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Culture, Education, and the Canon

An investigation of six texts in relation to literary culture, canonicity, popular culture, and mandatory education in England and Wales.

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Abstract

This is a thesis examining the relationship between three pairs of texts – Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), the *Alice* books (1864 and 1896) by Lewis Carroll and Gabriel Garcia Márquez' *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) by Ray Bradbury – to each other and to their canon-scapes. My research into the specifics of canonicity, education, and cultural landscapes indicated that each of these relationships offers a unique and important perspective on the canon debate of traditional versus multiple canon-scapes as it relates to the place of each text within the education system. This thesis looks into the relationship of each text to the cultural and academic landscape of the period in which it was produced as well as the attitudes towards the texts from a contemporary perspective through the lens of mandatory education at secondary level in England and Wales. Each set of texts holds a unique positioning in relation to each other, be that in terms of direct or explicit influence, or subconscious influence due to genre tropes and evolution of literature. As well as positioning these texts together in such a way in order to garner a clear perspective on the contrast in canonical perspectives, the historical shift in attitudes becomes clearer as it moves further into the twentieth century.

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The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) posits the primary definition of canon as "the collection or list of books of the Bible accepted by the Christian Church as genuine and inspired" (*OED)*. When it comes to a literary canon the definition becomes more nebulous: "A body of literary works traditionally regarded as the most important, significant, and worthy of study" (*OED*). In terms of Christianity, the canon of the Church claims to be solid and infallible, despite translation and interpretation issues in debate. As Royle explains, this definition shifts slightly when considering literature, "Nothing in the 'western literary canon' is solid and unshifting, starting with the 'western' and the 'literary' themselves" (Royle, 177). Unlike the Christian Canon, "in the literary sense it has signified a norm, a paradigm, a set of models" (Levin, 354). Instead, literature and literary canon is a consensus of academics and of popular and literary culture in order to preserve literary history. Moving through history a traditional canon has its roots in this idea of preservation and purity, however this idea has evolved into a preservation of a maligned historical narrative.

This thesis uses case studies of literature from the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries in order to assess the effects of canon and culture and education on each other in a symbiotic way. It also comments on the evolution of canon theory in relation to literary and popular culture through the lens of six texts, each with unique and complex relationships to each other as well as the canon. Comparing *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) shows the evolution of both literary and popular culture in relation to canon and education. With *Alice in Wonderland* (1864) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1896)*,* the comparison to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) is a less tangible and obvious one, however the texts' protagonists and treatment of the miraculous is similar as is their treatment from traditional canonical standards. Expanding slightly on this idea, my third chapter will compare *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) and take a more in depth look at the ways in which genre and canon interact, again in relation to both literary and popular culture as well as within education.

My research will be conducted into the relationship between texts and the canon, as well as how they have been debated and adapted across the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I will also be examining the reception both culturally and academically of canon-scapes through the lens of my primary texts. I will be defining the term 'canon-scape' as a space in which a canon is formed and exists in a social, academic, and cultural community. In Bloomian terms, this would have a limited amount of space, however canon-scapes are as adaptable, fluid, and free as literature itself. Building on the construction of canon, I will be

looking into the process of canonicity in terms of my chosen primary texts; their places both in relation to the canon-scape and cultural positioning. Each text exists within a very different cultural environment, and each had a tumultuous relationship with both popular culture and literary culture eventually leading to the position they hold now. I will be using the genre of texts, the deliberate or implied use of tropes and forms to be able to group texts, as an excuse to separately judge them from other traditionally canonical texts which in themselves play into genre tropes by virtue of popularity and expression.

When considering the attached appendices as examples of school curricula, the presence or lack of presence of my chosen texts is highlighted more than anything. The study of my chosen texts at different points in academia not only reflect on the almost dismissal of young readers as incapable as comprehending but also on the lack of belief in younger readers as an audience for literature. The texts I have chosen are not generally considered popular literature for the current generation but to their contemporary readers they definitely were, and this evolving relationship between popular culture and the young reader is furthered by what is chosen at the national curricula level. This evident lack of confidence in the young readers within the curricula only serves to enforce a lack of interest from said readers as they are consistently being told, by both their own education and the other adults surrounding them in wider culture, that they are unable to appreciate 'good literature'. Especially when considering books such as the ones I have chosen to study, when the emotional maturity and comprehension skills of young readers are only improving generation to generation.

Each text comes from a specific position in terms of genre, representation, and longevity in both popular and literary culture, therefore their relationships to multiple canons can be assessed and placed in contrast with their relationships to the canon. By this I mean that while multiple canons and a traditional canon theory are opposed in most respects, the texts held within each can and do have crossover and this relationship evolves along with the perception of the text in culture. I will be deconstructing the argument both for and against this divide of canonicity and focussing the argument fundamentally in relation to the education system due to the relationship to literature formed within the education system which in turn effects the ways in which popular culture views literature. This will including research into the ways in which the canon and the education system work in relation to each other, including comparing the syllabus of a mandatory education English Literature class in within national curricula, and a constructed canon list – the similarities and differences

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between the contents of each list are a point of interest to my research.

As well as English Literature classes, and mandatory education, I will be looking into how the rapid globalisation of literature affects both the perception of an exclusionary canon as well as how canons are constructed and perceived on a more global stage within academic spheres and society. Specifically, how translation and limited publication locations affect the possibility of global recognition and how canonical status in one sphere – geographically – affects the perception of the text and relating this to the multiple canon theory. Johansson presents "the idea that older literature is superior to more recent literature is far from new and so the more recent debates about the canon are not exactly the first of its kind. But as Bloom says in his discussion against opening up the canon [1994], a canon is never really complete. It is constantly revised, new titles coming in and older works sorted out" (Johansson, 18). The effort of globalisation alongside the efforts for multiple canons and representation of minority narratives go hand in hand, however, the issues of a lack of translation as well as mistranslation effecting the potential perception of the quality of the writing effect how the texts are received by a wider audience. The place of the chosen primary texts against this research will serve to highlight the evolution of these issues.

I will be presenting research on the adapting and evolving theories regarding canon as well as looking into the rejection versus acceptance of canon modification. There are some strong beliefs regarding the preservation of literature as a history of (a nationally influenced) narrative, the arguments that surround the potential of a change in any form of canon that occurred in the late twentieth century reflect the socio-political conversations happening historically; fights for equal rights for minorities are translated into the calls for equal opportunity in terms of publication and representation. Modern society attempts to retroactively adapt the historical narrative in order to represent both the population of the globe as well as the literary and popular cultures. These are both increasingly important in a socially, economically, and culturally effective way, hence the attempts to share these histories in an accurate and reflective manner.

Explanation of canon and theory

In a further attempt at western colonisation of culture, as historically precedented, the imposition of a traditional canon purposefully leaves out minority authors in order to perpetuate cultural values of the sphere. "After the end of the Second World War, prominent intellectuals across Europe shared a desire for popular education and culture, which was

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informed by progressive Resistance ideals" (Atonelaki, 287). As Atonelaki posits, the literary canon has never fully existed without conflict. There has never been a successful 'one true canon' in any area but specifically when it comes to literature. In defining one true canon traditionally, a 'one true canon' would be an infallible and definitive list of canonical works. Even amongst the most devout canon defenders, this would be impossible considering the level of influence that personal taste has on the perspective of canon. However, the perception of the canon both within academia and to the general public mean that there is an active assumption as to what literature is canonical and this assumption is what leads to the elitist influence upon what is studied and perpetuates the ideas and values that come with these assumptions. Not all canonical assumptions are borne out of a closed minded and traditional view of literature. In some cases, personal taste can be just as powerful an influence on an individual as to what literature is canonical or not. The elitism which comes with canonical assumptions at a higher level of education also leads into the perpetuation of a

closed canon which leads into a closed and rigid mandatory education syllabus. This elitism is ingrained in the treatment of both canonical and noncanonical texts in the education system and affect the further societal perspectives on a personal and wider level. The first English literature canon reflecting a bias towards the same kind of people who held positions of power in academia – white middle class males. Literature, both as a commodity and in form, develops with along with the cultural booms of the late-nineteenth, and early twentieth century, and calls for inclusion in academia and therefore canon come along with calls for rights for women. As the social and cultural movements develop for the inclusion of minority voices and narratives, so to do the calls for recognition in academia come.

Canons and their controversies have historically been subject to debate and the changing socio-political climates often play into how and why these debates on the canon occur. My intentions are similar to the argument laid out by Williams.

> The attempt to develop a sociology of culture is then not only an attempt to develop social methods and disciplines for the understanding of these distinguishable practices and institutions, but, necessarily, an attempt to contribute to a more general understanding of all social practices and institutions, from a standpoint in which the complex questions of the making of meaning and values are explicit. (Williams, 498).

For example, the mid nineteenth century – the period which begins my study – bases its canon on historical preservation. Moving through to the early twentieth century, first wave feminism comes with not only political movements for the advancement of women's rights but also the call for the inclusion of women in academic spaces both as teachers and minorities "whose literary merits are questioned by historians, [they are the] victims of sexist prejudices who are incapable of judging literary merits and who, in many cases, label the writer as oscillating between masculine and feminine" (Sebastián, my translation, 88) and as authors. There is a dismissal of the idea of literature for and by women being isolated to this sphere and therefore a societal call for women's writing to be included on the same level as men's writing. Later in my period of study, F R Leavis' *The Great Tradition* (1948) attempts to establish both a list of canonical texts and justifications as to why this limited list is important. Leavis explains that these authors built and took influence from each other's work in order to create a version of the novel which is still used as a basis today. These authors having some influence, if only indirectly, on almost every novel writer since them. Therefore, Leavis' *The Great Tradition* is less an argument on canon making and more an argument for the maintaining of a historical narrative on the creation of writing. Given the nuance of the

form of texts and canon, the novel is praised as the peak of canonical potential by Leavis, whereas to Eliot, poetry takes priority.

The debates that happened around this text, especially in a period of literature where Modernism and genre fiction meant specialised literary interest and studies were beginning to take place, created the beginnings of what would eventually lead to what is known as a multiple canon theory. The academic movement of New Criticism came with the expansion of higher education and the solidifying of English Literature as an institution, having a basis in previous canonical structures. T S Eliot explores how this movement works in that "Seldom, perhaps, does the word [tradition] appear except in a phrase of censure. […] Every nation, every race, has not only its own creative, but its own critical turn of mind; and is even more oblivious of the short-comings and limitations of its critical habits than of those of its creative genius" (Eliot, 105). He explores how the impact of elitist culture affected particularly American academic culture and how the era of post-war culture evolved into a greater canonical divide in terms of culture.

This conflict builds and continues throughout the late twentieth century. The nineteen nineties and the canon wars bring a definite and visible split in the world of academia concerning the treatment of the canon. The rapid expansion and publication of varied narratives and genres over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries mean that the original canonical narrative perpetuated by figures like Leavis in 1948, and Bloom in 1994 are no longer representative of literary culture, literary history, or even of the population of the world. With Leavis establishing a strict rule of literary judgment upon which the following academic culture based the canonical processes. Bloom's influence acted in a similar way, except for the increase in backlash due to the difference in social environments. To purposefully exclude so much literature in the name of a baseless claim of the preservation of culture is not only wilfully ignorant but a dangerous precedent to set with the treatment of wider global literature. Bloom seems to have come to the conclusion that an open canon would somehow mean that the previous inhabitants of a canon would be removed. His main argument is that Shakespeare is a great playwright with an established and wealthy history in English Literature and therefore deserves a place in the canon over anyone else. He argues that "as the formulator of a critical concept I once named "the anxiety of influence," I have enjoyed the School of Resentment's repeated insistence that such a notion applies only to Dead White European Males, and not to women and to what we quaintly term "multiculturalists"" (Bloom, 7). In response, Baumlin defends the almost trolling nature of

Bloom's writing; "As part of his own private war against contemporary critical theory, Bloom offers to defend the secular literary canon as a system of aesthetics rather than an instrument of politics, ideology, or progressive education" (Baumlin, 27). However, to the best of my ability I cannot find any academic claims that argue for the removal of Shakespeare from the canon. The closest any academic comes to this argument is Terry Eagleton, who maintains that Shakespeare's position is subject to further evolution of canon and culture in that "No work of literature is literally timeless. They are all products of specific historical conditions. To call some books timeless is just a way of saying that they tend to hang around a lot longer than ID cards or shopping lists" (Eagleton, 186-187). Bloom purposefully, and admittedly tries "to confront greatness directly: to ask what makes the author and the works canonical. The answer, more often than not, has turned out to be strangeness, a mode of originality that either cannot be assimilated, or that so assimilates us that we cease to see it as strange" (Bloom, 3). As Pyper explains: "Bloom's Western Canon is at least as much a text of resentment as any of the schools whom he berates in his own work" (Pyper, 119). With this in mind, his baseless claims, and suppositions that the canon is somehow a limited and tangible space, seem to be calling to people who have limited knowledge on the subject in the first place that there is a direct threat to authors such as Shakespeare and that their reputation within academia is under question.

This attitude, as well as Pyper's response, leads to a defined multiple canon theory which is defined by specialised, and separate canons determined by genre, geography, race, gender, and an overlap across these subsections. These canonical assumptions both in theory and in practice also have an effect on how the education sphere progresses – or does not – which tries to satisfy both sides of the theoretical division and thus satisfying neither. There is an ongoing attempt with contemporary culture to both globalise the canon to reflect current society and retroactively add voices which should have been heard throughout history. This effort is separate to the multiple canons theory and leads into calls for an overturning or complete rejection of the traditional canon as it is, arguing that the traditional canon only serves to perpetuate a problematic perception of western culture. Ohmann explores this through the market of culture, "Here we have a nearly closed circle of marketing and consumption, the simultaneous exploitation and creation of taste, familiar to anyone who has examined marketplace culture under monopoly capitalism" (Ohmann, 202). Ohmann conflates the position of the canon with the overpowering capitalistic desire for marketing and consumption.

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Structure of my thesis

Each of my chapters will be looking at a different comparison which uniquely frames the perspective of the canon, culture, and education. To start with, *Jane Eyre* (1847) and *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) which have the obvious connection in that Rhys specifically writes back to Brontë and grants the different perspective of the story through the eyes of Antoinette or Bertha Mason. This relationship serves not only to showcase how literary culture had evolved in the time between the two texts being produced but also offers an interesting insight on the relationship of education and literary culture when regarded in comparison to the canon-scape of each text. When Charlotte Brontë published *Jane Eyre* in 1847, the separation between literature as culture and literature as academic meant that the debates were less connected to official literary value judgements and more skewed towards taste and elitism. The production of *Wide Sargasso Sea* historically falls into a politically progressive yet turbulent period as explained by De Costa-Willis; "I believe that the social, political, and economic assumptions inherent in canon-formation challenge us, as critics of Afro-Hispanic literature, to make can(n)on fodder out of irrelevant theories, terminologies, and paradigms. Therefore, we must destroy that relic of the culture wars: The Canon!" (De Costa- Willis, 60).

Following this, the comparison between *Alice in Wonderland* (1864) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1896) and *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) is perhaps a less obvious one, however the link between the magical realism narratives and the perspectives of both Alice and Úrsula serve to showcase a similar narrative of isolation and the questioning of authority. Both can be applied to the canon and the treatment of texts previously ostracised from a traditional canon within literary culture and when considering education and wider culture.

Taking a critical perspective from the midway point of my study, Lauter presents the idea that "Thus, although we cannot ascribe to a literary canon the decline in attention to the concerns of women in the 1920s, the progressive exclusion of literary works by women from the canon suggested that such concerns were of lesser value than those inscribed in canonical books and authors" (Lauter, 435). Lauter presents a perspective of a literary culture and canon stalled in progress. Looking later into my period of study offers a stark change in both in terms of representation both in terms of gender and race.

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Published in the mid Twentieth Century, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) reflects on a fascist and controlling past and how it could easily become a fascist and controlling future. The literary canon at the time of this text was still constantly shifting and changing, matching the shifting political and social climates globally. Published a short time later the novel *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) reflects similar issues and again the literary canon is in flux. With Bradbury specifically writing back and deliberately using the same themes and tropes as Orwell, both texts work to present a lacking social climate and offer differing perspectives on solutions, which can be applied to both an evolving social climate as well as literary culture, as explained by Stock, "Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 (1957) has a more conservative appeal to the undifferentiated past than Orwell's epistemological concerns with representation" (Stock, 66).

The move through history within my study will reflect on the historical snapshots of the literary culture of the texts as well as using close reading to relate the contents of the texts to the wider academic and canonical spheres both of the times at which the texts were published as well as a contemporary view into the canon. "The main differences within this group of 'second-wave' theorists in the canon debate were differences of emphasis on this particular question of value to society against value to self" (Hayes, 235). There is a devaluing of personal taste to Hayes, which reflects the treatment of canonical literature and non-canonical literature by the perceived values they hold to both society and the self.

Education and the canon

On the subject of education and its relationship to the canon, the tension in the divided world of academia bleeds into this sphere. As mentioned above, mandatory secondary education syllabuses, of England and Wales specifically with regards to GCSE syllabi, are trying to satisfy both sides of the divide – maintaining a traditional canon through the texts they frequently use to study while also attempting to satisfy the social call for a more diverse reading list – and ultimate failing both sides.

At the level of secondary or mandatory education, the canon exists under veil of secrecy, used to further a traditional canon with its invasive presence and yet kept unknown to the majority of students, "the books assigned for reading are not necessarily Great Books, whereas the very greatest masterpieces are allowed to go unread" (Levin, 360). In the classroom there are already some canonical biases being formed by the content students are

studying held in comparison to what they might be reading in their free time. This is due to the academic dismissal of literature (both in higher and mandatory education), which is purely popular, there is no perceived cultural capital to be gained from reading these texts. Alongside this idea being ingrained in young students, there is the idea that the only the texts they study for their classes hold such cultural capital and therefore are important to both study and understand for wider social interactions with culture and literature.

This is problematised when the texts considered worthy of study do not change over the course of an entire generation and beyond.

> Greek and Latin have been most tenaciously entrenched at the British public schools and Oxbridge, where they furnished a backlog of precept and example to generations of statesmen, civil servants, and empire-builders. Even after "Greats" had ceased to be the sole option, they continued to form the most prestigious one; and their official title, *Litterae Humaniores*, suggested an invidious comparison with all other categories of letters or claims to humanity. (Levin, 354-355).[1]

Levin showcases the rigidity of the ways literature is taught which leads to a lack of deeper critical thinking developing in a way which builds on the canonical bias of the education system. "We recognize the problem of the emotions, and their inescapable presence, but cannot separately account for them without recourse to the formidable rigor of such systems or of prior classifying codes" (Cook, 28). With the pressure of the rigidity Cook posits, the perception of canon works in a cyclical and unhelpful way to reinforce through education and societal pressures the elitism in terms of which texts hold literary value and are canonical.

Texts and authors that frequently hold a place on the syllabus – such as Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Shakespeare's tragedies, *Of Mice and Men* – have held those places comfortably but have not gone uncontested. In the case of Orwell, his works are a fairly recent addition due to the previous suppression of his works from mandatory education for social and political themes and the banning of the text from education in America; "Such works become institutionalized into a canon that helps define the national culture. They are taught to school children, perpetuating the nation's sense of collective identity" (Mujica, 204). However, the study of *Animal Farm* specifically has appeared on many exam boards for the past thirty years. "British students also listed Orwell in fourth position as "the author who had greatest influence on them" (Squire and Applebee 110-11). A 1971 survey among A-level students found Orwell, after Lawrence, the most

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[1] This is supported by supplementary material document 3

popular "serious" author with Hardy third, and Shakespeare fourth (Yarlott and Harpin 92)" (Rodden, 510). The unerring appearance of these texts serve to perpetuate and uphold traditional canonical perspectives which can act as perpetuations of exclusionary and limiting educational practices, with the general belief with the public and non-experts being that the texts which are to be studied at this level are both appropriate for that audience only and that they are solely canonical texts. This means that these specific texts are worth studying and the more popular books – such as Young Adult fiction in this age group – are worthless and hold no literary value. This assumption of texts used for mandatory education plays into the elitism which is a core problem of the cultural perspective of the canon and the texts within, both in theory and practice.

> Good literature is considered good because it meets the aesthetic standards and reflects the values of the people—literary critics, educators, and librarians—who have the authority to make those decisions. Their notions of good literature do not always mesh with the wide range of uses that real readers […] actually make of books. For many people […] books provide pleasures that literary critics do not acknowledge as legitimate. (Haugland, 55).

The dismissal of the texts that these students actually enjoy reading cultivates a sense of insecurity in two ways; one being that the texts they study are the only ones that matter but that they are boring, and another in that if a student actually enjoys reading the texts assigned they will be discouraged from reading further texts both by their peers for not conforming to popular culture as well as by the education system as the texts which are high literature are too complex to be fully understood and appreciated by a student at this level of education. In expanding the reading list and explaining to the students about canonical processes and assumptions at an earlier level there is more of a chance at cultivating an empathetic student as they will connect more with the texts that reflect their reality and they will learn to connect with narratives that they do not necessarily relate to but are representative of a wider society.

The texts that do crop up again and again on the syllabus[2] have a sort of symbiotic relationship with the canon in that they both perpetuate canonical traditions as well as become a marker and standard for any sort of potential new canonical material. Texts included on a syllabus for any length of time are more likely to be recognised as canonical if they are not already and similarly any texts which are already canonical are kept in the public and academic sphere. As well as perpetuating canonical processes and assumptions, these

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[2] As shown in supplementary material documents 1 & 2

texts, and the literary value placed on them play into the perpetuation of classism in both the education and wider academic spheres. "It is a way for the bourgeoisie to reproduce their values and make their values and ideas legitimate. This is why so few women or non-white authors are included in the canon" (Johansson, 20). The narrative constructed by these assumptions and values is one of elitism and classism, holding perceived cultural capital over the inherent taste and opinions of the individual for example, Orwell's socialism and critique of the politics of his time which is glossed over in more conservative classrooms, however other issues of misogyny are focused on as well as teaching to exam with no real depth of critical thinking needed from the students. This narrative harms the ways in which literature functions as a cultural standpoint in two ways; one being the judgement of texts considered to be outside of any literary canon and those who read them, and the other harmful behaviour comes from the reverse and internal judgement that only a certain type of person – highly educated and well read – can even begin to both critique and enjoy the texts which are deemed canonical. This is a narrative which is initialised in the reading lists of mandatory education but quite quickly evolves and matures and furthers the class divide in such a way that ultimately benefits no one. The issue comes down to how literature is taught within the confines of the English Literature classroom, which prevents any sort of wider audience from reading canonical literature under the internal and pervading excuse of perceived self-worth.

An example for this in practise is the survey conducted revealed that "George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* comes top in a poll of the UK's guilty reading secrets. Asked if they had ever claimed to read a book when they had not, 65% of respondents said yes and 42% said they had falsely claimed to have read Orwell's classic in order to impress" (Brown). This claim, however, plays into the class divide laid out above; the claim of knowledge lends the individual a certain level of cultural capital – the book is recognised as canonical and holds literary value – which makes the fact that this is a lie all the more interesting and exposes and interesting relationship between the perception of the canon and the general public. This is looked further into within the third chapter of this thesis.

The canon, in whichever form it is perceived, has both negative and positive effects on both wider culture and the education system as well as the evolution of both. "All interact with one another to create a learning experience of a literary text that also includes many of these categories" (Behling, 414-415). In taking into account all of the factors which have previously influenced the creation of a canon list, there is a glaring point that culture and contemporary literature have far more effect on the longevity of the canon as well as how the

canon will change or be disrupted, which means that there is an inherent flaw in the argument of elitism to defend a traditional canon. From a contemporary perspective the symbiosis of the education system and the canon is useful in that it offers a reflection of literary history to some degree. However, this symbiosis is damaging to the future of the study of literature as it perpetuates harmful narratives both on a social level and an individual level. This tumultuous relationship is to be explored within the following chapters.

Chapter One: *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* in comparison

This chapter argues that the narrative arc of Jane as a character reflects the canonical perception of *Jane Eyre* in terms of academic recognition. In contrast, the married and independently wealthy Jane reflects the position of the text as firmly seated within a canon-scape. Given the lack of comfort provided by Thornfield Hall at this point, this is reflected in the tumultuous debates surrounding the perpetuation or destruction of traditional canon as something to house these texts with agreed canonical value. Developing on this, the argument then turns to the relationship between Rochester and Bertha in *Wide Sargasso Sea* which also reflects both cultural and academic attitudes towards literature that is so distinctly other than traditional canonical literature, namely participating in racist ideology and perpetuation of traditional biases to the detriment of minority narratives and authors. In examining these relationships between text and canon and character, this chapter concludes that the elitism so ingrained in the education system becomes a basis for elitism in wider academia and popular culture and examines the place of multiple canons within the education system as well as the cultural perception of both of these texts and the canon in general.

Jane Eyre (1847) and the canon

In the period in which *Jane Eyre* was published there was far less contentious debate about which texts should be included in the canon of English literature than there is today. That the canon was uncontested at this period reveals how an oppressive upper-class white male presence over-writes any other voice, as this social class - especially within western culture - has held more social and cultural privilege than any other. The active and purposeful exclusion of women and minorities from positions of agency as well as cultural input and influence meant that their opinions were purposefully unrecorded, and their works suppressed or overwritten so that these minorities "whose literary merits are questioned by historians, [they are the] victims of sexist prejudices who are incapable of judging literary merits and who, in many cases, label the writer as oscillating between masculine and feminine" (Sebastián, my translation, 88). Because of this, all of the Brontës first published their texts under gender-neutral pseudonyms, as it was felt by them at the time it would allow for a wider audience. As explored in this contemporary review; "We do not know who 'Currer Bell' might be, but his name will stand very high in literature" (*Weekly Chronicle,* 525). In order to better navigate this social climate, the anonymity granted by this gender-neutral name allowed the text to avoid the limitation of a solely female readership and market.

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Even with this change, the popularity of the text, and the market in which it was popular was dismissed as they were assumed to be "silly novels [for and] by Lady Novelists" (Eliot, 442); at first publication meant that it was ignored by academia. This meant that certain markets and authors were immediately dismissed due to societal prejudice of the people in positions of academic power. "Moreover, the plenitude of Victorian work allows us to adopt a different metric from quality: popularity" (Schaffer, 596). This popularity, both contemporary and sustained, of *Jane Eyre*, made it into a phenomenon that still has influenced contemporary society both in terms of literature as well as within popular culture. The novel still holds a cult-like hold over popular culture in that "the cultural and literary durability of *Jane Eyre* over the course of the decade can be explained not only as a reflection of the novel's cheapness and widespread availability as a reprint but as a result of the not uncommon conflation of Charlotte Brontë the person with Jane Eyre the literary character" (Le Favour, 121). The brand of popularity plays into the longevity of *Jane Eyre* as well as the added intrigue from this conflation of author and character. Le Favour's exploration of the popularity reflects the importance of the text and explores the reasoning behind it. For Le Favour, the book toes the line between being traditional enough in form to satisfy traditionalists and yet is unique enough in content to satisfy cultural rebels both at the time of publication and when considering its place within a canon.

This tension between academia and popular culture is borne of the elitism inherent in academia; the lack of academic interest in *Jane Eyre*, with the *People's Journal* confining the text to be "one of the most notable domestic novels" (qtd in Jerry, 10), only lasted until the popularity of the text continued in such a way that it was clear the text had an important cultural impact and held literary value. The position *Jane Eyre* holds in the canon today has been both perpetuated and troubled by its relationship to popular culture. The lack of contemporary Literary Studies as an academic discipline meant that popularity kept *Jane Eyre* in the public eye enough until it had enough presence to be able to recognise literary value. Brontë culture still attracts tourism and adaptations into TV, film, and even Broadway production such as *Jane Eyre the musical* (Caird 2000), and the film adaptations; *Jane Eyre* (Fukunaga 2011, White 2006, Young 1997, Mann 1970, etc.). In tandem with this, the academic attitude towards *Jane Eyre* is often reverential. As the academic community evolves, according to Arnold a contemporary critic of Brontë, "culture as the great help out of our present difficulties; culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in

the world" (Arnold, viii). In the view of Arnold, the community of literary academics who hold authority and agree to the literary value of the text perceive the text within its cultural context.

There are obvious links between the novel as it is, the way popular culture has evolved over the last two hundred years, and the inspiration found in contemporary literature as Le Favour argues with the link between

> the popularity and reception of *Jane Eyre*, Jane Eyre, and Charlotte Brontë taken together [they] demonstrate an Anglo-American world of reading and books that is far more complicated, and far richer, than a narrowly national consideration would have it. *Jane Eyre* helps us to complete the picture of this period's American literary history. (Le Favour, 133).

The canon of the mid-twentieth century placed *Jane Eyre* amongst the previous predominantly white male authors. In upholding *Jane Eyre* on a historical scale, thus immortalising it; the novel's place in the canon is unquestionable in contemporary culture and academia. Instead, it's more of an issue of which canon and troubling the readings on a critical scale. This change occurred as a social evolution towards academic feminism and acceptance of women and minorities meant that a retrospective of literature is critiqued through the lenses of these more modern academic perspectives.

In terms of how *Jane Eyre* is revered within the institution of education, interestingly, its teaching as a text is shied away from within mandatory education. This of course does not stop Brontë culture from pervading popular culture. When it comes to Victorian novels in general, for mandatory education these are shied away from, due to the sheer size of the text and the limited amount of time provided in the confines of mandatory education. Any requirements for pre-twentieth-century literature are largely fulfilled by poetry,[3] due to the more manageable length, given that "a defense of an education in the great books requires making a more robust claim about the aim of education: These texts teach not merely a way of thinking but a particular and substantive set of conclusions that makes the teaching of these texts essential and necessary" (Deneen, 34). *Jane Eyre* is a large and dense book, with complicated themes made even more complicated from the perspective of a modern-day audience, meaning it is overlooked in favour of shorter and less complicated texts within mandatory education. At higher education level there is both the time and dedication for the

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[3] See supplementary material document 1

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literature which means it can have enthusiastic students and teachers, there is not the space for this at lower levels due to exam and time constraints.

The elitism which remains in terms of the canon means it is expected that the individual has read *Jane Eyre* to present a certain level of cultural capital. With the novel being excluded from mandatory education and praised within academia, this dichotomy means that the novel as a popular culture entity and the novel as an academic entity are almost entirely separated. Not studying novels such as *Jane Eyre* in such a way, can lead to a problematic perpetuation of an elitist literary canon that only serves a traditional perspective. The themes of colonisation and misogynoir which can be read in the text are more contemporary ways to criticise the text which are often brushed over by the adaptations of popular culture to appeal to a contemporary audience in favour of romance, but these issues are inherent in the text. The perspective of canonical works and the teaching of these texts within mandatory education work in tandem to uphold a more traditional canon, with the elitist views and assumptions when considering the wider considerations of the canon working with the exclusionary syllabus to preserve a traditional canon. Intentionally or otherwise, if issues such as these are ignored in favour of less complicated texts in terms of themes and content, it only serves to perpetuate ignorance and a closed canon.

Despite the popularity and pilgrims, the multiple adaptations of *Jane Eyre* into other forms of popular culture allow a following of fans outside of the original text to enjoy the text, and yet there is a hidden under thread of elitism in terms of the novel. The text is kept in the public eye with ease without the public needing to read the text and garner their own opinions on the more problematic themes largely ignored in media, such as misogynoir and colonisation. These adaptations are, usually, passion projects from the people involved. This means that it is an easy excuse to ignore the problems with the text in favour of upholding both its place within popular culture and a traditional view of the canon. This text works within the canon to perpetuate some troubling themes which are brushed aside in favour of a dramatized retelling. The text is used in its adaptations to celebrate Englishness and romanticism rather than to critique in such a way to bring attention to the issues present in the work as previous explored. As Shane Madej remarks in *The Macabre Death of Edgar Allan Poe* "It's very easy to condemn from our vantage point in history, and so we do condemn! Wholeheartedly!" (5:09-5:16). The cultural relativism by which we have a duty to critique these historical shortcomings is an imperative not an option.

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The character of Jane Eyre within the text mirrors the ways in which the novel *Jane Eyre* functions in terms of canonicity. Jane travels England experiencing different levels of prosperity and poverty; when she is conforming to more traditional values, she is safe and comfortable in Thornfield Hall; when she rebels or is outspoken, she is beaten, subdued, and poor, both as a child and with the Rivers. When *Jane Eyre* is celebrated for its feminism, it upholds its place not only in popular culture but in academia and subsequently as a canonical text. When *Jane Eyre* is critiqued for its problematic themes, as Wu explores, there is an intrinsic entanglement of Jane as a character and Brontë as author in that "Two practically antithetical accounts, both critique […] and defense […] relied on an identification that bound author and character to one another" (Wu, 84). This entanglement is mirrored in the treatment of the text as canonical and Jane as a character housed in varying status positions. Within popular culture, the highlights of romance and feminism are focused on and almost always leave behind the original themes of the text. Jane as a character is mostly ignorant of the effects of colonisation, as were many of the English population of the time, and mostly benefits from the far-off oppression hinted at in the novel. To "toil under Eastern suns, in Asian deserts with him in that office" (Brontë, 621), the implied colonial and missionary actions of St John Rivers and the expectation of Jane to follow him without argument reflect the place of traditionalists within a canon debate.

Similarly, the book ends with the closing words of St John Rivers "No fear of death will darken St. John's last hour: his mind will be unclouded, his heart will be undaunted, his hope will be sure, his faith steadfast. His own words are a pledge of this ''My Master,' he says, 'has forewarned me. Daily He announces more distinctly, — 'Surely I come quickly!' and hourly I more eagerly respond, — 'Amen; even so come, Lord Jesus!'" (Brontë, 691), leaving the text to be haunted by the colonial implications just as the canon and the argument for keeping a closed canon are haunted by the colonial impacts on literary and general culture which leads to social and cultural attempts to rectify this. The hierarchies of both race and gender are played into by the overwhelming presence of Rivers and Jane's reaction to him. Spivak develops this framework further in her interview about neo-colonisation, "it's not just economic, just another different stage, where the economic element is more on the dominant and the territorial less so" (Spivak, 222). Rivers manipulates Jane's financially dependent situation to his benefit in order to further the colonisation in which he intends to participate.

The academic critiques of the text in terms of colonialism and misogynoir are distanced both historically and geographically so much so that the oppression presented in the

text is wrongly dismissed, by such critiques, as something society has long since evolved beyond. However, the social movements like Black Lives Matter and #MeToo have served as a reminder that these issues are far from forgotten. Leaving *Jane Eyre* and a contemporary critique out of mandatory education reflects a wider issue within a traditional canon and education, perpetuating ignorance and a frankly racist view of history which is excused and glossed over in favour of praising the text as proto-feminist as in Gilbert and Gubar's reading, *The Madwoman in the Attic:* "we began our own definition of these redefinitions with close readings of Charlotte Brontë, who seemed to us to provide a paradigm of many distinctively female anxieties and abilities" (Gilbert and Gubar, xii). This criticism creates a limited experience of the female experience upon which to base their interpretation of Brontë's writing, and while the feminism inherent in the protagonist of Jane is important to acknowledge it is not more or less important that the heavily ingrained other themes which touch on social issues. As Griesinger argues, "*Jane Eyre* has now gone global as postcolonial feminists challenge Bronte's apparent blindness to the ways her novels seem to sanction racism and aspects of western imperialism deemed oppressive for women" (Griesinger, 29). Brontë expands on this with Jane as a character recognising the social differences and the treatment of women both as a student in Lowood and as an independently wealthy woman by the conclusion of the text. The traditional canon perpetuates the view that the English literary canon should be preserved and untouched: the overwriting and erasing of minority stories in favour of upholding the same white male authors. In the time of the Brontës this idea was only starting to be questioned and yet now the traditional canon is still being upheld within education and popular culture in elitist and classist ways as well as racist and exclusionary ways. Jane as a character ignores the colonialist evidence rampant in Rochester's life simply because she benefits from it.

Simmons places Jane as a character within this liminal space, which in comparison to Bertha, is greatly diminished in sympathy.

> Brontë's "rebel slave" does not rebel against the class system which causes the innocent to be persecuted and criminalized, but against her own mistaken placement on a lower rung of that system. […] Once Jane has recovered family and fortune, once she can enter the gentility as an equal, she is content, and the problem of oppression is solved. (Simmons, 83).

The traditional canon is being upheld in a similar way to colonialism both in culture and literature. The assumptions of canonical value needing to be completely accepted without criticism by the general population lead to the elitist ideas of cultural segregation both in

terms of race and class within the cultural perception of canons. However, applying Simmons's critique of the text to the positioning within canon, *Jane Eyre* is celebrated as a feminist text due to the historical struggles of women authors. The belonging Simmons mentions is shown through the treatment of Bertha, in that the issues characters of colour both historically and contemporarily face are diminished in favour of upholding the white protagonists – a treatment which continues both in relation to this specific text as well as wider society. Henderson agrees, stating that "*Wide Sargasso Sea*'s representation of Thornfield's historicity marks the English country house as a space in which post-imperial racialization takes place, even as the country house in general begins to offer a sanitized national history that erases imperial contact, including involvement in the slave trade" (Henderson, 95).

Jane's narrative arc evokes sympathy but the contrast in characters with a contemporary perspective between her and Bertha only serve to highlight the position of privilege which she enjoys.

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Rhys uses the character, Antoinette, to show the stark contrast of a colonially affected Rochester - "'Oh England, England,' she called back mockingly" (Rhys, 39) - and his mistreatment towards Bertha Mason: "You shall see what sort of a being I was cheated into espousing, […] and seek sympathy with something at least human" (Brontë, 445). Rochester is geographically displaced in _Wide Sargasso Sea_ and yet still holds a position of power that counteracts this uncomfortable situation in which he finds himself. And yet Rochester and the power he holds over Antoinette are the points of sympathy conveyed by Rhys, she is subject to verbal abuse and judgement which she was both unprepared and unwilling to endure. The agency assumed as the position of narrator for the majority of the text stripped away and leading her blindly to her fate in the fire of _Jane Eyre_.

In Jean Rhys' novel, attitudes towards the canon in academia have altered. In place of the desire for upholding the traditional canon, at the time of publication, there was a political and cultural call for the inclusion of minority voices; _Wide Sargasso Sea_ plays perfectly into this cultural narrative. _Wide Sargasso Sea_ and the change in narrative voice with the more elegant Antoinette taking the place of the frankly racist portrayal of Bertha Mason in _Jane Eyre_. "[Antionette] is fully transformed from her position in Rhys' text as a victim of patriarchal oppression and realigned with the colonial master and perpetrator of cultural trauma" (Metz, 116). Rhys plays into the cultural call for a rewriting of history to reflect the diverse reality of events more accurately. Just as the text itself reflects the social narrative of raising minority narratives, the place of the text in the wider canon-scape reflects the further developing of these ideas. The structure of multiple canons as well as the narrative of a traditional canon both revolve around the suppression of minority voices and the effect this can have both on a social and academic level. The two theories simply approach these issues with different attitudes.

Rhys does alter the narrative to better reflect her own experiences in critical dialogue with Jamal; through a change in timing of the novel to line up with the independent Caribbean, the colonial influence is still prevalent throughout the text, even in a young Antoinette's life.

> Native peoples had to face colonizers' controlling ways and superiority as they dominated their homeland and told them that their customs were not as great as theirs, thus instilling their culture in the natives by force. It can be said that post-colonialism is a form of struggle that natives have had to endure to adjust to being free from the colonizer and building a new life. (Jamal, 113).

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The post-colonial struggle Jamal mentions is reflected in the treatment of Bertha in *Jane Eyre,* which Rhys's text attempts to dissect and resolve in giving the victim a voice and perspective.

Wide Sargasso Sea is a great example of the multiple canon theory in practice; the text is a direct colonial-critical retelling of a canonical text and so finds its praise coming from the academic sphere specialising in post-colonial literature. *Wide Sargasso Sea* "revisits and re-inhabits the architecture of an earlier text, *Jane Eyre*, so as to emphasize its internal heterogeneity, a process that [Hope] term[s] 'decomposition'" (Hope, 52). To Hope there is almost an act of revenge in Rhys' rewriting, a rebellion against both the colonial and the canonical. While *Jane Eyre* certainly maintains its hold on popular culture, *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a little more niche, left out of the public eye despite the fact that upon "publication of *Wide Sargasso Sea* in 1966 – it was awarded with the "W. H. Smith Award" and with the "Arts Council of Great Britain Award for Writers" in 1967– the interest in Jean Rhys has been constantly increasing" (García Rayego, my translation, 49). The text still holds an important place in both academic and canon critical spheres, but when compared to the reverence held for the Brontë's and the place that *Jane Eyre* holds, *Wide Sargasso Sea* is significantly overshadowed.

Rhys writing back to such a well-known text in such a critical way only serves to reflect the desire for not only a wider canon, but for critical re-reading of previously declared canonical texts. *Jane Eyre* is far from the only text to uphold problematic themes and values such as colonial racism and misogynoir. Themes which are glossed over in favour of maintaining a traditional canon. This serves as an explanation as to the relationship between texts as popular at the time of publication and the longevity necessary for canonical status and recognition.

Similarly, *Wide Sargasso Sea*'s role with contemporary education is reflective of a wider problem with canonical texts and education. In comparison to the stereotypically dense Victorian novel of *Jane Eyre, Wide Sargasso Sea* is a far more accessible text. This is mainly due to the fact that mid-twentieth century literature evolved through Modernism and Post Modernism before *Wide Sargasso Sea* was produced and therefore differs greatly from the literary surroundings of *Jane Eyre*. Despite this, *Wide Sargasso Sea* is very much ignored by mandatory education. Granted Rhys' text does rely quite heavily on having *Jane Eyre* for context and deals with the serious themes of racism, colonialism, and sexism, but there are

already texts which deal with these themes in mandatory education such as John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. The themes supposedly avoided by the exclusion of texts such as this are in fact present and so the argument of protection when it comes to education and immaturity of readership falls apart. *Wide Sargasso Sea* was specifically an anti-canonical text when it was first published; its place in the canon now is almost ironic as a post 'canon war' academia recognises the literary value in Rhys' text.

In Bertha not knowing if England is real, it reduces the influential power it can have over the individual, "I stared at her, thinking, 'but how can she know the best thing for me to do, this ignorant, obstinate old negro woman, who is not certain if there is such a place as England?" (Rhys, 68), in a similar way the influence of the canon over periphery cultures hold the colonial power and influence in a contested position as the resentment of invasion does not necessarily overpower the innate culture of these peripheries. If this recognition can be posthumously granted to the text, there is no excuse for it to be disregarded by mandatory education in the way it has been.

The narrative works to showcase the oppressed and subjugated colonial countries, to give a voice to the historically written over and out. In a similar way to the narrative, the text itself and its positioning both in and against the canon serve to showcase this suppression of colonial narratives "In the postcolonial field the act of 'devouring' English culture or literature is transformed into an act of irreverent love and cultural resistance" (Polatti, 71). Antoinette's rejection of Englishness and Rochester on a personal level transforms from solely being an act of rebellion of her personal situation into a deeper rebellion against colonial influence. Rhys' text had the benefit of being published at the peak of the civil rights movement of the nineteen-sixties, in giving a voice to the voiceless woman of colour in *Jane Eyre*, she is writing back to her contemporaries also calling for the inclusion of minority voices in literature as well as critiquing the past for upholding such erasure of minority voices. Metz uses Brathwaite's critique of Rhys to explore why this narrative holding such a place of literary value is important as Brathwaite is an extremely influential Caribbean author; "Brathwaite[4] declines to separate *Wide Sargasso Sea* from its status as a product of a white creole culture that created the Afro-Caribbean folk through captivity, transportation, and enslavement and then eradicated their culture and spiritual foundation through

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[4] "We cannot begin to understand statements about 'West Indian culture', since it is so diverse and has so many subtly different orientations and interpretations, unless we know something about the speaker/writer's own socio-cultural background and orientation." (Brathwaite, p.3)

acculturation" (Metz, 104). Antoinette is given a voice in Rhys' text but in many ways; "her voice in the first part of the novel, is also full of silences, gaps and undisclosed emotions" (Azam, 238); this only serves to showcase just how ignored she is by Rochester and in turn how the voices of the colonial subjects are ignored by the metropolitan centre. The people of Coulibri are "still waiting for this compensation the English promised when the Emancipation Act was passed" (Rhys, 4) their position as slaves gone only in title, the financial, cultural, and social effects of the colonial forces still felt at every level and this strained relationship is reflected in the interactions between Bertha and her peers as well as between Bertha and Rochester.

Under Antoinette's narrative, she never lets it be forgotten that she has no agency within her story, despite her want of it. She was sold into marriage and her husband has no interest in maintaining any sort of affectionate relationship, the flickering narrator "demands a fluid interpretive attentiveness to the structuring historical and experiential foundations of any individual discourse" (Brown, 576). Via the unnamed Rochester's narrative, Rhys gives a glimpse into the mind of the colonial power. Rochester in Coulibri is almost a sympathetic character – almost. He is there against his will, married off and uninvolved in any decisions by his father and brother; "Dear Father, we have arrived from Jamaica after an uncomfortable few days. […] [Antoinette] wished to get here as soon as possible" (Rhys, 41). This does stop readers from being constantly reminded that he is the one in the position of power. This is especially evident in Rochester's cruel treatment of Antoinette – even ignoring her name in favour of one he likes more against her wishes: "'why do you call me Bertha?' 'Because it is a name I'm particularly fond of. I think of you as Bertha'" (Rhys, 83) – as well as his interactions with the serving staff of the house, who seem to hate him for the power he holds over them. Neel presents an image of Antoinette isolated from her peers and any sort of comfort in Coulibri; "With her shorn head and request that her aunt sing "Before I was set free", Antoinette taxonomically resembles a slave" (Neel, 172), segregated from a young age for the history and crimes of her family. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* Coulibri is a state in political limbo as it exists in a post emancipation society, but the pervasive colonial power is still felt in every moment – the same can be said for the canon, in that the historical and continued erasure of minority narratives and authorial influences.

Whilst there were social and cultural attempts to broaden the canon at the time of Rhys' text under the civil rights movement of America and the call for representation, the canon wars of the 1990's only served to show that these attempts were maliciously

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overturned, in favour of maintaining the traditional values of an older canon. These attempts mostly served to showcase a racist intention, however successful they believed themselves to be. Baumlin's defence of Bloom connecting so directly to religious metaphor purposefully reflects the origins of the canon as well as playing into the domineering force of Christianity followed through both colonial efforts and canonicity of literature and culture; "I shall speculate on the consequences of having anointed our Norton Anthologies with holy oil" (Baumlin, 34), "few readers possess the heterodox esoteric traditions underlying [Bloom's] otherwise seemingly conservative arguments" (Baumlin, 25). Baumlin takes Bloom's *Western Canon* as almost doctrine in terms of literary canon and therefore, dismisses attempts to widen canonical perspectives, even to multiple canons. Although *Wide Sargasso Sea* is recognised as a canonical text within post-colonialism, this is mainly due to the multiple canon theory that came as a revolutionary opponent of the canon wars, this is a contested by traditionalists like Bloom - "Not a moment passes these days without fresh rushes of academic lemmings off the cliffs they proclaim the political responsibilities of the critic, but eventually all this moralizing will subside" (Bloom, 15). Placing all post-colonial literature in a single neatly bordered box means that the avoidance of important, if difficult, topics become that much easier. This creates a dangerous environment of a stilted development of empathy and a closing of perspective in relation to the complexities of global and social community.

Instead of opening the canon such as Rhys' contemporaries were calling for as a result of the civil rights movement, a traditional canon still pervades popular culture and mandatory education, however, the addition of multiple canons means that these important texts do receive the recognition that they deserve. The relationship between *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* does serve to reflect the way a traditional canon can work in tandem with mandatory education in an exclusionary way to maintain traditional canonical values even in the face of direct criticism and rebuke; using popular culture in tandem with brushing over the issues means that there is a potential for the more problematic themes to go unnoticed in a pervasive way.

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Comparison in culture

In *Jane Eyre*, Bertha is a tragic figure largely because she is presented through Jane's perspective, who sees her as unsalvageable and as the antagonist. In *Wide Sargasso Sea,* Antoinette is a tragic figure because she is stripped of personhood and agency to parallel the wider effects of colonisation on colonial subjects. The agency and tenacity she shows initially in *Wide Sargasso Sea* have already been broken by the time Jane is the protagonist of the tale. In terms of canonicity, the character of Bertha/Antoinette exists in a canonical limbo – Schrodinger's canonical character – in that Bertha exists within a traditional canon in *Jane Eyre* but is very much pushed aside in favour of Jane and Rochester's romance in *Wide Sargasso Sea.* Antoinette is a canonical character in terms of a post-colonial canon in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and is only given the recognition it deserves within the ostracised canon-scape of post-colonial studies, sometimes being grated study within feminist studies as an intersectional text.

The many adaptations of *Jane Eyre* allow it to maintain its position in popular culture. Such adaptations as mentioned previously, tend to either ignore or gloss over the colonial narrative within the original text. This is reflective of the role of colonisation within the canon.

> While Brontë's novel presents a pure English heroine speaking with a single voice and vision, Rhys revises the canonical Jane Eyre with her innovative incorporation of double voice and double vision throughout *Wide Sargasso Sea* and writes her back to the novel. […] Rhys's text resists the oppressive traditions of the past. (Tekin, 125-126).

Calls for a western canon, as Bloom puts forth, seem to in effect call for a perpetuation of the positions of privilege taken by a white male focus when history and culture are so much more diverse than that. The chronotope in which Rhys writes "leads to a mix of characters (consisting of English colonisers, Creoles and native population) and to an overall tense atmosphere, illustrated through the characters' particularities of language (but not only)" (Manea, 85). Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* serves to showcase the direct effects of colonisation on not only the individual as part of the subjugated colony – "They say when trouble come close ranks, and so the white people did. But we were not in their ranks" (Rhys, 4), but to shed a light on how the colonisation of the canon is harmful to the evolution of culture as the overwriting of culture under the colonial oppressor leads to a lack of reliable history.

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Jane Eyre is not at all secretive about its links to colonisation and the benefits those in positions of power enjoy because of it; "All these relics gave to the third storey of Thornfield Hall the aspect of a home of the past: a shrine of memory" (Brontë, 161). Despite the contemporary adaptations ignoring these issues from a contemporary perspective (Fukunaga 2011, White 2006, Young 1997, Mann 1970, etc.), it is supremely easy to recognise and critique these issues. In hiding them away from the public eye there is an attempt in upholding *Jane Eyre* in terms of canonical value whilst also turning away from a critical perspective of the text. *Wide Sargasso Sea* does not shy away from this type of critique; the novel itself rejoices in giving an in-depth look into the colonial subject and bridges that gap between the innocent romanticism of Jane in Thornfield Hall and the invaded Antoinette or Bertha in Coulibri. The adaptations of *Wide Sargasso Sea* lean into this critique (Duigan 1993, Maher 2006, Perry, 2016).

The adaptations of *Jane Eyre* are an attempt to perpetuate that brand of canonical preservation in a twisted way; for the most part, the contemporary adaptations heighten the romantic elements of the story and play into the romanticisation of Englishness, some play into the role of the text as a historical artefact, and there are plenty of parodic texts. In terms of the importance of colonialism to the plot of both texts, Jane not only enjoys the benefits of Rochester's active participation in colonising with his grand house and "domestic comfort" (Brontë, 146) provided by generational wealth and business endeavours but her cousin St John Rivers is an even more active participant in Empire and almost succeeds in convincing her to actively participate in colonisation in a religious sense through missionary work. *Wide Sargasso Sea* shows an example of the type of colonial influence Jane would have become with the convent school which a young Antoinette runs to after her family home is burned down; "The saints we hear about were all very beautiful and wealthy. All were loved by rich and handsome young men [told by] Mother St Justine" (Rhys, 28). They may seem to have the best intentions but place the figures they praise are distinctly other than the native people, these invaders are unwelcome and unmovable.

Rhys changes some aspects of the tale in *Wide Sargasso Sea* to become a more historically accurate positioning of a colonial subject: "Rhys's prose style is characteristically spare, yet with an ability to combine the uncanny with the sharply realistic" (Mundeja, 98). This allows her to give a portrayal of a colonially subjected country with more validity. Alongside Antoinette's name and her historical positioning, Rhys changes the race of the character of Bertha Mason. She is frequently referred to as a "white cockroach" (Rhys, 8) by

her peers and is the descendent of an ex-plantation owner. Physically she may have a lighter skin tone than the other inhabitants of Coulibri, but not only does this single her out as an outsider and aligns her with the previous oppressors but she holds the cultural traditions and ancestry of the island life, meaning that for Rochester – for the imperial metropole – she will never be white enough.

Antoinette is an outsider in Coulibri; however, Rochester does not see just how ostracised she really is as he places her under the same category from his perspective as a member of the colonial ruling class. She is shown no pity from the people she interacts with because in their hearts they believe this is either what she wants or worse what she deserves: "'When man don't love you, more you try, more he hate you, man like that. If you love them they treat you bad" (Rhys, 66). In comparison, the original character of Bertha Mason is reduced to a racist animalistic caricature of a woman. Jane is terrified of her – the only threat to her happiness in Thornfield Hall.

> 'It seemed, sir, a woman, tall and large, with thick and dark hair hanging long down her back. […] 'Fearful and ghastly to me—oh, sir, I never saw a face like it! It was a discoloured face—it was a savage face. I wish I could forget the roll of the red eyes and the fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments!' 'Ghosts are usually pale, Jane.' 'This, sir, was purple: the lips were swelled and dark; the brow furrowed: the black eyebrows widely raised over the bloodshot eyes. (Brontë, 432).

The portrayal of Bertha in *Jane Eyre* plays into the inherent cultural racism of the era as well as caricatures of people of colour which contributed to continued racial prejudice. The colonial subjects were often viewed as barely people by the imperial ruling class, more like animals that needed to be controlled and taught better. In having Antoinette exist in such stark contrast to the character of Bertha Mason, Rhys not only increases the opportunity for an empathetic reading of a much-debased character but showcases that the inherent cultural racism of both the novel *Jane Eyre* exists and the plantation era she is explicitly writing back to are outdated and need to be criticised for the problematic perpetuation of racist ideology they perpetuate. In *Jane Eyre,* Bertha Mason barely speaks an intelligible word. She is reduced to the caricature which makes it easier to justify colonial efforts while ignoring the problems they bring along despite her isolation from any sort of sense of belonging, in knowing that she will be married to England both literally and figuratively. "In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the pseudo-objects Antoinette pursues are definitely those images that connote

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pure Whiteness" (Peimanfard, 79). Antoinette is chasing a fantasy of something which has the potential to accept her more so than the volatile relationships she maintains in Coulibri.

Despite any agency assumed in granting Antoinette her narrative voice, she has pushed aside, ignored, and lied to about not only her place within Rochester's life, but her physical agency is stripped by him displacing her and essentially putting her under house arrest. As Luo explores, these interactions foster sympathy for Antoinette as well as inspiration in her resistance

> Where there is oppression, there is resistance. Antoinette, however, instead of choosing to remain silent but keeps arguing with her husband to make her voice heard. Though Rochester tries greatly to conceal his dark side, he has no room to retreat under Antoinette's bitter lashing and scolding. He feels great threat and menace from her. When Rochester and Antoinette talk about England, both insist that its own country is real while the other side is unreal. In the eyes of an English man, everything is unreal or inferior compared to Europe. However, Antoinette challenges his enrooted fallacy by refuting his country is unreal. Her voice is the voice of the other side. (Luo, 1226).

Luo pins down exactly why Rhys' text is so important both to post-colonial studies and canon-spheres; the sharing of narratives to create diversity and revive cultural practices and stories is a global imperative.

At the time of publication, *Jane Eyre* and the Brontës were a part of a proto-feminist call for the inclusion of women writers within education, as well as an expansion of the popular culture to include women writers. Although there were no laws or direct obstacles against Charlotte Brontë's writing, both she and her original publisher were certain that publishing under her pseudonym of Currer Bell would allow her text to reach a variety of markets, more popular and accessible markets. Brontë was writing at a point where education was a male-dominated profession, there were governesses for those with the wealth to spend but even as seen in Lowood Academy – an environment based on Brontë's education if Gaskill's biography is to be believed, "it comprised an irksome struggle with difficulties in habituating myself to new rules and un-wonted tasks" (Brontë, 89). The education that Jane – and presumably Brontë herself – received focussed on traditionally feminine skills and careers. In terms of the novel's canonical status, Brontë finds herself one of the few women generously granted a place in Bloom's Western Canon.

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The sustained popularity of the Brontës, even at the time of publication mean that the novel was granted popular canonical status, although the critical perspective still took a few years to admit that the novel is not just a popular phenomenon and has value as a text. Even by Leavis' extremely limited canon list Brontë garners recognition of literary value, if not outright canon status: "[Brontë] has a permanent interest of a minor kind. She had a remarkable talent that enabled her to do something firsthand and new in the rendering of personal experience" (Leavis, 27). In the time since its publication, *Jane Eyre* has maintained its popularity within culture, yes, but has also maintained a position within academia allowing it to continue to be analysed through more and more contemporary perspectives.

The publishing of *Wide Sargasso Sea* places it at the peak of the civil rights movement of the nineteen-sixties unconsciously; this means that the narrative of the minority voice showcased in such a way was deliberately writing back to this movement, both in a retrospective historical sense as well as a call back to the socio-political climate. Rhys previous to the publication of this text had taken a thirty-year absence from writing and the public eye, "she entered a long period in which she vanished from public view as a writer and in literary circles was assumed to be dead" (Savory, 10). Her returning at this time with such a politically inclined narrative not only implied her support for the movement – whether intended or otherwise, Rhys plays into the social narrative of civil rights - but also added credibility to the vocal calls for the inclusion of minority voices not only within the canon but within popular culture publication in general. Rhys' political positioning within this text is obviously and vocally anti-colonial, the political climate, especially within the US, was focused on the previous subjects of such colonial powers and the remnants of inherent cultural racism within their society and continued throughout. "The current [1990] rebellion against Dead White European Male authors has not touched Bloom's choices" (Anonymous, 24), the calls for representation of minority narratives carrying throughout the end of the twentieth century and beyond. The climate in which Rhys published this text meant that she ran the risk of not being published in the US at all – as the political positioning meant that the inherent racism forced people to choose a harsh side either for or against minorities.

Within literary history, *Wide Sargasso Sea* plays into the historical context of its publication and because of its content is often sectioned off into a post-colonial literature canon of its own. *Wide Sargasso Sea* is not only praised within this canon-scape for the critique of a traditional canon but is also praised and open to critique itself within specialised

academia. The issue comes with the specialisation of a post-colonial canon. The context of this text relies quite heavily on the previous knowledge of *Jane Eyre*, as well as the complex themes it brings up, such as the feminism of Jane in comparison to Antoinette/Bertha, the colonial impact which Rochester and his family and business would have on a wider global scale, and the racism in the portrayal of Bertha as animalistic in *Jane Eyre* and how this is rooted in the judgement of subjects of imperialism.

Novianti explores the cultural impact of *Jane Eyre* both as a Victorian novel but also as a much-adapted cultural reference point: "The novel is also rich of values or virtues, such as religiosity, honesty, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, and curiosity. […] Watching the film or TV serial version, according to the students, helped their comprehension of the novel" (Novianti, 259). Although mandatory education strays from *Jane Eyre*, as it does with many canonical texts, the cultural relevance supersedes the apparent novel itself. Both Bloom and Kouritzin explore how the colonial subjects deal with an English literature canon; how their education systems serve to perpetuate canonical values as well as installing a specific brand of elitism; "Although everything in my life experiences had prepared me to challenge the dominant assumptions about the representativeness of the literary canon, until this point, nothing in my educational experiences had so prepared me" (Kouritzin, 186). Canonical texts, such as *Jane Eyre*, are not as included mandatory education, and yet for the individual to gain more cultural capital, they are expected to have read these texts. "The discussion of the anthologizing movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century connects to recent considerations of anthologies as evidence of deliberate attempts to make or shape culture" (Bloom, 727); this presents attempts from people with status and academic power using said power and influence to create their narratives which benefit their peers as well as successfully othering the colonial subjects.

If mandatory education currently allows young students to deal with more and more complex STEM issues, there is currently no equivalent for the advancement of the complexity dealt with at this level in terms of literary theory and the issues dealt within. "The use of the term "crisis" for these changes still presupposes the notion that we can overcome the present problems and then return to a state of normalcy that would look more like the past than the dreaded present" (Hahendahl, 2). To an extent, these issues are already brought up in the limited texts studied at this level already cover similar subjects, such as the racism within *Of Mice and Men* – an extremely popular text to be studied at mandatory education in

England and Wales, which distances the theories and issues from the society those being taught are living in. Though there is no complexity or real depth to the study of literature at this level, there is no reason not to apply such depth. *Wide Sargasso Sea* not only provides such a gateway into an empathetic narrative of a colonial subject, but it also provides the critical perspective of the canon that seems so taboo within mandatory education, as to critique a form of canon at this level would be to target the foundations of the whole system.

Jane Eyre as a text and the character of Jane connect to the issues set out by Truman and Goebel; in that, "despite continued local attempts at diversification of English literary education, whiteness continues to circulate through and cling to many of the core texts, narratives and messages that make up English literary education" (Truman, 53). As well as playing into the perpetuation of a singular culture, *Jane Eyre* works as a contemporary tool which furthers "helping students learn to identify and critically analyze racist language [which] is a goal central to teaching multicultural literature" (Goebel, 42).

The role of *Jane Eyre* within the canon is ultimately to exist as a tool for a more traditionally focused canon – it holds canonical value and holds a position of relative power within both academia and popular culture. And yet the problematic treatment of colonialism is at best glossed over and at worst defended. Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* in turn is an activist's text, calling for a retelling of history to include the voices of those written over. In terms of literary history, *Wide Sargasso Sea* falls into a sector of post-colonialism in which it is ostracised from the traditional canon while being critical of it as well as the society Rhys inhabits with this text and the society the text exists in. In directly comparing the two texts, the aims of each become very obvious and the problematic themes of *Jane Eyre* are even more obvious to a reader with context.

The argument that the opening of the canon somehow means the destruction of a traditional canon as posited by Bloom as "our English and other literature departments shrink to the dimensions of our current Classics departments, ceding their grosser functions to the legions of Cultural Studies" (Bloom, 17) – is baseless in both literary history and culture. In terms of writing back to the traditional canon, the contemporary call for the retroactive inclusion of minority narratives and authorial voices comes from the social unrest of the civil rights movement and is a natural social progression from this political movement. Under the multiple canon theory, subjects and narratives which do offer this representation are often ignored under the guise of simplicity.

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Taking *Wide Sargasso Sea* as an example, the anti-colonial narrative and the inclusion of a minority narrative means that it was originally denied any sort of canonical status. "It may be, however, that the few classics of the emerging African canon can be fruitfully revisited by contemporary authors with vision, to challenge texts that have become as unavoidable in envisioning 'Africa' as the Iliad is to the notion of 'Western civilization'" (Doherty, 201). The text will forever be labelled within these boundaries, although these labels can be useful to people interested in reading specifically into them, generally, popular culture with leaving them to be included within the culture's it directly represents and academically at mandatory education this representation and culture will be left behind altogether. There is still a lot of evolution to come to fully represent the spectrum of the human experience explicitly as "scholars continue to deliberate over cultural and linguistic authenticity and appropriation" (Czarnecki, 6). The contemporary representations of a traditional canon are outdated and ignorant at best and racist and malicious at worst.

Chapter Two: The *Alice* Books and *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in comparison

This chapter explores the issues surrounding children's literature and magical realism as well as issues of translation in an English market, as well as how these texts are examined in terms of secondary education for exam in England and Wales – if at all. This chapter begins by addressing the canonisation of Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, I argue that the intended audience and perception from academia has limited the extent of canonisation and therefore their place in wider academia despite popularity. Next, the argument turns to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Márquez. I show that, in a similar vein to the *Alice* books, the canonisation process has been limited by the intended audience and academic perspectives on global literature, once again despite the irrefutable popularity. The chapter concludes that the place of genre texts within the realm of education in comparison to their popularity within their genre-specific areas and popular culture more widely reflects an inescapable link between the inherent classism within both the education system as it currently functions as well as the traditional concept of an 'one true canon'. There have been attempts to pin this concept down throughout literary history, but given the insurmountable variety and extent of literature, this task is damaging both in the cultural perspective intent on maintaining this concept as well as on the level of the individual texts as the core concept is as contestable as it is constructed.

Alice and the Canon

Although there are plenty of cross-genre canons and places within literary criticism for a wide variety of texts, children's literature is an area which has been often ignored in terms of the traditional canon. *Alice in Wonderland* is one of the most well-known pieces of children's literature within popular culture – alongside texts such as *Peter Pan* (1911) or the Beatrix Potter books for children. However well-established the place of these texts within popular culture, their literary significance has often been a hard-fought battle. Especially in the earlier days of children's literature, it was pushed aside in favour of texts viewed as more academically suitable such as classic literature in a Bloomian sense. However, the value of "such works become institutionalized into a canon that helps define the national culture. They are taught to school children, perpetuating the nation's sense of collective identity" (Mujica,

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204). Children's literature holds an important place within not only popular culture but also within education.

The literary value of these texts was limited simply due to the fact that they were written for children, this stance ignores the value of creating literature for children which continues to be influential as both Rackin and Grenby explore.

> The *Alices*, [literary critics] found, frequently addressed issues beyond the comprehension and appreciation of even the most precocious child. They came to believe that Carroll had informed these "nonsense" books—whether consciously or unconsciously—with much sense. Soon, therefore, the *Alices* began to receive the sort of professional critical attention usually devoted to literature meant exclusively for grown-ups. (Rackin, 21).

> But their prevalence and endurance is nevertheless important. We seem to demand such originary myths for our children's classics. What we want, it appears, is the assurance that published children's books have emerged from particular, known circumstances, and, more specifically, from the story told by an individual adult to individual children. (Grenby, 3).

The literary value is granted and judged with the presumption that the intended audience has an impact on the quality of the text. Rackin and Grenby both explore how the importance of the text to the intended audience of children impacted the attitude towards the text in later literary criticism; the children who grew up reading *Alice* looked back with nostalgia and reverence for these texts. *Alice in Wonderland* still holds cultural importance to this day, especially when considering the longevity of interest in *Alice* throughout both popular and literary culture. And yet, when it comes to canonical recognition the text is segregated from true canonical status in favour of a children's literature canon.

Up until the mid-twentieth century, "historians of children's literature were largely bibliophiles, bibliographers, book collectors, book sellers, independent scholars, with minimal institutional support, but with a passion for children's book" (Lundin, 62), moving later towards a more involved academic interest; "A quickening of scholarship starting in the 1960s arose in part from the special collections of children's literature" (Lundin, 63). At a conference in 1980 a group of librarians tried to establish a children's literary canon:

> When we had presented — I think established is too strong a word — our canon, we would have created a rough outline map of children's literature and could then begin exploring the topography, natural history, social history, and all the other histories of the various regions. We would then most certainly discover the inaccuracies in our original map. (Ake et al., 48).

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There was a mix of contemporary and classic children's literature within this list. Unfortunately, this list[5] serves to prove that the majority of contemporary children's literature is still prey to the assumption that it is limited in canonical value – the majority of the contemporary texts from this list have fallen out of popular cultural awareness and therefore have lost their canonical status and the so-called classics, including *Alice,* have remained showing that even a specialised canon is as closed and reliant on traditional canonical values of purity of contents as a nonspecialised canon. As Haifeng argues,

> The two different methodological paths in general canon studies are paralleling to each other, whereas the studies of canon of children's literature implies a containing, rather than paralleling, power relationship between the outside gatekeepers and the intrinsic aesthetic assessment, when it can also be approached from the two critical paths in general canon studies. (Haifeng, 398).

The power perceived in a canon, especially within specialised academic spheres, leads to far more critical and judgemental attitudes of which texts gain canonical status. This is reflected and upheld in the ways in which children's literature and popular literature are perceived within popular culture, namely with almost a sense of shame attached to the enjoyment of literature which has not been deemed 'good'. There seems to be a hidden assumption behind the perception of texts – which exists as an echo of the ways in which the canon functions – and begins with mandatory education.

The actual creation of literature specifically for children did not come about until the eighteenth century:

> Most cultural historians agree that children's literature, as we recognise it today, began in the mid eighteenth century and took hold first in Britain. With its mixture of pictures, rhymes, riddles, stories, alphabets, and lessons on moral conduct–its commitment, as its full title puts it, to 'Instruction and Amusement'– *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, published by John Newbery in 1744, is often regarded as the most important single point of origin. (Grenby, 4).

The popularity of texts such as *Alice* and other literature written for children encourages a submarket of popular culture to bloom. In Nikolajeva's book on the role of children's literature in education (2005), she mentions how the diversity of genre can be used to encourage a more empathetic pupil. In using didactic texts to teach in a formal setting, there is both a limitation on what they can be taught which comes hand in hand with an expansion

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[5] Ake, et al., pp54-67.

in their understanding of simplified global issues such as racism, sexism, and globalisation of culture and society. In *Alice,* Carroll does this in a subtle way. Alice's journey through Wonderland and even more so in *Through the Looking Glass* is a metaphor for growing up and taking on responsibilities. Obviously within this text the surface level is a world of nonsense but to a child that is a more than recognisable representation of the world of adults – all nonsense that people refuse to explain and yet expect you to follow. In terms of the canon this extended metaphor can also be applied. The canon seems to be something academics defend and expect people to follow without fully explaining what exactly is meant by the canon.

Upon a deeper analysis of the idea of 'one true canon', it unravels quite quickly as the limits and assumptions both restrict the texts and are fallible as they are based in classism as well as an inherited racial bias which comes from the historic ties between the ideas of high-brow culture and the colonisation of culture. If the texts used to teach children adapt based on readership it makes it a lot easier to expand the further reading canons as there are direct links between what children are taught and how they choose to further their own reading.

The *Alice* edition I used for this study was the Wordsworth Classics edition. The cover is mostly black with a simple typeface title. When considering that this text is intended to be a children's book – usually marketed with colourful and eye-catching designs in order to encourage children to pick them up from the shelves – this design choice comes across as purposefully targeting an academic audience instead of the intended audience. The cover proudly boasts that it is a Wordsworth Classics edition upon every surface. Additionally, it boasts an introduction by Professor Irwin of the University of Kent, (7-27). This specific edition is not intended to be picked up and read by a younger audience; from the presentation of the cover to the academic introduction, this publication is clearly intended for an audience separate to the intended audience of the original text. The canonisation of texts written for a specific audience means a manipulation of marketing in order to expand potential readership, as Couser explains, "To canonize a writer, then, is not as simple as canonizing a saint. It is not just a matter of matching a rediscovered text to clear standards already in place; it may involve questioning and revising the standards used previously, which served to exclude these very works" (Couser, 5). There is an acknowledgement of the literary value held within these editions by presenting it as a serious text which deserves respect, the stylised editions acknowledge the academic interest in the text before acknowledging the actual content.

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The purposeful presentation of texts in a uniform and 'serious' manner is, in itself, an attempt to legitimise any claims of canonicity within the collections. However, in doing so, there is also a purposeful exclusion of a layperson wanting to read more challenging or even just more diverse texts. The texts are presented in an academic sense for the Wordsworth Classics edition, and the same can be said for other attempts at legitimising canonical claims by publishers – but this detracts from a potential reader who is not interested in studying a text but simply reading for please. It is my opinion that these attempts at legitimising canonical texts through special, more 'serious' editions take away from the intentions of all good literature – which is it be read and enjoyed, as Haugland explains.

> Good literature is considered good because it meets the aesthetic standards and reflects the values of the people—literary critics, educators, and librarians—who have the authority to make those decisions. Their notions of good literature do not always mesh with the wide range of uses that real readers—both adults and children— actually make of books. For many people—and probably for all of us sometimes— books provide pleasures that literary critics do not acknowledge as legitimate. (Haugland, 55).

The elitism comes in as well when these editions are clearly published with the intention of holding onto the claims of high-brow literature and therefore too challenging or high minded for someone to simply read for enjoyment. As Haugland posits, the divide between 'good' literature and popular literature occurs seemingly independent of the reader-text relationship and the pleasure of reading is dismissed as it does not fit into the critical definition of the quality of literature; form, content, the depth of analysis which can be applied. And yet there is also the tension held within this in that high-brow literature is precisely what a reader is expected to read, so which side is supposed to win in this conflict? The side which discourages people from reading texts which are too academic, or the side which seems to dismiss any other literature outside of these lists as worthless? And within this conflict, the sacrifice is the reader, the individual who is ultimately discouraged from reader for pleasure at all and dismissing all canonical texts as snobbish whilst also feeding into the idea that popular literature is not worth reading.

Alice as a character through both *Alice* and *Through the Looking Glass* has a journey meant to parallel the life of a girl growing up and feeling lost in a world that moves too fast for her to the point that "she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English" (Carroll, 44). Alice's journey throughout the texts can serve as an analogue of the journey of the books themselves toward canonisation. Alice the character and

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Alice the books both serve to show how confusing and almost nonsensical the process of canonisation is. Alice has to navigate both the nonsense world of Wonderland and the world of reality with the previous assumptions she holds from what she's either been told – *Alice;* "'Why,' said the Dodo, 'the best way to explain it is to do it" (Carroll, 54) – or from previous experience – *Through the Looking Glass* " 'I know they're talking nonsense,' Alice thought to herself: 'and it's foolish to cry about it.' So, she brushed away her tears" (Carroll, 201). She soon finds out that neither world will conform to her expectations and as a result "Alice's behavior alternates between acceptance/imitation and rejection of the Wonderland reality. Her efforts to become acculturated to the Wonderland and Looking-Glass worlds are often offset by her anger and frustration in the face of an alien system" (Thomas, 46) - just as the concept of a 'one true canon' would not conform to the expectations and needs of an evolving society.

Alice is overwhelmed with the responsibilities of a queen in *Through the Looking Glass* with absolutely no preparation or explanation as to how she should handle these responsibilities. She "lives in two extraordinary lands ruled by an eccentric anarchy, where she keeps on looking for a sense and an order; she never stops, or gives up, and keeps on going ahead and look for her destiny, even if these worlds and their inhabitants are weird and puzzle her" (Trisciuzzi, 87) just as the role of a 'one true canon' would be too much responsibility for a limited list. Alice's interactions with the individuals that inhabit Wonderland serve to show that the expectations of both her and the role of a singular canon would differ from person to person, reader to reader. It is an impossible situation.

Both *Alice* and *Through the Looking Glass* have maintained popular cultural relevance due to the repeated adaptations of the texts into film and television. The original texts still hold a level of popularity within popular culture due to the Disney movie adaptation (Geronimi et al., 1951) and the Tim Burton movies (2010 and 2016) which both have loose interpretations of the text, the cultural lifespan of the texts is renewed by this consistent adaptation. This was also explored in the previous chapter with adaptations of *Jane Eyre*. The texts are still a unique telling of a nonsense tale which appeals to all ages despite the intended audience which links the wider readership under a shared experience of childhood, whether through nostalgia and the experience presented through a child's perspective, or through a more direct relation from a child reader.

Experiencing academia from the perspective of a student, the treatment of texts such as these come across as reluctantly canonical, especially outside of specialised spheres of higher education. The use of "such allegorical equivalencies of experience are common teaching techniques in English – after all, English is often touted as a subject where we read fiction and put ourselves into other people's shoes, or use fiction as a way of understanding larger social or historical issues" (Truman, 56) which leads to a more empathetic reading of a text, and this helps the longevity of the text within popular culture. The "shoes" the adult audience for *Alice* put themselves into are ones of nostalgia for the simplicity of childhood and a retrospective acknowledgement of the concerns of adulthood. The literary value of these texts is undeniable as they continue to influence children and adults alike and yet outside of a specialised studies into children's literature such as Nikolajeva (1995, 2005) and Lerer (2009) there is little focus on both these texts and children's literature within a more traditional canon-scape as the genre is dismissed as not high-brow enough. The sustained cultural perception of these texts serve to increase and sustain both the popularity and indisputable literary value they hold.

The place of the texts in popular culture is what is sustaining the granted canonical status rather than a perceived literary value simply due to the intended audience, if this can be true for such an important text to popular culture as *Alice,* how far can this limitation of genre extend to granting literary value? As well as this, the question of how the importance of a text and its relationship to popular culture affects the consideration of academic and literary culture is explored. The limitations placed on a text by intended audience, such as with *Alice* and being linked directly to children's literature extend to a more globalised perspective of literature and thus the issue of translation, and the lack of availability, further limits the place of a text within canonical consideration given the implied limitation of audience. When attempting a more globalised culture and society, this issue becomes more prevalent.

Úrsula Buendía and the Canon

        Úrsula acts as an allegory for the treatment of genre and world literature as it is excluded from the western canon despite modern efforts to globalise and become more inclusive. In the case of *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* the intended audience and the publication first affected the canonisation of the text before it was limited by the genre in which it was written. The conventions of genre set expectations for the expected reader and the conscious decision by the author to play into and around these conventions solidify the intended audience, these conventions link to the treatment of genre in canon. In looking at *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in such a way, it not only is an attempt to globalise my own research but to shed a light onto the segregation of texts for genre writing. Using Márquez as an example for this, someone who birthed a whole new genre of fiction unintentionally, there is a connection between popular culture and canonisation as explored with *Alice in Wonderland.* However, when that popularity is first limited by language as Márquez's text was having first been published in Spanish for the Colombian audience it was originally intended for. The popularity of the text breaches that divide to the western market – specifically the American market, it forces an acknowledgement of canon potential and genre writing. This is something previously and famously looked over when it comes to canon status – there is a conflict within history. In looking at a text in translation, there comes the issue of translation itself – removing the text from the authorial intention of the original language and the purist subsection of readers who see translation as almost blasphemous "the English reader is undone by a serious misprint […] for the Spanish is altogether unambiguous" (Janes, 59). However, when a text such as *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is such a globally popular text and has been published in many languages and is a text that delights in intertextuality – paying respects to previously acknowledged canonical writers and texts, the text globalises itself.

        Márquez's text was recognised as a great text as soon as it was published, being granted awards both before being translated into English and in the original Spanish, with the most prestigious award of the Nobel prize for literature being granted in 1982. However, as with almost all popular literature it took a while before it was recognised at an academic level. The text was praised for popularising and solidifying a definition for the magical realism genre. "For this reason, [Márquez] has always given a socio-political orientation to his literary discourse in order to highlight the salient features of his country. In fact, his artistic goal is to portray a comprehensive image of the past, present and future of Latin

America in a symbolically contextualized fictional discourse" (Aghaei, 187) which meant it was rejected by traditional canon standards both due to the fact it was by definition a genre novel as well as the reluctance to include writers of colour within the western canon of English literature. The fact that it established an entire genre means that its lasting inspiration and effect on popular culture are just as important throughout literary history as it was to the culture in which it was first published.

From inspiring literature in both form and content, to inspiring the birth of an entire category of literature which still holds popularity to this day, it is inarguable that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* holds an enormous amount of cultural relevance, to both literary history as well as representation of Latin American culture, specifically Colombian culture. Despite the initial limitation of language, the text has been published in translation across the world and continues to inspire, works of magical realism and the evolution of the fantasy genre. The text is very specifically directed to the history and people of Colombia; it is a detailed account of some specific points of their history and culture, some accurate and some fabricated by Márquez. "The fortunes of writers – and of their works – are critically dependent on their stakes, or their holdings, within this reputational economy, in which patronage and prestige are key forms of symbolic capital" (Penfold, 76) meaning that in an increasingly globalised market, writers must expect to some extent expansion into other languages which comes with the cultural distance from the initial language. And yet despite that cultural distance from the intended audience the cultural influence extends across the world and across media. The limitations it has faced in the world of academia due to genre and language only serve to prove that the process of canonisation is flawed and exclusionary.

Despite the recognition this particular text has earned, and rightfully deserves, there are thousands of text in a much less prosperous position, ignored and looked over in favour of focusing on a more traditional perspective of literature.

> Another consequence of exile, together with additional attendant factors already mentioned, is that exile writers are not incorporated into the literary "canon" and hence do not become required reading. They are seldom accepted into the canon in the land of exile, even if there is no language barrier, or they learn the language and publish in it, because they are not seen as "belonging" to or representing the culture of the new country. (Pérez, 684).

To recontextualise Pérez here, the exile of the authors mirrors the relationship between genre and translated literature when considering the canon. Limiting the reach of great texts only

serves to perpetuate a more closed and less complex literary history as well as allowing wilful ignorance of cultures and wider literary history as is necessary in as globalised a society in which we live currently.

Úrsula is left just on the outskirts of the main narrative, in the action and drama surrounding the other characters she acts as more of a supporting role, but she still manages to leave a lasting impression. "It could equally be seen as the story of the town they found, Macondo. Yet another interpretation would be that it is the story of the life of Úrsula Buendía; all these things are tied intrinsically together" (Geetha, 346) not just to the family but to the physical building which housed many generations of Buendías. "*One Hundred Years of Solitude* represents history in two different ways: the way the characters come in touch with it, and the way it actually takes place. Since the characters are trapped between the present and the past, from their standpoints everything is repeating cyclically" (Abdullah, 61). This narrative is purposeful of Márquez and Úrsula's role for the majority of the narrative is to act as a foundation for the cyclical rise and fall of the rest of the Buendía family. Úrsula is faced with a somewhat ordinary and often times mundane life within her home which she has made and built up to become what it is at its peak.

The closest Úrsula gets to any sort of magic is the incident with a trail of José Arcadio's blood coming to her - " 'Holy Mother of God!' Úrsula shouted. She followed the thread of blood back along its course, and in search of its origin" (Márquez, 69). In terms of the magic within this text acting as canonisation, Úrsula can be taken as both an embodiment of this text as well as genre texts as a whole. In Márquez's text magic is treated as something mundane and accepted as the natural reaction from the world around them, just as the existence of the canon is accepted within literary culture as reality, both are accepted without much questioning or explanation within their respective environments. As within the text and Úrsula's attempt grasping attempts to save her family financially; "In this sense, Úrsula is capable of learning; José Arcadio is not. Úrsula learns, at least, that her schemes for prosperity have set her up to be betrayed" (Conniff, 173) being in direct contact with magic or canonisation is not always a positive thing. Úrsula sees the positive effects on her more naïve family members such as Aureliano Segundo and his "rowdy friends were gathered. The war, relegated to the attic of bad memories, was momentarily recalled with the popping of champagne bottles. 'To the health of the Pope,' Aureliano Segundo toasted" (Márquez, 96). Úrsula tries to warn of the temporary effects but she is dismissed. Similarly, canonisation is not a permanent state for literature; what can be recognised as canonical for one generation

can just as easily be dismissed by the next generation (Eagleton, 186-187). Úrsula recognises the dangers of this and of indulging in notoriety as Aureliano Segundo does and soon finds his downfall "The watchful Úrsula realized what her son was doing but she could not stop him" (Márquez, 128). Úrsula holds the emotional influence as a mother figure but fails to hold the authority needed to make a difference as someone on the peripheries of the story.

Úrsula is also often ignored by her own family members, she out lives all of her children and the next generations treat her as a toy:

> Úrsula cried in lamentation when she discovered that for more than three years she had been a plaything for the children. She washed her painted face, took off the strips of brightly colored cloth, the dried lizards and frogs, and the rosaries and old Arab necklaces that they had hung all over her body, and for the first time since the death of Amaranta she got up out of bed without anybody's help to join in the family life once more. (Márquez, 163).

The children have no respect or knowledge of the work she put into the family. In terms of the canon, in ignoring or segregating genre texts simply because of the genre is disrespectful to the genre as well as the individual texts that have been assigned a genre with or without their intentions. Genre is primarily assigned by literary conventions and marketing, authorial intent matters in terms of canonicity as authors are the memorable names connected to the process of canonicity.

Globalisation of the canon is a point much contested and debated. For example, to Enrique Giordano, "Jose Aureliano Buendía outlines the universe and its history from his room on the patio, a room which is, in turn, a microcosmos of Macondo-it is the point of departure for the theoretical outlining of the universe. The expansion is not real; it is play" (219). The canon acts as play in the same way as the creation of a canon is often times at least somewhat disconnected from the literature itself and the role it plays within popular culture as well as the personal connections people make to what they read. Fagan presents the importance of translation when considering canonicity on a global scale.

> I think that Rabassa's [the translator for the 1978 edition] work magnifies the importance of translation. In this case, Rabassa's incredibly complex conception and description of the art of translation highlights the ways in which even a faithful translation of a novel functions as a fundamentally distinct work, related to but separate from the original. The translation alters the original not only in terms of language but also with regard to its new audience. (Fagan, 47).

Fagan's perspective that translation and the differing reader and translator interpretation to the author means that texts do in fact enjoy the longevity of popularity beyond the constraints that come with not having translation available as an option, which in turn means that there is a further opportunity for canonical recognition on a more global stage. On the other side of the argument, there is an insistence upon absolute representation which is both too broad and vague to be satisfactorily fulfilled.

This reluctance is most obvious in the text's lack of place within education outside of a specialised Latin American university level class. The curriculum aligns itself "in keeping with a predominantly male, White, Anglo-centric distortion of our human experience. A few women and authors of colour are included in the list in at least a token effort to disrupt a completely homogenised view of the literary landscape, but any curriculum built exclusively from this list severely constrains students' understanding of whose stories matter and whose lives are valued" (Peel, 106) and while Márquez does not present any radically progressive ideals, as an author of colour his inclusion within western canon is an important one, given the previous exclusion and oppression of authors of colour. Within the sphere of education there has been a steady adapting of the modern syllabus to match changes in theory and evolution of education specifically of GCSE study of English Literature, in comparison to the drastic changes in how they are taught which is a move unmatched in terms of the humanities[6].

While *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* specifically, can be viewed as a difficult text it is no more complex than a Shakespeare play which has found its place within mandatory education for almost one hundred and fifty years. Shakespeare is unequivocally deserving of a place within the canon whatever it transforms into. Passos presents the notion that "traditionally, the study of literature has always been heavily dependent on notions of national identity, collective self-assertion, and the cult of exemplary figures—all three ill-fitting notions for writing about the representation of fluid identities and individuals in transit, across distant geographies" (Passos, 215), which is reflective of Shakespeare's place as integral to both English culture as well as literary history. And yet texts such as *One Hundred Years of Solitude* are overlooked within education in favour of easier, more accessible texts – as if this area of selection is not itself based on canonical texts and is limited by the very same issues which limit texts. The awards and accolades granted to the text in this instance

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[6] Showcased by supplementary material 4

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seem to lend credence to the argument that the elitism surrounding both prize winning and canonical literature leads to a discouragement from study at these lower levels of education.

One Hundred Years of Solitude has enjoyed a canonical status without some of the benefits which come with historically canonical texts – in the inclusion of texts such as this, both genre writing and texts in translation, the process of globalising literature and in turn globalising society starts at a much earlier development point.

> The exponential growth in postcolonial studies and the growing numbers of "third world" academics who staff the postcolonial and multicultural literature classroom in first world institutions give particular impetus and urgency […] As teachers drawn in many cases from the elite ranks of universities in ex-colonies, our dilemma is compounded because some of us both teach *and* embody the margins. (Bahri, 279).

This in turn encourages a much more empathetic reader, one who is much more inclined to seek out texts which suit their taste as well as texts which will allow them to expand their previously insular direct influence. Within education, ignoring or dismissing subjects and genres as either too complex or not academic enough not only discourages would-be readers from looking into texts which might interest them and in turn will cut them off from an entire world of reading which would be beneficial to explore in order to be better involved in the rapidly evolving and exponentially globalised society which will only expand by the time they come to act as adults within it. The unique position of the canon means that it exists as a form of social capital but "because the canon possesses an essential rigid configuration as suggested, but because the society to which it belongs has not been modified, it has not been opened" (Alfonso, my translation, 111) in a social sense in attitudes towards canonical values opened towards the social conscious and globalised and inclusive canon-scape. In order to make these changes necessary, it falls to social progress and acceptance in representation.

Comparison in Canon

Within each of the texts there is a protagonist who is left with an unreasonable amount of responsibility and yet they are also ignored and pushed aside with the lack of belief in their authority. Both Alice and Úrsula's journeys in their respective texts parallel each other and that of the changing perspective of a limited and closed canon. Both Alice and Úrsula are removed from the comfort of family and familiarity and displaced into a situation out of their control to certain degrees. Úrsula falls into a position of social power within the insular community of Macondo along with her family and so finds her feet as a matriarch with some anxiety

> Úrsula suddenly realized that the house had become full of people, that her children were on the point of marrying and having children, and that they would be obliged to scatter for lack of space. Then she took out the money she had accumulated over long years of hard labor, made some arrangements with her customers, and undertook the enlargement of the house. (Márquez, 32-33).

She builds her house to match her social position as the wife of the founder of Macondo. Alice is displaced into a dreamscape which seems to follow rules which are unknown and inexplicable to her; "her voice sounded hoarse and strange, and the words did not come the same as they used to do" (Carroll, 47) and especially throughout *Through the Looking Glass,* Alice finds herself burdened with the responsibility of queen "exclaimed in a tone of dismay, […] It was a golden crown" (Carroll, 255-256) without any of the explanation as to what that means within this sphere. Alice does express desire for this power initially, stating "though of course I should *like* to a be a Queen, best" (Carroll, 177) but loses the conviction of will needed to hold her position as the world around her asks too much. As Siemann argues, "Alice is simply trying to impose some kind of order on a rule-less and illogical society with no system of its own"(Siemann, 434), seemingly without giving any sort of reward as she expected, even her dinner party end with no food eaten, "I won't be introduced to the pudding, please' said Alice hastily, 'or we shall get no dinner at all" (Carroll, 268).

Through the Looking Glass explores Alice's anticipated journey into adulthood and how her perspective as a child skews the social and cultural rules of adults, mostly arbitrary to a child as reflected in the introduction to the joint; "it isn't etiquette to cut anyone you've been introduced to" (Carroll, 268). From Alice's perspective in this narrative, she ultimately decides against being a queen and "shake[s] [the Red Queen] into a kitten" (Carroll, 273) which reflects her desire not to grow up and take on the nonsensical expectations of society.

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"Despite Alice's queening and the implied checkmate at the end of her looking-glass chess game, no one really wins by progressing logically and by deliberately reaching some known and desired end—or everyone wins, as in the pointless caucus race, which in itself nonsensically destroys the very grounds of all teleology" (Rackin, 94). Her attempts at control are inverted and yet her spirit does not break, she still moves forward in the face of Wonderland, "Alice's imposed order becomes all the more admirable and precious because of its fragility" (Rackin, 96). As Rackin shows, the limited and performative power granted to Alice reflects the lack of real power granted through the process of growing up, Alice believes that she will gain a certain degree of power when she is an adult and so that manifests in her experience of Wonderland, the same power dynamic and belief in canonical concepts and traditions.

Úrsula on the other hand has her responsibility and respect chipped away from her as the generations pass, breaking her reputation down into something "she herself could not really define and that she conceived confusedly as a progressive breakdown of time. 'The years nowadays don't pass the way the old ones used to,' she would say, feeling that everyday reality was slipping through her hands" (Márquez, 122). Úrsula being in a position of power, reluctantly, but as her family becomes more settled in Macondo, she takes up the mantle of matriarch and becomes a person of influence to Macondo "From that time on she was the one who ruled in the town. She re-established Sunday masses, suspended the use of red armbands, and abrogated the hare-brained decrees. But in spite of her strength, she still wept over her unfortunate fate. She felt so much alone that she sought the useless company of her husband, who had been forgotten under the chestnut tree" (Márquez, 56-57). As she ages, however, the younger generations take advantage of her, using her as a "plaything" (Márquez, 163). Úrsula's position of power dwindles as does her importance to the continuation of the family line and she is therefore ignored by the younger generations in more influential positions as evidenced by the fact that she is seemingly forgotten about even within the walls of the house, at points of the narrative. She reappears with some wisdom or warning - "'This one will be a priest,' she promised solemnly. 'And if God gives me life he'll be Pope someday.' They all laughed when they heard her" (Márquez, 96), "'Dear Lord,' she begged, 'make us poor again the way we were when we founded this town so that you will not collect for this squandering in the other life.'" (Márquez, 98) – at key moments but otherwise she is dismissed and almost fossilized by the house moving on without her. Úrsula

ages unnoticed along with the passing of the generations, even going blind without anyone fully noticing; (Márquez, 122).

In a similar way, Alice is ignored as an individual within the narrative of *Through the Looking Glass*, instead the inhabitants expect her to conform to the archetype of queen but "Alice began to remember that she was a Pawn, and that it would soon be time to move" (Carroll, 180). Whenever Alice tries to show individuality, she is quickly shut down; "The inevitable loss of childhood innocence could be traced in the book especially in the crises she undergoes about her identity" (Gündüz, 249). Alice quickly learns that her place is to obey before she is queen and her attempts at exerting power when she is queen – or when she is an adult – end in chaos and ultimately are contradicted by the other queens – actual adults.

At the apparent peak of Alice's power – at the banquet in *Through the Looking Glass* – she is essentially stripped of any power she once held throughout the narrative. She is easily and frequently stepped over by the other queens, one of whom states, "You can't be a Queen, you know, till you've passed the proper examination" (Carroll, 258). The same queen had needed help from Alice previously. Now Alice is swept up again in nonsensical rules which everyone excludes Alice from knowing. Once Alice does stand up for herself at this banquet where she has not eaten anything " 'I can't stand this any longer!' she cried, as she seized the tablecloth with both hands" (Carroll, 272), it is primarily to give up the power she holds. As Graner argues, Alice has an "ability to pose a hazard to the Wonderland creatures, whether the power she wields is deliberate or not" (Graner, 256). She scolds the other queens but does express a desire to escape and as she is rambling in this vein, the queens – and the rest of the world – revert to Alice's beginning in the "old room" (Carroll, 160). Úrsula similarly at the peak of her domestic and social power in Macondo – the arrest of Colonel Aureliano Buendía – is powerless in the face of the physical presence of the military force. She has enough influence over the insulated town in order to convince her way into visiting her son but that is the extent of her power, her son discourages her from attempting to help him "Then Colonel Aureliano Buendía stopped, tremulous, avoided the arms of his mother, and fixed a stern look on her eyes. 'Go home, Mama,' he said. 'Get permission from the authorities to come see me in jail'" (Márquez, 64) and the guards keeping him captive seem to allow her only because of her relationship to a man they actively respect. The invading forces – from whichever political affiliation – are confronted with the influence and stubbornness of the Buendías;

> 'Very well, my friend,' José Arcadio Buendía said, 'you may stay here, not because you have those bandits with shotguns at the door, but out of consideration for your

wife and daughters.' Don Apolinar Moscote was upset, but José Arcadio Buendía did not give him time to reply. 'We only make two conditions,' he went on. "The first: that everyone can paint his house the color he feels like. The second: that the soldiers leave at once. We will guarantee order for you.' The magistrate raised his right hand with all the fingers extended. (Márquez, 34).

This respect extends to Úrsula and her influence over the population. However, after the fall of Jose Arcadio Buendía, the power of the Buendía family is weakened as is Úrsula's position. For a time Úrsula does holds influence in Macondo but in the passing of generations this fades as the younger generations take advantage of all she and her husband set up to the point of ruin for both the family line and the house itself well after Úrsula finally dies, at which point "the superhuman diligence of Santa Sofía de la Piedad, her tremendous capacity for work, began to fall apart. It was not only that she was old and exhausted, but overnight the house had plunged into a crisis of senility" (Márquez, 174). Along with the death of Úrsula, the house and the people in it fall apart. She was the link and the foundation of the Buendía family, any prosperity or familial affection seems to leave with her.

Literary theory is always changing and evolving in order to reflect our rapidly globalising and more politically conscious society in terms of representation, which means the ways in which texts are analysed can also change and evolve depending on the level of theory we apply to them. In globalising the literature taught in mandatory education, it can only serve to benefit a more open-minded social environment for a rapidly globalising community. Which as Spivak argues is inevitable as "you cannot be against globalisation; you can only work collectively and persistently to turn it into strategy-driven rather than crisis-driven globalisation" (Spivak, 106). This evolution of theory and literary culture, which is working in tandem with Spivak's idea of globalisation, means not paralleling this change in educational reading lists quickly outdates them and leaves the reader both unequipped for a more mature experience of reading and uninterested in changing this perspective. The changes or lack thereof are trackable through syllabi provided which reflect that "complexity is treated not as an abstract or subjective transaction between the reader and the text, but as a concrete, measurable feature that exists within the text itself" (Peel, 105).

Both protagonists gain and lose their power of the course of their narratives. Úrsula's position as a protagonist can be questioned however, as stated she is quite literally forgotten about but, the power and influence she holds over the Buendía family and the town of Macondo are unquestionable. Alice's positioning is almost always in conflict with the other inhabitants of Wonderland meaning any power she has is weakened by her inability to

conform to the expectations that come with that power. In terms of these journeys in relation to the canon; there is a cultural expectation that significance granted to any text must first be proven infallible by the canonical assumptions and processes ingrained on a social level, however with how much culture – both popular and literary – change and debates rise and fall surrounding texts, it is almost impossible to gain unmoving canonical status. Even with canonical texts exalted as much as they are within culture, popularity, and evolution of said culture means that anything can be dropped either by design or simply because the passing of generations mean it has been forgotten about. Eagleton presents his theory that "that the concept of cultural materialism of course has its own material or historical conditions too – I mean, it's hard not to see culture as in some sense material once you have the rise of the so-called culture industry – once culture is very obviously a matter of capital, technology, markets and the mass production of commodities" (Eagleton, 9). The power of the canon ties into the power granted by popularity, both of which are reflected in the protagonists of these texts. No canonical status is guaranteed to last and there should be no expectation for such a thing to be true either in academic, literary, or popular culture.

This would only benefit not only the study of literature but also the furthering of an empathetic and critical future society. "Literary competency develops with the reader apart from the texts that must progressively achieve a higher degree of complexity and assist the development of critical thinking in children and young adults, forming them as literary readers and citizens in this society" (García, my translation, 103). *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and Márquez popularised a whole new genre – deeply ingrained in Latin American culture and history - "magical realism grew to become an important feature of the Boom literature of the 1960s in Latin America (particularly in Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* of 1967)" (Hart and Ouyang, 1). Márquez reflecting on his own place in culture and canon of the US states that "the problem with my entrances and exits and the problem of my illegitimacy in the US are more the US government's problems than they are mine" (Márquez qtd in Williams, 139) and applying this more broadly to his place within the culture of canonicity, Márquez shows a flippant dismissal of the culture which is ostracising both him and his work. In an effort to categorise each text, comes the birth of multiple canons and while this does allow recognition for the texts within that subsection, it does mean that it becomes restrictive outside of specialisms in academia and purposeful seeking out from an interested reader. "One can argue that the dismissal of foreign literature in North America does not target only Spanish American or Brazilian books. The rejected

files in Alfred Knopf's archives, for instance, host many European, Asian and African writers as well" (Cortez, 497), and the fact that this information only comes to light in higher levels of academia is dangerous as it serves to perpetuate this dismissal to wilfully ignorant levels.

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Chapter Three: *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Fahrenheit 451* in comparison

Following on from the genre specific discussion in the last chapter, this chapter will take a closer look into the ways in which genre and specific authors interact with canon. Between George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* there is a distinct connection not only due to the historical influence of Orwell upon Bradbury in terms of narrative structure and tropes but within the treatment of the authors and texts when considering them both from a canonical perspective. In comparing the content there is a clear, if not pessimistic, link between the treatment of literature within the narratives of each text and the contextual treatment of literature of both authors both with popular culture and literary culture. The use of genre within education is a tokenistic practice in which the acceptable genre fiction at this level enters a more competitive stage in order to gain recognition from a wider canon consideration, which cascades down into the canon-scapes of genre and means those areas are more competitive as well. To use Fredrick Pohl's definition of Science Fiction as literature which is not "fiction about science, [… nor] prophesy, […and] not fantasy" (Pohl, 11) but "a literature of ideas" (Pohl, 14), opens up Science Fiction as something to be studied from multiple angles. Both texts fall under this definition for use as genre texts. John Rodden and David Fox, respectively experts on Orwell and Bradbury, offer unique insight into the authors' relationship to their own texts as well as the wider literary culture of their time, both offering the perspective primarily through the lens of how their popularity affected their connection to literary culture, which I use to extend through to the texts' relationship to education.

<u>*Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and the Canon</u>

George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* explores an oppressive and invasive society which seeks to control those under its rule by means of indoctrination and obfuscation of information. Even going so far as to contradict themselves at the very core of their policies - "WAR IS PEACE FREEDOM IS SLAVERY IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH" (Orwell, 6). Winston Smith's job is a key component in this control; rewriting and editing past publications and even erasing certain texts completely, in order to ensure the Party would never be caught in a lie, "to rectify the original figures by making them agree with the later ones" (Orwell, 50). This all serves to play into the level of control held over the general population without them even realising or recognising the changes, reflecting Orwell's socialist views of the government in power around him. As Newsinger argues, "the fact that

Orwell could present such a pessimistic prospectus for socialism at a time when a Labour Government had a massive majority at Westminster indicates that he had little confidence in Labour's socialist credentials" (Newsinger, 38). The canon has been used as a foundation for the treatment of literature within the education system, thus Newsinger's extrapolation of Orwell's political perspective further leads into my critique of the perspective of the education system especially as the national curriculum is government run and managed.

Orwell as an author has a consistent place within the education system as evidenced by his frequent place in syllabi.

> Orwell's work - specifically *Animal Farm* (1945) - first entered English O[rdinary]-level classes (16-year-olds) in the 1950s. Composed of examiners and teachers, Examination Boards for O-level […] began prescribing *Animal Farm* every three or four years after 1958 […]. The fable is also often read in British classes before the O-level year, as early as the age of 13, whether or not it is later studied for the external examinations. (Rodden, 505).

Orwell and the anti-society science fiction themes are mentioned in passing within mandatory education with more conservative teachings glossing over the socialist themes of the text. The inclusion of this text on some syllabi can feel somewhat tokenistic when it comes to representing both different genres as well as differing ideals which diverge from the traditional and more conservative values as well as closed canonical values represented with almost every other text. Orwell's place in the curriculum may be assured by now; however according to a survey conducted by the *Guardian*; "George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* comes top in a poll of the UK's guilty reading secrets. Asked if they had ever claimed to read a book when they had not, 65% of respondents said yes and 42% said they had falsely claimed to have read Orwell's classic in order to impress" (Brown). This serves to prove that the importance of cultural capital, and therefore implied intelligence and education, is more important in a large number of cases than the experience of the text. This result also serves to perpetuate the perspective that this particular text has literary value and is worth both reading and studying. The cognitive dissonance between these ideas lead to the lie, but the fact that there is a compulsion to lie in the first place demonstrates that there is a disconnect between what people are expected to read – either within mandatory education or as part of cultural capital – and what people are actually reading.

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The book is a point of cultural relevance now and is a cult classic. The text's cultural importance is only exemplified by the use of the book in reference on social media in response to censorship. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s place as a banned book and the explicit critique of the capitalist system of western society, specifically Orwell's England, makes it interesting especially considering "the battles among intellectuals of the Right and Left for Orwell's mantle since 1950 have contributed immensely to his becoming a cultural icon" (Rodden, 32). As the perceived forerunners of both western culture and the western canon-scape, the UK and the US hold a great deal of power in the global arena of literary culture. This move did the opposite to detract from popularity and instead made the text a compelling mystery.

When a text is explicitly banned it only serves to make it more of a point of interest, leading to situations similar to Winston Smith and his notebook as a real life parallel. The allure of doing something or reading something explicitly not allowed is showcased by Winston's interactions with his notebook.

> Winston fitted a nib into the penholder and sucked it to get the grease off. The pen was an archaic instrument, seldom used even for signatures, and he had procured one, furtively and with some difficulty, simply because of a feeling that the beautiful creamy paper deserved to be written on with a real nib instead of being scratched with an ink-pencil. (Orwell, 9).

Orwell creates a ritual of writing for Winston which is as exciting in its defiance as it is comforting in its reliability. Winston knows the consequences of his actions, if he is caught, but the draw of the comfort and ritual are weighed against these consequences and Winston deems them worth the potential and inevitable punishment.

There is an odd kind of tension with this text specifically and the notoriety which comes with a canonical recognition. Content wise, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is critical of society and by extension the education system both of the time and the continuation of such a system. Orwell mocks both the reliance of the Party on infallibility as well as the presumed infallibility of the education and political systems of his time, as showcased in the presentation laid out by the Party in order to incite rage without actually explaining the reasons for that rage, "He [Goldstein] was abusing Big Brother, he was denouncing the dictatorship of the Party […] he was crying hysterically that the revolution had been betrayed" (Orwell, 16). Orwell and his writing are critical of the very thing in which they are being included which extends the critique even further into a self-reflection with a lack of self-awareness, Winston's rebellious writing acts as a stand in for the rebellious social act of

defying seemingly unimportant social and political rules, especially as Orwell was unsatisfied with the political landscape of his time.

In using Winston in this way, Orwell creates a separation in which "our words become materially separate from our minds and voices, so we experience a kind of interaction with our own words as if they were another's. Writing appeals to Winston for just this reason" (Jackson, 383) especially with the contested and fluctuating place of the book in relation to canon and banning. "A case in point is the canonization of George Orwell, whose important place in school curricula discloses many of the institutional and historical factors conditioning the inclusion and exclusion of a writer's work in Anglo-American classrooms. The variations in Orwell's reputation in the educational community are striking. Orwell's canonization was immediate, but it has also been eclectic" (Rodden, 503). The content of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* specifically warns against an overly controlling and censoring education system upon Winston's revelations, having the text be praised within education and canon without acknowledgment of this explicit critique has led to such an "eclectic" canonical process.

> And if all others accepted the lie which the Party imposed—if all records told the same tale—then the lie passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past,' ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.' And yet the past, though of its nature alterable, never had been altered. (Orwell, 44).

The lack of acknowledgment of the socialism of Orwell in favour of maintaining a traditional canon, specifically within the realm of education, serves to play into the perpetuation of a tradition which is disconnected from the intended role of the text, as Rodden explains, "reputations are used and abused, and Orwell's reception history is a particularly illuminating instance of the politics of literary reputation" (Rodden, 1). The general population of Orwell's England being unaware of the reflection of the education and control of Smith's job and the ways in which the education system works to perpetuate a traditional canonical perspective leads to a similar disenfranchisement as is shown within the text; "Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious" (Orwell, 90). The lower classes within *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are blissfully unaware that they are being fed lies which only serve to perpetuate and uphold the control of The Party meaning that "the proles, normally apathetic about the war, were being lashed into one of their periodical frenzies of patriotism" (Orwell, 188). The hidden place of

the canon within the education system serves to do the same in that the people this is affecting on a social and cultural bias level are not explicitly aware of the canonical influence on the curriculum.

The role of the canon within education is one which can be almost insidious as there is no taught awareness of these issues and the effect they have on both the individual and on education as a wider system[7]. In order to change both the place of the canon in education and to examine the place of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* within a specifically science fiction canon, there are some changes to happen at the highest level of mandatory education syllabus creation.

> The exclusion of *Animal Farm, 1984*, and the essays from the "high" canon further illumines the dynamics of reputation-formation in the academy. It first demonstrates that levels of canonization can and do conflict. In particular, entry into a "lower" canon often constrains, rather than facilitates, admittance into higher canons-usually according to some variant of the notion that an accessible, popular author cannot be serious. (Rodden, 523).

The inclusion of Orwell in education in such a way both serves to obfuscate the role of the canon within mandatory education as well as serving to attempt to diversify the syllabus with the tokenistic inclusion of a science fiction text. However, this role does not quite succeed, the text is still a western and white authored text, with no diversity within the text itself. Therefore, the diversity is only within the confines of genre and including a tokenistic text in such a way is not a sufficient fulfilment of the social calls for further representation of minority narratives. As well as this it limits said token genre – in this case science fiction – to an incredibly brief parameter as there have been a multitude of texts produced which also hold literary value and they are not considered for study at a mandatory education level at all. "[Dystopian] novels endeavored to make a proper diagnosis and prescription for the agonized spasms of the disenchantment and troubled world" (Besharati, 78). In perpetuating a canon which does not accurately reflect not only the reality of literary history but cultural diversity as it exists in a globalised society, there can be no hope to alleviate the agony of which Besharati writes.

The place of the text *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in a science fiction canon both helps and hinders the argument within the text itself for an invasive education system that controls much too heavily exactly what is read by the general population and what is acceptable

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[7] Refer to supplementary material document 4 & 5

material for such a general audience to consume. The inclusion of the text in some cases on a mandatory education syllabus is tokenistic at worst and obfuscating as to the intention of the text at best. The perception of literary value of the text is both helped and hindered by this inclusion. The canonical bias that this is a text worth studying is ingrained at an early stage of the development of critical thinking in English Literature classrooms. However, if these texts are misinterpreted purposefully or, in some cases, not actually read by the students, the importance of that literary value is undermined and leads to further questions about the extent to which actual critical thinking is encouraged and developed.

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<u>*Fahrenheit 451* (1953) and The Canon</u>

Despite Bradbury's sustained popularity and influence on popular and literary culture, his works such as *Fahrenheit 451* pass under the radar of mandatory education and even non-specialist areas of literature study. Bradbury's position of popularity is uncontested as "by the late summer of 1953, 33-year-old Ray Bradbury had become one of the most recognized names broadly associated with fantasy and science fiction." (Eller, 7). Bradbury and *Fahrenheit 451* hold places of cultural importance over their perceived literary value and therefore within a Science Fiction canon Bradbury is praised and recognised as canonical; "*Fahrenheit 451* cemented Bradbury as one of the most impressive writers of the mid-twentieth century and his novel contributed immensely to the development of the troubled history of Science Fiction" (Fox, 6). Whereas science fiction as a genre is mostly overlooked by wider and more traditional canonical perspectives. "What we were mostly afraid of was that the people who taught the courses in science fiction that were beginning to pop up in colleges would know nothing of the field, would give their students a false impression of what it was about, might even turn them off science fiction forever" (Pohl, 15). Frederick Pohl explores the fears of diverting from the traditional canonical texts included both within academia and education. With science fiction, the genre is so broad that limiting it in such a way cannot accurately represent the genre – or how it has evolved since the influences of Bradbury and Orwell.

Both Orwell and Bradbury contend with similar themes and formats, both expressing a disenfranchisement with the society of their times and looking to an extreme as to how the faults of said society could build up and progress and thus are linked by genre within Science Fiction and dystopia. For Bradbury in this text, the controlling and dictating nature of the government in *Fahrenheit 451* reflects a society obsessed with censorship and infiltrating dissenters; ""It's fine work. Monday burn Millay, Wednesday Whitman, Friday Faulkner, burn 'em to ashes, then burn the ashes." (Bradbury, 6). It also provides a reflection of the literary culture pervading the education system both of the time and continuing forward which relies on traditional and closed-minded canonical perspectives in order to control what and how the general population treat literature and by extension culture in general. Montag's response to the culture around him, his wife's play is one of disinterest; "Does [the play] have a happy ending?" "I haven't read that far." He walked over, read the last page, nodded, folded the script, and handed it back to her" (Bradbury, 18). There is a dismissal of the content in

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favour of the conclusion reached. Traditional canon values play into a similar dismissal of the actual content of texts in favour of accepting the conclusion that they are 'great' and infallible texts.

Bradbury's text includes his protagonist shocked and surprised upon their realisation that the government is not in fact doing something for the good of the population. He begins with the firm belief that nothing is wrong and "burning as one of the restrictive means of the governing body becomes a common practice of censorship all throughout the country so that the books cannot poison and complicate the minds of the individuals, which reinforces the power of the state" (Atasoy, 409). Montag learns that the city is instead preventing people from being able to critically think for themselves as proven by Montag's interactions with Clarisse, "you answer right off. You never stop to think what I've asked you.' […]'You think too many things,' said Montag, uneasily" (Bradbury, 6). This intense and overbearing control over exactly what can be read and how that material is treated by both the general population and the powers overseeing that is easily reflected in the canon and culture tension. The literary sphere holds judgment over what texts hold literary value – and are therefore canonical – while at the same time maintaining the barrier between general or popular culture and high-brow culture meaning the texts which are considered canonical do not in fact have a place within lower or general culture and should be read only be those who can truly appreciate the text for its value – academics and specialists.

The diversifying of the canon and syllabus should begin with the inclusion of minority writers and narratives, as a moral imperative, and not solely diversify based on genre and what is technically fitting the boundaries of a traditional canon but is not explicitly a part of it, as explored previously the overwriting of minority voices, especially within specialised canon-scapes, is an issue with an obvious solution in diversifying, however it has yet to be accomplished. With Bradbury's later works he does explicitly showcase characters of colour but "these texts should be read in conversation with each other to truly expand an understanding of Bradbury's take on the subjects of racism and segregation in the United States" (Cruz-Duarte, 19). Secondly, including a single text of genre fiction and offering little to no alternatives on the subject is not a satisfying or sincere diversification in any way shape or form. Thirdly, the exclusion of Bradbury for mandatory education is questionable when considering the similarities in both form and especially content between *Fahrenheit 451* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four.* Gonçalves explores how these texts are used to reflect the societies of

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both authors; "one could easily say that literature works in society as a mirror does in our homes – both provide us with imitations, with images responsible not simply to inform us about things we know are there, but also to make us aware of other details we have not noticed in the first place" (Gonçalves, 852). The continued favouring of one text over the other in this sphere and canon-scape reflects inconsistently more than the pitiful attempts to diversify the education system and by extension the canon. They both explore and critique the positioning both socially and politically in regard to the treatment of culture and the individual, which is one of the factors leading to the suppression of Bradbury's text in particular due to the Communism scare, however historically the canon adapts and evolves along with the social ideas of the times. This is why there is so much contention surrounding the inclusion of queer authors and authors of colour in canon lists, the social climate bolsters the literary environment. An idea that I explore further down denotes precisely what Bradbury is writing back to; he understands with the Brotherhood, that the time for expansion of canonical traditions will eventually come.

This liminal and cognitively dissonant space between the texts which should be read and the texts which must only be read by experts is the space in which Bradbury places his tangible antagonist, Beatty. Beatty is inexplicably an expert in the texts which are banned within the world of *Fahrenheit 451*, "Classics cut to fit fifteen-minute radio shows, then cut again to fill a two-minute book column, winding up at last as a ten- or twelve-line dictionary resume. I exaggerate, of course. The dictionaries were for reference. […] Out of the nursery into the college and back to the nursery; there's your intellectual pattern for the past five centuries or more" (Bradbury, 52). He is the one person driving Guy Montag to give up his intentions of dissent and live in the easier existence of submission. In placing Montag in contrast with Beatty, Bradbury exposes the cracks in the argument for complacency. Beatty at one point must have been in the same shoes as Montag, and yet Beatty allows leniency; "'Was it my wife turned in the alarm?' Beatty nodded. 'But her friends turned in an alarm earlier, that I let ride. One way or the other, you'd have got it. It was pretty silly, quoting poetry around free and easy like that. It was the act of a silly damn snob" (Bradbury, 111) showing almost disappointment and pity for Montag especially as during Montag's breakdown he reveals his position to individuals too indoctrinated to be of any help or sense to him. This breakdown comes as he realises his position and that the actions he has taken are damaging, not only to the individual but to the wider society, Patai sums up that "the novel's

protagonist, Montag, begins as a happy conformist and then slowly awakens to the significance of the society in which he lives and the profession he exercises" (Patai, 41).

Upon Beatty's death there comes the assumption that Beatty was just as much a victim of the overbearing system as Montag and by extension Clarisse, "Beatty wanted to die" (Bradbury, 116), he was just as trapped with no real way to escape given the position of power he held. The frantic pacing of the book matches Montag's fear and relief as he is on the run from The Hound. The Hound's presence is a threatening and very tangible example of the power of the governing body which remains nameless and invisible. The other forms of control the government show in this text are much subtler and more underhanded.

> The Mechanical Hound slept but did not sleep, lived but did not live in its gently humming, gently vibrating, softly illuminated kennel back in a dark corner of the firehouse. The dim light of one in the morning, the moonlight from the open sky framed through the great window, touched here and there on the brass and the copper and the steel of the faintly trembling beast. Light flickered on bits of ruby glass and on sensitive capillary hairs in the nylon-brushed nostrils of the creature that quivered gently, gently, gently, its eight legs spidered under it on rubber-padded paws. (Bradbury, 21-22).

The Hound is inorganic and explicitly terrifying to Montag and the other firemen, which means that "*Fahrenheit 451* engages with attempts to police the boundaries of subjectivity in the late-modern moment where technological saturation is charged with dissolving the classical subject" (McCorry, 43) this fear is manipulated and showcased by the City in order to exact more control and enforce conformism. Especially when positioned in such stark contrast to the idyllic setting of the unplugged forest in which Montag finds the Brotherhood. Bradbury holds this setting as a priority and uses this space specifically to sow the seeds of optimism for the future disconnected from the rapid technology and separation pushed by the City. The contrast serves to show how sceptical of technological advancement Bradbury really was.

In relating this excerpt of close reading to the relationship between the canon and Bradbury's writing, we hit upon the interesting position in that, similar to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *Fahrenheit 451* was banned across America for being perceived as a communist text - "This was a difficult time in American history when loyalty oaths, an irrational fear of Communism, and Cold War ethics reigned supreme" (Fox, 2) and therefore inciting dissent

and anti-democracy within the capitalistic societies of the time. Interestingly, this and other works of Bradbury's, meant that "In June [1959], the Federal Bureau of Investigation established a background file on Bradbury based on information gathered by the FBI's Los Angeles Division. The report found no evidence that he was ever a member of the Communist Party, which was not at all surprising given his background" (Eller, 144). As the communist threat was extremely important to America at the time and the Cold War meant that these threats were taken seriously and "a fierce debate continues to rage about whether actions taken by both government and private actors against American Communists constituted a repressive authoritarian witch hunt motivated by hysteria, or a (mostly) proportionate reaction to a true menace" (Bernstein, 1299).

Banning a text which explicitly condemns the controlling of what the general population are allowed to read meant that Bradbury gained a cult following; previously he had enjoyed a lower level of fame, the bans only served to increase interest both in this work and in him as an author. As well as this following, its popularity both at time of publication and beyond, meant that as with science fiction as a genre, the literary value of *Fahrenheit 451* was overlooked in favour of allowing it recognition solely on a popular and cultural sphere. Fox shares how Bradbury came to write for science fiction "These cheap stories interested and entertained Bradbury. However, there was a void left in the genre for a good writer who could create Science Fiction literature with substance that would spur intellectual discourse" (Fox, 6-7). Bradbury wanted to be able to encourage diversity of reading in terms of genre on a critical thinking level which plays into further questioning as to the extent of dismissal of genre fiction and how closely it is tied to the ideas of capital and how genre fiction is viewed as less than highbrow literature in terms of capital. As with previous texts, the cultural importance eventually leads to academic and canonical recognition, however unlike with other texts this recognition comes within the sphere of a multiple canon theory and under specificity of the science fiction genre, Bradbury's place as a pillar of the genre extends the judgments to exact even more strict boundaries. The themes Bradbury covers in *Fahrenheit 451* are areas in which science fiction developed its pillars and so "This idea of being reserved on the issue of technology was ingrained in Bradbury when he saw the abuses of his government and mass thought, even before such advanced technology that he was dreaming up became a reality. Technology would only exacerbate the abuses against the masses" (Fox, 12).

Bradbury's texts were excluded from mandatory education as a result of being banned, the themes have previously been deemed as inappropriate for study at this level and therefore inappropriate for canonical status despite or due to the popularity of the text. "This novel came at the tail end of McCarthyism so the American public saw the rise and fall of radical censorship and witch-hunt tactics" (Fox, 14). However, this reasoning does not hold up when texts with similar themes and execution are included on mandatory education syllabi such as Orwell's work. "It is the result of an odd confluence of received truths: *Animal Farm* and *1984* are "high school reading," the essay is not really "literature," an "untheoretical" writer and critic is of little contemporary value, and the "realistic" tradition of the modern British novel is inferior" (Rodden, 522). Rodden explores the tension between high and popular literature and how this tension is involved with the treatment of texts at a mandatory education level, and how even canonical literature exists within a hierarchy connected to the points of academia at which they are studied. This plays further not only into the tokenism of genre fiction within the education system but into the exclusion and lack of recognition for genre fiction in a canonical sphere. As previously explored, the popularity of an author and a text at the time of publication are more often than not a hindrance to the recognition of literary value. Therefore, there can be no exact and explicit decision of true canonical value as the academy and the general population will always be working within the tension held between the cultural capital of academia and the enjoyment of popular culture.

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Orwell, Bradbury, and Canonicity

The works of both Orwell and Bradbury praise the pastoral as an ideal outside of the societies' overwhelming interference. Orwell has his protagonist experience a semblance of freedom and happiness. He indulges in the instincts which are "pre-rational and an open rebellion against the discursive (ir)rationality that the Party dominates. It is also the initial basis of Winston's and Julia's relationship, first as sex and then their self-identification as a couple" (Phillips, 143). The pastoral idyll of the English countryside exists completely isolated from the dangers and risks of their regular lives if only for a short while. And yet there is the awareness that "their embrace had been a battle, the climax a victory. It was a blow struck against the Party. It was a political act" (Orwell, 159). Winston and Julia do try and replicate this idyll within the boundaries of society, with simple things to enjoy and a space to which they can both escape and exist as themselves; "I'm going to be a woman, not a Party comrade" (Orwell, 179). Winston uses this space to read and try to educate himself with Goldstein's book - "The book fascinated him, or more exactly it reassured him. In a sense it told him nothing that was new, but that was part of the attraction" (Orwell, 252) - whereas Julia uses the space to express herself and try things - "She had painted her face. She must have slipped into some shop in the proletarian quarters and bought herself a complete set of make-up materials" (Orwell, 178-179) - which are either outdated or are thought of as for the lower and working classes.

The two are happiest in these pastoral and mundane spaces where they can ignore the issues and responsibilities of their lives within society. These spaces reflect the spaces outside of the canon-controlled systems upon which cultural development are based, they represent intellectual freedom as much as they represent evolution of canonical biases. However, in the case of Winston and Julia, the space they craft for themselves is corrupted and inverted to a prison both by the fact that this is where they realise that they are an incompatible couple; "Julia's declaration of love meant to stand out precisely because of its deviation from Oceania, and graphic, norms" (Caponi, 44) which is what attracts Winston to her in the first place but beyond this they want different things from both the relationship and their rebellion against the Party. This means that their little slice of peace is unstable and that it is ultimately the place in which they are arrested. Bradbury's portrayal of the pastoral ideal is less corrupted directly but is a last resort for Guy Montag. Guy has literally been chased away from his society and the decimated remains of the city, which "looks like a heap of baking-

powder. It's gone" (Bradbury, 155), holds nothing to which he could return, even if he wanted to.

Montag ends up almost by accident with the Brotherhood; "He remembered a farm he had visited when he was very young, one of the rare times he had discovered that somewhere behind the seven veils of unreality, beyond the walls of parlors and beyond the tin moat of the city, cows chewed grass and pigs sat in warm ponds at noon and dogs barked after white sheep on a hill" (Bradbury, 135) garnering inspiration from a far-off memory in order to think of a somewhat safe space. He is immediately confronted by the fact that his surroundings, both in people and environment, are completely different from the city. He is almost frozen with the differences and tries to find any recognisable features in the forest in order to orient himself "Too much water! Too much land! Out of the black wall before him, a whisper" (Bradbury, 137). Montag's place within the Brotherhood is immediately accepted by the other men - "'All right, you can come out now!' Montag stepped back into the shadows. 'It's all right,' the voice said. 'You're welcome here'" (Bradbury, 140) - and the familiarity Montag feels being amongst people who purposefully left the city and established their own community of literature hits him with a sense of comfort which he had previously not known.

Montag here plays into the ideas set forward by Shah, in that "these urban subjects sentence themselves to their own imprisonment" (Shah, 718). Both authors embrace the narrative that the only feasible escape from these overbearing and invasive societies – and equally the pressures of canonicity - is completely alienation from them; Montag only feels freedom when outside of the physical boundaries of the city with no way of contacting anyone within especially after the bombing "the city rolled over and fell down dead. The sound of its death came after" (Bradbury, 153), and Winston gets a taste of being invisible to the Party and spends the rest of his free time before arrest trying to recreate that feeling, but is still not free of the paranoia instilled by the Party. "Winston watched [the glade] with a sort of vague reverence. […] He wondered whether after all there was a microphone hidden somewhere near" (Orwell, 156).

Montag spends a good while trying to find evidence of the fabled Brotherhood, just as Winston tries to find evidence for a narrative which would prove the Party was in fact lying. However, their efforts are essentially fruitless in different ways. These efforts are reflections of the efforts made to escape canonicity as well as the inescapable systems which use the

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canon as a foundation. Winston's efforts are more obviously useless as he ultimately becomes a victim of the very system he was trying to undermine. Winston's victim status is solidified as his personhood is stripped; "'Does Big Brother exist?' 'Of course he exists. The Party exists. Big Brother is the embodiment of the Party.' '[…] 'You do not exist,' said O'Brien" (Orwell, 327) showcasing the extent of the control the Party and by extension the government holds over the cultural narrative at the expense of the individual. Montag's efforts are fruitless in that his story purposefully sets him up to be a hero; he unveils the mystery of literature for himself and attempts to set out on a crusade to save other people, frustrated by "the way they jabber about people and their own children and themselves and the way they talk about their husbands and the way they talk about war, dammit, I stand here and I can't believe it!'" (Bradbury, 94), he gathers allies in Faber and the Brotherhood later and even defeats his tangible antagonist with the murder of Beatty. Montag also fights the intangible antagonist of the City and the ruling party which parallel the control and intangibility of the canon.

Cook explores the same ideas reflected in Eagleton, that the texts which make up any canon are as open to change as the canon itself, "Related to this modality is a second characteristic, a communicated sense that there is a finality in the utterance [...] The sense of closure in the finality is a balancing counter-twist to the openness of the modality" (Cook, 93). Bradbury speaks back to this with the Brotherhood only possessing fragments of texts which reflects their adaptability and means that Montag's sections of literature are useful artefacts to them. However, Montag's efforts essentially accomplish nothing. He joins the Brotherhood – a group self-contained and uninterested in actively fighting back rather waiting for their time to come – but the space he was trying to fight back against does not exist by the end of his story, physically. Montag holds some limited memory of some literature, as do the other members but this is not enough to either fuel a revolution or rebuild a library. Granger, the de facto leader of the Brotherhood, has the optimistic view that they will rebuild on top of the remains of the city; when read in contrast with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* this optimism cannot help but feel lacking. When the optimism portrayed by Bradbury is held in comparison to the similar point in Orwell's writing it is too easy to see that Montag and the Brotherhood's efforts will fall short in the unknowable face of the authority ruling their setting. "In the end, if these utopian and dystopian narratives do make sense, it is because they are based on material and objective" systems (Gonçalves, 852). Both Orwell and Bradbury use their texts to explicitly critique their societies specifically the political and

cultural treatment of literature and the individual. This is important when considering the difference in academic treatment between the texts at a mandatory education level and the direct influence of Orwell's writing on Bradbury.

When considering both of these readings in relation to the tension between each text, the desirable status that comes with literary value judgments and then canonical positionings is reflected in the ways the texts are treated within popular culture and academia to this day. In the case of genre fiction, and these texts specifically, "the formal and thematic complexity […] has been overlooked because of an understandable, but ultimately rather myopic fixation on their gripping ideas and frightening political messages" (Peat, 38). The texts themselves are judged to hold literary value to some degree – either within popular culture, education, or specialist canons – and yet in content they are arguing against the judgement and more essentially exclusion of texts.

The texts were published at a similar time within the same sphere of literary culture, they speak back to similar fears and predictions about society and the ruling classes, they essentially make the same points of arguing within the tension of canonical and popular texts both in content and in their treatment throughout literary history. When it comes to science fiction and a specialised canon, both texts are given the recognition and accolades that come with the sheer amount of influence both these texts and authors have had on science fiction as a genre. Both texts are respected in terms of popular culture with the influence they hold over the evolution of science fiction as a genre and the sustained popularity granted to both by the cult-like followings of both the texts and the authors which continues to influence the science fiction canon sphere as well as popular culture as Gonçalves explores:

> the modern project, triggered by a developmentalist spirit and profiteering enterprise, is no longer able to convince us as it has done in the past, and this is why so many images of utopia have been thoroughly replaced by the fear of dystopia. This may explain the undeniable growth of dystopian narratives both in literary and cinematographic productions. (Gonçalves, 863).

At the time of publication for these texts the canon-scape was just as tumultuous as it continues to be, especially given that both texts were published within a few years of Leavis' *The Great Tradition* meaning that in an academic sense there was a popular leaning towards the preserving of traditional canonical values. He believes that "there are no other novelists in English worth reading" (Leavis, 1) than the ones he presents and keeping the canon closed to all but the highest of literature – "And it seems to me that in the field of fiction some

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challenging discriminations are very much called for; the field is so large and offers such insidious temptations to complacent confusions of judgement and to critical indolence" (Leavis, 1). As previously explored, this leads into the argument of the impossibility of judging the literary value and cultural impact at the time of release. Moreover, the banning of both books played a part in their purposeful exclusion from recognition intended to discourage people from seeking the texts out. "Furthermore, curiosity is strongly discouraged, because it leads to knowledge and knowledge leads to questions" (Feneja, 9) in education as well as in the texts showcased here, so within both the education system as well as the cultural biases built from this education, on a popular cultural level this is the inverse.

Despite both books focussing on the pastoral as an escape from the pressures of society, they both deal with representing the pastoral differently, both of which reflect the role of canonical pressures on literature and education in unique ways. Orwell presents a place initially filled with Winston's paranoia and distrust that anything can be truly outside of the Party's control and so still "he wondered whether after all there was a microphone hidden somewhere near" (Orwell, 156). When he realises it is a safe space, the descriptions of the clearing and the surrounding wildlife and forest become more Romantic; "the mindless tender-ness that he had felt under the hazel tree, while the thrush was singing" (Orwell, 159) as if there is a haze of Winston's memory of the space making it more idyllic simply because of the freedom experienced there. Bradbury presents the pastoral through the eyes of a protagonist who has never experienced a life outside of the city, with presenting "Montag [as] alone in the wilderness" (137) and so the depictions through Montag are presented with a sense of disbelief and trying to find something recognisable, something to relate back to the cityscape that he is so familiar with as he walks "in the shallow tide of leaves, stumbling. And in the middle of the strangeness, a familiarity" (Bradbury, 38). Presenting these similar environments in such different ways through similar protagonists allows for the exploration of character development as they occur at two very different points of the characters stories.

The final positions of each protagonist reflect different viewpoints as to how the canon and relying on such a limited and controlling system will affect the future of education and further society. Winston's story is obviously not an encouraging or optimistic one, "He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother" (Orwell, 376), Winston loses all connection both to his previous life before his attempted rebellion as well as losing all hope that there can be anything done to stop them. Orwell presents a dark story with seemingly no hope for the future of society only continued submission. Relating this to the perceived future

of literary culture and the canon; the connection between the contemporary beliefs of a closed and immovable canon and Orwell's representation of the Party become unfortunately clear and upsetting future for the lack of literary progress as well as cultural progress.

Orwell provides motivation for unification of forces in this fable against the ruling classes as well as motivation for the progression of literary culture as encouragement in the face of such closed acknowledgement of literary value. Orwell presents a protagonist giving up because the individual is powerless against the ruling power and offers a fabular ending to encourage the building of literary communities to present a united front, the Party purposefully divides people, "We have cut the links between child and parent, and between man and man, and between man and woman" (Orwell, 336). Montag's story is again not necessarily an encouraging one as he does lose everything that he holds dear, first on a social level then on a physical level. Despite this, Montag survives in a way which leaves room for the future, "Yes, thought Montag, that's the one I'll save for noon. For noon... When we reach the city" (Bradbury, 158). Bradbury presents a much more optimistic ending than Orwell in that he leaves the Brotherhood as the basis for rebuilding society entirely. Relating Montag's story to the literary culture of the time – following Leavis' limited canon and New Criticism creating an incredibly contentious canon-sphere.

> 'Would you like, someday, Montag, to read Plato's Republic?' 'Of course!' 'I am Plato's Republic. Like to read Marcus Aurelius? Mr. Simmons is Marcus.' […] 'I want you to meet Jonathan Swift, the author of that evil political book, Gulliver's Travels! And this other fellow is Charles Darwin, and-this one is Schopenhauer, and this one is Einstein, and this one here at my elbow is Mr. Albert Schweitzer […] Aristophanes and Mahatma Gandhi and Gautama Buddha and Confucius and Thomas Love Peacock and Thomas Jefferson and Mr. Lincoln if you please. We are also Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.' (Bradbury, 144-145).

Bradbury engages in the act of canon forming with this list, however philosophically based they are and inclusive of literature this will be the basis of their new society – misremembered sections of literature from limited texts. "Canon formation turns to be a strategy based on complex relations of evaluation, cognition and actions that aims to conserve this selected knowledge and transmit it to future generations. The structure of the canon is directly related to the notion of literature and literariness; a society […] defines its canon by considering what they recognize as valuable" (Viktorija, 11). The explicit texts mentioned as memorised form a Bradbury-branded canon and when read against the cultural landscape seem to play into the tension between Leavis' extremely short list of "great English novelists"

(1) and the popular culture landscape which allowed Bradbury his success. Orwell's text acts as a rally to popular culture and Bradbury almost mocks the idea that a canon should be so limited. Both texts hold their place proudly within popular culture and seem to reject the idea of literary value being judged at all. Given the inherent link between popular culture and the lower classes due to sheer population difference as explored within *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the classism and elitism this comes with seems to link popularity with a lack of education or ability to recognise 'good' literature. These ideas are explored by both Orwell and Bradbury in that they encourage the working and lower classes explicitly to rebel not only against the ruling classes that are actively suppressing them, but against the literary constraints placed on their education which led to a lack of deeper critical thinking as well as expansion of potential texts by historically suppressed authors.

The relationship between genres and the inclusion within both a canonical and educational sphere is tense due to the tumultuous relationship between capital and literary value judgments in genre writing. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* now holds a stable place within education as a token for science fiction – if not all genre fiction as a whole – and *Fahrenheit 451* remains a cult and popular classic. Fox explores how Bradbury's reception on a popular culture level led to sustained popularity: "Bradbury was able to burst onto the scene with *Fahrenheit 451* to help change the attitude toward Science Fiction and it was reviewed well. […] Just because it was popular across genres did not remove it from the fact that it was still a Science Fiction novel" (Fox, 8).

Within a mandatory education syllabus, the exclusion of genre fiction is directly judging such literature as too low brow – especially within the case of science fiction – and is dismissing it outright as worthy of study. This not only prevents the further diversifying of the canon and therefore the education system, but it also actively prevents interested readers from diversifying their own interests and readership "this call for change is not being heard, blocked by the din of the crisis discourse and Utopian expectations that deform our children, our schools, and our society" (Thomas, 84). There is a disconnect between what is studied in the classroom and what is read for pleasure, but, at the level of mandatory education preventing a more diverse and varied reading list can only serve to encourage those readers who are initially interested to read outside of both what is just popular with their peers and what is only read for study.

While these lists are influenced by academia and do operate under the intention of gaining or maintaining an academic audience there is something to be said for the intention of both making texts of literary value more accessible to a lay audience who would read for pleasure as well as the intention of collating a form of canon in order to appeal to a more traditional canonical sphere of academics. "When the opportunity to teach it arose [the students] brought to the task a familiarity with and even an enthusiasm for the subject, and so over the last couple of decades there has arisen a substantial and generally valuable body of published scholarship about science fiction" (Pohl, 16). Here Pohl explores how critical thinking is developed in a specific way within higher education, more specifically within English Literature, and how the building of curricula for education should evolve with the social climate, and yet science fiction – and wider genre fiction – is no more likely to be considered.

There is also an odd tension between the texts as books and the texts as adaptations, this was previously explored with *Jane Eyre* in the first chapter, however when it comes to science fiction and specifically the texts studied for this chapter, the aesthetic behind the presentation of the texts matters so much more. Taking an adaptation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, for example, the imagery and atmosphere presented in Orwell's text is one of dark, grey, and oppressive walls filled with eyes "too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide" (Orwell, 3). An adaptation of this is much more involved in terms of representing the text in a faithful manner whereas period pieces such as *Jane Eyre* are more likely to be forgiven on a cultural scale for inconsistencies than the cult like viewership of science fiction adaptations, given the intense deification of the source material within popular culture, with adaptations such as (Redford, 1984) and (Cartier, 1954) there is the same critique applied.

However different an adaptation may be from the original, it does serve to either revive or maintain the popularity of a text. More recently, an adaptation of *Fahrenheit 451* on HBO Max, whilst successfully maintaining the public perception of the novella as a cultural classic, failed to convey the same atmosphere and danger as Bradbury's original text with critics stating that the show "fails to burn as brightly as its classic source material, opting for slickly mundane smoke-blowing over hard-hitting topical edge" (Rottentomatoes.com). Adaptations such as this do not help the text in terms of acknowledgment of literary value in one way as it can bring about a false representation of the text, however the production of an adaptation itself is an acknowledgement of literary value – in a cultural sense if not

academically. Adaptations of texts which previously had a tumultuous relationship with the canon and the academy leads to further dismissal of literary value because of the sustained popularity. In a very backwards way, both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Fahrenheit 451* are prevented from recognition and acknowledgement as high literature because of the fact that hold such steady places within popular culture, the dichotomy of cultures are much too reluctant to intersect and such texts which have great cultural impact and hold literary value are passed over. This is especially true within the education sphere more explicitly due to the fact that they are reluctant to acknowledge popular culture does in fact hold value which can be recognised within high culture. The preventing of popular texts from gaining any sort of academic or canonical recognition only proves to be a mistake in the long run.

As well as popularity, "cinema is also associated with superficiality" (Varricchio, 100) which leads into adaptations of popular texts being dismissed in this vein of superficiality. Most obviously, within my own work, in the case of texts such as *Jane Eyre*, which leaves the question of the extent and time before genre fiction is no longer dismissed as popular literature, unworthy of higher consideration and to what extent this is applicable to the recognition of minority narratives and authors. These changes and evolutions will drastically change the shape of literary culture and canon-scapes going forward as explored by Witt, "I am in favor of using race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and gender as criteria for choosing modern authors for curricula, not, however, under the rationale of diversity but under that of familiarity. It is high time that we paid attention to the phenomenal and continuing changes in the makeup of our student bodies" (Witt, 62). My optimistic hope is that literary value will not solely be judged retroactively or by sales, in our increasingly capitalistic society. I remain cautiously optimistic for the expansion of both the mandatory education syllabus, and the values which make up canonical assumptions, in order to reach a more diverse and varied reading list both inside and outside of the classroom. This would hopefully begin with a change of opinions of literature on a much larger scale and an acknowledgement of the symbiotic relationship between literature and culture and how this affect the progression of society.

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<u>Conclusion</u>

Despite attempts throughout the twentieth century to evolve and progress both the contents and the perception of the traditional canon in order to reflect the growing multiculturalism and diversity of society, there is still a gap between the representation of literature and society in terms of canon and the reality of both the literary market and the population of the globe. The reverence shown towards canonical literature is "a literary pantheon […] (in metaphorical stone), and worship of the enshrined [is] required of any critic or other student of literature seeking to earn his or her wings" (Weixlmann, 273). Weixlmann's pantheon or canon reflects dominant attitudes towards the canon within academia and education. The debate set against it in terms of multiple canons and multiculturalism is an even more intense argument for accurate representation of society and culture. This falls into the impossibility of complete representation within the confines of the mandatory education syllabus due to time limitations, as well as the issues with tokenism when considering race, gender, sexuality, and class as explored above.

Both theories have merits when taken at face value, but the deeper intentions need to be more closely and critically examined. A traditional canon list creates a capsule of literature which has historically held literary value and has the longevity attached to it to justify the need to study. Yet Royle explains, "Nothing in the 'western literary canon' is solid and unshifting, starting with the 'western' and the 'literary' themselves" (Royle, 177) meaning that the rigidity attached to canonical perception and values makes little to no sense. A multiple canon theory creates a more representative sphere for intersectionality and genre to flourish without wider competition and distraction. However, a traditional canon list is used to impact the exclusion of minority narratives and when considering the retroactive discovery of texts under these minority narratives and how they change, the aforementioned historical narrative which a traditional canon list attempts to uphold, is used in an almost malicious way. A multi-faceted canon-scape attempts to provide representation and progress under the best intentions. In fact, it serves to make these specialised and specific spheres of literature more competitive in a canonical sense.

Both theories come with issues when considered in depth, the majority of issues stem from the fact that they are both far too deeply entrenched in the classist, elitist, canonical values. Although multiple canons do try to reject these values, they are basing their value judgements on the same criteria as a traditional canon list. Evidently, there is no exact check

list as to what constitutes literary value and so in attempting to determine this any evolution of a canon – singular or multiple – would have basis in the exact same criteria as the traditional, exclusionary, and classist lists formed initially. These canonical biases are inherent in reading and studying literature and how we as readers decided what is worth reading outside of pure popularity of contemporary literature, therefore these biases would be as present in canon formation as they are in the education system – which is where these biases are currently formed and cultivated:

> very little within this category we are going, for the moment, to call 'high culture' since the nineteenth century, has been in received forms. It really has been in most places, itself, complex, innovative work of a disturbing kind and I certainly don't want to be reduced to the absurd kind of argument which maintains that there is some merit in, for example, melodramas contemporary with Dostoyevsky or with Dickens which makes them in some way more novel. (Williams, 915).

The alternative presented by a minority of theorists in specialised areas of study and for areas of personal taste – to simply overturn and ignore any sort of canonicity completely – come with just as many issues. If not from a cultural representative perspective, then from a historical perspective as they go hand in hand when considering literature. A text which could be considered great at one point in history can easily be re-evaluated and left behind in the annals of history. Similarly, there are texts which were previously dismissed which have been retroactively added. For example, taking *Jane Eyre*, from the first chapter, this text's place within the canon is solidified now, despite the reluctance of its admittance initially. In terms of critical reception, the text is undeniably canonical with personal taste and social popularity working in tandem to maintain the canonical interest.

So, if the debates on exactly how to progress with the canon are unsatisfactory at best and exclusionary and racist at worst, how do we contend with the existence of a canon at all? There are texts, such as *Wide Sargasso Sea*, which are purposefully left behind due to the content being critical of traditional canonical values, and it is simply not enough to forgive the offense and discrimination entrenched in practise. There is some palpable tension that exists within the canon debates and even more so when considering the side of the argument that seeks to overturn or ignore the canon completely. On the side of preservation, the argument for maintaining a canon in whichever form, comes with the stance that a literary canon is a reflection of literary history and culture and should be maintained in order to have a record of that history and culture. Cook explains that "we recognize the problem of the emotions, and their inescapable presence, but cannot separately account for them without

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recourse to the formidable rigor of such systems or of prior classifying codes" (Cook, 28) with regards to the inherent need to categorise literature within canonical subsections. The perception of a canon comes with acknowledgements of literary value of certain texts; canonical position although debated with most if not every text is in fact something which contributes to how a text is perceived within its place in a historical narrative. Even multiple canons hold their own place within the historical narrative created by having a working canon, as seen with the unique relationship which *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Fahrenheit 451* hold within canonical consideration. The specialised spheres somewhat agree upon which texts create their literary value narrative and how that canon list would be used within specialised fields. This argument breaks down to essentialism and tokenism when considering the effect of the canon on the mandatory education syllabus as even working canons from specialised fields would have a limited amount of space to fulfil requirements if the education system maintains the teaching of literature to exam.

On the other side of the argument – the complete overturning and ignoring of canons – is almost impossible to accomplish given how ingrained they are in not only the education system at every level consciously or otherwise, but within wider academia as well as public perception. The complete rejection of the canon may prove to be a positive in terms of furthering inclusion of minority narratives and authors as well as setting a brand-new precedent for literary value judgements, however, in actuality the sentiment would have to remain theoretical – at least for now. The canon and the perception of literary value as it stands are influenced by the canons of the past and how they placed judgement on literary value, as seen with chapter two and the *Alice* books and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. These historically based value judgements evolved into both the education system as it stands today as well as how the class divisions and elitism play into the perception of canonicity to the general popular culture and population. Even if the monumental task of erasing the canon and all of its influences from society were successful, it would leave a cultural void. In order to replace the canon, there first needs to be a new system in place which in itself is impossible to be free of canonical influences as the construction of such a system would be defining itself in opposition to the canon and therefore have basis in canonical influences. This is an issue because these canonical influences also shape the ways in which we teach literature and have taught in the past, meaning those available to teach are already entrenched in this bias.

Nevertheless, a lot of progress can still be made both within and outside the process of canonicity both in terms of cultural reflection and education. This would lead to a canon or

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canon-like tradition in regard to the judgement of literary value that accurately and fully represents both the variety of writing being produced as well as the authors producing them. "Thus, what is here presented must be seen as part of a work in progress toward not only a more representative and accurate literary canon, but also toward basic changes in the institutional and intellectual arrangements that shape and perpetuate it" (Lauter, 457). There needs to be a fundamental shift in how the canon is perceived in academia. Especially when considering the historical narratives that both shape and are shaped by canonical processes, and in popular culture, when considering the elitism and classism that creates inherent biases and gatekeeps certain texts from certain demographics of readers. The process of creating such an ideologically progressive canon structure is advancing and, with a more inclusive and diversity accepting generation that comes with globalisation on a social level, this is likely to win out over a limiting and exclusionary narrative such as those which have set up in past formations. However, the next debate to evolve from this will continue to grapple with the problem of both essentialism in canon formations and the impossibility of complete representation. This will bring more attention to the argument for overturning canon and canonical processes altogether.

While both sides of the argument have their merits and flaws, the flaws do mean that these theories of canon rejection can only remain, theories given artificial limitations on the canon-scape from the exaltation of it to Weixlmann's pantheon status and the changeability of public and academic opinion as proven in my previous chapters. With a more conservative section of academia sticking to the desire to preserve a traditional canon list in line with something like Bloom produced, and more progressive idealists calling for either a complete dismantling of the idea of a literary canon or subscribing to the multiple canon theory which would make a space for each and every genre and minority voice to celebrate the excellence within. The structure of both popular culture and education when it comes to literature are so ingrained and inherently based within the canonical assumptions and processes that make up the perception of a literary canon that to be able to fully separate from this ideology would lead to a chaotic situation in which literary value judgements simply boil down to personal taste. While this is not necessarily a bad outcome, personal taste is just too broad and vague and limited to the individual that it would be impossible to build a canon-like structure from that basis alone, or at least it would be impossible for one to be able to match the level of canonical integration which already exists within the education system and culture. Which begs the question of "How has the notion of canonicity [become] hinged on implicit and

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explicit attitudes toward class?" (Casey, 19) and to a further degree literary culture and popular culture. The ways in which the education system and the perception of the canon are symbiotic ultimately harm not only the future of literature as an institution but the future of literary and popular culture as they create a system of canonical biases which are near impossible to escape at such a mandatory level. This means that the escape in itself is limited by the system to which the readers belong and discouraged by other victims of the system to the point where removal is not only difficult at best but is actively stamped out both at an institutional and a social level.

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