Constructing Literary Dystopia:

exploring the divide between young adult and

adult dystopian fictions

Alexandra Jane Bodnaruk (BArts)

Macquarie University, Department of English

10th October, 2014

Contents

Summary

Throughout study of the development of the dystopian literary genre, very little emphasis has been placed on young adult dystopian novels. In the twenty-first century, when young adult fiction is becoming a significant proportion of dystopian novels published, it is important to analyse the extent of the engagement of such novels with the dystopian literary tradition – and thereby establish their importance in dystopian discourse. Seeking to fulfil that aim, this thesis will be examining the similarities and differences between two adult dystopian novels, *Oryx and Crake* by Margaret Atwood and *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, and two young adult dystopian novels, *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld and *Shades of Grey: the Road to High Saffron* by Jasper Fforde. The thesis will focus on how the authors construct the dystopian settings in the novels using methods that recur throughout utopian and dystopian fictions. The three methods that will be discussed are: characterisation, the manifestation of hope and fear, and the representation of politics. Ultimately, the thesis argues that the young adult literary dystopia discussed are simpler than adult dystopian texts, but are no less embedded in the dystopian tradition. In fact, that the young adult dystopian texts approach the same political issues as their adult counterparts reveals their full engagements with the dystopian literary tradition.

Declaration

I, Alexandra Jane Bodnaruk, certify that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Date: 10th October, 2014

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank the rest of my MRes cohort for their support and encouragement across the past year; I do not think I would have enjoyed this process nearly as much without them. Secondly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. Anthony Cousins, for his guidance throughout the processes of researching and writing, and his assistance in shaping this thesis into a coherent work. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my family and friends for being so understanding this past year as I dealt with writing this thesis.

Introduction

Within the study of the dystopian literary genre, very little emphasis is placed on young adult dystopian novels. The focus of most of the discourse is on dystopian novels written for adults, with their young adult counterparts often ignored completely. Given that in the Twenty-First Century young adult novels form a significant proportion of dystopian literature published, this thesis posits that they should occupy a larger role within discussions of the dystopian genre. Before being able to discuss the contributions young adult novels make to the dystopian literary canon, however, an analysis of the extent to which they engage the dystopian literary tradition must take place. This thesis aims to compare and contrast select young adult and adult dystopian texts and their methods of engagement with readers, focusing on the textual construction of literary dystopia. This process will allow for a detailed discussion of the relationship that exists between young adult and adult representation of dystopia in literature, and the influence each sub-genre has on the understanding of the dystopian concept as a whole.

To address the literary dystopia, even in its most current form, the discussion must reach back to utopia and the influences that utopian literary forms have had on their dystopian counterparts. The literary utopia, in the form we currently recognise it, was first defined with the publication of Thomas More's 1516 text *Utopia*; a work that has had a distinctly changeable meaning for nearly half a century. With his text, More created a new method of communicating utopian thought through the literary form focusing on a "speculative discourse on a non-existent social organisation which is better than the real society".[1] Moving forward, it has been persuasively argued that dystopian writing began to emerge in the early twentieth century as a pessimistic response to perceived issues in the social and political trajectories of the western world.[2] Dystopian texts were first proposed to

be the anti-thesis to utopian ones, highlighting the negative impacts of the modern world and tracing their increasingly corruptive effects, instead of depicting a utopian society that had transcended these issues and brought about near-perfection. While there has always been some debate about the definition of dystopia, there has been even more discussion on the definition of utopia. For the purposes of this thesis however, these debates will not be engaged with and the term 'utopia' will be used to refer to the literary genre in which a world more perfectly organised than our own is depicted.[3] (Additionally, I will be referring to the literary genre as 'utopia', distinguishing from More's text '*Utopia*' and the island nation of 'Utopia' discussed within it).

As the dystopian genre developed, a second term entered common parlance to describe dystopian texts – the anti-utopia – and the two terms began to be used interchangeably. Later critics distance these two terms, isolating literary dystopia and literary anti-utopia as two separate, albeit similar, sub-genres.[4] There was also much debate surrounding the placement of the dystopian and anti-utopian sub-genres in relation to each other and the governing genre of utopia. Suvin defines the anti-utopia as a sub-set of literary dystopia, with both falling under the umbrella of literary utopia,[5] while Moylan positions dystopia as a moveable point between the dichotomies of utopia and anti-utopia.[6] This thesis will use the assumption that literary dystopia negotiates the conflict between literary utopia and literary anti-utopia, as put forward by Moylan,[7] as it reflects the variability of dystopian tendencies in literature. If the space between utopian texts and anti-utopian texts is a spectrum, dystopian novels are capable of examining themes from both of its ends. Suvin's definition – a world less perfectly organised than our own –[8] still proves useful, however, as it provides a framework definition that can be applied to all of literary dystopia's forms. This definition highlights the importance of dystopian texts' relationship to

reality, as they present it as an extrapolated version of the author's own world and context. It is the influence of utopian literature on dystopian literature, in its role as parent-genre, which has created this emphasis on tying the fictional world back to reality. Dystopia mimics the utopian method of grounding political machinations in the author's present. This process allows literary dystopia to posit scenarios that show readers possible outcomes to immorality and inaction within their own society.[9] By dealing with these issues in settings that are estranged from reality, authors are able to engage readers in a critique of reality at the same time as readers are escaping from it.[10]

If one builds upon this relationship between utopia in literature and politics, as outlined by Sargisson,[11] then it can be seen that literary dystopia does not merely critique reality, but goes one step further and challenges the reader to accept their social and civic responsibilities.[12] Often, the purpose of a literary dystopia is to show readers what could happen if they ignore these responsibilities, focusing on social and political problems relevant to the author's present. This preoccupation with real world issues is one reason for the success of dystopian themes within young adult literature. While it has been argued that the rise in popularity of young adult literary dystopia in the Twenty-First Century can be attributed, at least in part, to the effects of the post-9/11 social and political climate (especially in the USA),[13] this approach cannot account for the success of young adult dystopian novels published prior to 2001. Lois Lowry, author of one such novel (*The Giver*, published in 1993), proposes an alternate explanation. She states that "young people handle dystopia everyday: in their lives, in their dysfunctional families, their violence ridden schools".[14] Dystopian novels provide escapist worlds that contain avenues for exploring typical adolescent issues alongside broader social and political problems, providing obstacles for the protagonist/s to overcome, and hence embark on their journey into adulthood.[15] The

nature of dystopian literature means that there are a plethora of obstacles that emerge from the imperfect world structure, which often centre on the struggle for autonomy and identity;[16] two of the most significant issues in young adult literature. In this way young adult dystopia are producing new dystopian narratives, rather than just young adult narratives that borrow dystopian themes.

The representation of social and political problems is an integral part of the construction of a literary dystopia, be it written for young adults or adults, and is one of the focal points of this thesis. One of the main methods of exploring these issues within the narrative is through characterisation. Characterisation is used across all literary dystopia as a way of introducing the dystopian world to the reader. Characters refract the dystopian setting to the reader and their development throughout the course of a novel allows the image of the world that is communicated to change.[17] The message that the reader takes away from the novel is, if not dictated by the characters, certainly heavily influenced by them. The character's reactions, their hopes and fears, impact on whether or not the reader views the narrative setting as dystopian, utopian, or something in between. In fact, it is the character's engagement with hope and fear that is one of the defining elements of literary dystopia's construction. Hope and fear are central to a literary utopia or dystopia's ability to examine social and political problems because of their intrinsic role in the enacting of the utopian impulse. Any account of utopian texts as singularly hopeful or dystopian texts as merely fearful is ignoring the ambiguity with which these ideas are presented in utopian and dystopian literature, even as far back as *Utopia*.[18]

In seeking to analyse these elements and bridge this gap that exists between young adult and adult dystopian narratives this thesis will bring together the young adult dystopian novel *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld (2005) and Margaret Atwood's adult dystopia *Oryx and*

Crake (2003). These texts will be used to examine the differences and similarities between the construction of adult and young adult literary dystopia. Both novels explore similar ideas and engage with the same dystopian themes; issues of genetic engineering, body modification, and eco-criticism. These consistencies in the novels' ideological concerns allows for easy comparison between the construction techniques and detailed examination of the approaches to political issues across the young adult-adult divide. To broaden the discussion beyond these texts, two supplementary novels will be used; *Shades of Grey* by Jasper Fforde (2010) and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006). These secondary novels, while they do not engage as explicitly with the same political ideas as *Oryx and Crake* and *Uglies*, do provide additional means of analysing literary dystopian construction methods. All four novels also demonstrate the importance of characterisation and perspective on the resulting interpretation of the literary dystopia by the reader.

There are a number of differences between these young adult and adult texts that arise from their differing intended audiences. Young adult literature focuses on adolescent characters dealing with issues to which adolescent readers will be able to relate. Issues such as forming an identity, growing up, dealing with authority, and social problems are just as readily explored in dystopian texts as in other young adult novels. Characters in young adult texts often follow a developmental arc that conforms to the classic 'coming of age' narrative, apparent in both *Uglies* and *Shades of Grey*. Adult texts are not as bound by these kinds of genre conventions. Instead, they are able to freely explore a much wider range of character arcs and plot-types, and often examine issues well outside the purview of young adult literature. As well as these distinctions in content between young adult and adult novels, there are also differences that result from the perceived intelligence of the audience. Adults are likely to be more educated than young adults and so, the argument goes, they are

capable of understanding more complex ideas presented in more complex ways. This differentiation between the complexity of young adult and adult literary texts is true within dystopia and within the core texts being discussed in this thesis. *The Road* and *Oryx and Crake* are more complex, with multiple perspectives and timelines being interwoven in a way that is absent from the single-focalising and linear young adult novels, *Uglies* and *Shades of Grey*. It is through these different uses of characterisation and hope and fear that the political and social questions of the texts are depicted. What this thesis aims to do is analyse the true extent of these differentiations by establishing how deep these contrasts run and how much of an impact they have on the ideological content.

Notes

¹ Fatima Vieira, "The Concept of Utopia," <u>The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature</u>, ed. Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010) 7.

² Tom Moylan, <u>Scraps of the Untainted Sky</u>, (Massachusetts: Perseus Books 2000) xi, <u>Literary Reference Centre</u>, 1 March 2014, <http://search.ebscohost.com>.

³ Darko Suvin, "Defining the Literary Genre of Utopia: Some Historical Semantics, Some Genology, a Proposal, and a Plea," [first published 1973], <u>Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction, and Political Epistemology</u>, (Germany: Peter Lang, 2010) 30.

⁴ Moylan, 127.

⁵ Darko Suvin, "A Tractate on Dystopia," [first published 2001], <u>Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction, and Political Epistemology</u>, (Germany: Peter Lang, 2010) 385.

⁶ Moylan, 156.

⁷ Moylan, 181.

⁸ Suvin, "Tractate on Dystopia," 384.

⁹ Vieira, 17.

¹⁰ Carrie Hintz, and Elaine Ostry. <u>Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults</u>. (London: Routledge 2003) 11.

¹¹ Lucy Sargisson, "The Curious Relationship Between Politics and Utopia," <u>Utopia Method Vision</u>, ed. Raffaella Baccolini, and Tom Moylan (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang 2007) 32.

¹² Vieira, 17.

¹³ Melissa Ames, "Engaging "Apolitical" Adolescents: Analyzing the Popularity and Educational Potential of Dystopian Literature Post-9/11," <u>The High School Journal</u>, 97:1 (2013): 8. <u>Project MUSE</u>, 1 May 2014. <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hsj/summary/v097/97.1.ames.html>.

¹⁴ Lois Lowry, "Interview with Lois Lowry, author of *The Giver*," <u>Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults</u>, ed. Carrie Hintz, and Elaine Ostry (London: Routledge 2003) 199.

¹⁵ Rebecca Carol Noël Totaro, "Suffering in Utopia: Testing the Limits in Young Adult Novels," <u>Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults</u>, ed. Carrie Hintz, and Elaine Ostry (London: Routledge 2003) 136.

¹⁶ Ames, 9.

¹⁷ Suvin, "A Tractate on Dystopia," 384; Moylan, 148.

[18] Sargisson, 25.

Chapter One: Characterisation as Construction

Margaret Atwood, in her essay *The Handmaid's Tale and Oryx and Crake in Context*, describes the main concern of dystopian novels to be the exploration of social changes and what impact these changes may have on everyday life.[1] Authors are able to depict these changes through the characters as their motivations and interpretations of the world around them are divulged. Characters become a means of understanding these unfamiliar worlds; they are the reader's entry point to the narrative. They refract the world in a particular light, changing the image that is produced across the course of the novel.[2] Baccolini describes this as "the questioning character", whose investigations of the dystopian world re-align the dominant opinions and reframes the reader's experience of the world.[3] Hence, the character's trajectory throughout the course of the novel is often the focal point of dystopian narratives, allowing the portrayal of the dystopian world to be as dynamic and open to development as the characters themselves. This trajectory is often outlined through the characterisation, a series of signposts inserted by authors throughout the narrative that inform the reader of who the characters are, what their goals are, and, importantly, how they interpret the world around them. It is this interpretation that forms the basis of the social critique presented in dystopian fiction, a critique that allows the central preoccupation of social change to be explored.

While this explanation of the importance of character in dystopian literary construction suffices for adult novels, characters play another, different, role within young adult (hereafter YA) dystopian literature. The key aspect of characters in YA literature is their relatability. They must be reflections of their target audience, so that adolescent readers can feel an affinity with them. YA literary dystopia, as well as trying to engage in a broad social or political critique, must also reflect on issues specific to adolescents; drawing on themes such

as self-esteem, independence, and maturation to be highlighted in the construction of the literary dystopia. Because of this grounding in YA literary conventions the characters in YA dystopian novels often differ greatly from those in adult dystopian novels because their broader purpose is to encourage empathy in adolescent readers.

The two novels that this chapter will focus on, *Oryx and Crake* by Margaret Atwood and *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld, depict these distinctions between YA and adult narratives' use of character. However, they both also demonstrate the integral nature of character to the construction of dystopia in literature, albeit in different ways. Each novel is primarily focalised through one character, and it is that character's developing interpretation of their social and physical world that draws out the political and social issues for discussion. The differences arise in the style of engagement with these issues, and the possible results of these discussions. Given the different target audiences of the novels, it is easy to see why there are differences in the critical debates within them. *Uglies* has a much less sophisticated engagement with the issues that are raised in the text than *Oryx and Crake* does and given that it is aimed at a much younger audience this is understandable. The result of this is that *Oryx and Crake* contains a more complicated social and political analysis than could be possible in *Uglies*. A similar dynamic can be seen with *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy and *Shades of Grey* by Jasper Fforde, where the target audiences again dictate the possible sophistication of the ensuing critical debate. Even between *Uglies* and *Shades of Grey*, both written for adolescent audiences, differences in the sophistication are present; a probable result of the slightly different age brackets each novel is aimed at. *Shades of Grey* is targeted at the older end of the young adult market, while *Uglies* is meant for the younger bracket. Fforde has delved deeper into dystopian literary conventions through his use of

satire than Westerfeld has, though still not to the extent that can be seen in *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road*.

The use of characterisation in dystopian literary construction has been a part of the genre since its inception. It is apparent even in early texts, such as *Brave New World*,[4] where the interplay between the character and the reader's perception of the world can be clearly seen. Huxley's novel uses multiple points of focalisation to present the dystopian society, with each perspective highlighting different aspects of the world. From Bernard's isolation as a result of his physical difference and desire to find a place where he belongs, to John Savage's complete inability to reconcile the world of loose morals and genetic engineering with the 'primitive' value structure he was raised with among the savages. Through John, Huxley shows the world as a horrific science experiment gone wrong, rather than the slightly broken, but ultimately functioning, world shown through Bernard and Mustapha Mond. The differing interpretations of the dystopia presented in the novel create a complex social critique that invites the reader to posit their own opinion on the aspects of social change and development being discussed.

This use of contrasting focalisation is another aspect of characterisation that is common within dystopian narratives. As in *Brave New World*, it is used to construct a dialogue surrounding the dystopian world and issues it deals with. By presenting duelling perspectives the social critique gains greater depth, as each character represents a different side, or belief, and the reader is forced to consider both. This is a technique that is used in both *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road*, but is absent in both of the YA novels. This absence ties back to YA literary conventions and the emphasis placed on the single protagonist and their journey. However, contrasting focalisations are used to great effect by Atwood, where they come from a single character at different points in time. *Oryx and Crake* presents the

intertwined worlds of Jimmy and Snowman; the scientifically elite world from before humanity's destruction by Crake's virus and the post-human, post-apocalyptic world that follows. Jimmy is isolated in his world, he is neither a world-class scientist like Crake, nor an attractive femme-fatale like Oryx; his average-ness creates disillusionment and anger that colour the visions of this world that are presented to the reader. Jimmy is not the kind of person who succeeds in life and most of his reflections centre on his numerous failings. This creates an air of desolateness within the world and strongly frames the society as dystopian rather than utopian. What kind of utopia could a society be if its populace was so disheartened? Throughout the course of the novel Jimmy shows no ability to take control of his own life, to find himself purpose. As a child, Jimmy moves when his parents do and goes to schools picked out by them, his father is responsible for securing him a place at the college he goes to, and even his eventual hiring at Paradice and subsequent survival of the apocalypse is due to Crake's intervention. Even following humanity's downfall Snowman simply fulfils the role that was given to him by Crake, to care for the Crakers. Atwood contrasts Snowman's bug-bitten and slowly starving body against the flourishing of the Crakers in the natural landscape, highlighting his alienation in this new world. This ambiguity in definition – utopia or dystopia – is emphasised through the opposition between humanity and the environment Atwood explores in Snowman's world. Utopia for one appears to be dystopia for the other.

There is opposition as well between Jimmy and Snowman, as while they may be the same person, the same body, Atwood characterises them quite differently. In the instances when Snowman interrupts his recollections of Jimmy's life and recounts his own feelings, rather than Jimmy's, he comes across as fond and sentimental or angry at what has been lost. Jimmy however, describes his world in terms of its absence of morality: murder, suicide,

and child pornography are black market (albeit easily accessed) reality television and a strict social hierarchy based on exclusion is enforced. Snowman's considerations of that world focus on human inventions like measures of time and complex language, he views it as a great empire that he is not pleased to have outlived. These interpretations of the pre-apocalyptic world are clearly quite different and shift from pessimistic to optimistic over the course of Jimmy/Snowman's lifetime. By combining this with the previously mentioned ambiguity as to the classification of the post-apocalyptic world (dystopia or utopia) the dystopian settings are constructed. Within these interactions is where the discussions that surround the social critiques take place.

Snowman's broken watch is the earliest instance of interaction between their two worlds; it is a leftover piece of Jimmy's world that Snowman "wears as his only talisman" of his old life.[5] His desire to hold onto a small piece of his past, his nostalgia, is contrasted against the panic he feels when he looks at the blank watch face. The lack of time, the idea that "nobody nowhere knows what time it is",[6] serves as a terrifying reminder to Snowman that humanity's reign is over. The desperation with which Snowman clings to this last, useless, aspect of his former life shows his strong desire to return to the pre-apocalyptic world and his belief that this previous world was intrinsically better. He looks back on his early life as Jimmy as "happier days",[7] while for Jimmy they are punctuated by his mother's depression and his own social isolation. Snowman's sentimentality regarding times when Jimmy was ignored and isolated demonstrates how much greater Snowman feels his isolation to be now: whatever else it was, the old world was much better suited to humanity.

The reader is introduced to this perspective – Snowman's belief that his new world is dystopian – first, and as a result all subsequent revelations about the change from Jimmy's world to Snowman's must argue against this first impression. Snowman believes Crake's

virus to be the catalyst which took the world from good to bad, but Atwood emphasises that this is *humanity's* perspective. Snowman compares himself with the genetically engineered Crakers, for whom this new world is easy; they were built to thrive in this environment, while Snowman struggles just to survive. Atwood is clearly showing the readers that while Crake created a dystopian world for humanity, he created utopia for everything else. This sophisticated engagement with the contemporary issue of environmentalism is produced through the characterisation, where readers are asked to question their assumptions about Snowman's reliability as a narrator and his objectiveness in his descriptions of the world.

While Snowman constructs his current world as dystopian to himself he continues to view his previous life with nostalgia, an attitude Atwood contrasts with Jimmy's perspective. Snowman's first introduction shows his longing for the past and his struggle to survive in his present, while Jimmy's introduction emphasises dystopian elements, not just for humanity but for the natural world as well. When the reader first encounters Jimmy he is a child, five and a half according to Snowman, and he is attending a bonfire of diseased animals with his father. The animals are being burnt to prevent the spread of a disease they were deliberately infected with as part of an act of corporate espionage against the company for which Jimmy's father works. A scene that could quite easily be described in brutal detail is instead framed through a child's naïve perspective, who is thinking very little about what is actually taking place, but rather about whether or not he will get to keep a cow horn and whether the disinfectant he had to walk through will hurt the ducks printed on his gumboots. This highlights the dominance of humanity over the natural world, a dynamic that is in strong contrast with the one presented by Snowman, who sees himself at the mercy of the environment. At the bonfire Jimmy hears the conversations going on around him, and so too do the readers, but while the readers are able to analyse some of the situation Jimmy is

characterised by his complete lack of understanding. The readers are able to build a picture of a segregated society where scientific advancement has been completely commercialised and corporate espionage has taken on a much darker tone. But because of Jimmy's lack of engagement with this discussion, the full effects and impacts of this world are intangible and subsidiary to Jimmy's immediate focus of himself.

Jimmy's lack of understanding of the wider implications of what is going on around him is a central part of his characterisation throughout the novel. He is not unintelligent, but when compared to Crake's cleverness and comprehension of the wider world, he appears stupid and self-involved. Much of the detail of the world is given to readers by other characters, predominantly Crake and Oryx, but is filtered through Jimmy. When combined with Snowman's interjections into Jimmy's narrative, this means readers are able to take greater meaning from Jimmy's conversations than he does. Atwood has turned the pre-apocalyptic world into a puzzle that readers must piece together themselves, each piece revealing something new about the state of the previous world and the process by which it was eliminated.

One of the most significant moments in the construction of both of the worlds is Snowman's journey back to Paradice, the lab where Crake made his virus and new-humans, and where Jimmy and the Crakers sheltered during the days following the virus' release. This is the biggest cross-over instance between the two worlds of Jimmy and Snowman and serves as a significant occurrence of characterisation for Snowman. While there, and after recounting the events of the apocalypse as Jimmy experienced them, Snowman discovers a letter written by Jimmy. He doesn't remember the contents of the letter, though he recalls enough to know he only wrote it by hand because the computers were fried. Jimmy begins his letter with "To whom it may concern" and Snowman wonders at the hope Jimmy must

have had, that one day there would still be someone who could read his letter.[8] The fact that Jimmy's letter is only ever read by Snowman places another level of distinction between the two characters; the "whom" that is concerned is Snowman, Jimmy's future self, but a self that Jimmy would not, could not, recognise. Snowman reads the letter but only comments that it has a good beginning and noting that Jimmy stops writing before he can speculate as to Crake's motivations. Snowman crumples the letter, "it's the fate of these words to be eaten by beetles",[9] a stark contrast to the rest of the novel, when Snowman is desperately trying to preserve words – the only thing of which he has found himself to be capable. There is a finality to Snowman's treatment of Jimmy's letter that assures the reader of the total end of Jimmy's world; whatever happens next that dystopia is over, vanquished by Crake and his virus. In coming to Paradice, facing his past and looting supplies, Snowman has ensured himself a greater chance of survival and shown a level of acceptance of his situation he has not previously achieved. His trajectory from a man courting starvation, to one with a greater determination to survive reconstructs the dystopia as less unforgiving, less desolate, with less chance of certain death for a human.

Cormac McCarthy also uses multiple perspectives to create a complex dystopian world in *The Road*. The unnamed father and son have different interpretations of their post-apocalyptic world, which are shown through their characterisation. As with Snowman, the father has memories of a better world from before the apocalypse which colour his interpretation of their current situation. The son, however, only has memories of the post-apocalyptic world where he is constantly hungry and afraid for his life. The man's driving purpose is for his son to survive and he is willing to go to extremes to ensure this, though the boy does not appear to have many goals. McCarthy uses their differing reactions to events to characterise them and to show alternate interpretations of their world. The two

perspectives do not necessarily oppose each other as in *Oryx and Crake*; instead they are complementary and create layers in the construction of the in-text dystopia.

One particular example of this contrast is within the man and boy's differing relationships with the pre-apocalyptic world. The father's view of post-apocalyptic landscape is coloured by his past experiences, his memories of the world from before the apocalypse, whereas the boy has no such comparisons to make. When they visit the house the father grew up in a strong contrast is drawn between his childhood and his son's. He remembers Christmases and homework and tries to convey some remembrance of happy times to his son, but the boy's only responses are "Can we go?" and "I'm really scared".[10] While the empty, gutted house reminds the father of good things despite its current state, it is only a thing of terror for the boy. The man's recollections serve to remind the reader of what has been lost, on a smaller, personal scale, not just to the father, but the loss to the boy, who has had no Christmas stockings, no home, and no school to give him homework. Their reactions show the bleakness of this new dystopian world, constructing it for the reader by highlighting how alien everyday elements of modern life now seem. This world is the boy's norm, while the man's memories cloud his vision of the present and make the horror worse. He feels the loss of the childhood the boy will never have, while his son does not. This loss of childhood is revisited throughout the novel as one of the dystopian elements of the social contract the boy and father find themselves in.

It is not a complete obliteration of childhood, however, as the son has moments of innocence throughout the novel that stand out against the father's near-constant pessimism. Towards the beginning of the text they swim in a pool at the foot of a waterfall, the boy in awe of the setting and the father's heart breaking at the sight of his son's skinniness. They find morel mushrooms in the undergrowth around the waterfall, a little

remnant of the past, and the boy tells the man, "This is a good place, Papa".[11] Something similar occurs at the end of the novel, when they finally reach the coast. The boy plays in the waves, screaming and jumping, but the father's focus is once again on his "razorous shoulder blades sawing under pale skin".[12] For the father this world is measured against his past and the life he would have liked for his son, but the boy's lack of knowledge of any other way of life gives him the freedom to enjoy some of the world. This presents two perspectives on the dystopian world, one in which the dystopia is endless and one in which there is a chance it can be resolved and the world put back together. The other element that these two scenes demonstrate is an engagement with the natural world. In contrast to *Oryx and Crake*, where humanity and nature were portrayed as being Incapable of coexisting, the man and boy in *The Road* seem most at peace when surrounded by nature. The waterfall and the beach both provide havens for the boy, where he is able to play and enjoy himself without fear; unlike the father's childhood home which is simply a place of terror. As with Snowman, the characterisation of the man and boy becomes integral to the representation of traditional dystopian issues.

The dual perspectives that are used in *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road* are not apparent in the YA novels chosen for discussion. Instead *Uglies* and *Shades of Grey* use a single protagonist and emphasise the character's development across the narrative as the means of construction. *Uglies* in particular exemplifies this process, using Tally's changing perspective throughout the novel to continuously reframe the world. The novel itself is set many years after a barely remembered apocalyptic event, something that is mirrored in *Shades of Grey* and numerous other YA dystopian narratives (*The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth and *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner etc.) and already sets them apart from the adult dystopian novels being discussed. The purpose of this

timeframe in *Uglies* and *Shades of Grey* is to depict a society that has been purpose built to avoid the problems that caused the apocalypse in the first place. This places an instant focus on any issues connected to the pre-apocalypse and the ways in which they are supposedly resolved in the new, narratively-current one. In Tally's world it is implied that part of the reason for the apocalypse was environmental collapse caused by the propagation of a single species of orchid, creating a monoculture. Her city isolates itself from nature and advocates, not just for its protection, but intense respect for the natural world as well. On top of this, the population is tightly controlled and segregated, from the separation of the uglies and pretties, to the secret brain lesions that create a blissed-out state in which people are generally agreeable. Tally's struggle against this regime is the central theme of the novel, her attempts to renegotiate her own free-will and individuality is a common theme in YA literature. They provide a point of connection for adolescent readers, who deal with independence from authority in their own lives. At the beginning of the novel Tally has a place in her society, a complete contrast to Jimmy and Snowman's isolation, and does not question the societal structure surrounding her. However, Westerfeld consistently places her in new and challenging situations, forcing her to reconsider her previous assumptions and allowing readers to experience her changing opinions firsthand. Tally's development across the novel is quite straight-forward and plainly stated, especially when compared to the nuanced changes between Jimmy and Snowman, but is conventional for a young adult narrative and lacks no believability as a result. *Uglies* depicts the standard growth and maturation narrative of YA literature, and uses this form to reveal the novel's dystopian themes in conjunction with Tally's newfound understandings of her world. This progressive development of the themes and issues, allows for discussions surrounding beauty standards, governmental power, and environmentalism to be included in the novel without dominating the narrative.

One of the novel's central issues, a critique of modern beauty standards, is introduced from the very beginning of the novel. Tally crashes a party in New Pretty Town and introduces the reader to the contrasting attitudes and personalities of the uglies and pretties. The vibrant party and the airheaded and exclusive pretties are described from Tally's perspective, while her own status as a boring and dull ugly is shown in both her thoughts and in her interaction with her former best friend, Peris. Tally's thoughts frame the pretties as mythic creatures; she described them as "magic" in the way their perfection makes her want "to protect them from any danger [and] to make them happy".[13] She gives them god-like qualities because of their looks, giving them greater worth and better social standing than her simply because they are beautiful. In contrast, Tally describes her own ugliness as making her worse than nothing; being ugly is the worst thing you could possibly be.[14] When she encounters Peris' prettiness in comparison to her "squinty, narrow-set, indifferently brown eyes",[15] Tally once again questions her self-worth; and Peris' confusion and dismissal only add to her alienation from New Pretty Town. He calls her a kid and is exasperated by her, even though he is only a few months older than her. Characterising Tally this way ties her to a common issue faced in adolescence: self-worth. It also questions the value placed on beauty, not just in Tally's society but in our own as well. Readers are asked to consider why Tally, as a loyal friend and clever and resourceful girl, is intrinsically worth less than the eternally partying pretties? By drawing readers into relating with Tally, the narrative places them in a position to answer this question in Tally's favour and in favour of the idea that beauty does not, or should not, have greater value than other traits.

This process by which readers are drawn into a discourse surrounding the narrative's central concerns diverges somewhat from the method predominantly used in adult dystopian novels. In *Oryx and Crake* it is the contrast between Snowman and Jimmy's

perspectives as well as the wider world that is visible to the readers that creates discussion. But *Uglies* relies solely on Tally's interpretations, and the connection readers feel to her, to instigate engagement with the issues. These different processes both allow for exploration of dystopian problems, but have diverse results. There is an emphasis placed on environmental concerns in both novels, for instance; one that places humanity in opposition to the natural world as an external, god-like force that can have the ultimate control over the environment. By providing only a single interpretation of the world in *Uglies*, Westerfeld's argument about the need for humanity's power over the environment to be restrained, or at least respected, is inherently less complex than Atwood's statements because she uses contrasting arguments. Even taking into account that most of the characterisation in *Oryx and Crake* comes from one character, Jimmy/Snowman, that character still exposes the reader to a broader discussion than Tally does. Where *Uglies* does excel is in the exploration of issues more central to adolescence; self-esteem, beauty-standards, and agency.

Another scene from *Uglies* in which the value system used in Tally's society is brought into question is when Shay attempts to convince Tally to run away with her. This is the first instance in the novel where Tally begins to consciously question the attitudes she has rote-learnt. Her passing thought that "Shay's ugly face looked perfect" undermines her previous insistence on accepting the social narratives surrounding beauty.[16] However, Tally still refuses to properly acknowledge this passing deviance from the norm, insisting that she is content to continue along the path laid out for her. Contrasting against Shay's belief that the distinction between ugly and pretty is a detrimental one, Tally's continuing attitude appears increasingly incorrect. Tally's desire to be pretty so that people will "listen to what I have to say" contrasts with Shay's desire "to have something to say" and reinforces the weighting of

the value system towards physical aspects of identity rather than mental or emotional ones.[17]

This gradual revealing of the dystopian qualities of the society's adoption of beauty standards is compounded when Tally elects not to betray the Smoke to Special Circumstances. Having just discovered the truth about the surgery, that people's brains are altered to make them more agreeable and remove conflict from the society, Tally throws away the necklace/tracker without activating it. This is an important moment for Tally and for the construction of the world. The surgery is changing who people are, explaining a great deal about Peris' attitude throughout the novel, who acted so differently to the best-friend Tally remembered, and although it is being done 'for the greater good' there is a question about how much autonomy could or should be sacrificed for a peaceful society. This is a theme that is common within dystopian literature, and the answers novels provide can differ greatly. In this instance it is Tally's reaction which determines the message of the novel. She could have decided that the lesions were for the betterment of society, because they prevented the conflict that destroyed the Rusties (her society's predecessors). Instead Tally chooses to support the Smokies and their quest for free will and individualism. This consistent challenging of Tally's beliefs throughout the novel causes her to gradually reconsider the system she has believed in her whole life. While the social valuing system in Tally's world is much more extreme than in our own it does still mirror the emphasis placed on conforming to a single beauty standard and the common practice of altering oneself to fit this mould; be it through make-up, clothing, digital alteration, or more extreme measures such as plastic surgery. Tally's questioning of the worth placed on beauty reflects back into the readers' world, and aims to cause them to question their own rote-learnt beliefs.

The revelation of the brain lesions that are a part of the prettifying surgery and Tally's decision to become pretty so that the cure may be tested on her is demonstrative of another issue, one that is considerably common in dystopian narratives. The attempted removal of agency and individuality by a government or other figure of authority is an issue that has been explored in dystopian works since the genre's inception. In *Oryx and Crake*, it is Crake who takes on the role of the authority and makes decisions for humanity without their input. This role in *Uglies* is taken by the government, who subdue the population by causing physical changes in them that put them into a state of blissed-out "bubbliness", preventing them from thinking too hard or questioning their situation. At the end of the novel Tally aims to challenge this, to reassert the agency of the people by helping to create a cure for the brain lesions. The novel ends before these goals can be realised, though in the ensuing trilogy Tally does in fact eventually succeed, but the emphasis is on Tally's decision to support the 'greater good' at the expense of herself. Her choices show a maturity and courage of which she did not believe herself capable at the novel's start and the sacrifice demonstrates a great act of autonomy. This is an incredibly significant difference between *Uglies* and *Oryx and Crake* and in adult and YA literary dystopia in general. While in adult novels the themes of agency and autonomy are used to show the restrictions placed in the protagonist, and hence their reaction to the stifling of their individuality is often one of the most essential parts of the construction of the dystopian world, there is often no resolution to this issue. In *Oryx and Crake* neither Jimmy nor Snowman are given the opportunity to act with their own agency, but Tally's entire narrative is driving her towards that point and towards the beginnings of a resolution to her dystopian world. Showing the readers the way out of the dystopia is dominant convention in YA dystopian literature that is uncommonly observed in adult dystopian texts.

In the satirical *Shades of Grey*, Fforde has depicted a textual dystopia that draws on these themes of governmental control of agency to a comedic degree. Similarly to *Uglies*, *Shades of Grey* is set in a society established post-apocalypse, which is referred to in the novel as The Something That Happened, where attempts to ensure order have resulted in numerous strict, and sometimes strange, laws. This world is refracted through the perspective of the inquisitive and intelligent Eddie Russet, who begins the novel in a position of acceptance of the society and its rules. As with Tally, it is Eddie's narrative progression that aids his changing views and develops the textual dystopia. His inquisitive nature is what allows him to question aspects of his world that others do not, and his desire for answers, often even against his better judgement, is what draws the reader through a consideration of the issues presented in the text. Because the novel is satirical however, the society's status as dystopian is readily accessible to the reader from the novel's start; no world in which both the number '73' and the production of spoons have been banned could be considered functional or well-organised, although its inhabitants clearly view it as a utopia. Instead Fforde uses Eddie, not to show how this seemingly utopian world is really a dystopia, but to demonstrate the necessity of questions, the need for laws to be challenged instead of blindly accepted.

Fforde has also used another method of construction, aided once again by Eddie's characterisation, which is not used in any of the other novels. Much of the novel's structure is very reminiscent of a travel narrative; Fforde states that the early form of the novel very much took the shape of a travelogue.[18] The travelogue structure has been quite common in utopian narratives, though is much less common in dystopian fictions. At first this adds to the utopian impression, while also allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the world, but through Eddie's interaction it is instead used to progressively reveal more and more

dystopian elements. Eddie has had to leave the town in which he grew up, Jade-on-Lime, to travel to the outer fringes of The Collective, because he believes he angered a powerful man by playing a prank on his son. As punishment he is being sent to conduct a chair census in the town of East Carmine, where he has heard the rules are easily bent and people do not behave in the best possible way.

The travel narrative structure is aided by Eddie's characterisation as inquisitive and clever. He has a degree of common sense not apparent in the majority of other characters, as evidenced at the beginning of the novel when he deduces that the ill Purple is in fact a wrong-spotting Grey. Given that wrong-spotting is identified by Eddie and his father as very rare, the fact that Eddie was able to reach that conclusion demonstrates his reasoning skills and his ability to absorb obscure knowledge. Upon reaching East Carmine, it is these characteristics that allow Eddie to explore all the different facets of the town believably. It is through his travels in the town that the complex world and character lives are revealed, piece-by-piece, until Eddie has a clear realisation that something in East Carmine, and possibly the Collective, is not quite right. This process of character development is once again aimed at demonstrating what is needed to prevent or rectify a societal dystopia.

Throughout all four of the novels it is the protagonists' characterisation that is the authors' main tool for constructing the in-text dystopian world. The development of the character's perspectives is what progressively reveals the world to the reader and gradually brings into question whether or not it is a valid form of social organisation. Only one of the novels, *The Road*, presents a world that the reader is expected to determine as dystopian without question, and even in this case the reader's assumptions about the nihilism of the world are consistently challenged. The other three texts all use developing or, in the case of

Oryx and Crake, opposing perspectives to present the dystopia in a way that forces the reader to critically analyse their expectations and conclusions.

The result of the literary dystopia's presentation differs between the adult and young adult texts. In *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road* the construction is more complex, posing questions about the issues engaged with, rather than answering them, while the two young adult texts are assembled so that the questions they ask are straightforward and answered, or in the beginnings of being answered, by the novels' end. It is clear that characterisation is employed across all four texts as a technique for constructing textual dystopia to a great degree of success. The differing levels of complexity between the adult and young adult texts does not indicate, however, that the YA texts use characterisation less as a method of building a dystopian setting. In fact, what can be seen from the analysis of *Uglies* and *Shades of Grey* is that both novels use characterisation just as effectively as *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road*.

Notes

[1] Margaret Atwood, "The Handmaid's Tale and Oryx and Crake 'in Context'," <u>PMLA</u>, 119.3 (2004): 515, <u>JSTOR</u>, 26 March 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25486066>.

[2] Suvin, "A Tractate on Dystopia," 384; Moylan, 148.

[3] Raffaella Baccolini, "Breaking the Boundaries: Gender, Genre, and Dystopia," <u>Per una definizione dell'utopia: Metodologie e discipline a confront</u>, (Ravenna: Longo 1992) 104; as cited in Tom Moylan, <u>Scraps of the Untainted Sky</u> (Massachusetts: Perseus Books 2000) 148, <u>Literary Reference Centre</u>, 1 March 2014, <http://search.ebscohost.com>. The text is cited from Moylan's as I could not access Baccolini's original text. (Hereafter it will be cited as Baccolini, "Breaking the Boundaries", in Moylan).

[4] Aldous Huxley, <u>Brave New World</u> (Hammersmith, London: Flamingo 1932).

[5] Margaret Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u> (Great Britain: Bloomsbury 2003) 3.

[6] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u>, 3.

[7] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u>, 26.

[8] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u>, 404.

[9] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u>, 405.

[10] Cormac McCarthy, <u>The Road</u> (Great Britain: Picador 2006) 27.

[11] McCarthy, 41.

[12] McCarthy, 233.

[13] Scott Westerfeld, <u>Uglies</u> (New York: Simon Pulse 2005) 8.

[14] Westerfeld, 7.

[15] Westerfeld, 17.

[16] Westerfeld, 87.

[17] Westerfeld, 92.

[18] Jasper Fforde, Personal Interview, November 2009, JasperFforde.com, 27 March 2014 <http://www.jasperfforde.com/grey/interview.html>.

Chapter Two: Hope, Fear, and the Utopian Impulse

Baccolini describes the "desires for change, for a better place, and a better life" as the driving force behind utopian narratives,[1] and what other word is there to best summarise this impulse than 'hope'? The presence of hope in the narrative sustains the utopian impulse and forms the foundation upon which utopia is constructed. It is *Utopia* by Thomas More that first exemplified this now familiar use of the utopian impulse in a narrative format. While it was not the first text to consider these ideas – texts as far back as Plato's *The Republic* are discussed within the history of the utopian genre –[2] More's dialogue re-visioned the form that the utopian impulse manifested in narrative and inspired the progressive development of the utopian and dystopian literary genres. The presence of hope in *Utopia* is less complicated than it is in the examples provided by the texts discussed throughout this chapter. This means that the utopian impulse conveyed by the texts is different in its method and effect, arguably as a result of their grounding in dystopian conventions rather than utopian ones. More focuses on a practical and technical application of the impulse, a systematic creation of a better world through changes to the social and political organisation of that world. *Oryx and Crake*, *Uglies*, *The Road*, and *Shades of Grey* are much less focused on provoking an in depth discussion on what would be needed to improve our own world. Instead they focus on re-emphasising the importance of the utopian impulse. Suvin describes the fictional land in *Utopia* as existing in an "alternative, but humanly attainable present",[3] and the dialogue itself is framed in such a way as to force the reader to question the text's status as fiction. *Utopia* places utopia as a possibility, something that can be worked towards, implying that the utopian impulse is inherent in human society. This

chapter will be examining the hope and fear framework that was established by *Utopia* in relation to adult and YA dystopian texts as well as discussing the deviations each sub-genre makes and what these differentiations say about the relationship each sub-genre has to dystopianism. Hope and fear are central aspects of the utopian impulse, which is itself a necessary component of utopian and dystopian fiction, hence an analysis of the engagement with this impulse in the texts should reveal a great deal about their positioning within the dystopian genre and surrounding discourse.

However, one element of *Utopia* that must not be overlooked in the discussion of the utopian impulse is the consistent representations of both hope and fear within the text. Utopia the society is the culmination of a utopian impulse, presenting a world in which many of the fears, both small and grand, felt by the populations of England and Europe at the time have been addressed and prevented. An understanding of the utopian qualities of Utopia cannot be reached without first comprehending the fears that spurred its social organisation. However, even as More is framing the events of *Utopia* as real by including himself and his associates in the text, he is giving the reader strong indicators of the fictionalised nature of the text. From the name of the island of Utopia, to Hythloday, who recounts the tale of the island, More is implying not only that this perfect place does not exist, but that it is also cunningly devised nonsense.[4] Sargisson states that "Utopia is thus the good place that is no place",[5] pointing to the ambiguity that exists in the text's addressing of hope and fear. The implication of nonsense leads the reader to consider that a society that addresses all of these fears is impossible; inspiring the fear that society will not progress. This ambiguity is one that theorists readily acknowledge in relation to *Utopia*, often stating that there is in fact illusiveness in the comprehension of the text that readers are still unable to overcome.[6]

Despite this longstanding presence of hope and fear in the template of utopian and dystopian literature, many discussions of the genres rely on the framing of hope and fear as oppositional and divergent. Within general discussions dystopian texts are often defined by an absence of hope, as though the two are mutually exclusive. For instance, the *Faber Book of Utopias* defines utopian literature as the expression of hope and dystopian literature as the expression of fear, implying an opposition between the two genres.[7] Even Suvin's early definition of literary utopia and dystopia relies on the idea of perfection in social organisation, discussing utopian and dystopian texts as opposing points on a scale of perfection to imperfection.[8] However, in a reprint of the essay in 2008 Suvin ends the chapter with a postscript that acknowledges the failings of this definition to account for the ambiguity present in both utopian and dystopian texts. He redefines utopia as radically different social organisation, and as a genre he argues that it encompasses utopian perfection and dystopian imperfection.[9] In *Utopia* fear is divided into basic fears, such as a fear of not having regular meals, not having shelter, education, or employment, as well as broader fears such as not living in a peaceful world, and it is these fears that the Island society appropriates to create a 'perfect' world. Fear is not absent, it is the motivator for the utopian impulse – fear creates hope – and More does not depict the two as opposites. This expression of the relationship between hope and fear is where the ambiguity that Suvin discusses emerges. Depending on the fears that the readership relate most to, or understand the best, their interpretation of the balance between perfection and imperfection in the society will change. For the original readership of More's *Utopia* a world that satisfied their previously discussed fears would be one to be considered perfect, however reading the novel from a contemporary Western perspective where those fears often fall secondary to a fear of losing free will and independence the control the government in Utopia exerts over its citizens is not a depiction of perfect social order.

36

This reconsideration of the genre definitions is not just apparent in the critical discourse, but also within the narrative texts being published. Since the 1980s there has been an increase in the number of dystopian texts being published, to the point that it is dystopian, not utopian, texts which dominate the market. Despite this however, the absence of hope that this change would be assumed to bring did not occur, and many theorists began to note that appearing within these dystopian novels was a greater presence of hope than ever before.[10] Baccolini suggests that many dystopian texts published after 1980 were constructed with a 'utopian core' and engaged with a critique of the genre conventions and seminal texts that came before them.[11] Sargent, and Moylan and Baccolini after him, calls this sub-genre 'critical dystopia' and proposes the definition to include texts that depict societies intended to be viewed as worse than a reader's own context, but at the same time also include a "eutopian enclave", or rather "hope that the dystopia can be overcome and replaced with a eutopia".[12]

This does not however, exclude early dystopian texts from engaging with hope in some way. In fact, following on from the inseparability of hope and fear in *Utopia*, hope is always present in a subtle way in a literary dystopia. The earlier dystopian texts engaged and presented hope differently, however, often highlighting the erasure of hope as the means to communicate the social or political warning of the text. Consider George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*,[13] often considered to be one of the seminal dystopian works of the twentieth century. Fear was emphasised above hope in the novel, the ending was not hopeful and did not promise the coming of a new and improved world. By the novel's conclusion both of these characters have had their hopes quashed, but that does not mean that it was not present in other moments of the novel. Winston and Julia's gradual involvement in what they believe to be a rebellious movement reveals their hope that they can help their society

overcome the aspects of it that they fear. In highlighting their growing utopian impulses,

only to have the society destroy them, Orwell is still using hope *and* fear to construct and

communicate the dystopian world. Milner also notes the evocation of hope through the

appendix 'The Principles of Newspeak', which "fictionally can only have been written after

the fall of Big Brother",[14] implying that society depicted in the text has long since collapsed.

There are some significant differences between the ways in which adult and YA texts

represent hope, fear, and the utopian impulse, but there are also a number of similarities.

All three of the ideas are drawn into the texts through the characterisation, as discussed in

the previous chapter. Where the two sub-genres diverge is with the levels of ambiguity and

complexity that arise in the texts. Narratives written for adult audiences have a greater

scope for dealing with hope and fear simply as a result of their more mature and higher

educated readership, while increased simplicity is considered necessary for novels aimed at

younger readers. *Oryx and Crake*, for instance, balances hope and fear quite precariously

within Snowman's world, where they are expressed dually on the behalf of both humanity

and the environment. The environment is framed as a utopia in which the previous fears of

the natural world – humanity and its destructive progress – have been eradicated and so

hope for a prosperous future abounds. On the other hand humanity, or rather Snowman,

fears his own hopelessness, but gradually begins to rediscover hope for his own survival (a

survival that threatens the prosperity of nature). In this one example Atwood is able to

interrogate assumed ideas about literary utopia and dystopia, asking the reader to question

the role perspective plays in the world's definition and engaging with the critical debate

Sargent, Moylan, and Baccolini outlined as a key feature of post-1980s dystopian writing.

There is a similar level of sophistication in the portrayal of hope and fear in *The Road*; the

subtle hesitancy of the man and boy's relationship with hope is one of the central

narratological devices in the text. Instead of fearing hopelessness as Snowman does, they fear hope itself for the inevitable disappointment it represents. In spite of this the father and son survive by holding on to the hope that they are carrying the fire of humanity; whether it is real or imaginary is unimportant, it is the only hope they are comfortable with trying to fulfil. However, *The Road* does not engage with the discourse on literary dystopia to the extent that *Oryx and Crake* does. It is worth noting that this may be because of the authors' own engagements with the genre; Atwood has written on the genre before, in both fiction and theory, while Cormac McCarthy has no previous professional engagement with the discourse surrounding the dystopian literary genre. Turning to the YA texts, differences in their expression of hope and fear are clearly apparent. Where *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road* were subtle and specific *Uglies* and *Shades of Grey* are explicit and broad. *Uglies* in particular depicts hope and fear as quite straightforward ideas, though Westerfeld makes interesting use of the utopian impulse as a motivating force across many of the novel's characters. Tally's fear of alienation is remade into her hope of an inclusive society, which she sees first in Prettyville and second in the Smoke. *Shades of Grey* is less explicit in its approach to hope and fear, predominantly as a result of its grounding in satire, which also allows it an easy method of joining in the critical discourse. Similarly to *Uglies* Eddie's main fear is exclusion, but he also fears not understanding or not having answers to his questions, and his hopes are again tied to these fears. His decision to discover the truth behind his world is motivated by a utopian impulse to create a better world where the truth is not hard to find. However, it still does not reach the levels of critical thought exemplified in *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road*.

One reason for the explicitness of hope in the YA dystopian texts is the influence of the YA genre conventions. While all the novels are influenced primarily by the history of the dystopian and utopian genres, the YA literary genre has an almost equal measure of

influence over the YA texts. Hope has been an integral aspect of YA literature throughout its development, predominantly due to the expectation that novels for children should ultimately have happy endings. The end result in dystopian novels written for adolescents is "never nihilism and despair",[15] though often the characters must pass through these points to emerge "with hope and action… into a less painful adulthood".[16] Hintz and Ostry put forward that in fact this hope is the result of decidedly utopian influences upon children's literature.[17] They quite persuasively argue that children's literature is, in itself, utopian, because of the worlds of perfect childhood it often represents. This utopian foundation is carried forward into the YA texts where, though they can deal with dark themes, there is still an emphasis on the utopian impulse and the presence of an underpinning sense of hope. This combined with the utopian/dystopian tradition, means that YA literary dystopia must navigate both utopian and dystopian influences equally; creating the greater emphasis on hope that marks them apart from the adult texts.

In *Oryx and Crake* hope is not projected predominantly through the protagonists; Jimmy and Snowman are not characters full of a utopian impulse to quest for a better world. They spend much of the narrative without hope, and fear and despair are often the governing forces behind their characterisation. However, towards the end of the narrative Snowman begins to discover hope; his journey back to Paradice renews not only his desire to survive, but the possibility that he actually will. For the majority of the novel though, Jimmy and Snowman's representation of fear is contrasted against Crake and his utopian hope for the rest of the world, not humanity. Atwood is once again centring the narrative on the clash between humanity and the environment and by emphasising Crake's utopian impulse in contrast to the world focalised by Jimmy/Snowman the reader is made to question their assumptions about utopia and dystopia. By not focalising the narrative through Crake,

distance is created between his ideas and the reader. His conceptualisation of utopia is refracted through Jimmy and Snowman's experiences of Crake and his creations, which prevents a complete understanding of Crake's motivations and vision. Hope and fear are presented as inseparable and tied to perspective and character. The ambiguity this creates prevents an easy conclusion from being drawn about the nature of the post-apocalyptic world Crake made.

Jimmy is a source of fear throughout *Oryx and Crake*, though it is a personal and introspective fear of loneliness, rather than a fear of his society. Even though his mother's beliefs exposed him to fears of society from a young age, Jimmy never identifies with those ideas. He never considers them to be valid or useful because they came from his mentally ill mother and so he does not question the aspects of society that his mother does. Instead Jimmy's main motivating force is his fear of loneliness, which can been seen throughout his life. At school he consciously acts in particular ways to get attention from his peers, and his reliance and love for his pet, Killer, shows his desperation for any kind of connection. When his mother leaves, Jimmy says he was not sure who he mourned more, "his mother or an altered skunk".[18] His willingness to go along with whatever Crake wanted to do simply because it meant he had a companion continues into his adulthood, when Crake once again appears in Jimmy's life to break him out of his loneliness. It is only when Jimmy arrives at Paradice and meets Oryx that he stops feeling alone for the first time, his own fear abating just as Crake brings human society crashing down. The personal nature of Jimmy's fear frames only his immediate world as negative and dystopian. In creating this blinkeredness in one of the focalising characters Atwood has created an inherent ambiguity in the reader's understanding of the world's classification. Traditionally, it is the framing by the character that determines whether the emphasis is placed on hope or fear, and hence the text is

identified as either utopian or dystopian. In Jimmy's case he does not engage enough with

his wider world to make a case for its status as dystopian or utopian. All that can really be

gleaned through Jimmy is that his immediate world contains dystopian elements. Although

he often encounters events and people that allude to the broader status of his world, which

Snowman signposts and discusses retrospectively, Jimmy does not pay them any attention.

The most important and influential character in the framing of the pre-apocalyptic

society, however, is Crake. Jimmy meets Crake when they are both still in school and they

become friends mostly because neither has anyone else. Jimmy is willing to follow Crake and

simply sees him as someone of above average intelligence, who is probably going

somewhere in life. Snowman's reflections, however, highlight Crake as someone of much

more import from the very beginning. Even the novel's title, *Oryx and Crake*, tells the reader

who the important characters are; and it is not Jimmy and Snowman. Crake's opinions and

beliefs are only encountered sparsely throughout the novel, though just frequently enough

that when combined with Snowman's elucidation the reader is able to glimpse the utopian

impulse at the centre of Crake's worldview. While Jimmy presents a world that is mostly

functioning and well-organised, Crake gives the reader glimpses of a world that is broken

beyond repair, even though it functions perfectly for someone of Crake's social standing. The

difficulty with Crake's worldview is that it is only glimpsed, so it becomes hard to tell if he is

hopeful or fearful in his motivations. Does he have hope for a better world in which

humanity and the natural world exist in harmony? Or is he fearful of the direction in which

he sees humanity progressing? Both ideas are equally supported by Atwood within the

narrative, to the point that it would be best to argue in such a short space for simply a

duality in Crake's motivations; a hope for the future spurred by his fear of the present. In

this way Crake frames for the reader both worlds, pre- and post-apocalyptic, differently from

Jimmy and Snowman. Jimmy's personal dystopia is illuminated further by Crake and Snowman's anarchical dystopia is argued as a perfectly organised utopia.

Snowman's relationship with hope and fear is more dynamic than Jimmy or Crake's. While Jimmy's fear is a near constant throughout his narrative and no indicators are ever given that Crake faltered in either his hope or fear, Snowman develops from the reader's first encounter of him, where he is full of fear for his situation and possesses a persistent lack of hope for his own survival, to his regaining of hope as he accepts his situation and finds ways to survive in his new world, significantly diminishing his fear. Snowman's journey to Paradice allows him to equip himself with better tools and confront his past. This journey establishes the first hints of a utopian impulse in Snowman, and Jimmy, as he works for the first time to make his world and life better without help from others. Neither Jimmy nor Snowman ever tried to change their situations or improve their lives and Snowman's expedition provides them with their first instance of true independent agency in the novel. The difference between the engagement with hope and fear from Jimmy to Snowman highlights the shifting utopian and dystopian perspectives. It is this kind of engrained connection between literary utopia and literary dystopia that Sargent described as so characteristic of post-1980s 'critical dystopia'.[19] *Oryx and Crake* explores the issue of perspective in the definition of textual utopia and dystopia, an issue that has long been acknowledged as central to the divide between the two genres.

The Road is an interesting text to consider within this argument about the reliance dystopian and utopian construction in novels has on the representation of fear and hope because it does not follow the same structural formula as the other three novels. The social organisation in the text is anarchy; even Snowman, in his position as 'prophet' to the Crakers, existed in some kind of social structure. There is also very little indication given in

the novel that the characters will ever be able to reach a point where they can begin to have hope. Unlike the other texts, there is no opposing view of the world as a utopia. For the man and boy fear is the dominating emotional state and the characters themselves place a barrier between fear and hope for fear of the disappointment hope would bring. Hope is represented by the impossible images of the previous world in the father's dreams and stories. He states that he mistrusts these dreams, as they act as "siren worlds" and are the "call of languor and of death",[20] but he continues to tell stories of this world to his son out of a desire to preserve some of his own, comparatively idyllic, childhood for the boy. Towards the end of the novel the boy makes an important distinction about his father's stories, saying that they are not true because they are happy and not like real life at all. These utopian images do not invoke hope, but instead create fear in the characters, because they represent a complete impossibility. No amount of hope or utopian impulse could put the world back the way it was.

Hope is not, however, completely absent from the text. The man tells the boy they are "carrying the fire", which the boy takes to heart to mean that they are carrying the humanity, or goodness, in amongst all the badness. It is clear too that this phrase, "carrying the fire", alludes to the mythic tale of Prometheus, who stole the fires of Mount Olympus to aid humanity. The father and son are continuing Prometheus' work, in a sense, as they preserve and protect 'the fire' of humanity. Throughout the novel the pair uses this phrase to reassure themselves that they are the good guys; that are surviving without becoming the inhuman cannibals and slavers they encounter on the road. In carrying the fire, the man and boy are also carrying with them a hope for humanity's future. While the traditional hopeful images hold no sway for them, often inspiring fear in the boy instead, and they fear any kind of utopian impulse for the despair that will accompany disappointment, by carrying the fire

44

they are able to maintain their humanity. It is the boy's desire to retain their humanity, to be the good guys, that guides many of their actions. From their sharing of food with Eli to the boy's insistence that they not eat the dog, the man and boy are the only people who show any real humanity until the novel's end. After the father's death the son encounters another man who offers to look after him and take him back to his home, where there are other children his age. The stranger expresses disbelief that the two of them made it so far and the boy's response, to ask if the man is carrying the fire, is a clear implication that it is by carrying the fire that they have survived.

Unlike *The Road* and to a lesser extent, *Oryx and Crake*, hope is a very central concept in *Uglies*. A probable result of the influence of the YA literary genre, there is a pervasive sense of hopefulness in the novel. Even though Tally and her companions are struck by despair and fear at times there is never any doubt that they will emerge on the other side and be struck once more by their utopian impulse. For instance, Tally's first impressions of the Smoke and the people who live there frames it as dystopian, ugly and unpleasant, but she is quick to revise her opinions as she sees the social organisation in practice and begins to appreciate what the Smokies are aiming to achieve. Fear is present as well, though because of YA literary influence it is used just enough so as to provide motivation for the characters and to create plot. What is interesting about the engagement with utopia and dystopia in the novel is that Westerfeld has entered into the same discussion as Atwood regarding the influence of positioning and opinion on the readers' understanding of the world. *Uglies* subtly explores the issue of how reliant defining a world as dystopian or utopian is on the viewer's belief system and positioning in that world. In the case of *Uglies*, Tally is the viewer, and she demonstrates the relationship between hope and fear and the classification of a setting as dystopian or utopian. As she shifts between hope and fear in

relation to the societies she encounters she changes her perspective between utopian and dystopian. In both worlds there are alternate positions presented, as in *Oryx and Crake*, of the human/environment divide, which explores how perspectives outside of humanity can form opposing definitions.

Tally's interpretation of the City and the Smoke changes as her emotional reaction to the places shifts. She begins the narrative certain of her desire to undergo the surgery and become pretty, it is a point of hope for her; hope that one day she will be a pretty and therefore a useful and worthy member of society. The feeling of loss she experiences when Special Circumstances refuses her the procedure is a strong indicator of how much she wanted to become a pretty. In her hopefulness, Tally does not consider there to be any other options, nor does she wonder if the way her society is organised is really perfect, or even good. Her blinding hope that her world will be better, perfect even, once she becomes a pretty defines the City in a utopian light, whether or not the reader agrees with Tally's assessment. It is not until Tally is made aware of the true nature of the surgical procedure, how it wipes away aspects of a person's personality so that they become mellow and agreeable, that she begins to fear the City and the loss of independence and agency it represents. It is a common method in YA dystopian literature to frame the world as dystopian through controls upon individuality, independence, and agency. All three are issues encountered in adolescence, as young adults struggle to define themselves in relation to authority structures and their peers. By tapping into this, YA dystopian texts like *Uglies* construct a dystopian setting that is specifically aimed at adolescents, though not exclusively understandable by them.

Another issue that the novel explores through Tally's changing attitudes of hope and fear is self-esteem as it relates to modern constructs of beauty. In particular it is Tally's

46

reaction to the Smoke that brings this issue into the forefront as it is central to her framing of that place as dystopian/utopian. Tally finds the 'uglies' or rather, normal people, who live in the Smoke to be almost grotesque at first, wrinkles and sun-damaged skin are not a part of the physical perfection that is valued in the City. Her fearful reaction to their difference is soon overcome as she begins to understand and appreciate their societal system and is eventually replaced by a hope for the Smoke, not just for herself, and the values that it represents. The relationship the Smokies have with the environment is one such value that Tally struggles to come to terms with. In the City the teachings on the environment centre on completely leaving it alone, to the point of not even eating real meat; it is environmental preservation to the extreme. But the Smoke advocates for a more symbiotic relationship, they take wood and food from the environment and in return they help to preserve the patches of wilderness left. These are two completely different approaches that both aim to respect the natural world and Tally's struggles to choose between them are a subtle attempt to present the idea that there will be multiple answers to all questions. Her changing connection to the Smoke is used to change its framing from dystopian to utopian and is a direct correlation to the importance of perspective on societal definitions.

These definitional changes in *Uglies* focus on literal shifts in construction rather than the dual presentations used in *Oryx and Crake*, meaning that there is inherently less ambiguity in the textual world's definition as dystopian or utopian. This difference is representative of a wider divide between YA and adult literary dystopia, where there is an increased challenging of genre boundaries and conventions. In this sense, Sargent and Moylan's definition of 'critical dystopia' can be applied much more easily to adult dystopian texts. However, as *Shades of Grey* demonstrates, critical engagement with the dystopian genre is not entirely absent from YA dystopian novels.

Once again *Shades of Grey* presents a slightly different, middle-ground engagement

with these ideas. Due to its satirical nature, the novel points out numerous conventions of

the dystopian genre, both YA and adult, in such a way as to allow critique. However, it does

not do this through the use of hope and fear as indicators of differing perspectives, and

hence differing definitions of utopia/dystopia within literature. In fact, hope and fear are

much less central and much less frequently signposted in *Shades of Grey* than in any of the

other novels being discussed. The primary motivation for Eddie is not hope, or fear, but

curiosity. Much like Winston Smith from Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Eddie is drawn out of

his ignorance of the wider implications of his society by his own inquisitiveness. In contrast,

the protagonists from the other novels in discussion are pushed into reconsiderations of

their world through outside forces (though Tally's hope for a better world does become a

driving force for her by the end of *Uglies*). Much like in *Oryx and Crake*, however, there are

other characters that represent hope and the utopian impulse whose influence on Eddie

cause him to rediscover hope and formulate his own utopian impulse to build a better world.

Hope and fear are inseparable in dystopian texts, both adult and young adult, and

throughout these twenty-first-century texts it can be seen that hope is increasingly

emphasised. Tied to the utopian impulse of desires for a better world, these dystopian

novels are using hope, more than they use fear in some instances, to motivate the readers.

While there are differences between the degrees to which the adult and young adult novels

engage with this process, there are definite and inarguable correlations between their

approaches. The similar approaches used in young adult dystopian texts indicates a strong

connection between the young adult texts and the dystopian genre, undeniably framing the

texts as an equal participant in dystopian conventions as the adult texts. Looking at the

continuation of hope and fear from *Utopia* through to the texts discussed it is clear how

significant these ideas are in the formulation of dystopian and utopian narratives. More's utopian text was built around the idea of creating a society that addressed the key fears of his contemporary society and the twenty-first-century dystopian texts discussed are built around the idea of overcoming fears and rediscovering hope. This method does not change between the adult and YA texts, though it is clear that there are differences in its execution; meaning that the critical engagement theorists described as so integral to modern literary dystopia is not just a feature of adult texts.

Notes

¹ Raffaella Baccolini, "Finding Utopia in Dystopia: Feminism, Memory, Nostalgia, and Hope," Utopia Method Vision, ed. Raffaella Baccolini, and Tom Moylan (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang 2007) 159.

² Dominic Baker-Smith, More's *Utopia* (Hammersmith, London: HarperCollins*Academic* 1991) 1.

³ Suvin, "Defining the Literary Genre of Utopia," 30.

⁴ George M. Logan, The Meaning of More's "Utopia" (Guildford, Surrey: Princeton University Press 1983) 30.

⁵ Sargisson, 25.

⁶ Logan, 3.

⁷ John Carey, ed. The Faber Book of Utopias (London: Faber and Faber Limited 1999) xi.

⁸ Suvin, "Defining the Literary Genre of Utopia," 30.

⁹ Suvin, "A Tractate on Dystopia," 385.

¹⁰ Moylan, 188.

¹¹ Raffaella Baccolini, "Gender and Genre in the Feminist Critical Dystopias of Katherina Burdekin, Margaret Atwood, and Octavia Butler," Future Females, the Next Generation: New Voices and Velocities in Feminist Science Fiction, ed. Marleen Barr (Boston: Rowman and Littlefield 2000) 13.

¹² Lyman Tower Sargent, "U.S. Eutopias in the 1980s and 1990s," lecture, COTEPRA Conference, Centro Interdipartimentale di Ricerce Sull'utopia (Rimini, Italy: University of Bologna 2000); As cited in Tom Moylan, Scraps of the Untainted Sky (Massachusetts: Perseus Books 2000) 195, Literary Reference Centre, 1 March 2014, <http://search.ebscohost.com>. The text is cited from Moylan's as I could not access the transcript of Sargent's lecture. (Hereafter it will be cited as Sargent, "U.S. Eutopias," in Moylan).

¹³ George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (London: Penguin Books 1949).

¹⁴ Andrew Milner, "Changing the climate: The politics of dystopia," Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies, 23:6 (2009): 832, Taylor & Francis Online, 8 September 2014. <http://www.tandfonline.com.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/search/advanced>.

¹⁵ Monica Hughes, "The Struggle between Utopia and Dystopia in Writing for Children and Young Adults," Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults, ed. Carrie Hintz, and Elaine Ostry (London:Routledge 2003) 156.

¹⁶ Totaro, 136.

¹⁷ Hintz, and Ostry, 5-6.

[18] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u> 70.

[19] Sargent, "U.S. Eutopias," in Moylan, 195.

[20] McCarthy, 17.

Chapter Three: Perennial Problems and the Politics of Literary Dystopia

There is an intrinsic presence of politics in literary dystopia that can, once again, be traced back to Thomas More's *Utopia*. *Utopia* paved the way for subsequent utopian and dystopian fictions, since many motives linked to political analysis in dystopian narratives are already evident in this seminal text.. It is worth noting that these conventions are often quite similar across both literary utopia and literary dystopia, but this thesis will be focusing on the influence of *Utopia* on literary dystopia. The literary dystopia has historically investigated a wide variety of political issues. The previously discussed *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* function as detailed explorations of totalitarian politics and the impacts of the specific social policies enacted by the governments imagined within those texts. The policies and ideas explored by both novels reflect back onto society as well, allowing the futuristic dystopian worlds to serve as a method of examining real-life politics. *Oryx and Crake* and *Uglies* continue this tradition as they examine a number of politically-motivated social issues that are relevant to current social and political discussions. This thesis will focus on the way both texts deal with issues of technological control and environmental degradation. It is worth pointing out that both novels explore many more political issues as well, such as civil liberty, distribution of wealth, and revolution, however this thesis does not have the space required to adequately cover these issues.-

This influence is not restricted to the content of the texts as it can be seen in their creation as well. There is a fear throughout literature, and throughout readers of literature, of morally corrupt representations of the world. In literary dystopia this is often because they question dominant social paradigms and depict worlds that are worse than our own. As

we know, there is a long history of texts that depict themes considered to be too dark or corruptive facing threats of censorship and banning. While this is still an issue faced by all genres, it is especially present within young adult and children's literature. The fear is in fact two-fold in YA literature: an authorial fear of discussing politics with adolescents, or over-politicising the text, and a societal fear of adolescents actually reading political works. There is a trend, at least in the USA, for YA texts that challenge the social and political norms to face attempts to prevent their intended audience from reading them.[1] Smith questions this censorship in novels when young adults "are bombarded with 'adult' material in films, on television and on radio".[2] YA texts that are also dystopian reflect the resulting fear of over-politicisation, the effects of which can be seen when YA dystopian texts are compared to their adult-audience counterparts. While this fear is not crippling for the texts, it can limit the scope of their political representation and analysis more than differences in complexity due to the intended audience's age group. This problem is something to be kept in mind when discussing the political reach of YA literary dystopia in comparison to adult literary dystopia. The social stigma surrounding the role of politics in novels has a greater impact on YA texts than adult ones, resulting in either self-censorship on the behalf of the author or censorship on the behalf of the institutions.

In spite of this fear of over-politicisation, YA dystopian novels still make significant efforts to develop political ideas. This is due to the significant role politics play in literary dystopia, a role that was established with *Utopia*. Many theorists argue that *Utopia* can be read as a work of political theory, as well as a work of fiction, because of the overtness of the engagement with contemporary political ideas.[3] However, Logan admits that actually defining what type of political theory the text advances is much harder, due to the complexity and scope of the issues addressed and the method by which More addresses

them.[4] *Utopia* deals with a number of political issues that were well discussed within More's society and it provides both commentaries on and solutions for these problems. The presentation of notional solutions that was the primary purpose of Hythloday's recount of Utopia is not characteristic of political texts. Instead, Sargisson suggests, More was laying the foundation for one of the key conventions of the utopian genre, the "attempt to offer solutions".[5] Utopia brings creative and critical approaches to dealing with political ideas by "telling what is wrong with the now and how it might be improved".[6] In this way, Sargisson believes that there is a complex relationship between politics and utopia, a give and take between the text and the reader. In the case of the literary dystopia this relationship is meant to show the reader what will happen if they ignore social and civic responsibilities.[7] Vieira also notes that this is a significant change from the original role of politics in utopia, where there was a focus on macro-level politics, while modern dystopian texts operate on a micro-level.[8]

Despite this change in political focus from utopia to dystopia in literature other aspects introduced by More's dialogue have remained the same. Sargisson argues that utopia from different time periods will often explore the same issues, proposing different solutions to "perennial problems".[9] This continuity in regards to political issues can also be seen in dystopian texts, which regularly revisit problems addressed in prior dystopian *and* utopian works. One issue that can be seen in both *Oryx and Crake* and *Uglies*, as well as in earlier works of literary dystopia, is the issue of technology and its use and control. The types of technology discussed in modern dystopian texts were inconceivable at the time More wrote *Utopia*, instead More dealt with the control of the medical technology and trade-specific technologies that were possible at the time, arguing for their open availability to free-citizens. Also, throughout this thesis the topic of environmentalism has been repeatedly

raised as a way of demonstrating how characterisation and hope and fear are used to build dystopian settings. This political issue is one that can also be traced back through dystopian works, although unlike technology, the attitude towards environmentalism has changed somewhat over the course of the dystopian genre. However, it is not an issue that is present at all in *Utopia*, predominantly because environmentalism is a relatively recent political concern, while the use and control of new technologies is an old one.

Although this universal engagement with political theory is certainly a feature in utopian and dystopian texts, Suvin emphasises that the texts must primarily reference the author's own "empirical environment" otherwise the reader will be unable to understand the world presented to them. The political theory presented in dystopian and utopian texts must be firmly grounded in the author and the reader's own context so as to be comprehensible, hence the changing political focus as shown by the new emphasis on environmentalism for example. While this does not mean that the text will be incomprehensible to future readers, there is an acknowledgement within the critical theory that understanding the author's context is an important part of interpreting and decoding utopian and dystopian texts. It could be argued that this presents a defect in utopian works, but Suvin counters this with the idea that their grounding in history is instead a strength, "born in history, acting upon history… and demand to be judged in and by history";[10] as they reflect upon historical political issues they in fact allow future readers to judge the social and political progress of society.

The cross-over of political issues between utopian and dystopian novels means that the author's intended classification of the text as either utopian or dystopian is a reflection of the dominant political perspectives at the time of writing; changes in political approaches and dominant beliefs directly impact upon the popularity of one genre over the other. This

means that the political climate of the author's context has a direct impact on whether he or she composes a literary dystopia or a literary utopia. The symbiosis of politics and utopia/dystopia is then extended as the dominant genre goes on to influence its reader's own political opinions. The emergence of the dystopian genre itself is also a product of this process. Changing opinions regarding political issues such as governmental control, use of technology, and scientific development meant that authors stopped writing positive utopia that depicted a world more perfect than our own to which readers should aspire. Instead the pessimism that pervaded politics created texts that predicted negative futures for humanity as a result of the mishandling of these political issues. Claeys described this process as a growing belief in humanity's inability to restrain itself and its "newly destructive powers".[11]

This idea of human failing is one of the most prominent features of the dystopian and utopian genres. In dystopian works it is most often tied to political issues such as: control of citizens; control of technology; environmental degradation; and social inequality among others. As discussed briefly earlier, environmentalism is a relatively recent addition to the list of common textual dystopian political concerns. While it appears to some extent in classic dystopian texts like *Brave New World*, it is framed as an exploration of the relationship between humanity and the natural world, rather than as the pivotal issue it has become in twenty-first century politics. Citizen oppression and social inequality are longstanding political problems that were central concerns in *Utopia*, reflecting the continuous preoccupation real-life politics has had with these issues. Last is technology, which is one of the most used political issues in dystopian fiction. Utopia features technology politics, but as can be seen in *Utopia*, the topic is not considered to be the most important issue, nor do they focus on it nearly as much as in literary dystopia. The emphasis placed on the politics of technology in dystopian texts goes back to the creation of the genre and the

56

links between its emergence and technological and scientific advancement. *Oryx and Crake* and *Uglies* deal with all of these political issues at some level, though the political focuses of both novels are environmental degradation and technology control.

Despite all of the differences established between the YA and adult dystopian novels relating to their construction and complexity, and even considering the reluctance to politicise YA texts, there is a surprising parity between the arguments presented by *Oryx and Crake* and *Uglies*. Environmentalism and technology both encompass a wide range of topics, but the two texts have highlighted the same topics, making it easy to compare the scope of political representation between them. Both Atwood and Westerfeld discuss environmental degradation, framing it as a negative result of human actions and hence a problem to which it is humanity's responsibility to find a solution. Another political issue that resonates strongly through both texts is technological dominance, specifically the morals and ethics associated with genetic engineering and body modifications. These issues are analysed in depth in both texts, demonstrating clear parallels between the political scope of YA and adult dystopian fictions. In spite of the previously discussed fear of politicising YA texts, *Uglies* manages to introduce the themes through the dystopian genre conventions.

The presence of environmentalism in *Oryx and Crake* and *Uglies* is indicative of the connection between author and context that Suvin highlighted. Environmentalism has become a much more significant political issue in the twenty-first century than it was in the century preceding, and so the texts represent that by investigating it as a political issue. *Oryx and Crake* presents a world in which climate change has had a significant impact on the environment, in turn causing havoc for humanity; and *Uglies* depicts a world where human enforced changes on the environment have had dire consequences. Atwood highlights climate change as the culprit, but also firmly emphasises that the phenomenon is the result

of human actions, while Westerfeld only engages with man-made alterations to the 'natural order'. It is clear that both texts are arguing in favour of the idea that humanity's influence on the environment can have wide-reaching consequences.

In *Uglies* this issue is interrogated through Tally's encounter with the orchids and the Rangers. The novel is set many hundreds of years after a single human created a bio-engineered orchid that became a monoculture, slowly destroying all other types of environments. Tally doesn't really understand why this is a bad thing at first, that the orchid's flowers are pretty is her first thought. The Rangers explain that the orchids did so well they began to prevent other plant life from growing, eventually there were no trees left for the birds that pollinated the orchids to nest in and so "the orchids eventually die out, victims of their own success, leaving behind a wasteland. Biological Zero".[12] Westerfeld directly engages the reader with the scientific reasoning behind the need for biodiversity, explaining the step-by-step process of a mono-culture take-over. Tally's city also embodies this idea as it is made clear that the city aims to have as little impact on the world around them as possible. The people in the city do not eat meat or use animal products; everything they consume is made within the city using advanced scientific methods. When Tally arrives in the Smoke and sees that they have cut down trees she is genuinely horrified, as though they have committed a heinous crime. The 'do not interact' approach of the city is then contrasted against the 'live in harmony' belief used in the Smoke; where they exist in a give-and-take relationship with the environment that Tally grows to appreciate. Westerfeld presents two political solutions to the problem of humanity impacting negatively on the environment, but presents the second method used by the Smokies as the most workable.

In *Oryx and Crake* climate change is briefly mentioned as Jimmy describes his father's work. He lists various environmental repercussions: "the coastal aquifers turned salty and

the northern permafrost melted and the vast tundra bubbled with methane, and drought in the midcontinental plains region went on and on, and the Asian steppes turned to sand dunes, and meat became harder to come by".[13] Because of how self-involved Jimmy is, these issues are very much part of the background of the novel. It is only really through the brief glimpses of Crake's character and the discussions Jimmy has with him later in life that these environmental issues are explored in Jimmy's world. While Jimmy is unable to really comprehend, or even care about, this issue, Crake's interest in it is shown from their first involvement with the game Extinctathon. Atwood depicts environmental degradation as incidental to Jimmy and his life, they will occur no matter what Jimmy does and they will eventually have an impact on him no matter what he does as well. This approach aims to reflect the possible real-world outcomes of climate change: environmental changes that humanity cannot reverse but instead must deal with. In Crake and Jimmy's world humanity is failing to deal with environmental degradation, so government's supress the reality of the situation and Crake tells Jimmy "as a species we're in real trouble, worse than anyone is saying".[14]

While in *Uglies* the worst of the environmental degradation has already happened, leaving behind a society that has tried to learn from its mistakes, Jimmy and Crake's world is at the beginning stages of humanity's collapse (which is then helped along by Crake). Both texts focus their analysis on the political side of these debates by looking at how humanity can, or is able to, respond to environmental degradation. *Oryx and Crake* also takes the discussion one step further as it explores the possible changes to the issue once humanity is no longer the party with all the power. In Snowman's world he is at the mercy of the environment and humanity's impacts have all but ceased, leaving the genetically engineered people and animals left behind to begin anew. Atwood uses Snowman and the Crakers to

examine the possibility that what the environment needs to thrive, to continue without

negative impact, is for humanity to be removed from the equation, which was Crake's belief.

Snowman's world shows that this has worked in theory, the fact that some humans other

than Snowman survived is a way of showing the impossibility of this idea. In *Uglies* too, the

city's attempted removal of themselves from the environment is shown throughout the

novel to be ineffective and not worth the cost incurred by the resulting impacts on society

(brain lesions and pretty surgery as methods of controlling the populace).

This is where the next political issue enters the discussion, the use and control of

technology in both of the in-text worlds is a response to the societal impacts of the

environmental problems. As society begins to become harder to maintain due to

environmental pressures, technology becomes the only way to support humanity. Both

authors are engaging with the old dystopian question of how far technology can be taken

before the negatives outweigh the perceived benefits. This question can be seen in the early

dystopian text *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley and even in *The Machine Stops* by E.M.

Forster, which is argued by Moylan to be the first example of dystopian fiction.[15] In both of

these dystopian worlds technology has become the singular way of controlling the populace;

in *Brave New World* it is achieved through using genetic engineering technology to alter the

population before they are born and in *The Machine Stops* technology in the form of The

Machine regulates and controls the world. Both worlds are depicted to be perfectly

functioning until the characters, and thus the readers, begin to realise just how much is

being sacrificed for functionality. This idea is still an intrinsic debate within dystopian writing

as evidenced by *Uglies* and *Oryx and Crake*.

In *Uglies* the technology is used to enforce class structures in a similar way to *Brave*

New World. The pretty surgery (and the later surgeries to become a middle-pretty, a late-

60

pretty, or a Special) is designed to create clear definitions between different classes and the roles performed by those classes. Through the implementation of the secret brain lesions they also double as a method of ensuring the population is easy to control due to their enforced sheep-like state. Unlike in *Brave New World* and *Oryx and Crake* this is not a strict example of genetic engineering as it doesn't involve altering the genetics of humans before birth, but instead physically altering them at a later point in their life. However, the alterations are significant enough, especially in the case of the Specials, to be considered within the same argument as they are truly creating new forms of humanity. At first there is little emphasis placed on the class structure, a person gains instant access to the next level of society once they reach a certain age, but Special Circumstances' refusal to let Tally become a pretty until she assists them indicates that things are not as equal in the city as Tally would like to believe. This conflict between the new humans, the pretties and Specials, and the old humans, the uglies, is primarily used by Westerfeld to interrogate modern beauty standards, but there is also a clear dialogue with the politics surrounding the use of this kind of technology.

Within literary dystopia the message about technology is often centred on wariness, a fear that improper handling of technology by politics will result in a new humanity in which morality and ethics have fallen by the wayside. *Uglies* quite clearly reproduces this message; the Rusties and their destruction of their society and world strongly imply that a reliance on technology is what causes the failing of humanity. Westerfeld uses the manipulative and controlling Dr. Cable and Special Circumstances to show that the approach to technological development that destroyed the Rusties has not been fixed in this new society. The technologically advanced city is also contrasted against the technologically primitive Smoke, reinforcing this idea that technology is central to the creation and sustaining of a textual

dystopia. These ideas tie into a real-world contextual fear of technological development. As technology has progressed at startling rates in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries many people have doubted the ability of governments and lawmakers to keep up with the rapid changes. It is not surprising then that literary dystopia is still questioning human society's growing reliance technology, especially in YA fiction. The audience Westerfeld is writing for have grown up with the internet and high-powered computing; technology is an integral part of their world and their reliance on it is certainly something that authors from previous generations seem to fear. Seemingly in contrast to the fear of over-politicising, many YA texts emphasise a need to fear technology; a message that is amplified throughout much of dystopian fiction.

However, describing *Uglies* as anti-technology would mean over-looking the clear message Westerfeld is communicating through the initial introduction of the pretty surgery. Before Tally and the reader learn of the brain lesions the procedure is depicted as an equaliser; prior to the pretty surgery no one is equal, but everyone is afterwards. The social discrimination that takes place in our own society as a result of prejudice surrounding physical appearance is eliminated in Tally's world. Eating disorders and the mental health problems that result from low self-esteem have been removed through the application of technology. Even after learning of the brain lesions Tally and her companions' aim is not to prevent the surgery but to remove the brain lesions. The only thing about the procedure itself that is framed negatively is that it is forced upon people and that people do not have a choice to remain ugly. For adolescent readers, to whom technology is an engrained part of their lives; Tally's world demonstrates the failings of a ruling class and not an inherent failure of technology itself.

Although *Oryx and Crake* certainly engages with the fear of technology that has such a strong presence in dystopian fiction, Atwood joins Westerfeld in challenging the idea that technology inherently leads to dystopia. Unlike *Brave New World* or *The Machine Stops*, *Oryx and Crake* does not depict a world in which technology has completely taken over. Instead it shows a society on the brink of becoming the quintessential technologically-controlled dystopia. The reader knows where the narrative is heading right from the novel's start, they are introduced to Snowman's world and the Crakers even before Jimmy and Crake's world is revealed, but the fact that they do not know how this future will come about gives Crake's discussions with Jimmy enhanced meaning. Crake hides his actual intention from Jimmy, claiming that he is using the BlyssPluss pill to make the population of the world more peaceful and to control population growth. In this way it seems as though the pill will have a similar function to the pretty surgery in *Uglies*, in that it will become a technological way of controlling a population and creating a typical literary dystopia. Crake tells Jimmy "the proper study of Mankind is Man… You've got to work with what's on the table";[16] a conversation that implies a very similar logic to that produced in *Brave New World* by Mustapha Mond, or even in Tally's interactions with Dr. Cable. In all of these situations the people with the power use technology to secretly control humanity with the excuse that it's for humanity's own benefit. But Crake wasn't talking about using BlyssPluss to control humanity; he was discussing using it to destroy humanity, to make way for his new, utopian race – the Crakers. Crake was telling Jimmy that there was no hope for Mankind and that in making the Crakers he had worked with what was on the table, building them out of the best bits and pieces from any life form out there. From Crake's perspective he uses technology to build the ultimate utopia, by remaking Mankind. Technically – and it is on the technicality of dystopia being centred on perspective that Atwood emphasises elsewhere in the narrative –

technology does not necessarily lead to a dystopia in *Oryx and Crake*, it only depends on your perspective.

However, the utopia Crake creates is devoid of technology, showing that his logic dictated that for his Crakers to survive and become the utopians he wanted them to, the ability or desire to use technology had to be removed. This introduces the idea that the only true utopian purpose for technology is using it in its own destruction. Snowman, Crake's planned for anomaly, uses remnants of technology to survive and it is his scavenging trip to Paradice that reignites his hope for his own survival. The message oscillates between technology being bad and good, as it is integral to Snowman's survival, but detrimental to everything else's. This idea is tied back to the relationship between humanity and the environment and the factor perspective plays in determining a dystopia. In Snowman's world almost everything else that is alive is a product of genetic engineering; the Crakers, the pigoons, the wolvogs, rakunks, bobkittens and so on. But Snowman himself was not the product of technology, though he survives on leftover technology in a utopian world that summarily excludes him because of this. Technology is no longer a real force of power in this world; it has a legacy in the form of the creatures of the world but Snowman does not have enough command over it for it to do terribly much. Atwood is framing it as a neutral force; it is neither inherently dystopian nor completely utopian. It is how it is used. Similarly to the message in *Uglies* that technology can be used for good or ill, Atwood is cautioning that it is humanity's uses and responses to technology that can create dystopia, rather than the technology itself.

This cautioning is repeated in the world building that surrounds Jimmy's world. Technological development has become the main focus of the society; corporations are in charge and have created gated communities for their employees that have turned into

64

miniature cities. Within these cities technology and quality of life is leaping forward, but outside the compound walls the environment and society are shown to be crumbling. Much of the technological development being made by the corporations is geared towards improving quality of life for humanity. The results of the genetic experiments are mostly restricted to the compounds, where the people who can afford the products created live. The poorer people in this world are left, ostensibly, to rot. This is a clearly negative portrayal of humanity's ability to manage technology, were the power technology provides is held in the hands of only a few. Technological development has become so political in Jimmy's world that the company you work, or whether you're smart enough to work for a company, determines your living situation. If you are able to work in technological development you are automatically awarded a better life. This social segregation and strict class system are not strictly enforced by technology however, which is the usual method in literary dystopia. Instead, the caste system is built around the ability to work with technology, though the underlying fear that is typical of literary dystopia is certainly present.

In the discourse surrounding dystopian texts a lot of emphasis is placed on the engagement with political problems, especially the degree to which texts deal with the previously discussed continuity within literary dystopia. The continuing significance of the political issues dealt with in dystopian texts is what gives them lasting relevance for future readers. For instance, *Brave New World*, though it was written over eighty years ago, continues to present an applicable discussion on capitalism and genetic engineering. *Uglies* and *Oryx and Crake* both clearly discuss the politics surrounding environmentalism and technology, focusing on the issues that were most important at their time of writing. While there is greater simplicity in the method by which the political argument is presented in *Uglies*, there is no attempt to disguise it or make it less challenging a discussion. The issues

outlined by Westerfeld are no less political or complex than the ones discussed by Atwood,

certainly an important point to consider in regards to the gap that exists in literary theory

between YA and adult dystopian texts. It is significant that YA texts are exploring the same

issues as adult texts as it indicates a belief in the ability of adolescent readers to deal with

complex political issues as well as a certainty of the need for adolescents to begin discussing

these problems.

Notes

[1] "ALA releases 2014 State of America's Libraries Report," 14 March 2014, American Library Association, 10 September 2014 <http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases>.

[2] Carolyn Smith, "Exploring the history and controversy of young adult literature," 7.

[3] Logan, 26.

[4] Logan, 26.

[5] Sargisson, 35.

[6] Sargisson, 32.

[7] Vieira, 17.

[8] Vieira, 22.

[9] Sargisson, 35.

[10] Suvin, "A Tractate on Dystopia," 386.

[11] Gregory Claeys, "The origins of dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell," <u>The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature</u>, ed. Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010) 107.

[12] Westerfeld, 182.

[13] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u>, 27.

[14] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u>, 347.

[15] Tom Moylan, 111.

[16] Atwood, <u>Oryx and Crake</u>, 346.

Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the construction of literary dystopia across both young adult and adult texts, focusing on three key areas: characterisation; the manifestations of hope and fear; and the representation of two key political ideas. By interrogating these ideas in relation to the novels *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld and *Oryx and Crake* by Margaret Atwood the similarities and differences between young adult and adult texts have been revealed. Both *Uglies* and the supplementary young adult text, *Shades of Grey* by Jasper Fforde, demonstrate complete grounding within the dystopian literary genre even though they

make use of the aforementioned construction methods in less complex ways than *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. The two adult dystopian novels use multiple points of focalisation, display hope and fear ambiguously, and delve into detailed discussions of the political issues, clearly producing more nuanced literary dystopia than is presented in the young adult texts. However, though lacking in complexity, the young adult novels do not, at any point, fall short in the construction of the textual dystopia. They fully engage with each construction method and discuss almost identical political issues as dealt with by the adult dystopian world, as can be seen with *Uglies* and *Oryx and Crake*. This proves that the degree of simplicity used in young adult literary dystopia does not equate to a lack of engagement with the central elements of dystopian political problems. Literary dystopia aims to illuminate readers' relationships with the world around them,[1] specifically the importance of fulfilling their social and civic responsibilities.[2] This process of encouraging critical thinking is key to the determination of the value of a literary dystopia and this thesis has proved there to be very little variation between adult and young adult literary dystopia in this area.

Literary dystopia's effectiveness in providing avenues for readers to engage in critical thought is closely tied to the target audience of the novel. The text must reflect the interests, education, and intelligence of the target audience so as to fully engage them and provide information in a format that they can understand.. Both *Oryx and Crake* and *The Road* are written for an educated adult audience who are possibly familiar with the previous works of both Atwood and McCarthy. Both authors are considered to be a part of the American literary canon and have won multiple awards for their writing, and so are clearly held in higher regard within literary academia than Westerfeld or Fforde, who would be considered popular-genre writers rather than literary authors. Because of this *Uglies* and

Shades of Grey are not written to appeal to readers of 'literature', but instead for

adolescents who enjoy immersive and escapist stories that reflect some of the issues faced

by young adults in everyday life. (It should be noted that the actual readership of young

adult novels is wider than the target audience, there is an increasing number of adults who

read texts intended for young adults).[3] For a young adult dystopian text to engage its

readers and ask them to think critically about their society it must also deal with the

expectations of the young adult literary genre in addition to those of the dystopian genre.

These texts must provide avenues for adolescents to navigate issues such as the formation

of identity and dealing with authority, as well as engaging with the dystopian purpose of

presenting "thought experiments",[4] which aim to involve the reader in discussions about the

social and political future of their world.

Taking into account that the young adult novels are trying to produce literary dystopia

for adolescents that conform to the genre's conventions, while adult dystopian novels are

doing the same for adults, all four of the texts analysed in the thesis have demonstrated

equal achievements in these aims. *Uglies* and *Oryx and Crake*, in particular, have produced

dystopian worlds that are equally adept at leading their respective audiences to critical

thought. *Uglies* challenges young adult readers to consider the implications of climate

change and exponential increases in technological capabilities and their own role in the

impacts that these concepts will have on society. While this is achieved through different

uses of the construction methods the communication of these ideas is as effective as

achieved in *Oryx and Crake*. In the adult text these ideas may be explained more complexly,

but, relative to the intended audience, Atwood does not use the literary dystopia created to

provide any additions to the text's purpose. Given this equality between the effectiveness of

young adult and adult literary dystopia at creating a framework for readers to engage in

social and political critique, it stands to reason that both sub-genres are important to

discussions on dystopian literature. As more and more young adult dystopian texts become

entrenched in the cultural consciousness, the continued absence of these texts from

academic discussion of dystopian literature becomes less and less explainable. Young adult

dystopian texts are just as relevant to and involved with both the dystopian literary genre

and the dystopian concept itself, as those texts written for adult readers.

Notes

[1] Suvin, "Defining the Literary Genre of Utopia", 35.

[2] Vieira, 17.

[3] Sean Fitz-Gerald, "More adults than youths are reading young adult fiction," <u>Denver Post</u> 22 June 2014, 29 September 2014 <http://www.denverpost.com/books/ci_25997024/more-adults-than-youths-are-reading-young-adult>.

[4] Milner, 834.

Works Cited

Ames, Melissa. "Engaging "Apolitical" Adolescents: Analyzing the Popularity and Educational Potential of Dystopian Literature Post-9/11." *High School Journal.* 97 (2013): 3-20. *ProjectMUSE*. Web. 3 March 2014.

Atwood, Margaret. "The Handmaid's Tale and Oryx and Crake "in Context"." *PMLA.* 119.3 (2004): 513-17. *JSTOR*. Web. 26 March 2014.

---. *Oryx and Crake*. Great Britain: Bloomsbury, 2003. Print.

Baccolini, Raffaella. "Finding Utopia in Dystopia: Feminism, Memory, Nostalgia, and Hope." *Utopia Method Vision*. Ed. Baccolini, Tom Moylan and Raffaella. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers, 2007. 159-90. Print.

---. "The Persistence of Hope in Dystopian Science Fiction." *PMLA.* 119.3 (2004): 518-21. *JSTOR*. Web. 26 January 2014.

---. "Breaking the Boundaries: Gender, Genre, and Dystopia." *Per una definizione dell'utopia: Metodologie e discipline a confront*. Ravenna: Longo, 1992. 104; as cited in Moylan, Tom. *Scraps of the Untainted Sky*. Massachusetts: Perseus Books, 2000. 148. Literary Reference Centre. 1 March 2014. <http://search.ebscohost.com>. The text is cited from Moylan's as I could not access Baccolini's original text.

Baker-Smith, Dominic. *More's Utopia*. London: HarperCollinsAcademic, 1991. Print.

Carey, John, ed. *Faber Book of Utopias*. 1999. London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 1999. Print.

Hintz, Carrie and Ostry, Elaine. Ed. "Introduction" *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*. London: Routledge, 2003. 1-20. Print.

Claeys, Gregory. "The Origins of Dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell." *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*. Ed. Claeys, Gregory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 107-35. Print.

Fforde, Jasper. *Interview*. Jasper Fforde, 2009. Web. 18 August 2014. <http://www.jasperfforde.com.2009>.

---. *Shades of Grey*. Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton, 2010. Print.

Fitz-Gerald, Sean. "More adults than youths are reading young adult fiction." *Denver Post* 22 June 2014. Web. 29 September 2014. <http://www.denverpost.com/books/ci_25997024/more-adults-than-youths-are-reading-young-adult>.

Hughes, Monica. "The Struggle between Utopia and Dystopia in Writing for Children and Young Adults." *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*. Ed. Hintz, Carrie and Ostry, Elaine. London: Routledge, 2003. 156-162. Print.

Huxley, Adous. *Brave New World*. Hammersmith, London: Flamingo, 1932. Print.

Logan, George M. *The Meaning of More's 'Utopia'*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. Print.

Lowry, Lois. "Interview with Lois Lowry, author of *The Giver*." *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*. Ed. Hintz, Carrie and Ostry, Elaine. London: Routledge, 2003. 196-199. Print.

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*. Great Britain: Picador, 2006. Print.

Milner, Andrew. "Changing the Climate: The Politics of Dystopia." *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 23.6 (2009): 827-38. Print.

More, Thomas. *Utopia*. London: Penguin Classics, 1965 (first published 1516). Print.

Moylan, Tom. *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia*. 2000. Literary Reference Centre. Web. 1 March 2014. <http://search.ebscohost.com>.

Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. London: Penguin Books, 1949. Print.

Sargent, Lyman Tower. "U.S. Eutopias in the 1980s and 1990s." lecture. *COTEPRA Conference, Centro Interdipartimentale di Ricerce Sull'utopia*. Rimini, Italy: University of Bologna, 2000; As cited in Moylan, Tom. *Scraps of the Untainted Sky*. Massachusetts: Perseus Books, 2000. 195. Literary Reference Centre. 1 March 2014. <http://search.ebscohost.com>. The text is cited from Moylan's as I could not access the transcript of Sargent's lecture.

Sargisson, Lucy. "The Curious Relationship between Politics and Utopia." *Utopia Method Vision*. Ed. Moylan, Tom and Baccolini, Raffaella. Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang 2007. 25-44. Print.

Smith, Carolyn. "Exploring the History and Controversy of Young Adult Literature." *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship* 8.1 (2002): 1-11. Print.

Stableford, Brian. "Ecology and Dystopia." *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*. Ed. Claeys, Gregory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 259-82. Print.

Suvin, Darko. "Defining the Literary Genre of Utopia: Some Historical Semantics, Some Genology, a Proposal, and a Plea (1973)." *Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction, and Political Epistemology*. Germany: Peter Lang, 2010. 17-48. Print.

---. "A Tractate on Dystopia 2001." *Defined by a Hollow: Essays on Utopia, Science Fiction, and Political Epistemology*. Germany: Peter Lang, 2010. 381-412. Print.

Totaro, Rebecca Coral Noël. "Suffering in Utopia: Testing the Limits in Young Adult Novels." *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*. Ed. Hintz, Carrie and Ostry, Elaine. London: Routledge, 2003. 127-138. Print.

Westerfeld, Scott. *Uglies*. New York: Simon Pulse, 2005. Print.

Vieira, Fatima. "The Concept of Utopia." *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*. Ed. Claeys, Gregory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 3-28. Print.