

## **Colloquia Document**

### **1. DETAILS**

**Candidate**

**Student No.**

**Degree** Doctor of Philosophy

**Start Date**

**Submission Date**

**Faculty** Faculty of Arts & Education

**School** School of Communication and Creative Arts

**Supervisor**

**Thesis Title** “Brave New World(s): Disability and the Dystopic in Children’s Literature”

**Thesis Type** Conventional

**Colloquia Form** First year confirmation

**Ethics** Not Applicable

### **2. OBJECTIVE**

#### **2.1 Research Questions**

1. How does the government of disability, and its disciplinary and biopolitical techniques, affect representations of Variations in dystopic texts for and about children and young adults, across different historical periods?

This project maps the representational shifts in regard to the disabled, in texts for children and young adults that feature dystopic settings and themes, across four historical periods: the late 1800s, the 1950s, the 1990s, and the contemporary period of the early 2010s. It seeks to understand disability as a form of government in the Foucauldian sense, considering how various disciplinary and biopolitical techniques that inform disability are utilised to create the disabled subject (both historically and textually). Considering that “post-disaster fiction has consistently depicted the present as history and uses this temporal relationship as a strategy to foreground dystopian

tendencies in present societies” (Bradford, C, Mallan, K, Stephens, J & McCallum, R 2008, p 13), the dystopic is a significant entry point to this discussion due to the way in which ideology can inform texts, but also how texts can be a space for talking back to ideology. Thus, this project takes dystopic literature for and about children and young adults as its focus for this investigation

### **3. RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE**

#### **3.1 Background**

The history of nonnormative physicalities and mentalities, or as I prefer, Variations, in literature and art is as long as the history of literature and art themselves, with representations to be found as far back as the Bible and in numerous mythologies<sup>1</sup>. Despite this history, it is only in the last three decades that representations of the disabled have become an interest of academic scholarship.

Discussions of disability and Variations have changed significantly over the last few centuries. As Henri Jacques-Stiker demonstrates in his book *A History of Disability* (1999 ed, trans. Sayers, W), ideas and modes for thinking about disability and Variations have altered throughout history. However, these discussions have most rapidly changed in the last twenty-five years. Tobin Siebers describes the ‘medical model’ of disability, and its relationship to historical concepts, succinctly noting, “Disability has been a medical matter for as long as human beings have sought to escape the stigma of death, disease, and injury. The medical model defines disability as an individual defect lodged in the person, a defect that must be cured or eliminated if the person is to achieve full capacity as a human being” (*Disability Theory*, 2008, p 3). This model, which sought to pathologise, categorise, institutionalise and, as Siebers suggests, cure and even eliminate people with disabilities, became seen “as natural, and individual and medical, and inexorable” (Shakespeare, T 2000, p 160). During the rights movements of the 1950s—1980s, this model of disability came under great scrutiny; the Union for the Physically Impaired Against Segregation

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<sup>1</sup> For examples see Snyder, S L & Mitchell, D T 2000, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse*, University of Michigan Press; Stiker, H-J 1999 (1997), (trans.) Sayers, W, *A History of Disability*, University of Michigan Press; Arwill-Nordbladh, E 2012, “Ability and Disability. On Bodily Variations and Bodily Possibilities in Viking Age Myth and Image”, in Back Danielsson, I-M & Thedéen, S (eds), *To Tender Gender: The Pasts and Futures of Gender Research in Archaeology*, Stockholm University, accessed online 21/01/14, <http://su.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:571447/FULLTEXT01.pdf#page=35>; Garland, R 2010 (1995), *The Eye of the Beholder: Deformity and Disability in the Graeco-Roman World*, Bristol Classical Press, London.

(UPIAS) and The Disability Alliance's discussion of "Fundamental Principles of Disability" in 1975 (accessed 03/02/14) was one of the first calls from disability activism groups for a conceptual framework which understood "disability not as an individual defect but as the product of social injustice, one that requires not the cure or elimination of the defective person but significant changes in the social and built environment" (Siebers, T pp 3-4). Thus social models of disability were established, where impairment became understood as a physical noted difference, and disability as socio-cultural reactions to that difference, and as a form of social oppression. Siebers continues, noting that,

Disability studies does not treat disease or disability, hoping to cure or avoid them; it studies the social meanings, symbols, and stigmas attached to disability identity and asks how they relate to enforced systems of exclusion and oppression, attacking the widespread belief that having an able body and mind determines where one is a quality human being (p 4).

It is significant to note that there are two 'social models': the American social model and the British social model. This project utilises the distinctions made by the British social model, a separation between "impairment" as noted difference and "disability" as socio-cultural reactions to that difference and as a form of social oppression, with specific reconceptualisations.

### **3.2 Significance**

Despite the long history of representations of Variations in art and literature, there is very little scholarship on these representations in both children's and young adult literature, and in relation to dystopic and fantasy fiction. Similarly, there is, at current, no scholarship that investigates how an understanding of disability as a government that operates through disciplinary and biopolitical techniques can enhance analyses of representations of Variations in literature. From this point, the foremost significance of this project lies in its interdisciplinary scope and its contributions to various knowledges. For disability studies, this research will apply and extend Michel Foucault's work to garner new understandings of disability and Variations, and the complexity of their representations. Both in the field of literary studies and in children's literature, this research addresses an absence of scholarship in relation to representations of Variations and discussions of disability in dystopic fiction for and about children and young adults. Moreover, it addresses the complex biopolitical and disciplinary nature of disability and how representations can be and have been

affected historically. Combining critical and cultural theories, and specifically New Historicist approaches, this research will articulate and demonstrate new ways for understanding disability and Variations both contemporarily and historically, and how these reconceptualisations can be utilised in relation to literature and art.

### **3.3 Rationale**

Michel Foucault's work investigates the complex politics that have impacted socio-cultural, political, and historical understandings of the body, power, and knowledge. This project utilises Foucault's approach as a framework for investigating disability in literature for and about children and young adults, with a specific focus on disciplinary and bio-power. By rewriting a history of disability as government that operates through disciplinary and biopolitical techniques, this project aims to achieve a new theorisation of disability as not simply a social oppression, but as a complex system of disenfranchisement on a multitude of different levels and intensities. This will be achieved through an investigation of representations of Variations across four historical periods in dystopic literature for and about children and young adults.

Although the social models of disability are a significant step forward in terms of disability rights activism, and have brought discussions of disability into several academic fields (as well as contributing to the creation of Disability Studies as a discipline), it has also come under scrutiny<sup>2</sup>. I would argue that within such models, two knowledges are predominantly privileged: sociological knowledges and experiential knowledges. Although these knowledges are indeed quite significant in reconceptualising disability and "impairment" in social structures, they are less valuable when analysing dystopic and fantasy representations of Variations and disability.

In addition to the shifting understandings of disability and Variations, the concept of the child and methods of understanding and dealing with children have undergone key changes historically. One of the most significant technologies effecting these changes has been literature for and about children and young adults. Maria Nikolajeva, quoting Hans-Heino Ewers, notes that, "Children's literature, Ewers argued, was from the very beginning related to pedagogics. Children's literature emerged on a larger

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<sup>2</sup> These criticisms and reconceptualisations are varied and broad, including the work of scholars such as Tom Shakespeare, Tobin Siebers, and Shelley Tremain, among others.

scale because at some time in the seventeenth century society began to recognize that childhood was a special period in people's lives and that children had their own special needs" (1995, p ix). As Ewers points toward, it is the society that "recognises" that children have "their own special needs"; in other words, it is the society that takes hold of what children "need", especially in relation to knowledge (pedagogy). Therefore, literature for children and young adults has always been more than 'entertainment', but a key technology in the socialisation of children, that is, the disciplining of children.

However, in the Victorian Era, where this study begins, there was a paradigmatic shift in the way socialising techniques in literature for children and young adults operated. Whereas up until the first half of the nineteenth century moralistic, and thus socialising, tendencies in narratives such as the fairy tale collections of both the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Anderson were more overt, after 1850, and most noticeably marked by the publication of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), these socialising techniques became more covert. I contend that this shift is most noticeable in fantasy narratives, and thus an analysis that focuses on the dystopic, as space of complex relationships between ideology and text, will be able to demonstrate this shift, and later comparable shifts, most succinctly.

## **4. APPROACH**

### **4.1 Conceptual Framework**

In my reading and research to date, I have found that the term "impairment" is insufficient; it is a heavily medicalised term, a bodycentric term, an individualising term, and disallows multiplicities. Following other scholarly critique of the term, and most notably that of Shelley Tremain's "On the Government of Disability" (2001), I have decided to use the term 'Variation/s.' This follows the lead of Katrina Arndt and Maia Van Beuren, and Sharon L Snyder and David T Mitchell, and signifies any aspect of the human condition that sits outside of the socio-culturally and medico-politically sanctioned norm. I want to point out that this is not inclusive of race, gender, sexuality, or class, respectively, as, although they may have once been situated as the 'problem' of medicine, they no longer fall under the umbrellas of illness, impairment, disability, or anomaly.

Similarly, in my project I move back toward the social model's definition of 'disability' as a form of social oppression (as indicated in the UPIAS discussion, pp 3-4<sup>3</sup>). In recent scholarship, and undoubtedly in part due to the differing perspectives between the British social model and the American social model, 'disability' has been understood and utilised as a prediscursive identity category. If, in fact, disability is, at its most extreme, a form of social oppression, or, in the less extreme, a system of disenfranchisement and governance, and is investigated as such, then it should not be used as a prediscursive identity category but rather as an intrinsically discursive technology of power which uses the mechanisms of classification, categorisation, hierarchisation, distribution, exclusion, and management, in order to govern and discipline individuals and populations. In this project, disability will be referred to as a government that results, ultimately, in the disenfranchisement of people with Variations. As Tremain contends,

By combining the elements of bio-power, the subject, and government from this incomplete cluster of ideas, we can identify how a Foucauldian analysis of disabling power would differ from the juridical conception of disability commonly employed in the social model (and a great deal of other disability theory) (p 10).

In moving beyond "the "juridico-discursive" conceptions of power that much disability theory takes for granted" (p 9), this project rejects the totally negative conceptualisation of disability as 'oppression', and the assumptions of passivity that this understanding comes with, and instead moves toward a discussion of the ways in which 'disability' is both regulatory and disciplinary, and productive and constitutive.

## **4.2 Theoretical/Methodological Framework**

As the central focus of this project is a historical mapping of the shifting representations of Variations and disability, Disability Studies scholarship is an integral part of this investigation. David T Mitchell and Sharon L Snyder's *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (2000) is one of the very few studies that discusses the role of disability, and the representations of Variations, in literature. In analysing a number of texts, both literary and philosophical, Mitchell and Snyder demonstrate how a historical mapping of disability in literature can be

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<sup>3</sup> "Our own position on disability is quite clear, and is fully in line with the agreed principles. In our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments, by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society".

achieved. Their concepts of ‘narrative prosthesis’ (pp 6-10, and the majority of Chapter 2, pp 47-61) and ‘the materiality of metaphor’ (pp 61-64) are two of the most useful tools for understanding these representations. In focussing on how Variations have been utilised historically as both a ‘narrative prosthesis’, a literary prop to further a narrative or effect and affect a character<sup>4</sup>, and as metaphor, acting as a cipher for social and political commentary or philosophical inquiry, a richer understanding of how Variations are effected by the techniques of disability. Although these analytical tools have been useful for an engagement with representations of Variations in literature, this thesis will move beyond an understanding of Variations as superficial and symbolic and contend that these representations demonstrate and articulate certain knowledges, power dynamics, and ideologies concerning Variations and disability in a given context.

Angela M Smith’s groundbreaking analysis of disability and eugenics discourse in classic American horror cinema, in *Hideous Progeny: Disability, Eugenics, and Classic Horror Cinema* (2012), is another foundational work for this project. In her analysis, Smith demonstrates the pervasiveness of eugenics discourse and the complex ways in which classic horror cinema can be understood as, at times, being supportive, and at others, articulating the insidiousness and absurdity of this discourse. Due to this pervasiveness, and the continued presence of eugenic thought today<sup>5</sup>, this work is fundamental to any analysis of disability that touches on eugenics discourse. In focussing on films such as *Frankenstein* (1931), *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931, 1941), and *Dracula* (1931), *Hideous Progeny* reveals the efficacy and relevance in investigating multiple representations that do not necessarily correspond to realistic depictions of Variations. Thus, Smith demonstrates the significance of analysing nontraditional, and nonnormative, representations of Variations in literature.

The second most significant area from which this project draws its scholarship is critical theory, and most specifically the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault’s

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<sup>4</sup> Mitchell and Snyder note “Shakespeare’s murderous, hunchbacked king, Richard III; Melville’s obsessive, on-legged captain, Ahab; and Dickens’ sentimental, hobbling urchin, Tiny Tim” (p 17) as prime examples of characters whose Variations are utilized as narrative prostheses.

<sup>5</sup> For example, nationalistic discourses are inherently eugenic with their push for an ‘ideal’ citizen (consider American nationalistic discourses both during the Cold War and post-9/11), advancements in medical technology such as prenatal screening and testing, stem cell and genetic research, even prostheses can be understood as eugenic.

historical and geo-political explication of the juridical apparatus in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979 [1975]) serves not just as an exemplar of the specific methodological approach this project intends to follow, but also as a work of great insight into the evolution of the judicial system. Within this complex account of the many facets of ‘the power to punish’ there are a number of references to the relationships between historical spaces and geo-political conceptualisations of criminality and the historically varied understandings of disability, madness, and the variability of humanity. These multiple references are of great significance to this study: from the relationship between torture and the sovereign, the literal dismantling of the human body as public spectacle of the sovereign’s vengeance, which articulates then the close bond between the spectacle, not unlike the ‘freak-show’, and the vengeance of the sovereign, and the body with Variations as ‘branded’ spectacle of criminality and immorality; to the methods of surveillance employed in multiple institutions, and thus the self-perceptions and self-regulation this breeds, and what this can mean for both disability as government and for the disciplined disabled subject. This discussion of the relationship between the juridical apparatus, and more specifically criminality, surveillance, the body, and disciplinary techniques, points to the centrality of disability to the complex mechanisms and technologies of power.

In his examination of sexuality in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, Foucault articulates how it can be considered as both disciplinary and bio-power:

On the one hand it was tied to the disciplines of the body: the harnessing, intensification, and distribution of forces, the adjustment and economy of energies. On the other hand, it was applied to the regulation of populations, through all the far-reaching effects of its activity. It fitted in both categories at once, giving rise to infinitesimal surveillance, permanent controls, extremely meticulous orderings of space, indeterminate medical or psychological examinations, to an entire micro-power concerned with the body (pp 145-146).

In his lectures, collected in “*Society Must Be Defended*”: *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, Foucault demonstrates the difference between disciplinary and bio-power in arguing that “Unlike discipline, which is addressed to bodies, the new nondisciplinary power [bio-power] is applied not to man-as-body but to the living man, to man-as-living-being; ultimately, if you like, to man-as-species” (p 242). Like sexuality, Variations, and all the associations of illness, anomaly, abnormality, disease,



epidemics and endemics, became the object of disciplinary knowledges, both as object to be medicalised and object of expertise; that is, as something to be known and as a space in which expertise itself is disciplined. Whereas sexuality can be deployed as disciplining in that it can ensure that “individual bodies...can be kept under surveillance, trained, used, and, if need be, punished” (p 242), disability, as a complex system of disenfranchisement, is disciplinary in that through processes of governance, that is processes of categorisation, distribution, normalisation, and management, the individual-as-body is surveilled, trained, used, and punished. In “On the Government of Disability”, Tremain notes that, “Discipline is the name that Foucault gives to forms of government that are designed to produce a “docile” body, that is, one that can be subjected, used, transformed, and improved. Disciplinary practices enabled subjects to act in order to constrain them” (p 622). Thus, several domains can be considered disciplinary, among them the prison, the hospital, the asylum, the clinic, the workshop, and the school: all of which, in some way or another, discipline bodies with Variations. In these spaces the body with Variations is subjected and produced, transformed and rehabilitated, normalised and objectivised (and thus made ‘knowable’), surveilled and regulated, individualised and classified: that is, the body with Variations is made docile *and* disabled. Therefore, it is disability, as it exercises these disciplinary techniques, which transforms the body with Variations into the disabled body. I contend that it is both through the intervention of disability that bodies with Variations are disciplined. However, this is not the only way in which disability operates.

As well as discussing the disciplinary role of sexuality in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* (trans. Hurley, R 1990 [1978]), Foucault also engages with the changing utilisation of sexuality and its operation as a mechanism of biopower, which he describes thus, “an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations” (p 140). The concept of biopower is furthered in his lectures from the Collège de France. The collection “*Society Must Be Defended*”: *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76* (eds Bertani, M & Fontana, A; general eds Ewald, F & Fontana, A; trans. Macey, D [2003], 2004 [1997]), discusses several of his concepts, however “Chapter 11: 17 March 1976” centres on the emergence and explication of biopower. He states that biopower is “addressed to a multiplicity of men, not to the extent that they are nothing more than their individual bodies, but to the extent that they form, on the contrary, a

global mass that is affected by overall processes characteristic of birth, death, production, illness, and so on” (pp 242-243). Due to biopower’s concern with “the living man, to man-as-living-being; ultimately...to man-as-species” (p 242), it is apparent that Variations are of significant interest to it, especially considering its relationship to processes such as “the birth rate, the mortality rate, longevity”, “the rate of reproduction, the fertility of a population”, and “a whole series of related economic and political problems” (p 243). Through the interventions of the medical, the clinical, the psychological, the economic, and the political, into the lives of people with Variations, on the level of both the individualising and ‘massifying’ (Foucault, p 243), and considering disability is socio-cultural, political, and historically variable phenomena, there must be a complex relationship between disability and bio-power; and this relationship is one of governance. This reconceptualisation of disability as government is one of the directions Disability Studies is now heading.

In “On the Government of Disability” (2001), Shelley Tremain demonstrates how “impairment is an historical artifact of the regime of “bio-power”” (p 618) through a paralleling of discussions on the construction of the two (“natural”) sexes to that of ‘impairment’. Tremain concludes this investigation by stating,

In short, impairment has been disability all along. Disciplinary practices into which the subject is inducted and divided from others produce the illusion that they have a prediscursive, or natural, antecedent (impairment), one that in turn provides the justification for the multiplication and expansion of the regulatory effects of these practices. The testimonials, acts, and enactments of the disabled subject are *performative* insofar as the allegedly “natural” impairment that they are purported to disclose, or manifest, has no existence prior to or apart from those very constitutive performances. That the discursive object called *impairment* is claimed to be the embodiment of natural deficit or lack, furthermore, obscures the fact that the constitutive power relations that define and circumscribe “impairment” have already put in place broad outlines of the forms in which that discursive object will be materialized (p 632).

This reconceptualisation of impairment *as* disability, and *as* created through disciplinary and biopolitical mechanisms, illustrates the complexity of representations of Variations and disability and the need to investigate these representations with respect to Foucauldian concepts. Through this analysis, Tremain demonstrates the viability and pertinence of using the work of Foucault, and especially the concepts of disciplinary and bio-power, to reconceptualising, rehistoricising, and analysing disability and Variations. This project will further this analysis and Tremain’s

contention through an investigation of how disability can be understood as a government, and the disciplinary and biopolitical techniques it employs and, as such, how disability as a government changes historically, through an analysis of its operations as expressed in dystopic literature for and about children and young adults.

Conversely, in the collection *Foucault and the Government of Disability* (2005), Bill Hughes' vehemently argues against using the work of Foucault to discuss disability contemporarily. Hughes contends that in Foucault's conception of power "the active or creative subject is invisible; that is, the subject is the product of expert classification and regulatory techniques" (p 87), and that "[f]or Foucault, the body does not act in and on the world; rather, the body is docile" (p 86). Although, to a degree, this is accurate, Hughes considers disciplinary power (the power he implicitly refers most to) as a kind of puppeteer, constantly pulling the strings of the body. In many respects, disciplinary power does take hold of the body, however Hughes assumes that this then means there is no space for agency and posits disability activism movements as evidence to the contrary, noting that, "[i]f power is reduced to structures of domination, it is not logical for impaired people to contest disability. Only fatalism makes sense" (p 90). On the contrary, Foucault demonstrates that power and domination are not equitable, but rather domination *can be* an effect of power: "but in making detention the penalty *par excellence*, it introduced procedures of domination characteristic of a particular type of power" (1979 [1975], p 231). More to the point, I contend that although Foucault's discussions of disciplinary power do not focus on issues of agency, to assume that his concepts of disciplinary power preclude any form of agency is nonsensical. If agency does not exist under disciplinary power, the question of the use of any of the apparatuses Foucault discusses needs to be asked. However, if on the contrary, Foucault's concepts *assume* agency, then these disciplinary apparatuses have purpose. Tremain replies to this arguing,

Hughes and [Kevin] Paterson allow that the approach to disability that I recommend would be a worthwhile way to map the constitution of impairment and examine how regimes of truth about disabled bodies have been central to governance of them. These authors claim nevertheless that the approach ultimately entails the "theoretical elimination of the material, sensate, palpable body". This argument begs the question, however; for the materiality of the "(impaired) body" is precisely that which ought to be contested. In the words of Judith Butler, "there is no reference to a pure body which is

not at the same time a further formation of that body”. ...[T]he historical approach to disability that I recommend does not deny the materiality of the body; rather, the approach assumes that the materiality of “the body” cannot be dissociated from the historically contingent practices that bring it into being, that is, bring it into being as that sort of thing. Indeed, it seems politically naïve to suggest that the term “impairment” is value-neutral, that is, “merely descriptive”, as if there could be a description that was not also a *prescription* for the formulation of the object (person, practice, or thing) to which it is claimed to innocently refer. Truth-discourses that purport to describe phenomena contribute to the construction of their objects (p 621).

This response highlights the significant shift between current conceptualisations of disability and “impairment” and the social models of disability, as well as the significance of utilising Foucauldian thought to interrogate these concepts. Although Hughes, makes some interesting points, he seems to contend, in alignment with social models approach, that disability and ‘impairment’ are distinct, discrete categories; and thus, that the ‘material, sensate, palpable body’ is separable from the government of disability which invests and regulates them. With the dissolution of this separation that Tremain achieves, and her interrogation of the concept of ‘impairment’ (especially as it pertains to the body), leaves Hughes and Paterson’s argument weakened. Although, of course, the body needs to be recognised and included in discussions of disability, their presumption of the prediscursive nature of ‘impairment’, or their reliance on the body as the central figure to these discussions, further problematises their arguments.

The third and fourth significant areas that this study draws from are the disciplines of children’s literature and literary studies, specifically in relation to dystopias and fantasy fiction, respectively. One of the most significant works that intersect with both areas is *New World Orders in Contemporary Children’s Literature: Utopian Transformations* (Bradford, C, Mallan, K, Stephens, J & McCallum, R 2008). Utopias and dystopias are often discussed in opposition, however, as Bradford, et al, contend, in children’s and young adult literature the concepts of “utopia or dystopia appear rather as tropes, modes, themes, or settings than as genres” (p 12). In note of this, this project uses the term ‘dystopic’ to signify that which can be considered dystopian but which is, however, not all encompassing in the sense that a genre may be. To describe a text as utopic or dystopic, or as containing elements of either, is to immediately draw attention to the text’s wider socio-cultural dynamics. As Bradford, et al, argue, “Because its settings are inevitably somewhere in the future, post-disaster fiction has

consistently depicted the present as history and uses this temporal relationship as a strategy to foreground dystopian tendencies in present societies” (p 13). Not only does ‘post-disaster fiction’ employ these tactics, but majority of texts which feature dystopias, and dystopic settings and themes, utilise an ‘undesirable’ future to discuss the politics of their time. If children’s literature is inherently pedagogic, and thus a disciplinary technology (Ewers, H-H 1995 in Nikolajeva, M), then dystopic narratives hold a very specific space of critique within their respective socio-cultural, geo-political, and historical contexts. In exploring this juncture, that is where the disciplinarity of children’s literature meets the criticism of the dystopic, in respect to Variations and the government of disability, a richer understanding of the complexities of these representations will be achieved. In considering these points, *New World Orders* is fundamental to the analysis of dystopic texts and the socio-cultural and historical contexts in which they were produced.

### 4.3 Data

| First Year (2013-2014) |   |
|------------------------|---|
| March-May              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Source and engage with primary and secondary research material. (Ongoing)</li> <li>• Research specifically on disability studies (Ongoing)</li> <li>• Map out chapters and the concepts to be engaged with (Ongoing)</li> <li>• Begin planning chapters (Ongoing)</li> </ul>   |
| June-August            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write paper for International Research Society for Children’s Literature conference.</li> <li>• Attend and present at the International Research Society for Children’s Literature conference in Maastricht, The Netherlands.</li> <li>• Research and engage with the work of Michel Foucault</li> <li>• Begin drafting introduction.</li> </ul> |
| September-November     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research specifically on the intersections of Disability theory and Foucault (Ongoing)</li> <li>• Continue drafting introduction</li> <li>• Research eugenics discourse for Section 1: The Victorian Era</li> <li>• Draft paper for Liberty and Limits: 1789-1920 conference</li> </ul>  |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
|                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit chapter proposal for <i>Anthology of Disability and Masculinity: Corporeality, Pedagogy and the Critique of Alterity</i></li> </ul>   |
| December-February              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend and present at Liberty and Limits: 1789-1920 conference at Macquarie University</li> <li>• Draft colloquium document</li> <li>• Draft Chapter 1</li> <li>• Submit abstract to the Australasian Children's Literature Association for Research conference</li> </ul>                                     |
| March                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise colloquium document and Chapter 1</li> <li>• Begin drafting Chapter 2</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Second Year (2014-2015)</b> |   |
| April-May                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit abstract for <i>Sexualities</i> special issue, "Disability and Sexuality: Desires and Pleasures"</li> <li>• Finish drafting Chapter 2</li> <li>• Draft Section 1 introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• Research for Section 2: Post-War Era</li> </ul>   |
| June-August                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue research for Section 2</li> <li>• Attend the Australasian Children's Literature Association for Research conference at Deakin University, Geelong campus</li> <li>• Draft Chapter 3</li> <li>• Submit abstract for the International Research Society for Children's Literature conference</li> </ul> |
| September-November             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Chapter 4</li> <li>• Draft Section 2 introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• Begin research for Section 3: Post-Rights Movements Era</li> </ul>   |
| December-February              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue research for Section 3</li> <li>• Draft Chapter 5</li> <li>• Begin drafting Chapter 6</li> </ul>  |
| March                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue drafting Chapter 6</li> <li>• Research for Section 4: Disability Today</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Third Year (2015-2016)</b>  |   |
| April-May                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Section 3 introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• Continue research for Section 4</li> <li>• Begin drafting Chapter 7</li> </ul>  |

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|--------------------|--|
|                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin editing Section 1</li> </ul>  |
| June-August        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend International Research Society for Children's Literature conference in Worcester, England</li> <li>• Draft Chapter 7</li> <li>• Begin drafting Chapter 8</li> <li>• Edit Section 1</li> </ul>                  |
| September-November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Chapter 8</li> <li>• Draft Section 4 introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• Begin drafting conclusion</li> <li>• Begin editing Section 2</li> </ul>   |
| December-March     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise drafts of introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• Editing Section 2</li> <li>• Editing Section 3</li> <li>• Editing Section 4</li> <li>• Edit introduction and conclusion</li> <li>• Submit thesis</li> </ul> |

#### 4.4 Thesis Outline

Since the proposal of this project, my research has become more structured, most specifically through the decision to focus on disability government that operates through disciplinary and biopolitical techniques. This project is separated into four sections, each focussing on a different era. Each section is comprised of two chapters, which discuss and analyse a different text, all of which are arranged chronologically. Each section also contains an introduction, which will serve as a brief genealogy of the events and theories of the period with specific relevance to concepts of the child, Variations and the government of disability.

The Victorian Era, the period subject to this first section, drastically altered conceptualisations of Variations and the child in Britain, specifically, through changes in legislation, advancements in science, medicine, and technology, international conflicts, and economic fluctuations, and in literature and art. The rise of a specific literature for children, and later, young adults, introduced new ways that children could be disciplined and socialised. This was exacerbated in the disciplinary shifts between the overt moralism expressed within children's literature in the late seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries, and the subtle socialising techniques

imbued in children's literature in the latter half of the nineteenth century and beyond. In this century multiple new ways of understanding the child and Variations were invented, of specific interest to this section are the advents of evolutionary theory, eugenics discourse, the hysterisation of women, the rise of physiognomic logics, explorations into the role of childhood and the child in social, behavioural, and emotional 'disruptions', the proliferation of specific spaces for people with Variations such as the hospital, the asylum, the clinic, the prison, and thus an individualisation and solidification of the confinement/liberation dichotomy and the people who should experience the former, and the advents and expansion of power of several institutions that operate through surveillance and regulation. Through the investigating the changing nature of Britain at this time, in relation to the government of disability and its disciplinary and biopolitical practices, we can then understand these shifting representations of Variations in literature for and about children and young adults.

The first chapter comprising section 1 is titled "Goblin-ology: George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872)". As people relegated to the depths of the mines, having adapted to their living conditions, the goblins embody a number of anxieties around Variations in the Victorian era. Throughout the narrative, the goblins are positioned as 'degenerate' subjects by the discourses of phrenology, physiognomy, and eugenics. In the novel's second plotline, Princess Irene, as a young girl moving toward sexual maturity, is positioned between and within varying and sometimes contradictory theories of 'hysterization'. As such, these two discussions are imbricated within one another given eugenics discourses interest in sex and sexuality. The significance of investigating these key areas within the Victorian era gives substantial import in understanding and critiquing the representations of people with Variations and the extent of the government of disability's intervention and governance. In considering eugenics discourse and the hysterization of women, the disciplinary and biopolitical impact of these technologies of the government of disability within the Victorian era and MacDonald's novel can be explored.

The second chapter of section 1 is titled "Princely (Dis)play: Dinah Mulock Craik's *The Little Lane Prince and His Travelling Cloak* (1875)". Centring on Prince Dolor, the titular 'little lame prince', his confinement in a tower, and his magical gift, the travelling cloak, this chapter analyses the role the government of disability plays on both an individual and a political level. On one hand, Prince Dolor's confinement



demonstrates the institutionalised and regulatory techniques deployed in the Victorian era in relation to people with Variations, however, on the other hand, Mulock Craik positions Prince Dolor, the real heir to the throne, as the ultimate solution to the political unrest present in the novel. Contrastingly, the one other character with Variations in the novel is the man who delivers Prince Dolor and his governess to the tower, a deaf and mute man of colour, whose inclusion, although in the novel quite minorly, is quite a substantial political statement on the role of non-white individuals in British society. Considering this, the complex discussions of Variations and the government of disability in this text articulates a unique Victorian perspective in relation to other literature from the period.

The period that is the subject of Section 2, titled “The Post-War Era”, are primarily the years between the end of World War II in 1945 to 1955, when *The Chrysalids* was published. Although there is a large temporal gap between sections 1 and 2, this time period is especially significant due to the large amount of disabled soldiers returning from both World Wars and the Korean War. As such, the lives of many families in Britain at this time changed drastically, in relation to family dynamics, economic viability and security, and the disparity between social, cultural and political imaginaries and lived realities. On top of this was the splitting of mainland Europe with the Cold War and the closing of the Iron Curtain, resulting in anxieties about the prospect of nuclear war, the racial and political Other, and thus the state of national identity, and the (seemingly) creeping natures of Communism and Socialism. A large amount of these anxieties were centred around the child, and thus the future of the nation-state, and children’s literature and media were a prime space in which to discipline the child into the desired/desirable, democratic, British subject. As such, the two texts I have selected for this section can be understood as critiques of these various anxieties through their dystopic elements, and in other ways supporting the dichotomies that these historically specific modes of thinking engender.

The first chapter (Chapter 3) in section 2 is “‘Sucks to your ass-mar!’: William Golding’s *The Lord of the Flies* (1954)”. Focussing on the three victims of the narrative, the “young’un” with the birthmark on his face, Simon and Piggy, this chapter illuminates the role of Variations and disability in the breakdown of ‘civil’ society in light of previous wars and the overbearingness of the Cold War. In considering the role of post-war and Cold War conceptualisations of the nation-state

and the individual with Variations within it, specific focus will be given to the us/them dyad the novel critiques through its deconstruction of the dichotomies of old/young, civilised/savage, culture/nature, human/monstrous, good/bad, and normative/nonnormative. Through a problematisation of the dichotomies presented and deconstructed in the text, and a thorough investigation of the role of the government of disability and its disciplinary and biopolitical techniques when faced with this deconstruction of dichotomies and the breakdown of 'civilisation', a complex rendering of how disability works in the text and in the British, post-war and Cold War historical space is achieved.

The second chapter (Chapter 4) of section 2 is "On the Fringes: John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids* (1955)". Set in a post-apocalyptic future, the politics of the novel deal with a world in which nuclear fallout produces animals, plants, and people with mutations. In having a post-apocalyptic setting, *The Chrysalids* is able to discuss the possible future in which the 'mutually assured destruction' (MAD) of the Cold War has actually occurred. In critiquing the aggressive treatment of people with Variations in the highly fundamental Christian culture of this post-apocalyptic Labrador, the text draws attention to the violences present in the nationalistic, Christianised discourses of Western nations during this historical period. This chapter focuses on the relationships between the government of disability and the communities in the novel, as epitomised through the struggles of David, Petra, Rosalind, Michael, Rachel and Anne, a group of telepathic children, Sophie, a girl with six toes on each foot, and the characters of the Fringes, a space where mutations go unchecked. In investigating these characters, and the ways in which they are positioned by the government of disability in the novel, an exploration of the cross-cultural critique of America's role in potential nuclear disaster, and its subsequent treatment of people with Variations.

After the end of World War II, and during the Cold War, many marginalised groups fought for rights in a number of sectors of social, economic, cultural, and political life. One such marginalised group was the disabled. Due to these movements, which have operated since the 1960s, much new legislation was passed worldwide and the United Nations established 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons. The period subject to investigation in Section 3, "The Rights Movements Era", stretches from 1981 to 1995, with specific interest on how these movements effected representations of Variations and the government of disability in the early and mid-

1990s. In addition to these significant changes in the way in which people with Variations, and disability as a larger concept, were considered, major world events occurred, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and of the Eastern Soviet Bloc, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, the dissolution of the USSR and the end to the Cold War in 1991, and the destabilisation of politics in both the Middle East and South America on a large scale. Thus, these rights movements, and the narratives analysed in this section, sit within a historical space that was centralised around concepts and politics of inclusion, volatility, interjection, and individualisation. This section investigates the role of the government of disability and the representations of Variations during this period of political volatility and the pushes for social, cultural, economic, and political rights of disabled people.

The first chapter (Chapter 5) of section 3 is “‘He’s a perversion of nature. Why, isn’t that exciting?’: Tim Burton’s *Edward Scissorhands* (1990)”. The representation of disability and Variations in Burton’s film is something often left out of scholarly analyses of the film, and this chapter seeks to rectify this. Through analysing the character of Edward explicitly, this chapter is able to fully investigate the role of the government of disability and its disciplinary and biopolitical techniques of this period through Edward’s own complex navigation of the wider society and culture he is brought to live in. In exploring this, the violent juxtaposition of positive and negative interpretations of Edward by the community is rendered complexly in relation to the government of disability. As such, the ways in which Edward is positioned as both marvellous and monstrous, and the intersections between them and the concepts of the exotic (Wehbi, S 2012), freakery (Garland-Thomson, R (ed) 1996) and fetishism (Shakespeare, T 1994), can be understood within a world, and specifically an American, context. Through these points of analysis, this chapter investigates the construction of Edward as disabled subject/object of the government of disability, and his social and cultural positioning as both marvel and monster.

The second chapter (Chapter 6) of section 3 is “‘Underneath Utopia: Jane Stemp’s *Waterbound* (1995)”. Although a rather unknown work, *Waterbound* overtly discusses the disability politics, and the politics of inclusion, of the 1990s in a futuristic ‘utopian’ society. Comprising of two worlds, the ‘above’, where utopian society runs normal, and the ‘below’, where children with Variations are surreptitiously sent off, immediately demonstrates the reality of existence in the 1990s

for the people with Variations beyond the overarching politics of inclusion. Through an investigation of how both worlds are rendered and positioned in relation to one another, a critique of these politics of inclusion, and of the concepts *Waterbound* builds in its place, as techniques of the government of disability, will be achieved. In addition to this, the disjuncture of the text itself, in its sentence structure and language, contributes to the novels complex political critique, thus the structure of the novel, and the possibilities these disjunctures put forward, will also be thoroughly analysed. In utilising the two spaces of analysis, the space in the text and the space of the text, and investigating them in relation to the government of disability, this chapter understands *Waterbound* in its varied complexity.

From the mid-1990s to today, much has changed, and done so drastically. With the rise of the internet, the globalising tendencies that have been expanding ever since the Victorian Era have reached an entirely new level, especially in relation to new media. Not only can people now communicate over large distances, via Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram, representations of Variations are now available on demand through YouTube, iTunes, from online viewing platforms, from illegal download sites, through the advent of meme's, and then distributed through the social media sites mentioned previously; the way in which people with Variations can be represented, and the extent to which the government of disability can reach people in order to discipline, surveil, and regulate them is indefinable. The focus of section 4, "Disability Today", is this contemporary period, specifically from 2001 to 2012. With this rise in social media, a number of remarkable events have occurred. Beginning with the 9/11 attacks on America, an age of paranoia and anxiety over terrorism began, only paralleled by the state of America during the Cold War. The resulting international conflict would play out in the decade up to 2012, ending with the toppling of regimes in both Afghanistan and Iraq, and mass exoduses from these and other war-torn nations and the return of many injured soldiers. During these events, the push of the rights movements, which found significant momentum during the 1990s, still fought on for rights across the globe, including disabled rights. As well as these rights movements on the streets, the rise in representations of Variations in film and on television helped raise awareness for disability rights issues.

The first chapter (Chapter 7) of section 4 is "(Dis)claiming Ooo-topia: Pendleton Ward's *Adventure Time* (2008)". While the show centres around the character Finn,

the only human left in the post-apocalyptic 'Land of Ooo', it explores alternative physicalities, mentalities, and psychologies, through its plethora of supporting characters who are very much non-human. With several kingdoms in the land of Ooo, and its sordid history of the 'mushroom wars', *Adventure Time* constantly positions other nonnormative characters as wonderful, viable, lovable and significant. This chapter will focus on two characters, the Ice King, and Finn, in a few selected episodes. The Ice King, who is positioned as insane, and who operates as both the main antagonist and as an anti-hero, has a long and complex history that details his growing insanity, as well as many questionable and comedic storylines. Finn, one of the series' protagonists and heroes, has his own traumas, and is decidedly the last human on the planet, making him rather nonnormative in a nonnormative society. Through investigating the role of these characters, as hero and anti-hero, protagonist and antagonist and normative and nonnormative, and the ways that these concepts are blurred, this chapter will demonstrate the new and complex ways Variations and the government of disability are considered in the contemporary space.

The second chapter (Chapter 8) of section 4 is "What is 'Pure'?": Julianna Baggott's *Pure* (2012)". Set in a post-nuclear future, *Pure* has two settings: firstly, the outside world where, due to the radiation, heat, and power of the nuclear blast, people and animals have fused to objects, landscapes and to each other; and the world inside the Dome, where people have been unaffected by the nuclear devastation and live under the dominion of Emery Willux. With multiple narratives and narrators, both inside and outside the Dome, *Pure* encompasses a number of different individuals, physicalities, mentalities, psychologies and, ultimately, humanities, and brings them to the forefront of the text. In developing such a complex set of characters, *Pure* is able to challenge concepts of normativity, life, the individual, governmentality, and community, in multiple ways. In doing so, conceptualisations of Variations are altered and the solidity of the government of disability is cracked. Similarly to *Adventure Time*, the large amount of nonnormative characters outweighs the normative characters, thus refiguring the normative individual as nonnormative in a nonnormative space. This chapter explores the potential *Pure* brings to discussions of representations of Variations and to an investigation of the government of disability, and the complex ways in which this novel comments upon the relationship between the contemporary space and the government of disability.

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## 6. EXAMPLE CHAPTER

# Chapter One

## Goblin-ology:

George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872)

### Introduction

During the Victorian Era, two structures of knowledge that were implemented and led to considerable social oppression became imbricated and heavily medicalised, much more than they had previously. They were both medical discourses of disciplinary and biopolitical interest: the first, eugenics, targeted, although not solely, people with Variations, while the second was the legitimization of the 'hysterization' of women<sup>6</sup>. Although these concepts may seem somewhat disconnected, Michel Foucault, in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, notes the existence of a "series composed of perversion-heredity-degenerescence" which "formed the solid nucleus of the new technologies of sex" appearing in the Victorian Era (1990 [1978], p 118). Rather than being discrete concepts, they were entwined and mutually constitutive. However, these concepts of perversion, heredity, degenerescence, and even these 'technologies of sex', are utilised, and even sometimes operated by, the government of disability. In relation to the theories of degenerescence, which bound sexuality and eugenics together, Foucault further notes,

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<sup>6</sup> Here I am referring to 'hysteria' and 'hysterization' in the broadest sense as it pertains to the sexuality of women. This is inclusive of the several ways women's sexuality was subject to the intervention, pathologisation and knowledges of medicine, and to the social denigration centred on female prostitutes, mothers, women with Variations, and girls.

...it explained how a heredity that was burdened with various maladies (it made little difference whether these were organic, functional, or psychical) ended by producing a sexual pervert (look into the genealogy of an exhibitionist or a homosexual: you will find a hemiplegic ancestor, a phthisic parent, or an uncle afflicted with senile dementia); but it went on to explain how a sexual perversion resulted in the depletion of one's line of descent—rickets in the children, the sterility of future generations (p 118).

Thus, discourses surrounding the hysterization of women and eugenics discourse targeting people with Variations in some respects mirrored each other; they both come from a desire to medicalise, and simultaneously discipline and bio-politicise bodies, the former focussing on women's subjectivity and sexuality and the latter the subjectivity and opportunities for people with Variations. The government that utilises these "technologies of sex" (p 118), in order to pathologise, normalise, regulate, and control the relationships between the individual, the population and sex, is simultaneously the government of disability. The extent to which the government of disability in the Victorian era deployed sexuality would be difficult to ascertain, however, the intervention of eugenics discourse remains a common thread. In this chapter, I consider how eugenics discourses and the hysterization of women become interrelated in George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin*.

### **Eugenics and the Goblins**

Eugenics, as the active form of Social Darwinist discourse, utilised the formerly reputable pseudo-sciences of physiognomy and phrenology in order to establish methods of determining which people were suitable to hereditarily pass on, what were considered, 'good' characteristics for the preservation of civilisation against the threat of degeneracy. As Lyndsay A Farrall argues, eugenics was seen as "the basis of a scientific religion which could lead to the utopian situation where problems such as alcoholism, criminality, disease and poverty had disappeared" (1979, p 111). As such, eugenics discourse, and its operative arms of heredity, degeneracy, physiognomy, and phrenology, sought to control and discipline individuals and the larger population, to the result of strengthening the 'race' (or rather, species) through 'breeding out' undesired traits. In the work of Arthur de Gobineau and Sir Francis Galton, physiognomy and phrenology were utilised to demonstrate differences between the civil societies of both England and France respectively, and the marginalised groups targeted by eugenics discourse. Through the socio-culturally accepted fear of degeneracy, that is the gradual breakdown of society, civilisation and the domination

of the 'superior' white races, and the threat of the continuation of degeneracy through heredity, eugenics discourses gained momentum across the Western world, and influenced social, cultural, political and institutional relationships with people with Variations<sup>7</sup>. In "'A Strange Race of Beings': Undermining Innocence in *The Princess and the Goblin*" (2006), Fiona McCulloch notes the significance of discussions of eugenics in relation to MacDonald's novel, arguing that "MacDonald's goblins can themselves be regarded as a foreign 'strange race of beings', highlighting the Victorian eugenic terror of degenerative races and social classes" (p 55). Although McCulloch does not mention them, considering that eugenics discourse operated disciplinarily and biopolitically simultaneously, the goblins can also be read in relation to people with Variations.

This kind of eugenic conceptualisation, through physiognomic and phrenological theorisations of people with Variations, is demonstrated from the outset of MacDonald's novel. Through the characters of the goblins, the social, cultural, and political manifestations of eugenics discourse in the narrative come to light. In an early exploration of the goblins, they are described thus,

Those who had caught sight of any of them said that they had greatly altered in the course of generations...They were now, not ordinarily ugly, but either absolutely hideous or ludicrously grotesque both in face and form. There was no invention, they said, of the most lawless imagination expressed by pen or pencil, that could surpass the extravagance of their appearance. And as they grew misshapen in body, they had grown in knowledge and cleverness and were now able to do things no mortal could see the possibility of. But as they grew in cunning, they grew in mischief...and although dwarfed and misshapen, they had strength equal to their cunning (pp 4-5).

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<sup>7</sup> Although people with Variations were not the only group targeted by eugenics discourse, they are the focus of this study and as such will be the only group discussed. For an analysis which discusses eugenics discourse, race and class in relation to *The Princess and the Goblin*, see McCulloch, F 2006, "'A Strange Race of Beings': Undermining Innocence in *The Princess and the Goblin*".

As can be seen in this excerpt, concepts of degeneration and physiognomic logic are utilised to describe the goblins. They are described as having “greatly altered in the course of generations”, becoming “either absolutely hideous or ludicrously grotesque both in face and form”, highlighting concepts of heredity and degeneration, furthered by the accusation that they exist beyond or beneath the category of “mortal”. Their physicalities are positioned as completely beyond the realm of what could



*Figure 1.1 (p 4)*

be considered human, and beyond even the possibility of imagination. However, it is here, in this minute reflexivity, that MacDonald questions the validity of eugenics discourse. In questioning the reliability of second-hand stories (as implied through the story of a story), and placing these characters beyond comprehension, the text implicitly questions the aggressive treatment of people, who exist within society and cultures and are not beyond recognition, by eugenics discourses. These descriptions are furthered by the accompanying illustrations by Arthur Hughes. As can be seen in Figure 1.1, the goblins in this image resemble old men, however their bodies look disproportionately small in relation to their heads, beards, and mining equipment, yet this image does not match up with the description of them as being beyond “the most lawless imagination expressed by pen or pencil”. Therefore, the reflexivity and complexity of the narrative also comes from the relationship between text and image, and between the images themselves. The stark differences between Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2, again, highlight the unreliability of the narrator, and the constant shifting of concepts of ‘degeneration’. Figure 1.2 positions the goblins as large, hairy, animalistic creatures. This image has greater implications as well, considering that this is an image of the goblin queen, again positioning women with Variations within a monstrous paradigm. As seen here, there are a number of differences between the illustrations of the goblins in each image. They transform from being like old men to

large, animalistic creatures, indicating the complex relationship between the government of disability and literary representations. This is amplified by the sharp transition in the physiognomic understanding of the goblins' characteristics. Due to the goblins unsightly appearance, their "knowledge and cleverness" is completely reduced to "cunning"; rather, considering their appearance is "hideous" and "grotesque" their characteristics are rewritten to reflect this logic, thus the goblins are not "clever" but are "cunning". Although this



Figure 1.2 (p 179)

transition indeed articulates physiognomic logic, the sharpness with which it is done, as the change occurs between two sentences, again reiterates the falsified "evil" attributed to people with Variations.

This complex critique of physiognomy continues throughout the novel, especially in reference to the goblins' physical appearance. In a passage, Curdie, a young miner and a protagonist of the novel, overhears a conversation between two goblins, where they state "The goblin's glory is his head" (p 57), indicating that a goblin's head is hard and is the epitome of goblin morphology (and this is evidenced in the rest of the narrative through the several physical fights between the humans and goblins). Here, the ways phrenological discourse is linked with the physiognomic discourse in the novel becomes apparent. In 1839, Samuel George Morton published the, now controversial, study into skull size and implied 'brain difference' between races, *Crania Americana; or, A Comparative View of the Skulls of Various Aboriginal Nations of North and South America: To which is Prefixed an Essay on the Varieties of the Human Species*, including a table replicated by Arthur de Gobineau in *The Inequality of Human Races* (1967 [1853-1855], this is the publication to which I will be referring). In considering these descriptions of the goblins heads in relation to

these phrenological ‘studies’, the large, hard, and thus presumably thick, heads of the goblins, not only further racialise them (as this study was specifically done to ascertain the different ‘civilising capabilities’ of different races), but also a disabling one, as it presumed that the hollowness (and thus also thickness) of the skull referred to intellectual capacity. However, this phrenological conceptualisation of the goblins comes undone when considered in relation to the goblins intelligence. As referred to earlier, the goblins are considered as having “knowledge and cleverness”, and as being “cunning”, beyond mortal comprehension. Thus, MacDonald’s narrative refutes the phrenological accounts of skull size and intellectual capability in creating thick-skulled and clever goblins.

While MacDonald’s narrative partially works to invalidate the defining concepts of both physiognomy and phrenology, it still places the goblins within the field of degeneration, however it does play with the conflicting origin narratives posited by eugenics discourses.

...[I]n these subterranean caverns lived a strange race of beings, called by some gnomes, by some kobolds, by some goblins. There was a legend current in the country that at one time they lived above ground and were very like other people. But for some reason or other, concerning which there were different legendary theories, the king had laid what they thought too severe taxes upon them, or required observances of them they did not like, or had begun to treat them with more severity in some way or other, and to impose stricter laws; and the consequence was that they had all disappeared from the face of the country. According to the legend, however, instead of going to some other country they had all taken refuge in the subterranean caverns... (pp 2-3).

As demonstrated in this excerpt, one of the ‘legends’ is that after suffering a rather nondescript severity from the king, the ‘people’ exiled themselves to the subterranean caverns whence they began to degenerate over generations. Thus, on one hand, their degeneration has been gradual and natural, a result of living in this space. But this origin story, as McCulloch notes, is rather elusive, “and subject to the radical narrative malleability of generational oral tales: no certainties can be established except that they are refugees, displaced and forced to live on the fringes of their homeland, oppressed by economic circumstance” (p 58). Thus, the story of this

‘natural’ transformation sits uneasily in a space of constant conversion and dilution, becoming gradually more multiple and unreliable as the goblins themselves gradually grow more complex and indefinable.

The second origin story exists within the discussions of the goblins’ creatures, which reflects upon the goblins themselves. In stark contrast with the ‘natural’ degeneration of the goblins in the first story, and its validity being undermined by the hearsay it is based upon, the second story relies on concepts of ‘interbreeding’:

My readers will suspect what these were; but I will now give them full information concerning them...The original stocks of these horrible creatures were very much the same as the animals now seen about farms and homes in the country, with the exception of a few of them, which had been wild creatures, such as foxes and indeed wolves and small bears, which the goblins, from their proclivity toward the animal creation, had caught when cubs and tamed...But what increased the gruesomeness tenfold was that, from constant domestic, or indeed rather family association with the goblins, their countenances had grown in grotesque resemblance to the human. No one understands animals who does not see that every one of them, even among the fishes, it may be with a dimness and vagueness infinitely remote, yet shadows the human: in the case of these the human resemblance had greatly increased: while their owners had sunk toward them, they had risen toward their owners (pp 106-108).

Not only have the goblins creatures also ‘devolved’, but through interbreeding, and implied bestial relationships, as suggested in the goblins “proclivity toward animal creation” and their “family association”, produced creatures “so grotesque and misshapen as to be more like a child’s drawings upon his slate than anything natural” (p 103). This logic, although historically constituted in several mythologies, is aligned with concepts within eugenics discourses, most noticeably in ideas of ‘interracial breeding’, but also in ideas of the ancestry of families with children with Variations. However, similarly to the first origin story, this account exists within a space of hearsay: it is a self-reflexive account of the creatures seen by the men-at-arms posted around the royal house. Again, this description is presented as unreliable, and as ‘legendary’ as the first story. In articulating these conceptions, *The Princess and the Goblin* demonstrates the anxieties of eugenics discourses, that perverse sexuality

produces people with Variations, and that people with Variations enact perverse sexualities. Unlike the former story, this one closely aligns the goblins with animals, blurring the boundaries between human and animal, as indicated in the idea that “while their owners had sunk toward them, they had risen toward their owners”. This concept is often repeated throughout the narrative where the goblins are described as animals: “...like a huge spider...” (p 45), “...the queen, with flaming eyes and expanded nostrils, her hair standing half up from her head...” (p 151), “...their mole-eyes...” (p 154), “...but the queen stood in front, like an infuriated cat...” (p 229), “...the goblins were disappearing through the hole in the floor like rats and mice” (p 231). This human/animal dichotomy colours all the other dichotomies constructed throughout the narrative, lightness/darkness, culture/nature, self/Other, good/bad, with the goblins relegated to the latter halves. In doing so, the narrative demonstrates, and in some ways validates, the fears of degeneracy eugenics discourses propagated.

One of the most significant ways in which the goblins are positioned as the subjects of eugenics discourse is through the conflation of them, and the groups they can be seen to represent, with criminality. Francis Galton writes,

The ideal criminal has marked peculiarities of character : his conscience if almost deficient, his instincts are vicious, his power of self-control is very weak, and he usually detests continuous labour. The absence of self-control is due to ungovernable temper, to passion, or to mere imbecility, and the conditions that determine the particular description of crime are the character of the instincts and of the temptation (1973 [1883], p 42).

As can be seen in this excerpt, this description of the character of the criminal comes with many marked associations linked with stereotypes (if not being downright straight forward in others); of specific interest to this study is the immediate and outright association of ‘imbecility’ and criminality. This conflation between people with Variations and criminals is furthered in the narrative with the goblins being involved in several criminal plots; treason in relation to their possible disobedience to the crown in their origin story (pp 2-3), the implicit voyeurism when they look through Curdie’s bedroom window (p 49), the (attempted) sexual assault of Curdie’s mother (pp 200-202), the attempted kidnapping of Irene and the house servants (pp 225-234), and the attempted murder of the miners (pp 241-243). These last two instances are of specific interest to this section as their rationales are to disrupt the



internal power dynamics of the narrative, demonstrated in the speech given by the goblin king's advisor: "Should His Majesty be successful—as who dares to doubt—then a peace, all to the advantage of the goblin kingdom, will be established for a generation at least" (p 74). The "two plans" (p 72) the goblin king has developed consist of kidnapping princess Irene and marrying her to their prince Harelip (a rather overt reference to Variations and degeneration), designated here as plan A, and in the possible eventuality of that plan not working, to flood the mines and kill the miners, designated here as plan B. Although the marriage of two heirs of different kingdoms was not uncommon historically, the anxieties of plan A coming to fruition stem from the fears of dysgenic reproduction and the possibility of sovereign power. Thus, the *real* crime is not the attempted kidnapping, it is the possibility of Irene having to marry and reproduce beneath her rank. Nonetheless, this association between people with Variations and criminality is not critiqued, and the corresponding anxieties within the narrative are instead shored up and justified, reasserting some of the detrimental and violent ways eugenics discourse intervened in the lives of people with Variations. *The Princess and the Goblin* ends with the goblins being "caught up in their own snare" (p 256), the enactment of plan B after the failing of plan A, with majority of them drowning. The ones who survived either fled or "grew milder in character" and "Their skulls became softer as well as their hearts..." (p 259). Despite the constant play with eugenics concepts and definitions throughout the rest of the novel, the goblins end up mostly dead, or otherwise adapting to their new lives alongside humans, however the humans "were merciless to any of the cobs' creatures that came their way, until at length they all but disappeared" (p 259). This conclusion to the narrative, and its incessant march toward this end, ultimately reinscribes eugenics discourses validity; the nonnormative goblins must be either eliminated or assimilated. As such, this conclusion implies that any individual considered degenerate, whether this designation is acceptable or not, must bear that burden and assimilate or otherwise face the dire consequences. Although Jack Zipes notes that "MacDonald...bring[s] out the need for the alteration and restructuring of social relations by questioning the arbitrariness of authoritarian rule and the profit motives of rulers" (2011, p 107), *The Princess and the Goblin* ultimately reinstates the 'rule' of eugenics discourse, which is rather authoritarian.

Through this analysis, it is possible to see how the goblins can be read as subjects of eugenic discourses, in relation to both knowledge and discipline. As such, *The*

*Princess and the Goblin* poses some of the significant ways the government of disability operated in the Victorian era. Given that eugenics discourse was billed as “the science of improving stock, which is by no means confined to questions of judicious mating, but which, especially in the case of man, takes cognisance of all influences that tend in however remote a degree to give to the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had” (Galton, F 1973 [1883], footnote p 17), one of the central concerns concerning ideas was the improvement of the ‘race’ through the disenfranchisement, as a broad term, of people deemed ‘less suitable’. Thus, the government of disability, as a system of disenfranchisement of people with Variations, utilised eugenics discourse in multiple ways: to partition off these people in order to better govern them, to then categorise, regulate and manage them through medicalised spaces, to discern ultimate power over who can and cannot reproduce, to regulate and monitor access to various spaces and institutions; all in all, to manage individuals with Variations and them as a group, in their day-to-day lives and within social, cultural, political, and economic arenas, in terms of disciplinary and biopolitical techniques. Eugenics discourse itself, as well as its operative arms of physiognomy, phrenology, and degeneration theory, and the way it effects both the lives of and representations of people with Variations, is one such technique. In order to operate in such a way, eugenics discourse was and is a technology of the government of disability. As Tremain notes, for Foucault “the term “government” [is used] in its broad, sixteenth-century sense, which encompasses any mode of action, more or less considered and calculated, that is bound to structure the field of possible action of others” (2001, p 622). Thus, the government of disability, as operating through eugenics discourse, limits the possibilities of people with Variations. When we consider the pedagogic implications of narratives such as that of the goblins’ in *The Princess and the Goblin*, we reach a stage where the socialising technology which children’s literature is becomes a technology of disciplinary and bio-power, and thus, in this instance, a technology of the government of disability. In terms of its pedagogic function, it is significant to note that “children’s fiction belongs firmly within the domain of cultural practices which exist for the purpose of socializing their target audience” (Stephens, J 1992, p 8). Thus, as a work of children’s literature, *The Princess and the Goblin* must contribute, either in relation to the circulation of specific concepts or in the critique of these concepts or both, to the socialising technologies of the late Victorian era.

Despite the narrative's subtle criticisms of many facets of eugenics discourse, it ultimately leaves a number of these concepts unquestioned. In relation to degeneration theories, as indicated through the several origin stories present in the narrative, *The Princess and the Goblin*, while questioning the stability of the categories themselves, still resolves that some types of people are indeed degenerate, and in turn should be either eliminated or subject to assimilative practices and social management. Thus, in terms of the government of disability, the representations of the goblins and their associated Variability, serve to socialise readers into eugenics discourse and the belief that people with Variations are indeed degenerate and, consequently, evil. Therefore the disciplinary and biopolitical outcomes of this socialisation are twofold: shoring up the concepts of degeneration and that the persecution of people with Variations is acceptable; and that people with Variations are, and should be, the subjects of several institutions and technologies, such as medicine, phrenology, physiognomy.

### **The Hysterization of Irene and Grandmother**

Hysteria, and other similar pathological categories, existed from Antiquity and gained considerable interest in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Andrew Scull demonstrates the complexly arbitrary nature of the diagnosis of hysteria noting,

...such labels as “hysteria” and “hypochondria”, which admittedly were protean categories embracing disorders that mimicked other forms of disease, must necessarily have caught in their net numerous afflictions that today would be assigned to a wholly different realm of neurological pathology...[and specifically that] some of the people whom seventeenth- and eighteenth-century physicians diagnosed as hysterical would today be seen as suffering from some form of epilepsy, from multiple sclerosis or the effects of tertiary syphilis, or from malignant tumors that manifested themselves in mysterious bodily ailments (2011, p 34).

Through these systems of pathologisation, a preoccupation with female sexuality came to the fore of these diagnoses. In the nineteenth century, several dramatic shifts occurred, as the “paradigm of hysteria as a disease...had reached the point where it did not readily explain either the empirical data or the variations in them”, resulting in “the paradigm fragment[ing] into three related disorders”, and disagreements between physicians (Maines, R 1999, p 34). Nonetheless, in the nineteenth century female

sexuality became the locus of significant interest socially, medically, culturally, and politically. As A N Wilson notes,

the Contagious Diseases Acts. Among the surgical outpatients at Bartholomew's Hospital in London, one half had venereal diseases, mostly the deadly syphilis [...] there was a crisis of the greatest magnitude [...] It now became enshrined in British law that women were a source of contamination [...] and] many forms of sexual 'deviancy' were outlawed (in McCulloch, F 2006, p 56).

Thus, ideas surrounding female sexuality, and indeed the mass pathologisation of female sexuality in multiple arenas became a significant issue, and, as such, the influence of these issues undoubtedly affected the socialising processes of children's literature in Victorian society. This is reflected in *The Princess and the Goblin*, explicitly in relation to Irene and her journey toward sexual maturation.

Throughout the novel, Irene is presented as in a constant state of indeterminable betweenness, confusion and fragility. This becomes most apparent as the strict separation of Irene and her Grandmother becomes less and less distinct, fracturing concepts of self and Other in relation to female embodiment. In the chapter titled "The Princess Loses Herself", Irene journeys up the stairs in her nursery, and eventually finds her Great-Great-Grandmother (affectionately termed Grandmother later in the novel), whence she becomes frightened and attempts to find her way back to her nursery, "but she had lost herself long ago. It doesn't follow that she *was* lost though, because she had lost herself" (p 8). This idea of Irene having 'lost herself' fractures the construction of her as a whole and complete entity, and instead positions her as fragmentary and thus also within a pathologising framework. When she first meets her Grandmother, after "losing herself" (p 22) in the upstairs region of the house, Irene is informed of her role as Grandmother's namesake:

"Do you know my name, child?"

"No, I don't know it," answered the princess.

"My name is Irene."

"That's *my* name!" cried the princess.

“I know that. I let you have mine. I haven’t got your name. You’ve got mine.”

“How can that be?” asked the princess, bewildered. “I’ve always had my name.”

“Your papa, the king, asked me if I had any objection to your having it; and of course I hadn’t. I let you have it with pleasure.”

“It was very kind of you to give me your name—and such a pretty one,” said the princess.

“Oh, not so *very* kind!” said the old lady. “A name is one of those things one can give away and keep all the same. I have a good many such things...”

This doubling of names, and the disruption of the giving/keeping dyad, emphasises the closing of the separation between Irene and her Grandmother and the confusing of binaries and distinctions. This doubling of names then has extraordinary power in relation to Irene, “fracturing the child’s sense of self as well as threatening the civilised, knowable world that surrounds her” (McCulloch, p 60). This is amplified by the fact that throughout a large amount of the novel, Irene is unable to find her Grandmother when she wants to, but only when her Grandmother wants her to. This results in Irene constantly contemplating whether or not her Grandmother is real or a dream, reiterating Irene’s fragmentation and confusion, and further closing the distinction between Irene and her Grandmother. This becomes most apparent in relation to age, and this is the point where sexuality comes in. Throughout the narrative, time is described seasonally with multiple references to the changing seasons, flora and fauna, and weather patterns. As such, Irene, without mention in the narrative aside from the reference to her being 8 at the beginning (p 6), ages and progresses toward a state of sexual maturity. Conversely, however, her Grandmother appears younger and younger each time Irene visits her: “The princess, though she could not have told you why, did think her very old indeed—quite fifty—she said to herself” (p 11), “...in the middle of the moonlight sat the old lady in her black dress with the white lace, and her silvery hair mingling with the moonlight, so that you could not have distinguished one from the other” (p 91), “...her hair, no longer white but of a rich golden color, ...Her face that of a woman of three-and-twenty” (p 119),

“She was dressed in white now and looking, if possible, more lovely than ever” (p 187). Thus, both Queen Irene and Princess Irene, moving toward one another chronologically, seem bound to meet at some age, both moving toward a space of sexual potentiality.

In her analysis of *The Princess and the Goblin*, Fiona McCulloch reads the goblin caves in relation to sexuality, positing,

[T]he moist dark caverns’ ‘natural’ (p 8) openings enwomb the eroticised outcasts, applying a feminine otherness whose hole is penetrated to extract jewels which generate the wealth of a patriarchal capitalist regime above (p 55).

The organic nature of the caverns is foregrounded in terms like “warm” (p 51) and “damp” (p 55, p 68), and accentuated further in the description of the hall of the goblin palace. It is described as “a magnificent cavern of an oval shape” of “tremendous height, but the roof was composed of...shining materials”, and “The walls themselves were, in many parts, of gloriously shining substances” (pp 70-71). This centre of the goblin kingdom is “immense” (p 70) and indeed ‘enwomb[s] the eroticised outcasts’, and thus, as McCulloch suggests, is the feminised seat of sovereign power, whereas the human’s male ruler is constantly moving from town to town (p 135). This then positions both spaces, above and below, within a gendered hierarchy, and reifies the difference between the goblin and human kingdoms. Although the gendering of the caverns is feminised, it is also sexualised, through the coalition of its organic description and feminine positioning, and is articulated as a space of sexual excess, aligning it with the conception of hysteria as sexual ‘over-indulgence’. This is achieved through it being a space for the procreation of goblins and creatures, and their implied bestiality, a space full of ore and jewels and exploitable for capitalist gain, and as a space of “huge caverns and winding ways, some with water running through them” (p 2). However this depiction of the caverns as overflowing with feminine sexual excess is juxtaposed with the image of the ‘upstairs’ of the house where Irene’s Grandmother lives. In her initial journey which results in her finding her Grandmother, and in which Irene loses herself, the space and her experience are described as follows:

Up and up she ran—such a long way it seemed to her—till she came to the top of the third flight. There she found the landing was the end of a long passage. Into this she ran. It was full of doors on each side. There were so many that she did not care to open any, but ran on to the end, where she turned into another passage, also full of doors. When she had turned twice more and still saw doors and only doors about her she began to get frightened. It was so silent! And all those doors must hide rooms with nobody in them!...She ran for some distance, turned several times, and then began to be afraid. Very soon she was sure that she had lost the way back. Rooms everywhere, and no stair!...At last hope failed her. Nothing but passages and doors everywhere!...Next, like a true princess, she resolved on going wisely to work to find her way back: she would walk through the passages and look in every direction for the stairs. This she did, but without success. She went over the same ground again and again without knowing it, for the passages and doors were all alike (pp 8-9)

In complete opposition to the caverns, upstairs is described as a completely empty maze of passages and doors. Once she finds a way out, a set of stairs going up, she comes across the only inhabitant of this space, her Grandmother; an indeterminably old woman. This description of the space as empty, resonates then with Irene's Grandmother's own sexual capacity as an old woman and the concept of hysteria as 'sexual deprivation'. At the pinnacle of the house sits her Grandmother's spinning room and her bedroom; the former described as having "hardly any more furniture...than there might have been in that of the poorest old woman who made her bread by her spinning" (p 14), and the latter, in the chapter "The Old Lady's Bedroom", as "the loveliest room [Irene] had ever seen in her life!" (p 95). The description of her Grandmother's bedroom continues,

It was large and lofty and dome-shaped. From the center hung a lamp as round as a ball, shining as if with the brightest moonlight, which made everything visible in the room, though not so clearly that the princess could tell what many of the things were. A large oval bed stood in the middle, with a coverlid of rose color, and velvet curtains all around it of a lovely pale blue. The walls were also blue—spangled all over with what looked like stars of silver (p 95).

This depiction of Grandmother's bedroom, although certainly accentuated with excessive details, is rather ephemeral, as is the character of Grandmother herself. Within the oppositional construction of these spaces, upstairs and the cavern, the reification of the culture/nature binary again shores up other dichotomous conceptions within the novel. This is furthered by the fact that it is Curdie who enters the hall of the goblin palace, a space of sexual excess, and Irene who enters her Grandmother's bedroom, a space of absent sexuality. Although Curdie does enter her Grandmother's bedroom (pp 186-190), he cannot see her nor her bedroom, and instead sees "a big, bare, garret room...[with] a tub, and a heap of musty straw, and a withered apple and a ray of sunlight coming through a hole in the middle of the roof" (p 188), because he does not believe Irene and her Grandmother does not wish for him to see her. However, this event reifies the doubling of Irene and her Grandmother, highlighting the possibility of Irene's fractured self. Considering that, as Maines notes, "Physicians could not agree...whether sexual deprivation or over-indulgence caused any of the disorders [the whole composite of hysteric disorders], and whether masturbation was a cause or symptom of any of them" (p 34), the narrative sets up two opposing notions of the aetiology of hysteria. Despite the novel's ability to criticise the contradictory diagnostic practices that 'fix' hysteria, it allows hysteria and these diagnostic practices to retain their credibility in never fully questioning the diagnosis itself.

As such, because these spaces are created in opposition, and the goblins are positioned as degenerate, eroticised creatures, the problem of Irene's security is highlighted, resulting in many restrictions and regulations over what Irene can do, where she can go, and what time she may do or go; in short, Irene is the focus of several systems of surveillance, regimentation, and management resulting in her imprisonment within the bounds of the domestic space<sup>8</sup>. Given the eroticised nature of the goblins and the caverns, and the desexualised status of her Grandmother and upstairs, these disciplinary systems are an attempt to curtail and direct Irene's growing sexuality, due to the anxieties of female and children's sexualities present in the late Victorian era. On the subject of the production of discourses of sex, and the various spaces of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which engendered them, Foucault notes,

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<sup>8</sup> Irene does constantly escape these minor disciplinary systems, at the fault of those who are supposed to be keeping watch over her, however she cannot escape the larger systems of constraint imposed by society and culture as easily.



First there was medicine, via the “nervous disorders”; next psychiatry, when it set out to discover the etiology of mental illnesses, focusing its gaze first on “excess”, then onanism, then frustration, then “frauds against procreation”, but especially when it annexed the whole of the sexual perversions as its own province; criminal justice, too, which had long been concerned with sexuality, particularly in the forms of “heinous” crimes and crimes against nature, but which, toward the middle of the nineteenth century, broadened its jurisdiction to include petty offenses, minor indecencies, insignificant perversions; and lastly, all those social controls, cropping up at the end of the last century, which screened the sexuality of couples, parents and children, dangerous and endangered adolescents—undertaking to protect, (end p 30) separate, and forewarn, signaling perils everywhere, awakening people’s attention, calling for diagnoses, piling up reports, organizing therapies. These sites radiated discourses aimed at sex, intensifying people’s awareness of it as a constant danger, and this in turn created a further incentive to talk about it (1990 [1978], pp 30-31).

As Foucault contends, sex became a significant interest of several medicalised and social spaces, and specifically the realm of ‘perversions’, which held the sexualities (or assumed lack thereof) of women, children, and people with Variations as of the utmost concern. This is explored in the novel in multiple ways, beginning with the assertion that “the little princess had never seen the sky at night” (p 5). While the narrator posits that “They [the house staff] were much too afraid of the goblins to let her out of the house then, even in company with ever so many attendants; and they had good reason, as we shall see by and by”, in a reading relative to sexuality, this is indicative of the need to surveil, regulate, and manage the princess due to fears of sexual ‘deviancy’. As McCulloch notes, “Denying Irene the pleasure of the night sky raises the question of whether she is being protected from the outside world or actually imprisoned in her fortress: ultimately the guarding of innocence appears to be perpetrated at the cost of the child” (p 54). Throughout the narrative there are several instances which demonstrate these disciplinary systems of surveillance, regulation and management, and which operate on multiple levels and areas of Irene. The most prevalent of these are the keeping of information from Irene, and the refutation of Irene’s experiences and understandings of situations. In the chapter “What the Nurse

Thought of It”, which occurs after Irene’s first trip to see her Grandmother, Irene’s nurse Lottie intimates knowledge beyond Irene’s and keeps it from her, and disbelieves Irene’s account of her previous whereabouts, reifying the dichotomy adult/child and the dynamics of knowledge inherent within it.

“Why, where have you been, Princess?” asked the nurse, taking her in her arms. “It’s very unkind of you to hide away so long. I began to be afraid—”

Here she checked herself.

“What were you afraid of, nursie?” asked the princess.

“Never mind,” she answered. “Perhaps I will tell you another day. Now tell me where you have been?”

“I’ve been up a long way to see my very great, huge, old grandmother,” said the princess.

...”What nonsense you are talking, Princess!” said the nurse (pp 20-21)

Due to this dichotomy, Lottie’s fear is idealised as more believable than Irene’s experience, however, given the implied reader’s awareness of the events of the previous chapter, Lottie is thus positioned as irrational and dismissive, aligning her too with concepts of hysteria. This is furthered in the first instance of Lottie and Irene venturing outside of the confines of the house and up the mountain, “Suddenly the shadow of a great mountain peak came up from behind and shot in front of them. When the nurse saw it she started and shook, and tremulously grasping the hand of the princess turned and began to run down the hill” (p 33). This brash, and indeed violent, reaction is complexly tied between Irene’s personal safety and Lottie’s job security, as “It was against express orders to be out with the princess one moment after the sun was down” and “If His Majesty, Irene’s papa, were to hear of it Lottie would certainly be dismissed; and to leave the princess would break her heart”. Not only does this effort to secure Irene come from a social desire to protect her, but also from a parental and sovereign, and thus potentially legislative, space. This is furthered in the king’s visits to the house, where he leaves first, “six of his attendants behind him, with orders that three of them should watch outside the house every night, walking round and round it from sunset to sunrise” (p 86), and after visiting and

leaving the second time, “he left the other six gentlemen behind him that there might be six of them always on guard” (p 137). However, the king’s attention is less on outside forces coming in, considering that “it was clear he was not quite comfortable about the princess” (p 86), and, rather, positing his anxiety on the princess herself. Thus, the king’s anxieties are located on Irene and her potential sexuality, and it is this that she must be protected from.

This fear finds validation precisely through the goblins’ plan A, the marriage plot, on one hand, and through the kiss Irene promises Curdie after assisting her and Lottie when they were out on the mountain, on the other. Lottie’s anxiety about Irene’s sexuality, and her job security, come to the fore in this exchange,

“Lottie, Lottie, I promised Curdie a kiss,” cried Irene.

“A princess mustn’t give kisses. It’s not at all proper,” said Lottie.

...”Nurse, a princess must *not* break her word,” said Irene, drawing herself up and standing stock-still.

Lottie did not know which the king might count the worse—to let the princess be out after sunset or to let her kiss a miner boy. She did not know that, being a gentleman, as many kings have been, he would have counted neither of them the worse. However much he might have disliked his daughter to kiss the miner boy, he would not have had her break her word for all the goblins in creation

...Formerly the goblins were her only fear; now she had to protect her charge from Curdie as well (pp 46-48).

Despite Lottie’s anxiety, the king would rather Irene begin her journey to sexual maturity with Curdie, a by all means eugenically appropriate male (especially given his royal lineage as explored in the 1883 sequel *The Princess and Curdie*), than adventure through the sexually charged spaces of the wilderness, the mountain, or the caverns beneath. Lottie’s anxiety itself stems from eugenic conceptions of ‘properness’, and her objections centre around the fact that Curdie is of lower social status than Irene, to the point that she even parallels the sexual threat of the goblins with that of Curdie. The issues of sexuality between Irene and Curdie are not resolved until the end of the narrative, where not only does Irene sleep in Curdie’s bed (p 244),

hinting again toward the sexualised nature of their relationship, but they finally do kiss after the king gives them permission.

“And now, King-Papa,” the princess went on, “I must tell you another thing. One night long ago Curdie drove the goblins away and brought Lootie and me safe from the mountain. And I promised him a kiss when we got home, but Lootie wouldn’t let me give it to him. I would not have you scold Lootie, but I want you to impress upon her that a princess *must* do as she promises.”

“Indeed she must, my child—except it be wrong,” said the king. “There, give Curdie a kiss.”

And as he spoke he held her toward him.

The princess reached down, threw her arms round Curdie’s neck, and kissed him on the mouth, saying:

“There, Curdie! There’s the kiss I promised you!” (pp 248-250).

Through this kiss, the king’s ultimate control over Irene and her sexuality materialise. The king, as parent and as sovereign, decides Irene’s correct sexual progression, and in turn justifies his extreme management of Irene’s sexual security. Thus, the narrative reifies ideas concerning the sexuality of women and children and their precariousness, specifically in the disciplinary need to control female sexuality from tipping into either excess or nonexistence, especially given Irene’s class position, and the need to juridically direct and manage children’s sexuality into appropriate spaces and expressions. Similarly, these ideas and their imbrication with eugenics discourse demonstrate the biopolitical urge, as the ‘improvement of the race’, to contain, monitor, and govern sexuality and sex.

## **Conclusion**

In regards to the points of analysis this chapter has investigated thus far, specifically the utilisation and subtle criticism of degeneration theory, physiognomy, phrenology, and origin stories, and the role that the ‘hysterization’ of women and girls plays in the reification of eugenic concepts, the question of how *The Princess and the Goblin* positions people with Variations in relation to the government of disability can be answered.

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