

The depleted bodies of Hook and Silver signify adventure, war, or both. What is less convincing is the assertion that Hook's injury is unwanted, with this suggestion touching upon the complex relationship that Hook has with his prosthetic, best illustrated in a conversation between the captain and his boatswain, Smee:

"Most of all," Hook was saying passionately, "I want their captain, Peter Pan. 'Twas he cut off my arm." He brandished the hook threateningly. "I've waited long to shake his hand with this. Oh, I'll tear him."

"And yet," said Smee, "I have often heard you say that hook was worth a score of hands, for combing the hair and other homely uses." (p. 53).

This passage is loaded with confusion. Hook's plan to exact revenge upon Peter relies upon the very injury that Peter himself has inflicted upon Hook. The means with which to damage Peter only exist *because* of Peter and, more surprisingly, Hook's anger is paradoxically aligned to a bodily state which he claims to enjoy. This particular conflict highlights the confusion of the prosthetic itself. It is both a masculinising weapon and a domestic tool. The passage ends with a further inconsistency: 'he cast a look of pride upon his iron hand and one of scorn upon the other. Then again he frowned' (p. 53). The differing looks offered to his hands initially suggests that Hook is honest in his assessment, that he prefers his prosthetic to his left hand; but the frown that immediately follows these glances undermines the apparent certainty that Hook has just displayed. Given Hook's relentless pursuit of his amputator, it is ambitious to claim that he is wholly satisfied with his bodily condition. However, to suggest that the hook is unwanted is to ignore its functionality. The hook is more than a trophy. While it does signify past adventure, it also offers the opportunity of further masculinising endeavours, and conforms to Tobin Siebers's reflection on prostheses:

Frequently, the objects that people with disabilities live with – prostheses, wheelchair, braces, and other devices – are viewed not as potential sources of pain but as marvellous examples of the plasticity of the human form or as devices of empowerment.⁷⁰

It is a tool which improves Hook through mechanisation, transforming his body into a weapon.

Despite the vast similarities that exist between Hook and Silver, it would be misguided to equate their amputations. The disparity between the effectiveness of Hook's prosthetic and the limitations of Silver's stump is embedded within nineteenth-century class structure. Vanessa Warne explains that while wealthier patients could, naturally, afford more sophisticated prosthetics in the nineteenth century, there was also a classist approach to amputation from the perspective of the surgeon that meant an injured person from a lower-

⁷⁰ Tobin Siebers, *Disability Theory* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), pp. 62-63.

class was treated with a level of disregard that would leave, according to the nineteenth-century doctor Stephen Smith, the ‘poor man’ with either ‘no artificial appliance to his stump, or one of the rudest character’.⁷¹ Consequently, it is the perceived deformity of Silver’s injury that is terrifying to Jim and others, while the masterful design of Hook’s prosthetic is what contributes to his fear-fuelled authority. Barrie further escalates Hook’s status by referencing the one man who can match his level of terror as a physically threatening, physically afflicted pirate – Long John Silver: “He was Blackbeard's bo'sun,” John whispered huskily. “He is the worst of them all. He is the only man of whom Barbecue was afraid,” (*P&W*, p. 43).⁷² We are not told why Silver was afraid of Hook, and we cannot even be sure that he was. The narrator seems to suggest, through an account of Smee’s future, that there is more than a hint of untruth about this: ‘Smee, who henceforth wandered about the world in his spectacles, making a precarious living by saying he was the only man that Jas. Hook had feared’ (p. 132). This aside, the *belief* that Silver feared Hook is what aids Hook’s authoritative standing within the text. And while the reader is made aware of how Hook lost his hand, Stevenson never reveals the origin of Silver’s amputation. There is a suggestion in *Peter and Wendy* that Hook is responsible for Silver’s injury, with the existence of the amputating amputee present throughout both texts. Hook’s wish to ‘shake hands’ with Peter is never realised, but it is a term that he reuses. Peter, hiding in the cabin of the *Jolly Roger*, kills Hook’s men as they enter:

“I think I heard you volunteer, Starkey,” said Hook, purring again.

“No, by thunder!” Starkey cried.

“My hook thinks you did,” said Hook, crossing to him. “I wonder if it would not be advisable, Starkey, to humour the hook?”

“I’ll swing before I go in there,” replied Starkey doggedly [...]

“Shake hands, Starkey,” said Hook, proffering his claw [...]

⁷¹ Vanessa Warne, “To Invest a Cripple with Peculiar Interest”: Artificial Legs and Upper-Class Amputees at Mid-Century’, *Victorian Review*, 35/2 (2009), 83-100, p. 83; Stephen Smith, ‘Amputations’ in William Alexander Hammond (ed.), *Military Medical and Surgical Essays* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1864), 459-500, p. 491.

⁷² Silver is also referred to as Barbecue in *Treasure Island*.

With a despairing scream the pirate leapt upon Long Tom and precipitated himself into the sea (p. 126).

Hook speaks of his prosthetic as though it harbours its own agency, able to hear and think for itself. This serves to demonstrate the power of his claw, as well as to further instil fear in its potential victims. The weapon is threatening enough when it is controlled by the blood-thirsty and impulsive Hook, but in an apparent surrendering of control over his prosthetic, Hook adds a further element of unpredictability, which inevitably instils a greater sense of danger, leading Starkey to choose suicide over confrontation with the prosthetic.

v. *The Crocodile's Pursuit and Unsettling Binaries*

Like Hook, the crocodile in *Peter and Wendy* fits the model of an amputating amputee. In eating Hook's arm, the crocodile plays a crucial part in his amputation while it is, itself, an amputee, having lost the ticking of the clock by the end of the narrative. Peter's imitation of this ticking prompts the crocodile into a pursuit of him:

The crocodile was among those who heard the sound, and it followed him, though whether with the purpose of regaining what it had lost, or merely as a friend under the belief that it was again ticking itself (p. 123).

Hook's amputation underlines and reinforces his power, while the crocodile's lost ticking is equally important to its success, allowing him to creep up on Hook and achieve its aim of eating him. Hook's eventual demise at the mouth of the crocodile reflects the paradoxical nature of his amputation. As with Silver, Hook's somatic state signifies a kind of masculinity that is unavailable to the texts' other male characters; yet it also suggests a substantial level of unmaning that disqualifies him from a claim to hyper-masculinity. David Rudd's assertion that Hook has an 'overtly "castrated" appearance' chimes with M. Joy Morse's description of the bond between Hook and the Crocodile as being sexually charged, calling his amputation a

‘symbolic castration [...] through the vagina-dentata-like mouth of the crocodile’.⁷³ There is the combination here of the threat of further unmanning with the presence of sexual desire. The crocodile-Hook dynamic is reminiscent of Jonathan Harker’s interaction with vampires in another *fin de siècle* text; *Dracula*:

I lay quiet, looking out under my eyelashes in an agony of delightful anticipation [...] There was a deliberate voluptuousness which was both thrilling and repulsive, and as she arched her neck she actually licked her lips like an animal [...] I could hear the churning sound of her tongue as it licked her teeth and lips, and could feel the hot breath on my neck [...] I could feel the soft, shivering touch of the lips on the super-sensitive skin of my throat, and the hard dents of two sharp teeth, just touching and pausing there. I closed my eyes in a languorous ecstasy and waited—waited with beating heart.⁷⁴

Like the crocodile, the vampiress licks her teeth and mixes sexuality with fear (Jonathan describes her voluptuousness as ‘both thrilling and repulsive’). The teeth are the eminent physical features for both the vampiress and the crocodile, and both aim to unman their victims using their mouths. For Harker, it is the reality of a woman penetrating him in a subversive interpretation of the heteronormative sexual code, while for Hook it is the threat of *further* unmanning – the crocodile, unsatisfied with the arm, is “licking its lips for the rest of [him],” p. 53). There are plentiful correlations to be drawn between the vampiress and the crocodile, but there is a stark difference between Harker and Hook: their desire. Harker waits for the vampiress in ‘delightful anticipation’, while Hook awaits the crocodile with a ‘fear that haunts’ him (p. 53). Morse also argues that, despite Hook’s coded castration, he ‘remains a virile and imposing rival’ (p. 296). Morse articulates the paradoxical existence of Hook within the text. At once a dominating and masculine figure, Hook simultaneously embodies an emasculation that is linked directly to his amputation. His prosthetic serves as a masculinising weapon, but

⁷³ David Rudd, ‘The Blot of Peter Pan’ in Donna R. White & C. Anita Tarr (eds.), *J. M. Barrie’s Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children’s Classic at 100* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 263-78, p. 274; M. Joy Morse, ‘The Kiss: Female Sexuality and Power in J. M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*’ in Donna R. White & C. Anita Tarr (eds.), *J. M. Barrie’s Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children’s Classic at 100* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 281-302, p. 296.

⁷⁴ Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (London: Penguin, 1994), pp. 51-52.

it also acts as an unintentional fishing hook, with Hook himself existing as the bait attached to it, perpetually attracting the crocodile and the emasculation that any conflict with her would guarantee. Ledger's gender-focused reading of the *Dracula* extract included above is equally applicable to Hook's fear of the crocodile:

'Kiss me with those red lips', he thinks – it is the women who will be doing the kissing whilst Harker lies prostrate and vulnerable [...One] of *Dracula's* sub-texts is that the The New Woman attenuates the sexual prowess of man, depleting his masculinity, feminising him.⁷⁵

Apart from the crocodile's symbolic castration of Hook, there are two other modes through which Hook faces a threat to his masculinity: the infantilisation and the feminisation that contribute to his character. Hook's exhibition of these traits inevitably places him in contrast to contemporary perceptions of manliness. Nevertheless, the sensitivities that Hook displays towards boy/man and female/male binaries are being challenged both during the Edwardian period and, more acutely, within *Peter and Wendy*. It was also a conflict which Barrie was interested in: 'To Barrie, one of the most interesting spectacles in the two worlds – his own and [the world of fantasy] – was the familiar tragi-comic contest between man and woman.'⁷⁶ Hook's goal is to eradicate the aforementioned opponents of manliness in order to leave a purified masculinity as the only available gendered code in the Neverland, but it is a task that the narrator will not allow him to achieve, interfering with their own narrative in order to end Hook's misguided aims ('we purposely stopped the clock that this knowledge [of Hook's own death] might be spared him' p. 132).

Through his repeated focus on his schooldays, Hook gifts the reader an emasculating betrayal of his own insecurities:

⁷⁵ Sally Ledger, *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the Fin de Siècle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 102.

⁷⁶ A. C. Ward, *Twentieth-Century English Literature, 1901-1960* (London: Methuen, 1964), p. 125.

From far within him he heard a creaking as of rusty portals, and through them came a stern tap-tap-tap, like hammering in the night when one cannot sleep. “Have you been good form to-day?” was their eternal question [...]

“Is it quite good form to be distinguished at anything?” the tap-tap from his school [asked].

“I am the only man whom Barbecue feared,” he urged; “and Flint himself feared Barbecue.”

“Barbecue, Flint – what house?” came the cutting retort.

Most disquieting reflection of all, was it not bad form to think about good form?

His vitals were tortured by this problem. It was a claw within him sharper than the iron one; and as it tore him, the perspiration dripped down his tallow countenance and streaked his doublet. Ofttimes he drew his sleeve across his face, but there was no damming that trickle (p. 117).

The opening of the passage relays the haunting nature of Hook’s thoughts. The language here is entwined with notions of the supernatural, with ‘creaking’, ‘rusty’, and the repetitive tapping nightmarishly linked to a failed attempt at sleep. The eternal questioning adds a tormenting element to Hook’s thoughts, while the question itself strikes at the heart of Hook’s masculine identity – whether or not he demonstrates good form. John Townsend negates Hook’s background when he dismisses *Peter and Wendy* as ‘not a very good book [... for] what would a pirate chieftain care for good form?’.⁷⁷ A typical pirate chieftain may well not care for good form, but Hook’s schooling informs every aspect of his behaviour and of his interactions. The reason that Hook is ‘so terribly alone’ and that he ‘never felt more alone than when surrounded by his dogs [because they] were socially so inferior to him’ is precisely because he is not a typical pirate chieftain, and is all-the-more worthy of attention because of this (*PW*, p. 117) . In the aforementioned passage, it is notably the school itself that is speaking to Hook, rather than any one person from the school. Given the school in question (Eton), the emphasis here is on the societal expectations of a man of Hook’s standing during the Edwardian period.

⁷⁷ John Rowe Townsend, *Written for Children: An Outline of English-Language Children’s Literature* (London: Bodley Head, 1995), p. 81.

Hook's attempt to verify his good form involves the establishing of a masculine hierarchy based entirely upon fear: Flint feared Barbecue (Long John Silver), and Barbecue feared Hook. The 'retort' takes no issue with the logic behind Hook's masculine ranking, except for the fact that the pirates mentioned were not worthy of comparison to Hook on a classist level (although it is mentioned in *Treasure Island* that Silver 'had good schooling in his young days' p. 62). On this point, Zipes notes that 'Hook, who supposedly attended Eton, feels nothing but contempt for Barbecue and Flint because they did not attend private school'.⁷⁸ It is impossible to ascertain whether the response from 'the school' is, as Jack Zipes suggests, a projection of Hook's own snobbish attitudes, or whether it is an admittance that despite Hook's own belief in his masculine superiority, it would inevitably fail to meet the standards set by his contemporaries. Regardless, the imaginary conversation betrays Hook's anxiety concerning good form, while the very existence of these thoughts further weakens his claim to it: 'was it not bad form to think about good form?' demonstrates the kind of self-defeating obsession that Peter so dramatically contrasts: 'Peter did not know in the least who or what he was, which is the very pinnacle of good form' (p. 130). The passage ends with a visceral description of Hook's torment. He has symbolically turned the claw upon himself, with the metaphorical weapon producing an unrelenting leakage of sweat. The mention of Hook's 'tallow countenance' suggests that this loss of fluid is damaging to him, as though he is being drained of an energising, perhaps even masculine, essence. The school memories return to Hook prior to his death in an episode that confirms the emasculating connotations that they hold:

The other boys were flying around him now, flouting, scornful; and as he staggered about the deck striking up at them impotently, his mind was no longer with them; it was slouching in the playing fields of long ago, or being sent up for good, or watching the wall-game from a famous wall. And his shoes were right, and his waistcoat was right, and his tie was right, and his socks were right (pp. 130-31).

⁷⁸ Jack Zipes (ed.) in J. M. Barrie, *Peter Pan: Peter and Wendy and Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2004), p. 231 (notes).

Hook's mental regression has impacted his physical capabilities. The lost boys are more combative than Hook here, with the use of 'impotently' a clear indication of the way in which Hook's infantilisation leads directly to his emasculation. The preoccupation with the neatness of his school uniform is both a symptom of his childishness as well as a complete departure from the lawlessness of piracy. With his mind elsewhere, this regression ultimately leads to Hook's demise as Peter kicks him into the mouth of the waiting crocodile. Given both the physical and emotional vulnerability that Hook exhibits as a result of these childhood memories, it is unsurprising that his main opponent is the very personification of boyishness, Peter Pan.

It is explicitly the childish nature of Peter Pan that Hook takes exception to, as the narrator explains:

Peter was such a small boy that one tends to wonder at the man's hatred of him [...] There is no beating about the bush, for we know quite well what it was, and have got to tell. It was Peter's cockiness (pp. 105-06).

It is the youthful arrogance of Peter, coupled with his past conflict with Hook that has made him Hook's primary opponent. However, to suggest that Peter is Hook's *only* target disregards his hatred for the text's other child characters. He demonstrates a desire to rid the Neverland of all the lost boys, stopping Starkey and Smee from killing Nibs with the reasoning that, in doing so, he would only be rid of one child: "He is only one, and I want to mischief all the seven," (p. 53). Hook's prime motivation for killing Peter is not revenge; it is to eradicate youthfulness from the Neverland. As the leader of the island's children, Peter inevitably becomes the focus of Hook's attention, but it is his embodiment of youth that is most threatening to Hook. In his speech 'Captain Hook at Eton', Barrie recounts Hook's destruction of any evidence that he ever attended the school: '[he broke] into the present premises of the

Eton Society and [destroyed] the evidence in its books that he had once been a member'.⁷⁹ Though Barrie speculates that this was done in order to honour Hook's former school, it is nevertheless fitting that a man so repulsed by youthfulness ('He had always hated children' *ibid.*, p. 119) should make such an effort to destroy any evidence of his own childhood. Peter is problematic for Hook because, aside from leading the island's children, he also demonstrates a virility that is unavailable to Hook himself. Hook's desire to kill the lost boys is an attempt at destroying the first half of the child/adult binary, leaving only adulthood available to him; but Peter's demise offers Hook a further consolation – the eradication of the greatest threat to his masculine dominance.

In *Treasure Island*, the threat to authority exclusively stems from underlings attempting to usurp their superiors (Black Dog and Pew to Bones, Merry to Silver, and Silver to Smollett). The novel's youthful character (Jim is more than a child, but not quite an adult yet) undoubtedly develops a greater sense of masculine identity, but he never aspires to the kind of social dominance enjoyed by Silver or Smollett. *Peter and Wendy* presents a drastically different structure. Hook and Peter are corresponding halves of the child/adult binary that exists in the Neverland. They each lead their subordinates ruthlessly – just as Hook kills Skylights for brushing against him, Peter maintains the Neverland's child/adult binary by killing the lost boys before they can age beyond childhood: 'when they seem to be growing up, which is against the rules, Peter thins them out' (p. 47). Peter's enemy is adulthood, as he demonstrates upon learning that Wendy plans to return home to see her parents:

he was so full of wrath against grown-ups, who, as usual, were spoiling everything, that as soon as he got inside his tree he breathed intentionally quick short breaths at the rate of about five to a second. He did this because there is a saying in the Neverland that, every time you breathe, a grown-up dies; and Peter was killing them off vindictively as fast as possible (pp. 98-99).

⁷⁹ J. M. Barrie, 'Captain Hook at Eton', in *M'Connachie and J. M. Barrie: Speeches by J. M. Barrie* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), 108-21, p. 117.

Peter's indiscriminate attempts to murder adults confirms that it is the state of adulthood that he detests, rather than any one adult in particular. Hook is the target of this hatred in *Peter and Wendy*, but Peter's issue is not with the character of the man, but with his age:

“Who is Captain Hook?” he asked with interest when she spoke of the arch enemy.
“Don't you remember,” she asked, amazed, “how you killed him and saved all our lives?”
“I forget them after I kill them,” he replied carelessly (p. 146).

Wendy has been deceived – Hook is no more Peter's arch enemy than any other adult invader to the Neverland would be. Their rivalry is meaningful for Peter at the time, but Hook's death has become as impersonal as those unknown adults that Peter hopes to kill from a distance through heavy breathing. Peter's ability to forget his victims validates the brutality of his regime; in ridding the island of adults he makes the very concept of adulthood alien. As far as Peter is concerned, Hook's position as an adult in the Neverland does not taint the island, as Hook (and thus adulthood) has never really existed there.



Just as he attacks the Neverland's children, so too does Hook attempt to purge the island of feminine influences, something that he is constantly escaping from throughout the text (the crocodile from which he repeatedly flees is notably a 'she'). Hook is overtly aligned with femininity by the narrator, who explains that 'In his dark nature there was a touch of the feminine' (p. 80). The tradition of having the same actor play Hook and Mr Darling in stage

versions of *Peter and Wendy* provokes comparison between the characters.⁸⁰ While Hook has ‘a touch’ of femininity, Mr Darling represents a far more effeminate version of his alter ego.

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PRESENTS
PETER PAN
OR
THE BOY WHO WOULDN'T GROW UP.
A Play in Three Acts, by
J. M. BARRIE.

<p>Peter Pan Miss NINA BOURGADULT Mr. Darling Mr. GERALD du MAURIER Mrs. Darling Miss DOROTHEA BAIRD Wendy Miss HILDA TRIVELYAN John Master GEORGE HERRICK Michael Miss WINIFRED GROGECAN Nana Mr. ARTHUR LUPINO Tinker Bell Miss JANIE WHEAT Tootsie Miss JOAN BURNETT Nibs Miss CHRISTINE SILVER Slightly Mr. A. W. JANSKOMB Cubby Mrs. ALICE DUHARRY 1st Twin Miss PAULINE GRASS 2nd Twin Miss PHYLLIS BRADON Jas. Hook (The Pirate Captain) Mr. GERALD du MAURIER Smee Mr. GEORGE SHELTON Beeshawm Hinkley Mr. SYDNEY HARGREAVES Cookson Mr. CHARLES TREVOR Cocco Mr. FREDERICK ANNELEY Mollies Mr. HERBERT WELLS Jules Mr. JAMES ENGLISH Noodle Mr. JOHN REPLY Great Big Little Panther Mr. PHILIP DAWWIN Tiger Lily Miss MIRIAM NESBITT Liza Miss ELA Q. MAY</p>	<p>(Members of Peter's Band) (The Pirate Captain) (Pirates) (Robbins) (Author of the Play)</p>
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Redskins, Pirates, Crocodile, Eagle, Curlich, Cat, Pack of Wolves, by Misses Mary Mayhew, Victoria Adcock, Mabel Crogan, Gladys Stewart, Kitty Maline, Marie Park, Elsa Siddall, Christine Lawrence, Mary Maddison, Gladys Carrington, Laura Harvatt, Daisy March. Men: E. Kirby, S. Spencer, G. Malvers, J. Gashane, Masters S. Green, A. Gasher, D. Duerow, C. Lawton, W. Scott, G. Hanson, H. Francis, E. Maslin, P. Gresham, A. Dierge.

ACT I.—OUR EARLY DAYS.
Scene 1.—Oupute the House. (Musical by Mr. W. Hayes, designed by Mr. W. Nicholson.)
Scene 2.—Inside the House. (Mr. W. Hayes.)
ACT II.—THE NEVER, NEVER, NEVER LAND.
Scene 1.—The House we built for Wendy. (Mr. W. Hayes.)
The Curlich will here be covered for a few minutes.

ACT II.—continued
Scene 2.—The Robbers' Camp. (Mr. W. Hayes.)
Scene 3.—The House where the Pirates
ACT III.—WE RETURN TO OUR BIRTH-PLACES.
Scene 1.—THE PIRATE SHIP. (Mr. W. Hayes.)
Scene 2.—A last glimpse of the Robbers.
Scene 3.—Home, Sweet Home.

The Play produced under the Direction of Mr. EDON BOURGADULT.

General Manager (For CHARLES FROHMAN) W. LESTOCQ

The Reception, Printing and Selling Expenses designed by Mr. W. NICHOLSON, and executed by Messrs. R. F. SIMMONS & E. J. SMITH, Cambridge. The Booklets for the Evening designed by Mr. HERBERT FORD. With David's Costumes by Madame HETWALD, New Bond St. Miss Tinsley's Evening Gown and designed by MISS TINSLEY, 11, St. James Street. The Dinner Incident and arranged by Mr. W. WARD. The Music composed and arranged by Mr. JOHN CROOK. The Police Machines supplied and worked by Mr. G. KERRY. Properties supplied by Mr. LOUIS LEBLANC, 21, Queen's Square, W.C. Stage Machinery by Mr. H. THORPSON. Electricals by Mr. C. HAMILTON. Property Artist, Mr. W. BURRILL.

Stage Manager DUNCAN MENAIE | Musical Director JOHN CROOK
Business Manager JAMES W. MATTHEWS

Extract from the Order made by the Lord Chamberlain.
(1) The names of the actual and responsible Manager of the Theatre must be printed on every play bill. (2) The Public can leave the Theatre at the end of the performance by all exit and entrance doors, which must remain open. (3) The Proprietor must in the programme insert a notice in large type, printed in every performance in which he is present, to the effect that he is prepared to receive any notice of objection, whether personal or otherwise, at any time, previous and subsequent to the time of his appearance at the Theatre. (4) All notices, personal and otherwise, must be kept from the public at all other objections, whether personal or otherwise.

JOHN TEA AND COFFEE can be had of the Amenities.

The programme for the original production of the play, starring Gerald du Maurier as both Hook and George Darling.⁸¹

Aside from the effeminate aspect of his name, Mr Darling is also feminised through his failed attempts at a respectable middle-class embodiment in both his domestic and professional life, the latter of which being characterised by the Darlings' use of a dog as the children's nurse

⁸⁰ The stage version I am referring to is the 1904 play *Peter and Wendy*, which predates the novel by seven years.

⁸¹ Jason A. Quest, '1904-programme', *neverpedia.com*, <http://neverpedia.com/wiki/images/9/99/1904-programme.jpg>.

(*P&W*, p. 7). This kind of fantasy foreshadows the practice of ‘make-believe’ that the lost boys partake in, instilling a level of childishness in Mr Darling that is also presented in Hook through his flashbacks. Mr Darling’s fabrication of middle-class success is then repeated at the end of the novel: ‘I am not sure that we have a drawing-room, but we pretend we have, and it’s all the same’ (p. 143). As a character of the *fin de siècle*, Mr Darling embodies the ‘crisis in the 1890s of the male on all levels – economic, political, social, psychological, as producer, as power, as role, as lover’ and his inability to attain the standard of middle-class Edwardian masculinity is confirmed during his interaction with the lost boys:⁸²

They stood in a row in front of Mrs. Darling, with their hats off, and wishing they were not wearing their pirate clothes. They said nothing, but their eyes asked her to have them. They ought to have looked at Mr. Darling also, but they forgot about him [...]

Then he burst into tears, and the truth came out. He was as glad to have them as she was, he said, but he thought they should have asked his consent as well as hers, instead of treating him as a cypher in his own house (pp. 142-43).

Catherine Ross & John Mirowsky’s study demonstrates the gendered aspect of crying, highlighting the act as a predominantly feminine exercise.⁸³ The crying incident evokes an earlier moment with Hook that positions his prosthetic as a key differentiator between him and Mr Darling: ‘There was a break in his voice, as if for a moment he recalled innocent days when – but he brushed away this weakness with his hook’ (*P&W*, p. 78). The claw instils a masculine stoicism that is unavailable to Mr Darling. Hook acts as a version of Mr Darling who rejects the confinements of respectable, middle-class English life. Smee becomes a kind of surrogate wife, taking care of feminine domestic chores (three characters sew in the novel – Mrs Darling, Wendy, and Smee), and just as Mr Darling is perturbed by the lost boys’ preference for his wife, Hook questions why they prefer Smee to himself:

“No little children love me.”

⁸² Regenia Gagnier, *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), p. 98.

⁸³ John Mirowsky & Catherine E. Ross, ‘Men who Cry’, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 47/2 (1984), 138-46.

Strange that he should think of this, which had never troubled him before; perhaps the sewing machine brought it to his mind. For long he muttered to himself, staring at Smee, who was hemming placidly, under the conviction that all children feared him. (p. 118).

If this reflection betrays a femininity within Hook then his *reaction* to the lost boys' rejection does not. While Mr Darling cries at their disrespect, Hook prepares them to walk the plank in a manifestation of men who:

split their own identities into masculine and feminine, and [...] repudiate the feminine. The imaginative disidentification [leads] them to disavowal some of their deepest desires, particularly sensuous desires, and to demonize them as symbols of a gendered or racial antitype.⁸⁴

In making the lost boys walk the plank, Hook is repudiating a feminine and sensuous desire to be loved by them. His femininity has instead been outsourced to Mr Darling, who embodies the difficulty in achieving a contented level of masculinity during the Edwardian period.

Despite Hook displaying a far stronger version of masculinity than Mr Darling, his physical appearance undoubtedly holds feminine connotations – 'his hair was dressed in long curls' and 'His eyes were of the blue of the forget-me-not' (p. 49). Carrie Wasinger argues that Hook is 'a villain, who kidnaps and assaults middle-class femininity (in the person of Wendy)' and that he 'is a tyrant who seems always waiting for his head to be cut off'.⁸⁵ Considering the importance afforded to bodily loss in *Peter and Wendy*, it is fitting that Wasinger reads Hook as a character who is ever likely to be damaged further, but the assertion that Hook has kidnapped middle-class femininity is worth exploration. Hook suggests to Smee that they take Wendy for their own mother, but this idea is never again discussed by Hook (though it is by Smee, who offers to free Wendy from the *Jolly Roger* if she agrees to be his mother). Hook's

⁸⁴ Martin Danahay, *Gender at Work in Victorian Culture: Literature, Art and Masculinity* (Aldershot; Ashgate, 2005), p. 121.

⁸⁵ Carrie Wasinger, 'Getting Peter's Goat: Hybridity, Androgyny, and Terror in *Peter Pan*' in Donna R. White & C. Anita Tarr (eds.), *J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children's Classic at 100* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 217-36, pp. 232-33.

desire to capture Wendy stems from his ambition to destroy femininity on the island. He targets Wendy but ‘he never reached her, he never heard the cry of anguish he hoped to wring from her’ (p. 121). Hook’s motive for capturing Wendy is not to *attain* her femininity; it is to destroy it. We have already seen how Hook plans to abolish the binaries that unsettle him. He attacks Peter and the lost boys because they represent the youth that he disdains within himself and, similarly, by killing Wendy (and Tiger Lily, who he also captures), Hook would be able to eradicate the text’s feminine presence, leaving only the desired masculine sphere available to him.

vi. *Sexual Violence and Phallic Threat*

The amputations of Hook and Silver serve similar purposes, paradoxically threatening to undermine the exclusive form of masculinity that they signify. And given their status as masculinising features, it is fitting that their injuries are reimagined as violently threatening genitalia. Hook achieves this through his phallic claw. The prosthetic is referred to as being ‘undoubtedly the grimmest part of him’ in a coded description of exposure; Hook is revealing a part of himself that he should keep hidden (p. 50). Peter unwittingly evokes this connotation when he mimics Hook and, addressing the *Jolly Roger’s* crew, threatens to ‘plunge’ his hook into them. The response from Smee is to gasp ‘This is queer’ (p. 77). With ‘the homosexual significance of “queer” [having] entered English slang by 1900’ (SA, p. 112), there is an evident association here between the penetrative hook and a coded sexual violence. Yet, while the claw is a threatening feature, it ultimately sits redundant at key moments. Upon finding Peter in his tree, the reader is presented with the image of a potential rape: ‘One arm dropped over the edge of the bed, one leg was arched, and the unfinished part of his laugh was stranded on his mouth, which was open, showing the little pearls’ (p. 111). Peter’s cockiness makes Hook’s ‘iron claw

twitch' as though the prosthetic were a stimulated penis (p. 106). Jackie Wullschläger refers to this episode in her assertion that Hook 'is a powerfully sexual creature'.⁸⁶ The suggestive positioning of Peter's body, coupled with his open mouth, makes him vulnerable to the sexual advances that Hook seems to desire (we learn that Hook would have 'leapt at the sleeper' if he was able to (p. 111). Karen Coats's reading of this scene also leads her to the conclusion that a sexually violent act is narrowly avoided: 'Had Hook been able to dislodge himself from Slightly's tree, Peter would surely have been violated, not in an act of eros, or love, but in an act of hatred, or violence'.⁸⁷ There is also a clear Freudian link here. As Pew wishes to blind Jim in *Treasure Island*, so too does Hook want to transfer his negative experience of the crocodile onto Peter Pan. In this case, he is unable to enter the tree to get to Peter, and so he attempts to poison him instead – a plan that fails. But this is not the first time that Hook has advanced on Peter in such a way. On Marooners' Rock, Hook bites Peter – mixing the sexual implications of biting with the transference of Hook's own negative experiences with the crocodile (p. 82). He manages to wound Peter, clawing at him twice with his hook, but it is Peter who displays a masculine virility here, even in the face of death: 'Next moment he was standing erect on the rock again, with that smile on his face and a drum beating within him. It was saying, "To die will be an awfully big adventure"' (p. 84). Peter's association of 'erectness' is repeated. At one point, we are told that he 'sprang erect, as wide awake at once as a dog' (p. 77). When he is approaching Hook, we learn how he 'crawled forward like a snake; and again, erect, he darted across a space on which the moonlight played: one finger on his lip and his dagger at the ready' (p. 115). 'His dagger at the ready' represents a virile penis and acts in contrast to Hook's impotent prosthetic when he hears what he believes to be the crocodile ('the

⁸⁶ Jackie Wullschläger, *Inventing Wonderland: The Lives and Fantasies of Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, J. M. Barrie, Kenneth Grahame and A. A. Milne* (London: Methuen, 1995), p. 128.

⁸⁷ Karen Coats, 'Child-Hating: *Peter Pan* in the Context of Victorian Hatred' in Donna R. White & C. Anita Tarr (eds.), *J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children's Classic at 100* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 3-22, p. 7.

iron claw hung inactive' p. 122). Furthermore, the narrator describes Hook as 'striking up at [the lost boys] impotently' (p. 132) and, when he is unable to attack Smee, Hook is described as being 'impotent as he was damp, and he fell forward like a cut flower' (p. 132). Ann Fox explains that:

Both queer and disabled bodies, seen as violations of natural masculinity and femininity, defy a heterosexist ideal of sexuality and its attendant gender roles, although while the queer body is read as deviant, the disabled body is rendered completely asexual.⁸⁸

Fox makes the contrast between the queer and the disabled body, but Hook is a conflation of the two. His ambiguous sexuality, flitting between sexual violence and impotency, appropriately bridges Fox's distinction. Peter, on the other hand, repeatedly demonstrates a masculine virility that Hook lacks; and so, in his attempts to kill Peter, Hook also plans to abolish the greatest threat to his masculine standing.

Just as the claw is the 'grimmiest' aspect of Hook's appearance, Silver's most prominent physical characteristic is his most frightening feature as well, a view that is endorsed by Jim at the beginning of his narrative. The aura surrounding Silver is powerful enough to unnerve Jim before they have met, giving the latter nightmares in which Silver's one leg takes on sinister connotations:

How that personage haunted my dreams [...] I would see him in a thousand forms, and with a thousand diabolical expressions. Now the leg would be cut off at the knee, now at the hip; now he was a monstrous kind of creature who had never had but the one leg, and that in the middle of his body. To see him leap and run and pursue me over hedge and ditch was the worst of my nightmares (p. 5).

The terror of the one leg develops in accordance with the severity of Silver's amputation. The knee disarticulation becomes a hip disarticulation, which in turn shifts across to the middle of

⁸⁸ Ann M. Fox, "'But, Mother – I'm – crippled!': Tennessee Williams, Queering Disability, and Dis/Membered Bodies in Performance' in Bonnie G. Smith & Beth Hutchison (eds.), *Gendering Disability* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 233-50, p. 235.

Silver's body in a grotesque debauchment of his actual injury, turning the man into 'a monstrous kind of creature'. With his one leg protruding from the middle of his body, Silver's deformity becomes overtly phallic as he hunts Jim in what is a veiled attempt at rape. Jim's dream foreshadows Tom's murder in Part Three of the novel, during which Silver exhibits the kind of traits that make Jim's record of the event read like that of a coded rape:

'As sure as God sees me, I'd sooner lose my hand [...than] turn agin my dooty –' [...] With a cry, John seized the branch of a tree, whipped the crutch out of his armpit, and sent that uncouth missile hurtling through the air. It struck poor Tom [...] and Silver] was on top of him next moment, and had twice buried his knife up to the hilt in that defenceless body. From my place of ambush, I could hear him pant aloud as he struck the blows (pp. 88-89).

Silver reacts with immediate aggression to Tom's claim that he would rather lose a hand than join the mutineers. Tom is speaking idiomatically here, but Silver's response is to quell this symbolic threat to his masculine authority. Not only is Tom refusing Silver, but he is doing so with allusions to bodily loss. The mere notion of a rival amputee demands an instant and violent response from Silver. His initial weapon is his crutch, which has phallic connotations not least because he regularly carries it 'by a lanyard round his neck' (p. 62). The consequential positioning of the crutch when it hangs from the lanyard is a reconstruction of Jim's earlier dream, and Silver's use of it here is the beginning of an episode charged with sexual violence. Silver pins his target down, meaning that his own depleted frame is in control over his victim's 'defenceless [albeit otherwise sound] body'. Jim feels it important to inform his reader that Silver's knife enters Tom 'up to the hilt', a notably visceral description of the violent penetration. Silver's animated panting is a further indication of the sexual nature of this scene. The importance of these coded assaults exists in the masculinising effects of same-sex sexual violence – and it is noteworthy that all such instances in *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* are carried out by male characters upon other male characters. Ian O'Donnell refers to contemporary prison culture when he explains that 'rape is an acting out of power roles within

an all-male, authoritarian environment where strength and dominance are emphasized' but such an environment is not too different to that on Skeleton Island.⁸⁹ This coded sexual violence serves as an activity through which men can exercise, demonstrate, and compete for masculine hierarchy.

vii. Coda: *The Role of Jim and the Failure of Hook*

In *Treasure Island*, the wounded men are frequently shown to have the strongest claims to masculine superiority. Silver is the most dramatically injured character and is, fittingly, also the most aligned to contemporary conceptions of masculinity; and while his time on Skeleton Island discredits his claim to the 'hyper-masculinity' that Sweet attributes to him, it does not invalidate the earlier instances of masculine authority that he persistently establishes. If there is any lesson to be taken from *Treasure Island*, it is that the means with which a boy attains manhood is changing at the *fin de siècle*. Jim undertakes all that can be expected of an adolescent male pursuing an assured masculine identity. His presence offers the other characters an opportunity to attain a youthfulness that will allow them to play out the same masculinising activities that are available to Jim by virtue of his age:

It is as though, in making Jim their collaborator, they [the adults in the novel; Bones, Silver, Trelawney, Livesey, Smollett] are trying to summon up these lost powers of youth's integrity in themselves (Ward, p. 308).

While Jim has the opportunity to access the masculinising benefits of the adventure, the other men have missed their chance to do the same. Jim's attendance offers them a potential harvesting of youth in what is a vicarious attempt at accessing an accomplished masculine identity. Dianne Simmons argues that *Treasure Island* is a form of imperial propaganda

⁸⁹ Ian O'Donnell, 'Prison Rape in Context', *The British Journal of Criminology*, 44/2 (2004), 241-55, p. 243.

‘precisely because it does not offer justification for imperialism, but rather presents foreign exploits as an adventurous escape from the humdrum of daily life.’⁹⁰ This is undoubtedly true, but to see this ‘escape’ from monotony as an endorsement of Empire is to disregard the ending of the novel:

Oxen and wain-ropes would not bring me back again to that accursed island; and the worst dreams that ever I have are when I hear the surf booming about its coasts or start upright in bed with the sharp voice of Captain Flint still ringing in my ears: ‘Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!’ (p. 220).

Jim’s time at sea has not masculinised him; it instead haunts him and the narrative itself reveals his masculine standing amongst his shipmates. The novel opens with Jim explaining why it is that he has written the account of their adventure: ‘Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen [have] asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end’ (p. 3). Jim began his voyage as an underling and remains one now, demonstrated through this laborious appeasement of his shipmates’ egos. There is no glorification of the adventure here, at a crucial part of the novel where Jim is free to write whatever he pleases. He is looking to the future, where he can claim a desire for further exploration free of any obligation to carry it out, but he does not do this. He instead frames his narrative as a warning, as ‘a repudiation of treasure-hunting and adventure’.⁹¹

The *Hispaniola*’s crew are separated by two groups who are racing towards the same goal – the masculinising treasure. Peter and Hook, on the other hand, are fighting against one another in an attempt to eradicate that which their opponent represents (youth and adulthood respectively). Hook aims to destroy the threat of youth in killing Peter just as he plans to eradicate the prospect of femininity in ridding the island of Wendy and Tiger Lily. If both of

⁹⁰ Dianne Simmons, *The Narcissism of Empire: Loss, Rage and Revenge in Thomas De Quincey, Robert Louis Stevenson, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling and Isak Dinesen* (Brighton: Sussex Academic, 2007), p. 46.

⁹¹ Graham Tulloch, ‘Stevenson and Islands: Scotland and the South Pacific’ in William B. Jones Jr. (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson Reconsidered: New Critical Perspectives* (London: McFarland, 2003), 68-82, p. 73.

these plans are achieved, then the only ostensible options left to Hook would combine as the mature masculinity that Edwardian imperialism hopes to achieve. The issue for Hook, however, is twofold. Firstly, he consistently fails to kill any of these characters. This is the kind of ‘tragi-comedy’ that Ward refers to, and it is a failure that means access to any form of hyper-masculinity is unavailable to him. Perhaps more traumatic for Hook than his failure to destroy youth, however, is the way in which youth itself is an empowering force within the text. Peter is clawed by Hook at the mermaids’ lagoon, but he survives the wound (p. 82). Later, Hook attempts to poison Peter but fails in his plan to do so (p. 112). Wendy is shot with an arrow upon her entrance to the Neverland (admittedly due to Tinker Bell’s manipulation), but she survives the attack (p. 56). In each instance, the saviour of youth and femininity is youth itself. At the lagoon it is the virility that allows Peter to stand ‘erect’ after being wounded in the face of the oncoming tide (p. 84), while Hook’s failed attempt at poisoning him would not have been realised had the pirate been small enough to fit through a lost boy’s door (after which he would have presumably killed Peter with his prosthetic, p. 111). In the case of Wendy, it is the *naivety* of youth that guards her. The acorn that Peter believes to be a kiss acts as armour to the arrow that Tootles fires into her (p. 59). Rosanna Walker notes Peter’s desire to ‘stay in the realm of the pre-sexual self’ and the reason for this desire is as evident here as it is anywhere else in the narrative.⁹² Hook is unable to destroy the youthfulness that undermines his attempt at gaining masculine satisfaction because youthfulness itself is too powerful (and ironically harbours many of the traits that are associated with Edwardian masculine idealism); and herein lies the second problem with Hook’s reasoning. Masculinity cannot be achieved by disrupting the binaries that Hook seeks to affect because, as Peter unknowingly demonstrates, such

⁹² Rosanna West Walker, ‘The Birth of a Lost Boy’ in Donna R. White & C. Anita Tarr (eds.), *J. M. Barrie’s Peter Pan In and Out of Time: A Children’s Classic at 100* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 127-52, p. 127.

concepts do not comply to binary form. He fights against adulthood just as Hook combats youth and he is explicit in articulating his hatred of adult masculinity:

“Wendy, I ran away the day I was born.” [...] “It was because I heard father and mother,” he explained in a low voice, “talking about what I was to be when I became a man.” He was extraordinarily agitated now. “I don't want ever to be a man,” he said with passion. “I want always to be a little boy and to have fun,” (p. 27).

Peter sets up the same boy/man binary that Hook advocates, although they admittedly have opposing allegiances within that structure. Peter remains loyal to boyhood throughout, most notably when the Darlings offer to adopt him, giving Peter the opportunity to reaffirm his earlier convictions:

“Soon I should be a man?”

“Very soon.”

“I don't want to go to school and learn solemn things,” he told her passionately. “I don't want to be a man. O Wendy's mother, if I was to wake up and feel there was a beard!”

“Peter,” said Wendy the comforter, “I should love you in a beard”; and Mrs. Darling stretched out her arms to him, but he repulsed her.

“Keep back, lady, no one is going to catch me and make me a man,” (pp. 143-44).

Peter's observations highlight his unique approach to masculinity. Firstly, the association of masculinity with facial hair shows, on the one hand, a certain naivety; there is no reason that a man must be bearded in order to be considered a man. However, in doing so, Peter encapsulates the sheer fragility of masculinity. If he believes a shave can reduce manliness then that inevitably raises questions about the impact of the far more severe dismemberment that he inflicts upon Hook. Similarly, his belief that somebody would catch him, and 'make' him a man, rather than him just growing into one, demonstrates an understanding of the ways in which masculinities are manufactured entities: 'one is not born a woman, but, rather, becomes

one' is a sentiment closely aligned to Peter's views on manhood, and there are inevitably links here to Butler's work on the performative nature of gender:⁹³

we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence [...] gender proves to be performative - that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be.⁹⁴

Hook's attempts to achieve masculine excellence are based on the falsity of gender as a binary structure, and is thus doomed. Both he and Silver may suitably lay claim to being the best example of masculinity within their narratives, but neither can attain the kind of hyper-masculinity that has elsewhere been attributed to them. *Treasure Island* and *Peter and Wendy* each demonstrate a masculine hierarchy, with the most injured man positioned above his less afflicted peers. Nevertheless, an idealised form of masculinity remains unachievable.

⁹³ Simone de Beauvoir, trans. by E. M. Parshley, *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage, 1973), p. 301.

⁹⁴ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 24-25.

2

W. H. Davies: A Bespoke and Unattainable Masculinity

However one rates the human species, a man must be considered as whole. His body is an incredibly wonderful piece of fully automated engineering, but in itself it is not a man. His mind, soul, spirit is an even more wonderful and complex thing, but in itself it still does not constitute a man. To make a man you must put the two together. He is more than the mere sum of these parts, but a deficiency in one means a deficiency in the whole.¹

W. H. Davies, a member of the Georgian Poets who underwent the amputation of a leg following a railway accident, focuses much of his work on the conflict between masculinity and femininity and, in particular, on the impossibility of achieving the idealised form of masculinity that he develops within his writing. The nomadic life that Davies chose to live betrays his desire to attain a respectable form of masculinity as, in order to become a man, the Victorian male ‘needed to demonstrate to himself [...] that he could live without the comforts of home’ (Tosh, 1999, p. 122). The way in which Davies’s life was impacted by his amputation makes the prevalence of somatic damage in his work unremarkable. However, his *treatment* of physical affliction is worth exploration. Davies has an evident preoccupation with masculinity, and he uses injured bodies as vehicles through which he can exercise this interest; but while carnal impairment is the primary catalyst for Davies’s focus on masculinity, he also repeatedly dismisses femininity, emboldening the apparent virtues of masculinity at its antonym’s

¹ Batty, p. 9.

expense. The third element of Davies's focus stems from specific forms of writing and the gendered connotations which are attached to them, something of which Davies was acutely conscious.

In George Gissing's *The Whirlpool*, Harvey Rolfe complains that 'All ordinary housekeepers are at the mercy of the filth and insolence of a draggle-tailed, novelette-reading feminine democracy.'² This association of fiction with femininity is echoed by James Eli Adams in his discussion of poetry: 'Under the gendered logics of domestic ideology, a wide array of Victorian intellectual vocations [...] came to resemble models of feminine activity and authority'.³ The connection also elucidates the conflict between gender and form that is so prevalent in the work of Davies and was a concern for many writers at the *fin de siècle*: 'The [fear] of unmanliness [was] endemic to the Victorian male novelist'.⁴ With autobiography as ostensibly antonymous to fiction, it is fitting that Davies, a writer so preoccupied with masculinity, would not only announce his prose arrival with an autobiography, but would also include biographical elements within his poetry and prose. Moreover, in positioning his injury alongside his own masculine identity, Davies betrays the greatest issue with which his writing is concerned; the impossibility of fashioning an idealised version of masculinity for himself. His amputation lacks the masculinising features present in the symbolic injuries of Hook and Silver. In contrast to those fictional characters, Davies's injury bars him from satisfying the criteria for masculinity which he establishes and reinforces throughout his work. Davies acknowledges this inability while reflecting upon his bodily condition:

The doctor, seeing the even development of my body, asked me if I was an athlete. Although I could scarcely claim to be one, I had been able, without any training, and at any time, to jump over a height of five feet; had also been a swimmer, and, when occasion offered, had donned the gloves. Thinking of my present helplessness caused

² George Gissing, *The Whirlpool* (London: Everyman, 1997), pp. 17-18.

³ James Eli Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 1.

⁴ Andrew Dowling, *Manliness and the Male Novelist in Victorian Literature* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), p. 83.

me many a bitter moment, but I managed to impress all comers with a false indifference.⁵

The implication here is that physical prowess is a pre-requisite for masculine excellence, and it is an implication that is echoed by the zeitgeist: ‘to a nation preoccupied with health, the athlete was the new hero and the “human form divine” the hero’s clear insignia’.⁶

This connection is periodically made in Davies’s writing, as so much of his work is concerned with the impossibility of achieving masculine excellence – not only for himself but for all of his male characters. Davies’s men either lack the physicality required to fulfil his own masculine criteria or, when this is not the case, they are consistently without an ethereality needed in order to attain his standards of masculinity. Davies regularly portrays his characters in a Cartesian manner, making a clear distinction between the body and the spirit, and invariably shows them to be lacking in one respect or the other. The depth of his concern with masculinity, however, extends beyond his portrayal of male characters. It engages with the very form of his writing.

Through *AST* Davies attempts an opposition to fiction, as well as to the femininity that was associated with fiction in the late nineteenth century: ‘After George Eliot’s death in 1880, male professional jealousies erupted in critical abuse of women’s emasculating effect on the English novel’ (SA, p. 17). This feminisation of the novel goes some way to explaining Rolfe’s outburst in *The Whirlpool*, as well as Davies’s interest in biographical writing. The femininity of one form – the novel – may result in the masculinity of another form as ‘The nineteenth century had cherished a belief in the separate spheres of femininity and masculinity that amounted almost to religious faith’ (SA, p. 8). This favouring of dichotomies is present in both

⁵ W. H. Davies, *The Autobiography of a Super-tramp* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 179.

⁶ Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 207-08.

the production and content of Davies's writing. Despite his belief that he was 'one of England's leading poets' (*CB*, p. 109), Davies was embarrassed by the feminine connotations of poetry:

Davies had been particularly careful to keep his verse-writing a secret from his rough companions, for, tolerant as they were about his genteel ways, he knew that this might incite them to ridicule (*CB*, p. 57).

Discussing his relationship with Ralph Hodgson, Davies says that 'Hodgson was a man to my own mind, for we both preferred to talk of dogs and prizefighters instead of poets and poetry.'⁷ The concept of being a man relies upon the exclusion of poetry from conversation here, and it is an exclusion that is important to the masculine world of tramping too: 'to survive and thrive in [the tramping world] he had to project a certain identity that only showed part of what he might be' (Normand, p. 27).

However, the separations which exist between fiction and biography (as well as masculinity and femininity) are often indeterminable. They cannot be placed into those binaries which Davies attempts to create, meaning that his effort to formulate an ideal masculinity is as flawed as his endeavour to distance his writing from fiction and the femininity that it supposedly harbours. Davies's inability to create an ideal form and, consequently, a realistic model of masculinity, results in a consistent blending of form and a series of flawed attempts at achieving an unattainable, idealised version of manhood. This unattainability is particularly poignant given the correlation between gender and disability, as Alison Kafer suggests:

no single person can fulfill the gender roles expected of her or him; femininity and masculinity are constructed in such a way that they are unattainable ideals. I suggest that these gaps, these positions of transition and excess, are made explicit at the intersection of gender and disability.⁸

⁷ W. H. Davies, *Later Days* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1927), p. 73.

⁸ Alison Kafer, 'Inseparable: Gender and Disability in the Amputee-Devotee Community' in Bonnie G. Smith & Beth Hutchison (eds.), *Gendering Disability* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 107-18, p. 109.

The standards of masculine excellence set by Davies are, as Kafer explains, wholly unachievable, while his focus on carnal damage within his writing exposes this impossibility further.

i. *Gendered Autobiography*

Davies's mixing of form is demonstrated by the inclusion of poetry throughout *A Poet's Pilgrimage*, a text which initially appears to be a prose account of an unnamed narrator (almost certainly Davies) as he travels through parts of Wales and England.⁹ Autobiography and poetry intrude upon a narrative which would otherwise appear to be fictional prose; and on the question of form, it should be noted that the inclusion of autobiographical texts within a thesis that is otherwise focused on more conservative examples of the literary does require a brief justification, beginning with the fact that the very notion of conservative literariness is, according to Barrett Mandel, the result of an unwarranted and unjustified bias towards fiction:

By splitting literature into fiction and non-fiction [...] we have created fiction at the heart of literary activity, relegating autobiography and other forms of writing to merely "something else." But there is nothing inherent in the forms themselves requiring such a ranking.¹⁰

Mandel's belief in the literariness of autobiography evokes Jaques Derrida's *The Law of Genre* which, in part, argues that those texts which have long been considered to be non-literary do often possess the means to claim validity as a literary work:

The possibility is always there. This does not constitute a text *ipso facto* as "literature," even though such a possibility, always left open and therefore eternally remarkable, situates perhaps in every text the possibility of its becoming literature.¹¹

⁹ W. H. Davies, *A Poet's Pilgrimage* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931). Hereafter referred to as *Pilgrimage*.

¹⁰ Barrett J. Mandel, 'Full of Life Now' in James Olney (ed.), *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 49-72, p. 55.

¹¹ Jacques Derrida, trans. by Avital Ronell, 'The Law of Genre', *Critical Inquiry*, 7/1 (1980), 51-81, p. 64.

Mandel is anxious to retain the divide between fiction and autobiography, highlighting how the inclusion of one's traits within the other does not necessarily result in a merging of the two forms:

Of course it is true that autobiographers use techniques of fiction, but such usage does not turn an autobiography into a fiction anymore than Dvořák's use of folk motifs turns the *New World Symphony* into a folk song [...] Moreover, critics always overlook the converse view that a novelist may use devices of autobiography: first person narration, use of protagonist/ narrator, facts drawn from history, local color (p. 53).

Mandel's arguments, however, are challenged by more recent life-writing criticism. Shari Benstock demonstrates how reading autobiography through a Lacanian lens exposes the flaws and hypocrisies of the genre: '[it] reveals the impossibility of its own dream: what begins in the presumption of self-knowledge ends in the creation of a fiction that covers over the premises of its construction'.¹² Lacan's mirror does not provide the subject with an objective reflection. Rather, 'the mirror constructs the self, that what is 'known' as the self is the cohesiveness of a reflection which the subject fantasizes as real'.¹³ Linda Anderson has more recently defended autobiography's claim to literariness but, in arguing that 'a title which refers to a text as an 'autobiography' does not itself belong to the genre of autobiography' (p. 9), she echoes Derrida's claim that:

Every text participates in one or several genres [...] yet such participation never amounts to belonging. And not because of an abundant overflowing or a free, anarchic, and unclassifiable productivity, but because of the trait of participation itself, because of the effect of the code and of the generic mark. Making genre its mark, a text demarcates itself. If remarks of belonging belong without belonging, participate without belonging, then genre-designations cannot be simply part of the corpus (Derrida, 1980, p. 65).

Derrida's critique of genre unsettles the certainty with which Mandel handles autobiography. Mandel endorses a clear divide between fiction and autobiography (albeit acknowledging the

¹² Shari Benstock (ed.), *The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings* (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 11-12.

¹³ Linda Anderson, *Autobiography* (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 62.

debt which each form owes to the other), and this binary-centred view is reminiscent of Davies's approach to writing. Men and women, masculinity and femininity, and body and spirit are just three examples of the binaries that are advocated in his work. Yet despite this, Davies contradictorily merges autobiography and fiction. His novels and poetry contain overt references to his own life, while the work that he labels as biographical contains, at the very least, examples of significant understatement and embellishment. By incorporating autobiography in his novels and poetry, Davies can attempt the creation of a masculine form of fiction; but any belief in the inherent masculinity of autobiography is, in itself, a fiction, as Mary Hiatt reveals through her analysis of the preconceptions which are responsible for the creation of so-called 'masculine' and 'feminine' forms of writing:

The "masculine" style is held to be terse, strong, rational, convincing, formidable, and logical. The "feminine" style is thought to be emotional, illogical, hysterical, shrill, sentimental, silly, and vapid.¹⁴

Hiatt's findings go on to disprove these assertions, but what is significant is the *perceived* link between masculinity and 'rational [...] and logical' writing. These two descriptors are more comfortably aligned with factual writing than with fiction, meaning that autobiography and masculinity become ostensibly synonymous. The reality, however, is that just as Hiatt's research contradicts societal expectations of gendered writing, the notion of a 'masculine' or 'feminine' form is equally complex.

The question of gendered bias in autobiography is addressed by Anderson, who suggests that the form has deep-rooted links to femininity. This marks a change from previous life-writing criticism where the masculinity of autobiography was commonly implied. An example of this is present in Gusdorf's 'Conditions and Limits of Autobiography', in which

¹⁴ Mary P. Hiatt, 'The Feminine Style: Theory and Fact', *College Composition and Communication*, 29/3 (1978), 222-26, p. 222.

one of his ‘conditions’ appears to be the exclusion of femininity. Gusdorf’s use of the pronouns ‘he’ and ‘him’ is not an attempt to signify a collective, gender-neutral subject. It is instead a blind presumption of the connection between autobiography and men. His essay contains numerous instances of this, including the claim that ‘in autobiography the truth of facts is subordinate to the truth of the man, for it is first of all the man who is in question.’¹⁵ Georges Gusdorf highlights the difficulties of factual self-reflection, but he is clear in his assertion that such reflection is nevertheless a masculine endeavour: ‘The *man* who in recalling *his* life sets out to discover *himself* does not surrender to a passive contemplation of *his* private being’ (p. 44, emphasis added). The link between masculinity and autobiography during this time is hardly surprising given the critical landscape in which Gusdorf was writing. James Olney, a former student of Gusdorf, explains how as late as the nineteen-eighties, ‘Women’s Studies courses have sizeable autobiographical literature to draw on, but theoretical and critical writing is for the most part yet to come’.¹⁶ There is, however, a shift in critical focus during the following decade. Anderson does not recognise any inherent masculinity within life-writing; on the contrary, she evokes Derrida in such a way that demonstrates the intrinsic femininity of the form:

For Derrida, the mother and father signify the dual inheritances of language: the formal, scientific, dead paternal language and the ‘natural, living mother tongue’ [...] The mother is a metaphor for what is not metaphoric about language. Hers is the body through which language must pass to make itself heard (p. 78).

Anderson utilises natal imagery in her assessment of Derrida, resulting in the presentation of life-writing as a feminine, maternal form. The mother’s language is ‘living’, and with it passing through the body we are presented with a symbolic birth. The mother’s body gives life to

¹⁵ Georges Gusdorf, ‘Conditions and Limits of Autobiography’ in James Olney (ed.), *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, 28-48.

¹⁶ James Olney, ‘Autobiography and the Cultural Moment: A Thematic, Historical, and Biographical Introduction’ in *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, 3-27, p.16.

language just as the autobiography gives life to its subject; and while labour is a sacrificial exercise for the mother, so too is autobiographical writing for its author, albeit in a symbolic rather than physical sense. Both depend upon the extraction of the self as an exchange for the production of life: for the mother, the extraction of the self is to her physical detriment, while for Davies, as an autobiographical author, the loss is ethereal – the author must betray their consciousness in order to produce autobiographical writing. This bond between autobiography and maternity seems, initially, to guarantee the femininity of the form, but Anderson's inclusion of Barthes complicates any sense of certainty over the gendered bias of life-writing:

For Barthes it seems that the mother leads away from theory towards autobiography where, though her dying is represented, her death can be endlessly postponed. Drawn back into a mournful relationship with his mother Barthes writes autobiographically (p. 74).

Once again, the link between maternity and autobiography is made overtly; but while the notion of death being 'endlessly postponed' may have specific maternal relevance to Barthes, it in fact weakens the claim that autobiographical writing is inherently feminine. Autobiography goes further than simply postponing death; it eradicates any possibility of it. Anderson quotes Derrida's belief that a person's 'name can survive him and already survives him [...] speaking and bearing his death each time it is inscribed'.¹⁷ She argues that 'For Derrida the question of the proper name or signature quickly takes on overtones of death since the name with which one signs will always outlive the bearer of that name' (p.81). The name alone produces a legacy, while the act of life-writing is an attempt at immortality; an immortality which, although not inherently masculine, is certainly in opposition to the feminising sign of mortality that Derrida believes the proper name produces. For Davies, however, the feminine connotations of creation must be addressed if he is to use autobiographical writing as a

¹⁷ Jacques Derrida, trans. by Peggy Kamuf & Avital Ronell, Christie McDonald (ed.), *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation: Texts and Discussions with Jacques Derrida* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), p. 49. Cited in Anderson, p. 81.

masculinising influence on his novels and poetry. This concern finds a welcome home during the late nineteenth century:

In the male writing of the *fin de siècle*, celibate male creative generation was valorized, and female powers of creation and reproduction were denigrated [...] Male writers constructed a new myth of creativity in which the work of art was the product of [...] male inspiration, totally independent of even metaphorically feminine cross-fertilization (SA, p. 78).

Homologous parthenogenesis is a recurring trope in late-Victorian literature. Mr Hyde is the creation of Dr Jekyll, while Dorian Gray's portrait – itself a living entity – is the work of Basil Hallward; but regardless of whether or not Davies is sympathetic to this theme, the reality is that autobiography can never be aligned exclusively to either half of a gender binary. The subject's name signifies both death and immortality, which results in a form that is neither masculine nor feminine.



Davies's *AST*, as well as much of his poetry, fiction, and other memoirs, demonstrates the blend between biography and fiction. Anderson summarises how from the late eighteenth to the mid twentieth century critical approaches to autobiography embraced the notion that 'each individual possessed a unified, unique selfhood which is also the expression of a universal human nature' (p. 4). This encompasses a fundamental aim of autobiographical writing – to elucidate while simultaneously appealing to the comfort of the universal. *AST* manages this in its very title. In prefixing 'tramp' with 'Super', Davies complicates what is an otherwise straightforward concept, immediately producing a series of differing responses. The conflict between the new and the universal exists elsewhere. Early twentieth-century readers can find familiarity in those moments that Davies spends in England but are offered a new and exciting

view of America and Canada. A man born into unremarkable circumstances is worth little attention, but transatlantic travel by a working-class man is noteworthy for both its masculine appeal and its rarity: 'international tourism [is] a masculine activity, reserved primarily for the middle and upper classes in the nineteenth century' (Goodman, p. 13).

Davies also creates this divide stylistically. 'The Autobiography of a Super-tramp' is at once a simplistic and complex title. It can be read as an account of the author's life, but it also produces a distance between the author and his subject. This conflict continues in the text's first line: 'I was born thirty-five years ago, in a public house called the Church House, in the town of N-, in the county of M-' is not an unexpected opening to an autobiography. However, its resemblance to certain canonical texts is noteworthy. For instance, Davies's introduction bares remarkable similarity to *Robinson Crusoe*, which begins: 'I was born in the year 1632 in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen who settled first at Hull.'¹⁸ Incidentally, Davies was occasionally likened to Daniel Defoe, a comparison that Davies delighted in (*CB*, p 83). It is a fitting association given *Robinson Crusoe*'s entry to the literary world, where it was presented as a true, autobiographical account penned by the title character. *AST*'s opening also echoes the second line of *David Copperfield*: 'To begin my life with the beginning of my life, I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night.'¹⁹ Stonesifer begins his biography of Davies by commenting on how the writer had 'the boyhood of some Dickens character' (p. 13), and *David Copperfield*, perhaps more than any other Victorian text, straddles the divide between biography and fiction.²⁰ Interestingly, George Bernard Shaw, who

¹⁸ Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1994), p. 1.

¹⁹ Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1994), p. 13.

²⁰ See the following for arguments of this nature: Ira Bruce Nadel, 'Apologize or Confess! The Dilemma of Victorian Autobiography', *Biography*, 5/3 (1982), 189-204, p. 193; Robert E. Loughy, 'Dickens and the Wolf Man: Childhood Memory and Fantasy in "David Copperfield"', *PMLA*, 124/2 (2009), 406-20, p. 408; Julia F. Saville, 'Eccentricity as Englishness in "David Copperfield"', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 42/4 (2002), 781-97, p. 784.

wrote the preface to *Autobiography of a Super-tramp*, argued against his contemporaries' reading of *David Copperfield* as a biographical narrative:

David Copperfield is a failure as an autobiography [...] because when [Dickens] comes to deal with the grown-up David, you find that he has not the slightest intention of telling you the truth - or indeed anything - about himself. Even the child David is more remarkable for the reserves than for the revelations: he falls back upon fiction at every turn.²¹

Davies's presentation of his text as autobiography inevitably grants it greater biographical credibility than Dickens's coded novel. Nevertheless, Shaw's reading of *AST* as an objective biography dismisses the literary merit of the text (and of the genre itself). Shaw speculates that Davies 'would die of shame if he were asked to write such books as *Adam Bede* or *David Copperfield*' (preface to *AST*, p. 8). It is true that Davies considered himself a poet rather than a writer of prose, with Stonesifer explaining that Davies regarded *AST* 'as a pot-boiler and a means to an end, a method by which he could get enough to live on so that he could write poetry' (p. 155). Nevertheless, *AST* should be understood as a carefully crafted narrative with nuanced examples of fictional writing, which exist *alongside* a claimed account of biography. There is, after all, an unreliability surrounding *AST*, with a 'basic artistry' existing in a text 'so frequently heralded for its lack of artificiality' (*CB*, p. 41). Davies also addresses the balance between fiction and non-fiction in his introduction to *The Adventures of Johnny Walker, Tramp*, a text which covers a similar timespan to that of *AST* but focusses more on Davies's interactions with other beggars than *AST* does.²²

Regarding *Johnny Walker*, Davies aimed to produce a text which is as informative as *Beggars* (a collection of essays about tramping), but in order to make *Johnny Walker* appeal to

²¹ George Bernard Shaw, Dan H. Laurence (ed.), *Collected Letters, 1898-1910* (London: Max Reinhardt, 1972), pp. 647 & 652.

²² W. H. Davies, *The Adventures of Johnny Walker, Tramp* (London: Howard Baker, 1970), p. 8. Hereafter referred to as *Johnny Walker*.

a wider readership, he consciously wrote it in a recognisable narrative structure, (*JW*, p. 8).²³ In doing so, Davies repeats a technique that he had previously exercised in *Pilgrimage*, an autobiographical piece of travel-writing which chronicles a journey through Wales and England, documenting Davies's interactions with the local people of each town or village he passed through, as well as the occasional tramp who he meets between stops. Davies begins the majority of *Pilgrimage*'s chapters with a suitably chosen poem, which validates a biographical reading of his poetry and allows for a greater understanding of his perception of masculinity.

There is, however, an interchange between what Davies labels biography and that which he classes as fiction. To presume that these two definitions create the sort of binary that Davies was so keen on installing in his writing – particularly with regards to gender – would be naïve. Rather, his novels contain biographical elements just as his autobiographical work is interrupted by fictitious scenarios, embellishments, and, regarding his amputation, dramatic understatement. 'Davies's life experiences' according to Waterman, 'almost always ostensibly informed his work'.²⁴ Yet, there is nothing 'ostensible' about the ways in which Davies puts himself into his work through the character of Henry Soaring in *A Weak Woman*.²⁵ Soaring represents Davies, ensuring that his novels do not become a wholly imagined narrative but, instead, allow Davies an opportunity for further self-exposure. The complication of form in Davies's work does not come through the inclusion of his life experiences, as there can be no doubt that this is what drives the entirety of his writing. Rather, it is the genre-labelling of his work that creates confusion. Any attempt to separate fact from fiction in Davies's poetry, prose, or what is ostensibly biographical writing is a hopeless endeavour. The underlying biography that exists in Davies's writing enables us to develop a clearer understanding of his views on

²³ W. H. Davies, *Beggars* (London: Duckworth & Co, 1909).

²⁴ W. H. Davies, Rory Waterman (ed.), *The True Traveller: A Reader* (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 2015), p. 10.

²⁵ W. H. Davies, *A Weak Woman* (Covent Garden: Duckworth & Co., 1911).

masculinity, particularly when coupled with the knowledge that the single most defining event in his life was the loss of his leg. While Shaw remarks on the lack of importance that Davies places on his injury in *AST*, saying that he '[loses] a limb with no more to-do than a lobster loses a claw or a lizard his tail' (Preface, p. 11), Stonesifer explains that:

The truth is that Davies [...] worked very deliberately for this extraordinary quietness in narration. He was tremendously proud of his physical toughness [...] and he] knew that this was the turning point [...] This had been a near brush with death indeed, and the real Davies did not take it at all lightly (p. 42).

By focussing on three aspects of his work, it is possible to expose Davies's approach to masculinity and the influence that his amputation has on these views. The initial analysis must centre on the division that he consistently emphasises between the physical body and the spirit. In understanding the link between the two, we are shown how a change to one can have a serious affect upon the other. Yet, despite this connection, the body and mind in Davies's writing exist in a binary. The body and spirit can drastically affect one another, but they are also separate spheres which, when combined, create the self. Just as we have seen in *Peter and Wendy* and *Treasure Island*, 'masculinity' is an ethereal concept, existing in the spirit and exercised through the body. However, the effects of somatic damage on this masculine spirit in Davies's work differ greatly from those shown in the aforementioned texts. The depleted body does not distil masculinity, as it does for Long John Silver and Hook. Instead (and continuing this metaphor), the injured part creates a gap through which manhood seeps.

Davies's amputation must be the centre of this chapter's focus, but this in turn informs our reading of the physicality of those who do not necessarily share the same kind of dismemberment as the texts' author, but who suffer through other physical affliction, such as blindness, or less severe, yet still significant somatic loss. Once again, Davies sets up a binary which runs throughout the entirety of his work. The masculinity that is revered belongs to the virile, physically superior man. In Davies's hierarchy of masculinity, the fighter reigns. Those

who are able to boast a physically accomplished and untainted body are the idealised men, while the impaired are portrayed as pitiful characters. In addition to the body/spirit and fit/injured dichotomies within Davies's work, he also attempts to stabilise a male/female binary, perennially reinforcing it. While Davies does not entertain the possibility of gender fluidity, he does introduce the reader to a woman in *AST* who is able to pass as a man for a cross-Atlantic voyage; but this experience does not encourage Davies to reconsider his views on the fixed nature of gender, as this binary is crucial to the consolidation of Davies's own masculinity. In *Peter and Wendy*, Hook targets Wendy and Tiger Lily in an attempt to eradicate femaleness from Neverland, thus leaving its ostensible opposition as the only available gender to him. Similarly, Davies advocates a strict binary so that he can burden femininity with a series of negative traits. By doing this within a framework that is so tightly governed by binaries, the traits themselves must exist in opposition to what they are not, and thus whichever trait is associated with the femininity must accordingly see its antonym in masculinity.

ii. *Davies's Descartes*

A consistent feature throughout Davies's writing is his assurance that the spirit and mind reside alongside each other, but that their vehicle – the body – exists elsewhere, in what is a clear subscription to Cartesian logic:

on the one hand, I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am a thinking and not an extended thing, and, on the other, a distinct idea of the body, in so far as it is only an extended and not a thinking thing, it is certain that I am really from my body, and can exist without it.²⁶

²⁶ René Descartes, trans. by Michael Moriarty, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 55.

This is not to say that the two halves are unconnected. On the contrary, Descartes argues ‘I am not present in my body only as a pilot is present in a ship, but that I am very closely conjoined to it and, so to speak, fused with it, so as to form a single entity with it’ (p.57), while Davies’s work shows how damage to one half of this pair can have a drastic effect upon the other. Masculinity is harboured within the spiritual half of this dyad but, unlike the example of Long John Silver, Davies’s version of masculinity is powerless when it exists within the physically afflicted. As far as Davies is concerned, a pre-requisite of idealised masculinity is physical excellence. This was something that he saw in himself as a child and as a young man, as a boxer and captain of his school’s rugby team (*CB*, p. 19). Stonesifer also mentions, on several occasions, how this physical superiority stayed with Davies throughout his young adulthood (pp. 26-27).

Nurturing both the body and the spirit are essential to the formation of the idealised man, and so illness – be it somatic or mental – is incompatible with Davies’s notion of the perfect masculinity. However, there is no character in Davies’s writing who manages to attain this balance, despite his apparent attempts to instil the importance of this in acquaintances such as Brum:

I often reproached Brum for the aimlessness of this existence; telling him we must seek work and attend to other wants than those of the body. I would tell him of the arts, and how the cultivation of them was lost to us through a continual lack of funds. I told him of the pleasures of reading, visiting picture galleries, museums and theatres, and of the wonders of instrumental music, and of the human voice (*AST*, p. 48).

Davies frequently uses the divide between body and spirit as a way of demonstrating his perceptions on masculinity, but he further embeds the importance of such a split by applying it to female characters too. In *A Weak Woman*, both Harry’s sister Maud, and his landlady, Mrs Figgs, are each presented in terms of this Cartesian divide. Regarding Maud’s drinking habits with other women, Harry informs that reader that:

those women had enough restraint to conceal their weakness from their husbands, and to keep the world's respect; whereas my sister, having no strength of mind, could not drink without bringing ruin on herself and others (p. 11).

Alcohol is able to transcend Davies's binary, affecting both body and spirit. Davies saw it as 'the soul's destroyer' (*CB*, p.58) and indeed, in 'The Soul's Destroyer', it receives a negative appraisal:

One morning I awoke with lips gone dry,
The tongue an obstacle to choke the throat,
And aching body weighted with more heads
Than Pluto's dog; the features hard and set,
As though encasèd in a plaster cast;
With limbs all sore through falling here and there
To drink the various ales the Borough kept.²⁷

The impact on the body here is demonstrably negative, with the inconvenience of dry lips quickly giving way to the more threatening image of the body choking itself. The 'plaster cast' suggests a body in need of repair but, in *A Weak Woman*, Davies proposes that succumbing to drink is an act of the mind, despite the physical consequences that follow (Maud's drinking is blamed on her 'having no strength of mind'); and while a strong mind is commonly displayed as a masculine trait in Davies's work, Mrs Figgs is certainly a character of great cunning and intelligence – although her mind is not exercised through the noble pursuit of the arts (with which Davies tempts Brum). Instead, Mrs Figgs manipulates and abuses one of her tenants in order to maximise profits. In removing her false teeth, Mrs Figgs unnerves 'the Major' to such an extent that he is unable to quarrel with her over his poor treatment:

She now had sharp, pinched features that appeared out of proportion to her body, which, as I have already said, was round and fat; in fact, she looked now what she was – a mean, avaricious woman. Her cheeks were hollow, her lips were thin and loose, and her mouth looked cruelly small (*WW*, p. 122).

²⁷ W. H. Davies, *The Complete Poems of W. H. Davies* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1965), p. 44. All poems taken from this collection, unless otherwise stated.

The prosthetic teeth make Mrs Figgs's appearance unremarkable, but in revealing her depleted state, she is able to reduce the otherwise loud and argumentative Major to short, courteous responses. Harry admits that he finds the presence of the toothless Mrs Figgs 'a most disagreeable surprise' that makes him 'quite upset' (p. 123). The uncanniness of Mrs Figgs's altered appearance unnerves both Harry and the Major, with the latter reporting on his interactions with the toothless landlady:

It sends a thrill of horror through me when this woman comes into my room with a different voice and a different face [...] There is something uncanny in it, for she is not the same woman, I fancy, and yet I know all the time that she is Mrs. Figgs, and no other. It startles me, sir; it makes me dumb with horror (p. 68).

The Major's confusion (she is 'not the same woman' and yet he is aware that 'she is Mrs. Figgs, and no other') demonstrates how Mrs. Figgs's physical affliction obscures her spiritual essence. Davies's focus on the separation of the spirit and the body in his women matches his approach to the male characters in his writing, highlighting the importance that such a binary has on Davies's formation of ideal masculinity.

Davies presents the spirit as being separate to the body, with each requiring different resources in order to sustain them. He is adamant that the ideal man can only exist once both halves are developed. In *Dancing Mad*, Norman appears to be a sound candidate for Davies's form of masculinity.²⁸ Upon hearing that his wife, Mildred, has invited the philanderer Richard Hardwick for dinner, Norman goes to his shed and viciously punches a leather ball, (pp. 40-41). This scene encapsulates Davies's idealised masculinity. The shed is a structure designed for the storage of physically demanding tools and machinery, and so to place a punching-ball alongside these utensils only strengthens the shed's importance as a masculine space.

²⁸ W. H. Davies, *Dancing Mad* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1927).

Furthermore, Norman's treatment of Hardwick suggests that he has both the physical and spiritual competency required for fulfilling Davies's criteria on masculinity:

The next moment Richard Hardwick felt himself being lifted bodily by two strong arms, and almost immediately after he was lying in the open street, with his hat and coat at his side (pp. 51-52).

Norman's physical proficiency and his willingness to channel it into such an aggressive manner are characteristics that fit Davies's model of masculinity; but such traits are superficial here, as the man who Norman exerts his masculinity over personifies those traits that Davies's ideal manhood rejects:

We said that Richard Hardwick was a man of great charm, but that is only the verdict of women. Most of his own sex hated and despised him for his lisping voice and effeminate manners. To think that a man like that, with his gushing and feeble manners, who would be no earthly use as a protector in case of danger – to think that such a man should have so much success with women made many a rough and more honest man blush for a woman's stupidity and ashamed of his own sex (*DM*, pp. 26-27).

Norman cannot achieve a perfected manhood by challenging somebody who is so far removed from any concept of the same masculinity. If securing a female partner was a test of Davies's idealised masculinity, then Hardwick's manhood would be revered; but this is not the case. The narrator does not praise Hardwick's 'success with women'. Rather, he partners the positive trait of honesty with 'rough', thus granting the latter term, which is linked to both a fighting body *and* a fighting spirit, with the same favourable connotations as its companion, and scoffs at the notion of a man like Hardwick attempting to fulfil his true masculine role 'as a [woman's] protector in case of danger'. This passage is reminiscent of Davies's poem, 'Men that have Strength':

Men that have strength to rule their sex
Leave women still unmoved;
Men that by women are preferred –
By that strange sex adored and loved –
Will rise by neither deed nor word.

When women's dainty heroes are

Conferring with strong men,
They sit in fear, as dumb as graves;
So, ladies, your sweet darlings, then –
What are they but our strong men's slaves? (p. 310).

There is an attack on the virility of these 'lesser men' in the final line of the first stanza. It is ambiguous as to whether they refuse to physically rise in a labouring or fighting sense, or whether the narrator is suggesting a phallic impotence. Any potential masculinisation that stems from romantic success is undermined by the inability of the 'dainty heroes' to interact with those stronger rulers of manhood, and such interaction is of great importance to the formation of Davies's version of masculinity.

Davies's biographical works often rely upon a series of interactions between the author and his characters. *Pilgrimage*, for example, journals the narrator's nomadic existence between towns, chronicling the conversations and experiences that he shares with strangers. Davies's ideal man must be confident in character as well as physically robust, and so Davies is inevitably excluded from his own version of masculinity as a result of his amputation. 'Men that have Strength' suggests the masculinising consequences of female rejection. The womanising Richard Hardwick of *Dancing Mad* therefore ensures his exclusion from the class of men who 'rule their sex'. He is, instead, one of the 'dainty heroes [... who] sit in fear' in the presence of Davies's idealised men. Norman's treatment of Hardwick is respectable insofar as Davies's criteria for masculinity is concerned, but it does not match the levels reached by the prizefighter. In Davies's continuum of masculinity, boxers trump all other men and, despite his size and despite the aggression that he exhibits towards Hardwick, Norman is unable to utilise his masculine body to the fullest extent as he lacks the required spirit with which to sustain it, specifically when faced with a similarly physical man: '[Norman] had nothing to fear from any man, unless, of course, it was a prizefighter. But Norman was not a fighting-man, for he did not have the fighting spirit' (p. 100). Davies not only demonstrates how the spirit and body

share an inseparable connection (despite existing apart from one another), but he also reveals that the ideal masculinity exists in the physically strong man – so long as his body is accompanied by an adequately strong spirit. Davies may allude to the spirited prizefighter, but this figure does not exist within his writing.



Davies devotes several poems to the question of the Cartesian divide of mind/spirit and body, with each one presenting a figure who is unable to satisfy both halves of the self. In ‘Fancy’, the narrator laments how there are:

Plenty of shops and markets with dead meat,
And other stuff to satisfy man’s flesh,
But little for man’s soul. (p. 125).

The body is fed, but the spirit is left unfulfilled, with the structure of these three lines mirroring the issue at hand. Davies generously affords the first two lines ten syllables, with this abundance matching the wealth of nourishing goods. The third line, however, is discordantly stopped short. Like ‘man’s soul’, the line is left wanting; and while this is a trivial example of the divide, Davies goes on to challenge us with far more unsettling illustrations of how the body and spirit relate. In ‘Dead Born’, the narrator describes:

A perfect child, with hands and feet,
With heart and bones [...]
[Yet] The mortal breath
Is lacking, for this perfect child
Is born in death. (pp. 541-42).

Davies’s use of a stillborn child demonstrates how even a body of perfection is redundant unless it harbours spirit. More interesting, though, is the tone of jealousy which pervades the poem. The perfection of the child is repeated, with special attention paid to its complete body;

a somatic perfection which exists in stark contrast to Davies's own physical condition. The influences of life and time have not impacted the dead child as they have Davies, meaning that its body is one of enviable perfection. Just as autobiography is an attempt at immortality, the child's body is able to preserve a physical excellence that is unavailable to Davies.²⁹ The preservation of the physical body is a crucial criterion for Davies's representation of masculinity; but the absence of 'mortal breath' ensures that the child can never achieve this version of the ideal manhood. The final line of the poem offers a noteworthy contradiction: 'born in death'. Davies is not content with presenting a child who has lived and died; rather, this jarring paradox with which he ends the poem reveals that the child is not simply 'lacking [...] mortal breath' but that it had never breathed to begin with. Despite its preservation of the perfected body, this absence of any spiritual half means that the child symbolises the inaccessibility of Davies's form of masculinity. The narrator of 'Dreaming of Death' ostensibly exists in stark contrast to that of the child in 'Dead Born':

For only my poor body dies,
My mind is still to this life bound; (p. 550).

While the child from the previous poem is 'born in death', this narrator is approaching the end of his life. The narrator is weak in body but strong in mind – the opposite to the physically perfect but otherwise absent baby of 'Dead Born'. However, despite these differences, both of the poems' subjects demonstrate the unavailability of Davies's idealised manhood; and while there is a juxtaposition between these two characters, the narrator of 'Dreaming with Death' shares certain traits with other characters in Davies's poetry. In 'The Fates', the narrator is 'lying sick in bed' with 'no strength in hand or foot' (*CP*, p. 342). As a result of his incapacity,

²⁹ That is not to say that this child is a symbol of Davies's idealised masculinity; indeed, the poem is notable for its absence of gendered pronouns.

he is unable to tend to his ill mother who, it is implied, dies because of her son's inability to care for her.

The figure of the man who is damaged physically, but who is left spiritually and mentally sound, is one which resonates with Davies's own life following the amputation of his leg. It is unsurprising, then, that he presents us with 'The Jolly Tramp':

So that the sun shines bright, I like to rest
All day, to let the body lie in sloth,
And make imagination do the work;
Such work is sweet, and brings no sweat or ache. (p. 65).

The tramp makes his body redundant, with Davies's choice of 'sloth' suggesting a sinfulness in his decision to do so. Yet, the tramp does not rest idly; rather, he chooses to engage his mind, as it is here that his strength exists. There are also similarities between the Jolly Tramp and the narrator of 'The Mind's Liberty', a poem worth reproducing in full:

Poor Body, sitting there so calm,
With scarcely any breath –
Are we rehearsing that last act,
When we shall meet with Death?
Our fire of life is burning low,
And we can feel the cold –
Yet we have had a glorious time,
When all our days are told.
Rest, tired Body, rest in peace,
And trust the Mind, this hour:
With thoughts too kind to tempt the flesh
To act beyond its power. (p. 507).

The inclusion of dashes after 'breath' and 'cold' emphasise the narrator's physical deterioration, with the abrupt breaks suggesting breathlessness. Moreover, Michael Bradshaw has demonstrated how 'the broken line [can evoke] not only silence and fracture, but also the isolated body part itself'.³⁰ While there is no explicit reference to a specific impairment in this poem, there is undoubtedly a depleted body that is being told to succumb to the mind, which

³⁰ Michael Bradshaw (ed.), *Disabling Romanticism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 5.

holds dominion over the narrator. The narrator verbalises the Cartesian divide between body and spirit, and it is the latter which is superior here. He reveals that he has ‘scarcely any breath’ – signifying the loss of spirit that strengthens Davies’s men – and is awaiting an imminent meeting with Death. Physically feeble, a declining spirit is all that is left available to the narrator, and so he insists that the masculinising mind must take full control over the diminishing body. Conversely, ‘The Lodging House Fire’ presents us with an active-bodied narrator – ‘Then out four hours I walked’ – but with a spirit that is drained over time (p. 36). The narrator recounts the previous day (his birthday) with the anniversary reminding him of his own mortality. He talks of how he ‘killed’ twenty of the day’s hours and ‘murdered’ another (p. 36 & p. 37). He repeatedly mentions the fire that he sits in front of, a setting which supports his belief that he is surrounded by hell: ‘Twas hell before, behind,/ And round me hell.’ (p. 36). With impending death, the fire begins to sap his spirit:

For listen: it is death
To watch that fire’s glow;
For, as it burns more red
Men paler grow. (p. 37).

The fire is strengthened at the expense of its victim. The loss of the men is mirrored in the final line of the stanza, with ‘Men paler grow’ considerably shorter line than the other lines in the poem. The narrator loses his spirit to the fire and we know that this spirit is the strong, masculine spirit that Davies reveres because the fire ‘burns more red’ – a consequence of the vitality that the narrator’s spirit has granted it. The use of fire to symbolise life is a repeated motif, having also been used in ‘The Mind’s Liberty’, while Stonesifer notes that ‘The very shortness of the lines adds to the atmosphere of debility’ (*CB*, p, 189).

The image of a drained masculinity is not unique to Davies’s poetry. In *AST*, Davies repeatedly foreshadows the injury that the reader (due to Shaw’s unambiguous introduction to the text) is expecting. Describing a botched robbery, and his resulting apprehension by a police

officer, Davies describes how ‘This terrible cry, taken up by one and another, took all the strength out of our legs, and our own sheer terror brought us to a halt’ (p. 28). The successful burglary in this passage is carried out by ‘terror’, which apprehends the strength from Davies’s legs. His physically fit body becomes redundant once it loses the spirit that fuels it. Through a newspaper’s report of a boxing bout, Davies presents another example of how this ethereal masculinity leaves its physical vehicle: ‘After he was knocked down, he picked himself up painfully, and the blood flowed from his nostrils in copious streams’ (*AST*, p. 87). This boxer should encapsulate Davies’s notion of the ideal masculinity. After all, Davies reveres the prizefighter above all other men. However, the flow of blood that exits the fighter’s nose suggests a seeping of masculinity, not to mention the physical affliction which causes such a loss. Davies’s inclusion of the bout further links physical excellence to an idealised masculinity, saying: ‘I like to see a good scientific bout by men who know the use of their hands’ (p. 87). The fight demands physical excellence, but to satisfy Davies, such physicality must be matched by a ‘scientific’ intelligence or, to put it another way, a fighting spirit.

In *Johnny Walker*, Davies introduces a character whose circumstances create a situation whereby physical deterioration results in spiritual loss:

Can a man enjoy the charms of Nature when his body is in this state? I lie upon a straw mattress which breaks, and the loose straws stick into my flesh: can a man enjoy sleep under these conditions? I sit upon a wooden chair that, after half an hour’s sitting, scrapes my very bones (pp. 180-81).

Unable to enjoy sleep, the man’s mind lacks the rest that it requires in order to fulfil its role in the spiritual half of the self; and this divide is not limited to Davies’s poetry or biographical writing, with Davies presenting it in his fictional work too. In *Dancing Mad*, Davies uses the Sabbath as an opportunity to highlight the division: ‘on this particular Sabbath Day, when men were resting their bodies, there was probably more work for the mind than had ever been known on any previous Sabbath Day’ (p. 218). In *A Weak Woman*, the narrator, Harry, has ‘nothing to

fear for [his] body, and the pleasure of everything to gain for [his] mind' (p. 32). Yet, despite this self-assurance, Harry's masculinity, like that of so many of Davies's characters, deserts him. Worried about the presence of Maud around his wife and younger sister, Harry becomes ill:

The last few days must have made a difference in my looks, for my wife was all the time advising me to see a physician, and threatened to send for one without any consent. I could not, of course, tell her that it was all through worry, and then withhold the cause, so I had to leave her under the impression that something was wrong with my bodily health (p. 280).

Much of Davies's work on the divide focuses on how somatic affliction results in the loss of ethereal masculinity. However, in Harry, we are shown that this process can begin with a loss of the masculine spirit which, in turn, forces the body into deterioration. Having previously boasted about his physical condition and his potential for intellectual excellence, Harry has been stripped of the masculine characteristics with which Davies had originally instilled in him. 'Worry' is not an emotion that Davies's ideal man would entertain, as it contradicts the hyper-macho criteria that exists within his treasured prizefighter.

iii. *Damaged Bodies and Masculine Loss*

Davies's focus on the Cartesian divide demonstrates the importance that he places on this uncompromising split – the body *or* the spirit are fulfilled, but never do both halves achieve excellence. However, given Davies's physical affliction and the biographical nature of his writing, it is unsurprising that so much of his work focuses on the way in which the male body dictates masculinity. Having seen how the body and spirit combine, and how physical excellence is an essential quality for Davies's idealised manhood, an analysis of the way in which Davies expresses physicality reveals how his amputation forms his perception of his own masculinity.

Davies manifests physicality in a variety of ways in order to demonstrate its relationship with masculinity. He venerates macho characteristics, such as physical strength and fighting, but he also reveals the opposite side of his spectrum on masculinity – the debilitated amputee. The amputee in question is often Davies, or a character that has been strongly based upon himself. Other amputees also exist in his work and they are similarly unable to achieve the premium manhood that is reserved for the physically superior man.

Prior to describing the accident that would result in his amputation, Davies foreshadows the injury, a technique which allows him to strengthen the claim that masculinity is best achieved through the unimpaired body:

A coal bunker was smashed by the waves, and large pieces of coal bounded across the deck with a force that would have broken every bone in a man's body. Pieces of heavy wood, that would have cut off a man's feet as clean as a knife, slid across the deck from side to side (*AST*, pp. 102-03).

The boat is a venue of severe threat to the physical body. In forecasting the injury that he will eventually suffer, Davies adds suspense to his narrative while ostensibly fulfilling his biographical obligations; but in addition to this, he is able to establish the importance of somatic superiority. Surrounded by the risk of physical harm, the seaman relies upon a highly functioning body in order to navigate the constant threat of danger. The veneration of physical excellence appears elsewhere in the narrative, and is not reserved to such perilous situations as the previous example:

For a day or two the least exertion tired us, owing to our winter's inactivity, but [...] we were certainly in good bodily condition. It was now that Australian Red made his first proposal. He knew a fruit farm, where he had been previously employed [...] “How long does the work last?” I asked. “All the summer,” he answered, “and good pay for an active man.” (*AST*, p. 82).

Despite admitting his inactivity, Davies is quick to reassure the reader that he is of ‘good bodily condition’, and thus he will be eligible for the ‘good pay’ that is reserved for the ‘active man’. The association between financial security and manliness had a heavy influence in Davies’s

life. Helen Thomas, the wife of Davies's friend, Edward Thomas, describes how Davies hated the idea of anybody thinking he was struggling financially.³¹ He also feared the possibility of his impairment becoming common knowledge amongst his neighbours. Thomas explains how at one point, 'The wooden leg became damaged and Davies was anxious to replace it, but he had a morbid dread of any of the villagers knowing about it' (p. 3). Stonesifer explains how this problem was overcome. Davies's friend, Edward Thomas:

drew up plans for a makeshift affair which would enable Davies to get about, and took it to a Sevenoaks wheelwright, telling him that it was a plan for a cricket bat of a new design (*CB*, p. 73).

It is ironic that Edward Thomas should compare the prosthetic leg – a symbol of Davies's lost masculinity – to a piece of masculinising sporting apparatus. Nevertheless, this episode demonstrates Davies's indecision about how best to attain a respectable level of masculinity. It is a conflict between the private and the public; Davies must decide between harbouring the anxiety that haunts him as a result of his perceived failure in masculinity or minimising this internal struggle in such a way that might publicly reveal the unmanned state which he wishes to keep secret. Davies's prosthetic is designed to function as a replacement for his lost leg, but the supposed ability of it to contribute to the body in the same way that his leg once did is undermined by its deterioration. The damaged prosthetic is a constant reminder to Davies of his own emasculation and so it must be replaced; but in replacing it, Davies risks exposing his damaged body, and thus his flawed masculinity, to others. This stoicism contrasts with Davies's description of another dismembered tramp:

To make no mistake, I looked at his right hand, and saw the two fingers missing, knowing him for a certainty to be Three Fingered Jack [...] Three Fingered Jack was a slow traveller for, as he with some emotion said – "It broke his heart to hurry and pass through good towns whose inhabitants were all the happier for being called on by needy men." (pp. 170-71).

³¹ Helen Thomas, *A Memory of W. H. Davies* (Edinburgh: Tragara Press, 1973), p. 5.

Jack is nominally defined by his amputation, and while the somatically complete Davies is able to pick fruit for ‘good pay’, Jack is forced to rely on his ‘neediness’ to live. After his amputation, Davies, on more than one occasion, demonstrates an insistence to work for money, rather than to use his impairment as a tool of emotional manipulation:

I explained to him that I was a licensed hawker, but had not yet been long enough at the business to make a success of it. “What,” he cried with some surprise, “a one legged man not to be successful?” (p. 211).

A similar interaction occurs later in the narrative. Davies recounts a meeting with a man who advocates the use of physical affliction as a means within itself to secure income:

he explained, that a man, who is afflicted with the loss of an arm, a hand or a leg, blind, paralysed or lame, should stand or sit in a public place in the town, holding in his hand matches, laces or any other cheap trifle, so that he might invite the charity of passers by. This old man could not understand why this was not done, seeing that it required no eloquence—the very act and the affliction speaking for themselves (p. 262).

The old man of *AST* need only turn to another of Davies’s biographical works – *Johnny Walker* – to see an able-bodied man do exactly this. Walking through Brixton, Davies sees a fellow lodger begging under the pretence that he is blind (*JW*, p. 239). Such an act would not have appealed to Davies. Waterman explains the humiliation that Davies suffered in his attempts to raise funds for his wooden leg, and so the idea of then using his injury as a means to ensure financial security would have been a repugnant proposition (p. 13). Stonesifer takes this further, explaining how:

As a beggar, Davies knew that his wooden stump and pronounced limp would be an endowment, and he never doubted that he could manage to support himself, but he hated the idea. The more need he had to beg, the less he liked begging (pp. 50-51).

Interestingly, it is begging that produces the environment for Davies’s injury. His refusal to pay for a ticket (he had the required funds to pay for one but had chosen not to) forces him to board a moving train, only to find that his path onto the carriage is blocked by fellow beggar and amputee, Three Fingered Jack. Waterman eloquently summarises this moment: ‘A three-fingered Jack inadvertently had led to a one-legged William’ (p. 12). This could have certainly

had an influence on Davies's decision to find work as a hawker but, more importantly, his change in attitude reveals the emasculating effects that his trauma inflicts, as Ava Baron's assessment of Victorian labour philosophy indicates:

the workplace is a key site for the construction of masculinity and male identity. Interrogation of masculinity shows it to be a central, albeit unstable and contested, feature of labor politics.³²

Davies clings to the masculinising comfort of employment as a replacement for the unmanning effects of his dismemberment: 'Not only did the accident nearly kill Davies [... but] it also took away some of his much-prized physical prowess' (Waterman, p. 12). Stonesifer attempts to put a more positive light on the accident, arguing that 'His body had been crippled, but his mind had been set free' (p. 45). There is certainly some truth to this; the amputation halted Davies's nomadic life, and in settling in England, he was able to focus on his literary career.

However, physical prowess is inseparable from masculinity for Davies, and so the loss of the former must inevitably mean the loss of the latter, too. Davies's injury resulted in a reduction of masculinity that could never be reversed. It is unsurprising, then, that he chooses to reinvent himself in his writing, through the character of Henry Soaring in *A Weak Woman*. In many respects, Davies begins such a reinvention in *AST*. The varied range of life experiences that he recounts convinces Michael Cullup that the divide between biography and fiction in the text becomes increasingly blurred:

But one has to remember that there was no-one to verify whether Davies was always telling the truth or not and [...] we are well aware that he was not above embellishing things somewhat [...] Davies was, almost without saying, 'a character'.³³

³² Ava Baron, 'Masculinity, the Embodied Male Worker, and the Historian's Gaze', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 69 (2006), 143-160, p. 143.

³³ Michael Cullup, *W. H. Davies: Man and Poet: A Reassessment* (London: Greenwich Exchange, 2014), pp. 43-44.

Despite Davies acting, according to Cullup, as ‘a kind of detached observer’ in *AST*, he does still have a legitimate claim to biography here which he does not ostensibly have in *A Weak Woman* (Cullup, p. 30). However, through the character of Soaring, Davies reveals far more about the importance of his amputation than he ever does in *AST*. When writing on himself, Davies must negate the importance of his injury. Cullup believes that the reason for this is that:

Davies never allows himself to be seen as genuinely weak or truly vulnerable. He always, through courage and determination, survives. He is proud, in the way that young boys would like to be proud (p. 33).

By transferring his own characteristics and traits onto Soaring, we are shown a different Davies to the one that we see in *AST*. The Davies that exists through Soaring is freed from the dangers of self-exposure that accompany biographical writing. Such a danger would have been a great concern to Davies, whose ambition to distance himself from others affected almost all aspects of his life, from his nomadic existence as a tramp to his standoffish and unequal interactions with women: ‘he called a woman by her first name [but] she must always call him ‘Mr. Davies’.³⁴

Soaring gives Davies an opportunity to recreate himself in an accurate, albeit egotistical manner. The name is the first hint at the link between author and character, with Soaring taking Davies’s middle name (Henry) for his forename. Like Davies, Soaring is a pipe smoker ‘without education’ (*WW*, pp. 92-93). Soaring is also a writer and, while this fact alone does not immediately demonstrate the association between the two men, the more we learn about Soaring’s profession, the more of Davies that we can see in him. Like Davies, Soaring writes poems about nature which are originally rejected by a publisher who ‘cannot find any message in it’ (*WW*, p. 107). Davies faced this exact criticism himself from publishers. Soaring struggles to earn money through poetry, and so turns to prose: “If I cannot make bread by writing pure

³⁴ Osbert Sitwell’s introduction to *The Complete Poems of W. H. Davies*, p. xxvii.

poetry I will make cake and wine by writing filth” (p. 243). This line should not be read as Soaring speaking about a fictitious piece of fiction that he is working on. Rather, it is Davies talking about this very novel. In his introduction to *Johnny Walker*, Davies delivers a scathing attack on *A Weak Woman*:

We will say no more about the novel, and regard it as a pest to be exterminated at sight. I will go so far as to offer twopence for every front page that comes my way, in the same way as we offer a penny for the tail of every rat that is killed. If any of my readers are fortunate enough to get possession of a score or more of that particular novel and send the front pages to my publisher for a reward, then they will be doing more good to the community than any rat-catcher that ever lived, although he boasts of twenty thousand tails (p. 7)

Davies saw himself as a poet rather than a writer of prose, and so the fact that his prose often received greater attention than his poetry irritated him greatly (Waterman, pp. 16-17). However, it is through prose that Davies manages to grant his poetry the level of adoration that he felt it deserved. *A Weak Woman's* narrator, Harry, informs the reader that Soaring is regarded as ‘one of the greatest of living poets’ (p. 193); but despite the self-assurance that Davies demonstrates here, he nevertheless lacks confidence in the reader’s ability to understand Soaring as a reflection of Davies himself.

The allusion to Soaring’s writing is too ambiguous a link for Davies, and so he makes the connection abundantly clear by attributing his own pre-poetry years to Soaring. Just as Davies lived as tramp and began hawking in order to earn money, so too did Soaring (*WW*, pp. 88-90). There is, however, one significant difference that exists between Davies and his avatar, and it is that of their bodily conditions. Soaring is missing a part of his body; but the difference in the two men’s injuries reveal just how important a role Davies’s missing leg played in his life, despite his attempt to dismiss it so casually in *AST*. Soaring is missing a toe (*WW*, p. 98). In order to be a true reinvention of Davies, Soaring cannot be bodily whole and so Davies, who desires the masculine make-up of a spiritually and somatically complete man, ensures that

Soaring's affliction is as discreet and unobtrusive as possible. Davies reimagines an idealised version of himself before allowing a partial honesty to contaminate his fictional incarnation in the form of a missing toe. The loss of a toe cannot impact bodily function in the same way that Davies's missing leg does. Its significance lies, instead, in Davies's inability to recreate himself without some degree of somatic loss, despite the fact that his amputation is a deeply distressing factor in his life. Soaring is a uniting figure, linking Davies's biographical and fictional writing, as well as his fantasy and reality. Davies sees the reality of his own tramping past and his perceived literary greatness in Soaring, as well as the functioning body that he can only fantasise over; but he is unable to stretch his fantasy to that of a personal idealised masculinity. Soaring's missing toe signifies Davies's anxiety over his own amputation. Like Davies, Kristin Lindgren subscribes to a Cartesian divide between the body and the mind, offering a specific focus on physical impairment:

In health, the split between body and mind is experienced as a positive or neutral absence; in illness, this split can be accompanied by a sense of the body as an other to the self, a problematic object that interferes with the self's projects.³⁵

This suggested interference with the self's projects is emphatically demonstrated by Davies's presentation of Soaring. The damaged body intrudes upon Davies's literary activity here just as it does throughout the majority of his writing.

The emasculating effects of amputation are irreversible for Davies's men, as is demonstrated in *Johnny Walker* through a one-legged tramp known only as 'Peggy'. Peggy's nickname demonstrates two things. Firstly, it establishes the importance of the physical body, showing how affliction results in the notion of otherness:

³⁵ Kristin Lindgren, 'Bodies in Trouble: Identity, Embodiment, and Disability' in David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder (eds.), *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 145-65, p. 149.

There was Peggy with his wooden leg, and another called Cockney; and there was one called Yank, and another called Darkey, owing to his dark complexion – and a number more (p. 96).

Cockney and Yank are presumably named in accordance to where they originate from, but Peggy and Darky are forced to carry their physical differences in their names as well as on their bodies (there is also a tramp named ‘One-Eyed’ Jim). The second noteworthy aspect of Peggy’s name is its femininity. A diminutive of Margaret, ‘Peggy’ reinforces the importance of truncation; but by being awarded to a man, the name does far more than this. It associates physical loss with femininity. Peggy is nominally, as well as somatically unmanned, and he recounts an anecdote which confirms the inability of Davies’s men to renew their lost masculinity. While out begging, Peggy approaches a widow whose late husband had also had a leg amputated:

In a little while she came back, carrying a very long paper parcel which she put into my hands, saying, “It will be useful when your own is broken or worn out. Take it, and God bless you! (p. 106).

Peggy is too polite to reject the donation, but he explains to his fellow tramps that these types of prosthetics are specific to their owner and cannot be shared (p. 107). The extent to which Peggy’s prosthetic aids him is already minimal, with this episode further emphasising the helplessness of amputation in Davies’s work.



The body remains as much a focus in Davies’s poetic writing as it is in his prose. Davies uses the natural world as a metaphor for somatic loss, while also focusing a large amount of his poetry on blindness. The treatment of the damaged body in Davies’s poetry is rooted in the

effects that his own amputation inflicts upon him (Sitwell explains how Davies's 'heart showed alarming symptoms of weakness, and that the doctors attributed its condition to the continual dragging weight of his wooden leg' *CP*, p. xxxiv).

'Autumn', which crucially appears as an epilogue to *AST*, is one-such poem which utilises the natural world in order to show the pitifulness of physical depletion, with the opening stanza linking this loss to weakness:

Autumn grows old: he, like some simple one,
In Summer's castaway is strangely clad;
Such withered things the winds in frolic mad
Shake from his feeble hand and forehead wan. (p. 23).

By including this poem in *AST*, Davies connects himself with the Autumn of the poem, and demonstrates his conscious inclusion of biographical writing within his poetry. The poem's language is notably carnal, specifically relating to dismemberment and bodily dysfunction. Davies exists just as he had previously done, with the exception that his now 'feeble hand' is unable to secure those 'withered things' that are shaken from him. It is unsurprising that he regrets the passing of summer: 'I would that drowsy June awhile were here' (*CP*, p. 23). This technique reappears in 'The Jolly Tramp' – a title which holds clear biographical relevance. In 'Fancy', the narrator anthropomorphises a tree, commenting on how leaves clothe 'the naked trees in every limb' (p. 130), while the narrator of 'The Jolly Tramp' compares himself to 'that fallen oak stripped of its bark, Showing the naked muscles of its limbs' before complaining:

O foolish Pride, discomfort is thy due;
That made a savage take an axe to chop
His feet that were too large to fit small shoes. (p. 65).

While this is not the literal amputation that Davies suffered, the narrator's decision to compare tight fitting shoes to amputation hints at the poem's biographical tone.

Less severe examples of bodily loss and discomfort exist elsewhere in his poetry. The narrator of 'The Helpless', for example, describes the difficulties that the bodies of the homeless must endure: 'They have no beds to warm their limbs,/ But with those limbs must warm cold stones' (p. 578). Davies also expresses physical loss by revisiting his seasonal metaphor in 'Old Autumn'. While he was previously 'growing old', Davies is now represented by an autumn that *has* grown old and, rather than missing the virility of summer, he now welcomes the death that winter brings:

Is this Old Autumn standing here,
Where wind-blown fruits decay;
Dressed up in limp, bedraggled flowers
That Summer cast away?
[...]
If this is his poor, pelted face,
With dead leaves soaked in rain,
Come, Winter, with your kindly frost
That's almost cruelly sane;

Take him, with his unwanted life,
To his last sleep and end – (pp. 426-27).

This evolution from 'Autumn' highlights the irreversibility of emasculation. The decaying fruits and 'limp, bedraggled flowers' are not just examples of a natural deterioration, but they also represent the loss of a sexualised masculinity. Summer symbolises youth and virility, while its 'cast away[s]' are antonymous to these traits. The 'dead leaves soaked in rain' produce two responses. The leaves represent the bodily loss that Davies himself has suffered, while saturating them in rain is a desperate, and ultimately flawed, attempt at regrowth. With this understood, Davies calls for Death, signified by Winter, to take a life which, because of a degenerated body, is now deemed 'unwanted'. The effects of old age on the body is also the focus of 'Worm-Proof':

'Have I not bored your teeth' said Time,
 'Until they drop out, one by one?
I'll turn your black hairs into white,
 And pluck them when the change is done;
The clothes you've put away with care,

My worm's already in their seams – '
‘Time, hold your tongue, for man can still
Defy you with his worm-proof dreams.’ (p. 288).

Time is a malevolent force, gradually reducing the body of the poem's subject, with the indentation of every other line signifying this reduction. After the teeth have fallen out of his mouth, and once he is bald (his hair having already lost its colour), the poem's subject is ostensibly ready for death. Time's worm, having already worked itself into the subject's clothing, is readying itself to feed on the depleted carcass. However, the old man is able to offer some resistance to Time, despite his somatic deterioration. He does this not through physical means, but through the strength of his mind: 'man can still/ Defy you with his worm-proof dreams'. This is reminiscent of 'The Mind's Liberty', which as we saw earlier, ends with a similar sentiment to that of 'Worm-Proof'. The absence of physical competence excludes the subject of either poem from claiming the kind of masculinity that Davies reveres. They must, therefore, utilise the spiritual half of the self in order to satisfy at least some of the criteria that Davies demands for any claim to masculinity.

While there is a clear biographical tone that runs throughout much of Davies's poetry, his own amputation is only ever alluded to. It is instead another form of somatic damage that preoccupies much of his poetry: blindness. The significance of such a focus is made evident by Freud's writing on the subject: 'A study of dreams, phantasies and myths has taught us that anxiety about one's eyes, the fear of going blind, is often enough a substitute for the dread of being castrated' (*U*, p. 160). With castration the most visceral form of unmaning, it is unsurprising that Davies focuses so much of his work on blindness. In *Pilgrimage*, Davies illustrates his condescending attitude towards the blind in a way which also permanently excludes them from his version of masculinity: 'I have always had great sympathy for the blind [...] The blind are the world's children that never grow independent' (p. 176). This belief

coincides with an otherwise unremarkable anecdote that Davies recounts at the beginning of his narrative:

I spoke to a little boy, whom I saw playing alone in the road, asking him what he was going to be when grew up. Of course, I expected to hear him say a sailor, a soldier, a hunter or something else that seems heroic to childhood, and I was very much surprised when he answered innocently, 'A man.' (p. 12).

Blind men are lower than children in Davies's hierarchy of masculinity. The child at least has the opportunity to 'grow up' into manhood, while a blind man can apparently never access this position of independence. In both his poetry and his prose, Davies uses the example of a blind fighter to demonstrate the effects of this affliction, with the following poem, 'The Blind Boxer', referring to the fighter he meets in *Pilgrimage*. The first octave describes the boxer's new profession before reflecting upon his previous work:

He goes with basket, and slow feet,
To sell his nuts from street to street;
The very terror of his kind,
Till blackened eyes had made him blind.
Aye, this is Boxer Bob, the man
That had hard muscles harder than
A schoolboy's bones who held his ground
When six tall bullies sparred around (p. 266).

The pitiful nature of the nut selling is compounded by the boxer's previous reputation. Considering the respect afforded to boxers by Davies, to label this fighter as 'the very terror of his kind' is to elevate him within the most masculine of environments; but his former masculinity is now undermined by his blindness and by his 'slow feet' (he has lost the 'quick feet' which he would undoubtedly have had as a successful boxer). The physical superiority of Bob at his prime is emphasised by the description of his muscles being as hard as bone, but the hypothetical anecdote of the resilient boy who holds off a group of bullies is subverted in the following sestet:

Small children now, that have no grace,

Can steal his nuts before his face;
And, when he threatens with his hands,
Mock him two feet from where he stands;
Mock him who could, some years ago,
Have leapt five feet to strike a blow (p. 267).

Bob is infantilised here in a reimagining of the school playground, surrounded by the sort of bullies that he would have once fought off. Aside from the difficulties associated with his blindness, there is a repetition here of the immobility which was first alluded to by his 'slow feet' in the poem's opening line. His previous ability – to leap five feet – has reduced to the extent that he cannot even reach out two feet and strike his tormentors. 'Drunken men' (to whom Bob was previously a 'god') now steal from the boxer and threaten him with violence (p. 267). His earlier status as a masculine icon has been wholly diminished, and this is reflected in the poem's ballad form:

In a literal sense, the ballad is "illiterature," its style and character explicable only by reference to oral transmission, which, in turn, implies a community virtually illiterate and of reasonably uniform beliefs and tastes.³⁶

The association of the ballad with illiteracy, alongside the simplistic rhyming structure and, at times, remarkably unsophisticated language ('had hard muscles harder than' for example), all serve to present the boxer as a man who has been reduced back to childhood. His nuts, symbolic of manhood, are cracked by drunken men while he is bullied by small children. His blindness has Freudian connotations with castration, and it is responsible for relegating Davies's idealised man to an inescapable childhood state. In an effort to reverse the effects of blindness, the narrator directly addresses the boxer with the use of antiquated terminology:

Poor Bobby, I remember when
Thou wert a god to drunken men;
But now they push thee off, or crack
Thy nuts and give no money back;
They swear they'll strike thee in the face,
Dost thou not hurry from that place;
Such are the men that once would pay
To keep thee drunk from day to day.

³⁶ Albert B. Friedman, *The Ballad Revival: Studies in the Influence of Popular on Sophisticated Poetry* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1961), p. 2.

With all thy strength and cunning skill,
Thy courage, lasting breath, and will,
Thou'rt helpless now; a little ball (p. 267).

Gary Day explains that:

there is plentiful use of archaic diction [in Georgian poetry]: 'blessed', 'wherewith', 'amid', 'thee' and so on. This conscious use of outmoded words may be seen as an attempt to re-create a past where the individual subject was at home in the world.³⁷

Davies does not use this 'archaic diction' at any other point in the poem, but its prevalence is notable during this section. The narrator is attempting to return the boxer to a time when his blindness did not exist, and his masculine superiority was unquestioned.

Davies continues his focus on blindness in 'Pride and Humility', where he combines the consequences of age to the physical body with the emasculating effects of this specific affliction:

He passed me by in April, Lord,
 With what an awful frown!
He held an eyeglass to his eye,
 And looked me up and down.

He passed me by in August, Lord,
 With what a chastened mind!
He held a woman by her arm,
 And walked beside her – blind. (p. 494).

In the space of a few months, the man referred to in the poem has transformed from a short-sighted, judgemental character to a humbled blind man. The man's eyeglass acts as a prosthetic but it is helpless in any attempt to reverse its owner's lost masculinity. The body weakens, with this impacting the spiritual self; the man now has a 'chastened mind'. His emasculation is confirmed by the report that he uses a woman to support him as he walks. His blindness has

³⁷ Gary Day, 'The Poets: Georgians, Imagists and Others' in Clive Bloom (ed.), *Literature and Culture in Modern Britain: Volume One: 1900-1929* (London: Longman, 1993), 30-54, p. 39.

robbed him of physical independence to such an extent that he must now rely upon feminine assistance in order to exercise his depleted body.

iv. *The Lost Sex: 'Hell for Women Made'*

This inclusion of femininity in 'Pride and Humility' points to the final way in which Davies develops his idealised version of masculinity: through a consistent tone of misogyny. Hockey's belief that Davies 'regarded women nervously and with some awe' does not align with much of Davies's writing (p. 42). Unable to reverse the emasculating effects of his amputation, Davies utilises his binary approach to gender by attacking his biological opponent. By ascribing a series of negative characteristics to women, Davies is able to attribute the antonymous traits to men. Femininity is presented as a danger to men, meaning that masculinity can prosper so long as the man in question rejects the advances of femininity.

Davies establishes this method in *AST*, revealing his contempt for women and the femininity that they represent. He achieves this early on in the text, celebrating the modesty of American women in comparison to their British counterparts:

The most pleasing trait in Americans [...] is their respect for women and the way in which the latter do their utmost to deserve it. No sight of a woman behind the saloon bar listening to the ribald jests of drunken men, and no woman at the bar's front drinking glass for glass with her associates. However weak in this respect a woman may be in private, she is certainly too strong to make a public exhibition of her weakness (p. 41).

Davies venerates the respect that women receive in America, but it is a respect that conforms to a patriarchal model. He claims that a woman's private behaviour is of no consequence to him, but her public performance must satisfy his conservative model of femininity. The truth, however, is that a woman's private conduct is of enormous importance to Davies. Stonesifer tells us that, in Davies's personal life, the 'right woman' is one who 'would be willing to stay at home while he visited his literary and artistic friends' (p. 136). It is fitting that Davies should associate feminine immorality with alcohol as he had a complex relationship with both:

A struggle is obvious. Davies glorifies drink in 'Ale', condemns it as the greatest evil in 'The Soul's Destroyer' and 'Hope Abandoned', and presents a realistic view of its effects in 'Whiskey' (*CB*, p. 78).

The irregularity with which Davies handles alcohol is far greater than his inconsistency regarding femininity, although such an inconsistency does nevertheless exist. Davies eventually marries, and while he speaks of his wife with affection, the success of the relationship depends upon her submission to Davies's conservative expectations:

She did not like drink and, although I was a drinking man, I was very pleased to see that. For I did not expect any woman to have the same control as a man in the matter of taking drugs [...] The effect of drink on men is strangely different; it makes devils of some men and angels of others. But the effect of drink on women is to make devils of them all (*LD*, pp. 215-16).

In *AST*, Davies offers an even more unsettling analysis of femininity, drawing upon his experiences of American women:

Husband and wife may be unhappy, but you seldom hear of a woman carrying the marks of a man's brutality as witnesses against him which is so common in the police courts of old England (p. 41).

This could be read as a condemnation of domestic violence (although this would be the extent of Davies's feminist leanings). However, when coupled with his previous account of women drinking, it becomes clear that, while Davies certainly never condones domestic abuse, he seemingly disapproves of its publicising as much as the act itself. American women are admired because they understand their subservient position within the male/female binary while maintaining an accordingly distant and discreet existence. The violence may be described as 'brutal', but it is the woman's choice to not approach the police that is worthy of Davies's approval. Davies is careful not to claim that this violence does not exist – only that it is unreported. Evidently, Davies, like so many of his contemporary writers, finds femininity in the meek and reserved woman, just as he finds masculinity in the physically and socially dominating man.

Whilst American women receive praise from Davies, the same cannot be said for any other examples of femininity that exist in his writing. Femininity is frequently presented as a dangerous concept which threatens masculinity. In *AST*, Davies uses a hazardous voyage in order to demonstrate this threat:

On one trip we had a very stormy passage, and on that occasion the winds and the waves made such a fool of the Welsh Prince that she – to use the feminine gender, as is the custom of every true mariner, of one of whom I am a proud descendant – often threatened to dive into the bowels of the deep for peace (p. 22).

The emphasis with which Davies highlights the use of ‘she’ is noteworthy; it is *she* who is a made ‘a fool of’ and it is also *she* who endangers the lives of the ship’s crew by cowardly threatening ‘to dive into the bowels of the deep for peace’. The ship is a perilous venue. Davies later reveals the working conditions on-board, describing coal bunkers ‘that would have broken every bone in a man's body’ and ‘Pieces of heavy wood, that would have cut off a man's feet as clean as a knife’ (p. 103). The feminised ship is always threatening to inflict trauma upon its passengers, and such an event does eventually occur:

we were hoisting bales of hay for the cattle, and he was assisting me in the hold of the vessel [...] all at once I heard a shout of – ‘Look out, below!’ and down came a heavy bale, striking my companion on the shoulder. He spun around once or twice, and then fell unconscious into my arms. The ship's doctor was at once called, and the poor fellow was taken aft (*AST*, p. 109).

It is revealed that Davies’s injured colleague is, in fact, a woman. She has successfully passed as a man but the injury that she sustains had forced a quite literal unmanning, as her true sex is revealed. While the woman’s ability to pass should convince Davies to reassess his interpretation of gender, he instead uses it as an opportunity to reaffirm his beliefs. It is the woman who is too physically feeble to survive the trip, and her veneer of masculinity is dislodged by the bale of hay that leaves her unconscious.

While the ship is a metaphor for the dangers of femininity, Davies uses *Pilgrimage* in order to reveal a more tangible example of how danger and womanhood are bound:

I did not know what to make of this [...] Here was a young man, healthy and strong, who had work and liked it, but would not do it [...] here was this young man found on the road hungry and penniless, it seemed [...] I put my hand into my pocket and took out twopence [...] and gave them to him. 'Thank you' he said, 'you are very kind. I don't know what will become of me in the end. Most likely I shall die of hunger, for I have no heart to work, after what has happened to me. I have been disappointed in a woman, and that is why I am here now, wishing I was struck by lightning or drowned in a flood (p. 45).

The man has the physical requirements needed in order to achieve Davies's idealised masculinity, but the actions of a woman have drained him of the spirit which was previously accountable for fuelling the physical body: 'Most likely I shall die of hunger, for I have no heart to work'. His desire to be 'struck by lightning or drowned in a flood' ensures a biblical tone and this, in turn, presents the woman in question as an Eve-like figure, complete with the failings that Eve herself is burdened with. 'The Lost Sex', the poem with which Davies opens the chapter, strengthens this claim:

What, still another woman false,
Another honest man betrayed:
Then Heaven is made for only men,
And Hell for women made.

Now, with that false deceitful sex,
Henceforth I have for ever done;
Only one Judas lived a man,
But every woman's one.

Send down, O Lord, ten thousand Christs,
Each one as great as Christ Thy Son;
Not for all men, but just to make
One woman true, just one. (*CP*, p. 265).

Davies employs certain extremities in ensuring that masculinity and femininity are regarded as opposites to one another. The honesty of men trumps the falsehood of women, while the afterlife will finally demonstrate the true difference and standing between the two sexes, with heaven a male-only space. The 'false deceitful sex' evokes the sinfulness of Eve, but Davies is

discontent with the apparent tameness of this comparison and so, through some theological manipulation, he surmises that womanhood descended from Judas instead. 'The Lost Sex' is the clearest example in Davies's writing of his contempt for women and femininity, but such disdain is not reserved to his poetry. Davies also portrays a troublesome femininity in his prose, ensuring that negative traits are attached to femininity while masculinity is granted the positive antonyms by default.

A Weak Woman gifts the reader certain expectations from its title alone. The novel tracks the adult life of Harry, but with an additional focus on his 'wayward' sister, Maud, (p. 25). The difficulty that Maud presents to her family stems from a set of behaviours which are too closely aligned to Davies's concept of masculinity. Harry fears that his wife's weaknesses in this regard will develop under the negative influence of his sister:

She would drink a glass of wine and smoke a cigarette with as much enjoyment as a man. And when I thought of this I feared she should come under the influence of my sister Maud; for my wife only did these things at home, and not elsewhere (p. 255).

Smoking and drinking, particularly in public, is the dominion of men. Maud's father finds her daughter's behaviour to be detestable: "Your drinking habits and vulgar companions will bring disgrace on my house [...] You are a wicked woman, and I wish you were dead," (p. 22). Maud is a threat to cultural norms and, indeed, to the entire gender binary that Davies's idealised society depends upon. This is not to suggest that Maud is comparable to the prizefighter insofar as her masculine traits are concerned. She has 'no strength of mind' and so is unable to claim such levels of masculinity (*WW*, p. 11). Yet, her refusal to conform to Davies's conservative notions of femininity results in her exclusion from her family, as well as from the novel itself. Despite its title, Maud is a minor character in the narrative, disappearing in the early chapters before she returns and is promptly murdered at the end of the novel. Harry explains that 'She was not the weak, charming woman that appears for a man's protection, but looked as though

she could take care of herself' (p. 262). This line clarifies the novel's title. Maud is the weak woman precisely because she is *not* weak. Davies's concept of masculinity exists in the physically and spiritually strong man. Therefore, masculinity's binary opposite, femininity, must claim the antonyms for its own. The essence of true femininity exists in the reserved and charming woman, and any woman who harbours such characteristics inevitably embodies a strengthened femininity. Maud's lack of need 'for a man's protection' ensure that Davies's femininity is unavailable to her. Likewise, by 'having no strength of mind' she is also blocked off from the masculine sphere. Maud transcends Davies's binary, which is problematic for a writer who has so consistently advocated this dichotomised split. Unable to exist as masculine *or* feminine, Maud is unable to exist in the novel at all, and so she is exiled, and then killed.

v. ***Coda: A Manhood Unachieved***

Any attempt to analyse Davies's vision of an idealised masculinity without first comprehending the importance of his amputation is futile. Davies consistently trivialises and understates his physical condition, convincing George Bernard Shaw that it was of little consequence to his life. The injury receives scant attention in *AST* and it is cited on just one occasion in his autobiographical *Later Days*, as Davies recounts his first impression of Max Beerhohm. Beerhohm makes an ambiguous reference to a 'lame dog', which Davies understands to be directed at him personally. He takes offence to this ('for I was *lame*'), but that is the extent to which his amputation is mentioned, (*LD*, p. 191). However, through the work of Stonesifer and more recently by Waterman, we are aware of just how big an impact Davies's injury had on him, with Cullup explaining that that it was the event that 'really changed his life forever' (p. 32). The extent to which physical prowess was a pre-requisite for Davies's model of masculinity has been well established. He repeatedly focuses on fighting men, but owning a fighting spirit is not enough to establish masculinity; it must be complimented by physical

superiority. We have seen how the boxer whose defeat is described in *AST* is emasculated by the loss of his bout. Similarly, the 'Blind Boxer' who has been forced to sell nuts in order to make money still 'threatens with his hands', but the threat is rendered impotent by his blindness. Davies gives his opinion on the physically inferior fighter in *Later Days*: 'A prizefighter without a punch is no more than cabbage without boiled beef, or a dish of beans without pork' (p. 22). It is unsurprising to see Davies use meat as a masculinising commodity in this way and, in relation to punching, he brags about the vitality he enjoyed prior to his amputation:

I carried a most deadly punch everywhere I went – the very sight of me tamed everything except the wild landscape [... I] was to be feared and respected [...] When I went down the Iron Mountain Road into Tennessee, all the young buck negroes touched their caps and greeted me respectfully with – 'Good morning, Captain.' (p. 19).

Physical excellence, present in a man who is prepared to exercise it, guarantees a masculinising respect. The closest example of this figure in Davies's work is Davies himself, prior to his amputation; but aside from this, his men lack either the spiritual or the physical strength required in order to attain Davies's idealised manhood, whose recorded experiences would place him above other masculine contenders. Showalter explains how boys' adventure fiction in the late nineteenth century 'conveyed an illusion of eternal masculine youth' (*SA*, p. 80), so it would be difficult for Davies (who lived and chronicled a nomadic and adventurous life, rather than just reading fictitious accounts of them) to valorise any man other than himself.

Davies's body bars him from his own model of masculinity, meaning that such a version is inevitably unattainable to anybody, and his inability to create a perfect man mirrors his failure to develop a strictly masculine form of writing. Convinced of the unmanliness of poetry, Davies uses biography as a shield. He includes poetry at the end of *AST* and throughout *Pilgrimage* in the apparent hope that the perceived masculinity of biography will retract from the supposed

femininity of poetry. However, just as ‘eternal masculine youth’ is an ‘illusion’, so too is the belief that autobiography is inherently masculine. Even if the form is closely aligned to a particular gender, (Anderson highlights its femininity, while Gusdorf presumes its masculinity), Davies’s treatment of autobiography ensures that it cannot serve a distinctly masculine cause. By camouflaging his feminine poetry with biography Davies consequently, albeit inadvertently, contaminates his autobiography with what he considers to be an effeminate form.

Unable to attain his model of masculinity through physical means, and having failed to do so through literary methods, Davies’s final attempt at elevating his own masculinity depends upon the subjugation of femininity. The most striking evidence of this is presented in ‘The Lost Sex’, a poem that makes Stonesifer’s claim – that Davies’s poetry demonstrates his ‘love of women’ – seem absurd. ‘The Lost Sex’ addresses his problems with women, but Davies’s preferred handling of femininity is to omit it altogether. There is a notable lack of women in Davies’s writing, a policy which masculinises both his prose and poetry, with the exclusion of the feminine resulting in masculine inclusion for Davies and his binary-centred approach to writing. Carole Pateman explains how, during the *fin de siècle*, women were ‘potential disrupters of masculine boundary systems of all sorts.’³⁸ Davies’s removal of women from his work ensures that this threat of disruption is minimalised. Nevertheless, such a threat occurs in *AST*, where a woman, disguised as a man, deceives Davies and his shipmates. Not only does she destabilise the binary through which Davies observes gender, but she is also a danger to the men on board the ship. In portraying the one inept worker as female, Davies ensures that competency becomes a masculine characteristic. The woman’s inadequacy is a risk to her

³⁸ Carole Pateman, ‘Trying Transformations: Curriculum Legislation and the Problem of Resistance’, *Signs*, 12 (1987), p. 261. Cited in Showalter (*SA*), p. 8.

colleagues, with the dislodged bales acting as a potential threat to any of her fellow sailors. As a response, Davies removes her from the narrative.

Whether it is thinly veiled or overtly labelled, the entirety of Davies's work is influenced by autobiography, and the marginalisation of women in his writing is no exception to this. He had great difficulty in building relationships with women, having 'grown to hate that period of his life [...] when wine and women ruled his mind' (*CB*, p. 135). The connection between alcohol and women is reminiscent of Kipling's 'The Man Who Would be King', in which the two protagonists sign a contract stating that they 'will not [...] look at any Liquor. Nor any Woman black, white, or brown, so as to get mixed up with one or the other harmful'.³⁹ Rather than being ruled (or harmed) by femininity, Davies ensures that his liaisons with women empower him:

When I was living in poverty and needed a woman I used to go down to Limehouse and have one of the cheap ones for a few pennies. And now that I could well afford to go to Leicester Square or Piccadilly, I find my feet turning East as they used to do! (*CB*, p. 26).

It is noteworthy that Davies rejects central London in favour of heading East. Not only does this evoke images of the oriental Other, but Limehouse in particular was known for its Chinese citizens and a culture of opium and prostitution.⁴⁰ Davies is able to distance himself further from femininity by employing the service of a woman who is racially different, with the consequential linguistic and cultural variances acting as a reassuring barrier between them.

In discussing the hypocrisy between late-Victorian judgement of the 'odd man' and 'odd woman', Showalter is unknowingly characterising Davies:

³⁹ Rudyard Kipling, *The Man Who Would be King and Other Stories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 254.

⁴⁰ Bartlett argues that the opium den that Dorian Gray frequents is Limehouse's Tiger Bay, so this area of London has a *fin de siècle* literary heritage that Davies may be playing upon: Neil Bartlett, *Who Was That Man?: A Present for Mr. Oscar Wilde* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1988), p.144.

Many Victorian men married late or never, lived a bachelor existence, and spent their adult lives with only male friendships. The odd man, however, was not seen as a problem. His life could be one of dignity and honor, or, while he was young, of adventure and challenge (SA, p. 25).

Davies may not have been seen as a problem to others, but there is no doubt that his amputation was problematic to him insomuch that it represented an indomitable blockade to his own, revered version of masculinity.

3

D. H. Lawrence: Broken Bodies and Gendered Space

Out of the strange passion that arose in men during the war, there should have risen the germ of a new idea, and the nucleus of a new way of feeling. Out of the strange revulsion of the days of horror, there should have resulted a fierce revision of existing values, and a final repudiation of the non-valid [...] We had a war, and beat the Germans, and lost our own manhood (*OBM*, p. 221).

For God's sake, let us be men
not monkeys minding machines
or sitting with your tails curled
while the machine amuses us, the radio or film or
gramophone.⁴¹

'England was in a sense already contaminated for [Lawrence] before 1914; before 1914 he was already exulting in a brown, foreign masculinity.'⁴² If D. H. Lawrence had developed a certain hostility towards his homeland and its masculine code prior to the war, then by its culmination in November 1918 such an aversion had advanced into a far more decisive revulsion and abandonment: 'the Great War had flooded Lawrence with waves of revulsion and had drowned his optimism'.⁴³ Writing in 1921 to Anton Kippenberg, a German publisher, Lawrence articulates not only his distaste for England, but for much of Europe:

Mentally, we are all cosmopolitan nowadays. But passionately, we are all jealous and greedy and rabidly national. For my part, I prefer to live abroad and escape as far as possible from the stigma of national interest [...] At the bottom of all European hearts a rabid, jealous nationalism of hate-your-neighbor is the basic feeling [...] the old internationalism of human interest [...] is dead or gone quite silly. In its place is a

⁴¹ D. H. Lawrence, 'Let us be Men' in *D. H. Lawrence: Selected Poems* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 146.

⁴² Hugh Stevens, 'Sex and the nation: 'The Prussian Officer' and *Women in Love*', in Anne Fernihough (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to D. H. Lawrence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 49-65, pp. 53-54.

⁴³ Michael Squires, 'Lady Chatterley's Lover: 'Pure Seclusion'' in David Ellis & Ornella De Zordo (eds.), *D. H. Lawrence: Critical Assessments, Volume III* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1992), 111-26, p. 111.

fizzing, acid internationalism of detestation and spite: not even hatred, for hate is too grand a passion: but spite, jealousy, and acid dislike.⁴⁴

In her assessment of this letter Bridget Chalk stresses the importance of nationalism in early twentieth-century Europe, and Lawrence clearly identifies this as a fundamental explanation for the development of the Great War.⁴⁵ Egbert, the protagonist of 'England, my England', betrays his Lawrentian sensibilities in his attitude towards the war:

No, he had no desire to defy Germany and to exalt England. The distinction between German and English was not for him the distinction between good and bad. It was the distinction between blue water-flowers and red or white bush-blossoms: just difference. The difference between the wild boar and the wild bear. And a man was good or bad according to his nature, not according to his nationality.⁴⁶

Married in 1914 to German aristocrat Freida von Richthofen, Lawrence rejects the anti-German sentiment being propagated in England and instead draws attention to the futility of the war and, in particular, to the devastating impact that it has on English masculinity:

Those that lived, came back disillusioned. They hadn't vindicated their manhood [...] The war hadn't made men out of them, as it was supposed to do. It had only put the final touch to their disillusion and to their hopelessness about their own manhood (*OBM*, p. 220).

Lawrence's treatment of the war has lacked the critical attention that it deserves. Not only does he assess the war's impact on those men who return from the Front, but he regularly recreates the conflict at home, seeing the collieries as miniature warzones. In doing so, Lawrence subverts Christine Berberich's claim that:

in times of war and peace [the English countryside] has been conjured up [...] to express nostalgia and hope, a sense of belonging, a yearning for home; and as something that needs to be defended at all cost.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ D. H. Lawrence; James T. Boulton & Andrew Robertson (eds.), *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 679-80.

⁴⁵ Bridget Chalk, 'I Am Not England': Narrative and National Identity in 'Aaron's Rod' and 'Sea and Sardinia', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 31/3 (2008), 54-70, p. 54.

⁴⁶ D. H. Lawrence, *England, My England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 32-33.

⁴⁷ Christine Berberich, 'Isn't This Worth Fighting For?' The First World War and the (Ab)Uses of the Pastoral Tradition' in Petra Rau (ed.), *Conflict, Nationhood and Corporeality in Modern Literature: Bodies-at-War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 26-45, p. 26.

Berberich concedes that some writers challenge this motif and Lawrence certainly does this in his post-war writings. He demonstrates that while the Great War is the major source of masculine damage, this loss is mirrored at home, often through his characterisation of those men who refused, or were unable, to fight. The two most striking examples of masculine loss in Lawrence's work are nevertheless demonstrated by two veterans: Maurice Pervin in 'The Blind Man' and Clifford Chatterley in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. While they differ in terms of their somatic loss, there are many similarities between the two characters. They both return to upper-class, countryside homes, and to women who must suddenly care for their newly impaired husbands; and Lawrence's women begin to assume certain responsibilities at home that would have been considered masculine tasks prior to the war. 'The Fox' and 'Tickets, Please' both serve to demonstrate the extent to which Britain was reliant on women crossing gendered divides of labour, something that the women in these stories achieve with varying degrees of success. Linda Lindsey explains that:

Women were considered helpmates to the men who fought the real battles. War and the preparation for war encourage men to perform according to the highest standards of masculinity. In this sense, war is the supreme standard for defining masculinity.⁴⁸

The reality of the post-war period, however, is that women become far more than 'helpmates' to the returning wounded veterans. Both Maurice and Clifford are infantilised, while their attempts to perform the most basic masculine tasks often prove too difficult for them, and invariably involve the emasculating support of a woman or, worse, another man. Lawrence sees post-war Britain as a country suffering from a palpable masculine loss. Through his work, it becomes clear that those men who went to war took Britain's masculinity with them. The men who are left behind are weak, and unable to live up to the masculine standards that are set

⁴⁸ Linda L. Lindsey, *Gender Roles: A Sociological Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2016), p. 282.

by Lawrence and early twentieth-century society as a whole. The casualties suffered at the war had an inevitable effect on masculinity at home; or that is at least Lawrence's view. Masculine essence either dies at the Front with the man who holds it or it returns, exhausted and drained in the form of the debilitated Clifford and Maurice, or in such a way that it has been otherwise altered, usually in terms of sexuality, such as in Henry's fascination with March's masculine features in 'The Fox', as well as Mellors's love for his old colonel in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Regardless of how this lack of manhood is manifested, Lawrence presents a pitiful Britain in desperate need of a masculinity that the war has largely eradicated.

Bourke's work on the Great War enables us to better understand the conditions required for the pre-war masculine ideal in Britain. Gender expectations were influenced heavily by the state, with the government 'explicitly [using] the education system to teach boys (and girls) what they considered to be appropriate gender roles' (*DM*, p. 13). This policy helped to strengthen the rigidity of gender expectations within the early twentieth-century gender binary: 'The womanly woman was gentle, domesticated and virginal: the manly man was athletic, stoical and courageous' (*DM*, pp. 12-13). Bourke goes on to say that 'The deliberate injuring of another man was part of growing up' (p. 35). The traits identified by Bourke are not often presented in Lawrence's veterans. Maurice is certainly stoic, but his blindness has forced him to drastically reduce his physically challenging work on the farm, while Clifford shows little evidence of fitting any of the conditions set out by Bourke; and while Mellors will not receive as much attention in this study as Clifford, his role as a veteran of the war should not be discarded, as despite the evidence of his athleticism and stoicism Mellors is unable to demonstrate the courage and control that one would expect to see in the ideal pre-war man; an ideal that is repeatedly reinforced in Lawrence's writing. Aside from 'The Blind Man' and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Lawrence's other work emphasises the same model of masculinity described by Bourke – although that does not stop Lawrence's cynical attitude towards the

Great War coming to the forefront. In *The Rainbow*, Anton's belief in war as an important and masculine endeavour is met with scepticism from the Lawrentian Ursula:

'But what would you be doing if you went to war?'

'I would be making railways or bridges, working like a nigger.'

'But you'd only make them to be pulled down again when the armies had done with them. It seems just as much a game.'

'If you call war a game.'

'What is it?'

'It's about the most serious business there is, fighting.'⁴⁹

The masculinising acts of building and fighting are not challenged by Ursula. She instead explains the senselessness of war; and with the war still at an early stage at the time of the novel's publication in 1915, Ursula can be retrospectively understood as a prophetic mouthpiece for Lawrence's own concerns. Ursula laments the futility of the British commitment to infrastructure at the Front, with Lawrence showing the fallout of this in 'Tickets, Please'. Set during the war, the narrator describes how a small town's tramway will 'jump over the canal bridges [... and] often leaps the rails'.⁵⁰ The parallel between bridges and railways here is noteworthy. The men who are able to build these structures are no longer doing so in Britain. The lack of masculinity at home is presented through the inefficiency of traditionally manly endeavours, in this example – engineering. The connection between soldiers and masculinity is repeated in *Women in Love*, through Birkin's introduction of Gerald:

'You're not an artist, then?' she said, in a tone that placed him an outsider.

'No' he replied.

'He's a soldier, and an explorer, and a Napoleon of industry' said Birkin, giving Gerald his credentials for Bohemia.

'Are you a soldier?' asked the girl, with a cold yet lively curiosity.

[...]

⁴⁹ D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p. 310.

⁵⁰ D. H. Lawrence, Stephen Gill (ed.), *Short Stories* (London: Dent, 1996), p. 199. All references to this story, as well as to 'The Blind Man', 'Odour of Chrysanthemums', and 'The Fox' refer to this edition.

The girl looked at Gerald with steady, calm curiosity. He laughed, hearing himself described. He felt proud, too, full of male strength.⁵¹

It is not Gerald's industrial success that interests Gudrun (although it is fitting that Birkin should frame that success in a militaristic manner with the use of 'Napoleon'). She concentrates instead upon Gerald's soldierly credentials, and it is this focus which fills Gerald with masculine vitality. Hermione also sees the inherent masculinity of a soldier, using it as an adjective for her model of manliness:

'Yes' said Hermione slowly. 'I think you need a man – soldierly, strong-willed.' Hermione held out her hand and clenched it with rhapsodic intensity. 'You should have a man like the old heroes – you need to stand behind him as he goes into battle, you need to *see* his strength, and to *hear* his shout... You need a man physically strong, and virile in his will, *not* a sensitive man' (p. 305).

Hermione also touches upon a further condition required from Lawrence's masculine men: marriage. Just as she believes Ursula should have a husband, several characters argue for the importance of a man to have a wife. The most complex example of this appears in a conversation between Paul Morel and his mother in *Sons and Lovers*:

'But you don't want me to marry?'

'I shouldn't like to think of you going through your life without anybody to care for you and do – no.'

'And you think I ought to marry?'

'Sooner or later every man ought.'⁵²

While the relationship between Paul and his mother is uniquely complex, the mother's belief that her son must marry is echoed throughout Lawrence's work. In *The Rainbow*, Tom expounds this wisdom in a speech to the guests of his daughter's wedding:

'Now' continued Tom Brangwen, 'for a man to be a man, it takes a woman –'

'It does that' said a woman grimly.

⁵¹ D. H. Lawrence, *Women in Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 64.

⁵² D. H. Lawrence, *Sons and Lovers* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), p. 300.

‘And for a woman to be a woman, it takes a *man* –’ continued Tom Brangwen.

‘All speak up, men’ chimed in a feminine voice.

‘Therefore we have marriage’ continued Tom Brangwen (pp. 137-38).

The difficulty with marriage in Lawrence’s literary world appears when either half of the couple begins to intrude on the other’s gendered sphere. Lawrence’s intense focus on gender exists alongside his emphasis on the separation between domestic spaces and the outside, a fact that has too often escaped the focus of Lawrence’s critics. It is partly through this divide of setting that we see the complexity with which Lawrence presents Maurice in ‘The Blind Man’, while allowing for a crucial episode between Clifford and Mellors in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*.

However, in order to understand the extent to which Lawrence pushes this idea, it is helpful to first recognise its prevalence elsewhere in his work. Returning to *The Rainbow*, the marriage of Tom and Lydia Brangwen is a relatively happy one by the standard of the novel in question, and this is because each of them remains strictly attached to their allotted, gendered spaces. Tom Brangwen sets his own masculine expectations early on:

Tom felt some importance when the care of the farm devolved on to him. He was only eighteen, but he was quite capable of doing everything his father had done. And of course, his mother remained as centre to the house (p. 18).

Lydia mirrors this attitude, and like Tom’s mother, she takes control of the family’s domestic space:

The mother was [...] was very shy of any outsider, exceedingly courteous, winning even. But the moment the visitor had gone, she laughed and dismissed him, he did not exist. It had been all a game to her. She was still a foreigner, unsure of her ground. But alone with her own children and husband at the Marsh, she was mistress of a little native land that lacked nothing (p. 103).

Tom’s response to domesticity contrasts sharply with Lydia’s comfort, as he longs to escape the stifling setting that he has found himself in:

The evening came on, he played with Anna, and then sat alone with his own wife. She was sewing. He sat very still, smoking, perturbed [...] It was too quiet for him. It was too peaceful. He wanted to smash the walls down, and let the night in, so that his wife should not be so secure and quiet, sitting there. He wished the air were not so close and narrow. His wife was obliterated from him, she was in her own world, quiet, secure, unnoticed, unnoticing [...]

He rose to go out. He could not sit still any longer. He must get out of this oppressive, shut-down, woman-haunt (pp. 91-92).

‘Her own world’ and ‘woman-haunt’, coupled with Tom’s destructive desire to escape this space shows just how vehement the divide between feminine domesticity and the masculine outside can be in Lawrence’s work. Destruction is itself seen as a masculine reaction to calm. Tom’s response to the house being ‘quiet’ and ‘peaceful’ is a restless urge to ‘smash the walls down’. For the most part, though, Tom is away from the domestic scene, engrossing himself in matters of the outdoors, much to the young Anna’s confusion:

He was always hailing one man or another, always stopping to gossip about land and cattle and horses and other things she did not understand, standing in the filth and the smell, among the legs and great boots of men (p. 87).

Unlike her parents’ marriage, Anna’s relationship with Will Brangwen faces greater difficulties, stemming from the crossing of gendered spaces. Indeed, their first days as a married couple evoke an unease from Will which is centered on his inability to access the outside world:

At first, he could not get rid of a culpable sense of licence on his part. Wasn't there some duty outside, calling him and he did not come?

It was all very well at night, when the doors were locked and the darkness drawn round the two of them [...]

But in the morning, as [...] the church clock struck eleven, and he and she had not got up yet, even to breakfast, he could not help feeling guilty [...]

‘Doing what?’ she asked. ‘What is there to do? You will only lounge about.’

Still, even lounging about was respectable. One was at least in connection with the world, then. Whereas now, lying so still and peacefully, while the daylight came obscurely through the drawn blind, one was severed from the world, one shut oneself off in tacit denial of the world. And he was troubled (p. 144).

We see here the origins of the staleness in this marriage that will later manifest itself in Will's desire to leave Anna for another woman. During a solo trip to the theatre, Will, through Lawrence's use of free indirect discourse, articulates a restlessness that would be read as a midlife crisis by modern-day readers:

A gleam lit up in him: should he begin with her? Should he begin with her to live the other, the unadmitted life of his desire? Why not? He had always been so good. Save for his wife, he was a virgin. And why, when all women were different? Why, when he would only live once? He wanted the other life. His own life was barren, not enough. He wanted the other (p. 227).

There are similar problems between Egbert and Winifred in 'England, My England', as Egbert's unwillingness to get a job breeds resentment in his wife:

She began to resent her own passion for Egbert [...] Many a woman would have adored to have him about her all her life [...] But Winifred belonged to another school [...]

But he simply *would* not give himself to what Winifred called life, *Work*. No, he would not go into the world and work for money (p. 15).

The case of Clifford and Connie Chatterley is different from that of Egbert and Winifred, as the intrusion into gendered space is complicated in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by Clifford's injury. Unlike Will Brangwen or Egbert, Clifford does not choose to stay in a domestic space; he is forced to. Connie still experiences the resentment one would expect from a Lawrentian woman who has been forced into such a situation, but rather than trying to push Clifford away from her space, as Winifred does with Egbert, Connie must instead react by intruding upon the masculine outside.

'The Blind Man' is unique in Lawrence's work for its treatment of gendered spaces. While the outdoors and the domestic are still the respective domains of masculinity and femininity, Maurice's injury, much like Clifford's, forces a change in the dynamic that we see in other Lawrentian narratives. This intrusion of space still occurs, but Maurice's level of masculinity fluctuates depending on where he is in his home. Consequently, Maurice's wife,

Isabel, is forced to attempt a masculine role within the Pervin household; and this role reversal is not all that surprising given the First World War experiences of many British women:

The absence of men allowed women unprecedented freedom, while it simultaneously deprived combatant men of their former masculine prerogatives, such as job choice, physical well-being, virility, and life.⁵³

‘The Blind Man’ validates this claim, with Maurice struggling to solve the personal difficulties that are described here. This chapter will demonstrate how Maurice’s domestic experience differs from his outdoor life, and it will explain the importance of this in the context of the First World War and the somatically damaged veteran. It will also establish that a woman’s attempts at masculinity are ultimately flawed, while the man who stayed at home, despite his physical wellbeing, is unable to fill the domestic masculine void.

i. Pastoral Power

Much of the critical attention given to ‘The Blind Man’ has focused, in some way or another, upon D. H. Lawrence’s concept of ‘blood-consciousness’ – his belief that ‘what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true. The intellect is only a bit and a bridle.’⁵⁴ Nils Clausson, Regina Fadiman, and Maren Linett contrast the physicality of the two men in the story, highlighting the somatic strength of the blinded Maurice Pervin in comparison to the relative weakness of his wife’s distant relative, Bertie Reid.⁵⁵ In doing this, critics have demonstrated how ‘The Blind Man’ acts as an archetype for Lawrence’s philosophy. However, Battye’s

⁵³ James S. Campbell, “‘For You May Touch Them Not’: Misogyny, Homosexuality, and the Ethics of Passivity in First World War Poetry”, *ELH*, 64/3 (1997), 823-42, p. 829.

⁵⁴ D. H. Lawrence, Harry T. Moore (ed.), *The Collected Letters of D. H. Lawrence: Volume One* (London: Heinemann, 1970), p. 180.

⁵⁵ Nils Clausson, ‘Practicing Deconstruction, Again: Blindness, Insight and the Lovely Treachery of Words in D. H. Lawrence’s ‘The Blind Man’’, *College Literature*, 34/1 (2007), 106-12, p. 111; Regina Fadiman, ‘The Poet as Choreographer: Lawrence’s ‘The Blind Man’’, *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, 2/1 (1972), 60-7, pp. 61-62; Maren Linett, ‘Blindness and Intimacy in Early Twentieth-Century Literature’, *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, 46/3 (2013), 27-42, p. 36.

suggestion, that Lawrence's valorisation of 'the physical, the sensual and the intuitive deeply prejudiced him against the physically abnormal' (p. 4) highlights the conflicting portrayal of Maurice. While the aforementioned critics view the blind protagonist as the embodiment of a stoic and intensely physical masculinity, there has been little critical consideration given to the role of the Great War and its destabilising effects on masculinity within the story. This is despite it being written during November 1918 – the month in which the war ended, and despite the importance of the injury to Maurice (he is immediately described in terms of his battle scars): 'And her husband, who had been blinded in Flanders, and who had a disfiguring mark on his brow, would be coming in from the out-houses' (p. 175). The story reveals a crisis of domestic masculinity following the war; and yet, it is paradoxically the inability to understand this experience that contributes to such a crisis. Darkness acts as a metaphor for, as well as a cause of, misunderstanding in 'The Blind Man'.

Maurice's blindness contributes to the loss of his masculinity, while also symbolising the incapability of the text's other characters to see or to understand the war and its effects. Martin Kearney describes Maurice as a 'resurrected [man] struggling for new life', and within this story there is a clear masculine void that none of the characters are able to fill.⁵⁶ Instead, the text begins and ends with an emasculated trio. The first character described is the story's literal blind man – Maurice Pervin, and it is a description that aligns Maurice with the traits required to fit into a post-war masculine ideal. Referring to Bourke's portrait of the strong, healthy physique and its association with First World War masculinity, it is clear how Maurice, with his 'powerful, muscular legs', 'heavy limbs', large hands, and 'thighs and knees [that] seemed massive' (p. 184) fits into this description.⁵⁷ His physical body suggests a virile masculinity but this virility is undermined by his blindness. In this respect, Maurice

⁵⁶ Martin F. Kearney, *Major Short Stories of D. H. Lawrence: A Handbook* (New York: Garland, 1998), p. 48.

⁵⁷ See *DM* (p. 140) for an account of how physical excellence became synonymous with an idealised sense of masculinity in the early-twentieth century.

encapsulates Bourke's characterisation of the damaged soldier: 'In war, however, the injured man was not disabled but mutilated. He was the fit man, the potent man *rendered* impotent' (*DM*, pp. 37-38). It is too simplistic to say that Maurice's blindness has stripped him of his masculinity. Rather, there is a conflict between Maurice's blindness and his otherwise powerful body that exercises itself through contrasting spaces – the domestic (where Maurice's blindness emasculates him) and the outdoors (where his blindness itself becomes inconsequential, and his masculine virility is restored).

As previously mentioned, critical attention has focused largely on the comparison between Maurice and Bertie, the feeble man of letters. However, Bertie's presence in the story does more than guarantee an opposition to Maurice in just these terms. It also presents us with the figure of the man who stayed at home – men who were deeply resented by soldiers at the Front and who, as Fussell points out, were the attention of Sassoon's 'Fight to a Finish', a poem in which returning soldiers turn their bayonets at 'Yellow-Pressmen' before heading to Parliament 'to clear those Junkers out'.⁵⁸ Bertie acts as an opposition to Maurice through which the latter can be more easily understood; but more than this, he represents the supposed femininity of those men who did not go to war. Lawrence presents a domestic Britain in which no men are able to satisfy the post-war masculine demand. The clearest way to demonstrate how gender and physical space interact in this story is to highlight the characterisation of Maurice, Isabel, and Bertie within feminine domesticity, before seeing how these characterisations change in the masculine outdoors.



⁵⁸ Fussell's analysis of 'Fight to a Finish' can be found on p. 86 of *The Great War and Modern Memory*. The poem is available in Siegfried Sassoon, *The War Poems of Siegfried Sassoon* (London: Faber & Faber, 1983), p. 96.

Isabel Pervin finds comfort in domesticity. Describing her journey from the farm to her house, the narrator notes how ‘Isabel was always glad when they had passed through the dividing door into their own regions of repose and beauty’ (p. 184), giving a clear indication of the conscious manner in which the domestic and the outside are divided in this story. As well as finding comfort in the house, Isabel also exerts control, even assuming traditionally masculine tasks: ‘Isabel knocked the logs on the fire, and clouds of brilliant sparks went up the chimney’ (p. 189). Conversely, Maurice’s domestic experience is one of angst, infantilisation, and emasculation.

The domestic version of Maurice is a feminised figure, and this feminisation is most clearly highlighted through an account of him shaving – a masculine act that troubles Maurice: ‘He had to handle the razor very carefully, as he shaved, for it was not at one with him, he was afraid of it’ (p. 186). This ritual demonstrates how the war has remained with Maurice, with the blindness suffered at the Front resulting in a frequent risk to his life. The razor, ‘not at one with him’, is seemingly *against* him, threatening his neck on a daily basis; but more than demonstrating the war’s legacy, this moment also symbolises the femininity of the domestic and the masculinity of the outside. To shave is to create order and neatness, to tame and transform a natural wildness. The conflict between the feminine domestic order and the masculine wild outside is present here. It is no wonder that Maurice fears the razor; it is a feminine threat to his already depleted masculinity. A comparable moment occurs later on in the narrative: ‘The cat had reared her sinister, feline length against his leg, clawing at his thigh affectionately. He lifted her claws out of his flesh’ (p. 194). Regardless of her apparent affection, the female cat and its associated femininity is, like the razor, a physical threat to Maurice’s body. It is worth noting that the cat is described as ‘half-wild’ (p. 194) and this, along with the contradictory affection with which it claws at Maurice, symbolises the conflict between the domestic and the outside within the story. Maurice is at ease outside with the

farmyard animals: 'He milked the cows [... and] attended to the pigs and horses' (pp. 175-76), but it is the cat, the animal most associated with domesticity in this list, that inflicts further physical damage on Maurice.

Maurice is further emasculated by the infantilisation he suffers as a result of his blindness. Listening in to the conversation between Bertie and Isabel, Maurice is characterised not as an innately effeminate man, but as an inherently masculine man who has been relegated to an unmanned, childlike state:

They moved away. Pervin heard no more. But a childish sense of desolation had come over him, as he heard their brisk voices. He seemed shut out – like a child that is left out. He was aimless and excluded, he did not know what to do with himself. The helpless desolation came over him. He fumbled nervously as he dressed himself, in a state almost of childishness [...] He was fretful and beside himself like a child, he had almost a childish nostalgia to be included in the life circle. And at the same time he was a man, dark and powerful and infuriated by his own weakness. By some fatal flaw, he could not be by himself, he had to depend on the support of another. And this very dependency enraged him (p. 187).

This Lawrentian repetition of 'child' serves to emphasise the helplessness of Maurice, acting in opposition to what he is 'at the same time [...] a man'; but this description of Maurice is not universal. It is rooted in Maurice's domestic experience, where he must make the choice between being dependent on others or to function with difficulty. At dinner with Isabel and Bertie, he chooses the latter: 'He touched his food repeatedly, with quick, delicate touches of his knife-point, then cut irregular bits. He could not bear to be helped' (p. 189). Despite Maurice's aversion to feeling reliant on others, that is exactly how his relationship with Isabel is presented: 'She had her husband on her hands, a terrible joy to her, and a terrifying burden. The child would occupy her love and attention. And then, what of Maurice?' (p. 177). Not only is Maurice labelled a 'burden', but he is also implicitly linked with his unborn child in a way that suggests his connection will be that of an older, almost petulant brother rather than the father; but while domesticity stifles Maurice's masculinity, the outdoors offers him a chance to regain it: 'Sightless, he could still discuss everything with [his neighbour], and he could also

do a good deal of work about the place – menial work, it is true, but it gave him satisfaction’ (p. 175). The ‘menial’ nature of the farm work that Maurice carries out suggests that his blindness has still ensured a reduction in his masculine state. However, the intrusion upon the masculine outdoors by Isabel and Bertie serves to strengthen Maurice’s claim to masculinity.

The way in which Lawrence’s men interact with the outdoors results in an understanding of how gender and space combine within his work; and yet, a consideration of how *women* interfere with this bond is equally helpful in strengthening this interpretation. Isabel’s conflicting experience with the outdoors in this story reflects the post-war societal reality that Kirsten Jacobson describes:

Around the time of WWI and especially during the war, there was both an increased expectation for women to take part in the public sphere, and also, paradoxically, a social expectation that women retain a certain privately centered existence. The household remained the proper place for a “lady” [...] A lack of available men led to what had been considered exclusively “men's work” being opened to women [...] After WWI, women were expected to leave “masculine” jobs.⁵⁹

Lawrence shows us this in ‘The Fox’. Henry hints that the farm’s lack of success is due to a lack of masculine control and, in response, March and Banford admit the animosity they feel towards the outside, natural world; an animosity that greatly humours the patronising Henry:

‘There wants a man about the place’ said the youth softly [...] ‘You aren't willing to put yourselves into it.’

‘We aren’t’ said March, ‘and we know it.’

‘We want some of our time for ourselves’ said Banford [...]

‘Yes’ he said, ‘but why did you begin then?’

‘Oh’ said March, ‘we had a better opinion of the nature of fowls then than we have now.’

‘Of Nature altogether, I'm afraid’ said Banford. ‘Don't talk to me about Nature.’

Again the face of the youth tightened with delighted laughter.

‘You haven't a very high opinion of fowls and cattle, have you?’ he said.

⁵⁹ Kirsten Jacobson, ‘Embodied Domesticity, Embodied Politics: Women, Home, and Agoraphobia’, *Human Studies*, 34/1 (2011), 1-21, p. 13.

‘Oh no – quite a low one’ said March.

He laughed out.

‘Neither fowls nor heifers’ said Banford, ‘nor goats nor the weather’ (pp. 246-47).

Like March, Isabel takes interest in the practical necessities of the outdoor, masculine life. We are told that ‘she cultivated a real interest in agriculture and cattle-raising’, and the narrator even hints that she has inherent characteristics that would have been deemed masculine: ‘For she, being at heart perhaps an emotional enthusiast, always cultivated the practical side of life, and prided herself on her mastery of practical affairs’ (p. 179). March is described in similar terms, with the narrator being explicit as to the masculine role that is expected of her on the farm: ‘March was more robust. She had learned carpentry and joinery at the evening classes in Islington. She would be the man about the place’ (p. 233). Her description evokes Mellors’s anger at the emasculated state of post-war society in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*: ‘It’s because th’ men *aren’t* men, that th’ women have to be’.⁶⁰ Yet, regardless of the masculine connotations that both women are associated with, there is still the clear sense that they are encroaching upon a space to which they do not truly belong. This can be seen in their perceived obligation to wear masculine uniforms during their intrusions to the outdoors: ‘[March was] in her puttees and breeches, her belted coat and her loose cap, she looked almost like some graceful, loose-balanced young man’ (p. 234), while Isabel ‘pulled on her overshoes [... and] put on a man’s felt hat, and ventured out along the causeways of the first yard’ (p. 182). Both March and Isabel engage in the kind of performativity that Butler would later establish: ‘gender proves to be performative – that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be’ (*GT*, p. 25). However, Lawrence’s beliefs on gender are clearly at odds with a Butlerian model. In *Women in Love*, Lawrence speaks through the character that he based upon himself – Rupert Birkin, and

⁶⁰ D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 219.

expounds his belief that the separation of men and women into a clear binary is natural and unalterable:

Why should we consider ourselves, men and women, as broken fragments of one whole? It is not true. We are not broken fragments of one whole [...] that which is manly being taken into the being of the man, that which is womanly passing to the woman, till the two are clear and whole as angels [...]

The man is pure man, the woman pure woman, they are perfectly polarised [...] There is only the pure duality of polarisation, each one free from any contamination of the other [...] Each has a single, separate being, with its own laws (p. 207).

In wearing masculine uniforms, March and Isabel are able to mask their femininity, but they cannot eradicate it, or exchange it for the masculinity that their clothes may suggest. Instead, both women are shown to falter in their respective masculine spaces, only to have a man correct the situation. March consistently fails to kill the fox that is damaging her farm, and so Henry takes it upon himself to deal with the problem. Having shot the fox, Henry attempts to transform the prize for his masculine triumph into a feminising gift:

‘He’s a beauty’ he said. ‘He will make you a lovely fur.’

‘You don’t catch me wearing a fox fur’ she replied (p. 274).

Prior to the fox being killed, Henry remarks on the beauty he sees in March when she is wearing feminine clothing, and performing domestic, and thus feminine, tasks:

‘Why’ he said, ‘do you wear a dress, then?’ [...]

‘Of course I do. What else do you expect me to wear but a dress?’

‘A land girl’s uniform, of course’ said he.

And she rose quickly to her feet and took the tea-pot to the fire, to the kettle. And as she crouched on the hearth with her green slip about her, the boy stared more wide-eyed than ever. Through the crape her woman’s form seemed soft and womanly. And [...] he saw her legs move soft within her modernly short skirt. She had on black silk stockings, and small patent shoes with little gold buckles.

No, she was another being [...] Seeing her always in the hard-cloth breeches [...] and thick boots, it had never occurred to him that she had a woman’s legs and feet. Now it came upon him. She had a woman’s soft, skirted legs, and she was accessible (p. 284-85).

Once more, femininity and domesticity are bound, and in his effort to persuade March to wear the effeminate fur, Henry is attempting a violent ownership of her, in which her external appearance must conform to his own sexual desire. There is a vast difference between this destructive relationship in ‘The Fox’ and the marriage of Isabel and Maurice in ‘The Blind Man’, but the similarity exists in Isabel’s inability to succeed in the outside world and, more crucially, how Maurice does, despite his blindness.

ii. *The Home Front*

Lawrence consistently recreates the First World War back in England, often in masculine, outdoor spaces. The most striking example of this exists in his description of collieries, a comparison that Wilfred Owen would later make in his poem ‘Miners’:

And I saw white bones in the cinder-shard,
Bones without number.
Many the muscled bodies charred,
And few remember.⁶¹

Owen gives particular attention to damaged bodies here, using the wartime ubiquity of hostile heat as the specific threat, something which Lawrence alludes to in *The Rainbow*:

As they drove home from town, the farmers of the land met the blackened colliers trooping from the pit-mouth. As they gathered the harvest, the west wind brought a faint, sulphurous smell of pit-refuse burning (p. 13).

The divide between those at war and those at home is brought into close proximity by Lawrence. The pit, like the Front, is a dark, mysterious setting that the reader is not shown. Maurice wears the war through his blindness and his scar, while the colliers are blackened by

⁶¹ Wilfred Owen, *The War Poems* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003), p. 24.

their work, with the 'sulphurous smell' of 'burning' depicting a warzone; and this is not the only example of Lawrence using a colliery in this way. Published in 1911, 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' demonstrates how Lawrence viewed the collieries as spaces of conflict well before the outbreak of the First World War. The description of Rigley shows notable similarities with that of Maurice Pervin:

Rigley was a big man, with very large bones. His head looked particularly bony. Across his temple was a blue scar, caused by a wound got in the pit, a wound in which the coal-dust remained blue like tattooing (p. 55).

Both men are described in terms of their heavy limbs and their scars and, if 'pit' were to be exchanged for 'trench', and 'coal-dust' with 'mud', this passage would be a fitting description of a wartime injury, as would the description of Walter's death:

"it fell at th' back of 'im. 'E wor under th' face, an' it niver touched 'im. It shut 'im in. It seems 'e wor smothered." Elizabeth shrank back. She heard the old woman behind her cry: "What? – what did 'e say it was?" The man replied, more loudly: "'E wor smothered!" (p. 59).

The smothering of Walter inadvertently forecasts the suffocation of soldiers as a result of poisonous gas just a few years after the story's publication, but perhaps the clearest example of how Lawrence recreates the war back in England can be seen in 'Tickets, Please':

There is in the Midlands a single-line tramway system which boldly leaves the county town and plunges off into the black, industrial countryside [...] over canals and railways, past churches perched high and nobly over the smoke and shadows, through stark, grimy cold little market-places, tilting away in a rush past cinemas and shops down to the hollow where the collieries are (p. 198).

This story focuses on life in England during the war, with Lawrence concentrating on the women left behind and the men who were, for a variety of reasons, unable to fight. Lawrence chooses to symbolically reconstruct the war in the English Midlands. The tram system represents the young soldiers' journey from home to the Front. Leaving the 'county town' and '[plunging] into the black, industrial countryside' reflects the transition from the homely to the

frightening unknown, while the canals and railways evoke images of trenches and the railway systems that were constructed between them. The 'single-line tramway' (itself suggestive of a one-way journey with no return) unsurprisingly ends at the collieries, Lawrence's trusted emblem for the recreated war. It is fittingly described as 'the most dangerous tram-service in England' (p. 199).

What marks 'The Blind Man' as an extraordinary story amongst Lawrence's work is not how he resituates the war on the Pervins' estate; we have seen how the repositioning of the war is a common trope in Lawrence's work, so that in itself is unremarkable. Rather, it is the blindness suffered by Maurice (crucially during the war itself) and the way in which this blindness captures the masculine state of the post-war man that makes this story distinctive and worthy of greater critical attention. The blindness serves as a personal injury to Maurice but, more than that, it symbolises the confusion and inaccessible nature of the First World War experience.

As with March and Henry in 'The Fox', Lawrence positions a key interaction between Maurice and Isabel on a farm, and we are immediately made privy to Isabel's fear at encroaching on this masculine space – a dark stable:

She did not stir, because she was aware of the presence of the dark hindquarters of the horses, though she could not see them, and she was afraid [...]

She stood motionless, waiting for [Maurice] to come through the partition door. The horses were so terrifyingly near to her, in the invisible (pp. 182-83).

In an early description of Isabel, we are told of her interest in cattle and agriculture; and yet, she remains fearful of the horses while her husband is at ease around them:

She could hear and feel her husband entering and invisibly passing among the horses near to her, darkness as they were, actively intermingled. The rather low sound of his voice as he spoke to the horses came velvety to her nerves. How near he was, and how invisible!

'Give me your arm, dear' she said.

She pressed his arm close to her, as she went [...] She was nervous. He walked erect, with face rather lifted, but with a curious tentative movement of his powerful, muscular legs. She could feel the clever, careful, strong contact of his feet with the earth, as she balanced against him. For a moment he was a tower of darkness to her, as if he rose out of the earth.

When he stood up his face and neck were surcharged with blood, the veins stood out on his temples (pp. 183-84).

This ostensibly uneventful passage – a man leading his wife out of a stable – demonstrates the place of Maurice’s blindness in the construction of his own post-war masculine identity. This episode stretches far further afield than the stable in which it is set. It suggests a war experience that is responsible for Maurice’s blindness but, more than that, Maurice’s comfort in this setting aligns his masculinity closely *with* the war, with his blindness being integral to that alignment. Symbolically, the shed represents the Front. Terrified by the horses and the physical threat that they represent, surrounded in a darkness that ensures she cannot understand the shed just as she can never understand the war, Isabel has stumbled into a coded trench, where physical endangerment surrounds her. Maurice, on the other hand, performs with a masculinity that we have not seen before in this story.

Having entered the shed with the intention of helping Maurice back to the house, Isabel soon finds herself reliant on him. ‘Give me your arm, dear’ establishes the control that Maurice has over the situation, while the ‘clever [...] contact of his feet with the earth’ demonstrates how, in the dark, Maurice’s blindness is overpowered by his kinetic harmony with this masculine realm. The virile description of Maurice is also noteworthy (Kingsley Widmer notes that ‘The blind man is a sexual figure, Bertie is [not]’).⁶² Walking ‘erect’, this ‘tower’ of a man’s body is bulging with blood and throbbing veins. Maurice is described in overtly phallic terms and the blindness that unmans him in the domestic space becomes invisible to Isabel at

⁶² Kingsley Widmer, *The Art of Perversity: D. H. Lawrence’s Shorter Fictions* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), p. 44.

this point, with 'She did not look at his blindness' suggesting a more erotic tone to the episode (p. 184).

Maurice can regain his masculinity while he is in this masculine space. It would be going too far to suggest that the shed is a reconstructed warzone in the same way that setting of 'Tickets, Please' is, but there is a strong sense that the comfort Maurice feels there, compared to the angst of Isabel and, later, Bertie in a similar setting, comes down to its association with the Front: its overtly masculine essence, its darkness, and its separation from the domestic sphere being familiar to Maurice but acting in stark contrast to the homely spaces occupied by Isabel and Bertie. This passage, along with the fox shooting episode in 'The Fox', are fitting examples of the male-dominating moments that Kate Millet argues are so common in Lawrence's work: 'It is unthinkable to Lawrence that males should ever cease to be domineering individualists'.⁶³ However, it is important to compare this portrayal of Maurice to the description we are given in the domestic setting of the house. There is a naturalness to the erect body of Maurice in the above passage, but when he is described in similar terms in the house, he is demonstrably performing this carnal symbolism of masculinity, at times as a response to his unmanned, damaged state: 'Maurice had a curious monolithic way of sitting in a chair, erect and distant' (p. 188).

The distance that Maurice exudes suggests a certain foreignness to the setting, while 'monolithic' links the masculine erection of the body to the outdoors. The curiosity that Isabel sees in Maurice stems from the unnaturalness of the situation. Maurice's virile posture, associated clearly with the outdoor world, is imprisoned by the domestic furniture that cannot adequately fit with, or support, his body. Lawrence presents this scene as though it were a portrait of Maurice; a portrait that radiates a sense of unbelonging, in which the domestic setting

⁶³ Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (London: Virago, 1993), p. 244.

cannot suitably accommodate the subject's masculinity. This is not the only description of Maurice's erected body in the house. After Bertie asks about his blindness, Maurice 'straightened himself to attend', as if masculinising his body in this way will eradicate any perception that Bertie might have about Maurice's loss of sight and a consequential loss of masculine identity (p. 191). Both of these examples suggest that, rather than returning from the war, Maurice has returned *with* it. The mention of his blindness prompts Maurice to set his body to attention in a militaristic manner, while the distance that Isabel senses in Maurice suggests that part of him is still attached to the war. This claim is strengthened by the 'devastating fits of depression' that Maurice undergoes, where he exhibits behaviour that is symptomatic of shellshock:

[The depression] seemed to lay waste his whole being. It was worse than depression – a black misery, when his own life was a torture to him, and when his presence was unbearable to his wife (p. 176).

The war remains with Maurice and its presence underlies the entirety of this story. In seeing its influence through the repeated descriptions of Maurice's body, there is one passage that offers a particularly pertinent comparison to the version of Maurice that is described in the shed:

She watched him enter, head erect, his feet tentative. He looked so strong-blooded and healthy, and, at the same time, cancelled. Cancelled – that was the word that flew across her mind. Perhaps it was his scars suggested it (p. 187).

A similar list of virile descriptors is used for Maurice in both passages but in the above episode his masculine body is somewhat paradoxically 'cancelled' out by his physical affliction. Out of the shed, Isabel does not look at his blindness, whereas in her domestic setting it is his physical affliction that overshadows everything else. This passage goes further than suggesting the intrusion of a man upon a feminine space as we have previously seen. The scar is emblematic of the war, and so it is the *war's* intrusion on the home that is so unsettling to Isabel. If the opposition between the outside and the domestic results in prevalent and

problematic conflicts within Lawrence's writing, then the separation between the war and the home is an exaggerated and more aggressive version of this divide, and this is a division that is embodied by Maurice and Bertie.



Maurice's return from the war is not a return from conflict. Fussell alludes to an aspect of the war's legacy that is visible in Lawrence's writing:

What we call gross dichotomizing is a persisting imaginative habit of modern times, traceable, it would seem, to the actualities of the Great War. "We" are all here on this side, "the enemy" is over there (p. 75).

It is unsurprising, then, that 'The Blind Man' focuses so much on these dichotomised confrontations. 'We' and 'the enemy' become the outdoors and the domestic, as well as Maurice and Bertie. The latter pairing is particularly noteworthy given Fussell's explanation of the relationship between soldiers at the Front and those soldiers who did not go to war: 'No soldier who has fought ever entirely overcomes his disrespect for the staff' (p. 84). Admittedly, Bertie was not one of those military members who stayed at home but it can be safely assumed that the resentment felt by soldiers at the Front towards those back at military bases would have invariably spread to civilian men, as Fussell goes on to argue: 'The visiting of violent and if possible painful death upon the complacent, patriotic, uncomprehending, fatuous civilians was a favorite fantasy indulged by the troops' (p. 86). Lawrence hints at this same antipathy in 'On Being a Man', where he suggests that veterans of the Great War fought 'to make it safe for the cowardice of modern men' (p. 219).

The reason for the dislike between Maurice and Bertie is, like much of 'The Blind Man's' narrative, left unclear. However, the narrator does offer some revealing clues:

From the first the two men did not like each other [...] Bertie adopted a slightly ironical attitude, very offensive to Maurice, who returned the Scotch irony with English resentment, a resentment which deepened sometimes into stupid hatred (p. 178).

The initial dislike is reminiscent of the way in which Gerald feels an instant aversion towards Loerke in *Women in Love* – an aversion that, if not fuelled by, is at the very least manifested through an apparent disdain for Loerke's lack of masculine physicality:

Both Birkin and Gerald disliked him, Gerald ignoring him with some contempt, Birkin exasperated.

'What do the women find so impressive in that little brat?' Gerald asked (p. 444).

Like Bertie, who has 'little short legs' and 'dark grey eyes, with their uncanny, almost childlike intuition' (p. 190), Loerke's anatomy is described as infantile and physically weak: 'His body was slight and unformed, like a boy's' (p. 421). Both Gerald and Maurice are ex-soldiers forced to contend with infantilised men for the attention of Gudrun and Isabel respectively in these conflicts of masculinity, with the veteran attempting to outman the childish civilian. For Maurice, this is a very real concern, as his blindness forces him to doubt the extent to which Isabel loves him:

his blindness and his disfiguring scar is the proximate, apparent source of the dark intensity both he and Isabel occasionally feel. Though he has great faith in their relationship, Maurice nonetheless permits his blindness, and the ugly scar associated with it, to infect his confidence in her total acceptance of him.⁶⁴

Maurice reveals some of these doubts to Bertie towards the end of the story, asking his guest questions about his wife. While there may be a naturalness to gauging the opinion of another for those things that one is unsure of, it does demonstrate the lack of confidence that Thornton

⁶⁴ Weldon Thornton, *D. H. Lawrence: A Study of the Short Fiction* (New York: Twayne, 1993), p. 52.

describes. Further to this, in asking Bertie to describe his scar, it can be assumed that Maurice has either never asked the same of Isabel or, at the very least, that his injury is rarely discussed. This lends more weight to Thornton's reading of Maurice's injury as both an aesthetic and practical obstacle that he must overcome in his marriage, a complication that is unique to the wounded men of the war:

'What I am a bit afraid of' he resumed, 'is that she'll find me a dead weight, always alone with me down here.'

'I don't think you need think that' said Bertie, though this was what he feared himself.

'I don't know' said Maurice. 'Sometimes I feel it isn't fair that she's saddled with me.' Then he dropped his voice curiously. 'I say' he asked, secretly struggling, 'is my face much disfigured? Do you mind telling me?' (p. 194).

Maurice's blindness evidently impacts his marriage, but it also adds a sophisticated layer to his relationship with Bertie as, in his domestic home, Maurice is infantilised by Isabel in the same way that Bertie is (Isabel refers to Bertie's 'childlike intuition' p. 190) and, in addition to this infantilisation, Bertie is repeatedly associated with femininity in the story, beginning with the description of his profession:

Bertie was a barrister and a man of letters, a Scotchman of the intellectual type, quick, ironical, sentimental, and on his knees before the woman he adored but did not want to marry (p. 177).

Bertie's intellectual office job exists in stark contrast to the traditionally masculine professions of the story's other men – the soldiering of Maurice or the farming of Wernham. This feminisation continues through the insinuation of his homosexuality. Edward Carpenter's influence on Lawrence has been well established by Émile Delavenay and its inclusion within 'The Blind Man' is clear (although Delavenay does not make this connection).⁶⁵ In *The*

⁶⁵ See Émile Delavenay, *D. H. Lawrence and Edward Carpenter: A Study in Edwardian Transition* (London: Heinemann, 1971), pp. 21-27 for a comprehensive account of the link between Lawrence and Carpenter.

Intermediate Sex, Edward Carpenter describes the relationship between homosexual men and heterosexual women:

though naturally not inclined to 'fall in love' in this direction, such men are by their nature drawn rather near to women, and it would seem that they often feel a singular appreciation and understanding of the emotional needs and destinies of the other sex, leading in many cases to a genuine though what is called 'Platonic' friendship.⁶⁶

While Bertie's sexuality is never made explicit, Lawrence's description of him is a manifestation of Carpenter's argument:

He was a bachelor [...] He lived in beautiful rooms overlooking the river, guarded by a faithful man-servant. And he had his friends among the fair sex – not lovers, friends. So long as he could avoid any danger of courtship or marriage, he adored a few good women with constant and unflinching homage [...] But if they seemed to encroach on him, he withdrew and detested them [...] He was ashamed of himself, because he could not marry, could not approach women physically. He wanted to do so. But he could not. At the centre of him he was afraid, helplessly and even brutally afraid (p. 190).

Bertie's friendship with women corresponds with a trait that is, according to Carpenter, symptomatic of homosexuality. It is also relevant that Bertie does not live alone, as we might expect from a bachelor, but is accompanied by a 'faithful man-servant'. It is left unclear as to whether his fear in approaching women stems from a simple lack of confidence in executing his heterosexual desire, or whether it is rooted in a more complex blend of his homosexuality and a consequential degree of self-loathing. The shame that he feels would suggest it is the latter, given the standing of homosexuality in early twentieth-century British society, as Campbell demonstrates with regards to Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen:

Owen and Sassoon found themselves enmeshed in constructions of gender that eventually discredit femininity as a moral force. Their understanding of their own homosexuality encouraged them to self-identify as essentially feminine beings with masculine bodies (p. 824).

⁶⁶ Edward Carpenter, *The Intermediate Sex* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1908), p. 35.

The alignment of their own homosexuality with femininity is a rejection of the Hellenistic approach taken by the Oxbridge elite that Sassoon in particular would have mixed with.⁶⁷ It is, however, a subscription to Carpenter's *The Intermediate Sex*:

Both were influenced by Edward Carpenter's theories of homosexuality which, as we can discern from the title of his primary text on the subject, "The Intermediate Sex," fall decidedly within the gender inversion trope. For Carpenter, the homosexual, or Intermediate [...] results from an intermixture of the body of one sex with the psyche of the other. The male Intermediate's mind is thus essentially feminine, in that it works primarily through intuition and instinct, thus fitting well with Romantic conceptions of the Poet (Campbell, pp. 827-28).

Once again, we see the influence of Carpenter shown through Bertie, who is described in similar terms to those 'Romantic conceptions of the Poet' that Campbell lists:

[Bertie was] the intellectual type, quick, ironical, sentimental [... Maurice] was just the opposite to Bertie, whose mind was much quicker than his emotions, which were not so very fine (pp. 177-78).

If Bertie and Maurice are opposites, it is not made evident in the story's domestic setting. Just as Isabel sees Maurice as a burden in their home life, she 'patronises' Bertie (p. 190), and there appears to be little difference between the two men during the episodes within the house, with Bertie inadvertently aligning himself with Maurice, and leaving Isabel as the anomaly within the trio:

'I suppose we're all deficient somewhere' said Bertie.

'I suppose so' said Isabel wearily.

'Damned, sooner or later.'

'I don't know' she said, rousing herself. 'I feel quite all right, you know' (p. 192).

Lawrence suggests in 'The Blind Man' that, if there is deficiency within this post-war English society, then it is a deficiency of masculinity. For Bertie, the lack of masculinity that is betrayed

⁶⁷ See Julie Anne Taddeo, 'Plato's Apostles: Edwardian Cambridge and the 'New Style of Love'', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 8/2 (1997), 196-228, p. 829.

by him not going to the war is now compounded by having to face those men who *did* fight. Yet, those men have a manhood that has been depleted *by* the war. The true opposition that exists between Bertie and Maurice is demonstrated in the final part of the story. While the two men are equal in their deficiency in a domestic setting, Maurice demonstrates his domination over Bertie when they meet in the masculine, outdoor space. Bertie shows an immediate fear of leaving the comfort of the house for the threatening outside: ‘He shrank from the wet and roaring night. Such weather had a nervous effect on him: too much moisture everywhere made him feel almost imbecile’ (p. 193). He enters the barn that Maurice is working in to begin the culminating episode of the story which encapsulates the way in which the war, mystery, and darkness are constantly working together throughout this narrative.

iii. *Blindness and the Untranslatable War*

For all that we are told about the three main characters in the story, so much remains unknown by the end of the narrative. An early insight into Maurice’s mind presents us with a series of paradoxes: The couple are ‘happy’ and enjoy a ‘whole world, rich and real’, with Isabel gaining ‘inordinate joy’ at having Maurice ‘entirely to herself’ (p. 176). Maurice’s life is described as ‘peaceful with the almost incomprehensible peace of immediate contact in darkness’; and yet, Isabel’s mental state includes ‘weariness’, ‘ennui’, ‘madness’, a longing to escape and an inability to ‘bear’ her husband (p. 176). Likewise, Maurice’s happiness is countered by a life of ‘torture’ which comes about during ‘devastating fits of depression’ (p. 176). Thornton attempts to make sense of these tumultuous emotional states and concludes that the marriage of Isabel and Maurice is a happy one: ‘My view of this story rests upon the belief – reached after considerable heuristic trial and error – that the marriage of Maurice and Isabel is a fundamentally sound, even a rich, union’ (p. 50). However, Thornton’s determination to find

an answer to this complex problem dismisses Lawrence's tendency to embed his work with uncertainties, something that is particularly prevalent at the end of his narratives.

In 'The Captain's Doll', the reader is unaware as to how the precarious relationship between Hannele and Hepburn will develop after an unconvincing agreement between the two that they will move to Africa.⁶⁸ Similarly, we are not told whether March's happiness will improve upon her arrival in Canada, despite Henry assuring her that it will at the end of 'The Fox' (pp. 312-13). *Women in Love* ends with a disagreement between Ursula and Rupert about their conflicting attitudes towards love (pp. 499-500), while *Lady Chatterley's Lover* finishes with Connie and Mellors being kept apart by the complications of their current marriages (pp. 301-02). The mystery that the above narratives end with exists *throughout* 'The Blind Man', and any dismissal of that mystery is a dismissal of the story's sophistication. There is a recurring difficulty of language, both between characters and between narrator and reader. An example of the latter can be seen in Isabel's restlessness: 'Isabel was agitated, racked with her old restlessness and indecision. She had always suffered from this pain of doubt, just an agonizing sense of uncertainty' (pp. 179-80). The 'doubt' and the 'sense of uncertainty' is not Isabel's alone. In attempting to tell Bertie what has replaced his activity since losing his sight, Maurice is only able to offer: "'There is something' he replied. 'I couldn't tell you what it is'" (p. 191). He then leaves Bertie and Isabel who discuss this further, but little more substance is offered to Maurice's initial vague contemplation:

'Nevertheless, it is a great deprivation, Cissie.'

'It is, Bertie. I know it is.'

'Something lacking all the time' said Bertie.

'Yes, I know. And yet – and yet – Maurice is right. There is something else, something *there*, which you never knew was there, and which you can't express.'

'What is there?' asked Bertie.

⁶⁸ D. H. Lawrence, *The Fox; The Captain's Doll; The Ladybird* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2006), pp. 152-53.

‘I don’t know – it’s awfully hard to define it – but something strong and immediate. There’s something strange in Maurice’s presence – indefinable – but I couldn’t do without it [...]

‘I’m afraid I don’t follow’ said Bertie (p. 192).

Like Bertie, the reader is also unable to ‘follow’. Maurice’s blindness is an emasculating injury, but it also acts as a metaphor for the entire story, a metaphor that highlights how untranslatable the First World War experience is. The darkness of Maurice’s life is mirrored by the inability of Isabel and Bertie to *see* his experiences. Fussell explains how the description of the war was particularly (and unsurprisingly) difficult to achieve for those writers who did not go to the Front:

The point is this: finding the war “indescribable” in any but the available language of traditional literature, those who recalled it had to do so in known literary terms. Joyce, Eliot, Lawrence, Pound, Yeats were not present at the front to induct them into new idioms which might have done the job better (p. 174).

This need not be seen as a criticism of Lawrence, as in the case of ‘The Blind Man’ there is a self-awareness in his writing of that which he cannot understand. He is not attempting to write about an experience he does not know. Instead, Lawrence, like Bertie, is admitting that there is a truth that he will be forever unable to follow.

The enigmas in this story do not require solving. They instead deserve appreciation for what they tell us about the experience of post-war English life. The most iconic of these moments comes, in a predictably Lawrentian style, at the end of the story in a scene that demonstrates the masculine control of Maurice in the outdoor space and the importance of his injury to his war experience. We are also given an insight into the sort of wartime homosociality that is present in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*; a homosociality that goes some way to explaining the crisis of masculinity that we see in Lawrence’s work. This final episode is worth recounting in detail:

‘I thought you were taller’ he said, starting. Then he laid his hand on Bertie Reid’s head, closing the dome of the skull in a soft, firm grasp, gathering it, as it were; then, shifting his grasp and softly closing again, with a fine, close pressure, till he had covered the skull and the face of the smaller man (p. 195).

The physical domination of Maurice over Bertie is not *despite* his blindness; it is because of it. The fact that he cannot see means that Maurice, in an attempt at understanding his guest’s physicality, is able to take hold of Bertie in this threatening manner, holding his skull in one hand. Maurice also comments on Bertie’s height, amalgamating his literal shortness with his symbolic lack of stature in comparison to Maurice within this masculine space. After asserting his dominance, Maurice asks Bertie to return the act of touching:

Touch my eyes, will you? – touch my scar.’

Now Bertie quivered with revulsion. Yet he was under the power of the blind man, as if hypnotized. He lifted his hand, and laid the fingers on the scar, on the scarred eyes. Maurice suddenly covered them with his own hand, pressed the fingers of the other man upon his disfigured eye-sockets, trembling in every fibre, and rocking slightly, slowly, from side to side. He remained thus for a minute or more, whilst Bertie stood as if in a swoon, unconscious, imprisoned.

Then suddenly Maurice removed the hand of the other man from his brow, and stood holding it in his own.

‘Oh, my God’ he said, ‘we shall know each other now, shan’t we? We shall know each other now’ (pp. 195-96)

Bertie’s revulsion is not strong enough to escape the power that Maurice has over him, and the link between his disgust and this control reflects the masculine dominance that the injured veteran had over his non-afflicted peers. Citing a 1917 article from the *Liverpool Chronicle*, Bourke explains how the victim of war-inflicted damage becomes more masculine because of his injury (*DM*, p. 58), something that we see in Maurice when he occupies outdoor spaces. The ritualistic exercise that Maurice carries out here is almost Freudian. Despite being written shortly prior to ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’, Maurice’s attempt to relay his experiences on to another is reminiscent of Freud’s description of children’s play. The difference seems to be that, unlike the child who is ‘passing from the passivity of experience to the activity of play’,

there is not the sense that Maurice wants to rid himself of his war experience (*BPP*, p. 170). Rather, he sees this act as the best way of *sharing* his experience with another given the inadequacies of language in the story.

Bertie could not answer. He gazed mute and terror-struck, overcome by his own weakness. He knew he could not answer. He had an unreasonable fear, lest the other man should suddenly destroy him. Whereas Maurice was actually filled with hot, poignant love, the passion of friendship (p. 196).

This passage encapsulates two of the ways in which masculinity is drastically altered at the end of the war. Bertie embodies Showalter's description of shellshock as 'the body language of masculine complaint'.⁶⁹ Through Maurice we see a sense of friendship developing for the first time since his return from the war, and it is a friendship based entirely on what he now views as a shared experience with Bertie. Unmanned in his domestic home, Maurice's attempt at recreating a military friendship is in fact an attempt to return to his pre-emasculated state, to exist once more alongside those men who can truly understand him. Bourke deals comprehensively with homosocial bonds during the war, explaining how 'it was in the interests of military authorities to foster in servicemen a sense of group solidarity, a merging of the individual's identity with that of the battalion' (*DM*, p. 128). She goes further, suggesting that the lack of feminine presence at the Front ensured that affection amongst the soldiers was not an effeminate sentiment:

The absence of women was only one feature that encouraged male intimacy. The very experience of war also demanded closeness [...] Male comradeship served to make war less unbearable, and more human (*DM*, pp. 136-37).

Yet, despite his confidence that he and Bertie have now 'become friends', the truth is that Maurice's effort to recreate this masculine zone is flawed, with Bertie lacking the masculine spirit required to contribute to it. The ultimate tragedy of the story is how Maurice's blindness

⁶⁹ Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980* (London: Virago, 1987), p. 172.

has convinced him that he has finally regained a sense of post-war masculine belonging (through the ritualistic transference of his experience on to Bertie) while, in what is a cruel paradox, he is left both physically and metaphorically blind to the reality of the situation.

In reference to Wilfred Owen's 'Anthem for Doomed Youth', Sandra Gilbert explains that 'only an act of witnessing, of attesting to the antipastoral reality of the scenes of death and dying, can constitute a properly elegiac tribute to the slaughtered multitudes'.⁷⁰ There is no elegiac tribute from Bertie, but there is an understanding of the war's horror which was previously and pleasantly unknown to him. Bertie embodies the difficulties of interacting with war:

When we imagine we are "seeing" trauma or the signs of its passage, we know immediately that something spectacular and catastrophic has transpired and we fear, also with a sense of immediacy, that normal systems for understanding the event and any of its survivors will be overwhelmed and rendered incapable of adequately capturing its immensity or the subtlety of its sublime pervasiveness.⁷¹

The restricted conversation that Bertie has with Isabel is a result of the trauma signifying an event that cannot be understood by either of them and that cannot be verbalised by the afflicted Maurice. In typical Lawrentian fashion, touch succeeds where language has failed. The 'blood-consciousness' at play here demonstrates that Bertie is the true blind man of the story, unable to see the experiences of Maurice. The story ends with Bertie seeing far more than he wishes to. While Maurice is 'so glad' after their interaction, Isabel is aware of what has truly taken place:

But she was watching Bertie. She knew that he had one desire – to escape from this intimacy, this friendship, which had been thrust upon him. He could not bear it that he had been touched by the blind man, his insane reserve broken in. He was like a mollusk whose shell is broken (p. 197).

⁷⁰ Sandra M. Gilbert, "Rats' Alley": The Great War, Modernism, and the (Anti) Pastoral Elegy', *New Literary History*, 30/1 (1999), 179-201, p. 188.

⁷¹ Maurice E. Stevens, 'Trauma's Essential Bodies' in Monica J. Casper & Paisley Currah (eds.), *Corpus: An Interdisciplinary Reader on Bodies and Knowledge* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 171-86, p. 176.

Elaine Feinstein remarks that Maurice's 'fumbling attempt at making intimate, touching contact with his wife's visitor is felt as a horrible intrusion' and it is in this moment, the final passage of the story, that Britain's crisis of masculinity is most clearly illuminated.⁷² Lawrence presents us with his three post-war archetypes. Firstly, there is Isabel, the woman who faces difficulty in the masculine world of work, linking her to Ursula in *The Rainbow* and, in particular, to Millett's response to her portrayal:

Lawrence finds the new woman in Ursula fairly hard to bear [...] she is a threat and the author's ambivalence toward her is a fascinated combination of sympathy and dislike – even fear [...] If Ursula has [...] the capacity to live in "the man's world" (as Lawrence calls the chapter in which she earns her living) to succeed and achieve in it, then, Lawrence seems to feel, there is very little left anywhere for the male. He is bettered in his own field and beaten in hers (pp. 259-60).

There is a harshness in Millett's critique. It is not Lawrence, but Ursula's father who 'seems to feel [that] there is very little left anywhere for the male' terrified that his daughter might live independently of him (*The Rainbow*, p. 359). Indeed, Ursula demonstrates an admirable stoicism throughout the chapter. It is true that Isabel does not succeed in 'the man's world' that Maurice occupies, but neither does Bertie. Lawrence may well be criticising the new woman's attempt to intrude upon masculine spaces, but he also shows how the man who stayed at home is equally inept at succeeding there. Despite the masculine essence that Maurice is able to regain while in these outdoor spheres (and there are moments in the story of genuine vitality), he remains an unmanned version of his pre-war self, only able to accomplish 'menial' tasks. He is above Bertie in the masculine order, but 'The Blind Man' portrays a post-war Britain in which masculinity was left at the Front, along with Maurice's sight.

Maurice's injury is a fitting companion to his shellshock. Not only does the scar offer a physical signifier to his internal damage in an age of cynicism surrounding male 'hysteria'

⁷² Elaine Feinstein, *Lawrence's Women: The Intimate Life of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 115.

but his blindness reinforces the lasting effects of the war, and not just through its physical effect, but also through its symbolic influence.⁷³ In a story so preoccupied with unknowingness, it is fitting that the impenetrability of darkness undercuts the entirety of the narrative, while Maurice's final vision (which was of the Front) literalises the inability of veterans to metaphorically leave the war behind them upon their return to Britain.

iv. *Symbols of Damage*

'Connie felt again the tightness, niggardliness of the men of her generation. They were so tight, so scared of life!' (*LCL*, p. 69). Connie Chatterley's concern for post-war men in English society is well founded given what we know about the effects of the war on its veterans. Their fear of life exists because they have seen its fragility, and despite the many ways in which her husband, Clifford, and her lover, Mellors, differ from one another, this remains a feature that the two ex-soldiers share. In its presentation of masculinity, the narrative is explicit (in more than one way) in its demand for carnal virility. Sexual and physical vitality are pre-requisites for the ideal manhood in the novel. This promotes Mellor above the impotent Clifford, but the legacy of the war ensures that neither man can claim an idealised sense of masculinity. Just as in 'The Blind Man', Lawrence portrays a post-war England that lacks a masculine ideal. Instead, the two men in Connie's life enjoy opposing masculine characteristics. While Mellors can claim physical superiority over his paralysed rival, he is unmanned by his lack of control over space, a difficulty that does not concern Clifford, the landowner; and although Mellors does not wear the effects of war in the overt manner that Clifford is forced to, there is undoubtedly a hangover from his time at the Front that ensures that his masculine essence remains unavailable to England upon his return.

⁷³ See Showalter (1987) for a comprehensive study of shellshock as a form of 'male hysteria', (pp.167-94).

The critical history of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* has focused largely, and perhaps understandably, on class and gender relations. There remains, however, a gap in the critical landscape for a reading of the text that places Clifford's somatic condition at its centre, around which the rest of the plot is able to develop. Maurice Pervin's blindness offers a symbolic worth in terms of the inability to relay the horrors of the war to those who did not experience it, and in a similar way, Clifford's paralysis is emblematic of the state of post-war British masculinity, and it is a symbolism that developed while the novel itself was being written. Despite Lawrence's insistence 'that he did not start out with the intention of making Sir Clifford Chatterley's "symbolic" of the condition of dominant modern men [...] the portentous moral crippling of Clifford expanded in each rewriting of the novel'.⁷⁴

Harry T. Moore also reads into the symbolism of Clifford's injury, but negates the importance of the war to the narrative:

That it was a war wound which paralyzed Clifford deepens the symbol, yet in itself it is a poor one, for Lawrence's fable. It would have been a stronger story if Lawrence had made Clifford's lack of sex the result of overintellectualization.⁷⁵

Moore's preferred version of the novel would eradicate the important dynamic that exists between Clifford and Mellors. Their experience of the war ensures an inevitable alignment from which important comparisons and contrasts can be drawn, as while the two men may well have had different war experiences, each has returned drastically affected from the Front.

Similar to 'The Blind Man', Lawrence uses physical space in order to highlight the emasculation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover's* major male characters. Lawrence is also more explicit about the nature of post-war masculinity here than he is in his other work, with his

⁷⁴ Kingsley Widmer, 'The Pertinence of Modern Pastoral: The Three Versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*' in David Ellis & Ornella De Zordo (eds.), *D. H. Lawrence: Critical Assessments, Volume III* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1992), 96-110, pp. 99-100.

⁷⁵ Harry T. Moore, *The Priest of Love: A Life of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Heinemann, 1974), p. 425.

greater focus on wartime experience lending itself well to this. Clifford embodies this change, representing on the one hand the sheer ubiquity of amputees in post-war Britain (Bourke goes as far as saying that ‘Limblessness became normalised’ *DM*, p. 60), while also giving an external signifier, through his paralysis, of the internal damage that the war has inflicted upon him:

The face in the bed seemed to deepen its expression of wild, but motionless distraction. Mrs Bolton looked at it and was worried. She knew what she was up against: male hysteria. She had not nursed soldiers without learning something about that very unpleasant disease [...] But hysteria is dangerous: and she was a nurse, it was her duty to pull him out. Any attempt to rouse his manhood and his pride would only make him worse: for his manhood was dead, temporarily if not finally. He would only squirm softer and softer, like a worm, and become more dislocated (*LCL*, pp. 289-90).

There is an evident poignancy in stating that Clifford’s ‘manhood was dead’ and linking this death to the war. Lawrence summarises Clifford’s injuries in a dehumanising way, objectifying him through a series of detached descriptors. He is said to have been ‘shipped home smashed’ (p. 12) as if he were a fragile parcel, while the passage describing the doctor’s work on Clifford’s body seems better suited to a mechanic fixing an engine than it does a surgeon working on a body:

Then he went back to Flanders: to be shipped over to England again six months later, more or less in bits [...] He didn't die, and the bits seemed to grow together again. For two years he remained in the doctor's hands. Then he was pronounced a cure, and could return to life again, with the lower half of his body, from the hips down, paralysed for ever (p. 5).

Clifford is divided in two with the working half above the hips and the broken half below; and yet, despite this portrayal of half a man, he is deemed to have been ‘cure[d]’. Half a man, then, is apparently considered the masculine standard in post-war society. Lawrence reveals that Clifford’s injury ‘was symbolic of the paralysis, the deeper emotional or passionate paralysis, of most men of his sort and class today’, and this is a consistent standard through which

masculinity is presented in the novel.⁷⁶ David Cavitch argues that Mellors is ‘free from any serious complexities or shortcomings’, but such an analysis ignores his desire for solitude, his inability to break from his homosocial bonds with his fellow soldiers, and his lack of control over his own domestic space.⁷⁷



The combination of man and machine is a prevalent pairing in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Lawrence ‘despised’ industrialism (*PL*, p. 424), and so despite the ostensible advantages of technological advancement in the early nineteenth century, the combination of the physical body and industry is portrayed negatively in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.⁷⁸ This negativity exists in both a metaphorical and more literal sense. In terms of the symbolically negative, Gerald Doherty concentrates on Lawrence’s depiction of England’s post-war landscape, saying that ‘The industrial scene becomes a gigantic skin inflammation [... and] the desolate Midlands [... has] figures of charred devastation’.⁷⁹ Doherty is referring to the ‘ravel of dead bracken, a thin and spindly sapling leaning here and there, big sawn stumps, showing their tops and their grasping roots, lifeless’, (*LCL*, p. 42). The death and decay in this passage is yet another example of Lawrence recreating the war back in England, while Doherty’s reading of the landscape as a degenerating human body existing alongside industrialism imitates Clifford’s condition. The lifeless stumps evoke the kind of irreparable limb damage that Clifford suffers from, while their pairing with ‘the industrial scene’ mirrors the mechanised attempt to fix

⁷⁶ Lawrence writes this in *A Propos of “Lady Chatterley's Lover”*, in the same edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* that I reference in this chapter (p. 333).

⁷⁷ David Cavitch, *D. H. Lawrence and the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 196.

⁷⁸ Erin O’Connor, p. 745.

⁷⁹ Gerald Doherty, *Theorizing Lawrence: Nine Meditations on Tropological Themes* (New York: Peter Land, 1999), p. 105.

Clifford with a motorised bath-chair. Lawrence, however, will not reconcile the natural with the industrial, and so this partnership is presented with a mocking irony that further reduces Clifford's already depleted sense of masculinity. Clifford is initially assisted by modernity: 'he had a bath-chair with a small motor attachment, so he could drive himself slowly round the garden and into the fine melancholy park' (p. 5). The chair grants him a masculinising liberation, allowing him to escape the femininity of domesticity and recharge his manhood in the masculine outdoors.

However, Lawrence later demonstrates that modernity cannot truly replace the masculine essence that was lost during the war. After being warned that the chair occasionally 'sticks' (p. 47), Mellors and Clifford engage in the text's only conflict between the two men. Clifford's chair breaks down and while Mellors argues that it needs to be pushed, Clifford is adamant that he will control the chair himself. Clifford '[resents] the interference' from Mellors and tells him to 'Keep off!' when the gamekeeper attempts to help move the chair (p. 188). Mellors twice pushes the chair against Clifford's will, in an act that demonstrates the gulf in masculinity between the two men:

The impotence of his engine also reflects his inability to 'function' as a sexual mate for his wife, whereas the keeper's act of pushing the chair through Wragby Wood suggests the other way he supplements his employer's power, through his phallic union with Connie.⁸⁰

Sedgwick's categorises cuckoldry as a:

necessarily hierarchical in structure, with an "active" participant who is clearly in the ascendancy over the "passive" one. Most characteristically, the difference of power occurs in the form of a difference of knowledge: the cuckold is not even supposed to know that he is in such a relationship.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Dennis Jackson, 'Lawrence's Allusive Art in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*' in David Ellis & Ornella De Zordo (eds.), *D. H. Lawrence: Critical Assessments, Volume III* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1992), 145-170, p. 158.

⁸¹ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 50.

The cuckoldry that takes place here is an unspoken ridiculing of Clifford. Mellors and Connie are in on the same joke. The secret of their affair becomes the secret of their knowledge that Mellors is pushing the chair with Clifford falsely believing that it is working by itself. Sedgwick explains that ‘The most common image for a cuckolding relationship in *The Country Wife* is of one man cheating another at cards’ (1985, p. 50) and the same kind of deception is taking place here. In a conversation that is ostensibly about the chair, Mellors and Clifford could just as easily be talking about the latter’s waning manhood:

‘She’s done!’ said the keeper. ‘Not power enough.’

‘She’s been up here before’ said Clifford coldly.

‘She won’t do it this time’ said the keeper (p. 188).

It is fitting, too, that the chair is feminised throughout this exchange. It acts as a prosthetic for those parts of Clifford’s body that have been affected by his paralysis, and its association with femininity is perhaps Lawrence’s most explicit emasculation of Clifford, as further feminisation results from the chair as an effeminate replacement for the bottom half of Clifford’s body.

One apparently contentious issue, Clifford’s sexual potency, is clarified by the understanding that Clifford’s masculine essence can only exist from the waist upwards. The narrator notes that Clifford is ‘very strong and agile with his arms’ but that he has a ‘burden of dead legs’ (p. 48). Clifford is resigned to his impotency shortly after the war: ‘Crippled for ever, knowing he could never have any children, Clifford came home to the smoky Midlands to keep the Chatterley name alive while he could’ (p. 5). This attitude changes once Clifford begins to involve himself in the masculine (and, in Lawrence’s work, the war-like) sphere of mining:

He even roused himself to go to the mines once more: and when he was there, he went down in a tub, and in a tub he was hauled out into the workings. Things he had learned before the war, and seemed utterly to have forgotten, now came back to him (p. 107).

Just as his mind returns to a pre-war state when he is in the mine, Clifford begins to believe that this involvement will also repair his masculine essence in a physical sense. The act of mining is particularly symbolic, with Clifford attempting to mine that macho world of its virility:

He had said: 'Of course I may have a child yet. I'm not really mutilated at all. The potency may easily come back, even if the muscles of the hips and legs are paralysed. And then the seed may be transferred.'

He really felt, when he had his periods of energy and worked so hard at the question of the mines, as if his sexual potency were returning (p. 147).

Clifford's confidence in the mine and how industrial innovation can complement humanity in both a physical and spiritual sense is reminiscent of his fellow First World War veteran Gerald, in *Women in Love*. Colin Milton explains how Gerald sought to combine mechanical engineering with human endeavour in an attempt at greater industrial efficiency:

In his working life in such a system, the individual tends to become simply instrumental [...] and his humanity is suppressed in the interests of the efficient working of the whole [... Gerald's] aim is to create the perfect machine, with human and mechanical elements in perfect, frictionless interaction.⁸²

Unfortunately for Clifford, his optimism in the sort of vision that Milton sees in Gerald is misplaced. Machine and man fit uncomfortably in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, a fact that we see in the description of Clifford visiting the mine. When he does so, 'He [sits] there, crippled, in a tub' (p. 107). This undignified positioning of Clifford denies him the masculine enhancement that he believes can be made possible by exposure to the mine, while Connie's reaction to his newfound belief in his own virility is, despite its hint of cynicism, a realistic response: 'Connie

⁸² Colin Milton, *Lawrence and Nietzsche: A Study in Influence* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), p. 168.

had looked at him in terror. But she was quite quick-witted enough to use his suggestion for her own preservation. For she would have a child if she could: but not his' (p. 147).

Leonard Kriegel reads Clifford as 'An impotent [...] industrialist into whom Lawrence poured everything he despised about modern industrial society' and, fittingly, the portrayal of Clifford in mechanical terms contrasts sharply with the rustic depiction of Mellors.⁸³ When Connie finds him at work, Mellors is not engaging with industrial modernity like Clifford and his mining enterprise. In contrast, Mellors is 'kneeling, hammering', making a coop for the pheasants by hand, employing the same kind of skillset that Maurice demonstrates in 'The Blind Man'; and just as Isabel becomes entranced by Maurice's masculine essence during the passage in the stable, Connie experiences 'weakening limbs' while she watches Mellors work (*LCL*, p. 87). Mellors's artisanal life extends beyond his work, infiltrating his domestic life too. 'Rustic' is a repeated term, used to describe his hut, his porch, his table and his chair, while his evenings are filled with a basic, pure masculinity: 'He went home with his gun and his dog, to the dark cottage, lit the lamp, started the fire, and ate his supper of bread and cheese, young onions and beer' (p. 119). Morag Shiach believes this to be an exercise in masculinisation, arguing that 'the possible recovery of 'manhood' through labour is imagined, through the activities of the gamekeeper, Oliver Mellors.'⁸⁴

The mechanisation of Clifford is as much a consequence of his unmaning as it is a contributor towards it, forcing him into a perpetuating situation which paradoxically grants him access to masculine spaces, but in such a way that his lack of masculinity is emphasised, be that through the abject way in which he must visit his mine, or through his reliance on Mellors to travel around his own garden. Mellors, in contrast, rejects modernity, and is presented as a

⁸³ Leonard Kriegel, 'The Cripple in Literature' in Alan Gartner & Tom Joe (eds.), *Images of the Disabled, Disabling Images* (New York: Praeger, 1987), 31-46, p. 39.

⁸⁴ Morag Shiach, 'Work and Selfhood in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*' in Anne Fernihough (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to D. H. Lawrence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 87-102, p. 88.

more organically masculine man than Clifford; and indeed, this is true for much of the narrative. However, the recognition that Mellors embodies more masculine traits than Clifford does not justify any claim that he is an icon of idealised post-war manhood. Mellors may not have returned injured from the war but, like Clifford, he has lost a masculine essence that is never regained in the novel.

v. *Clifford Chatterley: Playing at War*

The inherently destructive nature of war does not only expose itself to the soldiers at the Front in Lawrence's writing. In *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, as in much of his other work, the war is recreated in England with a similar level of devastation. Although the narrator is speaking metaphorically, there is pronounced significance in Connie's post-war predicament:

The cataclysm has happened, we are among the ruins, we start to build up new little habitats, to have new little hopes. It is rather hard work: there is now no smooth road into the future: but we go round, or scramble over the obstacles. We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen.

This was more or less Constance Chatterley's position. The war had brought the roof down over her head (p. 5).

The war may not have been fought on mainland Britain, but Lawrence recreates its landscape here, portraying a broken and decaying space which mirrors both the war's landscape and the damaged bodies that were caused by the conflict. Clifford shares Maurice Pervin's conviction that, for the wounded veteran, a return to masculinity is made possible only by a return to the Front or, at the very least, the recreated front in England. For Maurice this is his dark stable, or his metaphysical ritual of transference that he forces upon Bertie. In Clifford's case, Lawrence once again presents mining as a repositioned warzone, with the account of Ted Bolton's death the best example of how this is achieved:

Ted Bolton was twenty-eight when he was killed in an explosion down pit. The butty in front shouted to them all to lie down quick, there were four of them. And they all lay down in time, only Ted, and it killed him. Then at the inquiry, on the masters' side they said Ted had been frightened, and trying to run away, and not obeying orders, so it was like his fault really. So the compensation was only three hundred pounds, and they made out as if it was more of a gift than legal compensation, because it was really the man's own fault (p. 80).

Not only does the explosion evoke the war, but so too does the militaristic phrasing of 'not obeying orders' and the unsympathetic way in which the death of Bolton, portrayed as a deserter, is handled. The comparison of mines with a warzone is a repeated motif in Lawrence's fiction, but it also appears in his essay 'Return to Bestwood': 'The country is the same, but scarred and splashed all over with mines and mining settlements' the use of 'scarred' suggesting a permanent post-war mutilation of the land.⁸⁵

The emasculated Clifford takes advantage of the comparable spaces of the mine and the Front, reasserting himself as an authoritative figure for the first time since leaving the army. There is a Foucauldian element of this that can illuminate not only the position of the miners as surrogate soldiers but also of the novel's mechanised veteran, Clifford himself:

The individual body becomes an element that may be placed, moved, articulated on others [...] The soldier is above all a fragment of mobile space [...] The body is constituted as a part of a multi-segmentary machine.⁸⁶

This kind of language echoes the early description of Clifford's injured body. *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is a demonstration of what happens when a part of the coded military machine is removed. Lawrence does not concentrate on the machine itself, but on one of its missing pieces – Clifford; and Clifford views his miners with the same Foucauldian focus on mechanism that Gerald employs in *Women in Love*:

⁸⁵ D. H. Lawrence, 'Return to Bestwood' in *Phoenix II: Uncollected, Unpublished and Other Prose Words* (London: Heinemann, 1968), 255-66, p. 262.

⁸⁶ Michel Foucault, trans. by Alan Sheridan, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p. 164.

The miners were, in a sense, his own men; but he saw them as objects rather than men, parts of the pit rather than parts of life, crude raw phenomena rather than human beings along with him (pp. 15-16).

However, unlike Gerald, Clifford is unable to fully commit to this detached and objectifying observation of his workers. Jeffrey Reznick recounts an unnamed wounded soldier who, at the end of the First World War, says, 'We are after all but cog wheels in a vast machine'; and this sentiment is mirrored in the way that Clifford and Gerald view their mines and their miners.⁸⁷ Clifford's focus on mining allows him to childishly reimagine a position of virile, militaristic importance, studying the mine as though he is drawing up a battle plan, using reports that are notably written in German, adding to a sense of espionage to his activities:

He began to read again his technical works on the coal-mining industry, he studied the government reports, and he read with care the latest things on mining and the chemistry of coal and of shale which were written in German. Of course the most valuable discoveries were kept secret as far as possible [...] It was far more interesting than art, than literature, poor emotional half-witted stuff, was this technical science of industry. In this field, men were like gods, or demons, inspired to discoveries, and fighting to carry them out. In this activity, men were beyond any mental age calculable (pp. 107-08).

It is easy to see how the engrossing nature of Clifford's work and the strategic position that he has assumed aids him in viewing the mine as a masculinising warzone. There is nevertheless a stark difference between Clifford and Gerald, and it stems from the fact that Clifford's distance from his workers is temporary, disappearing once they recognise his own flawed humanity: 'He was in some way afraid of them, he could not bear to have them look at him now he was lame' (p. 16). The mere recognition of Clifford's paralysis unmans him, undoing the masculinising benefits that he has found in mining. If mining transports Clifford back to a wartime sense of his own masculinity, then the reminder of his wound quickly returns him to the reality of his unmanned, post-war present.

⁸⁷ Jeffrey Reznick, *Healing the Nation: Soldiers and the Culture of Caregiving in Britain during the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 3.

Despite the numerous and obvious differences that exist between Clifford and Mellors, both men returned from the war with a depleted masculine essence. The reason for this in Clifford is far more overt and easier to observe than it is in Mellors, who ostensibly exists as a masculine and virile opposition to his depleted and impotent love rival. However, his masculine essence has been left at the Front, with this absence demonstrated through his longing for the homosociality of the war and through his apparently contradictory desire for isolation in his post-war life.



If the physical trauma of the war was not enough to unman Clifford Chatterley, then the personal care that he receives as a consequence of it undoubtedly does. The somatic damage inflicted upon Clifford results in an emasculating infantilisation that he eventually embraces, occurring as a result of the inevitable invasion of his personal space and his reliance upon, firstly, his wife, and secondly, the maternal figure of Mrs Bolton. He is described as being ‘absolutely dependent’ (p. 16) upon Connie, who ‘[willingly] did the personal things’ (p. 71) for him. Interestingly, Clifford’s support from Connie does not unsettle him, despite its undignified associations. Clifford differs with Maurice Pervin, who prefers to struggle with his own care rather than seek help from Isabel. That being said, Clifford does resist the support of nurses: ‘he hated them, because they left him no real privacy’ (p. 78). The support of anybody other than Connie is deemed an intrusive act by Clifford, until Mrs Bolton takes over his care. Mrs Bolton’s son, Ted, was twenty-eight when he died, a year younger than Clifford is said to be at the start of the novel. Mrs Bolton assumes a maternal role over Clifford, who responds by regressing to a childlike state. His emasculation accelerates as Mrs Bolton ‘even [shaves]

him', a sharp contrast to 'The Blind Man', where this is presented as a particularly masculine act. Clifford is returning to a pre-war (and thus pre-injury) time that means, despite his infantilisation, he is at least able to claim a greater sense of personal masculine potential:

Only when he was alone with Mrs Bolton did he really feel a lord and a master, and his voice ran on with her almost as easily and garrulously as her own could run. And he let her shave him or sponge all his body as if he were a child, really as if he were a child (p. 109).

Clifford experiences a sense of control over his estate, as 'lord' and 'master', and in doing so regains some of the masculine essence that has since departed him; but this feeling is his own, and is a purely temporary rejuvenation. It is certainly not the opinion of Mrs Bolton or the narrator, the latter of whom depicts the emasculated condition of Clifford as pitifully infantile, rather than youthfully virile. Clifford's playful belief in himself as 'a lord' is short-lived, as the reality of his regression begins to set in:

And he put his arms round [Mrs Bolton] and clung to her like a child [...] He had let himself go altogether, at last [...] She] said to herself: 'Oh, Sir Clifford! Oh, high and mighty Chatterleys! Is this what you've come down to!' And finally he even went to sleep, like a child (pp. 290-91).

Mrs Bolton offers an accurate account of Clifford's circumstances, remarking on his deterioration into this infantile condition, a state that he is unable to recover from. Instead, Clifford embraces the emasculating infantilisation, willingly sacrificing any remaining sense of manhood:

After this, Clifford became like a child with Mrs Bolton [...] And he lay with a queer, blankface like a child, with a bit of the wonderment of a child. And he would gaze on her with wide, childish eyes, in a relaxation of madonna-worship. It was sheer relaxation on his part, letting go all his manhood, and sinking back to a childish position that was really perverse (p. 291).

This perversity includes using Mrs Bolton not just as a maternal figure, but as an outlet for a sexual yearning that rejects penetrative desire and instead focuses on achieving contact with

the breast, in what is a fittingly infantile ambition: ‘And then he would put his hand into her bosom and feel her breasts, and kiss them in exultation, the exultation of perversity, of being a child when he was a man’ (p. 291). This episode exemplifies the prominent association between impaired adults and a presumed rejection of their sexuality, manifested through a perceived childishness: ‘Disabled adults have been infantilised, sterilized, prohibited from engaging in sexual activity’.⁸⁸ Clifford is positioned at the extreme end of a post-war nostalgia that is described by one of Lawrence’s contemporaries, Bertrand Russell:

On the Continent of Europe, the war and its consequences have administered a blow to this confident belief [in progress], and men have begun to look back to the time before 1914 as a golden age, not likely to recur for centuries.⁸⁹

Lady Chatterley’s Lover’s narrator raises the contradiction of Clifford being both a child and a man, and it is a contradiction that Gary Adelman highlights when contrasting the infantile behaviour of Clifford when he is with Mrs Bolton compared to his masculinising work on the mines, calling him a ‘Coriolanus in the coal industry’;⁹⁰ but it is in this paradox that the essence of post-war masculinity exists in Lawrence’s work, with the external male lacking the internal masculine essence required of a ‘man’ at this time.

vi. *Oliver Mellors: Unshakable Conflicts*

Despite returning physically unharmed from the war, it is still important to assess the state of Mellors’s masculinity. Cavitch argues that Clifford’s ‘condition represents, for Lawrence, the

⁸⁸ Selina Bonnie, ‘Disabled People, Disability and Sexuality’ in John Swain, Sally French, Colin Barnes, & Carol Thomas (eds.), *Disabling Barriers, Enabling Environments* (London: SAGE, 2004), 125-32, p. 125.

⁸⁹ Bertrand Russell, *Sceptical Essays* (London: Unwin Books, 1970), p. 100. See Moore’s *The Priest of Love* for an account of the tumultuous friendship between Lawrence and Russell.

⁹⁰ Gary Adelman, *Reclaiming D. H. Lawrence: Contemporary Writers Speak Out* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2002), p. 101.

maiming of man's emotions by our anti-sexual culture' (p. 195). Clifford's somatic state is symbolic of the loss of all men in his generation, and so Cavitch is wrong to remove the 'anti-sexual culture' from its First World War context. Clifford's paralysis results in this kind of impotency, but Mellors also resists the formation of bonds in such a way that demonstrates the war's unshakable legacy on its soldiers.

Considering the fact that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* centres on the affair of Mellors and Connie, it is surprising how such little critical attention has been spent on Mellors's enjoyment of solitude, and how this inadvertently leads to his emasculation due to his lack of control over space. In reacting to Connie as she enters his domestic setting, we are told that Mellors 'resented the intrusion; he cherished his solitude as his only and last freedom in life' (p. 87). The two clauses here require separate treatment. The intrusion of space has connotations for Clifford's masculinity just as it does for Maurice in 'The Blind Man' although, for Mellors, class becomes an important factor. He attempts to halt Connie's intrusion into his space in his effort to deny her a key:

Connie hesitated. He was putting up an opposition. Was it his hut, after all

"Couldn't we get another key?" she asked [...]

"Another!" he said, glancing at her with a flash of anger, touched with derision [...]

"Yes!" she said, "[Clifford] might have another. Otherwise we could have one made from the one you have. It would only take a day or so, I suppose. You could spare your key for so long."

"Ah canna tell yer, m'Lady! Ah know nob'dy as ma'es keys round 'ere."

Connie suddenly flushed with anger (p. 90).

There is a clear disagreement over who has the right to call this part of the Wragby Hall estate their own. Mellors considers Connie's presence to be an intrusion, while Connie speaks as a landlord visiting her own property when she discusses the confrontation with Clifford:

"He didn't seem to like my intruding at all. In fact he was almost rude when I asked about a second key."

“What did he say?”

[...]

“Oh, nothing, really! But I don’t think he wanted me to have the freedom of the castle, quite.”

“I don’t suppose he did.”

“Still, I don’t see why he should mind. It’s not his home, after all! It’s not his private abode. I don’t see why I shouldn’t sit there if I want to.”

“Quite!” said Clifford. “He thinks too much of himself, that man.” (pp. 91-92).

There is a curiosity with which this episode plays out. Unable to acquire a key from Clifford, Connie returns to the hut without one, to sit on the porch. On finding her there, Mellors reveals the insecurity that had made him hesitant to see her with a key when the subject was first discussed:

“Nay, your Ladyship. It’s your Ladyship’s own ‘ut. It’s as your Ladyship likes an’ pleases, every time. Yer can turn me off at a wik’s notice. It wor only...”

“Only what?” she asked, baffled.

[...]

“On’y as ‘appen yo’d like the place ter yersen, when yer did come, an’ not me messin’ abaht.”

“But why?” she said, angry.

[...]

“Shall I get your Ladyship another key then?”

“No thank you! I don’t want it.”

“Ah’ll get it anyhow. We’d best ‘ave two keys ter th’ place.”

Not only is Mellors forced to admit that the hut belongs to Connie and that it is hers to use as she wishes, but he also reveals that his reluctance for her to have a key stems from his fear that she will dictate when he is able to use the hut himself. Once Connie alleviates this concern, Mellors offers her a key, but this passage is a clear demonstration of how Connie holds authority over Mellors with regards to physical space. This moment contradicts the dialectic of class and race argued by Millett, who claims that:

In a society where status is dependent upon the economic, social, and educational circumstances of class, it is possible for certain females to appear to stand higher than some males. Yet not when one looks more closely at the subject. This is perhaps easier to see by means of analogy: a black doctor or lawyer has higher social status than a poor white sharecropper. But race, itself a caste system which subsumes class, persuades the latter citizen that he belongs to a higher order of life, just as it oppresses the black professional in spirit, whatever his material success may be. In much the same manner, a truck driver or butcher has always his “manhood” to fall back upon (p. 36).

The difference between Mellors and Millett’s butcher or truck driver is that, in this moment, Connie has taken away his manhood, so he has nothing left ‘to fall back upon’, as Mellors himself understands:

She listened to the tapping of the man's hammer; it was not so happy. He was oppressed. Here was a trespass on his privacy, and a dangerous one! A woman! He had reached the point where all he wanted on earth was to be alone. And yet he was powerless to preserve his privacy; he was a hired man, and these people were his masters (*LCL*, p. 88).

In admitting that the hut belongs to Connie, Mellors sacrifices the very structure that symbolises his masculine, artisanal labour, and also contradicts H. M. Daleski’s claim that, in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, ‘relationship between a man and woman is based not on power and submission but on a reciprocal tenderness’.⁹¹ This is a pertinent example of Ward’s reading of Lawrence’s work, where he argues that there is a:

repeated emphasis in Lawrence’s books on the conflict between Man and Woman, a conflict he believed to arise from civilized woman’s having become the desperate antagonist of man, drawing from his greatest possession – his manhood, his masculinity – and in time feminizing him and bringing him under the control of her will (p. 63).

Tenderness admittedly develops between Mellors and Connie, but the relationship begins precisely because of Connie’s control over Mellors (afforded to her by a higher social standing), and develops as a result of Connie’s sexual submission to him. And after Connie takes control of the hut, it is intruded upon twice more, by two other women. The least invasive

⁹¹ H. M. Daleski, ‘Aphrodite of the Foam, and “The Ladybird” Tales’ in Harold Bloom (ed.), *D. H. Lawrence* (New York: Chelsea House, 1986), 201-14, p. 202.

intrusion comes from Hilda, as it is not strictly an intrusion at all. She is welcomed into Mellors's home, but the sense of imposition comes about by virtue of Hilda's reluctance to act in a guest-like manner, despite Mellors' courtesy towards her. She insults Mellors with classist overtones, telling him that his vernacular seems "a little affected" (p. 243) and that "men like [him...] ought to be segregated: justifying their own vulgarity and selfish lust," (p. 245). Mellors is equally combatant in his response and, yet, he is unable to ever assert his dominance in this space, even to the extent that it is Hilda's decision to leave (she is never forced out by Mellors). The final intrusion into Mellors's home is also the most emasculating. Mellors's wife, Bertha, confronts him before breaking into his home and forcing him out of it:

But he wouldn't have anything to do with her, and wouldn't let her in the house, and did not go in himself; he went back into the wood without ever opening the door.

But when he came back after dark, he found the house broken into, so he went upstairs to see what she'd done, and he found her in bed without a rag on her [...] Well, he told her he'd die rather than ever live with her again, so he took his things and went straight to his mother's on Tevershall hill [...]

Mr Mellors stayed on with his mother, and went to the wood through the park, and it seems she stayed on at the cottage (pp. 262-63).

Bertha's behaviour is so invasive that Mellors is forced to return to his mother in a mirroring of Clifford's dependence upon Mrs Bolton. The refusal of his naked wife is symptomatic of a depleted virility while her ease at entering his home is, at its most innocuous, further evidence of Mellors's emasculating lack of control over his domestic setting and, at its most threatening, a coded penetrative assault on Mellors by his own wife.

Intrusion emasculates Mellors, but it is not the only example of his unmaning in the novel. Mellors's desire for solitude reflects his wartime experiences that depend upon the absence of women, something that immediately raises questions about his virility, while reinforcing Cavitch's view of an 'anti-sexual', post-war society. His relationship with Connie threatens to contradict this, but it remains a strained pairing throughout, with Mellors reluctant

to form a sentimental intimacy with Connie. Mellors senses a post-war expectation that demands that he, as a man, can ‘no longer be private and withdrawn’ (p. 119); and yet, solitude is exactly what he seeks, lamenting the invasion of industry into the ‘darkness and seclusion of the wood’ (p. 119). Having previously ‘resented [Connie’s] intrusion’ in to his solitude (‘his only and last freedom in life’), Mellors eventually accepts her presence. Nevertheless, his bitterness remains: ‘And now he had taken the woman, and brought on himself a new cycle of pain and doom. For he knew by experience what it meant’ (p. 119). Mellors’s pessimism is consistent. He is repeatedly unable to offer the level of commitment that Connie desires:

“You do love me, don’t you?” she asked calmly.

He looked down at her.

“Tha knows what tha knows. What dost ax for!” he said, a little fretfully (p. 211).

Mellors’s refusal to reassure Connie here with a simple ‘yes’ is an attempt to distance her from himself, something that he manages successfully at the end of the novel in his letter to her. Despite the moments of intimacy leading up to this point, the narrative ends with the couple’s fate still unknown:

But of course what I live for now is for you and me to live together. I’m frightened, really. I feel the devil in the air, and he’ll try to get us [...] We’ll be together next year. And though I’m frightened, I believe in your being with me [...] For me now, it’s the only thing in the world (p. 300).

Barbara Hardy’s claim that ‘Lawrence set the human couple together at the end of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*’ is premature.⁹² Despite being more revealing of his affection for Connie, Mellors still struggles to detach himself from his misanthropic leanings. He tells Connie that he is living for their union, but this seems more of an attempt at fulfilling masculine expectations than it does for any love he may feel towards her:

⁹² Barbara Hardy, ‘Women in D. H. Lawrence’s Works’ in Harold Bloom (ed.), *D. H. Lawrence* (New York: Chelsea House, 1986), 133-46, p. 144.

A man has to fend and fettle for the best, and then trust in something beyond himself. You can't insure against the future, except by really believing in the best bit of you, and in the power beyond it. So I believe in the little flame between us (p. 300).

Mellors refuses to cite 'love' as a reason for his hope of a successful union, choosing instead to label his connection with Connie a 'little flame'. This distinction is not arbitrary, as when Mellors does talk of 'love' in the letter, it is far from a potent, virile, masculine love. Rather, it is an emasculating love, ensuring that the last words that Mellors is granted in the novel result in a self-inflicted unmaning: 'So I love chastity now, because it is the peace that comes of fucking. I love being chaste now [...] John Thomas says good-night to Lady Jane, a little droopingly' (pp.301-02). This moment reflects Bourke's analysis on the virility of First World War veterans: 'The strain of war had 'desexed' men, rendering them impotent' (*DM*, p. 166).



Guy Cuthbertson has recently argued that Mellors's longing for the war-years is a symptom of returning to the working-class. He explains that 'The working-class or lower-middle-class soldier who had become a 'temporary gentleman' as an officer was unlikely to want to go back to pre-war days' before relating this predicament to Mellors in quoting from *Lady Chatterley's Lover*: 'it does them no good – they have to fall back into their old place when they get home again' (*LCL*, p. 68).⁹³ There is undoubtedly some truth to this point, but the novel suggests a more sentimental issue is at play here. Mellors's difficulty in connecting with women is evident, but so too is his inability to escape his closest bond from his time in the military. Fussell argues that the need for affection, coupled with the alienating and womanless features

⁹³ Guy Cuthbertson, *Peace at Last: A Portrait of Armistice Day, 11 November 1918* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), pp. 154-55.

of war, meant that ‘both the actuality and the recall of front-line experience [are] replete with what we can call the homoerotic’ (p. 272), and Bourke supports this, explaining that ‘The absence of women was only one feature that encouraged male intimacy. The very experience of war also demanded closeness’ (p. 136). This can certainly be said for Mellors’s bond with his colonel, a relationship that Connie enquires after:

“And weren’t you happy, when you were a lieutenant and an officer and a gentleman?”

“Happy? All right. I liked my Colonel.”

“Did you love him?”

“Yes! I loved him.”

“And did he love you?”

“Yes! In a way, he loved me [...] I lived under his spell while I was with him. I sort of let him run my life. And I never regret it.”

“And did you mind very much when he died?”

“I was as near death myself. But when I came to, I knew another part of me was finished. But then I had always known it would finish in death. All things do, as far as that goes” (p. 216).

Bourke remarks that ‘it was in the interests of military authorities to foster in servicemen a sense of group solidarity, a merging of the individual’s identity with that of the battalion’ (p. 128), and this is evident in Mellors’s account of his colonel’s death. Not only does Mellors suffer physically alongside his friend (‘I was near death myself’), but ‘another part of [him] was finished’ in a metaphysical sense. This moment mimics the way in which Clifford’s paralysis emblemises the loss of masculine essence in post-war Britain. The somatic affliction – be it to Clifford or the colonel – has connotations for those soldiers who escaped physical threat but who are symbolically as unmanned as their wounded comrades. Bourke argues that ‘Male comradeship served to make war less unbearable, and more human’ (*DM*, p. 137), and this can be seen in Mellors’s admission that he ‘lived under [a] spell’ with the colonel who ‘[ran his] life’. However, the bond between Mellors and his colonel characterises the same

difficulty with homosociality at the Front that Bourke also describes: ‘While the war provided an intimate environment for love between men, it at the same time exposed the fragility of brotherhood’ (p. 145). This fragility is witnessed in Mellors’s loss of self as a result of the colonel’s death, and this, once again, resonates closely with Bourke: ‘comradeship could mean that you too died. And if you did not, you could live with that guilt for years’ (*DM*, p. 152). Mellors is certainly unable to rid himself of this trauma, and this undoubtedly influences him in his attempt to distance himself from Connie: ‘And now he had taken the woman, and brought on himself a new cycle of pain and doom. For he knew by experience what it meant’ (p. 119). The ‘experience’ the narrator is referring to is of course the experience of the colonel’s death. It is also noteworthy how the bond between Mellors and his colonel is mirrored by the former’s new relationship with Connie. There is the conflict of ‘love’ – just as Connie is explicit about her love for Mellors but is given a vague reply, so too is this the case for Mellors and the colonel. Mellors does not hesitate in declaring his love for the colonel (something, incidentally, that he is unable to do with Connie), but when he is asked about the colonel’s love for him, Mellors is only able to offer an elusive, almost hopeful response that he did, ‘in a way’. Equally significant is how Mellors describes the influence of the colonel as spell like, as this is exactly the response that Connie has to Mellors when they first have sex:

She lay quite still, in a sort of sleep, in a sort of dream [...] It was the moment of pure peace for him, the entry into the body of the woman. She lay still, in a kind of sleep, always in a kind of sleep [...] a kind of sleep, from which she did not begin to rouse till he had finished and lay softly panting against her breast (p. 116).

Despite finding a degree of solace in his relationship with Connie, it remains a second-choice bond, one which only exists because, in the post-war period, he can no longer achieve the homosocial connection that he previously enjoyed. Indeed, this ambition for a homosocial association develops into homoerotic desire in a way that links fighting and the war with a masculine virility:

the stirring restlessness of his penis, the stirring fire in his loins! Oh, if only there were other men to be with, to fight that sparkling electric Thing outside there, to preserve the tenderness of life, the tenderness of women, and the natural riches of desire. If only there were men to fight side by side with! (p. 120).

By mirroring the two relationships, Lawrence blocks Mellors from ever truly leaving the war behind; and this is his ambition with *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Clifford's paralysis symbolises the loss of masculine virility in his generation following the war, while Mellors laments the absence of shared male activity.

vii. Coda: England's Masculine Void

Clifford's paralysis reflects the paralysis of a nation dealing with the aftermath of the First World War. In particular, it symbolises England's unmaning, a consistent theme throughout the novel. Tommy Dukes articulates this masculine decline in his conversation with Connie: 'I really like women better than men; they are braver' (p. 56), while Connie and her father lament the scarcity of 'real men':

"I hope you had a real man at last," he said to her after a while, sensually alert.

"I did. That's the trouble. There aren't many of them about," she said.

"No, by God!" he mused. "There aren't!" (p. 274).

However, it is Mellors who is most vocal about the emasculated state of the post-war period, using emasculating terminology in his description of Clifford that also evokes his rival's impotence:

"You say a man's got no brain, when he's a fool: and no heart, when he's mean; and no stomach when he's a funkier. And when he's got none of that spunky wild bit of a man in him, you say he's got no balls. When he's a sort of tame."

She pondered this.

"And is Clifford tame?" she asked.

"Tame, and nasty with it" (pp. 196-97).

Perhaps counterintuitively, the ‘wild bit of a man’ that Mellors refers to is made synonymous with sanity. While the tameness of Clifford instinctively suggests a calm and coherent form of masculinity, Mellors considers it a signifier of irrational, emasculated insanity, and a depleted model of manhood that is increasingly encroaching as a consequence of conflict:

Ay, it will. It'll achieve its own salvation. When the last real man is killed, and they're *all* tame: white, black, yellow, all colours of tame ones: then they'll *all* be insane. Because the root of sanity is in the balls (p. 217).

Lawrence's assessment of post-war masculinity, channelled primarily through Mellors, reaches its climactic point at the end of the novel in Mellors's exposition on the topic in his letter to Connie. In Lawrence's work the mine is often portrayed as a space of masculine security in an increasingly feminised world, but Mellors concedes that this domain is deteriorating in correlation with the decline in society's masculine reserves:

The pits are working badly; this is a colliery district like Tevershall, only prettier. I sometimes sit in the Wellington and talk to the men [...] As everybody says, the Notts-Derby miners have got their hearts in the right place. But the rest of their anatomy must be in the wrong place, in a world that has no use for them. I like them, but they don't cheer me much: not enough of the old fighting-cock in them [...] The men are very apathetic. They feel the whole damned thing is doomed, and I believe it is. And they are doomed along with it (p. 299).

The emasculation experienced by Clifford as a result of his paralysis has been well established but, crucially, Mellors laments that regardless of a man's physical condition, the world now ‘has no use’ for them. This worthlessness of their situation mirrors the pessimism with which Clifford is introduced at the beginning of the novel: ‘Crippled for ever, knowing he could never have any children, Clifford came home to the smoky Midlands to keep the Chatterley name alive while he could’ (p. 5). Both Clifford and his fellow post-war men exist, but it is an existence characterised by a sense of worthlessness. The Chatterley name will die out with Clifford, while the men observed by Mellors live a meaningless and superficial life:

The men are limp, they feel a doom somewhere, and they go about as if there was nothing to be done [...] They're a sad lot, a deadened lot of men: dead to their women, dead to life. The young ones scoot about on motor-bikes with girls, and jazz when they get a chance, But they're very dead (pp. 299-300).

John Horne articulates the legacy of the war on its survivors:

many men were treated for 'shell-shock' or were disabled or disfigured. The war had a profound impact on men's minds and bodies – and it would be surprising if it did not also affect ideas of masculinity.⁹⁴

Clifford's paralysis is a tangible affliction that has significant connotations for him and his own sense of masculinity. It stands, too, as a symbol of the war's barbarity, something that Lawrence was deeply attuned to as his friend, Catherine Carswell, explains: 'Lawrence was not a "conscientious objector" [...] But he quickly divined the dire significance [and horror] of this war'.⁹⁵ However, more than any of this, Clifford's somatic state – his injury and his impotency – emblemises the ubiquitous presence of emasculated men in post-war Britain, a true crisis of masculinity to which Lawrence is unable to offer a solution.

⁹⁴ John Horne, 'Masculinity in Politics and War in the age of Nation-States and World Wars, 1850-1950', in Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann & John Tosh (eds.), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 22-40, p. 32.

⁹⁵ Catherine MacFarlane Carswell, *The Savage Pilgrimage: A Narrative of D. H. Lawrence* (London: Martin Secker, 1932), p. 25.

4

Ernest Hemingway & William Faulkner: The Wounded Veteran, Home and Away

Old Lady: It must be most dangerous then to be a man.
It is indeed, madame, and but few survive it. 'Tis a hard trade and the grave is at the
end of it.⁹⁶

The comparison of Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner is commonplace in early twentieth-century criticism. Much of the assessment that focuses on them as a pair contributes to their position as leading interwar American writers while being simultaneously symptomatic of this fact. While their aesthetic approaches are, for the most part, drastically different, there remains a deep curiosity in their shared attempt to 'make it new' and establish themselves as integral figures in the burgeoning modernist movement:

The most apparent similarity [...] is that both Faulkner and Hemingway began their writing careers in search of innovation [...] and grew through their love of method to attain a command of skill that gave them their positions as masters of modern prose.⁹⁷

There is also an intense critical interest in the lives of these two men; how they may have intertwined, and how their upbringings and experiences compared to one another. Much is made of how their personal lives are manifested in their work, but there has been a hesitancy to examine their texts alongside one another; a hesitancy that is made more remarkable when each of their seminal novels is taken into consideration. Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, the narrative of a phallically wounded American veteran of the First World War has received substantially greater attention than *Soldiers' Pay*, Faulkner's first novel, which follows another

⁹⁶ Ernest Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon* (London: Arrow, 2004), p. 88.

⁹⁷ Linda Welshimer Wagner, *Hemingway and Faulkner: Inventors/ Masters* (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1975), p. vii.

veteran, the facially deformed and blinded Donald Mahon back to his hometown in Georgia after the armistice. The similarities in plot are glaring, but the levels of critical attention afforded to them differ vastly.

The Sun Also Rises enjoys the reputation of being Hemingway's 'most important work' that 'immediately established Hemingway not only as the voice of his generation but as a lifestyle icon as well.'⁹⁸ In contrast, *Soldiers' Pay* is consistently underappreciated by Faulkner's critics. John Hagopian correctly labels these texts "'lost generation" novels', but dismisses their potential for further comparison, arguing that 'despite the impressive list of biographical similarities, Faulkner and Hemingway are fundamentally different in character, values, and artistry'.⁹⁹ The differences in their artistry, however, does not necessarily restrict an opportunity for comparative analysis. In reading *The Sun Also Rises* and *Soldiers' Pay* together, a shared understanding emerges of both the individual and social implications of the First World War; implications that are caused and symbolised by the injuries sustained by the novels' central characters, Barnes and Mahon. The impact that these injuries have on their masculinity has been discussed before, especially in the case of Barnes, but the comprehensive critical landscapes of both Hemingway and Faulkner lack a comparative reading of these two novels that demonstrates how the existence of their wounds is continually present and always challenging the concept of an individual's masculine construction within the respective texts. The injuries additionally symbolise a post-war loss of American manhood, which in turn makes the critical background of these two authors important to ascertain. The similarities of *The Sun Also Rises* and *Soldiers' Pay* seem less coincidental when it is understood that the two authors

⁹⁸ Linda Wagner-Martin, *New Essays on The Sun Also Rises* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 1; Lesley M. M. Blume, *Everybody Behaves Badly: The True Story Behind Hemingway's Masterpiece The Sun Also Rises* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016), p. xi. Also see Malcolm Cowley, 'Mr. Papa and the Parricides' in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), 162-72, pp. 162-63 for a review of *The Sun Also Rises*' critical reception.

⁹⁹ John V. Hagopian, 'Style and Meaning in Hemingway and Faulkner', *Jahrbuch für Amerikastudien*, 4 (1959), 170-79, p. 170.

share a similar upbringing, were in interaction with one another, and were viewed both by themselves, their peers, and their contemporary critics as leading writers of their time. Joseph Fruscione's assessment, that 'Despite some differences in tone and degree, both men's codes of manhood were culturally rooted and performed with some eagerness', demonstrates that what may at first seem incidental in their work becomes far more compelling as an accurate representation of post-war American masculinity when other factors are considered.¹⁰⁰

Hemingway and Faulkner's longstanding critical pairing has been prompted, in part, by the interactions that took place between the two men. The extensive array of talented young writers in post-war American fiction triggered a determined effort to establish which author deserved to be recognised as the greatest amongst their peers, with these two contenders to this authorial crown discussing one another in depth for decades, through books, letters, and interviews. The obsessive attempts to establish a literary order is manifested in Faulkner's frequently cited answer to a student at the University of Mississippi in 1947. When asked to name the 'five most important contemporary writers' Faulkner replied with the following list:

1. Thomas Wolfe: he had much courage and wrote as if he didn't have long to live;
2. William Faulkner;
3. Dos Passos;
4. Ernest Hemingway: he has no courage, has never crawled out on a limb. He has never been known to use a word that might cause a reader to check with a dictionary to see if it is properly used.
5. John Steinbeck: at one time I had great hopes for him – now I don't know.¹⁰¹

It is unsurprising that the competitive and pugnacious Hemingway was greatly offended by Faulkner's categorisation of him. This hostility was partially fuelled by a misunderstanding on Hemingway's part, but it is a misunderstanding that reveals how the kind of masculine integrity that is so prominently portrayed within Hemingway's literary works was also considered part of their construction:

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Fruscione, 'Hemingway, Faulkner and the Clash of Reputations', *New England Review*, 33/1 (2012), 62-79, p. 74.

¹⁰¹ Lavon Rascoe, 'An Interview with William Faulkner' in M. Thomas Inge (ed.), *Conversations with William Faulkner* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 66-72, p. 71.

Hemingway was incensed when he discovered that Faulkner had placed him fourth in a field of five writers. Initially, he took great umbrage at the ranking, because he – predictably – misconstrued what Faulkner meant by “courage.” Whereas Faulkner was referring to his artistic courage, he read the comments as questioning his masculine courage [...] Hemingway – arguably the most competitive American writer of their era, or any other – routinely equated man and author [...] Faulkner's comments had given Hemingway the impression that he saw himself as both a better author and as a better man. This, of course, did not sit well with Hemingway, who retaliated against what he perceived as a two-front attack on both his literary and masculine worth (Fruscione, p. 71).

The type of retaliation that Fruscione refers to here is uncertain, but an example of how Hemingway may have responded to this criticism can be seen several years prior to this event, in *Death in the Afternoon*. Conversing with the Old Lady, Hemingway's praise of Faulkner's writing is laced with sarcasm and derision:

My operatives tell me that through the fine work of Mr. William Faulkner publishers now will publish anything rather than to try to get you to delete the better portions of your works [...] Madame, you can't go wrong on Faulkner. He's prolific too. By the time you get them ordered there'll be new ones out (p. 148).

It is comments like these that prompt Fruscione's assessment of Hemingway as having 'simultaneously respected and scorned Faulkner' (p. 63) and, despite the hostilities that evidently existed between the two men, there was certainly a level of respect, albeit a respect tinged with animosity: 'Faulkner was troubled by Hemingway's early success and great eminence – and later Hemingway was troubled by Faulkner's eminence'.¹⁰² The respect between the authors is particularly true with regards to Faulkner's admiration for Hemingway. Faulkner 'claimed that Hemingway's style is synthetic, but added later that there is a great deal of Hemingway in his own novels' while David McKay says that Faulkner's 'earliest work appropriates Hemingway's style, characters, and attitude'.¹⁰³ Richard Adams argues that *The*

¹⁰² William Van O'Connor, 'Faulkner, Hemingway, and the 1920's' in Richard E. Langford & William E. Taylor (eds.), *The Twenties: Poetry and Prose: 20 Critical Essays* (Deland: Everett Edwards Press, 1966), 95-98, p. 96.

¹⁰³ Gene Roper, 'Faulkner on Writers and Writing' in M. Thomas Inge (ed.), *Conversations with William Faulkner* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 63-65, p. 65; David McKay, 'Faulkner's First War: Conflict, Mimesis, and the Resonance of Defeat', *South Central Review*, 26/3 (2009), 119-30, p. 120.

Sun Also Rises influenced Faulkner and readers of Hemingway's first novel unavoidably see Jake's confrontation with his own naked reflection in Benjy's duplicated episode in *The Sound and the Fury*.¹⁰⁴ Barnes's 'Undressing, I looked at myself in the mirror' becomes Benjy's 'I got undressed and I looked at myself', as both men are confronted by a castration complex that has, for them, been realised, with the associated implications of loss that this inevitably entails.¹⁰⁵ Faulkner's admiration of Hemingway can be seen elsewhere, with him citing 'Fifty Grand' as 'top in contemporary short-story writing'.¹⁰⁶ Fruscione explains that there was a 'symbolic textual relationship in place of a sustained social one', arguing that 'no published biographies of either man mention a meeting' between the pair (p. 64). Despite an inaccuracy here (Faulkner mentions that 'The last time [he saw Hemingway] he was a sick man' with 'last' implying that there had almost certainly been other meetings) the critical pairing of these two authors must exist for something other than their fraught relationship.¹⁰⁷

Faulkner's belief, that he and Hemingway ranked somewhere in a list of the five most important writers of their time, is widely shared amongst critics. Arnold Bennett uses Hemingway as a benchmark for Faulkner, saying that *Soldiers' Pay* has proven the latter to be 'more promising' a writer than the former.¹⁰⁸ Harold Bloom would later agree: 'Faulkner is an eminence apart, but critics agree that Hemingway and Fitzgerald are his nearest rivals'.¹⁰⁹ Earl Rovit & Arthur Waldhorn pay tribute to those other writers on Faulkner's list (as well as Fitzgerald, who Faulkner omitted) but they elevate two authors above the rest:

¹⁰⁴ Richard P. Adams, 'Faulkner: The Development of the Writer: The Apprenticeship of William Faulkner' in Linda Wagner-Martin (ed.), *William Faulkner: Four Decades of Criticism* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1973), 7-44, p. 11.

¹⁰⁵ Ernest Hemingway, *Fiesta: The Sun Also Rises* (London: Vintage, 2000), p. 26; William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1954), p. 71.

¹⁰⁶ Laurence Stallings, 'Faulkner in Hollywood' in M. Thomas Inge (ed.), *Conversations with William Faulkner* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 27-29, p. 28.

¹⁰⁷ William Faulkner; Joseph L. Fant & Robert Ashley (eds.), *Faulkner at West Point* (New York: Random House, 1964), p. 196.

¹⁰⁸ Arnold Bennet, 'Review' in Henry Claridge (ed.), *William Faulkner: Critical Assessments, Volume II* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1999), 51-52, p. 52.

¹⁰⁹ Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), p. 2.

The period of 1920 to 1960 was incomparable as a time of glorious flowering in American Letters [...] Scott Fitzgerald, Thomas Wolfe, John Dos Passos, and John Steinbeck can each justifiably lay claim to eminence [...] We believe, however, that in terms of enduring influence and intrinsic interest, Hemingway and Faulkner's achievements occupy an even more special tier.¹¹⁰

Hamilton Basso credits a particular accolade for admittance to this 'special tier', explaining that Faulkner 'became with Ernest Hemingway our most widely read and most highly admired writer throughout the world, and, like Hemingway, was awarded a Nobel Prize'.¹¹¹ The mention of the Nobel Prize is relevant. Hemingway felt aggrieved at winning it five years after Faulkner had done so, reportedly telling Charles T. Lanham 'I should have had the damn thing long ago' (*LS*, p. 620). However, of their aforementioned contemporaries, the two men were the only recipients of the award until Steinbeck received it in 1962 (incidentally, Basso was speaking just a few months prior to Steinbeck being awarded the Nobel Prize. Steinbeck may well have turned Basso's Hemingway-Faulkner duo into a triad had he been awarded it a year earlier). Nevertheless, the importance of the award with regard to the pairing of Hemingway and Faulkner is in the literary establishment's public endorsement of them. This, in turn, makes the lack of critical comparison of their seminal novels all the more surprising.

While Faulkner and Hemingway's reputations are connected to their stylistic innovation and, especially on the part of Faulkner, narrative experimentation, it is their projection of universality into the presumably alienating space of an expatriate American community in Europe (Hemingway), or onto an ostensibly idiosyncratic Deep South, small-town setting (Faulkner) that not only grants them such esteemed critical praise, but also enables them to present the individual, collective, and societal aftermath of war through the physically afflicted Barnes and Mahon.¹¹² This universality is yet another reason for a comparison to be

¹¹⁰ Earl Rovit & Arthur Waldhorn, *Hemingway and Faulkner In Their Time* (New York: Continuum, 2005).

¹¹¹ Hamilton Basso, 'William Faulkner: Man and Writer' in M. Thomas Inge (ed.), *Conversations with William Faulkner* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 3-8, p. 7.

¹¹² For sources regarding universality in Hemingway and Faulkner's work, see: Charles S. Aiken, 'Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County: A Place in the American South', *Geographical Review*, 69/3 (1979), 331-48, pp. 347-

made between these two authors and, given their respective claims to being America's greatest modernist writer of the post-war period, it is necessary to examine how the First World War itself produced a cultural environment that influenced both men and bound them together.

In reference to *The Sun Also Rises*, Dana Dragunoiu argues that Jake's insular social circle serves to highlight a far greater and wider-reaching loss:

Hemingway is making a much larger claim about war and the psycho-social scars marking its victims. In other words, while demonstrating the truth of Gertrude Stein's observation which he cites in his first epigraph – "You are all a lost generation" – Hemingway is also suggesting that his generation is only a representative group in a much larger European, or even universal, context.¹¹³

Maxwell Geismar rightly urges us not to 'deny the importance of the war on Hemingway' but it is an importance that also extends to Faulkner:¹¹⁴

Intellectually they came early under the influence of scientific determinism. Personally they were tremendously influenced by their own experiences in World War I [...] Each man belonged, and felt that he legitimately belonged, to what Gertrude Stein called "the lost generation."¹¹⁵

The reference to Faulkner and Hemingway's war experiences here is significant. If we are to accept what Fruscione describes as a 'mano a mano' (p. 68) contest that existed between the two authors, both attempting to out-masculinise the other in their writing, while simultaneously assuming Park's position (that the war was a tremendous influence on their work), then it must be concluded that their writings on the war are fraught with deep insecurities regarding their

48; Cleanth Brooks, 'Faulkner's "Mosquitoes"', *The Georgia Review*, 31/1 (1977), 213-34, p. 221; Eric Bennett, 'Ernest Hemingway and the Discipline of Creative Writing, or, Shark Liver Oil' *Modern Fiction Studies*, 56/3 (2010), 544-67, p. 556; Mark LaVoie, 'William Faulkner's "Speech Accepting the Nobel Prize in Literature": A Language for Ameliorating Atomic Anxiety', *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 17/2 (2014), 199-226; Peggy Bach, 'A Serious Damn: William Faulkner and Evelyn Scott', *The Southern Literary Journal*, 28/1 (1995), 128-43, p. 139; Stephen Jan Parker, 'Hemingway's Revival in the Soviet Union: 1955-1962', *American Literature*, 35/4 (1964), 485-501.

¹¹³ Dana Dragunoiu, 'Hemingway's Debt to Stendhal's "Armance in *The Sun Also Rises*"', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 46/4 (2000), 868-92, p. 869.

¹¹⁴ Maxwell Geismar, *Writers in Crisis: The American Novel: 1225-1940* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942), p. 42.

¹¹⁵ Edd Winfield Parks, 'Their Thought', *South Atlantic Bulletin*, 22/4 (1957), 1-2, p. 1.

own contributions to the war effort. 'As early as 1922, Hemingway had already done sufficient historical reading to pose as an expert on a war in which he had served only briefly' and neither he nor Faulkner received the kind of experience that they sought:¹¹⁶

Both were so eager to get into World War I that they enlisted in Allied forces when for reasons of physical disability they were rejected by the United States Army - Faulkner as a pilot for the RCAF, Hemingway as an ambulance driver and later as a lieutenant in the Italian infantry. Both were severely injured and returned home in pain and disillusionment and with the inchoate urge to become writers (Hagopian, p. 170).

Panthea Reid offers a more detailed and, in terms of Faulkner's sense of masculinity, a more damning account of his rejection:

The Army's Air Corps quickly rejected Falkner. He was under educated (in formal terms) and of dubious character [...] Most embarrassing for Falkner was the official reason: at just over five feet tall, he was too small. small. Meanwhile, the Marines accepted his younger, six-foot-tall brother Jack.¹¹⁷

Jay Martin explains how Faulkner subsequently fabricated a war story of a plane crash that left him with a temporary limp, an incident which Cuthbertson also mentions while summarising Faulkner's war experiences:¹¹⁸

Faulkner wanted to be someone who had fought [...] but the war ended, along with any chances of heroism, when he was still in training [...] One story he came up with was that he injured himself in a drunken plane crash while celebrating [the armistice] (p. 92).

John Lowe alludes to this kind of deceit when he argues that Faulkner's 'false military record made him secure in his identity as a 'real man.''¹¹⁹ John Lowe reinforces the impact that Faulkner's rejection and Jack's acceptance had on the former, arguing that this tension is present in *Soldiers' Pay*. He proposes that 'Faulkner seems always to have viewed war as a

¹¹⁶ Michael S. Reynolds, *Hemingway's First War: The Making of A Farewell to Arms* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 13.

¹¹⁷ Panthea Reid, 'William Faulkner's 'War Wound': Reflections on Writing and Doing, Knowing and Remembering', *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, 74/4 (1998), 597-615, p. 600.

¹¹⁸ Jay Martin, "'The Whole Burden of Man's History of his Impossible Heart's Desire": The Early Life of William Faulkner', *American Literature*, 53/4 (1982), 607-29, p. 625.

¹¹⁹ John Lowe 'Fraternal Fury: Faulkner, World War I, and Myths of Masculinity' in Noel Polk & Ann J. Abadie (eds.), *Faulkner and War* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 70-101, p. 80.

magnification of fraternal struggle' (p. 73) and supports this by claiming that Julian Lowe, 'seethes with envy' at the sight of Mahon, 'much as Faulkner must have over Jack' (p. 86).¹²⁰ Later analysis of this episode will underpin John Lowe's argument, as Julian Lowe demonstrates a deep jealousy towards Mahon that is a direct and obvious by-product of their contrasting physical states and military experiences. However, Faulkner's sibling rivalry extends beyond its refashioning in *Soldiers' Pay*, and the result of this is a strengthening of the bond between Faulkner and Hemingway:

Faulkner's literary "brothers" such as Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Fitzgerald [...] were thus sibling rivals too, especially Hemingway, whose heroic wound authenticated him and contrasted powerfully to Faulkner's lack of combat experience (John Lowe, p. 94).

Faulkner's supposed jealousy of Hemingway does not make the latter's experience of the war any more comforting. Both men regretted the 'pain and disillusionment' that followed the war, and both allow their respective experiences to highlight a sense of post-war masculine loss in their seminal novels. Peter Brooks correctly asserts that 'Ernest Hemingway's novels [...] offer a typical and influential dissent from ideas of heroism and value in the context of the First World War' (p. 262), while Mary Brocki, using a suitably carnal vocabulary, links the destructive aspects of the war with the literary works of Hemingway and Faulkner in a way that holds a particularly strong significance to *The Sun Also Rises* and *Soldiers' Pay*:

The two writers saw a disturbing dislocation in society caused by internacine and interracial upheavals. Both exposed the wounds that resulted; both analyzed the defection and infection that occurred; both believed in the integrity and vigor of man that would permit a healing from the fever and the pain.¹²¹

¹²⁰ For the sake of clarity, Julian Lowe is a character in *Soldiers' Pay*, while John Lowe is a Faulknerian scholar. Any reference to John Lowe will include his full name. Any mention of the surname alone is a reference to Julian Lowe.

¹²¹ Sister Mary Damascene Brocki, 'Faulkner and Hemingway: Values in a Modern World Author', *Mark Twain Journal*, 11/4 (1962), 5-9 & 15, p. 5.

The societal dislocation that Brocki describes is prevalent in *The Sun Also Rises* and *Soldiers' Pay* and is personified by the damaged bodies of Barnes and Mahon (Pamela Knights explains that *Soldiers' Pay* struck 'a note of deepfelt distress' amongst its contemporary readers); and while Mahon is seen by certain characters as an embodiment of vigour, neither he nor Barnes demonstrates an ability for personal or societal healing.¹²² On the contrary, while Jake and Donald's impairments impact them in a tangible and demonstrable manner, they are also similar to Clifford Chatterley in that they are symbolic of a masculine loss in their respective post-war societies. Neither text can offer a masculine ideal following the destruction that came out of the First World War, but that is not to say that Barnes and Mahon's injuries produce identical levels of masculine loss. Jake's physical state restricts him from exerting his masculinity with women, or in domestic spaces. He is, however, able to develop and demonstrate his masculinity at other points in his narrative. He is never going to be the man that he wants to be, but the masculine sphere is not entirely closed off to him. Mahon, devoid of agency, is an ornamental representation of the First World War, a war which provided an arena for men to develop their masculine identity, while simultaneously and perpetually threatening it. Donald's injury symbolises this contrast, as some onlookers long for the masculinising influence that his wound possesses while others dismiss Mahon's worth and are sickened by his damaged body.

It is important to determine how Hemingway and Faulkner established their masculine standard to ascertain the degree to which Barnes and Mahon are compatible with the writers' recognised models of masculinity. This is far easier to do for one author than for the other. In Hemingway's work, masculinity is overtly manifested in two different, albeit connected, ways:

¹²² Pamela Knights, 'Rhetorical and Reader-Response Criticism' in Charles A. Peek & Robert W. Hamblin (eds.), *A Companion to Faulkner Studies* (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 233-60, p. 249.

through sport and through Hemingway's 'code hero'. The importance of sport is undoubtedly linked to the late nineteenth-century American attitude that Michael Kimmel recounts:

Sports were a central element in the fight against feminization; sports made boys into men [...] Manhood required proof; sports were its central testing ground, where men proved they were men, and not women or homosexuals.¹²³

In *The Sun Also Rises*, Jake Barnes makes a point of explaining the linguistic association between sport and masculinity in the novel's French setting:

The concierge [...] took great pride in telling me which of my guests were well brought up, which were of good family, who were sportsmen, a French word pronounced with the accent on the men (pp. 46-47).

In Jake's world, the concept of masculinity is intrinsically linked with sport, and this is true of much of Hemingway's work. The prize-fighter and the boxing ring are recurring tropes in his writing, although his boxers invariably suffer from a loss of masculine essence. In 'The Battler', former boxer Ad Francis is said to have taken 'too many beatings' and is described as 'crazy'.¹²⁴ Welterweight champion Jack Brennan places money on his opponent in 'Fifty Grand', evocatively describing himself as being 'all busted up inside'.¹²⁵ These boxers still enjoy masculine characteristics, but their evident vulnerability relegates them below a particular type of sportsman. In Hemingway's work, the most masculinising sports are those which pit man against beast. Comparing the two trackers that accompany him in the biographical *Green Hills of Africa*, Hemingway judges their manhood in alignment with their hunting skills:

M'Cola was not jealous of Droopy. He simply knew that Droopy was a better man than he was. More of a hunter, a faster and a cleaner tracker, and a great stylist in everything he did. He admired Droopy in the same way we did.¹²⁶

¹²³ Michael S. Kimmel, 'Consuming Manhood: The Feminization of American Culture and the Recreation of the Male Body, 1832-1920' in Laurence Goldstein (ed.), *The Male Body: Features, Destinies, Exposures* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 12-41, p. 33.

¹²⁴ Hemingway, 'The Battler' in *In Our Time* (New York: Scribner's, 1970), 53-62, p. 60.

¹²⁵ Hemingway, 'Fifty Grand' in *Men Without Women* (London: Arrow, 2004), 64-89, p. 88.

¹²⁶ Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa* (London: Arrow, 2004), p. 33.

Droopy's ability to conquer wild animals is evidence of his masculine essence. In contrast, Santiago's poor fishing makes him unappealing as a masculine role-model for his young companion in *The Old Man and the Sea*, a point that is made in the novella's opening paragraph:

He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish. In the first forty days a boy had been with him. But after forty days without a fish the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally *salao*, which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week [...] The [old man's] sail was patched with flour sacks and, furled, it looked like the flag of permanent defeat.¹²⁷

Perhaps fittingly, it is the sportsman who gets closest to the animal that ranks highest in Hemingway's hierarchy of masculinity. Barnes claims that 'Nobody ever lives their life all the way up except bull-fighters' (p. 9), and in *Death in the Afternoon* Hemingway labels bullfighters 'the most manly chaps' (p. 61). Barnes's remark is quoted by Paul Ramsey when he argues that as far as Hemingway is concerned, 'The best life is the most intensely active [...] especially when [activity is] interlaced with or threatened by the presence of physical pain or the presence of death'.¹²⁸

This pinnacle of masculine identity is significant to the portrayal of Jake Barnes, as is Harry Hand's characterisation of Hemingway's 'code hero':

The Hemingway code, lived and acted but never verbalized by the hero, suggests the following concepts: love (not merely lust) for a woman, honor and loyalty among the initiates, courage, stoicism, resignation but not personal defeat, avoidance of sentimentalism or excess emotionalism, individual freedom from the demands of society, necessity of personal choice, determining truth for one's self, no messiness or fakery or phoniness, indulgence of the senses but not overindulgence, dignity, self-discipline, and determination.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea* (London: Vintage, 2000), p. 3.

¹²⁸ Paul Ramsey, 'Hemingway as Moral Thinker: A Look at Two Novels' in *The Sun Also Rises* in Richard E. Langford & William E. Taylor (eds.), *The Twenties: Poetry and Prose: 20 Critical Essays* (Deland: Everrett Edwards Press, 1966), 92-94, p. 93.

¹²⁹ Harry E. Hand, 'Transducers and Hemingway's Heroes', *The English Journal*, 55/7 (1966), 870-71, p. 871.

The characteristics of sportsmanship are present in Hand's comprehensive description of the 'code hero' (courage, stoicism, self-discipline, and determination); and the matching of the above criteria with Hemingway's major male characters (predominantly Santiago in *The Old Man and the Sea*, Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and Jake Barnes) is prevalent in Hemingway criticism. Jake's situation is made unique by his injury, as while it does not drain him of his masculine essence, it does repeatedly restrict his entry into the higher tiers of Hemingway's masculine rankings. Josep Armengol could well be referring to these characters when he claims that 'the image of violent adventure as a test of manhood has influenced [...] the fiction of twentieth-century American writers such as Hemingway, Faulkner, [and others]'.¹³⁰ That being said, its influence is far more evident in Hemingway's writing than it is in Faulkner's. The latter uses sport as a signifier of masculinity, but he does so in a more muted way than Hemingway does: 'Faulkner evokes the prize fight in many passages, but rarely directly depicts it or refers to it', marking a stark contrast with Hemingway's overt presentation of boxing, hunting, and bull-fighting.¹³¹ This is not to suggest that the ostensibly masculine sports of Hemingway's work is foreign to Faulkner. Knepper explains that Faulkner was aware of 'the ways in which hunting interconnected with core aspects of Southern existence like race, masculinity, and identity' while Grant Bain highlights the prevalence of boxing in Faulkner's work, suggesting that 'he evokes the boxing narrative as starting point to foreground larger struggles over race, masculinity, and democracy' (p. 22).¹³² In both instances, sport and masculinity seem inextricable, and if these masculine sports (hunting and fighting) can be taken

¹³⁰ Josep M. Armengol, 'Gendering Men: Re-Visions of Violence as a Test of Manhood in American Literature', *Atlantis*, 29/2 (2007), 75-92, p. 81.

¹³¹ Grant Bain, 'Boxing Yoknapatawpha: Faulkner, Race, and Popular Front Boxing', *The Southern Literary Journal*, 46/1 (2013), 19-35, p. 22. Gandal demonstrates the masculinising effects of boozing and its importance to the US military: Keith Gandal, *The Gun and the Pen: Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, and the Fiction of Mobilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 134-35.

¹³² Steven Knepper, "'Shoot Quick, and Slow": Southern Sporting Values, Mastery, and Language in Faulkner's "Go Down, Moses"', *Studies in Popular Culture*, 29/2 (2006), 87-106, p. 89.

to their extreme points then the end result is surely war, and it is war that Faulkner believes is ‘a central pole of masculine identity’ (John Lowe, p. 73). Not only is this combination of war, fighting, masculinity, and sport mirrored in Hemingway’s outlook – he used ‘violence as a test of masculinity’ (Armengol, p. 81) – but it is the First World War that informs our reading of Donald Mahon as a dyadic figure, emasculated by his personal experiences while antithetically viewed by others as an ornament of masculinity.

i. *Jake Barnes: The ‘Human Punching-Bag’*¹³³

Critical attention afforded to *The Sun Also Rises* has invariably been swift and clinical in its treatment of Jake Barnes’s physical state and its effect on his masculinity. Peter Messent argues that there is an ‘absence of manhood’ in Barnes, while Delbert Wylder believes that Jake’s ‘wound has made him unmanly’.¹³⁴ Mark Spilka describes Jake as being ‘like a woman’ as a result of his impotence.¹³⁵ Any genital injury will inevitably produce such readings, but they are readings that too often negate the importance of body damage in the novel as well as contradicting what Hemingway says on Barnes and the effect his wound has on his sense of masculinity:

[Jake’s] testicles were intact and not damaged. Thus he was capable of all normal feelings as a *man* but incapable of consummating them. The important distinction is that his wound was physical and not psychological and that he was not emasculated.¹³⁶

A major issue in classifying Barnes’s masculine state is one of semantics. When Hemingway argues that his protagonist is ‘not emasculated’, he refers to the sexual impulses that still exist,

¹³³ Quote in title taken from *The Sun Also Rises*, p. 173: ‘Old Jake, the human punching-bag’.

¹³⁴ Peter B. Messent, *New Readings of the American Novel: Narrative Theory and its Application* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), p. 97; Delbert E. Wylder, ‘The Two Faces of Brett: The Role of the New Woman in *The Sun Also Rises*’ in James Nagel (ed.), *Critical Essays on Ernest Hemingway’s The Sun Also Rises* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1995), 89-94, p. 92.

¹³⁵ Mark Spilka, *Hemingway’s Quarrel with Androgyny* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), p. 203.

¹³⁶ George Plimpton, ‘Ernest Hemingway: The Art of Fiction’ in Philip Gourevitch (ed.), *The Paris Review Interviews* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2007), 34-61, p. 50.

despite Barnes's inability to exercise them. Yet, it is exactly this inability that prompts the labels of 'unmanly' and 'unmanned' that are routinely attributed to Barnes, invariably with little or no consideration for the virility that is still present. Cleanth Brooks refers to Barnes as 'emasculated' and Spilka calls him 'unmanned', but neither are saying that he has literally lost his testicles.¹³⁷ The exact nature of Jake's injury is what makes his masculine state far too complex to have his character deemed entirely 'unmanly' but, equally, the accusation that he is emasculated should not be wholly dismissed. The wounded penis restricts Jake's ability to exert the virile urges that are still present within him, but while his injury limits him from manifesting his masculine impulses, this paradoxically ensures that his virility is strengthened as a kind of masculine essence that is distilled in his depleted body.

What exactly Hemingway meant by 'emasculated' is unclear. If he is claiming that Jake has not been greatly feminised by his injury, then he is right to argue this point. However, if he sees 'emasculated' to mean any reduction in masculine essence whatsoever then a reading of *The Sun Also Rises* that places Jake's injury at its forefront is unavoidably going to result in a contradiction between analysis and author.¹³⁸ This latter definition of emasculation is periodically demonstrated with regards to Jake throughout his narrative, but there are several moments of masculine enhancement that also exist. It is the context of these moments that illuminate Barnes's true masculine state, a state which resists stability and is, instead, demonstrably malleable and under perpetual reconstruction. Women and domesticity are the two greatest triggers of Jake's emasculation, with both evoking the tension that exists between his somatic affliction and his masculine urges.

¹³⁷ Cleanth Brooks, *The Hidden God: Studies in Hemingway, Faulkner, Years, Eliot, and Warren* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1963), p. 20; Mark Spilka, 'The Death of Love in "The Sun Also Rises"' in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), 107-18, p. 108.

¹³⁸ For the purpose of this chapter, 'emasculated' will be used in accordance with the latter description offered: a reduction, to some degree, of masculine essence.

The major female characters are immediately masculinised by their names (Frances, Georgette, Brett), and all three offer attacks on Jake's sense of masculine worth. In the novel's opening chapter Frances thwarts Barnes's plan to visit Alsace with Cohn. This episode initially lacks significance, but what later becomes evident during Jake's fishing trip with Bill is how important these homosocial outings are for Jake and for the rejuvenation and exercising of his masculinity. In blocking Jake's escape from domesticity, Frances consequently excludes him from a precious masculinising experience. Jake spends the first two chapters of his narrative describing, and in conversation with, Robert Cohn. During this early part of Jake's narration there is no mention of his own physical state. It is not until shortly after the arrival of Georgette, in chapter three, that Barnes's condition is alluded to:

She looked up to be kissed. She touched me with one hand and I put her hand away.
"Never mind."
"What's the matter? You sick?"
"Yes."
"Everybody's sick. I'm sick, too," (p. 13).

The sickness that Jake refers to initially seems a simple aversion to Georgette's mouth, having said of her: 'She grinned and I saw why she made a point of not laughing. With her mouth closed she was a rather pretty girl' (p. 13). However, the reader soon learns of Barnes's physical condition and this, coupled with a conversation between Brett and Jake in chapter four, illuminates the true 'sickness' that afflicts Barnes:

"We'd better keep away from each other."
"But, darling, I have to see you. It isn't all that you know."
"No, but it always gets to be," (p. 23).

The use of 'sick' over 'wounded' holds gendered connotations, particularly with regards to war injuries. James demonstrates that for the injured soldier, dying of sickness is 'unmanly' when compared to dying of a wound (p. 135). This is fitting here, as the prospect of romantic engagement is a threat to Jake's masculinity, as it will 'always' head towards a sexual

experience that he is incapable of consummating. This is the true reason why sharing a kiss with Georgette is so unappealing for Jake. Moreover, Georgette's status as a prostitute ensures that this masculine threat is intensified. The basis of her profession – the proposition of sex – is the one offer that Jake is unable to accept. His genital wound makes him incapable of achieving what he most desires when it is ostensibly at its most accessible.

The most complex relationship that Jake has, however, is with Lady Brett Ashley. His physical injury makes a sexual bond impossible, just as it does with Georgette, but the difference is in the sentimental connection that exists between Jake and Brett, something that is not present in Barnes's liaison with Georgette. His wounded condition informs the entirety of their relationship in a way that creates an emasculating hierarchy between the two: 'Jake's war wounding returns him to a childlike state in that he can love Brett not as an adult but, in effect, as a child.'¹³⁹ The toxicity of this relationship stems from a mutual desire that will never be fulfilled. The reciprocated nature of this desire makes their relationship particularly tragic, but also demonstrates the centrality of Jake's injury in their interactions. Whatever exactly is missing from Jake's body is paradoxically ever-present, as demonstrated in this conversation between Barnes and Brett:

“Don't touch me,” she said. “Please don't touch me.”
“What's the matter?”
“I can't stand it.”
“Oh, Brett.”
“You mustn't. You must know. I can't stand it, that's all. Oh, darling, please understand!”
“Don't you love me?”
“Love you? I simply turn all to jelly when you touch me.”
“Isn't there anything we can do about it?” (p. 22).

Jake's interaction with Georgette is unemotional and transactional. The offer of a kiss from her is unappealing as it cannot grant him emotional solace, nor will it lead to physical gratification.

¹³⁹ William Adair, “‘The Sun Also Rises’: Mother Brett”, *Journal of Narrative Theory*, 40/2 (2010), 189-208, p. 194.

Brett, on the other hand, is able to offer at least the former of these to Jake, but she sensibly refuses, leading Jake to admit that ‘it always gets to be [about that]’ (p. 23). The physical touch that turns Brett to ‘jelly’ can never be developed beyond this point, and acts as a reminder to Jake of his emasculated state. Jake says of his injury: ‘what happened to me is supposed to be funny. I never think about it’ (p. 23), but this is not true. It may be that he *rarely* thinks of his wound, but in the presence of Brett it is always in his (and her) mind, to the extent that he contravenes all of the ‘code hero’ criteria in a moment of masculine loss: ‘I was thinking about Brett and my mind stopped jumping around and started to go in sort of smooth waves. Then all of a sudden I started to cry’ (p. 27). Unfortunately for Jake, Brett’s influence on his masculinity is not confined to their personal interactions. His masculine status is under as much threat when Brett engages with other men in front of him. During these moments Jake’s somatic depletion lacks the intense presence that it has during his conversations with Brett, but it nevertheless remains at the root of all that threatens his masculinity.

Jake’s emotional reaction to Brett’s first appearance in the novel mirrors the conflicting nature of his masculine state. His immediate response to her is rooted in a primal urge: ‘She looked very lovely’ (p. 17). It is not until later that Jake expands on Brett’s description, noting her clothes and hair (p. 19). Even when this does happen it is Cohn’s gaze (looking at Brett in the same way that ‘his compatriot must have looked when he saw the promised land’ p. 18) that prompts Jake to deliver a more detailed account of Brett’s appearance. Jake’s initially unfocused portrayal of Brett is a result of his perennially unsatisfied libido. The pairing of ‘very’ and ‘lovely’ has a childlike resonance that reinforces the dominance of Barnes’s *id* when he first sees Brett in the bar. Yet, while this immediate response is a flaring up of his masculine virility, it is soon followed by anger. Noticing Brett’s homosexual companions, Jake is quickly reminded of the impotency that acts in direct opposition to (and ultimately overpowers) his virile desires:

I was very angry. Somehow they always made me angry. I know they are supposed to be amusing, and you should be tolerant, but I wanted to swing on one, any one, anything to shatter that superior, simpering composure (p. 17).

Jake's bitter confession reveals his paranoia. It suggests a belief that Brett's companions are somehow aware of his physical condition and that this, in turn, results in them feeling superior to Jake. Unable to prove them wrong insofar as his specific wound is concerned, Jake instead wishes to be rid of them through physical violence in what is a masculinising fantasy: 'gay men and those perceived to be gay are assaulted by young men intent on proving their masculinity and heterosexuality'.¹⁴⁰ Jake imagines himself acting with the same aimless aggression of the bulls that he describes during their journey to the Pamplona bullring: 'the bulls passed, galloping together, heavy, muddy-sided, horns swinging' (p. 170). The comparison is not a wholly unfair one. Both he and the fighting bull are figures of pent-up virility and, in this situation, aggression. The difference lies in the bulls' opportunity to exercise their macho essence in the ring, a prospect not available to Jake. His observations of Brett from afar are as emasculating as his personal interactions with her and it is his injured body that is the cause of this, as Messent explains:

Brett, whom Jake loves, is 'very much with' those who lack the desire, though not the potential, to sexually fulfil her. He has the desire, though no longer the potential. If their homosexuality defines his manhood (his conventional sexual preference marking theirs as aberrant), nonetheless Brett's choice of their company is a sharp reminder of his own sexual lack (absence of 'manhood') which has led to his solitude (p. 97).

This is an early example of how Brett's relationships with other men force Jake to consider his sense of manhood with his wound at its core and it is a recurring situation throughout the narrative.

¹⁴⁰ Michael Flood, 'Violence, Men as Victims of' in Michael Flood, Judith Kegan Gardiner, Bob Pease & Keith Pringle (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 2013), 616-17, p. 616.

In Count Mippipopolous we are introduced to another wounded character. Rudat makes a somewhat convincing case that the count is also impotent (pp. 57-60) but the possibility of this is no consolation to Barnes. The count's wounded condition makes comparisons with Jake unavoidable, and while there is an opportunity here for normalising Jake's physical state, Brett's reaction to the count's body ensures that Jake is emasculated further. Brett initiates a comparison, countering the count's claim that he has 'been around a very great deal' with 'I dare say Jake here has seen as much as you have' (p. 52). Brett is instigating a competition between the two men in which the winner's prize is, ostensibly, her. In truth, neither man can ever have her (Jake because of his condition, and the count because Brett is in love with Jake), and so the actual prize is the winner's claim of masculine domination over his opponent. The count quickly asserts his advantage, boasting that he has 'been in seven wars and four revolutions' (p. 53). This grants the count a competitive edge over Jake who has earlier lamented the unglamorous situation in which he was injured: 'Well, it was a rotten way to be wounded and flying on a joke front like the Italian' (p. 27). The count then offers a demonstration of his wounds which Brett eagerly accepts:

"And I have got arrow wounds. Have you ever seen arrow wounds?"
"Let's have a look at them." (p. 53).

By offering to reveal his own damaged body the count symbolically exposes Jake's wound. The unspoken (and uneasy) reality here is that Jake cannot join in with this game of show-and-tell, as Brett well knows. Jake is emasculated here not by that fact that he is wounded, but by the specific nature of his wound. Bill Gorton is especially conscious of this, telling Jake to 'never mention' his wound, saying it is 'the sort of thing that can't be spoken of' (p. 101). The implication here is that the injury, which Bill correctly presumes has led to his impotence, is a more delicate and tragic affliction than the sort of damage that has been exacted upon the count. Rena Sanderson's reading of Jake's injury contradicts Bill's perception of it, focusing

instead on its masculinising influence: ‘The consequence of a physical wound incurred in battle, his impotence is paradoxically a badge of manly courage.’¹⁴¹ While this may be true from an external perspective, it is an impotence that offers little masculinising solace to Jake himself. It is primarily responsible for plugging his masculinity and not allowing it to be manifested through the sexual episodes with Brett that he so deeply craves. There is a badge of manly courage on display in this scene, but it resides with the count, not Jake:

The count stood up, unbuttoned his vest, and opened his shirt. He pulled up the undershirt onto his chest and stood, his chest black, and big stomach muscles bulging under the light.
“You see them?”
Below the line where his ribs stopped were two raised white welts. “See on the back where they come out.” Above the small of the back were the same two scars, raised as thick as a finger.
“I say. Those are something,” (p. 53).

There is a striking contrast in the aestheticism of each man’s wound. Jake description of his own injury is vague and inhibited:

Undressing, I looked at myself in the mirror of the big armoire beside the bed [...] Practical, too, I suppose. Of all the ways to be wounded. I suppose it was funny. I put on my pajamas and got into bed. I had the two bull-fight papers, and I took their wrappers off (pp. 28-29).

After undressing and briefly looking at himself, Jake soon covers up his wound. He then symbolically repeats this exercise to counter the emasculation he experiences at viewing his damaged body. Rather than undressing himself, he reaches for his bull-fighting papers and unwraps those, instead. Faced with the cause of his emasculation, Jake turns to the symbol of ultimate masculinity for relief. The count, however, exerts his masculinity by undressing. There is a clear homoerotic tone in Jake’s narrative here, describing the count’s ‘big’ and ‘bulging’ abdomen. While Jake’s genital injury has disabled that part of his body, Mippipopolous’s

¹⁴¹ Rena Sanderson, ‘Hemingway and Gender History’ in Scott Donaldson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 170-96, p. 178.

injured stomach is symbolically and literally an area of strength. Brett's assessment, that 'Those are something' is purposefully vague, but whether this is her reaction to the count's muscular body or to his wound is irrelevant to Jake, who is emasculated here either way. Having written in an early draft of the novel that the count was nineteen when he received the injury, Hemingway later changed this to twenty-one.¹⁴² The implications of this age with regards to masculine growth are particularly prominent, and the fact that the count's affliction coincides with such a cultural signifier of American adulthood is fitting. The wound takes on connotations of a masculine initiation: 'boys and youths [are] so often tested or indoctrinated before being awarded their manhood'.¹⁴³ The count's wound serves a masculinising purpose that Jake's injury cannot replicate.

Jake evidently harbours frustrations over Brett's other liaisons – particularly her brief romance with Cohn. This culminates in a fight where Barnes is comprehensively unmanned by Cohn's superior boxing skills, but it is the *cause* of this fight, rather than the fight itself, that illuminates Jake's wound. Jake's association with Brett causes him a great deal of pain, but he consistently retains a calm exterior when faced with her romantic interests. Yet, despite the composure demonstrated throughout his narrative, Jake becomes violent in response to being called a 'pimp' by Cohn:

'Tell me where Brett is.' [...]
'Go to hell!'
'I'll make you tell me' – he stepped forward – 'you damned pimp.'
I swung at him and he ducked. I saw his face duck sideways in the light. He hit me and I sat down on the pavement. As I started to get on my feet he hit me twice. I went down backward under a table (p. 165).

¹⁴² Ernest Hemingway's handwritten manuscript of *The Sun Also Rises*; MS28, 'The Sun Also Rises 194: Notebooks Book II' [no page numbers], Ernest Hemingway Collection, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum Archives, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

¹⁴³ David D. Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 9.

There are some caveats to be made here. Not only is there a growing hostility from Jake to Cohn throughout the novel, but there is a suggestion in ‘he stepped forward’ that Jake is acting in self-defence. However, the usually equable Barnes is surely reacting impulsively when he instigates a physical fight with a man who he resentfully admits was a middleweight champion (p. 3). The insinuation that Brett is a prostitute is unflattering, but Jake makes too many jokes about her promiscuity to get so angry as to fight over it. Part of the anger is undoubtedly borne out of the soured relationship between Barnes and Cohn (a souring that is linked to Jake’s anti-Semitism and dismissal of Cohn’s masculinity):

Robert Cohn, because he is a mere military school graduate, not a combat veteran, and Jewish to boot, is not for Jake truly masculine. Jake has no problem, by contrast, with Brett’s affair with Romero, a true fighter (Gandal, p. 140).

The animosity that develops between Jake and Cohn does nothing to calm their altercation, but it is the accusatory use of the word ‘pimp’ which is the greatest catalyst for the fight. It is what ‘pimp’ suggests about Jake that is the problem, not what it says about Brett. The effects of the word even overshadow the physical beating that Cohn inflicts upon Jake:

‘Please forgive me, Jake.’
I did not say anything. I stood there by the door.
‘I was crazy. You must see how it was.’
‘Oh, that’s all right.’
‘I couldn’t stand it about Brett.’
‘You called me a pimp.’
I did not care. I wanted a hot bath. I wanted a hot bath in deep water.
‘I know. Please don’t remember it. I was crazy’ (p. 168).

The cause of Jake’s anger is the use of ‘pimp’, not the beating that he has received. His reaction betrays a deep insecurity; that he is indeed comparable to a pimp. After all, he introduces Brett to Romero and, ironically, to Cohn as well, match-making her with sexual partners. The term is made additionally problematic by Jake’s ineffectuality – if he is a pimp then he is a pimp without recompense. His only compensation is, at best, the masochistic experience of seeing his love-interest being romanced by his close friends. The most damning signification of

'pimp', however, is understood by comparing the term to comparable positions in Hemingway's work. The pimp serves a similar purpose to the Viennese boxing promoter that appears in Bill's story (*SAR*, pp. 62-62), or Retana, the bullfighting promoter in 'The Undefeated'.¹⁴⁴ All three figures are attached to masculinising professions while contravening masculine criteria themselves. The Austrian boxing promoter lacks the honour expected in a Hemingway hero, cheating the victorious fighter out of his deserved prize-money, whereas Retana's office in 'The Undefeated' is a bull-fighting museum, with his slight frame contrasting sharply with this masculine space:

A little man sat behind a desk at the far side of the room. Over his head was a bull's head, stuffed by a Madrid taxidermist; on the walls were framed photographs and bullfight posters (p. 1).

Retana surrounds himself with emblems of masculinity, makes a living out of the most masculine of sports, and deals with the archetype of masculinity – the matador. Yet he is emasculated by the physical descriptions of him that repeatedly focus on his diminutive stature. By accusing Jake of being a pimp, Cohn links him to sexuality in the same way that the promoters are linked to their sports. Just as Retana is incapable of bull-fighting himself, Jake is denied access to the sexual experience that the pimp is tasked with arranging. His anger is fuelled not by a denial of Cohn's accusation but by the understanding that he is indeed a pimp, attempting to gain any sense of access to, or control over, Brett's sexual activity while unable to experience it himself.

The cause of Cohn's anger is the developing relationship between Brett and another man, the young matador Romero, and theirs is a pairing that produces a graphic depiction of Jake's genital wound. After his victory in the bullring, Romero takes an ear from a bull and gifts it to Brett:

¹⁴⁴ Ernest Hemingway, 'The Undefeated' in *Men Without Women* (London: Arrow, 2004), 1-31.

The bull who killed Vicente Girones was named Bocanegra, was Number 118 of the bull-breeding establishment of Sanchez Tabemo, and was killed by Pedro Romero as the third bull of that same afternoon. His ear was cut by popular acclamation and given to Pedro Romero, who, in turn, gave it to Brett, who wrapped it in a handkerchief belonging to myself, and left both ear and handkerchief, along with a number of Muratti cigarette-stubs, shoved far back in the drawer of the bed-table that stood beside her bed in the Hotel Montoya, in Pamplona (p. 172).

The significance of this moment is reflected in Jake's narration of it. A writer by profession, he reports on the moment with a detached, journalistic tone that would be better suited to his newspaper articles. This is the best example in the novel of what Warren Beck argues is a tendency for Jake to 'conceal himself completely behind his materials'.¹⁴⁵ Jake later retells this anecdote, shifting his tone back to what it had previously been and giving us a first-hand account of the bull-fight and the presentation of the ear:

He leaned up against the barrera and gave the ear to Brett. He nodded his head and smiled. The crowd were all about him. Brett held down the cape.
'You liked it?' Romero called.
Brett did not say anything. They looked at each other and smiled. Brett had the ear in her hand (p. 191).

There is a temptation to seek importance in the repeated details of these two accounts. However, in a narrative where the unseen and unspoken are so significant, it is important, instead, to privilege what is omitted. In doing so, the central issue of this episode becomes, once again, Jake's wound. In wrapping the bloodied, limp piece of flesh in Jake's own handkerchief, Brett recreates Barnes's injury in front of his own eyes. This moment is traumatic enough for Jake to record it with an objective and disengaged tone before omitting it altogether when he returns to the novel's more familiar narrative style. The significance of it ensures its inclusion, but the trauma of it demands a shift in tone, allowing Jake to distance himself from his own suffering. Brett's later treatment of the ear holds further symbolic importance. Romero presents her with a token of Jake's mutilated manhood, but it is of no use to Brett as Jake has

¹⁴⁵ Warren Beck, 'William Faulkner's Style' in Linda Wagner-Martin (ed.), *William Faulkner: Four Decades of Criticism* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1973), 141-54, p. 153.

devoted this to her already. Brett admits early on that she likes to ‘add [men] up’ (p. 19), but Jake is not a new one for her to add so the ear, along with its coded significance, is pushed out of sight in her bedside draw in the ultimate rejection of Jake’s limited masculine appeal. The cigarettes that are already in her draw are Muratti, a brand founded by a Greek businessman. These symbolise Mippipopolous in the same way that their stubbed condition is reminiscent of Cohn’s face, with its ‘permanently flattened’ nose (p. 3). Just as the count and Cohn have been removed from Brett’s life, she rids herself of Jake after witnessing Romero’s (and the novel’s) most heroic and masculine moment. He is ‘the perfect artist, whom Jake Barnes and even Hemingway can only admire, and that is partly because Romero’s art is adventure: he puts his life at risk everytime he performs’ (Green, p. 27). Showalter says that Barnes ‘observes the changes in his own emotions with as much detachment as he observes the weather or the lay of the land’ and this analysis is never more accurate than during these aforementioned passages.¹⁴⁶

Brett, Bill, and Jake return to their hotel after the bullfight and Brett immediately goes upstairs. This is her last appearance until things go wrong with Romero, and she calls out to Jake for support. Jake understands that he has been used by Brett throughout the novel: ‘That was it. Send a girl off with one man. Introduce her to another to go off with him. Now go and bring her back. And sign the wire with love. That was it all right’ (pp. 209-10). His decision to support Brett despite this realisation is fitting, given the emasculating control that she has over him.

ii. *Rural Respite and the Home Retreat*

Each interaction that Jake has with Brett is a reminder of his wounded state and is a further threat to his masculinity, but he is not the wholly emasculated character that many critics of

¹⁴⁶ Elaine Showalter, *Speaking of Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 104.

The Sun Also Rises have so often read him to be. The distinction that Hemingway makes about Jake's injury, that his penis is wounded while his testicles remain undamaged, could be reworded to explain that not only does Jake still possess an internalised masculine essence, but that certain characteristics of masculinity (in particular sexual virility) are stronger within him than others as he has no means by which to exercise them. His virility paradoxically exists alongside his impotence. Brett consistently evokes the latter by reminding Jake of his damaged body, but another form of emasculation for Jake is domesticity. It has a similar impact upon Brett, in that it produces environments in which Jake is forced to consider his wound. Jake can find masculine solace but only when he rids himself of feminine constraints: Brett and domesticity.

The issue with Jake's domestic life stems from a sense of claustrophobia. The 'typically French way to furnish a room' includes a large mirror next to the bed (p. 26); so, each night, as Jake undresses, he is confronted with his damaged body. The mirror displays and intensifies his confinement while his physical reflection prompts internal reflection, specifically about the wound: 'Of all the ways to be wounded. I suppose it was funny' (p. 26). Jake accepts that there is a humorous element to his injury, but it not a humour that he shares in:

At one time or another I had probably considered it from most of its various angles, including the one that certain injuries or imperfections are a subject of merriment while remaining quite serious for the person possessing them (p. 23).

Jake's life is one of material comfort, but he is noticeably restless. Nagel argues that 'In the nine years between London and Paris, Jake has managed to learn how to live in a man's world, devoting himself to his work, to friendships, and to sports'.¹⁴⁷ Nagel's description of what makes a 'man's world' does not match Jake's criteria. His two closest friends are Cohn (who he dislikes) and Brett (who emasculates him). He plays tennis with Cohn, but he must travel to

¹⁴⁷ James Nagel, 'Brett and the Other Women in *The Sun Also Rises*', in Scott Donaldson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 87-108, p. 92.

indulge in the more masculinising activities of fishing or bull-fighting. His profession has the same stifling nature that exists in his domestic spaces. Bill Gorton and Cohn are successful writers of fiction and with this comes a sense of freedom which Jake does not enjoy in his career as a journalist. Gorton confirms this hierarchical view, mentioning how Jake would rather be writing fiction: 'And you claim you want to be a writer, too. You're only a newspaper man. An expatriated newspaper man' (p. 100). His work is considered lesser than that of Bill and Cohn and it cannot compete on a masculine level with Mippipopolous's business trip, on which he was wounded by arrows.

If as Nagel suggests, Parisian life offers the opportunity of a man's world, then its masculine features have either evaded Jake or have been inaccessible to him. Kimmel explains that, in the early twentieth century:

The effort to recreate American manhood went outside the home or the bedroom, outside the factory or the corporation, into leisure and recreation, to include the rediscovery of the tonic freshness of the wilderness (p. 31).

Jake habitually seeks an escape that will offer him a masculine experience. The novel's first piece of dialogue sees Jake suggest to Cohn that the two of them 'fly to Strasbourg and walk up to Saint Odile' (p. 5). When this is rejected, he proposes that they visit Senlis where they can 'hike in the woods' (p. 6). His final suggestion is a shooting trip to British East Africa (p. 9). The two trips that do take place involve fishing and bull-fighting. Each of Jake's proposals include plans of physical exertion or masculine sports – shooting, fishing, and bull-fighting, all of which hold phallic connotations through the gun, rod, and horn/ sword respectively, with Lionel Trilling noting the importance of 'a rod, a gun, an *espada*, [and] a pen' to Hemingway's 'admired men.'¹⁴⁸ In highlighting Jake's decision to travel to Pamplona rather than Lourdes,

¹⁴⁸ Lionel Trilling, 'Hemingway and his Critics' in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), 7-15, p. 11.

Reynolds fails to account for the importance of the destination's masculine atmosphere. He explains that 'If ever a man needed a miraculous cure, it is Jake Barnes [...] As a nominally practising Catholic, Jake is making the wrong pilgrimage.'¹⁴⁹ Reynolds acknowledges Jake's injury here but fails to explain why it is that Jake says he is Catholic, and what Bayonne and Pamplona can offer him that Lourdes cannot. The answer to both questions is concerned with Jake's own physical state and his sense of masculinity. He reveals the doubtful nature of his Catholicism during a visit to Pamplona cathedral:

I was a little ashamed, and regretted that I was such a rotten Catholic, but realized there was nothing I could do about it, at least for a while, and maybe never, but that anyway it was a grand religion, and I only wished I felt religious and maybe I would the next time (p. 85).

Jake's desperation to be religious, to force himself into faith, is an attempt to remove his wound's impact on his masculine state. During his fishing trip he is asked whether he is 'really a Catholic' by Bill. He answers that he 'technically' is but that he does not know what this means (p. 108). Reading these two passages together suggests that Jake's belief that he is 'technically' a Catholic has nothing to do with faith, which we know he lacks. Rather, it is a justification for his abstinence. Jake's understanding of Catholicism is inseparable from chastity. He evokes its teaching during his troubled contemplation over Brett, praising its hostility towards sex:

Probably I never would have had any trouble if I hadn't run into Brett when they shipped me to England. I suppose she only wanted what she couldn't have. Well, people were that way. To hell with people. The Catholic Church had an awfully good way of handling all that. Good advice, anyway. Not to think about it (p. 27).

If Jake can immerse himself in Catholicism, then his enforced abstinence becomes virtuous rather than emasculating. However, his wound paradoxically signifies the very reason that he

¹⁴⁹ Michael S. Reynolds, 'The *Sun* in Its Time: Recovering the Historical Context' in Linda Wagner-Martin (ed.), *New Essays on The Sun Also Rises* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 43-64, p. 58.

cannot embrace religion. It stands for the war that Jake himself describes as being a ‘calamity for civilization’ (p. 14). The ‘lost generation’ to which Jake belongs are no longer able to find solace in the institutions that appealed to them prior to the war. When Lourdes is mentioned, Jake has two options: to continue his journey to Burguete or to join his fellow Catholics on their pilgrimage. His conversation with Hubert and his wife (fellow passengers) reveals why he chooses the fishing trip:

‘We got some of the best fishing in the State of Montana. I’ve been out with the boys, but I never cared for it any.’
‘Mighty little fishing you did on them trips’ his wife said.
He winked at us.
‘You know how the ladies are. If there’s a jug goes along, or a case of beer, they think it’s hell and damnation’ (p. 75).

Fishing trips are about much more than the sport itself. They are synonymous with homosocial bonding, promising access to ‘the tonic freshness of the wilderness’ while simultaneously offering an escape from women and feminine domesticity (napping under a tree during the fishing trip, Jake comments that ‘It felt good lying on the ground’ (p. 107), a stark contrast to the episode in his Parisian flat where he recounts crying in bed). Jake cannot be guaranteed a miraculous cure if he travels to Lourdes, but he can be sure of a masculine restoration while fishing, indulging in a macho sport in the rejuvenating outdoors, free of the emasculating Brett and the confines of domesticity. Moreover, the two destinations are positioned in opposition to one another; and with the masculine fishing trip described as ‘hell and damnation’, it is reasonable to assume that there is a perceived femininity in the holiness of the Lourdes pilgrimage, not least because of its associations with the Virgin Mary: ‘[Pilgrims] go to Lourdes because Our Lady said: “I want people to come here in procession.” [...] they experience within themselves the power and presence of Our Lady.’¹⁵⁰ The femininity here, combined with the virginal reminders to an impotent Jake marks Lourdes as a particularly unappealing destination,

¹⁵⁰ François Roy, ‘The Meaning of Lourdes’, *The Furrow*, 9/2 (1958), 79-89, pp. 79-80.

because while Jake's sexual desire cannot be exercised through normative means, the masculine activities that he pursues do offer a coded sexual release as well as a literal physical exertion and are the only available channels for Jake's masculine expression in the novel.

Thomas Strychacz, alluding to the volatility of gender in Hemingway's work, argues how his fiction 'forces us to try out various constructions of masculinity and femininity while realizing that we are merely staging significations that have no eternal or absolute validity'.¹⁵¹ The fishing trip demonstrates the macho rejuvenation that is available to Jake for the first time in his narrative, while simultaneously reminding him of his physical state and the consequential limitations that it has on his masculinity. The trip 'represents a release from social and sexual competition [...] Bill and Jake go to the country to escape social constraints'.¹⁵² It is 'a pause, a reprieve from the emotional tension of the rest of the novel [...] in which the central characters are happiest and most at peace'.¹⁵³ It is an opportunity to 'flee the confusion of the world' (Watkins, p. 105). Fussell references Hemingway's work, describing Frederic Henry's retreat to Capri in *A Farewell to Arms* as a 'pastoral oasis', but the term is equally applicable to Jake who, despite no longer fighting the war, still suffers from its fallout (Fussell, p. 237). Jake has a successful trip, fishing well enough to claim an invigorated sense of masculinity, but this masculine ascendancy is halted by Bill in such a way that causes Jake's physical condition to resurface:

Bill sat down, opened up his bag, laid a big trout on the grass. He took out three more, each one a little bigger than the last, and laid them side by side in the shade from the tree. His face was sweaty and happy.

'How are yours?'

'Smaller.'

'Let's see them.'

'They're packed.'

'How big are they really?'

¹⁵¹ Thomas Strychacz, *Hemingway's Theatres of Masculinity* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), p. 76.

¹⁵² Wendy Martin, 'Brett Ashley as *New Woman* in *The Sun Also Rises*' in Linda Wagner-Martin (ed.), *New Essays on The Sun Also Rises* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 65-82, p. 78.

¹⁵³ David Savola, "'A Very Sinister Book": *The Sun Also Rises* as Critique of Pastoral' in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2011), 135-55, p. 143.

‘They're all about the size of your smallest.’ (p. 105).

Jake’s initial pride with his neat and substantial haul – ‘They looked nice in the ferns, and now the bag was bulky’ (p. 104) is overshadowed by Bill’s ‘bag plump with ferns’ (p. 105). This competition over size echoes the earlier episode in which the count exposed his wounds to Jake and Brett. Just as Jake is unable to reveal his injury for comparison at that moment, he chooses not to display his trout here in another example of his damaged body gleaning attention from its very concealment: ‘A refusal to put his (Jake’s) on display thus reconfigures the play of glances around an absence (the absent trout/ phallus)’ (Strychacz, p.79). Hemingway revisits this theme in *Green Hills of Africa*, where his rhino is overshadowed by his companion’s due to the respective size of the animals:

There we were, the three of us, wanting to congratulate, waiting to be good sports about this rhino whose smaller horn was longer than our big one [...]
‘We got one too’ said P.O.M.
‘That’s fine’ said Karl. ‘Is he bigger than this one?’
‘Hell, no. He’s a lousy runt.’ [...]
‘Papa, please try to act like a human being’ she said. ‘Poor Karl. You’re making him feel dreadfully.’ [...]
‘I’d rather have him beat me. You know that. Truly. But why couldn’t he just get a good one, two or three inches longer? Why did he have to get one that makes mine ridiculous? It just makes ours silly’ (pp. 56-57).

The two episodes hold several parallels. Not only do they concern hunting as a masculine endeavour, but the narrators in both texts find their initial sense of pride quickly reduced by the greater success of another man. The measure of success itself is crudely based on size. Jake’s six fish do not trump Bill’s four because Jake’s are smaller, while it is the size of the horn that matters to Papa and Karl in *Green Hills of Africa*. Both Barnes and Papa are identical in their comparison. Jake tells Bill that his trout are ‘all about the size of [Bill’s] smallest’ (p. 105) while the smallest horn on Karl’s rhino is described as longer than the longest on Papa’s. The passage from *Green Hills of Africa* is more overtly phallic (given the obvious connotations of the horn) and its similarity with the trout episode in *The Sun Also Rises* strengthens a reading

of the latter as being concerned with phallic imagery. The significance of this imagery gains additional importance given the prevalence of Jake's wound throughout his narrative. The fishing trip rejuvenates Jake's masculinity through its cathartic activity and absence of femininity, but Bill's presence (and success) serves to remind Jake and the reader that while the trip offers a degree of repair to his masculinity, he is permanently limited by his physical condition; and yet, despite this limitation, the trip grants Jake his most contented moments in the novel. He says that it is 'Wonderful how one loses track of the days up here in the mountains' (p. 110) and that he had 'had a grand time' (p. 112) during the trip.

Jake's rejuvenation is a result of the masculinising activities – drinking and fishing in a homosocial group that is granted a credible masculinity by its exclusion of femininity. Only two women are present during the trip, and while one serves to strengthen the masculinising aspects of the homosocial bond between Jake and Bill, the other succeeds in ending it. The first woman brings Jake and Bill breakfast in their hotel room. She is unnamed and does not speak (pp. 99-100). The second woman delivers the message from Cohn that breaks the sense of masculine camaraderie ('What a lousy telegram!' p. 111) and ultimately brings an end to their trip. In Jake's 'pastoral oasis', women either serve as silent figures of domesticity or they infiltrate, threaten, and finally put an end to his masculine space, despite their new friend Harris's attempts to delay their departure:

'I hope you're not thinking of leaving?'
'Yes. We'll go in on the afternoon bus, I'm afraid.'
'What a rotten business. I had hoped we'd all have another go at the Irati together.'

[...]

'Do. Stop over another day. Be a good chap.'
'We really have to get into town' I said.
'What a pity' (pp. 110-11).

Both men are veterans of the First World War. Harris, however, enjoys a wisdom that Jake lacks. He knows that Jake's decision to leave Burguete is a bad idea, calling it 'rotten business'

while pleading with him to stay an extra night, appealing to Jake's fondness for fishing. Harris seems aware that nothing good can come for Jake if he visits Pamplona (and indeed it does not), and this sense of awareness is a character trait that he exhibits when discussing the homosocial environment that the three men have created:

'I say. You don't know what it's meant to me to have you chaps up here.'
'We've had a grand time, Harris.'
Harris was a little tight.
'I say. Really you don't know how much it means. I've not had much fun since the war'
(p. 112).

The striking aspect of that final sentence stems from the suggestion that the war was fun, but this is of course not what Harris is saying. Rather, he is reminiscing about a time of excessive masculinity – fighting, weaponry, danger – and the homosocial camaraderie that is associated with that period. It seems that for Harris, the war was so catastrophic that the nature of 'fun' has become inaccessible unless it appears through a recreation of his war experiences. Harris's presence in the narrative strengthens the claim that Burguete is the novel's singular space of masculine solace. Reynolds criticises Jake's decision to go to Pamplona rather than to Lourdes but in truth, Jake's real choice is whether to travel to Pamplona or to stay in Burguete, and he makes the wrong one.

iii. *Donald Mahon: Jealousy and Disgust*

The lives of Jake Barnes and Donald Mahon in *Soldiers' Pay* initially seem to mirror one another. Both men are wounded veterans whose injuries have resulted in (or at least prompted) a problematic love-life for each of them:

It is a war novel in the same sense that *The Sun Also Rises* is, in that each book's hero bears irreparable wounds as a result of World War I, and that he loses the woman he loves because of those wounds (Wagner, p. 154).

Yet, despite their ostensibly similar circumstances, the two characters experience post-war lives of such contrasting nature that any comparable aspects of their lives could be deemed to be little more than superficial:

Barnes is a normal man despite his injury [...] Donald Mahon, contrastingly, is one of Faulkner's grotesques – Mahon should have died months before; his speech is robot-like, and his appearance frightens everyone (Wagner, p. 155).

Wagner is correct in highlighting the substantial differences in the post-war lives of Donald and Jake, but as she already indicates when linking them through their categorisation as 'war novels', the wounded condition of each man as well as the cause of the injury (the war) produces an inevitable association between them, regardless of their otherwise divergent lives. Unlike Jake's wound, which is hidden and ambiguous, Donald's scarred face is an unavoidable emblem of the war's horror; but *Soldiers' Pay* is not a war novel simply because its central character 'bears irreparable wounds as a result of World War I'. Rather, its status as a war novel is guaranteed by the jarring arrival of the European war experience, signified by Mahon, in a small town in Georgia. The physical damage that Donald has sustained is symbolic of a wider sense of masculine loss in the post-war period: 'Donald Mahon's war wound [...] expresses] the sensibility of the lost generation'.¹⁵⁴ The combination of Donald's personal injury and the societal gaze that his damaged body is subjected to evokes Butler's model of the human body as being vulnerable to damage, as well as being both private to the individual and accessible to the public:

The body implies mortality, vulnerability, agency: the skin and the flesh expose us to the gaze of others but also to touch and to violence [...] The body has its invariably public dimension; constituted as a social phenomenon in the public sphere, my body is and is not mine.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Lothar Hönnighausen, 'Imagining the Abstract: Faulkner's Treatment of War and Values in *A Fable*' in Noel Polk & Ann J. Abadie (eds.), *Faulkner and War* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 120-37, p. 120.

¹⁵⁵ Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 21.

When John Liman states that Donald is ‘dead while still alive’ he is appealing to Butler’s distinction between the private and public perceptions of the body.¹⁵⁶ Donald’s limited life continues in order to paradoxically demonstrate death to those townspeople who had been protected from the destruction of the war. Faulkner emphasises this distinction, contrasting the primary setting of the narrative, Mahon’s hometown, and the Front from which he has recently returned. The novel’s town is presented as sheltered and insular, with the collective body of ‘the town’ aware of the individual lives of its constituent members.

The Town:

War Hero Returns. . . .

His face ... the way that girl goes on with that Farr boy. . . .¹⁵⁷

The entire town seems aware of Donald’s physical condition and they are alert to relatively trivial pieces of gossip, such as Cecily’s promiscuous behaviour. Faulkner positions this alongside the experience at the Front of two minor characters, Green and Madden:

They sat silent across a table from each other [...] thinking of home, of quiet elm-shaded streets along which wagons creaked and crawled through the dusty day and along which girls and boys walked in the evening to and from the picture show or to sip sweet chilled liquids in drug stores; of peace and quiet and all homely things, of a time when there was no war [...]

Outside was Brittany and mud, an equivocal city, temporary and twice foreign, lust in a foreign tongue (p. 145).

The description of their respective hometowns matches that of the novel’s setting. They reflect on it nostalgically from a cosy domestic space while the reality of wartime Brittany (ugly, large, hazy and incomprehensible) is, for the time being, safely outside. Prior to the war, Donald epitomised small-town respectability as the son of the popular and respected rector,

¹⁵⁶ John Liman, ‘Addie in No-Man’s Land’ in Noel Polk & Ann J. Abadie (eds.), *Faulkner and War* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 36-54, p. 45.

¹⁵⁷ William Faulkner, *Soldiers’ Pay* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 126.

‘Uncle Joe’. His physical condition upon his return, however, is an embodiment of the war’s horror:

A death is one thing, a scar is another, but closely related. The scar, the stump, are the visible signs of a soldier’s brush with annihilation: not so much a badge of courage [...] but rather a mark of chaos, a site where death has tapped him on the shoulder in grim reminder.¹⁵⁸

As far as Julian Lowe is concerned, the scar is very much ‘a badge of courage’, but this is not the case for most of the townsfolk who have been sheltered from the ugly realities of the war and who are suddenly forced to confront them:

at the metaphorical center of *Soldiers’ Pay* sits Donald Mahon’s vividly undescribed scar across his brow. His scar is the mirror into which all the characters look, seeing themselves in pity and revulsion and even pride; it is a text in which they read their own narratives. The very young Cadet Lowe [...] has] no experience of war [...] but longs for [Mahon’s scar] (Polk, p. 144).

Herein lies the importance of Mahon’s scar to the novel and its treatment of masculinity. Characters are split in their reaction to Mahon’s wound. Wagner’s claim that Donald’s ‘appearance frightens everyone’ is demonstrably untrue – certainly in as much as it is not the dominant response of each character. It produces a range of emotions from onlookers, and while fear (and, more often, disgust) are prevalent reactions, so too are jealousy, awe, and sympathy. Insofar as the novel’s men are concerned, there is a clear distinction to be made between Gilligan, a fellow veteran who is made to feel ‘sick to [his] stomach’ (p. 25) by the sight of the scar and the likes of Lowe and Robert Saunders, who harbour jealousy and fascination respectively for Donald.¹⁵⁹ This variance reflects the work of Colin Barnes & Geoff Mercer, who note that ‘The “otherness” of disabled people has [historically] been exploited as a source of “entertainment” as well as to stir the fears and emotions of the non-disabled

¹⁵⁸ Noel Polk, ‘Scar’ in Noel Polk & Ann J. Abadie (eds.), *Faulkner and War* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 138-59, p. 143.

¹⁵⁹ Cecily’s brother will be referred to as ‘Robert Saunders’ while her father, also named Robert, will be referred to as ‘Mr Saunders’.

population.’¹⁶⁰ They also describe ‘the so-called ‘Ugly Laws’ in the USA’ which were prominent in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and ‘which [placed] social restrictions on those whose physical appearance might offend or frighten “normal” people’ (p. 91). The reactions to Mahon certainly evoke this distinct cultural phenomenon, but they are also a result of the war’s contrasting effects on masculine identity. Gilligan sees Donald as an ugly reminder of a war from which he has only recently escaped while, for Lowe, Donald embodies the masculinising experience of a war which Lowe himself has missed out on; ‘they had stopped the war on him’ (p. 7), meaning that much like Faulkner, Lowe trained for a service that he was never able to carry out. His reaction to Donald’s condition is not the feeling of relief that might be expected of someone who has escaped the evident horror of the war. Instead, Faulkner grants Lowe’s jealousy its own section of a chapter, which begins with Lowe waking in the same room as Mahon and comparing himself to the injured aviator:

In the next room Cadet Lowe waked from a chaotic dream, opening his eyes and staring with detachment, impersonal as God, at lights burning about him. After a time, he recalled his body, remembering where he was and by an effort he turned his head. In the other bed the man slept beneath his terrible face. (I am Julian Lowe I eat, I digest, evacuate: I have flown. This man . . . this man here, sleeping beneath his scar. . . . Where do we touch? Oh, God, oh, God: knowing his own body, his stomach.), (p. 38).

The entirety of this passage is loaded with somatic language. Lowe assigns Donald a Cartesian split of body and spirit while speaking of himself in more unified terms. Donald sleeps ‘beneath his terrible face’ as if the masculine essence of Mahon (Lowe repeats ‘this man’) is shrouded by his disfigurement while simultaneously being defined by it.

The uncertainty surrounding the classification of manhood is repeated throughout *Soldiers’ Pay* and, in response to seeing this ambiguity in Donald, Lowe reassures himself of his own cohesive state. Lowe’s ‘I’ is in control of the most basic bodily functions, binding the mental and the physical in a way that is seemingly unavailable to Mahon. The comparison that

¹⁶⁰ Colin Barnes & Geof Mercer, *Disability* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), p. 91.

Lowe makes between himself and Mahon is an attempt to align himself to the wounded veteran. When Lowe thinks 'I have flown', he really means 'I have flown *too*'. However, despite his self-assurance, he is conscious of the signifiers of masculinity that Donald has, but that Lowe himself lacks. The first example of this is made evident through Lowe's comparison of his and Mahon's hats.

Raising his hand he felt his own undamaged brow. No scar there. Near him upon a chair was his hat severed by a white band, upon the table the other man's cap with its cloth crown sloping backward from a bronze initialed crest (p. 38).

Lowe optimistically feels his brow in the hope that Mahon's scar is a symptom of a contagious condition which might have been transferred while the two men slept. His next act, the comparison of the hats, is a symbolically charged moment involving a striking amount of carnal language, with Lowe describing his own hat as having been 'severed'. By using this terminology alongside the presence of Mahon's undamaged cap, Faulkner is alluding to the physical (and consequentially masculine) distinction that exists between the two men. Lowe's hat may seem damaged to him, but his head is not. Conversely, Mahon's hat remains in a sound condition precisely *because* his head has not. Lowe's severed hat stands for the shelter and protection that he has received by virtue of his youth, while Mahon's pristine cap was untouched by the trauma that was instead inflicted upon his body. Mahon's cap also includes a valuable bronze crest, sharing its colour with typical wartime ammunition, while Lowe's hat is more modestly decorated with a nondescript piece of white material, sitting above his head like a flag of surrender. The specific positioning of the hats in the room is equally noteworthy. Mahon's rests on a table, presumably above Lowe's, which is on a chair, as their headpieces mirror their masculine hierarchy, with Donald at the top.

Lowe's inability to outman Donald is not the extent of his emasculation. Rather, his existence in the novel serves to demonstrate how, for those close to the war (such as Gilligan and the widowed Margaret), the man who did not fight lacks the masculine virtue of any man

who did, an example made all the more prominent by Lowe's proximity to the military. His inability to access and acquire a sense of masculine identity is the most conspicuous aspect of his character. As Daniel Singal notes, 'Despite [Julian Lowe's] yearning for adult masculinity, he has missed his chance to grow up and so remains a hopeless romantic and a "child" in Margaret's eyes.'¹⁶¹ He is immediately described as 'embryonic' and this association with childishness is prevalent. He responds squeamishly to alcohol (p. 9), while Gilligan, who takes on a mentoring role over Lowe, is clear about the masculinising qualities of drink: 'lemme get my bottle and I'm your man' (p. 32). Margaret describes him as a 'child' after receiving the first in a series of love-letters that are notable for their juvenile tone. The lack of grammatical precision in 'Well, give my regards to Giligan tell him not to break his arm crooking it until I get back. I will love you all ways' (p. 86) is repeated throughout his correspondence and is pre-empted by the narrator, who describes Lowe as speaking with 'ungrammatical zest' (p. 42). He immaturely confesses his love to Margaret before having even learnt her name (pp. 42-44), and is then forced to confront his masculine lacking that has been caused, in part, by his absence of war service:

'You would have been an ace, too, if you'd seen any Germans, wouldn't you?'
 He glanced at her quickly, like a struck dog. He was his old dull despair again.
 I'm so sorry' she said with quick sincerity. 'I didn't think: of course you would.'
 [...]
 'I would have been killed there if I could, or wounded like him, don't you know it?'
 'Of course, darling.'
 [...]
 She drew him down beside her, and he knew he was acting the child she supposed him to be, but he couldn't help it [... He] put his arms around her legs (pp. 42-44).

Aware of his childlike state but unable to alter it, Lowe drops down to Margaret's knees and grips her legs, constructing a maternal interaction that further infantilises him. Margaret compounds this, forcing Lowe's face between her breasts. Any suggestion of this being a

¹⁶¹ Daniel J. Singal, *William Faulkner: The Making of a Modernist* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 62.

sexual embrace is diminished when Margaret calls Lowe a 'sweet child' and kisses him 'as his mother kissed him' (p. 45). The interaction with Margaret during this episode is focused primarily on Lowe's suspicion that she prefers Mahon to him. Within this fear is the revelation of the primary threat to his masculinity: 'Tell me, you don't like him better than me because he has wings and a scar, do you?' (p. 43). Lowe is repeating the concern that he previously contemplated through the comparison of his hat to Mahon's:

He tasted his sour mouth, knowing his troubled stomach. To have been him! he moaned. Just to be him. Let him take this sound body of mine! Let him take it. To have got wings on my breast, to have wings; and to have got his scar, too, I would take death tomorrow. Upon a chair Mahon's tunic evinced above the left breast pocket wings breaking from an initialed circle beneath a crown, tipping downward in an arrested embroidered sweep; a symbolized desire.

To be him, to have gotten wings, but to have got his scar too! (p. 38)

Lowe's focus on clothing continues as his earlier pride at his unified and functioning body gives way to a desperate plea to trade it for Mahon's wings, displayed on his tunic, and his scar, displayed on his face. Despite the naivety surrounding his relationship with Margaret, Lowe is acutely aware of the value of both the wings and the scar. Having straddled the divide between soldier and civilian, he is in the privileged position of understanding what is deemed indicative of masculine eminence. From his wartime life in America he has seen the admiration afforded to pilots:

Of course it was silly that some uniforms had to salute others, but it was nice, too. Especially, if the uniform you had caught happened to be a salutee. And heaven only knows how much damage among feminine hearts a set of pilot's wings was capable of (p. 156).

Aviators are evidently the highest-ranking veterans, with their wings granting access to a sexual, and consequently masculinising, interaction. Lowe is conscious of this power and suspects that Margaret has fallen under its influence. His desperation for wings is not aimed at attaining personal satisfaction: he believes that he is 'as good a flyer as any ever was at the

Front' (p. 43). It is, instead, a manifestation of his desire to receive the kind of masculinising attention that he has seen afforded to fighter-pilots and, in doing so, he adheres to Slavoj Žižek's interpretation of Lacan's teaching on desire: 'I desire an object only insofar as it is desired by the Other'.¹⁶² Lowe never imagines flying; he simply imagines people knowing that he has flown; and just as his civilian experience has prompted his desire for wings, his military background has taught him the masculinising effects of a battle wound. Donald's return produces a varied reaction amongst the townspeople, but fellow veterans are consistent in the respectful distance that they maintain: 'You'll notice them soldiers don't bother him, specially the ones that was overseas. They just kind of call the whole thing off' (p. 136). There is a reverence here that Lowe aspires to have for himself. After all, the conclusion of his fantasy is the autoscopic experience of studying his corpse:

But what was death to Cadet Lowe, except something true and grand and sad? He saw a tomb, open, and himself in boots and belt, and pilot's wings on his breast, a wound stripe. ... What more could one ask of Fate? (p. 44).

The use of 'stripe' transforms the wound into a military medal, on par with the wings that are on his 'breast', itself a markedly carnal word that Lowe repeatedly prefers to the more common (but less visceral) 'uniform', or even 'chest'. The badged body and the scarred face are identical in their masculine signification.

Whether or not Lowe truly desires Margaret is irrelevant, and it is not crucial for his sense of masculine identity that she reciprocates his affection. Lowe's primary concern is that Margaret is in love with Donald precisely because Donald has those masculine traits (the wings and the scar) that Lowe can never have. However, the balance that exists between scar and wings for Lowe is not universally recognised. Physical damage has an inconsistent association with masculinity in *Soldiers' Pay*, as Wagner alludes to with reference to *The Sound and the*

¹⁶² Slavoj Žižek, *Interrogating the Real* (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 62.

Fury: ‘Faulkner’s use of Mahon [...] throughout the novel, foreshadows his use of Benjy. Only the morally good characters have any real sympathy with either Benjy or Mahon’ (p. 156). The comparison of Benjy and Mahon is a tempting one to make. Both require substantial care, and both suffer from a similar level of cognitive disorder, albeit for very different reasons. Ironically, the trauma inflicted on their respective bodies is what produces the largest divide between them. Benjy is inevitably unmanned by the castration that he undergoes, but Donald’s injuries have a more complex effect. Wagner is correct – the ‘morally good characters’ do have sympathy with Donald, but these same characters also see a masculine essence in him that others do not.

iv. An Unwanted Return

From a critical perspective, Barnes and Mahon act first and foremost as case-studies, representing the injured soldier that was so prevalent following the war. Yet at the same time, their specific injuries encourage us to consider them as separate from other wounded veterans. The precise and sensitive nature of Jake’s injury differentiates him from his less intimately damaged comrades in Italy (p. 27). Similarly, Donald’s sickening scar is unavoidable, whereas the novel’s other injured veteran, James Dough, is able to disguise his amputated leg with the use of a prosthetic (p. 158). The specific nature of Jake and Donald’s condition makes them especially relevant to discussion about the relationship between the male body and masculine identity. Jake’s genital wound is a barrier to the execution of sexual desire, while Donald’s facial disfigurement threatens his position as a sexually desired man. Despite these similarities, a notable difference between *The Sun Also Rises* and *Soldiers’ Pay* is demonstrated through their contrasting narrative focus. *The Sun Also Rises* is narrated by Jake and concentrates on

his experiences, his views of society, and, crucially, his experiences as a wounded veteran. *Soldiers' Pay*, on the other hand, is predominantly concerned with society's reaction to Donald and his wound, rather than his personal experience of either. In both cases, the physical condition becomes connected to masculine identity through the focus on specific bodies in the text while also offering a wide-ranging critique of post-war masculinity which leads, in Jake's opinion, to an extensive societal problem:

"It's a shame you're sick. We get on well. What's the matter with you, anyway?"

"I got hurt in the war," I said.

"Oh, that dirty war."

We would probably have gone on and discussed the war and agreed that it was in reality a calamity for civilization, and perhaps would have been better avoided (p. 14).

Jake efficiently blames the war for sickness, injury, and calamity on both a personal and societal level, and the suggestion that Jake encapsulates a universal masculine loss is well established in regard to *The Sun Also Rises*:

[*The Sun Also Rises* captures] the cultural dislocation and psychological malaise that were the legacy of the World War I [...] Hemingway makes it clear that the postwar sensibility as exemplified by Jake is one of severe loss, emasculation, and impotence (pp. 66-67).

Wendy Martin deals comprehensively with this topic, positioning Brett as the embodiment of those things that Jake symbolises the loss of:

This role reversal reflects the changing definitions of gender in the jazz age. In *The Sun Also Rises*, men cry and women swear; Brett aggressively expresses her sexual desires, while her lovers wait to be chosen; she likes action – noisy public gatherings, large parties, the blood and gore of the bullfight – whereas the men appreciate the pleasure of sipping brandy in a quiet café (p. 75).

Gladstein views Brett as distinct from Hemingway's other literary women, arguing that 'Hemingway has done much more with her character [than presenting her as just a bitch-goddess or Terrible Mother]'; and while little more can be added to Mimi Gladstein and Wendy

Martin's analysis of Brett as a post-war replacement for masculine loss, their criticism does illuminate another area in which Faulkner's perennially under-appreciated novel needs greater critical attention.¹⁶³ Margaret Powers lacks the gregarious attributes of Brett Ashley, but she is equally important as a filler for the masculine void created by the war, embodying this new model of womanhood that develops in the post-war period:

In the gap of meaning that opened after World War I, the female role was undergoing a transformation in the popular consciousness from passive, private creature to avid individualist in pursuit of new experiences (Wendy Martin, p. 67).

Margaret admittedly contradicts this description inasmuch that she repeats marriage, rather than seeks new experiences. Nevertheless, she offers the novel's firmest rejection of passivity while Cecily undoubtedly enjoys a sense of liberation in her social engagements, although she is unable to fully escape patriarchal dominance.¹⁶⁴ Wagner briefly summarises the role of women in *Soldiers' Pay*, explaining how they appropriate traditional models of male and masculine power:

A 'primary theme' is 'that there are great differences between men and women, and that Faulkner as this time finds the dice loaded in favour of women. Sometimes women use their strength positively (Margaret and even the stolid Emmy), but sometimes they use it to un-man their men (Mrs. Saunders, Cecily), (p. 155).

Margaret and Cecily combine to represent the new woman that Brett embodies alone, and Anne Wiltsher's description of the post-war, liberated woman could just as easily be a combined embodiment of these three fictional characters:

There was greater freedom for American women in general (during the war): they disregarded the restricting corsetry of the early 1900s, threw away ornate hats and wore shorter skirts [...] Women smoked cigarettes and drank alcohol for the first time.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ Mimi Reisel Gladstein, *The Indestructible Woman in Faulkner, Hemingway, and Steinbeck* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986), p. 61.

¹⁶⁴ There is an uncomfortable episode in which Janarius Jones exercises a large degree of domination over Cecily (p. 192).

¹⁶⁵ Anne Wiltsher, *Most Dangerous Women: Feminist Peace Campaigners of The Great War* (London: Pandora Press, 1985), p. 44.

The appearance of this kind of woman in *Soldiers' Pay* ensures that analysis of the text is not limited to a reading of Donald's scar as purely incidental to him; but, as with Jake in *The Sun Also Rises*, Mahon's injury is equally symbolic of a societal loss of masculinity, a loss that is addressed by the novel's women.

The symbolic loss that exists in *Soldiers' Pay* is centred around Mahon and his physical condition, a wounding which has reduced him to a 'walking coma'.¹⁶⁶ The cause of his injuries is relayed late in the novel, in a passage that ends with the death that Donald cruelly avoided at the Front. It is a death that arrives with the return of Mahon's consciousness and this is fitting for a text which is preoccupied with responses to, and interactions with, the central character, rather than the central character's own experiences. Indeed, the prominence of this divide has prompted critics to clarify Donald's position in the novel. Knights argues that 'Although virtually silent and almost completely passive, Donald nevertheless represents a powerful force at the center of *Soldiers' Pay*' while Geismar explains that 'Donald Mahon, disfigured, uncomprehending lump of flesh who may be called the central object rather than the central figure of *'Soldiers' Pay*' (p. 146).¹⁶⁷ This objectification positions Mahon as an invasive war memorial amongst a naïve American populace who retained much of the pre-war idealism that had been relinquished in Europe after the war.¹⁶⁸ The war 'remained a virtual phenomenon to many US residents' and so Donald exists as 'a moral touchstone by which the community of Charlestown may be judged'.¹⁶⁹ Arriving in a small Georgian town that has been otherwise

¹⁶⁶ Myra Jehlen, *Class and Character in Faulkner's South* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p. 26.

¹⁶⁷ Pamela E. Knights, 'Mahon, Donald' in Robert W. Hamblin & Charles A. Peek (eds.), *A William Faulkner Encyclopedia* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999), 241, p. 241.

¹⁶⁸ Mrozek discusses the pre-war idealism that remains in America in the post-war period: Donald J. Mrozek, 'The Habit of Victory: The American Military and the Cult of Manliness' in J. A. Mangan & James Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 220-41, p. 224.

¹⁶⁹ John T. Matthews, 'American Writing of the Great War' in Vincent Sherry (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of The First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 217-42, p. 217; Michael Millgate, 'Starting Out in the Twenties: Reflections on *Soldiers' Pay*' in Henry Claridge (ed.), *William Faulkner: Critical Assessments, Volume II* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1999), 64-78, p. 71.

sheltered from its atrocities, Richard Hughes says that he is ‘like an unwanted ghost’ a point which has critical support.¹⁷⁰

the portrait of the crippled, scarred body of Donald Mahon, intended to convey the horrors of the battlefield, seems to convey much more sharply the horror of the helpless male in the southern world of ‘Soldiers’ Pay’ dominated by these strange feminine temperaments (Geismar, p. 148).

Geismar’s focus on the ‘indented’ symbolism of Donald’s body is misguided. Mahon conveys both the atrocities of war *and* the ‘helpless male’ that Geismar describes. Indeed, the helpless male is a result of the war’s atrocities, so any attempt to disaffiliate the two is ill-founded. What is fitting, however, is Geismar’s description of Mahon’s body as a ‘portrait’, as this sense of Donald being a symbolic object rather than a human being is apparent. Donald’s visitors include men who are:

interested in the war only as a by-product of the rise and fall of Mr Wilson, and interested in that only as a matter of dollars and cents, while their wives chatted about clothes to each other across Mahon’s scarred, oblivious brow (p. 123).

Faulkner depicts Donald as little more than a furnishing in a room of unconcerned civilians, while their indifference towards him is contrasted with that of his fellow soldiers who ‘don’t bother him, specially the ones that was overseas’ (p. 124). While the veterans retain a respectful distance, the townsfolk behave around Donald as they might at a public display, especially the ‘boys’ who react with frustration when they realise that Donald ‘wouldn’t tell any war stories’, as though they have an inherent right to see and understand Mahon’s damaged body (p. 124). The prevalence of these intrusions provokes a response from Gilligan that betrays his frustration at the townspeople’s treatment of Donald: ‘G’wan now, beat it. Show’s over’ (p. 124). Gilligan understands that, to these people, Mahon and his injured state is a form of entertainment, ‘a show’, and this public self-entitlement towards Donald’s body is a

¹⁷⁰ Richard Hughes, ‘Preface to the British Edition of *Soldiers’ Pay*’, in Henry Claridge (ed.), *William Faulkner: Critical Assessments, Volume II* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1999), 49-50, p. 50.

manifestation of Butler's suggestion that 'to be a body is to be given over to others even as a body is, emphatically, "one's own," that over which we must claim rights of autonomy' (p. 20). Donald's issue is that he lacks the agency to claim this autonomy, and so he must rely on Gilligan to do so for him.

Moreover, the combination of awe and disgust that is targeted at Mahon is symptomatic of reactions to the disabled body:

Disabled bodies are so unusual and bend the rules of representation to such extremes that they must mean something extraordinary. They quickly become sources of fear and fascination for nondisabled people, who cannot bear to look at the unruly sight before them but also cannot bear not to look (Siebers, pp. 63-64).

The reactions to his scar are indications of a post-war split in the American psyche, between those who are unable to relinquish the war, and those for whom the war itself is only registered when they are forced to face Donald, with his scar that recreates the horror of the Front in the apparent seclusion of America. *Soldiers' Pay* presents a society where war and masculinity were once closely associated, where war is venerated up to the point at which its consequences are revealed to society. Aviators are the most highly desired men while they are in the safety of America, but Donald's return forces the girls who he had once 'danced with or courted of summer nights' to turn away from him 'in hushed nausea' (p. 124). Olga Vickery notes the tension between the veterans and the civilians in the town: 'Charlestown is split into two groups each of which is a stranger to the other.'¹⁷¹ Gilligan's impression of post-war society reflects upon changing attitudes towards the war and its soldiers:

girls who once waited upon their favours and who now ignored them – the hang-over of warfare in a society tired of warfare. Once Society drank war, brought them into manhood with a cultivated taste for war; but now Society seemed to have found something else for a beverage (p. 165).

¹⁷¹ Olga W. Vickery, 'Faulkner's First Novel' in Henry Claridge (ed.), *William Faulkner: Critical Assessments, Volume II* (Robertsbridge: Helm Information, 1999), 58-63, p. 59.

There is an assurance here that vast change has taken place during the war-years. Admittedly, the assurance is vague. 'Seemed' and 'something' suggest an uncertainty regarding what exactly society has turned to in place of masculinising warfare. This ambiguity is reflected in the narrative with terminology like 'boys of both sexes' – an indication of the lack of certainty surrounding gender-expectations. All of *Soldiers' Pay*'s characters are forced to navigate this new society, but that is not to say that each of them assimilates successfully. The novel is split by those characters who relish the post-war changes and those who do not. The position that each character takes can be identified by their reaction to Donald's injury; there are those characters who continue to venerate him, regardless of how his wound may or may not sicken them, while there are others who are appalled by the invasion of the horrifically injured man who is 'dead while still alive' (Liman, p. 45).

Those who view Mahon as an iconic masculine figure (in the way the Lowe does) are invariably the same characters who, for a range of different reasons, do not fit in with post-war America. Lowe is unable to fit in with veterans or civilians, having occupied an ambiguous middle-ground during the final stages of the war. Gilligan, on the other hand, clings on to his own war experience, against his own inclination. He feels sick at the sight of Donald's scar and equates it with the war when the men are first introduced. Gilligan urges Lowe to 'Let [Donald] alone. Don't you see he don't remember himself? Do you reckon you would, with that scar? Let the war be' (p. 25). Gilligan is aware of the scar's physical effects on Mahon and also of its signification of the war, but despite demanding that Lowe 'let the war be', Gilligan is unable to do this himself. He refers to Mahon as 'Loot' throughout the narrative in a respectful reference to his military ranking, while speaking of himself in deprecative terms: 'Number no thousand no hundred and naughty naught Private [...] Joe Gilligan' (p. 7).

By maintaining this strict hierarchical order in the post-war civilian society, Gilligan is attempting to retain a sense of order in a new world that he struggles to adapt to, as witnessed

through his behaviour on the train where he disturbs the civilian passengers (p. 11), or his inability to dance: '[Gilligan] perched among them while they talked loudly, drowning the intimation of dancers they could not emulate' (p. 165). The passage is illuminating for two reasons. It is not the first mention of Gilligan's unimpressive dancing, as he previously tells Lowe of a time that a 'swell Jane' told him that he 'can't dance'. Gilligan argued that he 'can dance as well as any general or major or even a sergeant' (p. 8). Dancing is a ritualistic act in *Soldiers' Pay*, and for Gilligan, ability and rank (and thus, masculinity) are intrinsically bound together. Hughes rightly calls the dance scene in the novel 'a climactic episode' (p. 50).

To not dance is to not engage in courtship, and it is notable that the one character who we are categorically told 'doesn't dance' is the amputated veteran, James Dough (p. 158). Dough is a relatively minor character in the novel, only appearing in this episode. However, his name, a reference to 'doughboy' (a colloquial name for an American soldier) suggests that he is symbolic of his post-war generation: 'The doughboys had returned home and, like millions of their fellow citizens, were trying to do the impossible: recover the life that they had lived before the war.'¹⁷² His interaction with Cecily is hugely significant, as it animates Meyer's assessment of heterosexual relations in the post-war period, where 'there were the millions [of veterans] who were still alive but maimed in body or spirit or both. And all of the women for whom there were no men' (p. 464).

Dough is the kind of wounded veteran that Cecily wants Donald to be. The major injuries to the two men are substantially different, but Faulkner's decision to give them both a damaged arm is a clear ploy to equate them in some regard. Mahon's 'withered hand' (p. 7) and Dough's 'festering arm' with bones through 'which a tracer bullet had passed' (p. 158) do not have as great an impact on their lives as their other injuries but they do create a bond

¹⁷² G. J. Meyer, *The World Remade: America in World War I* (New York: Bantam Books, 2016), p. 559.

between Donald and James. Cecily is at first horrified by Donald: ‘Donald! Donald! She says your face is hur – oooooh!’ she ended, screaming as she saw him’ (p.78), but a tender moment is later made possible by the temporary exclusion of his scar: ‘she turned swift and graceful to Mahon, averting her eyes from his brow [...] sweetly kissing his mouth’ (p. 114). Dough’s prosthetic can be effortlessly avoided by Cecily, who is aware of his masculine superiority without having to confront its carnal representation. The uneasiness of Gilligan and the actions of Cecily in this episode is reflected in Theresa Towner’s reading of *Soldiers’ Pay*:

Like all of the returning soldiers, Joe is psychologically wounded as Donald is physically; Mrs. Powers represents the lost generation’s educated women, whom war has rendered unable to love. Donald’s fiancée, Cecily, is the other sort of woman produced by the war – the teasing flapper who tries to dance and romance away all memory of unpleasant things.¹⁷³

Cecily dismisses Rivers as ‘[one of] those infants [that she sees] all the time’ (p. 158), and chooses to sit with Dough despite wanting to dance:

‘There’s a man here who can’t dance, that nephew of Mrs Wardle’s, that was hurt in the war. Cecily, I mean Miss Saunders – has been with him all evening. She wants to dance.’ (p. 159).

Dough’s inability to dance ensures that there will be no coded consummation of this emerging relationship, and so any expectation of longevity between himself and Cecily is unrealistic. However, at a venue where ‘Boys of both sexes swayed arm in arm’ (p. 158), Cecily sits with the injured soldier, the manliest individual in the room. She desires Dough because he has the masculine essence afforded to an injured soldier, while conveniently using a prosthetic to ensure that any physical sign of his wound is hidden away. Dough is a romanticised version of Mahon. His injury guarantees the same degree of heroic status granted to Donald, but he has the additional advantage of being of sound mind and, superficially, sound body. The episode

¹⁷³ Theresa M. Towner, ‘Historical Criticism’ in Charles A. Peek & Robert W. Hamblin (eds.), *A Companion to Faulkner Studies* (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 27-45, p. 29.

demands comparison with *The Sun Also Rises*, where Jake's lack of stamina forces him to sit out of dancing while his date, Georgette, continues with Brett's homosexual companions:

Some one asked Georgette to dance, and I went over to the bar. It was really very hot [...] As soon as the music stopped another one of them asked her to dance. She had been taken up by them. I knew then that they would all dance with her. They are like that.

I sat down at a table (p. 17).

Brett and Georgette's decision to dance with men who offer no sexual advance angers Jake. He wants to beat the 'simpling composure' out of them. Yet violence, which gives Jake the impression of his superior masculinity, is the very reason for his injured condition. James Dough is a man amongst boys while Jake sees himself as a man amongst the less masculine homosexuals; but both Jake and James are unable to dance, and both receive the attention of women who admire them but cannot exercise this sexual desire upon their bodies.



Alongside Gilligan and Mr Mahon, Donald has two other characters who demonstrate deep affection for him: Margaret and Emmy. There is a vast contrast in their personalities, but striking similarities in their experiences with Margaret's first husband, Dick, and Donald respectively. Sergei Chakovsky maps out how they, along with Cecily, act as three distinct parts of the novel's feminine triumvirate:

[Margaret] represents the intellectual while [...] Emmy represents the sensual or "corporeal" element in a woman. Together with Cecily Saunders, occupying the middle ground [...] they form the "collection force" of womanhood.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Sergei Chakovsky, 'Women in Faulkner's Novels: Author's Attitude and Artistic Function' in Doreen Fowler and Ann J. Abadie (eds.), *Faulkner and Women* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986), 58-80, p. 65.

Despite their differences, Margaret and Emmy demonstrate the same response to the war's impact on their relationships. Margaret thinks of 'Richard Powers, with whom she had spent three days [as] one man and Richard Powers commanding a platoon in the – Division [as] another' (pp. 30-31). Emmy initially finds Donald's transition equally difficult to adapt to. She 'weeps' and 'sobs' after Donald does not recognise her (p. 91), before eventually accepting the change and even recognising the similarities between her predicament and that of Margaret's. Upon hearing of Dick's death, Emmy says to herself 'My Donald was killed, too' (p. 102). However, her difficulty with the present situation dissipates when reminiscing of her life with Donald before the war, something she does with enjoyment (pp. 103-06). She shows no response to Donald's physical condition other than to lament the death of their romance as a result of his amnesia. Whether or not Emmy sees Donald as having been masculinised by the war is difficult to ascertain, but the combination of her continued devotion to Donald, the instant rejection of Jones, and her complete indifference to the scar that others find sickening suggests that, at the very least, she does not see in him a masculine decline following his trauma.

'Faulkner was quite deliberate in his choice of character names' and Margaret's surname, Powers, aptly describes a woman who consistently expounds the kind of authority that would usually be reserved for men.¹⁷⁵ Donald's doctor instructs Mr Mahon to take Margaret's advice regarding Donald's recovery, saying that he has 'every confidence in her judgement' (p. 129), while Gilligan witnesses Margaret's independence as she tells him 'I just happened to be the first woman you ever knew doing something you thought only a man would do' (p. 134). Geismar, in his analysis of women in *Soldiers' Pay*, argues that there is 'a suspicion of women when it is not contempt, and contempt when it is not hatred – which dominates *Soldiers' Pay*'

¹⁷⁵ Alice Hall Petry, 'Double Murder: The Women of Faulkner's "Elly"' in Doreen Fowler and Ann J. Abadie (eds.), *Faulkner and Women* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986), 220-34, p. 230.

(p. 147), but this type of reading must combat the majority of male responses that Margaret receives, responses that consistently demonstrate examples of reverence and respect. As Chakovsky says, 'Unlike her "haphazard" male counterparts [...] Margaret Powers commands singular presence and strength of character' (p. 64). This is a new society in which female independence has rapidly developed while Gilligan and others were at the Front. Margaret is undoubtedly the novel's wisest character: 'she was young [...] yet at the same time she seemed not young – as if she knew everything' (p. 28).

Given her above conversation with Gilligan, as well as her previous interaction with Lowe, it is evident that if any character in the novel was conscious of the narrator's declaration, that 'This, the spring of 1919, was the day of the Boy' (p. 156), then it would be Margaret. Aware that she is living in a manless age, Margaret focuses her attention on Mahon for two reasons, the first of which being that Donald is the only available model of masculinity available to her. She receives several romantic propositions but each man who approaches her lacks a masculine feature that Mahon possesses. Lowe is seen as a child by Margaret and given that he was an *aspiring* pilot, his presence inevitably initiates an unwinnable contest with Mahon, the accomplished aviator. The repugnant Jones, a 'fat worm' (p. 209), is routinely described as 'feminine' while Gilligan's fault seems to be, to some extent, a class issue. Margaret mentions that she was 'teased [...] about being highbrow and marrying an officer' (p. 135) and once again she focuses her affection on the high-ranking Mahon at the expense of Private Gilligan. Towards the novel's end Margaret tells Joe that she 'couldn't marry a man named Gilligan' (p. 255), an allusion to the boyish origins of the name.¹⁷⁶ Instead, she focuses on Donald, who fits more criteria of masculinity than the novel's other men even before his injury is considered; and given that his scar is symbolic of his pre-existing masculinity while also being masculinising in itself (through its connotations of war), the importance of his

¹⁷⁶ 'Gilligan' is derived from the Irish word 'Giolla', which translates to English as 'boy'.

wound as a masculine emblem is reinforced. An additional motivation that Margaret has for focusing on Mahon reveals a refusal to forget the war:

‘I didn’t write any more. And one day I got a letter saying that he didn’t know when he’d be able to write again, but it would be as soon as he could. That was when he was going up to the front, I guess. I thought about it for a day or two and then I made up my mind that the best thing for both of us was just to call the whole thing off. So I sat down and wrote him, wishing him luck and asking him to wish me the same.

‘And then, before my letter reached him, I received an official notice that he had been killed in action. He never got my letter at all. He died believing that everything was the same between us.’

She brooded in the imminent twilight. ‘You see, I feel some way that I wasn’t square with him. And so I guess I am trying to make it up to him in some way’ (p. 136).

Margaret’s guilt is what drives her concern for Mahon, but it is a guilt that has turned Donald into a surrogate for Dick. Mahon’s presence forces Margaret to confront her own dying husband. The association between the two men is immediately obvious through their first initial (‘D’) and their notably Irish surnames, as well as their military ranking and the trauma that they suffered at the Front. The similarities result in their entanglement in Margaret’s thoughts: ‘(Dear dead Dick.) (Mahon under his scar, sleeping.) (Dick, my dearest one.)’ (p. 37). More than offering a chance to alleviate Margaret’s guilt, Donald offers her a sight of the masculine fighting soldier that she never experienced with Dick. The apathy towards her marriage develops before Dick goes to the Front and that was the last version of her husband that she knew.

Mahon’s return serves as an opportunity for Margaret to re-evaluate her relationship with the post-front Dick via a proxy, and Margaret herself is evidently aware of this. By caring for Donald, she feels as though she is somehow caring for her husband. The morally righteous Margaret, who on the day of her wedding to Mahon ‘had never felt so alone’ (p. 231), nevertheless deems Donald to be her only suitable husband. She is conscious that, in this post-war era (the ‘year of the boy’), masculinity as it had previously been known is in a perilous state. She tells Gilligan as much in her rejection of his proposal: ‘If I married you you’d be

dead in a year, Joe. All the men that marry me die' (p. 255). Margaret's role in Donald's life is not primarily to offer him affection. She says herself that Emmy and Gilligan 'are the ones who should have married him' (p. 235) for the care that they offer him. Instead, the widowed Margaret (who is, incidentally, repeatedly described as being 'dark' and even 'black') acts as a merciful black widow. The specialist from Atlanta says of Donald's condition: 'He is practically a dead man now. More than that, he should have been dead these three months were it not for the fact that he seems to be waiting for something' (p. 128). It is evident that Donald is waiting for marriage, and Margaret offers him this as a *coup de grâce*.

It is the attachment to the past that accounts for Margaret, Emmy, and Gilligan's admiration for Donald, and so it is fitting that those characters who demonstrate a disregard for the war and represent a modernised post-war society are less sympathetic towards Mahon. More than representing the 'middle ground' of womanhood that Chakovsky suggests, Cecily embodies the modern woman who enjoys an independence and sexual liberation that is commonplace in American literature of the twenties, and so frequently unsettling to post-war American society, not least in the works of Faulkner and, even more so, Hemingway. Geismar demonstrates this correlation by arguing that "'Soldiers' Pay' in 1926 is of the same vintage as the tale of Hemingway's Krebs' (p. 146). Geismar is referring to 'Soldier's Home', a short story that focuses on a WWI veteran's return home and his attempt (and ultimate failure) to assimilate back into American society. One obvious parallel that runs between the two texts concerns the muted reception to the return of each soldier:

By the time Krebs returned to his home town in Oklahoma the greeting of heroes was over. He came back much too late. The men from the town who had been drafted had all been welcomed elaborately on their return.¹⁷⁷

Krebs's homecoming is notably similar to Mahon's:

¹⁷⁷ Ernest Hemingway, 'Soldier's Home' in *In Our Time* (New York: Scribner's, 1970), 69-77, p. 69.

Donald Mahon's homecoming, poor fellow, was hardly a nine days' wonder even [...] girls that he had known [...] come now to look once upon his face, and then quickly aside in hushed nausea [...] boys come to go away fretted because he wouldn't tell any war stories, (pp. 123-24).

The temptation here is to equate Krebs and Donald Mahon, but the real similarity is not in the central characters of these stories but in the societies that are depicted. Just as 'Society seemed to have found something else [other than war] for a beverage' in *Soldiers' Pay*, the narrator of 'Soldier's Home' says of the small, Oklahoma town that Krebs has returned to:

Nothing was changed in the town except that the young girls had grown up. But they lived in such a complicated world of already defined alliances and shifting feuds that Krebs did not feel the energy or the courage to break into it. He liked to look at them though. There were so many good-looking young girls. Most of them had their hair cut short (p. 71).

There are considerable similarities between this town and the setting of *Soldiers' Pay*; similarities that inform the texts' representations of masculinity. The suggestion of 'defined alliances' that Krebs is unable to access mirrors Gilligan's 'perching' on the outskirts of the 'dancers [he] could not emulate' (p. 165). The short haired women are reminiscent of Brett Ashley. They display the importance of this ostensibly masculine characteristic as an attractive aesthetic feature of women in Hemingway's work. Similarly, the most admired woman in *Soldiers' Pay* is undoubtedly Cecily Saunders, whose physical makeup forces her greatest devotee, George Farr, to ask 'How can breasts be as small as yours, and yet be breasts?' (p. 197). Like Margaret, Cecily has assumed a level of societal influence as a result of the post-war lack of masculine atmosphere that pervades the novel: 'Cecily is the apparently typical Scott Fitzgerald post-war flapper, thin, flat, and emancipated, the prototype of the modern freedom of the sexes' (Geismar, p. 147). Combining feminine beauty with a masculine dominance, it is fitting that she is described as being both boyish and 'beautiful'. This pairing of gendered terms is also applied to Margaret, who is repeatedly described as having a 'scar'

for a mouth.¹⁷⁸ Given the masculine implications already attributed to Donald's scar, there seems a conscious effort to emphasise Margaret's undertaking of a more traditionally masculine position, while linking this position back to Mahon in a reinforcement of the masculinity that his scar stands for.

iv. *Coda: Helpless Men and New Women*

Through *The Sun Also Rises* and *Soldiers' Pay*, Hemingway and Faulkner expertly depict 'the individual caught and mangled in the great anonymous mechanism of a modern war fought for reasons that the individual could not understand'.¹⁷⁹ Given the abundance of criticism directed towards the pairing of Faulkner and Hemingway, it is remarkable how such little work has been afforded to a reading of *The Sun Also Rises* alongside *Soldiers' Pay*. Their status as the seminal works of America's two most significant modernist novelists makes them worthy enough of recognition even before the thematic similarities are considered. *The Sun Also Rises* has received an array of critical responses but has lacked a reading that positioned Jake's wounded body at the forefront of every action and interaction that he undertakes; and while Hemingway's first novel is considered by many to be his finest piece of work, *Soldiers' Pay* has been consistently overlooked in favour of Faulkner's later work. The coupling of these two novels, read with a primary focus on their instances of somatic damage, has demonstrated the vulnerable nature of masculinity in the post-war period.

¹⁷⁸ Both Cecily (pp. 188-89) and Margaret (p. 41) are described as being 'beautiful'. Margaret's mouth is likened to a scar on several occasions: p. 27, p. 34, p. 35, p. 167 & p. 232.

¹⁷⁹ Robert Penn Warren, 'Ernest Hemingway' in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), 35-62, p. 35.

Hemingway's claim, that Jake Barnes is not 'emasculated', is incompatible with a definition of 'emasulation' that encompasses the loss or lack of well-established masculine features. Impotent, childlike, lacking the sporting prowess of one of his friends and physically dominated by another, Jake embodies a masculine void in a group of men that are mothered by Brett.¹⁸⁰ Donaldson argues that 'The problem for Brett is that she needs the companionship of a man, and no one but Jake can offer her much beyond fleeting sexual pleasure' (p. 94). The issue for Jake is that, despite whatever it is that he can offer Brett, he will always fall short of her masculine expectations because of his impotency. Brett's greatest chance of developing a strong romantic bond is with Romero, but this fails because of the pre-war expectations that he demands from Brett: 'He wanted me to grow my hair out. Me, with long hair. I'd look so like hell [...] He said it would make me more womanly' (p. 212). 'In *The Sun Also Rises* gender roles have lost all stability' (Messent, p. 112). Spilka takes this further, explaining that 'when men no longer command respect, and women replace their natural warmth with masculine freedom and mobility, there can be no serious love' (1985, p.111). Romero's attempt to assert traditional and strict guidelines to Brett's femininity is flawed from the outset.

Slowly dying, lacking agency, and scarred to such an extent that civilians and veterans alike feel 'sick' when they look at him, Mahon exists as an invasive symbol of the war's cataclysmic legacy in a town that has otherwise been sheltered from its devastation. His damaged body becomes an emblem through which the ostensibly binary positions of veteran and civilian are played out, with particular attention afforded to their divergent attitudes regarding the quintessential model of masculinity in the post-war period. The masculinising response to Donald, demonstrated by Lowe, Gilligan, Margaret, and Emmy, is not representative of the whole town. There is a clear divide between those characters who

¹⁸⁰ Gladstein references Brett's nursing background and demonstrates how this makes her well suited to the maternal role that she holds within the narrative (p. 61).

understand the impact of the war and those who are unable or unwilling to do so. The former group venerate Donald because of his bodily signifiers of the war's impact, seeing him as the personification of a lost masculinity. The latter characters view Donald as a relic of a specific wartime masculinity that has little to offer in the post-war period. Janarius Jones describes Mahon as being 'practically dead' (p. 207), a view shared by Cecily's mother who warns her daughter against marrying Donald, with specific reference to Donald's disability: 'You fool, you idiot, marrying a blind man, a man with nothing, practically dead' (p. 214).

Mr Saunders is more sympathetic to Donald and the idea of him marrying his daughter, but his primary concern is with Donald's bodily state and the potential implications that it may have on his ability to procreate: 'By the way, he ain't lame or badly hurt, is he?' (p. 82). The Saunders family do not share a unified conception of the ideal masculine figure. Mr and Mrs Saunders seek a son-in-law who can fulfill a traditional set of masculine expectations; to give their daughter a family and to be able to provide for it. In doing so, they demonstrate their subscription to a pre-war masculine code, in much the same way that Romero does with the demands he places on Brett's appearance.

The distinction that Germaine Greer makes between the bodies of men and women allows for an apt analysis of the characters in these two novels: 'Men's bodies are altered by the work that they do [...] and so are women's, but women add to these influences others which are dictated by fashion and sex-appeal.'¹⁸¹ If ever there is a pair of men unable to alter their work-affected bodies then it is Barnes and Mahon. Meanwhile, Brett and Cecily represent the surge of post-war feminine liberation:

The new woman wanted the same freedom of movement that men had and the same economic and political rights [...] Before the war, a lady did not set foot in a saloon;

¹⁸¹ Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch* (New York: Bantam Books, 1972), p. 23.

after the war, she entered a speakeasy as thoughtlessly as she would go into a railroad station.¹⁸²

Amy Linnemann & Philip Cohen argue that both Hemingway and Faulkner are concerned with ‘the destabilization of gender roles [which] had turned the world upside down as much as had World War I’ but it is the war itself which has been the most destabilising factor in sexual politics.¹⁸³ Estelle Freedman’s description of the archetypical flapper (‘Shorter skirts, more comfortable undergarments, shorter hair, the use of cosmetics, smoking, drinking’) coincides neatly with the depictions of Brett and Cecily in these texts.¹⁸⁴ Leslie Fiedler claims that ‘Unlike the natural women of Hemingway, Faulkner’s dewiest dells turn out to be destroyers rather than redeemers, quicksands disguised as sacred groves.’¹⁸⁵ It would be deeply unfair to apply this description to Cecily and not to Brett, who is equally and even consciously destructive – she leaves Romero because she knows she would have ‘ruined’ him (*SAR*, p. 213).

The post-war evolution of femininity is achieved through the encroachment into traditional masculine spheres, and Spilka blames this for the failure of Jake and Brett’s romantic partnership:

Lady Brett Ashley and unmanned Jake Barnes are unable to consummate their love, ostensibly because of the sexual wound Barnes has sustained in the war, but more importantly because Brett herself [...] represents the arrival of the liberated woman of the 1920s (1990, pp. 1-2).

Regardless of Spilka’s privileging of sexual politics here, the damaged bodies of Donald and Jake symbolise the personal and societal devastation of the war, with neither author offering

¹⁸² William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity: 1914-32* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 159.

¹⁸³ Amy E. C. Linnemann & Philip Cohen in Charles A. Peek & Robert W. Hamblin (eds.), *A Companion to Faulkner Studies* (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 279-306, p. 289.

¹⁸⁴ Estelle B. Freedman, ‘The New Woman: Changing Views of Women in the 1920s’, *The Journal of American History*, 61/2 (1974), 372-93, p. 378.

¹⁸⁵ Leslie Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York: Stein & Day, 1996), p. 321.

the chance of a restored masculinity. *Soldiers' Pay* ends with Donald's father and Gilligan walking out of the town and overlooking 'the mooned land inevitable with tomorrow and sweat, with sex and death and damnation [... with] dust in their shoes' (p. 266). It is fitting that Faulkner, having demonstrated the hollow and vulnerable nature of masculinity at this time, should leave the novel's admirable male characters in a physically desolate space. The ending of *The Sun Also Rises* is equally dispiriting:

'Oh, Jake' Brett said, 'we could have had such a damned good time together.'

Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton.
The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.

'Yes' I said. 'Isn't it pretty to think so?' (p. 216).

The policeman's raising of the baton acts as a warning to Jake of Brett's attempted seduction while simultaneously mocking him as an ironic emblem of erection – a 'psychic [image] of lost consummation'.¹⁸⁶ Spilka also notes the importance of this episode, reading it as a metaphor for the tense sexual politics and post-war disillusionment that permeate the novel:

With his khaki clothes and his preventive baton, he stands for the war and the society which made it, for the force which stops the lovers' car, and which robs them of their normal sexual roles. As Barnes now sees, love is dead for their generation. Even without his wound, he would still be unmanly, and Brett unable to let her hair grow long (1985, p. 117).

Spilka's observation here that Jake would be 'unmanly' regardless of whether or not he was injured supports the wound's existence as a symbol for the generic, post-war emasculation of the 'lost generation'.

Returning to the end of *The Sun Also Rises*, the image of the couple pressing against one another in a car appears earlier in the novel and Jake's response here ('Isn't it pretty to think so?') demonstrates his awareness of the hopelessness of their situation:

¹⁸⁶ Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism, 2011), p. 7.

When on earlier occasions Jake had sought physical closeness, Brett would usually push him away because she did not want to be reminded of what could have been. Here, however, she is the one that is moving close to him. Thus, when she reminds him of what could have been had he not been impotent, she is actually making sexual demands on him that she knows he cannot fulfill.¹⁸⁷

The novel ends here but the conversation that continues outside of Jake's narrative is predictable, undoubtedly turning to their inability to consummate their affection in the kind of repetition that William Vance also expects:

Jake and Brett ride off into the night whispering vanities like those they whispered chapters and months before and, presumably, like those that, by easy but redundant extension of the book, they could be whispering chapters and years later on.¹⁸⁸

Rather than offering any optimism, this passage can only hint at a repetition of the conflict that fuels the novel.

¹⁸⁷ Wolfgang E. H. Rudat, 'Brett's Problem: Ovidian and Other Allusions in "The Sun also Rises"', *Style*, 19/3 (1985), 317-325, p. 319.

¹⁸⁸ William L. Vance, 'Implications of Form in *The Sun Also Rises*' in Richard E. Langford & William E. Taylor (eds.), *The Twenties: Poetry and Prose: 20 Critical Essays* (Deland: Everett Edwards Press, 1966), 87-91, p. 87.

Afterword

The injured body's relationship with masculinity is demonstrably complex, and it has too often been subject to brief and reductive generalisations. Missing limbs can certainly symbolise phallic loss but they, indeed that *same* limb, can also signify masculinising activity. Wounds can exist as an indication of weakness as well as a source of strength.

Sweet's recent work on Long John Silver and Captain Hook is an illuminating and important contribution to both the respective texts and to disability studies, but in labelling these pirates 'hyper-masculine', there is a dismissal of the femininity within Hook and the emasculation that Silver suffers as a result of his amputation. These characters instead operate within a continuum, with their masculinity being frequently repositioned. These amputees are certainly lacking, as all of their male contemporaries are in these texts, for they have been unsuccessful in their hunt for an idealised manhood (be that treasure or the demise of Peter Pan). Crucially, however, their masculinity has not been taken along with their flesh. It is true that they have not added to their reserves of masculinity, but while the tangible body is depleted, their ethereal masculinity is often shown to have remained as it was, distilled within a reduced vessel. It is this condensed and strengthened version of masculinity that gives the amputee his authority over his less afflicted peers. Nevertheless, there are many examples of when the same injuries produce an emasculating response. For Silver, such a moment occurs when he lands on Skeleton Island. Thrusted onto a site of manly adventure, he finds that his afflicted body cannot properly interact with the natural terrain. Hook's injury is masculinising until those moments that the crocodile appears. His injury is what gave the crocodile its first taste of him, and she is in a perennial pursuit for the rest of his body. Chapter 1 offers a new analysis of these canonical texts, focusing specifically on physical trauma and what it says about the injured man's masculinity.

W. H. Davies is less optimistic about the masculinising effects of his amputation. This is understandable: as a real injury, he cannot instil it with the same symbolic machismo as the other authors can with their fictional characters. Davies demonstrates a self-awareness regarding the injury's emasculating consequences and, rather than attempting to downplay this, he instead crafts a model of masculinity that is unachievable for any character in his writing.

In 1955, Stephen Spender incorrectly predicted that W. H. Davies's reputation would 'almost certainly outlive the year 2000'.¹ The lack of scholarly attention afforded to Davies is in keeping with critical attitudes towards Georgian poetry as a whole: 'The Georgian breath of fresh air was, to their detractors, nothing but a nineteenth-century hangover.'² This criticism hints at Georgian poetry's most severe limitation, the 'lack of sharp definition [that] helped lead to its decline from 1917'.³ The nature of the Great War also contributed to this decline. The Georgians 'found the world both joyous and doleful, dealt with both primroses and urban grayness, celebrated both hard fact and airy fantasy'.⁴ This conciliatory approach becomes incompatible with the undeniable horror of the war. T. S. Eliot, for example, 'never cared much for the naivety' of Davies, noting his 'deliberate refusal to think or moralise in his poetry'.⁵ This kind of poetry, at least for Eliot, is deeply ill-suited to a post-war world.

Despite these apparent limitations in Davies's poetry, an analysis which recognises his amputation as an undercurrent to *all* of his writing yields enlightening results, demonstrating the use of literature as a locus within which the connection between somatic trauma and masculinity can be explored. The fact that Davies's injury is not fictional would suggest that Chapter 2 in fact offers the most reliable case study for this connection. It is additionally

¹ Stephen Spender, *The Making of a Poem* (London: Hamilton, 1955), p. 145.

² Victoria Glendinning, *Edith Sitwell: A Unicorn Among Lions* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981), p. 47.

³ Hugh Underhill, 'From a Georgian Poetic to the "Romantic Primitivism" of D. H. Lawrence and Robert Graves', *Studies in Romanticism*, 22/4 (1983), 517-50, p. 518.

⁴ Myron Simon, 'The Georgian Poetic', *Midwest Modern Language Association*, 2/1 (1969), 121-35, p. 132.

⁵ Peter Howarth, 'Georgian Poetry' in Jason Harding (ed.), *T. S. Eliot in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 221-30, p. 223.

beneficial to this thesis as it concerns a wound inflicted prior to the war. While those characters created by Lawrence, Hemingway, and Faulkner are instilled with a distinctly post-war symbolism, Davies presents his amputation not as a metaphor for a societal depletion of masculinity, but as a deeply personal affliction that forces a reimagining of pre-war masculine concepts.

The Great War is irrefutably an affront to D. H. Lawrence's values, and he utilises its savagery in order to manipulate the damaged male body into a symbol of post-war masculine decline. Clifford Chatterley exists as the common critical example of this of symbolism, but Maurice Pervin is an equally important figure in this regard. The mere existence of their war-afflicted wounds is enough to suggest their potential as metaphors for this decline, but Lawrence concentrations on certain specificities of the injuries in an attempt to articulate more detailed features of the loss of English manhood at the end of the war.

James Scott notes that in the 1955 film *L'Amant de Lady Chatterley*, Clifford is presented as 'more [of] a machine than a man'.⁶ The film's director, Marc Allégret, is evidently attuned to the importance of this symbolism in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Lawrence's version of Clifford could not have suffered any injury that left him completely debilitated. He had to be paralysed and he had to be confined to an electric wheelchair (a manual wheelchair would not have fully served his purpose). The mechanisation of Clifford represents a departure from the manlier, artisanal labour of Mellors, and it is crucially a mechanisation that does not function as it should (the chair is inefficient and unreliable). Mechanisation is responsible for the physical destruction of the male body during the war and is a symbolic thief of manhood after it.

⁶ James F. Scott, 'The Emasculation of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'', *Literature/ Film Quarterly*, 1/1 (1973), 37-45, p. 41.

Clifford's immobility from the waist down also crucially includes an impotence that serves as both a catalyst for Connie's affair (and thus fuels the novel's plot), and as a clear emblem for the returning soldier's emasculation:

They fought and risked their lives for this; partly out of idealism, partly out of desire to vindicate their own manhood. And the best men died, knowing they'd better seek their lost manhood in the grave, since idealism obviously would never give it back to them. And certainly democracy wouldn't.

Those that lived, came back disillusioned. They hadn't vindicated their manhood [...] The war hadn't made men out of them, as it was supposed to do. It had only put the final touch to their disillusion and to their hopelessness about their own manhood (*OBM*, p. 220).

Lawrence vindicates a reading of any of his returning soldiers as disillusioned and lacking in the masculinity that they believed they were promised by the war. When Robert Welker asks: 'What is maleness? What is a man?' and responds with 'The shorthand Lawrence answer is Oliver Mellors' he is ignoring Lawrence's assertion that the 'best men died' during the war. It is Mellors's colonel and not Mellors himself who best embodies Lawrence's version of maleness; although even the best men have a 'lost manhood', the difference being that they are conscious of this.⁷

Maurice Pervin's injury also holds a specific importance. Referring to the Great War, Lawrence believes that 'Many men went out and faced the fight. Not a man dared face his own self afterwards' (*OBM*, p. 213). The refusal to 'face' oneself is the first example of this metaphor of sight in the essay, which continues with its description of Great War veterans:

These are the heroes of the Great War. They went and fought like heroes, truly, to prove their manhood. And having fought like heroes, they thought they had proved it, in the eyes of the world, once and for all. Perhaps they have. The trouble is, they never proved it *in their own eyes* (*OBM*, p. 219 [emphasis added]).

⁷ Robert H. Welker, 'Advocate for Eros: Notes on D. H. Lawrence, *The American Scholar*, 30/2 (1961), 191-202, p. 194.

This repeated focus on an inability or a refusal to ‘see’ oneself after the war evokes Maurice Pervin’s blindness. Similarly, Lawrence’s claim that Great War soldiers fought ‘to make it safe for the cowardice of modern men’ evokes Bertie in the same story, demonstrating the clear dialogue taking place between ‘The Blind Man’ and ‘On Being a Man’. Maurice’s sight is forever confined to the Front. It is, and will forever be, the last thing that he sees; his final ocular experience. In this sense he can never truly leave the war behind and, given Lawrence’s beliefs in the emasculating effects of the war, it will continue to afflict Maurice.

Despite the deeply felt disillusionment of those members of the ‘lost generation’, the war did grant Hemingway a masculinising feature which would become a trope in his writing – the damaged body; and the connection between somatic trauma and masculinity is embedded in his personal war experience. Upon returning home from the war:

he found that he was a celebrity – the one man among all the uniformed passengers to be singled out by a reporter from the *New York Sun*. Hyperbole dominated the interview. The reporter believed that the 227 scars on Ernest’s legs proved that he had taken more punishment than ‘any other man, in or out of uniform’ (*LS*, p. 82).

This experience evidently taught Hemingway about the inherent masculine value of a battle scar. As an American involved with a European war, he had ‘got himself gloriously wounded. What other solidly middle-class boy from one of “our best families in Oak Park” could at nineteen have won for himself such lasting images of the war, fright, and death?’⁸ This masculinisation of the body is, however, predominantly superficial. The true impact of carnal affliction is emasculating. This is even true of Count Mippipopolous. The count’s scars afford him an excuse to expose his muscular body to Brett but in the context of this novel, such a wounding holds deeply emasculating connotations. San Sebastian is the Catholic saint who lends his name to the iconic Basque town visited by Brett and Cohn in the novel. The saint’s

⁸ Alfred Kazin, ‘Hemingway the Painter’ in Harold Bloom (ed.), *Ernest Hemingway* (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), 193-209, p. 195.

death mirrors the count's injuries while he has historically been positioned as an icon of gay culture: He 'is generally portrayed as a swooning yet defiant youth' and, like the count, 'his lithe and muscular body [is] pierced by arrows'.⁹ Jake's homoerotic narration of the scene where the count reveals his arrow scars is rooted in the 'most familiar of [St.] Sebastian's incarnations in the late-Victorian epoch [... as] a powerful visual metaphor for [...] unsanctioned, homoerotic yearning'.¹⁰ The ostensibly masculine injuries on the count's body are undermined by their symbolic association with homosexuality, a symbolism compounded by the phallically penetrative nature of the wounds. Physical trauma in *The Sun Also Rises* (and indeed all of Hemingway's work) demands close analysis, with it invariably demonstrating an association with contemporary concepts of masculinity.

When Robert Hamblin explains that 'allusion' is 'highly prominent' in *Soldiers' Pay*, he is doing so with reference to classical iconography.¹¹ This point, that Jones is a satyr and that Cecily is a nymph, has been made repeatedly by Faulkner scholars.¹² However, the allusion which has too often escaped serious critical attention is the allusion of Mahon's scar to the predicaments of those men who make up the 'lost generation'. In this respect, the scholarly reading of Mahon's classical influence is worth noting, as he undergoes a transformation 'from a faun-like youth to a medal-decked, scarred shell of a man – the epitome of the brutal and irrevocable changes brought about by the war'.¹³ Mahon's face signposts a post-war damaged

⁹ Sarah Parker, 'The Male Wound in *Fin-de-Siècle* Poetry' in Andrew Mangham & Daniel Lea (eds.), *The Male Body in Medicine and Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018), 87-102, p. 87.

¹⁰ Richard A. Kaye, "'Determined Raptures": St. Sebastian and the Victorian Discourse of Decadence', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 27/1 (1999), 269-303, p. 272.

¹¹ Robert W. Hamblin, 'Mythic and Archetypal Criticism' in Charles A. Peek & Robert W. Hamblin (eds.), *A Companion to Faulkner Studies* (Westport: Greenwood, 2004), 1-26, p. 7.

¹² Yonce, Millgate (1999, cited earlier) and, more recently, Koch have made this point, but these are just three examples of critics who have demonstrated the links between the characters of *Soldiers' Pay* and classical figures. The vast majority of *Soldiers' Pay*'s analysis includes this observation: Margaret Yonce, 'Faulkner's "Atthis" and "Attis": Some Sources of Myth', *The Mississippi Quarterly*, 23/3 (1970), 289-98; Benjamin Koch, 'The French Quarter Apprentice: William Faulkner's Modernist Evolution', *The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, 48/1 (2007), 55-68.

¹³ Addison C. Bross, '*Soldiers' Pay* and the Art of Aubrey Beardsley', *American Quarterly*, 19/1 (1967), 3-23, p. 7.

manhood that is visible in so many of the text's characters. It arrives in the form of Mahon and Dough's debilitating injuries, but it is also present in Gilligan's inability to dance, or Lowe's purgatorial position between civilian and soldier and all of the consequences to a stable concept of masculinity that this entails. Through Cecily Saunders and Brett Ashley, both *Soldiers' Pay* and *The Sun Also Rises* also demonstrate the danger of liberated women to masculinity at this time: 'when men no longer command respect, and women replace their natural warmth with masculine freedom and mobility, there can be no serious love' (Spilka, 1985, p. 111).

There is nothing new in demonstrating that these two novels are 'lost generation' texts. However, the obvious comparison between the respective central characters (Barnes and Mahon) is that of their damaged bodies, and while this association has been repeatedly made, there is a notable absence of scholarly work that reads these injuries as central to the narratives' depiction of a depleted post-war masculinity. Many critics have highlighted the importance of the wounds suffered by Barnes and Mahon, but in understanding that these afflictions inform the entirety of both novels, particularly with regards to their treatment of masculinity, a new and illuminating reading of each text is established.



The decision to focus this thesis on close textual analysis of literary representations of trauma immediately produces certain limitations. It is a methodology that results in a comprehensive review of how the included authors use somatic damage as a metaphor through which modes of masculinity can be explored, but it inevitably neglects other theoretical schools. Although this study has incorporated work from disability scholars such as Barnes, Mercer, Bonnie, Shakespeare, Shuttleworth, Smith, Siebers, Fox, Lindgren, Leder, and others, there certainly

remains scope for further engagement with this field, with the potential for readings that offer significant insight into the statuses of respective injuries and their relation to contemporary masculine concepts. Siebers warns against ‘nondisabled people [who] try to represent disability as a marvelous advantage’ (p. 64) and as a nondisabled person, this is certainly something that I was conscious of during my research. While I am confident that this kind of representation is absent from this study, Siebers’s concern points towards my personal methodological limitations. The vast majority of the aforementioned scholars incorporate anecdotal experiences within their disability-focused scholarship, and while no researcher is in a position to choose the condition of their own body, my engagement with disability studies faces inevitable limitations. However, I am confident that the subject of this thesis is itself worthy of exploration, despite the fact that the input from disability-focused scholars is reasonably limited. Similarly, while this thesis does include some examples of psychoanalytic reading, analysis of this kind is used sparingly. In *Body Works*, Peter Brooks demonstrates a far more detailed psychoanalytic approach to damaged literary bodies, and such a methodology would undoubtedly produce illuminating readings of the texts that are the focus of this study.

A small but pertinent area of analysis in this thesis has been afforded to the gendered aspects of form and genre. The majority of this attention has been directed towards W. H. Davies, and my claim that he believes autobiography to be the most masculine literary form, on the other end of the scale to fiction and poetry.

Chapter 2 attempts to highlight the flaws in labelling genres as either masculine or feminine. Laurence Davies, in an attempt at defending the gendered categorisation of writing style instead exposes those same flaws and hypocrisies that make it a futile endeavour:

I'm following Alice Jardine in the assumption that 'feminine writing' may come from men as well as women. Likewise, Marie Corelli, with her moral assurances and climactic plots, would be a ‘masculine’ writer. Why must this be especially masculine.

I am not assuming that Conrad wrote in a 'feminine' way to attract women readers: if feminine and masculine writing can escape anatomical polarity, so can reading.¹⁴

Almost thirty years on from Davies arguing this point, it seems clear that discussions amongst gender theorists have rendered this kind of obsessive categorisation obsolete. That is not to say that writers are not engaging with notions of gendered form and genre, but just that our critical responses should be more nuanced than simply attempting to fix writers and writings to presupposed gendered trends. Nevertheless, it is certainly worth exploring the ways in which the writers of this study engage *themselves* with what they consider to be masculine writing, especially given the time of the works' production.

It is true that, within this study, Davies has been given the greatest level of attention insofar as this issue is concerned. However, of the writers included here, it is Hemingway's work that is most often considered in light of gendered form and genre. Attempts to define Hemingway's formal style as masculine are common amongst the reactions to his work. Lynne Segal's belief that Hemingway's 'action-packed, concrete, laconic prose' is an attempt to masculinise his work encapsulates much of this critical response.¹⁵ Chapter 4 of this thesis also demonstrates how Jake Barnes shifts his narrative form within *The Sun Also Rises*, reverting to a professional, journalistic tone at an attempt of self-preservation during the greatest danger to his masculinity in the novel. This shift is indicative of Lisa Long's observation of naturalist authors who 'occupy a space both inside and outside the ring in order to reinforce their own masculinity'.¹⁶ Barnes is able to involve himself in, and shape, his narrative, while also taking a more detached and objective approach when his masculinity is most under threat.

¹⁴ Laurence Davies, 'Conrad, *Chance*, and Women Readers', *The Conradian*, 17/2 (1993), 75-88, p. 86.

¹⁵ Lynne Segal, *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men* (London: Virago, 1990), p. 111.

¹⁶ Lisa A. Long, 'Genre Matters: Embodying American Literary Naturalism', *American Literary History*, 19/1 (2007), 160-73, pp. 161-62.

Despite the attention given to Hemingway's attempts at producing a masculine narrative style, less focus has been afforded to the genre of some of his work. *The Sun Also Rises* is as much a piece of travel writing as it is a novel, and this has interesting gendered links at its time of production.

Michael Nowlin discusses 'the boundary between the masculine frontier and the feminine domestic front' in American modernist thought.¹⁷ This seems as true for Hemingway and *The Sun Also Rises* as it did for Stevenson and *Treasure Island*, written in a period when 'the domestic sphere of home and hearth was primarily associated with femininity throughout the Victorian period, just as the sphere of economic activity was associated with masculinity', and when female writers themselves were more inclined to include this kind of feminine domesticity within their work.¹⁸ 'the social, romantic and domestic themes dominating Australian women's writing in the nineteenth century resonated with British and American women's writing of the period'.¹⁹

While Stevenson's novel places a focus on travel, *The Sun Also Rises* appropriates so many features of travel writing that any attempt to place it solely within one genre becomes impossible. As seen in Chapter 4, Nowlin's description of the masculine frontier with feminine domesticity is a tension that is played out in *The Sun Also Rises*, where male pastoral exploration is rejuvenating up until the moment that a woman appears, and thus corrupts the previously masculine environment with her femininity. Given the array of research that establishes travel as a masculine activity, it is clear that if travel writing was to have its own gendered connotations, then they would be masculine.

¹⁷ Michael Nowlin, 'The World's Rarest Work': Modernism and Masculinity in Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night*, *College Literature*, 25/2 (1998), 58-77, p. 76.

¹⁸ Emily Rena-Dozier, 'Re-gendering the Domestic Novel in *David Copperfield*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 50/4 (2010), 811-29, p. 812.

¹⁹ Katherine Bode, *Reading by Numbers: Recalibrating the Literary Field* (London: Anthem Press), p. 116.

Anat Osher Ben-Shaul's work on Gertrude Stein also suggests that there is an association between masculinity and other genres. Referring to *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, Ben-Shaul explains that Stein:

breaks the conventions of this patriarchal genre, the autobiography, and of this typical masculine kind of writing, war testimony [...] The combined violation of a patriarchal genre and of the model of war literature, both related to masculine writing, leads to a subversion of social values.²⁰

The very fact that Stein is breaking these conventions in 1933 gives a certain justification to Davies's earlier interest in the masculine features of autobiography. Similarly, for Hemingway, Faulkner, and Lawrence, their literary engagement with the war also seems to be accompanied by masculine connotations during the time of their writing.

Hemingway's desire to infuse his writing with masculinity begins with the very act of writing itself. Plimpton's introduction to his interview with Hemingway describes the author's writing habits:

A working habit he has had from the beginning, Hemingway stands when he writes. He stands in a pair of his oversized loafers on the worn skin of a lesser kudu – the typewriter and the reading board chest-high opposite him (p. 35).

His insistence on standing while he writes could be read as a rejection of physical comfort. For a man so interested in sport and physical exertion, it is fair to speculate that this could be the reasoning behind this decision; to turn a profession that is traditionally sedentary into one that is physically demanding. More revealing, perhaps, is his decision to stand on a hunting trophy.



²⁰ Anat Osher Ben-Shaul 'Chatting about War: Gertrude Stein's Subversive Autobiography', *L'Esprit Créateur*, 40/2 (2000), 25-32, pp. 27-28.

Expanding beyond the authors of this thesis, there are several other works and authors that are worthy of this kind of analysis. W. E. Henley's poetry collection *In Hospital* refers to the period of his life where he was undergoing treatment for the amputation of his leg and, similarly to W. H. Davies, his poetry includes references to his own injury.²¹ Coupled with his friendship with Stevenson and the influence that he had on Stevenson's characterisation of Long John Silver, Henley's work would undoubtedly benefit from the kind of analysis presented in this study. A reading that focuses on the impact of physical affliction on masculinity would also serve literary representations of the Great War's aftermath that fall outside of this study's timeframe. An example of this would be Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun* (1938), which focuses on the almost entirely bodiless Joe Bonham, or more recent work such as Pat Barker's *Regeneration* (1991) which, while predominantly concerned with shell-shock, does offer scope for analysis on wounded servicemen too.²²

While all of the authors analysed in this thesis are innovative in their treatment of trauma to the male body, it is evident that Hemingway is the most deeply concerned with the connection between physical injury and masculinity. It is a trope that permeates so much of his work, from Santiago's 'deep-creased scars' in *The Old Man and the Sea* to the more drastic amputated arm of fellow fisherman Harry Morgan in *To Have and Have Not*, or the likely death of Robert Jordan after being wounded by tank fire in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.²³ There are many more examples of injured men in Hemingway's work, but the injuries of women are also worthy of exploration, especially considering their potential for further illuminating Hemingway's portrayal of masculinity. In 'Indian Camp', the trauma of an unanaesthetised childbirth causes the child's father to slit his own throat, while the death of Catherine and her

²¹ W. E. Henley, *In Hospital* (Maine: Thomas B. Mosher, 1901).

²² Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got his Gun* (New York, Lyle Street, 1970); Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (London: Penguin, 2008).

²³ *The Old Man and the Sea*, p. 3; Hemingway, *To Have and Have Not* (London: Arrow, 1994); Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (London: Arrow, 2004).

infant son in childbirth at the end of *A Farewell to Arms* produces another series of questions about the role of manhood in the post-war era.²⁴ A further study of significant length that focuses on all of Hemingway's depictions of physical trauma would be a significant contribution to his critical landscape.

This thesis assesses literature from two periods of British and American history that are deeply concerned with concepts of masculinity – the British Empire and the Great War. These events have retained their impact to varying degrees. Post-colonial writing is increasingly becoming the lens through which Empire is explored, with a 'rapid assimilation of a disparate interdisciplinary undertaking within academic curricula'.²⁵ John Marx explains how 'It has become difficult for even the most recalcitrant critics to ignore imperialism when teaching European literary history' and the increasing popularity of postcolonial studies inevitably requires assessments of the plethora of masculine modes contained within it.²⁶

Just over a century after the armistice, the Great War undoubtedly remains a rich source for literary studies, despite Geoff Dyer's pessimistic prophecy regarding its future treatment as a historically significant event:

Every generation since the armistice has believed that it will be the last for whom the Great War has any meaning. Now, when the last survivors are within a few years of their deaths, I too wonder if the memory of the war will perish with the generation after mine.²⁷

Dyer's concerns have been dispelled by the recent interdisciplinary surge in Great War related publications, from G. J. Meyer's two volume historical account *The Fate of Nations: The Story of the Great War* to the critical contribution of Anne Haytock's *The Routledge Introduction to*

²⁴ Ernest Hemingway, 'Indian Camp' in *In Our Time* (New York: Scribner's, 1970), 13-19; Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (London: Arrow, 2004).

²⁵ Benita Parry, 'The Institutionalization of Postcolonial Studies' in Neil Lazarus (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Post-Colonial Literature Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 66-80, p. 66.

²⁶ John Marx, 'Postcolonial Literature and the Western Canon' in Neil Lazarus (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Post-Colonial Literature Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 83-96, p. 83.

²⁷ Geoff Dyer, *The Missing of the Somme* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994), p. 18.

American War Literature and Carol Ann Duffy's poetry collection *Armistice: A Laureate's Choice of Poems of War and Peace*.²⁸ Dyer's fear, that there would be a distance created between the war and public consciousness, has not materialised. In actuality, being one century on from the armistice allows for a critical perspective that can assess the war, and the lasting effects of its trauma, with a level of objectivity that is only made possible *by* that distance.

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²⁸ G. J. Meyer, *The Fate of Nations: The Story of the Great War* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2018); Jennifer Anne Haytock, *The Routledge Introduction to American War Literature* (London: Routledge, 2018); Carol Ann Duffy, *Armistice: A Laureate's Choice of Poems of War and Peace* (London: Faber & Faber, 2018).

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