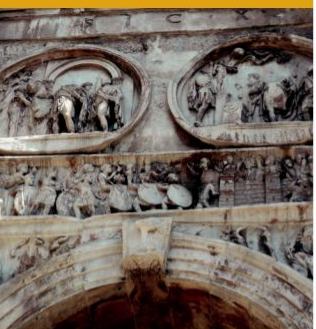


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 **White Rose**  
College of the Arts  
& Humanities  
Universities of Leeds, Sheffield & York

# Student Journal

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## Editorial

We are delighted to present the fifth issue of the WRoCAH Student Journal, and showcase the fantastic work being undertaken across the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, and York. As editors, this has been a wonderful experience in encountering and engaging with the breadth of research being undertaken by our colleagues in the arts and humanities. It has not been without challenges: this is the first issue of the Journal not to have any of its founding members on the Editorial Team. That combined with the fact that there have only been two of us editing this time has meant that the work done by our reviewers and proofreaders has been more valuable than ever. It is to them that our first thanks go: to each of you who has taken the time to read through and provide feedback on the articles in this issue—ranging from those keen from the very start to those who appeared the last minute to save us from a whole lot of trouble!—we couldn't have done it without your hard work. And to the authors who have provided us with such incisive, demanding scholarship: without your work this journal would be nothing—thank you so much for your brilliant contributions to this issue. We are lucky to be part of a community committed to such diverse research topics and practices.

While there is no set theme for this issue, the selected papers in this collection do share broad concerns; there is a thread to be traced here surrounding questions of perception and experience. This is perhaps most explicit in Naomi Benecasa's paper, "The Effect of Titles on the Music Listening Experience": here Benecasa speaks through her own primary data gathering to interrogate the role of titles and program notes in how individuals respond to a given piece. Following this thread of perception, Joseph Genchi's work on Indigenous "authenticity" in Thomas King's 1999 novel *Truth and Bright Water* speaks to nuanced political discourses surrounding recognition and expectations of cultural identity in North America. Matthew Oxley performs an astute reading of the relations between sexuality and urban space in Josep Maria de Sagarra's *Vida privada* through a specifically Catalan understanding of urbanisation. Rounding off this issue is Kyra Piperides Jaques's wonderful commentary on the "Philip Larkin: Personality, Poetry, Prose" conference, run under the WRoCAH Student-Led Forum scheme, which very much contests Larkin's own perceived notion that no-one studies poets.

A final thanks to you, reader—we hope that you enjoy the work in this issue as much as we do. We are excited to see what the future holds for the WRoCAH Journal as we hand over to the new editors for Issue Six.

EMILY REED and CARL WHITE  
The WRoCAH Journal Editorial Team

# The Effect of Titles on the Music Listening Experience

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“Music is an interaction between sound and listener,” avers Cook (10), yet such an interaction is rarely unmediated. Attend any classical concert and you will likely be handed a book of program notes, a purported guide to the abstract sound experience called ‘music’. Yet, research shows that the guidance which program notes provide is not always beneficial to the listener’s experience. This study questions whether, in lieu of program notes, an elaborative title can provide enough interpretative information to enhance the listening experience.

Forty-eight adults were asked to listen to selected music excerpts and report their aesthetic experience. The titles for each excerpt were manipulated to be either nondescript, formal-analytical, or elaborative on the composer’s intended interpretation of the piece. Although results showed no effect of title on the aesthetic experience of music, this lack of effect may be due to the participants’ previous exposure to and interest in classical music, or to their inherent listening strategies.

In order to contextualize the study, this article will begin with a brief overview of previous literature on guided music listening. Similar research in the field of visual arts will also be consulted as to the effect of titles on the aesthetic experience. Following the literature review will be a brief description of the experiment procedure and a selective report of the results, including analysis. Finally, the article will conclude with some points of discussion.

## Literature Review

### *Programmatic meaning*

Music is experienced as more than just sounds, but as imagery, movement, force, emotions, and characters (Zbikowski 65). Such extrinsic associations sometimes inspire composers to create a programmed meaning for the music. The aptly named ‘program music’ was often accompanied with notes explaining the intended interpretation of the piece; notable works include Beethoven’s *Pastoral Symphony* and Berlioz’s *Symphonie Fantastique*. The stories in such program music are typically compelling and recognizable above chance, even for children (Trainor and Trehub 464). However, the objectivity of programmatic meaning for music is dubious at best; even when given the programmatic meaning, listeners may not choose to associate the music with it (Antović, Stamenković, and Figar 247).

*Program notes*

Many contemporary composers utilize program notes, not necessarily to interpret their work as in the case of programmatic compositions, but also to guide the listener through novel music (Blom, Bennett, and Stevenson 7). However, research on the use of program notes yields conflicting findings. A study by Margulis found that participants enjoy music best when prefaced with no program notes (295). The program notes used in this study, however, were only descriptions of the music and did not provide any historical or critical information. In a successive study (Margulis, Kisida, and Greene), 506 children were brought to a live concert and given one of two program notes: one of background information about the music and performers, and one of information about the concert venue. Children were later asked to report on their understanding of the music and their enjoyment of the concert. Although the music-related program notes improved comprehension and retention of the information, there was little effect of program notes on enjoyment (601). Therefore, although composers and musicians mean well when they construct program notes, the provided information may not positively affect the audience's enjoyment.

Further complicating the efficacy of program notes are subjectivities — e.g., the listener's musical expertise and preferences — which moderate the listening situation. In a study by Bennett and Ginsborg, twenty-nine participants watched a live musical performance, first without program notes and then with program notes; for each performance they were asked to interpret the music. Results suggest that while program notes influenced how participants listened to and interpreted music, only 39% of the participants deemed this effect positive (Bennett and Ginsborg 599). Furthermore, the participants who reported a more extensive musical background were also more likely to reject programmatic guidance (600). This may be because the program note's interpretation confined the listener's interpretation — a constriction which a more experienced listener might disdain.

By guiding the listener with a pre-set interpretation, program notes make the music listening experience an analytical one, catering to a limited subset of listeners. Not everyone listens to music analytically, and listening typologies exist far and wide throughout music research. A useful review by Kemp consolidates listening typologies onto three binary axes: analytical vs. holistic listening, objective vs. associative listening, and finally, syntactic vs. non-syntactic listening (Kemp 132). The present research is based on a typology of three listening strategies: associative, affective, and objective listening (Hargreaves and Colman 16-17). The first of these, associative, is a type of listening in which musical sounds are paired with extra-musical references, as in the case of programmatic music. Affective listening focuses on the emotive qualities of the music, while objective listening focuses on musical elements and context. Research suggests that one's previous listening history and musical training may influence one's listening strategy (Hargreaves and Colman 19; North and Hargreaves 123).

Program notes might not be for everyone, considering the personality traits of some and the listening strategies of others. To use program notes is to wield a “double-edged sword” (Blom, Bennett, and Ginsborg 7), providing useful information at the risk of overriding the listener's own interpretation

(Micznik 214). Paragraphs of insight may preclude the listener to construct his or her own meaning; however, a single phrase, like a title, might be just enough to pique interest. Yet, the role of titles on the interpretation and enjoyment of music has been mostly overlooked by previous research.

### *Titles*

Research on titles is more prevalent in the field of visual arts, wherein a title alone may suffice as an interpretative guide for particular artworks. A study by Franklin, Becklen, and Doyle measured the ‘looking time’ at two paintings by having participants point at and narrate what they were thinking as they looked at the artwork. The differences in title influenced both the looking time and the responses for the same artworks across participants (108).

Titled artwork was reportedly better understood than untitled artwork in a study by Leder, Carbon, and Ripsas. Titles in this study were also cross-examined with looking time; a shorter looking time correlated with increased enjoyment while a longer looking time correlated with increased understanding (185). Although titles increased understanding, they did not seem to affect appreciation (190). Similarly, in a study by Russell, artwork that was presented with titles and evaluative information was perceived as more meaningful, and thereby more pleasing, when examined within each participant’s response (104).

The type of title, just like the type of program note, might affect aesthetic experience differently. In a study by Millis, participants viewed artwork under different title conditions: Absent (in which there was no title), Descriptive (in which the title merely described the depiction), and Elaborative (in which the title subtly elaborated on the artwork’s meaning). Participants in the Elaborative title condition self-reported higher ratings of interest, enjoyment, and aesthetic experience than those in the Descriptive title condition, coining Millis’ “elaboration effect.” (324) Whether this elaboration effect similarly applies to a musical context has, as of yet, not been fully explored.

### **The present study**

This review suggests that an interpretative, elaborative title, in lieu of analytical program notes, may enhance the aesthetic experience of music. The present study has two objectives: to establish any effect of an elaborative title on a listener’s aesthetic experience — measured in self-reported ratings of enjoyment, interest, and affect; and secondly, to determine any effect of an elaborative title on a listener’s discourse about the music — measured through free-description responses. In anticipation of an “elaboration effect,” the experimental hypothesis expects higher ratings of affect, interest, and enjoyment for music that is presented with an elaborative title as opposed to music presented with a descriptive (formal) or absent title. This effect may also engender thematic and typological differences in the listening experience as evident in the free description responses.

### *Participants*

Fifty-two adults participated in the study. The responses of four participants were excluded because of an experimenter's error. Of the remaining forty-eight participants, twenty-five (52.1%) were female, twenty-two (45.8%) were male, and one (2.1%) reported gender as "other." Although exact age was not measured, participants indicated their age bracket; the median age fell in the 26-35 years old age bracket. Participants were primarily recruited in-person. Additional participants were contacted virtually to complete an online version of the experiment. In total, forty-three participants completed the study in-person while five completed it online. While none of the participants were musicians, the majority of participants (70%) reported having had less than one year of classical music training.

When asked about classical music listening habits — either through live performance or digital recordings — 44% of participants reported listening to classical music either occasionally ("monthly or whenever I'm in the mood") or regularly ("daily, or whenever I have the chance"). The most common response — 48% of the time — was that classical music was rarely listened to, or "only when obligatory." Only four participants reported never listening to classical music; others may have been hugging the middle of the scale out of politeness.

### *Materials*

The stimuli consisted of twelve classical music excerpts spanning the Romantic and Modern eras (c. 1860 - 1960). Excerpts were mp3s clipped to include a few seconds of fade, with the shortest excerpt at 48 seconds and the longest at 69 seconds. Each piece was selected for its relative obscurity to non-musicians and for its evocative, programmatic title, such as "The Old Castle" from *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Modest Mussorgsky. The original title for each excerpt thus became the elaborative title condition. Two alternative titles per excerpt were then fabricated by the researcher and validated by two professional musicians as being appropriate formal and absent title alternatives. Formal titles simply relayed the form and tempo of the music, such as "Symphonic Suite in F Major: Quickly," while absent titles were placeholders, such as "Opus 50." A full list of the excerpts, along with their alternative titles, can be found in table 1 in the Appendix.

Participants were divided into eleven testing groups and further subdivided into three participant groups. Excerpt order was randomised for each testing group using Random.org, an online sequence generator. A unique title list was made for each participant group, accounting for the three title alternatives among the twelve excerpts. Within each participant group, the title list was generated pseudo-randomly such that each participant received an equal number of four elaborative (original) titles, four formal titles, and four absent titles. The experiment sessions were conducted both in public and private locations, chosen primarily for convenience for each participant and secondarily for minimal distractions. In-person participants heard the excerpts through a portable Bose loudspeaker.

### *Procedure*

Upon arrival, participants were asked to read the information sheet and complete the accompanying consent form. They were then given their response packet, consisting of twelve identical response sheets and one demographics questionnaire. Participants were instructed to listen to the music and respond to the following question on their sheet: “*What, if anything, does the music bring to mind?*” Responses were recorded on several blank lines beneath the question. Four ratings scales followed, utilizing a six-point Likert scale to measure familiarity (“How familiar was the excerpt to you?”), affect (“How ‘moving’ did you find the excerpt?”), interest (“How interesting did you find the excerpt?”), and enjoyment (“How much did you enjoy the excerpt?”).

Blind to the title discrepancy, participants copied the title of each excerpt — as indicated on their title list — into the response sheet whilst the experiment progressed, ensuring that all participants read and processed the title they had been given. Each excerpt was presented verbally in numerical order: e.g., “Excerpt number one.” Most participants began writing within fifteen seconds after the music began, while some waited until the end of the excerpt. On average, the procedure lasted thirty-five minutes.

## **Results**

### *By Title Condition*

The means and standard deviations<sup>1</sup> for each excerpt by title condition are displayed in table 2 in the Appendix. While the values appear to be different for each condition, further testing was needed in order to determine whether such differences were statistically significant or merely incidental. Therefore, the data underwent a Kruskal-Wallis H test, revealing no significant effect<sup>2</sup> of title condition: for familiarity [ $H(2) = 1.282, p = .527$ ], affect [ $H(2) = .439, p = .803$ ], interest [ $H(2) = .560, p = .756$ ], or enjoyment [ $H(2) = .182, p = .913$ ]. Thus, the title condition had no significant effect on the data.

### *By Genre*

As mentioned in the *Materials* section, the twelve excerpts differed categorically by genre, with six Romantic and six Modern excerpts. Romantic music received higher mean ratings than Modern music on all four

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<sup>1</sup> The mean, represented with ‘m,’ indicates the average rating across all participants within the given title condition. The standard deviation, represented with ‘sd,’ indicates the average spread, or deviation, of the data from the mean.

<sup>2</sup> For tests of significance, here and throughout the *Results*, a p-value of <.05 indicates a significant effect.



parameters of familiarity, affect, interest, and enjoyment. The means and standard deviations for ratings by genre are displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Means and standard deviations for each rating by genre

	<b>Familiarity</b>	<b>Affect</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>
<b>Romantic</b>	m = 1.035; sd = 1.455	m = 3.247; sd = 1.082	m = 3.503; sd = 1.117	m = 3.571; sd = 1.097
<b>Modern</b>	m = .699; sd = 1.171	m = 2.852; sd = 1.327	m = 3.138; sd = 1.289	m = 2.911; sd = 1.3425

Evident in the table, the means for each rating differ by genre. Another Kruskal-Wallis H test verified these differences, suggesting a significant effect of genre on ratings of familiarity [H(1) = 6.806, p = .009], affect [H(1) = 5.619, p = .018], interest [H(1) = 6.427, p = .011], and enjoyment [H(1) = 23.104, p = .00]. Therefore, genre had a much stronger, significant effect on the ratings than did the title condition. In order to analyse whether there was any interacting effect of genre with the title condition (e.g., whether an elaborative title had more of an effect within the Modern subset of excerpts, but not within the Romantic subset), an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run. Such an effect was found to be insignificant in all four ratings of familiarity [F(2) = .162, p = .851], affect [F(2) = .358, p = .700], interest [F(2) = .344, p = .709], and enjoyment [F(2) = .865, p = .422]. Thus, the title condition fails to show any significant effect on the ratings data once more.

*By Novice*

For further analysis, the pool of participants was then divided based on their reported level of classical music training and listening habits. Those who reported a 0 or 1 on music training (i.e., less than one year's worth) and a 0 or 1 on listening frequency (i.e., rarely or never listening to classical music) were coded as 'novices.' Novices typically gave lower ratings for affect, interest, and enjoyment than non-novices. See table 2 for the means and standard deviations of each ratings scale by novice and non-novice participants.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations for each rating by novice

<b>Familiarity</b>	<b>Affect</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>
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<b>Novice</b>	m = .779; sd = 1.202	m = 2.858; sd = 1.3369	m = 3.008; sd = 1.2708	m = 3.115; sd = 1.2628
<b>Non-Novice</b>	m = .930; sd = 1.4138	m = 3.187; sd = 1.1215	m = 3.545; sd = 1.1305	m = 3.333; sd = 1.2664

Another Kruskal-Wallis H test was run on the data, revealing a significant effect of ‘novice-ness’ on the ratings for affect [ $H(1) = 7.428, p = .006$ ], interest [ $H(1) = 26.520, p = .000$ ], and enjoyment [ $H(1) = 4.164, p = .041$ ], but not for familiarity [ $H(1) = 1.078, p = .299$ ]. Therefore, the ratings from non-novice participants for affect, interest, and enjoyment are significantly higher than those from novice participants.

The data were then considered for any interaction between genre and novice factors (i.e., whether novices were more likely to give high ratings for music from a particular genre). The means and standard deviations of the ratings, by novice and by genre, are displayed in table 3.

Table 3: Means and standard deviations by Novice and by Genre

	<b>Familiarity</b>	<b>Affect</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Enjoyment</b>
<b>Novice</b>				
<i>Romantic</i>	m = .833; sd = 1.2921	m = 3.033; sd = 1.1735	m = 3.133; sd = 1.2362	m = 3.375; sd = 1.1527
<i>Modern</i>	m = .725; sd = 1.1074	m = 2.683; sd = 1.4666	m = 2.883; sd = 1.2976	m = 2.854; sd = 1.3179
<b>Non-Novice</b>				
<i>Romantic</i>	m = 1.179; sd = 1.5489	m = 3.399; sd = .9873	m = 3.768; sd = .9412	m = 3.711; sd = 1.0360

<i>Modern</i>	m = .680; sd = 1.2176	m = 2.973; sd = 1.2077	m = 3.320; sd = 1.2566	m = 2.952; sd = 1.3624
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Modern music was rated lower than Romantic music on all four parameters by both novices and non-novices. This effect was significant among novices only for enjoyment [H(1) = 8.892,  $p = .003$ ], and not for familiarity [H(1) = .152,  $p = .697$ ], affect [H(1) = 2.581,  $p = .108$ ], or interest [H(1) = 1.966,  $p = .161$ ]. In contrast, this genre bias was significant among non-novices for all parameters: familiarity [H(1) = 11.603,  $p = .001$ ], affect [H(1) = 10.701,  $p = .001$ ], interest [H(1) = 10.378,  $p = .001$ ], and enjoyment [H(1) = 27.337,  $p = .00$ ]. These results suggest that novices enjoyed Romantic music more than Modern music, yet felt indifferently on the other parameters, while non-novices rated Romantic music higher than Modern music on all parameters.

### *Qualitative responses*

Participants responded to the open-ended question, “*What, if anything, does the music bring to mind?*”, 98.3% of the time. Participants were instructed to leave the page blank if nothing came to mind; therefore, it is safe to assume that the scant instances of no response were intentional.

The responses were coded with two methods. The first method utilised thematic analysis, wherein a theme comprised any two or more semantically similar responses. Multi-thematic responses were divided into response segments and coded multiple times. The second method of analysis was a classification of listening type into one of the following three categories: associative, affective, or objective, as adapted from the aforementioned study by Hargreaves and Colman. Each category is defined as follows:

- *Associative*: respondents associate sounds with extra-musical concepts, especially imagery, such as “Roaring ocean with fish and sea creatures swimming side by side” [P# 36 - Rimsky-Korsakov]<sup>3</sup>.
- *Affective*: responses included affective descriptions, such as “Beautiful” [multiple instances], and how the music made the participant feel, or how the participant perceived the music to be ‘feeling’: respectively, “bringing me anxiety but in a wierd [sic] beautiful way” [P# 6.1 - Ives], and “This feels like a dreamy music” [P# 6 - Debussy]. Further classification of affective listening was aided by the list of musical emotions and affects compiled by Zentner, Grandjean, and Scherer.
- *Objective*: responses are objectively evaluative, often in regards to the music’s technical quality, such as “The trumpets sounded out of tune, squeaky” [P# 43 - Stravinsky].

Responses which included multiple types of listening were segmented and coded twice.

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<sup>3</sup> Here and elsewhere in the *Results*, the brackets contain the quoted participant’s (‘P’) identification number, followed by the excerpt for which he or she made the particular comment.

Considering the lack of an effect of title condition on all twelve excerpts as demonstrated in the ratings, only four excerpts — Rimsky-Korsakov, Ives, Stravinsky, and Debussy — were used for qualitative analysis. The results of the Stravinsky excerpt will be further expounded below, to demonstrate the methods of analysis and provide insight into the participant’s responses.



For the Stravinsky excerpt, the responses of forty-eight participants yielded 137 response segments, with eleven left unclassified. Twenty-eight themes emerged, with participants from all conditions using the majority of the themes. See figure 1 for a word cloud of each theme in proportion to its prevalence in the data.

The themes relevant to the title, *The Soldier’s March*, were labeled *Military* and *March/procession*, accounting for 21% of the response segments. The *Military* theme was mentioned eleven times, eight by respondents in the elaborative title condition, and three by respondents in the absent title condition. Thus, the ‘military’ meaning in the music was not so inherent as to garner responses cross-conditionally. However, the *March/procession* theme was far more pervasive, evident in eighteen responses — the most prevalent theme for this excerpt. See table 4 below for more examples from the top five themes and see table 3 in the Appendix for a list of all twenty-eight themes and their occurrence cross-conditionally.

Table 4: Examples of responses using the top five themes

March/procession	“I can imagine like an army marching to this piece in a movie” [P# 30]
	“A family of duck trotting along, the little ones trying to keep up, toppling over” [P# 42]
Joy	“Fat and happy” [P# 14]
	“Horses and riders marching merrily off to war” [P# 45]
Military	“Cartoon pigs in military uniform” [P# 39]
	“Light-hearted march, not into battle, but more like a training exercise” [P# 22]

Royalty	“This reminds me of a scene where an announcement is being made by a King in his castle” [P# 11]
	“A gathering of dignitaries” [P# 8]
Instruments	“Not crazy with the string part” [P# 18]
	“Love hearing all the different instruments” [P# 25]

There were two main theme clusters: the first, CEREMONY, included *March/procession*, *Royalty*, *Military*, *Celebration*, and *Crowd*, encompassing forty-six separate response segments. The second theme cluster, POSITIVE EMOTIONS, included thirty-one response segments in *Fun*, *Playful*, *Energy*, *Joy*, and *Triumph* themes. The *Humour* theme was not included in this cluster because some responses did not necessarily imply positive humour.

Interpretative analysis of the Stravinsky excerpt transformed all forty-eight responses into seventy response segments. See table 5 below for a distribution of listening type by condition.

Table 5: Listening type by condition

	Associative	Affective	Objective
<b>Elaborative title condition</b>	12	7	5
<b>Formal title condition</b>	10	7	4
<b>Absent title condition</b>	13	8	2

Associative listening is demonstrated by many of the examples already listed, and by the following: “City street with the hustle and bustle of people and car [sic] and trucks going this way and that way with lights flashing and lots of movement” [P# 13], and “A day in the courtyard at a royal residence (as an outsider). Welcoming exploration” [P# 17]. Examples of affective listening, of similar frequency across condition, are the following: “Light hearted mischief” [P# 48] and “Made me smile at first. Sounds like a

fun song.” [P# 4]. Examples of objective listening, many of which correlated with the *Instruments* theme, include the following: “Staccato...Musical theatery [sic]. Lots of individual instruments” [P# 21].

Because thematic and interpretative analyses can be quite subjective, the responses to the Stravinsky excerpt were coded for interrater reliability. Two raters coded the raw data for listening type and matched on 556 words out of 620, representing very high (89.7%) agreement.

### *Within-subjects Analysis*

Each participant’s response packet was examined for any change in listening type; responses for each excerpt were compared to responses for other excerpts in the same condition. There was no perceivable effect of title condition on associative listening within-subjects. One participant consciously relied on the title, admitting that “Knowing the title helped me to appreciate it more” [P# 15 - Britten]. However, this evidence is much too exiguous to support the hypothesis that an elaborative title would prime participants to listen associatively. Two other participants seemed to listen associatively more as the experiment progressed, unrelated to the condition. Perhaps it took a couple of listens for them to focus on the sound and come up with something imaginative. However, this progression was irrespective of their title condition and does not support the hypothesis.

## **Discussion**

Overall, the data indicates no effect of titles on the aesthetic experience of music. There was no effect of Title Condition on the participants’ enjoyment of, interest in, or affect for the music listening experience. The free response data suggest no effect of title condition on listening type; associative listening was a frequent type of listening response regardless of the title. Moreover, there was no effect of title condition within each subject’s response data. Those who gave associative responses tended to do so for the majority of the excerpts and not simply for those which had elaborative titles.

Such a null effect may be due to the participants’ prior exposure to classical music. Although musicians were not recruited, most of the non-musician participants in this study had been well acquainted with classical music. Notably, the *Film* theme was common in all excerpts, reflecting the prevalence of classical music — particularly Romantic classical music — in movies and commercials. While the music was mostly unfamiliar to the participants titularly, the genre of music — and the feelings and associations it engenders — was clearly familiar to the participants idiomatically. To account for this widespread idiomatic familiarity, further research on the effect of titles should utilize music of a completely unfamiliar idiom (such as music of non-western cultures), or participants uninitiate with western classical music (such as very young children or adults from remote, non-western cultures).

A participant's background and interest in classical music may also influence the baseline results for each subset of participants, regardless of title condition. For instance, in this study, novices rated Romantic music over Modern music only in regard to enjoyment, but not for interest or affect. In contrast, non-novices rated Romantic music over Modern music for all parameters. This difference between subsets may reflect the participants' baseline interest in classical music. The novices seldom willingly listen to classical music — likely out of a lack of interest. They might not find Romantic music any more interesting than Modern music, accounting for the null difference in ratings between the two genres. Unexpectedly, the title condition did not improve interest, and only a difference in genre affected enjoyment. This lack of an “elaboration effect,” particularly among novices towards Modern music, is especially surprising.

The thematic analysis adds little to the discussion. Elaborative titles preceded the music 44% of the time; however, themes which directly related to the titles accounted for, on average, only 12% of the responses. Moreover, participants without the original title often alluded to title themes, owing to the composer's deft use of musical techniques to convey the programmatic meaning extra-linguistically. Thus, it seems that, regardless of title, participants came up with a wide variety of themes. A lifetime of associating extrinsic meaning to music likely contributes to a participant's relative ease in doing so without an elaborative title. Similarly, among participants who rarely listened associatively, the title did not alter the way they engaged with music nor elaborated extrinsic meaning to them.

The interpretative analysis shows a high prevalence of associative and affective listening by all participants. This may reflect not only the instructions for the listening task, but also the tendency for non-musicians to adopt a referential listening style (Smith 388). It would be worthwhile to replicate this study using music experts and music novices to demonstrate this tendency more robustly. There might be a stronger disregard for title condition among music novices and a higher prevalence of objective listening style among music experts, per the study by Hargreaves and Colman (19).

Another uncontrolled variable may lie in different personality tendencies for certain listening strategies (Lewis and Schmidt 318). Those who score highly with analytical personality traits will be more likely to enjoy a cognitive approach to music listening (Hedden, 235), such as the task for this study. A replication of this study should integrate a personality assessment in order to observe any interaction of title condition and personality on listening response.

## **Conclusion**

The present study implies that title information, and thereby program notes, cannot secure an engaged audience. An elaborative title might not change a person's listening style or affect their interest in the genre of music. This starkly contrasts the results of the art studies — where titles brought about an “elaboration

effect” (Millis 324), served as interpretative guides (Franklin, Becklen, and Doyle 108), and helped increase understanding (Leder, Carbon, and Ripsas 192). Clearly, music and art benefit from different types of guidance. Elaborative titles may prove more effective when paired with music more obscure than what was presented in this experiment. Moreover, if the participants’ latent personality proclivities and previous music experience are better controlled for, a more robust “elaboration effect” might become possible. Overall, while this study does not deny the possibility for such an effect, it does not confirm its existence either. Further research is needed.

Music is more than mere sounds, and it is more than a simple interaction between sound and listener. An aesthetic experience of music is foremost a personal one, and as such, one that will likely remain difficult to define and to contrive. Research in music aesthetics should continue to consider the phenomenon of musical meaning within the humble context of everyday life.



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## Appendix

Table 1: List of excerpts with alternative titles

Excerpt	Elaborative title	Formal title	Absent title
<i>Out of Doors: IV. The Chase</i> (1926) by Bela Bartok	Out of Doors: The Chase	Sonata for Piano: Fast Movement	Sz. 81
<i>Peter Grimes: IV. The Storm</i> (1945) by Benjamin Britten	The Storm	Orchestral Interlude: Rapidly	Untitled
<i>In a Landscape</i> (1948) by John Cage	In a Landscape	Nocturne in D minor for Solo Piano	Study no. 8
<i>Children's Corner: The Snow is Dancing</i> (1908) by Claude Debussy	The Snow is Dancing	Suite in F Major for Solo Piano: IV. Moderately	Opus 50
<i>Central Park in the Dark</i> (1906) by Charles Ives	Central Park in the Dark	Pseudo-Rhapsody for Orchestra	6a
<i>Atmospheres</i> (1961) by Gyorgi Ligeti	Atmospheres	Sound Mass	No. 1
<i>Un Sospiro</i> (1849) by Franz Liszt (1849)	Un Sospiro (A Sigh)	Concert Etude No. 3 in D flat Major	S. 144
<i>Pictures at an Exhibition: IX. Ballet of Unhatched Chicks</i> (1874) by Modest Mussorgsky	Ballet of Unhatched Chicks	Symphonic Suite in F Major: Quickly	Mvt. 9
<i>Pictures at an Exhibition: IV. The Old Castle</i> (1874) by Modest Mussorgsky	The Old Castle	Dirge in G# minor	Mvt. 4

<i>Scheherazade: I. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship</i> (1888) by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov	The Sea and Sinbad's Ship	Symphonic Suite in E minor: I. Steadily	Opus 35
<i>Histoire du Soldat: I. The Soldier's March</i> (1920) by Igor Stravinsky	The Soldier's March	Music for Chamber Orchestra: I. Moderately	No. 5

Table 2: Means and standard deviations of each rating by excerpt and by condition:

Bartok:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = .5; sd = .9459	m = 2.6; sd = .9947	m = 3.35; sd = 1.1367	m = 3.125; sd = .8867
Formal	m = .5; sd = 1.0919	m = 2.429; sd = 1.5046	m = 3.0; sd = 1.3009	m = 2.286; sd = 1.1387
Absent	m = .5; sd = .7596	m = 2.714; sd = 1.2855	m = 3.071; sd = 1.4899	m = 2.357; sd = 1.3927

Britten:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = 1.133; sd = 1.4573	m = 3.2; sd = 1.0142	m = 3.467; sd = 1.2459	m = 3.067; sd = 1.2799
Formal	m = 1.067; sd = 1.3345	m = 3.333; sd = 1.1751	m = 3.533; sd = 1.1255	m = 3.4; sd = 1.2984
Absent	m = 1.118; sd = 1.6156	m = 3.471; sd = 1.1789	m = 3.529; sd = 1.2307	m = 3.412; sd = 1.1213

Cage:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = .684; sd = 1.0569	m = 3.316; sd = .9459	m = 3.474; sd = 1.0733	m = 3.526; sd = 1.0733
Formal	m = .583; sd = .6686	m = 3.083; sd = 1.2401	m = 3.5; sd = 1.2432	m = 3.667; sd = 1.3027
Absent	m = .529; sd = .8745	m = 2.941; sd = 1.7128	m = 2.882; sd = 1.5765	m = 3.029; sd = 1.6438

Debussy:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = .529; sd = .7998	m = 2.824; sd = .9510	m = 3.059; sd = 1.2976	m = 3.176; sd = .8828
Formal	m = 1.308; sd = 1.6525	m = 3.423; sd = .9541	m = 3.462; sd = 1.3914	m = 3.769; sd = 1.0919
Absent	m = .667; sd = 1.0290	m = 2.722; sd = 1.2274	m = 3.0; sd = 1.1882	m = 3.444; sd = 1.2935

Ives:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = .941; sd = 1.5195	m = 2.765; sd = 1.2005	m = 3.353; sd = 1.3201	m = 3.0; sd = 1.3229
Formal	m = .625; sd = 1.0247	m = 2.438; sd = 1.5478	m = 2.938; sd = 1.0626	m = 2.688; sd = 1.1383

Absent       $m = .267; sd = .5936$        $m = 2.633; sd = 1.7573$        $m = 2.4; sd = 1.6388$        $m = 2.667; sd = 1.3889$

Ligeti:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	$m = .211; sd = .7133$	$m = 2.789; sd = 1.2727$	$m = 2.842; sd = 1.1187$	$m = 2.526; sd = 1.5044$
Formal	$m = .882; sd = 1.6912$	$m = 2.941; sd = 1.4778$	$m = 3.353; sd = 1.1147$	$m = 2.882; sd = 1.269$
Absent	$m = .708; sd = .8649$	$m = 2.750; sd = 1.5448$	$m = 2.833; sd = 1.4668$	$m = 2.25; sd = 1.4222$

Liszt:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	$m = 1.056; sd = 1.2113$	$m = 4.056; sd = .8024$	$m = 4.222; sd = .8085$	$m = 4.278; sd = .8264$
Formal	$m = 1.0; sd = 1.2403$	$m = 3.143; sd = 1.2315$	$m = 3.214; sd = 1.2514$	$m = 3.643; sd = 1.0082$
Absent	$m = 1.250; sd = 1.9149$	$m = 3.688; sd = 1.1383$	$m = 3.563; sd = 1.2633$	$m = 3.938; sd = 1.2366$

Mussorgsky - Ballet:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = .353; sd = .8618	m = 3.235; sd = .8314	m = 3.353; sd = .8618	m = 3.353; sd = .8618
Formal	m = 1.059; sd = 1.6760	m = 3.941; sd = 1.0290	m = 3.882; sd = .9275	m = 3.559; sd = 1.1974
Absent	m = 2.143; sd = 1.7033	m = 3.429; sd = .9376	m = 3.5; sd = .9405	m = 3.643; sd = .8419

Mussorgsky - Castle:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = .733; sd = 1.2799	m = 2.733; sd = .7988	m = 3.067; sd = 1.2799	m = 3.0; sd = 1.0690
Formal	m = .375; sd = .6191	m = 2.750; sd = 1.3416	m = 3.250; sd = 1.4376	m = 3.188; sd = 1.3276
Absent	m = 1.412; sd = 1.6977	m = 3.0; sd = 1.1180	m = 3.529; sd = .9432	m = 3.412; sd = 1.0037

Rimsky-Korsakov:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = 1.765; sd = 1.8884	m = 3.294; sd = 1.1048	m = 3.765; sd = .9034	m = 3.588; sd = 1.1757
Formal	m = 1.400; sd = 1.5946	m = 3.533; sd = .6399	m = 3.933; sd = .5936	m = 4.067; sd = .7037

Absent      m = 1.000; sd = 1.4142      m = 3.125; sd = 1.2583      m = 3.563; sd = 1.1529      m = 3.438; sd = 1.3150

Smetana:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = 1.214; sd = 1.5777	m = 3.393; sd = .8810	m = 3.643; sd = 1.0082	m = 3.857; sd = 1.1673
Formal	m = 1.000; sd = 1.5635	m = 2.842; sd = 1.2140	m = 3.211; sd = 1.2727	m = 3.211; sd = 1.2727
Absent	m = .600; sd = 1.1832	m = 3.400; sd = .7368	m = 3.867; sd = .8338	m = 3.867; sd .6399

Stravinsky:

Condition	Familiarity	Affect	Interest	Enjoyment
Elaborative	m = .706; sd = 1.4038	m = 2.647; sd = 1.3201	m = 2.912; sd = 1.3720	m = 3.029; sd = 1.3284
Formal	m = .438; sd = .8139	m = 2.375; sd = 1.0878	m = 2.750; sd = 1.0646	m = 2.500; sd = 1.2649
Absent	m = 1.267; sd = 1.4864	m = 2.867; sd = 1.3020	m = 3.200; sd = 1.4243	m = 3.133; sd = 1.4573



*Table 3: Distribution of themes by condition for the Stravinsky excerpt:*

<b>Theme</b>	Elaborative Title	Formal Title	Absent Title	<b>Total</b>
Band	1	1	0	2
Bright	0	1	1	2
Busy	1	1	0	2
Celebration	0	0	2	2
Color	1	0	1	2
TV	1	1	0	2
Fun	2	0	0	2
Journey	0	2	0	2
Story	2	0	0	2
Street	0	1	1	2
Whimsy	1	1	0	2
Adventure	1	1	1	3
Enjoyment	2	1	0	3
Announcement	1	1	1	3
Mischief	1	1	1	3
Crowd	0	2	2	4
Dance	0	0	4	4
Playful	2	0	3	5
Energy	1	3	1	5

Humor	4	1	1	<b>6</b>
Triumph	1	3	2	<b>6</b>
Animals	1	4	2	<b>7</b>
Instruments	3	3	3	<b>9</b>
Joy	2	1	7	<b>10</b>
Military	7	0	3	<b>10</b>
Royalty	5	4	2	<b>11</b>
March	5	5	8	<b>18</b>

# Indigenous “Authenticity” in Thomas King’s *Truth and Bright Water*

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When Monroe Swimmer returns to the reservation in Thomas King’s 1999 novel *Truth and Bright Water*, he ironically insists that his reputation as an indigenous creative is recognised. Upon meeting the text’s protagonist, Tecumseh, he stresses that “You’re supposed to say ‘famous Indian artist’ after you say ‘Monroe Swimmer’” (King 45). The anecdotes that detail Monroe’s early artistic endeavours are of questionable validity, either sourced from the “probably made up” tales of local real estate agent Miles Deardorf or news stories from the aptly named paper “the *Truth Free Press*” (25-26). Yet, regardless of how truthful they may be, these stories create an air of irresistible mystique around Monroe. The repeated declaration of the “famous Indian artist” title, by which “everybody” refers to him, intertwines his racial heritage with his profession (46). This association is reinforced through his creative endeavours, which are always in service of a “restoration” (in one way or another) of indigenous culture. His career has taken him “everywhere” – “Paris, Berlin, New York, London, Moscow, Madrid, Rome” – and he has developed an international reputation as an “authentic” figure of American Indian artistry (129). This reputation frames Monroe as the “organic intellectual,” Antonio Gramsci’s ideal of the individual who “articulates the understandings of a community or a nation,” a concept that King cites in his description of real-life Cherokee performer Will Rogers (*Truth About Stories* 41). However, “authenticity” is never so simple, especially in the context of indigeneity. Sylvia Escárcega explores these complexities in her article on shifting understandings of what defines indigeneity, in which she argues that for the indigenous intellectual, “authenticity” is not a straightforward search for “the genuine, pure, and unchanged” but rather it is “an appropriated political claim and self-conscious representation” in which the concept itself is “always negotiated” (21-22). Over the course of the novel, Monroe repeatedly engages in acts of self-conscious representation, utilising his awarded title of “famous Indian artist” to trouble, redefine, and negotiate notions of “authenticity.”

While the world outside of the reservation may regard Monroe as such, neither Thomas King nor *Truth and Bright Water* make any claims to be “authentic.” In fact, the novel actively subverts, parodies, and deconstructs ideas of a potential and infallible “authentic” indigeneity. In this article, I will argue that King offers commentary upon issues of authenticity, firstly through the characters of Lucy and Monroe, and then with regard to the Indian Days festival. I will consider how King presents American Indian tradition in the postcolonial context, especially its commodification and role in tourism and its appropriation by art, science,

and history.<sup>4</sup> Finally, I will argue that, while recognising the difficulty of negotiating indigenous identity within contemporary North American society, King ultimately valorises the fluidity of identity. Through parody and mimetic art and performance, the novel destabilises and devalues “authenticity” while searching for a less problematic way to adapt indigenous cultural heritage.

*Truth and Bright Water* examines the destination of American Indian culture and tradition in the postcolonial context. As King notes, “Authenticity only became a problem for Native people in the twentieth century” (*Truth About Stories* 54-55). In the nineteenth century American Indians generally lived on reserves, “out of sight” of European settlers, and possessed “strong ties to a particular community” (*Truth About Stories* 55). Through the twentieth century, increasing numbers of American Indians moved to cities, due partially to legislation such as the 1956 Indian Relocation Act. With much of the population geographically displaced, these once strong national or tribal ties have become “tenuous” (*Truth About Stories* 55). As King notes, the loss of Native languages as a result of imperialism has contributed to the estrangement of American Indians from their cultural history and destabilised concrete concepts of indigenous identity. As a consequence, “the question of identity has become as much a personal matter as a matter of blood” (*Truth About Stories* 54-55). King argues that whether an individual can be regarded as “authentically” American Indian is now determined in reference to “touchstones” such as their knowledge of Native language, involvement in traditional ceremony, and place of birth. These components form the basis of a compulsory “authenticity test” or “racial-reality game that contemporary Native people are forced to play” to prove their legitimacy as American Indians in an era where it seems “authenticity” is harder to access than ever before (*Truth About Stories* 54-55).

Indeed, these problems only emerged after the arrival of the white settler specifically because the conceit of “authenticity” is an imported one. This “notion of aboriginality” or “cultural authenticity” was introduced by imperial discourses such as anthropology in their “project of *naming* and thus *knowing* indigenous groups” and have since entered into these communities as essentialist narratives (Ashcroft et al. 163). While essentialist ideas can appear to protect and promote indigenous cultural heritage, they can consequently arbitrarily freeze a single “aspect” of that identity at the expense of all others by “elevating particular historical practices as core to the community” (Eisenberg 121). This is evidently the case with regard to American Indians. Although they possess “vibrant” and “changing” cultures, the perception is that the culture of indigenous groups froze at the moment of contact – as King writes, “the idea of ‘the Indian’ was already fixed in time and space. [...] [T]hat image had been set” (*Truth About Stories* 37).

Tracing the genesis of these issues of indigenous “authenticity” to imperialism reveals the paradox at its centre. Notions of “authenticity” have been built on a foundation of deceit. King states that “there is no reason for the Indian to be real. The Indian simply has to exist in our imaginations” (*Truth About Stories* 54). The American Indian is reduced to a concept or idea. For the indigenous person, as King notes, this

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<sup>4</sup> There is no unanimously accepted name for the indigenous peoples of North America, and each alternative term (such as “Native American,” “First Nations,” and “Aboriginal”) carries potential issues. This assignment will therefore follow Thomas King’s lead in using the term “Indian.”

"disjunction between reality and imagination is akin to life and death." This painful severance of identity demands that an individual must strive to be "authentic" before they can be "seen as 'real'" or imagined as an American Indian (*Truth About Stories* 54). The indigenous person must therefore perform a concept of "authenticity" that is, at its very core, inauthentic.

King's text resists this performance of "authenticity" and rejects taking part in the racial-reality game. Rather than favour one of the traditional or "authentic" methods of Native storytelling such as oral performance, King opts for the narrative to take the form of a novel. In their preoccupation with misreadings and misunderstandings (such as Tecumseh and Lum's misidentification of Monroe), King's stories themselves meditate upon the potential incompatibility of the confusion of contemporary life with this traditional form, which carries with it "messages and meanings that must not be misconstrued" (Cornell 176). Yet in taking on the static, written form of a novel, King risks an alignment of his narrative with the "official" (yet often forged or distorted) written histories and sciences that are deeply problematised within the text. He avoids this by marrying the two forms, inviting the open-ended ambiguity and unending nature of the oral into the novel and "invoking an infinite regress of meaning where there can never be one original, authentic story" (Schorcht 199). Although the text is reminiscent of classic Western/European narratives in its deployment of the Bildungsroman genre, King rejects a "standard Eurocentric plot-line that includes climax and catharsis" in favour of a "circular narrative formulation" (Davidson et al. 4). Narrative threads, such as the significance of Mia (a name from Auntie Cassie's past) are left unresolved, and the novel closes with the introduction of an additional mystery when Tecumseh's mother receives flowers from an admirer whose identity is withheld from both the protagonist and the reader (266). In this combination of forms, King recognises the often "obscured" history of contemporary Native literature, which has been influenced by both "white culture" and a tradition of "Native oral literature" (King, "Introduction" 13). He embraces the dual influences upon the genre, positioning his writing as "the bridge between the written and the oral." This allows him to break down the "borders" between written and oral storytelling in the "creation of a hybrid narrative structure" (Davidson et al. 4).

The formal in-between space that King's text inhabits defies the enforced structures of the "authentic." As Sissions notes, "official binaries" of the "authentic"/"inauthentic" and the consequential "excluded middles" that are produced "within settler and post-settler states" represent the "legacies of colonial invasion" and reveal the "deep roots" that "the *very question* of indigenous authenticity" has within "colonial racism" (Sissions 43). To attempt to be "authentic," for the artist, is not only an act of folly but also one that carries "real dangers." King recognises that to make claim to an "authentic" indigenous voice overwrites "the actual complexity of difference" and may silence voices "as effectively as earlier oppressive discourses of reportage" (Griffiths 165). In resisting and subverting "authenticity," *Truth and Bright Water* unveils the constructed nature and problematic origins of the concept.

However, several of the novel's characters do chase the ideal of "authenticity." As previously discussed, individuals are forced to take part in racial-reality games that they are ultimately doomed to fail due to the impossibility of achieving this culturally constructed, essentialist ideal. Nonetheless there is, as

King identifies, an “almost irresistible pull” to fulfil the Native archetype: to be “an Indian who has to dress up like an Indian in order to be recognised as an Indian.” This desire to comply and become a “cultural ritualist” or a “pretend Indian” embodies the deeply ambivalent relationship with the concept of “authenticity” that King depicts (*Truth About Stories* 45).

This irresistible, or even obsessive, pursuit of “authenticity” is exhibited in the novel through the character of Lucy Rabbit, who repeatedly bleaches her hair blonde in an attempt to look like Marilyn Monroe. Through the character of Lucy, King offers a parodic version of Homi Bhabha’s concept of mimicry. Bhabha describes mimicry as an “*ironic* compromise,” a strategy that addresses the tension between the “demand for identity”/“stasis” and the “counter-pressure” of “change”/“difference” in its appropriation of the image of the Other (122). Mimicry is not a perfect, indistinguishable imitation but is defined by “*ambivalence*” and its “difference” or “slippage” from its model (Bhabha 122). In Lucy’s case, this slippage is her inability to replicate Marilyn’s hair colour, as her hair is naturally so dark that bleach only colours it “flaming orange” (19). Lum perceives the bleaching of her hair as an attempt to erase her racial identity, asserting that “being blond” is equivalent to “being white” (22). Yet although the act can be interpreted as a form of white-washing, this is complicated by Lucy’s justification of the changes to her appearance with the theory that Marilyn was actually Native American (“probably Cree [...] maybe Ojibwa”) but concealed her true identity (19). Lucy conducts what she perceives to be a restoration of the apparently stolen Native actress to American Indian culture through a deceptive self-transformation or forgery. Lucy’s desire to shed her American Indian identity in favour of appropriating and replicating Marilyn Monroe is apparently revealed in her explanation that “Marilyn was ashamed of being Indian, [...] That’s why she bleached her hair.” In contrast, Lucy claims that her motivation is to prove to Marilyn that “bleaching your hair doesn’t change a thing” (201). Archibald-Barber reads Lucy’s failure to dye her hair, and therefore her failure to erase her “Indian-ness,” as a statement that rejects the possibility that one can ever truly alter or erase their identity (244). However, this act is even more complex and subversive than it first appears. Lucy’s theory of Marilyn’s origins may be dubious, yet she significantly recognises that history and culture have been manipulated and falsified, and therefore acknowledges the artifice of “authenticity.” The reshaping of her appearance can thus be interpreted, not as an act that proves the essence or unchangeability of identity, but on the contrary reveals that identity is *not* fixed and exists in a constant state of play. By engaging in the very pursuit of “authenticity” encouraged by legacies of colonialism, Lucy unconsciously destabilises the concept.

The orange of Lucy’s hair suggests a compromise between her naturally black hair and Marilyn’s “yellow-white,” rejecting the categorisation of her identity as simply “Indian” or “white” (19). As well as transforming her own appearance, Lucy rewrites Marilyn’s identity by insisting upon her American Indian heritage. This is most explicit when Lucy takes a marker pen and colours in Marilyn’s hair in a photograph, changing her iconic image in an act that recalls Monroe Swimmer’s campaign of artistic “restoration” (201). Another American icon, Elvis Presley, is subject to this rewriting as Lucy claims he too is Indian. This is further complicated by Elvis’s role as an American Indian in the western film *Flaming Star*, and later the

character Elvin's performance as Presley (210). Invoking mimicry, performance, and the slippage of identity to interrogate two of the most recognisable symbols of US pop culture, King goes beyond destabilising notions of essential or "authentic" indigenous identity to dissolve clear racial and cultural boundaries and reveal the constructed, inauthentic nature of all concepts of fixed identity.

One of the most disturbing examples of the preoccupation with "authenticity" in the novel is the Vampire Project. The project exemplifies the ways in which "racist" concepts of "authenticity" that have existed since colonialism continue to be "obsessed with indigenous blood" (Sissions 43). The colonial settler developed a "whole mathematics of blood quantum" based upon the idea of racial purity (synonymous in this case with "authenticity"). This served as "a pseudo-scientific foundation for indigenous exclusion" and worked to rationalise "a host of oppressive measures," including "Aboriginal child abduction in Australia" and "massive land alienation in the United States" (Sissions 43). As its gothic nickname suggests, the Vampire Project involves the collection of blood from American Indians across the US and Canada by a University of Toronto research team. Recalling the Human Genome Diversity Project, the aim of the research is vaguely described in the newspaper as "something to do with genes and DNA" (166). The project signals the insidious return of colonial thought and the continued haunting of indigenous people in post-settler countries by the "legacy of bloody classification" (Sissions 43). Upon hearing about the project, Miles theorises that the goal of the researchers is to "find out where Indians came from" (166-67). For the researchers, this ironic question that demands an answer is the corporeal and vampiric realisation of the ongoing obsession with "authenticity." The efforts to find the origins of the American Indian hopes to prove that they have come from elsewhere, working as an ultimate denial of their indigeneity.

Whilst discussing the Vampire Project, Miles warns Tecumseh to "watch out if those research boys show up here" and deems them "real blood-thirsty savages" (167). Referring to the researchers as "savages," he enacts a reversal of the racist discourse that has historically aligned the "Native" with the uncivilized or the savage. This reversal not only rejects racist logic but also challenges the association between science and academia and the development of civilization. King challenges the same institutions later in the text, with the revelation that the remains of American Indian children have been stolen from reservations and stored in museums. As Monroe describes, "Anthropologists and archaeologists dig the kids up, clean them off, and stick them in drawers." They are then re-exhumed every "ten years or so" when "some bright graduate student" uses them to write an academic paper (250-51). This act represents the ultimate theft from and violation of indigenous culture in the desecration of the dead.

Monroe describes his retrieval of the remains as a "rescue," taking them from the museums and "returning" them to Bright Water, which he calls "the centre of the universe" (251). With no apparent knowledge of the origins of the corpses, his repatriation does not follow the "customs of their specific communities" but is rather a "highly generalized ceremony" (Archibald-Barber 246-47). Archibald-Barber is highly critical of this act, describing how Monroe "appropriates and subverts past Aboriginal figures and traditions for his own critical and artistic purposes." He argues that the ceremony depicts the ethical "danger" of representing various cultures in a "single pan-Native framework of archetypes and

assumptions” (Archibald-Barber 246-47). Indeed, the ceremony is not so much a respectful burial as it is performance art. Yet it is precisely through this performance that Monroe avoids falling into the trap of subscribing to the idea of a singular, universal ceremony that could properly represent and honour the deceased of an unknown number of distinct communities. With the knowledge of the true origin of the remains lost, there is no alternative “authentic” ceremony that can be performed that would be appropriate for the majority of the dead. Monroe finds a solution to this problem by inventing his own amalgamative, abridged parody of some far-removed tradition. As Tecumseh recognises when he states “I’ve never heard of a ceremony for putting bones into a river,” there is no “authentic” precedent for this unusual situation (251). With Monroe wearing a wig, dancing to his car stereo, and tossing bones into the river, the ceremony is undoubtedly ridiculous – but it is self-aware of its ridiculous nature. It is so parodic and so decidedly inauthentic that it avoids making claims of “authenticity” and does not overwrite the individual lost cultures and beliefs of the deceased.

This deliberate engagement with the inauthentic is a recurring strategy in Monroe’s art. As an indigenous creative and activist, he has “learned when it is strategic to use standards of authenticity” and when “to be flexible” (Escárcega 9). He tells Tecumseh that his artistic strength is “restoration,” and he was employed in several cities “fixing” paintings (129-30). While working on nineteenth-century landscapes that depict idyllic, empty American nature scenes, he supposedly discovered images of Indians lurking within the art. He later admits that he did not, in the traditional sense, “fix” these paintings, but in fact “painted the village and Indians *back into* the painting” (133, my emphasis). There is, however, still a “restoration” taking place. In resorting to artifice, Monroe reveals that the paintings of uninhabited, “primeval paradises” were always inauthentic (129). History, and the art that portrays it, has already been designed to sell the myth that before the arrival of the European settler the landscapes of North America were vast, empty, and ready to be taken. The histories of American Indians have been painted over by the apparatus of imperialism, yet they still exist deeply buried beneath the surface. Monroe’s restorative acts allow the hidden indigenous people to “bleed through” and slowly re-emerge through “layers of paint” (130).

Monroe achieves this restoration by appropriating the same tools deceptively utilised in the processes of imperialism. He not only adapts the landscapes of the paintings, but also enacts a literal rewriting of the real landscape surrounding Truth and Bright Water. For example, the church is painted out of the landscape and essentially made invisible, but still has a physical presence. With the town and reservation hidden behind the now invisible church, Monroe’s art has reproduced the false nineteenth-century representations of the empty land (Archibald-Barber 250). Just as art was utilised by white settlers to remove the presence of indigenous peoples and structures, Monroe erases the imperial symbol of the church. However, Monroe acknowledges that this false image is only “As far as the eye can see” (134-35). His artistic technique of choice, the *trompe-l’œil*, may relish the confusion it produces but, unlike the realist landscape paintings, it also celebrates illusion and thus makes explicit its inauthenticity. While the historic acts of imperialism remained covert, Monroe’s art does not conceal but rather parades its counterfeit nature.



This is also the case with the iron buffalo that Monroe installs in the landscape. When he informs Tecumseh that the buffalo "aren't really real," the boy responds with uncertainty, saying "I don't know, [...] They sort of look real." The reaction this elicits from Monroe is an explosion of "smiles and tears" as he replies "Yes, that's exactly right" (135). Here, Tecumseh unintentionally gives the exact response that Monroe desires and uncovers the artist's philosophy. His work does not ultimately represent the "authentic" or the "inauthentic," but celebrates the playful confusion that exists in the liminal space between.

In the humble early days of Monroe's career, he would paint animals on "brown butcher paper" and try to "sell them for a few dollars." He faced failure as "there was already an Indian artist in Toronto who had made a name for himself," the implication being that there was no great desire for *two* indigenous artists (26-27). He only finds commercial success when his art becomes more provocative and overtly political, fulfilling the stereotype of the indigenous creative at a time when "Indian was becoming chic" (27). Monroe himself may later denounce this period as "reactionary" and "predictable," but playing up to the expectations of the "authentic" Indian artist is certainly lucrative (129). It is only by doing so that he is dubbed "famous Indian artist," a title which assumes that only one creative can somehow be the "authentic" voice of an entire, diverse people.

The "authentic" indigenous creative has historically been difficult to define. In 1990, the United States introduced the Indian Arts and Crafts Act, which sought to "protect Native Americans engaged in the arts and crafts market" from "non-Indians who might seek to market items that falsely suggest authentic Indian origins" (Sissions 48-49). To function, however, the Act demanded a deployment of the same racial-reality game that King recognises. To continue to work, artists must "prove their authenticity." Those that failed to "meet the varying blood quantum and descent requirements of tribes" were subsequently "excluded" from producing "authentic Indian" art (Sissions 48-49).

In the novel, the commercial demand for "authenticity" in art is explored through the character of Tecumseh's father, Elvin, and his wooden coyote carvings. He is open about the fact that he considers these carvings to be purely a matter of "business" (34). He is not driven by a creative urge, but rather the wish to capitalise on everybody "going crazy over traditional Indian stuff" (32-33). Elvin attempts to set his work apart from the fakes from Japan and Taiwan that are flooding the market by signing the bottom of each coyote. He claims that this is a necessity, so that the buyer knows they are "authentic" (32). However, this act actually achieves the opposite. The signature, insisting upon the "authenticity" of the wooden coyotes as "legitimate" indigenous artefacts, reveals their true nature as a commercial product. The carvings are simulacra with only a vague relationship to traditional indigenous culture, modelled instead after "the shit that they advertise in sports magazines" (32-33). The coyotes, abandoned by Elvin and swept "into the garbage," suggest that in contemporary society "authentic" indigeneity is simultaneously valued as a marketable product yet, ultimately, disposable (37).

The coyote carvings represent the reification of indigenous culture into a marketable product. According to Carrigan, contemporary tourism is "a late capitalist product of previous western colonial projects" that is "bound up discursively" with fetishization (17). Tourism, and especially the aspects of

fetishism within it, is dependent upon concepts of “authenticity,” which functions as “the currency at play in the marketplace of cultural difference” (Root 78). Therefore, it often demands that indigenous people perform “authenticity.” King engages with these ideas in his portrayal of the Indian Days festival. Tecumseh exhibits his ambivalence towards the event (and tourism more generally) in his description of visitors “from Germany and France and Japan” wandering around and “asking the kinds of questions that make you feel embarrassed and important all at the same time” (101). Rather than a celebration of their own culture, the characters essentially become products and put themselves on show for the eager tourists.

This is evident through the character of Edna, who does not sell a physical artefact to tourists but instead allows them to purchase her knowledge – the “secret of authentic frybread” (211). The tourists’ desire to obtain a “genuine” piece of culture reveals their belief that they can buy into “authentic” indigeneity. However, Edna claims that she maintains her “pride,” not by withholding the information from the buyers but by “holding out” until they make a greater offer for her recipe (211). She possesses agency and, unbeknownst to the buyers, holds the power within these transactions. Her sales technique is an elaborate, tactical performance that involves her wearing her “Indian face” and acting out a Native stereotype by waving her arms at the sky and banging a drum (211). The success of this method suggests that the item for sale is not the recipe itself, and what the tourists truly desire is to be sold a convincing performance that reinstates clear racial boundaries and binaries between the “authentic”/“inauthentic.”

The examples of Elvin and Edna reveal that the Indian Days festival offers an inversion of “the dynamics of cultural commodification,” allowing indigenous characters to profit from the “stereotyped exotic images that have been projected onto them” (Dvorak 19). As Lucy states, “Indian Days are the only time [they] make any money without having to fill in a form” (22). With no alternate means of earning money, the characters utilise the influx of tourism tactically. The use of tactics is glimpsed when Elvin is able to cross the US-Canada border while carrying cannabis by mimicking “the Indians you see in westerns on television,” a performance of the “dumb Indian routine” that non-Indians “love” (86). The festival involves a performance on a grander scale. The methods deployed by King’s characters to survive within the postcolonial context recall Michel de Certeau’s discussion of “making do” and the “ways of operating” utilised by individuals who have “no choice” but to live in a place which “lays down its law” (29-30). The American Indians are able to employ this “art of being in between” to create a space for themselves in which they “can find *ways of using* the constraining order of the place” to establish within it a “degree of *plurality* and creativity” (Certeau 29-30). Through the Indian Days festival, the inhabitants of Bright Water acknowledge and capitalise upon the power of tourism and the thirst for “authenticity.” Rather than be exploited, they exploit the situation through a strategic essentialism.

Indian Days may therefore be the realisation of the “white man’s wet dream,” but it is so knowingly (151). While the event allows tourists a chance to repeat, through simulation, the crimes of the settler (such as the near-eradication of the buffalo, parodied by replacing real firearms with paintball guns), the scenarios are so ridiculous that they are positioned as the butt of the joke. The tourists are also able to indulge in the fantasy of becoming “Indian,” dressing up in supposedly “authentic” traditional indigenous clothing.

Monroe parodies this on two occasions. He firstly performs as a stereotypical German, playing a tuba and wearing a "pair of short pants [made] out of elk hide with elk hide suspenders" (25). In doing so, he reverses the flow of cultural appropriation and "calls attention to the marketability of all ethnic quaintness, even within the dominant European paradigm" (Dvorak 20). He therefore establishes "a vertical dynamic of substitution in which the biter is bit," and "generates equivalence" by interrogating "cultural stereotypes" (Dvorak 20). In dressing himself in traditional German clothes, Monroe reverses the gaze of the tourists and once again challenges essentialist ideas of cultural identity.

This reversal of cultural appropriation is also the case in the second instance, in which he costumes himself as a white North American tourist. He is dressed in dual symbols of colonial legacy, a "white cowboy hat" that refers to classic Hollywood representations of the Indian in the western genre and a "red Hawaiian shirt," another simulacrum of an indigenous culture that has been appropriated on a large scale by tourists (217). On both occasions, Monroe playfully engages in an act of mimicry that produces its own slippage," a "double articulation" that poses an "immanent threat" to colonial power and discourse (Bhabha 122-23). When he hopefully asks Tecumseh if the disguise managed to "fool" him, he once again exhibits a belief in the fluidity of identity and a fondness for the confusion over what is "authentic." He also displays this when he states "Guess who I just saw [...] Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley" (217). Playfully accepting Lucy and Elvin as the real celebrities, Monroe valorises their respective acts of mimicry, embraces forgery, and awards the same significance to the inauthentic as the supposedly "authentic."

In their self-aware rejection of the "authentic" and deployment of parody, King's characters, especially Monroe, inhabit a liminal space between established binaries, destabilising essentialist ideas and promoting concepts of mimicry and hybridity. While the novel depicts the commercialisation and commodification of Native culture and heritage in contemporary society, the American Indian characters invert traditional power structures, often by playing up to stereotypical understandings of and demands for indigenous "authenticity." Rather than subscribe to a static, exclusionary definition, King denies the existence of a singular and unquestionable "authentic" indigeneity and instead presents a fluid cultural identity with the ability to adapt and embrace change.

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# Transgressive Sexualities and Urban Form in Josep Maria de Sagarra's *Vida privada* [*Private Life*] (1932)

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The first recorded use of the word *urbanisation* occurs in an 1861 text on a proposal for the reform of Madrid written by the Catalan engineer and politician Ildefons Cerdà (1815-76). The word transformed from a mere neologism to the name of a complex theory of civilisation elaborated in the two-volume, 1500-page *General Theory of Urbanisation* that Cerdà published in 1867. The exhaustive work includes far more than a manual for city planning. It details a holistic scheme for the total reorganisation of the built environment into a grid layout that can be spread over the entire world, as summarised in the chiasmus on the frontispiece: “Rurizad lo urbano: urbanizad lo rural: ... *Replete terram*” (“Ruralise the urban: urbanise the rural: ... To fill the Earth”). Painstakingly justifying every minute detail of his visionary urbanised world, even working out an intricate mathematical theory to determine the precise width of streets, pavements and doorways, Cerdà believed his system of a geometric pattern of streets and buildings would pave the way towards a better future. He was convinced that his radical reformation of society would drive forward technological progress and promote natural, fraternal law between citizens that would see the end of political conflicts between nation states, which would all be connected by the uniform grid network.

The *General Theory of Urbanisation* has a special relevance for Barcelona. In the mid-nineteenth century, the city suffered from severe overcrowding as a result of the medieval walls that surrounded it, preventing its growth. As the Spanish government recognised the need to expand Barcelona as its industry and population continued to grow, the walls were gradually demolished between 1854 and 1868 to make way for the construction of new suburbs. Cerdà's design for the extension of Barcelona, based on emergent ideas that would take full form later on in the *General Theory*, was chosen in 1859 as the design for the new city. Its gradual construction over the following decades resulted in a modern Barcelona whose urban form reflected Cerdà's egalitarian ideology. The highly regulated grid structure promoted equality, while the carefully delineated spaces for families to live in, separate from the streets, promoted a high standard of hygiene. This was desperately needed as four devastating disease epidemics had each wiped out around three percent of the population throughout the nineteenth century (Aibar and Bijker 5).

Cerdà coined the neologism *intervías* to describe the spaces where people live. This word is intended to illustrate a conception of space that blends movement and stasis, which Cerdà identifies as fundamental requirements for humans to live prosperously. Cerdà defines human life as “una alternativa constante entre el quietismo y el movimiento” (“alternating constantly between stillness and movement”), and the *intervías* is a space designed for repose and intimacy, yet must still facilitate easy movement within its walls (368). This dual function is also apparent in other aspects of Cerdà's theory of urbanisation, as he notes that

activities that usually take place in the home may also happen out in the street and vice versa because urban space is defined by “encuentros, encruces y enlaces” (“encounters, crossroads and connections”) (362). As I will argue, the resulting crossing over of public and private activities plays a crucial role in the construction of the identities of city inhabitants.

The *intervías* takes perhaps its most significant novelisation in Josep Maria de Sagarra’s novel *Vida privada* (*Private Life*) (1932). In the novel, Sagarra, known for his journalism and satirical poetry, traces the financial and moral decay of the urban aristocracy and bourgeoisie through the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, which lasted from 1923-30. Causing scandal upon its publication, when many readers identified the characters with prominent figures in the city, the novel draws attention to the corruption concealed in the drawing rooms and boudoirs of Barcelona’s high society. This salacious exposé of the aristocracy’s private life focuses on intimate spaces within the *intervías* of the newly built city. The aristocracy and bourgeoisie flocked to the luxurious apartments of this area, called the Eixample after the Catalan word for “extension,” in the years following its construction. Sagarra criticises the moral decay of the inhabitants of this new area of the city designed by Cerdà, which, I argue, reflects the highly regulated nature of its urban form. The grid structure produces straightforward and linear journeys, in contrast to the confusion of the historic centre with its “tortuous” and “anarchic” streets that twist and turn (Cerdà 286), frustrating the journey of the moving subject. By describing the form of the medieval city centre as “anarchical,” Cerdà implies that this area of the city obeys no authority and follows no order, in contrast to the highly regulated Eixample and the strict bourgeois moral code that controls everyday life there.

These different characterisations of Barcelona’s urban form are expressed most effectively through the exploration of the transgressive sexual practices that take place in them, as Sagarra devotes a considerable amount of the novel to examinations of the characters’ sex and sexuality. Transgressive sexuality, or perversion (“perversió”) as Sagarra calls it, is understood here as an unstable subjectivity that creates the personal and social expression of the self by challenging binarised positions such as male/female and heterosexual/homosexual (MacCormack par. 2), which is expressed through transgressive sexual acts. Such acts are defined by Hastings Donnán and Fiona Magowan as “sex that crosses or threatens to cross boundaries and ... flout[s] social, moral and cultural convention” (1). Transgressive sexuality is also negotiated via the complex interplay between “exhibitionism and secrecy, [and] public and private responsibilities” (McCormick 2), aspects that are dealt with expressly in the *intervías*, the space that combines private and public notions of space. My analysis will draw on Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s deconstruction of the binary opposition heterosexual/homosexual and Patricia MacCormack’s association of perversion with monstrosity to investigate to what extent Barcelona’s urban form dictates the process of identity formation in the two opposing spaces of the Eixample and the old city.

The connection between urban form and conceptions of sexuality and gender is also highlighted in the word *intervías* itself. The neologism demonstrates Cerdà’s desire to endorse dominant codes and conventions that are sanctioned by a higher common authority. He achieves this by grammatically defining the word as masculine singular rather than feminine plural, defying the grammatical logic of its feminine

plural “-vías” ending. He justifies this decision by comparing it to the Real Academia Española’s designation of the same gender and number to “afueras”, another conception of space (Cerdà 365). Cerdà thus demonstrates an attempt to label the gender of concepts and entities that defy gendered interpretations in a way that resembles, as we shall see, the narrator of *Vida privada*, by deferring to established conventions that promote gendered norms. Sagarra’s novel therefore lends itself to be read in light of Cerdà’s urban theory due to the tension between established norms and transgressive practices that shapes both writers’ texts.

Sagarra represents the Eixample as the private side of Barcelona, while the old city is portrayed as its public side. In the Eixample, the aristocratic and bourgeois characters spend their time indoors, the narrator focusing his or her critical attention on bodies and material possessions inside apartments in order to reveal the private lives of the inhabitants (Davidson 193). By contrast, in the old city, indoor activities are presented as spectacles to be appreciated visually. For example, the Liceu Theatre on the Rambles shows opera for the moneyed classes and away from this wide, central boulevard, spectators attend dance clubs and burlesque shows in the red-light district, where the street is also used as a site of activity. These separate public and private zones of the city, where transgressive sexual practices are carried out, are the locations of different flows of knowledge and power. Foucault argues that practices of knowledge and power create sexuality (32), which is defined by Sedgwick as “the essence of both identity and knowledge” (26). Whereas in previous centuries, an individual’s identity would have been understood by society in terms of their social standing, bloodline and public honour, in the modern era, individual identity is created in private spaces and is defined in greater part by personal and psychological characteristics (Pernas 15). It is our private life that lets us develop our own personality and identity as it is in our own private space that we feel “free” from the scopophilic and judgemental gaze of others (Pernas 13). Therefore, these personal qualities are the factors that determine social value, rather than status or privilege accorded to a person at birth.

In the Eixample, the private space of the *intervías* is used as the location for transgressive sexual acts which form their participants’ identities. Like many of the aristocratic characters in the novel, dressmaker Dorotea Palau keeps two separate public and private lives. In addition to her dress shop, she rents a room from where she operates a business that capitalises on the perversions of Barcelona’s high society. She symbolically calls this room “la cambra del crim” (“the scene of the crime” (Newman 62) (where “cambra” (“chamber”) suggests a private room reserved for intimacy and “crim” (“crime”) the violation of a moral code. But Dorotea is not just in it for the money: she is herself sexually transgressive. A “colleccionista de casos clínics” (“collector of clinical cases”), the “secret” and “abnormal” tasks she carries out “donava a la seva sexualitat deformada, o si es vol, a la seva perversió, una vivacitat ondulant” (Sagarra 66-7) (“gave her own twisted sexuality, or if you prefer, her perversion, an undulating vivacity” (Newman 67)). To satisfy the demands of her perversion, she regularly contracts Guillem, the youngest member of the Lloberola family, to the special room in his role as prostitute. Described as “un xicot feble, amoral, egoista, sense dignitat” (Sagarra 93) (“a weak, amoral, and selfish person, a man lacking in dignity” (Newman 100)) he provides his services to the well-known baron Antoni Mates and his wife. Dorotea

provides Guillem with clothes and make-up so he may disguise himself as a vagrant to keep his identity secret from the pair. The baron, described as a “faldilletes” (Sagarra 63), a term for an effeminate man, has previously had joint sexual relations with his wife and younger men, which have the effect of bringing the married couple closer together, giving them the public appearance of an ideal couple who love each other madly. Indeed, a customer at the dress shop remarks that “S’estimen bojament” (Sagarra 63) (“They are madly in love” (Newman 63)). The baron and his wife, concerned about the secrecy of the location, site their transgressive sex in a private, concealed space because news of their ‘perversion’ would be ruinous to their position in society. Their sexual identities are therefore also kept secret from public view, which appears to reinforce the binary of heterosexuality/homosexuality, where the former is normative and the latter deviant.

However, Sedgwick demonstrates how this dichotomy is inherently unstable as both of these terms “subsist in a more unsettled and dynamic tacit relation” (10). Homosexuality is not symmetrical, but subordinate to heterosexuality, which in turn depends for its meaning on the submission and exclusion of homosexuality. Each category is therefore “irresolvably unstable” because homosexuality is constituted as at once internal and external to heterosexuality (Sedgwick 10). The “cambra del crim” episode demonstrates that the same “unsettled and dynamic tacit relation” exists between privacy and publicness, secrecy and exhibitionism. Guillem visits the baron at his home, where he reveals himself to be the vagrant from the dress shop flat and threatens to disclose the baron’s transgressive sexuality to the members of the Barcelona bourgeoisie if he does not write off the enormous sums of money his brother owes him from gambling losses. The baron is quick to comply, as public knowledge of his activities and associated identity would ruin his reputation. Following Foucault’s theory of the construction of sexual identity, public knowledge of the secret would represent the production of knowledge of the baron’s secret sexuality, thus entirely reconstructing his identity. Public knowledge of his identity would submit him to the power of Barcelona’s privileged classes and, racked with fear and shame as Guillem ensnares him in an ever-thicker web of blackmail, the baron, unable to bear the weight of his secret any longer, shoots himself. The complex intertwining of public and private realms that Sagarra presents demonstrates how each sphere cannot be delineated and separated as neatly as the characters, or Cerdà, imagine they can be, as the public/private dichotomy transcends urban boundaries.

The “cambra del crim” episode takes place in the “in-between” space of the *intervias*, which literally means “between ways”. In a similar vein, MacCormack’s alignment of perversion with monstrosity draws on Rosi Braidotti’s definition of monsters as “human beings ... who represent the in-between, the mixed, the ambivalent as implied in the ancient Greek root of the word monsters, *teras*, which means both horrible and wonderful, object of aberration and adoration” (77). The bourgeois moral code is patriarchal and heteronormative, a position which the narrator upholds, identifying a hidden monster in Dorotea Palau: “Probablement, en el clima secret de Dorotea s’hi devia criar també algun monstre insospitat, i probablement, una de les conseqüències d’aquell monstre era l’escena que acabava de passar a la casa de modes” (Sagarra 66) (“In her inner depths she must be harboring some unsuspected monster, and one of



the consequences of that monster was probably the scene that had just taken place in that house of fashion” (Newman 67)). In her discussion of perversion as monstrosity, MacCormack recognises that if “monsters” are to name themselves as such, “they accept the terms of their bodies given to them by phallogocentric culture” (par. 21), affirming a condition for them that they did not choose. The public fascination with the deformed sexuality that the baron imagines, a fascination echoed in the narrator’s labelling of Dorotea’s sexuality as “monstrous,” subjugates the characters to the established norms of the bourgeois realm. Falling foul of this moral code is what brings about the characters’ deaths. The baron is not the only one to die as a result of his transgressive sexuality: Dorotea is later stabbed to death, apparently out of spite for her secondary line of work. Their deaths connect to the urban form of the *interviás* in the Eixample. Attempting to keep their transgressive sexual practices private within a space characterised as both private and public proves tragically impossible.

MacCormack also points out that conditions of subjugation are often glamorised in society (par. 21), which further reaffirms traditional patriarchal and heteronormative discourses. This is also the case in *Vida privada*, as Sagarra’s lively portrait of the red-light district in the old city demonstrates. A group of aristocratic and bourgeois characters who had met through regular games of poker go on a night out in the old city. Their night out turns into a voyeuristic tour of the red-light district, as they observe all kinds of people out in the streets: different kinds of men, prostitutes, gypsies and disfigured people exhibit themselves to the passers-by. Practices of transgressive sexuality in the red-light district take place outdoors in the streets, where people flaunt their body’s characteristics and display appearances that cross boundaries, flouting the conventions the group of tourists are accustomed to. The people they encounter blur the strait-laced, normative conceptions of gender enshrined in the bourgeois moral code: “D’homes, se’n veien de tota manera, des dels mariners, els mecànics i els obrers perfectament normal, fins als pederastes amb els llavis pintats, les galtes amb crostes de guix i els ulls carregats de rímmel” (Sagarra 205) (“There were all kinds of men, from perfectly normal sailors, mechanics and workingmen, to pederasts with painted lips, cheeks crusted with plaster and eyes laden with mascara” (Newman 233)). Later on, they are pursued by Lolita, an “homenot” (“big man”) with a masked face and hair gleaming with coconut oil who begs them for a cigarette “amb una veu de mascaró que vol imitar la d’una dona i fent aquell ploriqueig assossegat i llepissós dels invertits professionals” (Sagarra 212) (“in a high-pitched tone meant to imitate a woman’s voice, with the unhurried, sibilant lisp of the professional invert” (Newman 241)). Afraid of this character, the group try to hurry away as Lolita makes “uns ‘ais’ inaguantables a l’orella dels quatre homes que fugien; uns ‘ais’ com si volguessin imitar l’orgasme femení” (Sagarra 212) (“whimpering and crying ‘Ay!’ into their ears, intolerably, over and over again, as if imitating a female orgasm” (Newman 242)). Indoors, transgressive sexuality is expressed through performances of dance and movement. In the La Criolla club the dancers and a boy with a full face of make-up and a woman’s hairstyle prepare the group for the burlesque friezes they witness later on at the sex show at La Sevillana: a pornographic performance by four women and “dos éssers que probablement eren homes” (Sagarra 214) (“two beings who must have been men” (Newman 243)). This episode highlights the narrator’s taxonomic gaze and upholding of

heteronormative discourse, as it attempts to define all subjects as either ‘male’, ‘female’ or a combination of the two, expressing sexuality solely through these gendered terms.

In the riotous, winding streets of the old city there is a much less clear distinction between public and private spaces as the streets are much narrower and there is much less room for a pavement buffer zone to separate public and private areas. Private spatial practices that develop the identity of an individual are therefore forced out into the public domain, where they are witnessed as performance. There is consequently no layer of secrecy surrounding transgressive sexuality in the old city: it exists out in the open and invites no public quest for knowledge as in the Eixample. The people of the red-light district attract viewers, which is reflected in the narrator’s comparison of the area to a stage being set up for the 1929 International Exposition where the inhabitants are performers: “és possible que aquells barris els donin un maquillatge especial” (Sagarra 205) (“maybe it is the neighborhoods themselves that apply a special sort of maquillage” (Newman 233)). The flouting of bourgeois social, moral and cultural conventions, which are understood in the middle- to upper-class residents of the Eixample as heterosexual relationships and normative sexual practices, is reflected in the old city’s urban form. Whereas Cerdà regulated and controlled the form of the new city with its rigid grid pattern of streets and an *interviás* consisting of apartment blocks made of single-family units and hence a great deal of private space, the old city underwent no similar planning project.

*Vida privada* thus establishes links between transgressive sexualities and the form of the city. The layout of the Eixample advocates the dominance of binary modes of thinking that protect normative identities, as exemplified by the presence of transgressive sexual practices within the private space of the *interviás* and the secret nature of the sexual identities that are constructed as a result. Dorotea’s hidden flat in the Eixample is the baron’s “closet,” where his transgressive identity is developed and where it is kept a closely guarded secret, along with the identity of Dorotea herself.

Cerdà’s urbanisation is based around human interaction and interrelationships which are constantly shifting, thus making themselves “open to the subversion of normalcy and the multiplication of alternative potentials” (Green 142). While this process of subversion happens publicly in the streets and clubs of the old city, when it takes place in the private-public in-between space of the *interviás*, it results in tragic consequences. Private sexual identities are shown to be incompatible with the conventional values that regulate daily life in the Eixample. The potential for privacy and secrecy was meant by Cerdà to create a more balanced place for humans to thrive by allowing them to combine movement and stasis in equal measure and creating universal harmony. Yet *Vida privada* would suggest that the promotion of this human solidarity and fraternity appears contingent on the upholding of phallogocentric values, as the tragedies in the Eixample and the glamorisation of conditions of subjugation in the red-light district convey.

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**“Oh, for Christ’s sake, one doesn’t *study* poets!”**  
**Reflections on Philip Larkin: Personality, Poetry, Prose**  
**Hull History Centre, 13-14 June 2019**

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In 1982, Philip Larkin wrote that Hull is “as good a place to write as any” (*A Rumoured City* 9). On the basis of this rave review, as well as that fact that it was the city in which the poet lived and worked for the final thirty years of his life, Hull was chosen as the setting for the conference ‘Philip Larkin: Personality, Poetry, Prose,’ which was held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> and Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2019. We were extremely grateful to the White Rose College of the Arts and Humanities (WRoCAH) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding the conference under WRoCAH’s Student Led Forums scheme. The conference had been a long time in the making: extremely early in our doctoral studies, myself and Rebecca Devine, a PhD candidate based at the University of Hull, noted the lack of dedicated outlets for Larkin researchers to disseminate and discuss their findings: indeed, ours was to be the first Philip Larkin conference in twelve years. This seemed a shame, given the number of single-author conferences focussing on his contemporaries, and despite Larkin’s assertion in *Paris Review*, referenced in the title of this essay, that “one doesn’t *study* poets!” (‘Interview’ 67). The previous lack of events certainly does not reflect a lack of research being conducted in the field, nor the enthusiasm of Larkin researchers and fans.

After securing the support and expertise of Dr James Underwood, Senior Lecturer at the University of Huddersfield, as our academic sponsor, and the talents of Felicity Powell and Wei Zhou, PhD candidates at the Universities of Sheffield and Leeds respectively, the show was well and truly on the road. We were particularly lucky to secure the use of Hull History Centre for the conference. The History Centre is home to the University of Hull’s extensive Philip Larkin archive, so it was a natural home for the conference: delegates who opted to spend a little more time in the city would be able to make use of the archive for their own research, and we had the advice of the University’s knowledgeable archivist, Simon Wilson, close at hand, too.

In putting the programme together, we were particularly interested in engaging the public as well as academics, especially as the conference was being held in Hull, where Larkin is a major part of literary and cultural heritage. We decided on a mix between scholarly and more creative panels, with several Larkin-based activities in the programme, too. We also made sure to market the conference in the local press, on events websites and social media networks, as well displaying posters and flyers in each of our university English departments, in Hull’s libraries and tourist information centres, in the Hull History Centre, and in an exhibition about Philip Larkin and Ted Hughes at the University of Huddersfield. The Philip Larkin Society journal, *About Larkin*, kindly allowed us to include our flyers within their journal and gave us a shout

out at their Annual General Meeting, too. We were pleased, therefore, that our ultimate delegate numbers were fairly evenly split between academics and members of the public, people from Hull, and others from much further afield.

As we had the luxury of spreading the conference over two days at the History Centre, we were able to sidestep two of our least favourite things about conferences: parallel panels and early morning starts! Avoiding parallel panels was very important to us: it was brilliant that all speakers had a well-sized audience of delegates to engage with their research, and that all delegates could experience the conference in its entirety! We were also very keen that the conference supported small local businesses: thus, to make sure that our delegates were properly fed and watered, and that quality was maintained irrespective of dietary requirements, we worked closely with the award-winning Hull Pie Bakery on the flavours of the conference. In the poem 'Dockery and Son,' Larkin's narrator travels through Sheffield and takes note of the "awful pies" he found there (*Complete Poems* 66). Through their delicious offerings, the Hull Pie Bakery proved to the delegates that northern pies are not all cut of the same pastry, so to speak. The wine for the reception was sourced from a local business too, whilst the conference dinner was held at the Barrow Boys, a new restaurant and bar set beside Hull's beautiful marina; this also allowed us to show another part of the beautiful, historic city to all the delegates who were visiting from outside the city walls!

As the sun rose in Hull on the first day of the conference, it was clear that, despite our best-laid plans for lovely al fresco lunches and outdoor activities, the weather had other ideas. Weather – and the number of pairs of shoes I got through, after having no choice but to park in a four-inch-deep puddle – aside though, the first day went entirely to plan. After welcoming the delegates, we proceeded to the first of our three programme strands, with the panel 'Interpreting Larkin.' This panel – chaired by myself – was, as the name suggests, made up of three different ways in which the poet (his life and his work) are currently being interpreted by scholars and creatives alike. The first of these papers, by Rebecca Devine, explored possible interpretations of Larkin's correspondence with children – particularly his own niece and the children of his friends – and, in turn, the different light that these shed on his character. University of Hull undergraduate student George Dixon followed, with his dissertation research, which analysed interpretations of place and nationhood in Larkin's work, particularly through the ways in which these can be linked to Brexit. In the third talk of the session, Wes Finch of The Mechanicals Band performed three songs from his band's collection inspired by Larkin's poems, and discussed 'The Righteous Jazz,' the full-length music and theatre piece that the band are currently working on. This was a particularly pleasing panel to chair, due to the cutting-edge nature of its content: Rebecca's paper challenged some of the more tired interpretations of the poet's character, whilst George responded to Larkin within today's political contexts; it was brilliant, too, to get an insight into the research and development work Wes's creative responses to Larkin.

Thursday afternoon brought the second of the three thematic strands: 'Influences.' Chaired by James Underwood, this panel was concerned with the influence of people and places. Philip Pullen opened the discussion here, presenting a selection of archived material – including some that is as yet unpublished

– within his research into some of the places that the poet visited with his family on childhood holidays, alongside their influence on his writing even as an adult. Alison Mace followed, with her close readings and discussion of the influence of a mutual acquaintance, Miriam Plaut, on Larkin, and the likeness between Plaut and the character of Katharine Lind in Larkin's second novel, *A Girl in Winter*. Closing the panel was Sam Perry, lecturer at the University of Hull, with his exploration of the various influences of the Surrealist movement on Larkin's correspondence and poetry. His original interpretations suggested the influence of surrealist art and literature as a particularly illuminating way of reading the poet's early work in particular.

We were extremely pleased to be able to welcome Professor James Booth to our conference, to deliver the keynote paper on Thursday afternoon. As one of the central authorities on Larkin's life and work, it was very interesting to hear Booth – author of *Philip Larkin: Writer*, *Philip Larkin: The Poet's Plight* and *Philip Larkin: Life, Art and Love*, and editor of *Trouble at Willow Gables* and *Philip Larkin: Letters Home* – reflect on his new interpretations of Larkin's texts. His keynote paper, entitled 'The Girlhood of Philip Larkin,' discussed the various influences of some of the lesser-discussed women in the poet's life, including his sister Kitty, his friend Diana Gollancz, and his ex-fiancée Ruth Bowman, both on his writing and the more feminine aspects of his personality. This character exploration was juxtaposed with examples of the poet's behaviour in correspondence with male friends Kingsley Amis and Bruce Montgomery, to emphasise certain aspects of the poet's recognised multi-faceted persona. Booth's paper – which featured analysis of poems alongside archival material, including letters and photographs, and the schoolgirl stories that Larkin wrote under the pseudonym Brunette Coleman – was warmly received by the delegates, whose questions contributed to a particularly fruitful discussion.

After Booth's keynote, delegates were invited to help themselves to a glass of wine before regrouping for our evening poetry reading. We were really excited that the highly acclaimed Hull poet Vicky Foster had accepted our invitation to speak at the conference: it was amazing to hear Foster's moving poetry and funny observations read within the city in which she was born and raised, and how the place and its association with Larkin influenced her own poetry career. Foster treated our delegates to poems from her debut collection *Changing Tides* as well as excerpts from the newly published text *Bathwater*, which comprises the script of her BBC one-woman show. We were especially pleased when she signed our books after the reading, too!

Friday quickly dawned with no upturn in the weather – indeed, the day treated us to some impressively monsoon-like episodes – but this was not reflected in the enthusiasm of the delegates who returned eager for another day of Larkin-related research and reflections. After the resounding successes of the first day, we felt very relaxed about the coming day's proceedings: alas, we were not allowed to become complacent, as the second day was laced with some of the most bizarre technological conundrums, from the main computer's operating system inexplicably regressing to one that resembled Windows 98, to a wired keyboard dramatically perishing with no warning or provocation, and the speakers suddenly refusing to emit any sound just as we were poised to watch a delegate's paper via video link. In September 2018 a rather peculiar article was published by Andrew Motion, describing how he had communicated with

Larkin's ghost through the high-frequency radio of the deceased poet's former hearing aid specialist. Of course, Motion recalls in this tale how spirit-Larkin gave his biography the ultimate seal of approval, deeming it "very satisfactory." In the nine months since the article's publication, Motion's tale has become the stuff of legend; as a result, of course, the poet's disembodied spirit and his aversion to studying poets was quickly and humorously blamed for our day of technological woes.

The show must go on, of course, and the first panel of the day, chaired by Rebecca Devine, was to conclude the 'Influences' strand, this time with a literary focus. This began with the research of James Underwood, whose paper entered into an interesting dialogue with Booth's keynote of the previous afternoon, by identifying Brunette Coleman – Larkin's pseudonym during his early writing career – as an important influence in his early poetry; indeed, Coleman was evidenced as a more central influence on the poet's work than the frequently-cited Thomas Hardy. Here, Underwood raised Coleman as a far more significant and focal aspect of Larkin's writing than has been previously acknowledged. My paper followed, with a literary-linguistic analysis of the subtle yet significant role of birds in Larkin's poetry, both as wide-ranging symbol and as a point of narrative perspective. This was a new and somewhat radical approach to the interpretation of Larkin's poetry, with results that go some way to explaining a particularly contentious ambiguity in the poem 'Here.' In the final paper of the session, the University of Leicester's Nick Everett provided a detailed intertextual exploration of several of Larkin's poems. Widening the discussion of Larkin's literary influences quite considerably, Everett argued the presence and purpose of a wide range of writing that may have fed into the poet's own work, from religious texts to the works of modernist poets.

The final strand of the conference themes concerned the way in which Larkin's reputation and associated heritage is, and should be, managed. This is a particularly pressing concern for Larkin scholars and enthusiasts as a result of Hull's time as UK City of Culture 2017, and the fact that the next city to hold the title is Coventry, the city in which Larkin was born and raised. The first talk in the afternoon's programme was delivered by Don Lee, an expert in 'literary safaris,' who has delivered Larkin-themed walks in towns and cities throughout England. Lee discussed his experiences in leading these walks, as well as their importance within literary heritage, as well as tips and practicalities for anyone who might like to deliver their own cultural walks in the future. The second speaker within this cluster was Helen Cooper, librarian and archivist at King Henry VIII School in Coventry. Cooper was one of the first thirty girls to attend the school, which Larkin had also attended in his youth. Cooper's talk discussed the Larkin archives that the school holds, as well as the events that she is planning for Coventry UK City of Culture 2021; Cooper concluded with an invitation to delegates to engage with the Larkin activities that she is programming at the school.

Due to a cheeky intervention by the phantom-writer that unfortunately silenced the digital inclusion of Dámaso López García from Universidad Complutense Madrid, our programme was cut short on the second day. Instead, García's paper 'Refiguring Philip Larkin's Poetry' – which discussed the ways in which the poet's works can be re-examined, retrospective to the damaging effects of the publication of the early biography and collection of the poet's correspondences – was handily delivered to the delegates

via email, to enjoy at their own convenience and through their own speakers! To conclude the session, Simon Wilson displayed a selection of fascinating items from the extensive Larkin archives, with the opportunity for delegates to inspect them up-close. This valuable experience allowed a real connection with the more everyday aspects of the poet's life, as well as underlining the importance of the University archives to the city's heritage and the work of the Larkin scholar.

This connection to the poet was reinforced by the final activity in our programme, which delegates were invited to attend on the Friday afternoon. It was important to us to end on a high note: thus, we could not let them leave Hull without seeing some of Larkin's haunts within the city, making the most of the expertise of Don Lee. By some miracle, given the torrential rain that had almost drowned out the post-lunch panel (or perhaps it was the poet-spirit's apology for his technological tomfoolery!) the clouds cleared and the sun beamed down just as the Larkin-themed walk prepared to leave the History Centre. On their hour-long exploration of the city, Lee and his tour group took in some of the most prominent sites and sights of Larkin's city, a place that was (and still is!) "as good a place to write in as any."

Contrary to Larkin's assertions then, people absolutely *do* study poems, and his own are certainly no exception to this! We were particularly satisfied to note the ongoing passion and interest in Larkin – both amongst researchers and more general poetry and literature fans – in the city of Hull and far beyond: a testament, perhaps, to the continuing relevance of his work within today's society. After two days of dynamic conversation and debate about Philip Larkin's personality, poetry and prose, we deemed the conference to have been, on the whole, a great success. This was clearly reflected in the feedback we received from the delegates:

"Thank you and your colleagues for a splendid and wonderful conference. We both enjoyed the papers a lot. Organisation superb, food marvellously good!"

"Thank you for such an illuminating, comprehensive and well organised conference. The subjects covered were eclectic and all offered interesting takes on topics as likely to be of value to 'Larkin professionals' (so to speak) as to relative newcomers. I learnt a great deal and was equally inspired to pursue further research. In short – a rave review!"

"Thank you for such an illuminating, comprehensive and well organised conference. Particular thanks are therefore due to the organisers: they conducted everything with commendable efficiency and friendliness"; "what set this conference apart from other Larkin events I've attended (including my own) is that several of the papers tackled the technical aspects of Larkin's poetry, rather than simply focusing on the man and his life. I am coming more and more to the view that Larkin's life has had every last drop squeezed out of it as the subject matter of conferences, whereas his poetry merits ongoing analysis. I learnt a huge amount from the academic speakers and your communications were excellent."



“Thank you all for organizing a most excellent and insightful conference. It was a genuine delight for me to attend. It was most pleasing and encouraging to see so many young academics interested and passionate about the life and work of Philip Larkin.”

The organisers were also congratulated on the conference’s success by the Philip Larkin Society. Given this warm reception, we are working with the Philip Larkin Society on speculative plans for a Larkin conference to recur on a three-yearly basis: if all goes to plan, the next event will occur in 2022, which will coincide nicely with the celebrations to mark the centenary of the poet’s birth. We hope to see you in three years’ time!

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