

CONVENTIONAL CONVENTIONS?
A MACRO-INTERTEXTUAL EXPLORATION OF LITERATURE, FILM, AND CULTURE

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The following faculty members have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts with a major in English.

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ABSTRACT

The role of the villain in literature and cinema poses a problem for traditional critical scholars: how can readers see beyond the villain's role as literal antagonist? Differing critical methods approach this problem from their respective systems, but how can a feminist critic see a creature such as *Silence of the Lamb's* Hannibal Lecter as anything but a misogynistic mass murderer? Intertextual theory seems much more apt to handle a complicated multi-dimensional character such as Hannibal the Cannibal.

Traditionally, Intertextualism has dealt primarily with examining texts within a genre with a particular focus on convention: elements of plot, character, and theme are examined in light of all other works regardless of period or authorial intent. Cinematic Intertextualism operates similarly, only now examining cinematic conventions; however, this approach suffers from a form of myopia as well. What seems lacking is a comprehensive viewpoint that examines literature and film not just within their separate formats, but intertextually between the two. What's more, in examining the links between literature and film, and even more all-encompassing viewpoint comes into sharper focus, a viewpoint in which not only are the texts themselves examined through an intertextual lens, but the criticism applied to those texts.

This project seeks to examine these comprehensive "Macro-Intertextual" connections between texts – both literary and cinematic – combined with an intertextual view of criticism as well. With this theory in mind, Hannibal Lecter is revealed as much more than cannibalistic madman: through a Macro-Intertextual lens, he and other villains can be seen as social commentary, embodying the societies in which they arise and exposing their society's hypocrisies simultaneously. Removed from structuralist theory and classic literary criticism, Macro Intertextualism forms a more all-encompassing viewpoint.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION: MACRO -INTERTEXTUALISM AND THE ROLE OF THE “VILLIAN”	1
II. MEN OF MODE: AN INTERTEXTUAL EPLORATION OF WEATLH, POWER, AND INFLUENCE	10
III. WE SEE THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY	24
IV. CONCLUSION: STARS IN THE SKY	37
BIBLIOGRAPHY	40

INTRODUCTION

MACRO-INTERTEXTUALISM AND THE ROLE OF THE “VILLAIN”

The role of the villain in literature remains an enigmatic, often philosophical, aspect of literary study. How can we best quantify the nature of villainy? Does the villain simply serve his or her role as antagonist, a foil to highlight the, presumably, heroic qualities of the “hero?” What about the idea of the villain, unrestrained by morality or societal boundaries, fascinates readers, and what role might the villain or villainous character play in challenging these boundaries or the role of the “hero?” Traditional critical theories attempt to answer these questions. The historical critic might view the villain as emblematic of the particular time in which the text is set or written: Richard III as a representation of the political gamesmanship and scheming of the Elizabethan court. A feminist approach might examine the role of the Duchess in *The Duchess of Malfi* in light of her struggle against the patriarchal power structure of 17th century Europe and even draw corollaries with modern women’s struggle against entrenched patriarchal attitudes. However, these traditional approaches struggle when pitted against a character such as the modern-day boogeyman, Hannibal the Cannibal. Audience members and critics may find it difficult to see Hannibal Lecter as anything but a brutal, sadistic mad-man. While traditional approaches can highlight certain aspects of this character, a more all-inclusive approach is needed to see Hannibal as more than mere goblin. Intertextual criticism offers a more complex, a more rounded view of this brutal maniac, a view which can shed more light on the shadow recesses of the villain and their possible roles in a cultural, societal context.

One of the most pluralistic of critical systems, Intertextuality approaches literature with all-inclusive methodology. The Formalist focuses almost exclusively on the text, the literal words on the page. Genetic critics concern themselves primarily with the author and his or her

history, and the social critics – Feminist, Marxist, etc. – examine texts through their own particular socio-economic lens. The intertextual critic is the jack-of-all-trades of the critical community, taking what he or she will from the other disciplines and examining texts in light of all other texts written. Intertextuality examines every aspect of a work: the author, the world in which it was written *and* read, and makes connections within the text itself, and embraces the self-referential, self-examining, interconnected world of post-modern thought.

Donald Keesey discusses the inherent value of Intertextualism in *Contexts for Criticism*: “Our comprehension of the *Aeneid* is improved when we read it with *Paradise Lost* in mind, and our understanding of the *Iliad* is conditioned by our reading of Virgil’s epic, even though the „lines of influence“ in each case run in the opposite direction” (Keesey 267). The study of one work of literature, even in the opposite chronological direction (or whichever direction for that matter), informs understanding and appreciation beyond mere comparison. Most critical methodologies concern themselves with one aspect of a particular text, and while these approaches certainly possess critical merit, they often create a myopic view of a work. For example, a historical examination of Homer’s *The Odyssey* might focus on the oral tradition and the evolution of spoken-word mythic tales into verse and the ancient Greeks’ preoccupation with the meddling of the gods in Human affairs and the need for this conceit in the creation of the heroic epic. Again, while this approach is a completely valid one, it ignores the impact of Homer’s epic on the greater western canon. For instance, the connection between works such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, and even *The Lord of the Rings* owe a great debt to Homer since all of these texts utilize the convention of the quest. A purely historical examination of these works would neglect the inter-connectedness of these texts and ignore the broader literary impact of Homer’s classic.

Unbound from this narrow viewpoint, an Intertextual approach embraces the interrelated nature of literature and explores the complex connectedness of texts. Intertextualism doesn't solely rely on the author's intent in writing a particular work; to the contrary, Intertextualism seeks to uncover the often overlooked, even by the author, or unconsidered ramifications of a particular text and its relationship to other works. An inherently post-structuralist approach, Intertextualism doesn't concern itself in particular with the author of a text (although this can certainly influence intertextual connections), his personal history, or the works which might have influenced the writing of a particular work, but instead focuses on the connections a work might possess with other works. This theoretical approach has expanded beyond its original focus on the interconnectedness of differing literary works. The intertextual connections between literature and cinema may seem obvious and much of the critical work on the intersection of film and literary studies focuses on the link between novels and their cinematic counterparts.

In his essay, "Postmodern adaptation: pastiche, intertextuality and re-functioning" from the *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*, Peter Brooker discusses some of the aspects of applying Intertextual criticism to adaptive studies. While he does an excellent job of breaking down the complex issues that arise when dissecting a novel to film adaptation – issues of style, the translation to a visual medium, and "the death [or loss of control over the information imparted] of the author" – he, and the vast majority of adaptive, intertextual critics, tend to view the critical approach as a straight line. One starts at the novel, works through the film, and then examines any other issues that arise from the film. Certainly, this line often branches off into multiple lines of inquiry – the novel into the film which spawns a television show which is then referenced in a song – but the straight linear progression seems almost universally maintained.

The original text, or the works that influenced that text for that matter, is left behind, relegated to a mere jumping-off point. Umberto Eco in his oft-referenced essay “Casablanca: Cult Movies and Intertextual Collage” views cinema as inherently postmodern, constantly referencing itself, copying conventions, and remarking on what has gone before. Eco transforms Brooker’s straight line into a more starburst pattern or perhaps a web of interconnectedness, but while the connections certainly become more complex, the progression stills remains moving in a forward direction.

What most intertextual critics tend to neglect is the all-encompassing aspect of Intertextuality: the concept that by examining a work – its conventions, its social and political relevance, and its thematic references – in light of other works, other authors, and other historic periods creates a much more holistic viewpoint. A text, whether an epic poem, renaissance drama, or modern cinematic thriller cannot help but be connected to every other aspect of literary history. Not only do succeeding generations of texts build on one another, reference one another, and comment on each other, but examining a particular work can lead to greater understanding and appreciation of the themes, issues, and characters present in another work and the greater literary field. The straight line or web of Intertextuality is not enough. Just as the human brain maintains billions of complex, interconnected references sliding along neurons, careening from one idea to another, so too does the constantly shifting, multi-referential network of literary connectedness which I have termed Macro-Intertextuality. Macro-Intertextuality creates a network of references which comment on all aspects of critical theory. A particular work can be viewed through any one lens – cultural criticism for instance – but what happens when the criticism itself takes on the intertextual viewpoint? If the conventions of a particular work can be viewed in light of other works, why can’t the criticism be viewed in the same way? The cultural

or psychological underpinnings of texts reveal just as much when viewed in relation to other works and other critical methods as do examining the characters themselves. A small example will help to illustrate my point.

The critically acclaimed film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000) begins with a title card which reads, “O muse! / Sing in me, and through me tell the story / Of that man skilled in all the ways of contending... / A wanderer, harried for years on end...” These few lines of text flashed on the screen at the beginning of the movie set the tone for the entire film. Immediately recognizable to some viewers as a play on the opening lines of Homer’s *The Odyssey*¹, this simple phrase sends the minds of those familiar with Homer’s work spiraling back to the foundations of literary history. The movie continues as a re-imagining of Homer’s epic poem now set in depression era America complete with singing female bandits as sirens, a one-eyed thug as the Cyclops, and a seemingly supernatural sheriff wielding a pitchfork as Poseidon. Those familiar with *The Odyssey* cannot help but make these connections.

Furthermore, these allusions refer to more than simple omages. Classic motifs and characters also emerge: the quest, the vain hero, the reclaiming of birthright/kingdom. These conventional characters and plot devices create a sense of familiarity in the audience: the audience knows, in a general way, what to expect and can understand the plot and relate to the characters through these familiar reference points. Keesey explains the phenomenon by speaking to the unconscious universality of Intertextuality:

“Intertextual” criticism, then is something neither new nor strange, and the idea that our understanding of literature depends on a knowledge of its conventions may often go unremarked because it goes, as we say, without saying. But quite as

¹ Translations differ, but the heart of the passage remains the same: the invocation to the muse and the harried Odysseus wandering for years on end.

often, one, suspects, it goes unsaid because it is *unseen*. A curious thing about conventions is that the more firmly established they are, the less likely we are to notice them. (267)

These unseen, perhaps even unnoticed conventions represent the unconscious nature of Intertextuality which originally arose from Jungian ideas concerning the “collective unconscious” and were further developed by Northrop Frye in *Anatomy of Criticism*. The concept that we, as a western culture carry these unconscious references from our literary and social memory - movies, books, and stories - forms the heart of Intertextuality, and this complex, ever expanding web of references creates the basis for intertextually understanding a text.

What’s more, those that go back and examine *The Odyssey* in light of *O Brother, Where Art Thou* gain new understanding and appreciation for the original text; similarly those armed with this comparison are further able to explore *The Aeneid* and other works which draw from *The Odyssey* such as Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Robert Frost (quoted from *Contexts for Criticism*) elegantly explains this web of Intertextuality:

A poem [here multi-textual works] is best read in light of all the other poems ever written. We read A the better to read B (we have to start somewhere; we may get very little out of A). We read B the better to read C, C the better to read D, D the better to go back and get something out of A. Progress is not the aim, but circulation. The thing is to get among the poems where they hold each other apart in their places as the stars do. (267)

In discussing Intertextuality the “stars” take the form of conventions.

The literary concept of “convention” encompasses a multitude of approaches and attitudes. Many critics view convention as mere motifs that repeat themselves over and over,

simple devices to convey the more important details of plot and character or structure and language: the conventional, trivial building blocks of a text. The Intertextual critic views convention as much, much more. The intertextualist examines conventions as the implicit connectedness of all works of literature. According to Keesey, viewed through an intertextual lens, one work cannot exist without the other; a text isolated from all others becomes incomprehensible: “Our understanding of a particular work is an analogical process by which we measure its conformity to the linguistic and literary conventions we know. The conformity is never absolute; in this sense each work is „unique.“ Yet, if the work were truly unique, if it used no conventions we knew, it would be simply unintelligible” (Keesey 266). These conventions form the building blocks of a text: references stack upon references to form a greater whole.

In a sense, this approach is not unlike mathematics: you must understand the basics – addition, multiplication, etc. – and then build on that – fractions to algebraic equations – to finally arrive at Calculus. And just as Calculus leads into Physics and Astronomy and Engineering to gain a greater understanding of the natural world, so too does Macro-Intertextuality. Here, the building blocks start small with ideas of character, plot, and theme: simple *conventional* elements of a narrative. The blocks then progress into criticism: structural, cultural, and psychological. Macro-Intertextuality takes all of these component elements and transforms them into conventions to create a larger whole. Thus traditional critical approaches become conventions unto themselves. Cultural commentary and Psychological examinations become just as referential and self referential as character and theme. For example, Jungian archetype theory becomes Joseph Campbell’s mono-myth which in turn remarks on Homer’s *Odyssey*, which lends a new perspective on George Clooney’s character of Everett (the Odysseus

character) in *O Brother, Where Art Thou*². The mosaic of criticism, archetypes, and understanding further enriches our view of a text in isolation and in respect to every other text: the stars combine to form something far greater than their individual components.

Macro-Intertextualism then examines all of these disparate approaches – the literal, the subjective, the allegorical, and the critical – to better understand the connections, the roots, and the ramifications of a text in light of the universe of literary thought. Not unlike the way in which a linguist³ examines the whole of language from form to function, the macro-intertextualist examines the greater whole of post-structuralist thought.

Continuing with Frost's star metaphor⁴, the Macro-Intertextualist might look at three stars – an examination of three interconnected works – in the sky and realize the connections between them. Then widen his or her view and realize that three stars resemble a belt – bringing those works into focus as a greater whole. Widening still, they might realize that this belt of stars belongs to a constellation – a network of interrelated texts, from cinema to literature and back again. Now, the constellation Orion becomes fully formed, a unified whole. Pulling back further still, the Macro-Intertextualist realizes that the criticism of said works shares relationships with other works and other criticism, other theory. An even greater whole, a greater understanding and appreciation culminates in a group of constellations: Orion, followed by his two loyal hounds, fighting Taurus the Bull. And, of course, Orion leads back to Homer's *Odyssey*: "Gladly then did goodly Odysseus spread his sail to the breeze; and he sat and guided his raft skilfully with the steering-oar, nor did sleep fall upon his eyelids, as he watched the

² Obviously this series of interrelated connections can go on and on: Clooney's character can then be referenced back to the archetype of the Trickster and compared with Odysseus which then leads to the role of "trickster" roles in folklore and mythology which then comments back on Campbell's monomyth, etc. etc..

³ A linguist might start at syntax and examine that in terms of historical influence using Anthropological migration patterns, and then break a language down into component parts with multiple cultural influences and then even further into the base sounds of a language before building back up to form a more complete understanding of a language.

⁴ Incorporating the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* example from before.

Pleiads, and late-setting Bootes, and the Bear, which men also call the Wain, which ever circles where it is and watches Orion” (Homer lines 269-274). Like Odysseus, the Macro-Intertextualist follows these stars, these bits of theory, criticism, text, and convention wherever they may lead. The connections, like the stars, are endless; all that matters is the perspective.

Returning to the original concept of the villain, I argue that the Macro-Intertextual viewpoint sheds new light on the complicated role of the villain in literature, cinema, and therefore society. Could a character like Hannibal Lecter fulfill a societal role beyond simple shock value or one-note antagonist? The villainous character may serve the greater good, offering commentary on not only the times in which the work was set (or written) and a greater understanding of similar time periods and similar cultural establishments? These questions are best addressed in a Macro-Intertextual viewpoint. By examining the convention of the villainous character, comparing and referencing it in light of other characters and other literary periods and genres, we gain a new understanding and appreciation of the villain and his or her role in the western literary canon and culture. The quest for the true nature of the villain begins in two seemingly incongruous cultural moments: Restoration Britain and the American 1980s.

CHAPTER 1

MEN OF MODE: AN INTERTEXTUAL EXPLORATION

OF WEALTH, POWER, AND INFLUENCE

One of the classic roles of the villain is that of seducer, the serpentine character that lures the protagonist from the righteous path: the serpent tempting Eve, Mephistopheles tempting Faustus, or even Honest John tempting Pinocchio. But what Intertextual meaning can be found in these roles? What can we make of the fact that Mephistopheles repeatedly warns Faustus to turn back and what allegorical and cultural ramifications arose from eating of the Tree of Knowledge? Could these characters, villains true, have noble intent? An Intertextual examination could reveal answers to these questions.

Two works that greatly benefit from the Macro-Intertextual approach are the Restoration comedy, *The Man of Mode*, and the 1980s morality tale, *Wall Street*. On the surface these two works have very little in common but a closer reading reveals remarkable correlation. A comedy of manners, *The Man of Mode or Sir Fopling Flutter*, by court wit George Etherege, despite its name, deals mainly with the machinations of Dorimant, rake extraordinaire and his complicated schemes to woo the women of Restoration England. The play examines the follies and hypocrisy of the complicated amoral games of the aristocratic elite. Similarly, *Wall Street* scrutinizes the high-stakes world of the financial markets of the American 1980s. It analyzes the young and hungry Bud Fox's Faustian deal with the cold-blooded Wall Street raider, Gordon Gekko. The film highlights the wealth-obsessed culture of the 80s, where money substitutes morality and winning is the only option. Both works present their prospective societies at the height of their supposed ideals and yet comment and disassemble these *values* as inherently false. Ronald

Bermen, speaking of the *Man of Mode*, sees presenting this world as a “culmination of a way of thought,” displaying society’s values in an effort to ultimately expose and “dismiss” them (460).

One such “value” in Restoration Britain was the importance of appearance and the need to “play” one’s assigned role. An illuminating scene in *Man of Mode* involves Young Bellair and Harriet; old Bellair (his father) wishes Young Bellair to marry Harriet against his son’s wishes, and is, in fact, holding his son’s inheritance over his head to ensure the match. Harriet also objects to the match as she has eyes for Dorimant. The two must hide their true feeling and in Act III Scene 2, stage their own little production with Old Bellair and Lady Woodvill looking on:

LADY WOODVILL. See your son and my daughter. They have improved their acquaintance since they were within.

OLD BELAIR. Adod, methinks they have! Let’s keep back and observe.

YOUNG BELLAIR. [to Harriet] Now for a look and gestures that may persuade
„em I am saying all the passionate things imaginable.

HARRIET. Your head a little more on one side. Ease yourself on your left leg
and play with your right hand....

YOUNG BELLAIR. Clap your hand upon your bosom, hold down your gown.
Shrug a little, draw up your breasts and let „em fall again, gently, with a sigh or
two, *etc*....

HARRIET. By the good instructions you give, I suspect you for one of those
malicious observers who watch people’s eyes, and from innocent looks make
scandalous conclusions....

YOUNG BELLAIR. Clap your fan thin in both your hands, snatch it to your mouth, smile, and with a lively motion fling your body a little forwards. So! Now spread it, fall back on the sudden, cover your face with it, and break out into a loud laughter. – Take up! Look grave and fall a-fanning to yourself. Admirably well acted! (3.2.116)

This complicated courtship ritual highlights the need for duplicity in Restoration society. The two must act the part to fit in. They cannot risk going against their parents' wishes without being disinherited. Wealth, or the promise of wealth, guides their actions. The need for deception highlights an all too common societal theme: one must hide one's nature to succeed in society. Intertextually, this need to deceive reveals one aspect of the role of the villain. For the most part, the villain has no societally enforced need for personal deception. They might deceive others to accomplish their goals, but the villain operates outside of societal boundaries and is free of these restrictions. Of course the notion of *acting* a part is not new: Hamlet's "all the world's a stage" was a cliché when Shakespeare wrote it. But, as in the English Renaissance, the idea of playing the part in order to remain in society's good graces resonates throughout *Man of Mode* if only to highlight the "acute realization that life is not really like *this*" (Bermen 463).

Bud Fox also has a part to play. He must assume an identity to fit into the world he so desperately wants to enter. In the opening scenes of the movie, we see Bud coming into his office filled with confidence and bravado. He jokes/flirts with the receptionist and his co-workers, exuding charm and enthusiasm, but soon, after a disheartening day in the trenches of Wall Street, we see him broken and somber, forced back into the blue-collar world of his father, asking him for money. Later, before his first meeting with Gekko, he is back on his game when talking to the receptionist, but, before he finally gains entrance to the office of his soon-to-be

mentor, we see the true Bud – Buddy the nervous, blue-collar boy, way out of his league: a supplicant, humbled at the foot of his master.

Later, after first day at the behest of his new master, Bud sits at lunch with Gekko and lapses into his huckster role once more, saying, “Thank you, Mr. Gekko. Thank you for the chance. You will not regret this. You’re with a winner.” Gekko responds with a knowing look, “Right. Right,” gets up and admonishes Bud to “save the cheap salesman talk, will ya? It’s obvious.” Now these instances can certainly be taken as Bud finding his way in his new role, but viewed through the scene between Young Bellair and Harriet, we can see bud acting the part he believes he has to play, performing for those around him to gain advantage, just as Bellair and Harriet must perform to keep their inheritance. They all must act the way that society wants them to act to remain, or gain entry to, the upper levels of the elite.

Sir Fopling Flutter also must play his part to win his prize. Fopling, a fop in name and action, performs his role ably. His first entrance into the play is one of great flourish and exuberance. Splendidly dressed in the latest fashions, he struts onto the stage spewing platitudes, attempting to gain favor with those assembled:

SIR FOPLING. [To LADY TOWNLEY] Madam, I kiss your hands. I see yesterday was nothing of chance; the *belles assemblees* form themselves here every day. [To EMILIA] Lady, your servant. – Dorimant, let me embrace thee. Without lying, I have not met with any of my acquaintance who retain so much of Paris as thou dost – the very air thou hadst when the marquise mistook thee i’ th’ Tuileries and cried „He chevalier!“ and then begged thy pardon.

DORIMANT. I would fain wear in fashion as long as I can, sir. „Tis a thing to be valued in men as will as baubles.

SIR FOPLING. Thou art a man of wit and understands the town. Prithee let thee and I be intimate. There is no living without making some good man the confidant of our pleasures. (3.2.120-121).

Immediately, this display brings to mind the entrance of Bud Fox: strutting and backslapping his coworkers, currying favor. And like Bud, Fopling immediately seizes on the strongest man in the room: Dorimant. He instinctually knows that by getting close to Dorimant, he increases his station. Unfortunately for Fopling, Dorimant, like Gekko, sees right through him.

Sir Fopling Flutter, the titular Man of Mode, has transmogrified himself into the classic fop. Wearing the height of fashion and peppering his speech with French terms, Fopling has created a character for himself to play. He was not always so. Dorimant reveals his origins, saying, “He has no more excellence in his heels than in his head. He went to Paris a plain, bashful English blockhead and is returned a fine, undertaking French fop” (4.1.139). While Fopling is assumedly a member of the aristocracy (he seems to have plenty of money), he has not been accepted by the social elite. It is only through his daily performance, playing the fop, that he can gain any manner of approval. Like Bud Fox, Fopling had to remake himself to fit in. He patterns his actions after what he thinks will make him acceptable to aristocratic society, but, like Bud, he is easily unmasked. Dorimant; his friend, Medley; and Young Bellair share their first impressions of him:

YOUNG BELLAIR. He thinks himself the pattern of modern gallantry.

DORIMANT. He is indeed the pattern of modern foppery.

MEDLEY. He was yesterday at the play, with a pair of gloves up to his elbows and a periwig more exactly curled than a lady’s head newly dressed for a ball

YOUNG BELLAIR. What a pretty lisp he has!

DORIMANT. Ho, that he affects in imitation of the people of the people of quality of France.

MEDLEY. His head stands for the most part on one side, and his looks are more languishing than a lady's when she lolls at stretch in her coach or leans her head carelessly against the side of a box ,i the playhouse.

DORIMANT. He is a person indeed of great acquired follies. (1.1.98)

Out of place in the Restoration aristocracy, Fopling has molded himself into the image that he believes will win him acceptance.

Fopling disguises his banality in the latest Paris fashions: a suit of armor as it were. He takes great pains to mention his attire and is oblivious when those around him mockingly play along:

LADY TOWNLEY. [to EMELIA] He's very fine.

EMILIA. Extreme proper!

SIR FOPLING. A slight suit I made to appear in at my first arrival – not worthy your consideration, ladies.

DORIMANT. The pantaloons are very well mounted.

SIR FOPLING. The tassels are new and pretty.

MEDLEY. I never saw a coat better cut.

SIR FOPLING. It makes me show long-waisted, and I think slender.

DORIMANT. That's the shape our ladies dote on.

MEDLEY. Your breech, though, is a handful too high, in my eye, Sir Fopling.

SIR FOPLING. Peace, Medley, I have wished it lower a thousand times, but a pox on't, ,i will not be!

LADY TOWNLEY. His gloves are will fringed, large and graceful.

SIR FOPLING. I was always eminent for being *bien gante*.

EMILIA. He wears nothing but what are original of the most famous hands in Paris. (3.2.122)

Fopling cannot see that the others view him as a buffoon, and he spends the whole play unaware of their disdain. The illusion that he has created is enough to sustain his ego. The material possessions that he surrounds himself with fulfill the emptiness that consumes him.

Bud Fox shares many of the same weaknesses as Sir Fopling Flutter. He too falls victim to the illusion that clothing and material goods make him who he is. After he falls in with Gordon Gekko, his wardrobe remarkably improves. Gone are the drab, cheap suits that marked the beginning scenes. Now he appears dressed in dark, obviously expensive suits. In the later scenes even his casual clothes are “Hamptonesque”: lots of khakis and sweaters, dressing the part. Like Fopling, he has eschewed his working class clothes to better fit in to the elite crowd he wishes to join.

This longing demonstrates the heart of Bud’s character: desire. Born into a working class world, Bud is the consummate outsider; he yearns for the high-powered, uber-wealthy world of the Wall Street insider. He says it best himself, after being shafted for the losses of a delinquent account: “You know what my dream is? Is to one day be on the other end of that phone.” He craves the wealth and influence of the Gordon Gekkos of the world but is constantly denied entry. In a telling scene, after Bud is rebuked by Gekko’s secretary, the camera pans to the golden doors of Gekko’s office as a group of richly appointed suits walk through the doorway, revealing the white elephant himself, Gordon Gekko. Then the doors slowly close, trapping Bud from the world he desperately craves.

The quest for wealth and power will be Bud's ruin. Bud already makes more money than his father, but he still must return to the blue-collar bar to ask his father for money. "There is no nobility in poverty anymore," he says after listing the expenses he has. Bud cannot be satisfied with the modest home and simple pleasures of his father, and this scene highlights the two worlds that Bud straddles. Later, while trying to win access to Gekko, he holds up a copy of *Fortune* magazine with Gekko on the cover and explains that he knew about Gekko's birthday because he "read about it in the Bible." The accumulation of wealth and power has replaced the traditional moral code. Bud rejects the hardworking values of his father for the materialistic desires of Gekko. After his first big "win" for Gekko, a hooker shows up at Bud's door and they take a limo ride. As the prostitute seduces him, she asks, "what do you like?" not in a sexual sense, but what stocks do you like? They then proceed to mix sexual and business entendres further blurring the lines between sex, money, and power. This sentiment also foreshadows Gekko's later statement during the "seduction" scene that profit is "better than sex." Soon, Bud becomes firmly ensnared in Gekko's web.

Seduced by Gekko, Bud further damns himself by starting a lucrative business spying on corporations and using the information to manipulate the Stock Market to make himself and Gekko richer. Bud is eventually betrayed by his master when Gekko goes behind his back to break-up the airline that his father works for, instead of saving it as was Bud's intent. After this turning point we see Bud, broken, sitting in his lavishly decorated apartment, eating take-out pizza and drinking beer instead of his earlier meals of sushi and wine. He reverts to his working class origins, finding comfort in the familiar. This betrayal marks the end for Bud, faced with the realization that he is in far over his head, he turns on Gekko, recording him boasting of illegal deals they participated in. He ends the film walking up the steps of the courthouse, faced with

jail time for insider trading. Still, he has, apparently, learned his lesson, and we assume he has given up his lust for wealth, or has he?

Dorimant's pursuit of Harriet in *Man of Mode* ends in typical comedic fashion: the two pair off in anticipated wedded bliss, retiring with the other paired-off couples to the country to frolic in their love. However, Ronald Bermen views this retreat as commentary on the traditional form and an extension of the literary versus reality motif running throughout the play: "They move cautiously and comically from feeling to wit, from the ideal of heroic love to the modern awareness of love as a self-destructive if not ridiculous situation" (Bermen 467). Bermen's view of the self-awareness of the characters echoes in Bud Fox's final scene in the car listening to his father's moralizing. With this more cynical view in mind, Bud Fox's blank look takes on new meaning: he hasn't learned a thing. His somber trek up the court house steps now more aptly reflects a child's chastened retreat up the stairs to his room, anticipating hours of tedium. If Bud was truly repentant, would he not march up the steps, head held high in moral righteousness? Again, the view of one work colors the view of another.

Although there is no neat Hollywood ending for Fopling Flutter, he too is manipulated into playing a game far above his understanding. Dorimant deceives the naïve fop into unwittingly helping him in his conquests. He places Fopling in the hands of Mrs. Loveit, convincing her that he is jealous of Fopling's attentions towards her. She in turn takes the bait and attempts to use Fopling to make Dorimant jealous. This, of course, only plays into Dorimant's hands because now he can accuse Loveit of having desire for someone other than him. Fopling serves only as a pawn in this complicated game of lust and desire. Like Bud, in the end, he is only a useful tool that the true masters can manipulate into doing their dirty work. Dorimant uses Fopling just as Gekko manipulated Bud, and both are just as easily cast off when

their usefulness is at an end. Fopling, in the final act, perhaps finally understanding his diminutive role in the events unfolding around him, exclaims, “Dorimant, thou hast engaged me in a pretty business.” Dorimant dismissively replies, “I have not the leisure now to talk about it” (129). Having won his stakes in *his* game, the master manipulator dismisses his pawn with barely a shrug. Fopling has no more lines.

Fopling, like Bud Fox, represents the universal everyman, a small-time hustler attempting to run with the big dogs and ultimately failing. While social mobility has certainly come a long way since 17th century Great Britain, the deck remains stacked against the little guy. These two works, if nothing else, represent the futility of the constant, relentless clamor for status and power. Fopling Flutterer and Bud Fox fail not only because they strive for too much, but also because thy quest for ignoble purposes. The world of Dorimant and Gordon Gekko is filled with just as many pitfalls and cosmetic judgments as their more humble counterparts, and the two works shine a light on this equally hypocritical, if more lavish, world. George Etherege notes in the Epilogue to *Man of Mode*, “He’s Knight o’ th’ shire, and represents ye all. From each he meets he culls whate’er he can; Legion’s his name, a people in a man” (5.2.130). Etherege sees Fopling embodied in his society: strutting along the park lanes and wearing masks to hide their petty deceptions in the theatres. He also know his audience will see themselves. *Chicago Sun-Times* critic Roger Ebert sees the same notion in *Wall Street*: “The movie can be followed by anybody, because the details of stock manipulation are all filtered though transparent layers of greed. Most of the time we know what’s going on. All of the time, we know why” (Ebert). Greed for love, for power, for status, all of these aspects of the mortal sin resound in the two works and become embodied in two main figures.

Dorimant, the rake, the gamesman, the paragon of his time represents the ultimate in Restoration aristocratic arrogance, just as Gordon Gekko, Gekko the Great, embodies the avarice and moral ambiguity of the self-centered American 80s. Both epitomize the wanton excess of their eras. Gekko, when asked by Bud Fox “why do you need to wreck this company?” responds, simply, with, “because it’s wreckable.” There is no malice in his response, only an arrogant self-serving justification: because I can.

Dorimant too lies and manipulates, seduces, and destroys simply because that is what one does. Society sets up the rules, and these two simply play them out. Dorimant delights in wordplay as illustrated in his exchange with Harriet:

DORIMANT. You were talking of play, madam. Pray, what may be your stint?

HARRIET. A little harmless discourse in public walks or at most an appointment in a box, barefaced, at the playhouse. You are for masks and private meetings, where women engage for all they are worth, I hear.

DORIMANT. I have been used to deep play, but I can make on at small game when I like my gamester well.

HARRIET. And be so unconcerned you’ll ha’ no pleasure in’t.

DORIMANT. Where there is considerable sum to be won, the hope of drawing people in makes every trifle considerable. (3.3.126)

Both are masters of seduction and maneuver their chess pieces across their boards to fulfill their ends. Dorimant exploits his servants and the working classes to spy on others. In the opening scene of *The Man of Mode*, he is seen holding court, as it were, to a pair of commoners who bring him news of the newly arrived heiress in town. Gekko too utilizes Bud, perhaps not a commoner, but someone he can easily entice with money to do his bidding. He hooks Bud with

the one thing he knows that Bud cannot refuse: “I’m not talking about some \$400,000-a-year working stiff flying first class and being comfortable. I’m talking about liquid. Rich enough to have your own jet. Rich enough not to waste time. Fifty, \$100 million, Buddy. A player... or nothing.” Of course, Bud’s only response to this is a meek “o.k. Mr. Gekko, you got me.” Gekko’s only response is a knowing smile: the devil’s smile.

Dorimant and Gekko possess something of the demonic about them and it is plain for all to see; in fact, it only makes them all the more desirable. Lady Woodvil exclaims of Dorimant, “Oh, he has a tongue, they say, would tempt the angels to a second fall” (3.3.127). All of the people surrounding both Dorimant and Gekko long for their good wishes whether it bodes good or ill for them. Mrs. Loveit cannot resist Dorimant even though she knows she is being manipulated: “I know he is a devil, but he has something of the angel yet undefaced in him, which makes him so charming and agreeable that I must love him, be he never so wicked (2.2.106). Gekko too can seem to do no wrong and is expert in swaying those around him to succumb to his ideals. He corrupts Bud and even convinces a crowd of stockholders to vote his way in his famous speech: “Greed, for lack of better word, is good. Greed is right. Greed works.” Here is a man, in front of a hostile crowd, convincing them that one of the cardinal sins is good. Lucifer⁵ could only hope for so smooth a tongue.

Gekko and Dorimant both represent a common convention in the form of the seducer: amoral and yet unmistakably alluring. They both represent the unabashed, confident man of power, secure in their wickedness and yet both “witty, charming, and magnetic” (Berglund 369). Both texts seem to revel in the characters’ vice, and while *Wall Street* arguably paints Gekko as

⁵ Macro-Intertextually speaking this reference could easily veer off into a discussion of the character of Lucifer in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and the (somewhat out of fashion) criticism that views Lucifer as a classically heroic character. At the very least, the seductive nature of Dorimant, Gekko, and Lucifer resonates throughout the unconscious.

the villain, there exists an interesting impulse to see Gekko as simply playing the role that society places him into. Like Dorimant, Gekko is a member of the “monied middle class” at odds with the true power brokers in the form of the old world tycoon, Sir Larry Wildman (Berglund 370). Gekko began with nothing and fought and scrapped his way to become the Wall Street raider he represents. Lisa Berglund notes the dangers of mistaking the depiction of Dorimant as moralistic judgment and the argument can equally be applied to Gordon Gekko. Berglund makes an excellent case for Dorimant (and other characters of wit) critiquing their society “from within” (370). Instead of condemning Dorimant’s vice, she sees him as foil for the society, exposing the hypocrisy of the rake by embodying it. By speaking in Metaphor – remarks on health and robustness and games of chance (gambling) instead of love and marriage – the wits are able to allegorically critique their own society without drowning in moralistic condemnation. The characters in *Wall Street* operate similarly, speaking in terms of business and sex rather than issues of moral correctness and wrongness. The only character that truly condemns the society in which he finds himself is Bud’s father Carl, a character which constantly portrayed as moralizing, old-fashioned, and out of touch with modernity. The characters in both works understand the world they live in and, in fact, embrace the hypocritical values of their times, yet they are self-aware enough to critique their own societies without sermonizing

All four of these characters schemes and ambitions intertwine until one flows smoothly into the other. Fopling’s disastrous attempts to woo his way into aristocratic society echoes throughout Bud’s attempt to break into the upper echelons of the power-elite. Interestingly, both bud and Fopling operate in similar roles as foils to their more successful counterparts: neither seems aware of the power struggles and social critiques occurring around them – Gekko’s

struggle for acceptance when pitted against the “old money” world and Dorimant and his fellow wit’s observations on Restoration society. Berglund notes of Fopling: “Sir Fopling penetrates the metaphors of Dorimant and Medley and discloses their polite secrets; he does so, however, because he is sublimely unaware that anything has been concealed” (675). Both characters embody the same conventional character: the ambitious outsider. And both are pitted against their more seductive counterparts. Dorimant’s complicated manipulations are revealed in Gekko’s power plays. The two works, dissimilar at first reveal themselves through the other. By understanding Bud’s longing for wealth and power, we gain greater insight into Fopling’s desperate need for acceptance, and by delving into Gordon Gekko’s black heart we further understand the machinations of Dorimant. Two works of two radically different times flow together seamlessly and echo Bud’s searching question: “Who am I?”

CHAPTER 2

WE SEE THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY

One of the most haunting characters of modern cinema is that of Hannibal Lecter, Hannibal the Cannibal. Hannibal appears in a series of books by Thomas Harris, but never entered the collective psyche as a modern boogeyman until the cinematic adaptations of Harris' books, especially in *The Silence of the Lambs* (*Silence*) and the sequel, *Hannibal*. Hannibal dispatches his victims with artistic aplomb, casually murdering his way through the movies. No mere stereotypical movie madman (although it could be argued that Hannibal himself has spawned a stereotype – the artful, intelligent killer), Hannibal Lecter's killings are carefully orchestrated masterpieces performed with merciless efficiency. But why would a mindless killer resonate so profoundly with audiences? What role might an unmerciful killer serve in a society, modern or otherwise? Why the fascination with what so many dismiss as pure animalistic carnage, and what might that killer reflect in society's, in the viewer's, own psyche?

What makes a hero a hero or a villain a villain? Can a hero be monstrous, commit monstrous acts and still be considered heroic? One of John Webster's more enigmatic "heroes," Bosola, from *The Duchess of Malfi*, exemplifies these questions. Bosola, murderer for hire, killer of women and children, seems an unlikely hero, and yet, there is nobility in his heart and the reader of the play is drawn to him; the dark path contains more shadows than the sunlit road and we relish in those dusky recesses. While Bosola seems to be little more than a heartless killer, hungering for gold at the sake of his soul, an intertextual reading of his character reveals shades of gray.

Bosola is not a good man. Unlike many classic heroes, he possesses very little in the way of heroic qualities. An admitted killer in the Cardinal's service, he lusts for money as a means of

advancement. He thrashes around the stage in the early acts of the play, lashing out at anyone who threatens his personal agendas. Bitterness eats at him, and in the first scene of the play he reveals his situation:

He and his brother [Ferdinand and the Cardinal] are like plum trees that grow crooked over standing pools; they are rich and o'erladen with fruit, but none but crows, pies, and caterpillars feed on them. Could I be one of their flattering panders, I would hang on their ears like a horse leech till I were full and then drop off. I pray, leave me. Who would rely upon these miserable dependencies, in expectation to be advanced tomorrow? (1463)

Bosola realizes his situation. He is trapped in service to the Cardinal. What place is there for a hired killer? Frank Whigham views Bosola as an emerging class of worker in his essay "Sexual and Social Mobility in *The Duchess of Malfi*." Whigham addresses the complicated situation of the hired soldiers who fought in the War of the Roses as exemplified by Bosola: "Then as now this figure was unprovided for, and Bosola has not even the minimal fact of service to his country [as he was in personal service to the Cardinal] to cushion his return to social life. He has been a more private soldier and has taken the fall. He will not rise in the pub or feast his friends on Saint Crispin's Day. He can only sneer bitterly at his employers for their relative depravity" (177). Bosola cannot bring himself to be one of the many fawning courtiers of Ferdinand and the Cardinal, but what choice does he have? He must play his role:

What creature ever fed worse than hoping Tantalus? Nor ever died any man more fearfully than he that hoped for a pardon. There are rewards for hawks and dogs when they have done us service; but for a soldier that hazards his limbs in a battle, nothing but a kind of geometry is his last supportation. (1463)

Bosola, trapped in a time between emerging economic systems – aristocratic patronage and market-based employment – must forge an identity not based on lineage but on economics⁶.

Whigham notes, “Webster offers us the first tragic figure whose isolation is formulated in terms of employment by another” (177). Bosola cannot see any other recourse than to be the Cardinal’s dog, serving at his master’s feet.

The image of “playing the dog” instantly brings up the idea of another Renaissance literary figure: Shakespeare’s Richard III. In 3 Henry VI, Richard (then Gloucester) delivers his infamous soliloquy over the body of Henry VI:

Had I not reason, think ye, to make haste,
And seek their ruin that usurp'd our right?
The midwife wonder'd and the women cried
'O, Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth!
And so I was; which plainly signified
That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.
Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.
I have no brother, I am like no brother;
And this word 'love,' which graybeards call divine,
Be resident in men like one another
And not in me: I am myself alone. (154)

⁶ While I briefly touch on the idea of Bosola as mercenary (in favor of the more universal idea of corruption and authority discussed later in the essay), this image bears further intertextual examination. The mercenary as unrepentant hero occurs quite often in Literature and Film. The struggle for acceptance and self-realization plays out in films such as *Payback*, *Man on Fire*, and *Casablanca* as well as numerous westerns such as *The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly*. Examining the characters in these movies as well as characters such as Bosola and Robert Jordan from Hemingway’s *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, especially in contrast to other more traditional depictions of soldiers could be quite interesting.

Like Bosola, Richard's bitterness and desire overwhelms him. Cursed by life, he sees no recourse but to play the role the universe has assigned him (a nice piece of meta-drama as well, as the audience is well aware that they are watching a play with assigned roles). Both Bosola and Richard have let their own misfortunes corrupt them, turning them from the righteous path. In *Richard III*, Richard continues the fall he began in *3 Henry VI* and Antonio's dark prophecy about Bosola holds true just as much for Richard III:

Tis great pity
He should be thus neglected; I have heard
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy
Will poison all his goodness; for, I'll tell you,
If too immorderate sleep be truly said
To be an inward rust unto the soul,
It then doth follow want of action
Breeds all black malcontents and their close rearing,
Like moths in cloth, do hurt for want of wearing. (1464)

The two dark figures do more than resemble each other; by examining one we gain insight into the other and vice versa. Richard's single-minded determination and bitterness at his treatment can only enrich our understanding of Bosola's resentment at his manipulation. Both want more than power, more than riches: they want vengeance for the injustices heaped upon them. Viewing Bosola through the lens of Richard further enriches our understanding and appreciation of these characters. Both have been cast in the role of the outsider in their respective societies: Bosola, discarded for his misdeeds and Richard for the accidents of his birth. This notion of the Outsider plays a significant impact on their evolution as villains: On the

one hand, they may now operate apart from society, apart from the morality and norms of society, apart from the restrictions of restraint, and on the other hand, their exile gives them all of the personal justification they may need to commit whatever heinous act they see fit to achieve their goals. They have been jilted. Why not return the favor? Bosola craves retribution and while it takes until the end of the play for him to extract his revenge, knowing his true motives from the outset, through intertextual reading, reveals his character more fully.

Even though his motives might be questionable, there is no doubt about Bosola's cruelty. He performs his gruesome duties with heartless efficiency. He dispatches the Duchess and her attendant in an almost casual way:

BOSOLA. Strangling: here are your executioners.

DUCHESS. I forgive them:

The apoplexy, catarrh, or cough o' th' lungs

Would do as much as they do.

BOSOLA. Doth not death not fright you?

DUCHESS. Who would be afraid on 't,

Knowing to meet such excellent company

In th' other world?

BOSOLA. Yet, methinks,

The manner of your death should much afflict you:

This cord should terrify you. (1514)

His mind made up, Bosola does not waver from his task. He approaches murder with the grim efficiency of the craftsman. No mercy exists in his heart. He casually orders the murder of the Duchess's children and her attendant saying, "Fetch her. Some other strangle the children"

(1515). At this point, the audience is faced with an interesting dilemma: how to view this brutality? Horror would be the immediate response, but viewed with the cultural implications of an Intertextual reading in mind, the event and Bosola's almost flippant comment becomes at once horrible and humorous; Hannibal's quips before dispatching his victim elicits a similar reaction. While this cold-heartedness obviously resembles the machinations of Richard III, especially in light of his ordering the deaths of children, it also resembles more modern characters.

Superficially, Hannibal Lecter resembles both Bosola and Richard III; all seem to be horrible villains, murdering their way through their respective texts, killing without mercy and slaughtering without reason: wild animals butchering for its own sake. Wolfe and Elmer view Lecter as reinforcing the idea "of human society as unremittingly feral, as never-ending sacrifice." They continue, "Dog eat Dog. People Are Sheep. Ambling at film's end down the Caribbean thoroughfare [from *Silence*] in his bad hairpiece and baggy linen suit, Lecter becomes the postmodern Wolf in Sheep's Clothing" (145). Bosola and Richard III could not be described more aptly (complete with "dog" reference). These predators represent the iron will and steely resolve of the primal killer – "Nature, red in tooth and claw" as it were. The coldness of Bosola echoes in Hannibal's "okey dokey" before casually disemboweling and hanging one of his victims.

Wolf and Elmer discuss an interesting concept reflected in the film's "totemic" characters: "Buffalo" Bill, "Starling", and Catherine "Martin" (who serves as Starlings foil, representative of her had she not undergone the trials of her past and remained the simple, country girl she might have become). Wolf and Elmer break down these animalistic roles into types including the *animalized human*, capable "of all manner of brutalizations," and the

humanized human, the more “wishful category, sovereign and untroubled.” These types converge in the figure of Hannibal Lecter, “the figure who seems to embody *both* poles in their (impossible) purity” (147). This notion of animality reoccurs again and again throughout the film: Hannibal’s mask, cage, and bindings; Catherine’s holding pen; and Buffalo Bills “skinning of his humps.” Dr. Chilton, Lecter’s *keeper*, describes Lecter in bestial terms, echoing the animal motif: “Oh, he’s a monster. A pure psychopath. So rare to capture one alive.” Interestingly, this statement comments on Wolf and Elmer’s classification of Lecter: he is at once a monster, a rampaging beast, using his teeth to tear out the tongue of a nurse at the asylum, and yet he is a psychopath, perhaps the most human of *humanized humans*, a man capable of detaching his emotions so completely from his actions that while attacking the nurse “his pulse never got over eighty-five.” Lecter has conquered his “beastly” instincts. He does not feed on his emotions; he feeds on other people. This perversion of logic echoes in Bosola’s killing of the duchess to “save her” and again in Richard III’s wooing of Lady Anne where he twists logic to explain his killing of her husband, simply because of his passion *for* her. All three embody this duality of nature; they are at once beasts and the most human of humans, capable of monstrous deeds justified with “human” logic.

In a Macro-Intertextual viewpoint, Whigham comments on Wolf and Elmer’s concept of the *animalization* of these disparate characters. He remarks on Bosola’s “unwitting murder of Antonio” at the end of the play, describing his attempts to justify his actions in relation to the god and the cosmos. Bosola says, “We are merely the stars” tennis-balls, struck and banded / Which way please them.” Whigham comments, “The dream of self-substantiation through self-abbegation he now rejects as pointless, swearing „I will not imitate things glorious, / No more that base: I’ll be mine own example” (181). Bosola, seeking to understand himself and the

events around him, attempts to rationalize his actions intellectually as *humanized human*. However, he fails to achieve any self-enlightenment and abandons the attempt. As Whigham points out, “If he cannot realize himself in any cosmic or social terms, he may yet seek identity *par sibi*, and so he grimly carries out a revenge now surely his own” (181). Bosola abandons the human in favor of the base and proceeds to remorselessly murder anyone that stands in the way of his vengeance, echoing Lecter’s fusion of the *humanized human* and the *animalized human*.

Returning to the idea of the totemic character, what animal does Lecter embody? Wolf and Elmer aptly point out that “Lecter” is nearly identical to the Latin “lector” or reader. Thus the audience also embodies the combination of *animalized human* and *humanized human*, at once able to rationally deal with the brutality and cruelty on the screen as fiction and yet also relishing in the animalistic acts of Lecter at the same time. Lecter reinforces this notion in his captivity scenes in *Silence*. He questions Starling about her past, dissecting her for his own amusement, literally reading her. These scenes resemble the detached method of the classic Freudian analyst with the patient on the couch, the analyst aloof and to the side. As Starling recounts her troubled past, Lecter looks away from her. Arthur Saltzman describes Lecter’s attitude: “In each case, neither raving nor wrath marks the monster so definitively as the studied remove from which he operates. Urbanity seems first to conceal his nature, then to convey it” (236). Lecter is detached the epitome of the *humanized human*, totally in control of his responses and emotions.

More importantly, he looks into the camera, into the audience, dissecting them as well, perhaps remarking on the fact that the audience bears some examination as well. We are watching these horrific events unfold, secretly reveling in Hannibal’s viciousness. Richard III also involves the audience in his cunning plans through his soliloquies, in a sense making the audience coconspirators to his brutal deeds. “Taking the audience, so to speak, into his

confidence,” as Gerald Camp (speaking of Olivier’s film performance of *Richard III*) notes⁷ (117). Indeed, many film adaptations of *Richard III* seem to have a hard time dealing with his soliloquies. Most films, in an effort to avoid breaking the audience’s suspension of disbelief, tend to not break the fourth wall; however, in adapting Shakespeare, many filmmakers choose to acknowledge “the presence” of “the audience.” In both Lecter and Richard’s cases this addition adds another subtle layer to the film; the viewer becomes more engaged with the characters, perhaps even complicit in their actions. The audience knows Richard’s dark plans and the act of telling, of confessing, removes him of guilt; in fact he may now relish in his deeds: “I am determined to prove a villain / And hate the idle pleasures of these days” (4). Lecter too relishes his morsel, turning away from Starling as she relates the killing of the lambs and closing his eyes in obvious pleasure at her misery. Both characters, in moments of meta-realization involve their audiences in their deeds and Richard’s soliloquies inform Hannibal’s knowing, judging eyes.

Like Bosola, enemies surround Hannibal. The FBI and other law enforcement agencies hound him at every step; although, interestingly, the authorities represent the most corrupt organizations in the film. The Department of Justice plays lap dog to Mason Verger, one of Lecter’s early victims, and the Italian policeman that discovers Lecter in Italy betrays himself and his oaths, selling Lecter to Verger rather than arresting him as is his duty. The morality of the movie reverses itself; the most “moral” person, other than Clarice Starling, is Hannibal Lecter himself, the monster.

Treachery and deceit surround Bosola as well. The Cardinal and his brother, Ferdinand, using Bosola as their agent, conspire to murder the Duchess and her progeny at every turn. As

⁷ While much has been written on the purpose and nature of the soliloquy as a literary device, there seems to be little focusing on its adaptation to film. While breaking the fourth wall of cinema carries its own conventions, and intertextual view in light of the soliloquy bears further study.

Whigham argues, Bosola, lacking the traditional methods of establishing identity through “rule and fealty,” must turn to a more mercenary means of advancement:

This sense of desire helps construe what would otherwise seem a simply “depraved” ongoing decision to continue doing Ferdinand’s dirty work, much in spite, he claims, of his own good nature. Compulsively seeking to be paid, recognized, acknowledged, identified, Bosola expends efforts that intensify his sense of need but prove unequal to the task of filling it. The cash payment is the full exchange value to be got from this employer. (178)

While Whigham tends to discount the moral aspect of Bosola’s actions, the concept remains the same: Ferdinand and the Cardinal, representing the established power structure – the state and the church, respectively - remain the truly corrupt enterprise. Hannibal Lecter too sees the inherent corruption of authority. As Hannibal says to Starling, “they are weak and unruly and believe in nothing.” It then becomes both Lecter and Bosola’s duty, in an, admittedly, twisted way, to expose these false officials, consigning them to their fates: “The office of justice is perverted quite / When one thief hangs another. / Who shall dare / To reveal this?” (1516). In fact, this seems to be their true purpose. Before Lecter had his way with him, Mason Verger was a pedophile, using his wealth and power to escape justice. Lecter crippled him, horribly disfiguring his face. Now, Verger’s inner ugliness is apparent for all to see. Bosola too, exposes the twisted minds of both the Cardinal and the incestuous Ferdinand. While labeling Hannibal and Bosola “heroes” may seem inappropriate, they still serve the same functions within their respective works.

Richard III also serves a societal role; he, like Bosola and Lecter exposes hypocrisy. While there can be little doubt that Richard serves his own ends, through his machinations he

exposes the duplicity of those around him. Hastings and Buckingham both waste little time in latching onto Richard, sharing in his ambitious schemes. They profess to nobility, but the ever-aware Richard sees right through them. If nothing else, these three characters are without self-deception. While they may meander through their own, respective, moral wastelands, they remain true to themselves. This is one of the hallmarks of the hero: the ability to cast off the deceptions of others, keeping themselves pure. In this respect, Bosola, Richard III, and Hannibal Lecter are no different than the Redcrosse Knight throwing off the illusions of Archimago or Odysseus wresting free from the Siren. These anti-heroes also share something else with their more traditional brethren.

Like the classic hero, the heroic villain shares a unifying focus: protecting the innocent (if in their own ways). Just as Red Crosse has his Una, these three have their own symbol of innocence. Although this seems a strange concept considering that they spend much of the time corrupting, murdering, and lusting after their respective innocents, they all, in essence, seek to preserve innocence. Hannibal Lecter seems inexplicably drawn to FBI agent Clarice Starling. Their relationship stretches from the first film, and while it could be argued that Lecter only used his relationship with Clarice to facilitate his own escape, an unmistakable bond formed between the two. Lecter, the monster, could not help but be drawn to noble innocence, King Kong to his fair maiden. Lecter risks his life many times simply to catch a glimpse of Clarice. In the final scenes of *Hannibal*, he takes gruesome revenge on the corrupt federal agent that has wronged her, ignoring her repeated attempts to apprehend him. He even severs his own hand rather than harm her when she handcuffs them together. Lecter will go to any length to protect his maiden, even mutilating himself. Hannibal is no white knight, but the purity of Clarice calls out to him.

Richard III, while he certainly cannot be seen as Lady Anne's protector, still holds some measure of respect for the innocence she represents (at least to him). Richard III sees himself as a monster, cursed by fate. He cannot envision a world in which he is more than the crooked wreck of a human being. He believes he "cannot prove a lover" and therefore is "determined to prove a villain" (4). Thus, Anne represents the purity that he believes he can never obtain, the beautiful woman, the beautiful life that has been denied him (whether or not she is actually that pure is immaterial). Only when this purity proves false, when Anne submits to his "charms", does he relinquish his protection. This notion resembles the "slasher" film convention where the characters are safe from the killer as long as they remain pure. As soon as they submit to their own carnal desires, their lives are forfeit, as is Anne's. Richard III, in his own twisted way, seeks what all dark heroes seem to desire: innocence, whether it be to protect or possess.

Bosola, perhaps the most unlikely protector, kills his innocent to protect her. The Duchess of Malfi represents, like with Richard III, everything that Bosola will never have: wealth, power, love. She exemplifies the notion of noble innocence⁸. Her radiance shines from the dark world of the play. There is simply no way she can survive. Even though Bosola seems to care for her, he hardens himself, finding outrage at her missteps, or what he contorts in his mind to be her missteps. When he discovers that the Duchess is pregnant by Antonio in Act 3 Scene 1, he immediately goes on the attack, insulting the old woman: "tell them that the devil takes delight to hang at a woman's girdle, like a false rusty watch, that she cannot discern how the time passes" (1479). This exchange seems a fairly obvious bit of displacement. Bosola

⁸ Although outside the confines of this essay, the separation of noble versus common innocence bears intertextual examination as well. The characters of Julia in *Duchess* and Catherine Martin in *Silence* both serve as sacrificial lambs to the aristocratic games taking place around them. Both characters believe themselves to be free – Julia attempts to free herself from the patriarchal world and Catherine represents the care-free, modern woman singing along to "American Girl." Both are caged (in their own ways) and reduced to mere objects for the gratification of those with power. Interestingly, both serve a confessional role as well: the Cardinal literally confesses his crimes to Julia and Buffalo Bill reveals his yearning for the feminine through his tormenting of Catherine.

realizes that he must now kill a woman and her child and displaces his anger onto the annoying old woman from earlier in the scene. Bosola takes an interesting approach to protecting his innocent. Rather than attempting to save her from the forces arrayed against her, he chooses to murder her, saving her in a sense from the twisted desires of Ferdinand and the machinations of the Cardinal. Of course, having realized what he has done in slaying the Duchess, he vows revenge, but at times it seems somewhat half-hearted. Without his innocent, without the light to cast shadows, he remains mired in darkness.

This darkness takes others forms as well: there is little difference in the desire to protect these disparate women and the desire to possess them. Echoing Wolf and Elmer's view of Hannibal Lecter as animal, all three of these characters demonstrate not just the need to protect, the need to save the innocence in themselves, but also the hunger to possess, the animalistic alpha-male urge to claim territory in the form of the female. Lecter's obvious desire for Starling and his equally obvious pleasure in tormenting her inform Bosola's (and Ferdinand's for that matter) desire for the Duchess and his eventual contempt at her pregnancy by another man, which equally informs Richard's own desire/contempt for Lady Anne and her discarding of Edward's memory (conveniently forgetting that it was he that orchestrated the whole "play").

Alone these dark heroes would remain obscured by their own misdeeds. However, together, they shed light on themselves. Examining Hannibal Lecter's obsession with Clarice Starling reveals Bosola and Richard III's relationship with the innocent figures in their lives. Bosola's and Richard III's quest to reveal hypocrisy informs Lecter's horrific executions. All three, while not heroic, possess heroic qualities and an intertextual examination of them, through the lens of the others, reveals a richer and more complete vantage. Beyond simple villains or anti-heroes, these characters, as most fully-formed characters do, possess their own vast web of

motivations, rationalities, and justifications. Although they appear to be simple stock characters, conventions unto themselves, they, like Milton's Satan, can be viewed from many different angles and through many differing lenses, perhaps always darkly, but certainly more clearly.

CONCLUSION

STARS IN THE SKY

The proceeding essays exemplify Macro-Intertextuality in action. Rather than relying on a single text or group of text that directly relate to one another – a piece of literature and its cinematic adaptation or two works from similar historical periods, etc. – I have chosen works which, on the surface, appear completely dissimilar; however, the intertextual links, the inherent connectedness of works from an intertextual perspective across time period, theme, and literary form (drama, cinema, and print) remain closely linked and unmistakable. With this viewpoint in mind, Hannibal Lecter, Richard III, and Bosola, while they may be separated by time, form, and theme, serve nearly identical cultural and thematic roles: exposing the inner struggle of beast and man; revealing hypocrisy in the authoritarian power structure; highlighting the cultural necessity of the unrepentant outsider, unbound from societies rules; and examining the role, and perhaps complicity, of the audience in the performance art (drama and cinema). While, perhaps, these themes existed all along in their respective stories, viewing them intertextually brings them into sharper focus. What might seem a small detail – the Lecter/lector relationship – becomes much more apparent when viewed through the lens of the other texts.

Similarly, the role of Sir Fopling Flutter as commenter on Restoration society becomes much clearer when viewed through the lens of Bud Fox in *Wall Street*. What's more, the respective critical views begin to mesh more fully as well. Frank Whigham's study of Bosola remarks on Wolf and Elmer's concept of animality. Lisa Berglund's essay on *The Man of Mode* explores the concept of not morally judging Dorimant and his fellow wits and instead relying on the characters own value judgments hidden in metaphor and language. This view, when applied to *Wall Street* creates an interesting new take on Gordon Gekko, his origin, motivations and the

condemnations he receives from Bud's father, Carl. Without this Macro-Intertextual viewpoint, Gekko is easily dismissed as the 80's yuppie Wall Street raider: a financial boogieman. Instead, an interesting new way in which to view the seductive villain arises.

Frank Whigham's view of Bosola as a rising force in Restoration-era social structures: the monied middle class. Consequently, Gordon Gekko serves as more of a commentary on the prejudice against "new-money" and the disdain that many place on financial villainy. This Intertextual viewpoint Gekko highlights western (particularly American) society's hypocritical notion that while a person should be able to amass a fortune on their own merits; they shouldn't climb too high or reach too far in the struggle for status and power (or at the very least he should feel guilty about it). Amoral games of wealth are reserved for the social and political elite. This series of interrelated connections forms the very essence of Macro-Intertextualism: not only can critical views be shared among texts, but the ideas raised by those views can be shared among completely differing subject matters. The two essays presented here also comment and expand on each other. The Intertextual view widens and we see not only Orion but Taurus as well. Now a whole new avenue of investigation becomes possible.

In this wider Macro-Intertextual viewpoint, Wolf and Elmer's concepts of the feral nature of humanity – the "Dog eat Dog. People Are Sheep" view – echoes Gordon Gekko's tirade that fund managers are "sheep, and sheep get slaughtered" (Stone). Here Gekko resembles Lecter in his *humanized-human* glory, using all of his cunning and intelligence to brutally and without mercy conquer his foes: not so different from Bosola and Richard III. Additionally the totemic notion of the characters from *Silence of the Lambs* equally applies to the characters from *Wall Street*: the cold-blooded Gekko and the wily, but weak fox. The Macro-Intertextual links are nearly endless, all weaving together to form a greater whole, a different constellation, a new

view and greater understanding of the villainous character. Hannibal Lecter is not just a killer. His actions, however brutal, however immoral still serve a purpose, and Macro-Intertextualism sheds a new light on this “conventional” character, reveals a different way in which to view the stars.

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