

ADDRESSING THE “WYNDHAM PROBLEM”:
A VERSIONED APPROACH TO TEXTUAL VARIATION IN
JOHN WYNDHAM’S POSTWAR NOVELS

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Introduction

Matthew Moore begins his doctoral dissertation on John Wyndham with a provocative proposition: “‘John Wyndham’ does not exist.”¹ This opening achieves its intended effect, and intrigued readers must continue on in order to understand that John Wyndham does not exist in the same way that Mark Twain does not exist; both are pen names which, due to the popularity of the fiction associated with them, have become synonymous with the actual identities of the authors. After Moore’s startling first line, he goes on to deftly examine not only what he calls the “Wyndham strategy” but also the motivations and literary influences that contributed to the creation of the author’s postwar novels, evaluating the composition history of each novel in order to understand John Wyndham as a man and artist. But Moore’s interpretation of the Wyndham strategy does not offer a solution to the textual variations found across Wyndham’s novels, variations which have yet to be fully grappled with in Wyndham criticism. For this study then, I will be taking a different approach, one that reworks Moore’s initial premise and that addresses what I call the “Wyndham problem”: John Wyndham does indeed exist, but he exists in multiple, incompatible textual forms.

John Wyndham Parkes Lucas Beynon Harris, initially writing as John Harris, began his career, like many American science fiction (sf) authors, in the pulps. His first published story, “Worlds to Barter,” appeared in the pages of Hugo Gernsback’s *Wonder Stories* in 1931, a significant achievement for a British author. For one, publication in *Wonder Stories* aligned Harris with H.G. Wells, whose work was republished in early issues of the magazine. But more importantly, early association with Gernsback

¹ Matthew Moore, “A Critical Study of John Wyndham’s Major Works,” (doctoral dissertation, University of Liverpool, 2007), <http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.441940>, 3.

cemented Harris's place in a market dominated by American writers. As a result, Harris was "one of the few English exports" to enjoy steady success with US editors, selling standard pulp fare to the prozines throughout the 1930s.² Many of Harris' stories and novels from this early period are best characterized as juvenile space operas, though Peter Nicholls points out that the *Stowaway to Mars* series prefigured a willingness to break with science fiction convention.³ Nevertheless, critics agree that Harris' early work bears the mark of the pulp format. But after military service in World War II and the accompanying trauma of that event, Harris—symbolically settling on the penname John Wyndham—began to rapidly mature as a writer, publishing four novels of increasing complexity throughout the 1950s.

The first four postwar Wyndham novels, *The Day of the Triffids* (1951), *The Kraken Wakes* (1953), *The Chrysalids* (1955), and *The Midwich Cuckoos* (1957), were immensely popular and influential. Today, all four remain in print and have been featured in Penguin's Modern Classics series. Andrew Liptak writes that Wyndham's "highly regarded novels...continue to exert their influence on modern writers," and speaking to this fact, many authors in both the genre and mainstream cite Wyndham as an important influence.⁴ Wyndham's novels frequently appear on syllabi in the United Kingdom, and "virtually the entire Wyndham catalog" has been optioned by filmmakers.⁵ Furthermore,

² "Biographical Note," John Wyndham Archive Finding Aid, Sydney Jones Library, accessed November 29, 2017, <http://sca-arch.liv.ac.uk/ead/search/?operation=full&recid=gb141wyndham>.

³ *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, s.v. "Wyndham, John," http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/wyndham_john.

⁴ Andrew Liptak, "John Wyndham and the Global Expansion of Science Fiction," *Kirkus Reviews*, May 7, 2015, <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/features/john-wyndham-and-global-expansion-science-fiction>. Contemporary authors influenced by Wyndham include Alex Garland, Christopher Priest, and John Harrison.

⁵ *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, s.v. "Wyndham, John," "Biographical Note," John Wyndham Archive Finding Aid.

there has been an increase in scholarly appreciation for Wyndham's novels, and after decades of neglect by critics, articles about his work have begun to see a resurgence.

By all accounts then, Wyndham is like many other influential British science fiction authors; in terms of career trajectory, Arthur C. Clarke would seem to be a fine comparison. But there is a problem with Wyndham that differentiates him from Clarke and most other authors: Wyndham's postwar novels "exist as significantly divergent American and British texts."⁶ And the textual variation found between editions extends far beyond the American double quotation mark and the British single quotation mark; readers and scholars must contend with the fact that, depending on which Wyndham text is being read, there are significant differences in content.

This situation arose directly as a result of Wyndham's position as a transatlantic author. The transmission of his novels from the United Kingdom to the United States and the editorial treatment they received in both countries destabilized the texts in serious ways. In fact, by listing the titles of his four postwar novels above, I simplified the situation—in the same problematic way that other critics have—by giving only the British titles of Wyndham's works. A more accurate listing would have to include the American titles, and thus the Wyndham novels of the 1950s are actually *The Day of the Triffids*, *The Kraken Wakes*, *Out of the Deeps*, *The Chrysalids*, *Re-Birth*, *The Midwich Cuckoos*, and *The Village of the Damned*.

The problem of transatlantic publishing is not only limited to Wyndham. Philip Gaskell writes in *A New Introduction to Bibliography*, rather matter-of-factly, that "considerable variation between British and American texts" is a fact of transmission.⁷

⁶ David Ketterer, "The Complete Midwich Cuckoos," *Foundation* 46, (2017): 47.

⁷ Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (New Castle: Saint Paul's Bibliographies, 1974), 356.

Matthew J. Bruccoli wrote in 1969 about the instability of British editions of American novels, and his bibliography is rife with articles from *Papers of the Bibliographic Society of America* that trace variations between British and American texts. In a more contemporary example, Martin Paul Eve shows how the British and American versions of David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* differ in significant ways in an attempt to prove that "critics...need to consider the production processes of contemporary fiction" when analyzing popular literature.⁸ And yet there are few authors whose most important novels suffer from this problem, setting Wyndham apart from all sf writers, whether they belong to genre sf or to the mainstream. Despite the clear understanding in textual studies that transmission across the Atlantic is a significant source for textual variation, the problem has been understudied in relation to the work of John Wyndham; indeed, in Wyndham scholarship, only one critic has truly addressed the Wyndham problem, and that is David Ketterer.

Of all the scholars who have written about Wyndham, David Ketterer is certainly the most prominent and knowledgeable. He is currently working on a biography of Wyndham, "awaited with impatience" by the editors of the *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, and his published articles are an invaluable resource for anyone interested in Wyndham. Significantly, Ketterer is virtually the only scholar to have examined the textual problems inherent in Wyndham's novels.⁹ Ultimately, Ketterer's conclusions about the divergent British and American forms of Wyndham's novels come down to a

⁸ Martin Paul Eve, "'You have to keep track of your changes': The Version Variants and Publishing History of David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*," *Open Library of Humanities* 2, (2016), <http://doi.org/10.16995/olh.82>.

⁹ *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, s.v. "Ketterer, David," http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/ketterer_david.

litmus test that I would like to challenge in this thesis: Ketterer believes that in most cases, the “preferred” Wyndham novel can be determined by identifying the edition with the least amount of editorial intervention. Ketterer bases this conclusion on a thorough examination of the material housed at the John Wyndham Archive at the University of Liverpool’s Sydney Jones Library. Manuscripts, typescripts, letters, and diary entries found in the archive reveal that, in almost every case, “the British editions of Wyndham’s novels are longer and preferable,” usually because of editorial intervention that corrupted Wyndham’s American editions.¹⁰ Yet as we will see, such an absolutist position prohibits readers and critics from making the kinds of important insights that a versioned approach allows.

Initially, the only exception to Ketterer’s rule was *The Midwich Cuckoos*, Wyndham’s last 1950s novel.¹¹ But in Ketterer’s entry for John Wyndham in the *Literary Encyclopedia*, he contradicts his original assertion by writing that *The Chrysalids* is the “single case” where the American text is preferable; “the Ballantine paperback published in 1958,” he writes, “is generally superior to the British one; it contains a good deal of material that JBH unwillingly cut for” his British publisher.¹² Though Ketterer’s arguments revolve around editorial intervention, there is an unspoken principle at work here that has dominated editorial theory and practice for the past century, one which has been challenged by contemporary theorists but nonetheless persists: the ideology of authorial intention.

¹⁰ Ketterer, “The Complete Midwich Cuckoos,” 47.

¹¹ Based on the findings he addresses in “The Complete Midwich Cuckoos.”

¹² David Ketterer, “John Wyndham,” in *The Literary Encyclopedia: Exploring Literature, History and Culture*, Volume 1.2.1.09, accessed April 2, 2018, <https://www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=4820>.

Though Ketterer is not a textual editor, his identification of the British editions of John Wyndham as superior is truly based on the notion of authorial intention, one of the most contentious issues in textual editing today. A more thorough review of authorial intention will be offered in chapter 3, but essentially the concept of authorial intention refers to textual authority; editors who adhere to authorial intention attempt “to present a text that embodied the intentions of its author” by removing all nonauthorial contaminates.¹³ This would include the impositions of editors and publishing house executives, printer errors, and any other source that may have changed the text as the author intended it. In studying the contents of the Wyndham Archive, Ketterer has been able to identify editorial intervention in the production of every Wyndham novel, and whether or not a text has been reduced due to the requirements of the publishing house determines for Ketterer the preferred edition.

In this thesis I will argue for a different conception of authorship, one that reflects recent trends in editorial theory and that is based on the production of Wyndham’s novels. In chapter 1 I will describe Wyndham’s initial success in the pulps to show how the early years of sf encouraged a close interplay, rising at times to collaboration, between reader, editor, and author. Based on my examination of primary documents from in the Wyndham Archive, I will show how Wyndham was engaged in this collaborative process, complicating notions of authorial intention in regard to Wyndham’s short fiction. Chapter two relates the demise of the collaborative environment of the pulps to the postwar growth of the sf book market—a process that elevated Wyndham and a few other sf genre writers into the literary mainstream. Nonetheless, an investigation into the

¹³ Peter Shillingsburg, *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age: Theory and Practice* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 45.

production of Wyndham's novels mirrors the collaborative nature of the pulp magazines, and I will argue that any attempt to remove editorial intervention from Wyndham's novels is impossible. Finally in chapter 3 I will advocate a different critical model for Wyndham's work, one not based on authorial intention but on the sociological approaches of Jerome McGann, Donald H. Reiman, and Charles L. Ross. In discussing this critical model, we will see that versioning eliminates the issue vexing Ketterer (and Moore); ultimately, I conclude, it solves the "Wyndham problem."

Chapter 1: The Collaborative Nature of SF and the Early Career of John Wyndham

During the 1950s, the British writer known best as John Wyndham produced some of the most significant speculative fiction published on either side of the Atlantic. His four principal works—*The Day of the Triffids*, *The Kraken Wakes* (*Out of the Deep*s in America), *The Chrysalids* (*Re-Birth* in America), and *The Midwich Cuckoos* (adapted to film in America as *Village of the Damned*)—have become part of the canon, even though his mature style, themes, and his very identity represent a distinct departure from his early pre-World War II career. The remarkable evolution of his work from pulp science fiction to the more broadly defined postwar tradition of speculative fiction represents a studied reaction to the rapidly evolving nature of genre literature during the interwar decades, and ultimately highlights how the problem of textual instability complicates the reception of Wyndham's novels. This historical context will also reveal that Wyndham's short fiction—and indeed early sf in general—developed out of a close relationship between reader, editor, and author. Specifically, the genre cultivated a collaborative system in which literary production was shaped by a web of relations, and as a result, the early years of Wyndham's career and the history of the genre as a whole complicate any attempts to identify the author as a solitary agent.

Wyndham was born into an early twentieth-century world where the established works of Jules Verne and the new run of scientific romances of H. G. Wells had found mainstream acceptance without the benefit of a genre culture.¹⁴ A tradition of mass-produced forerunners existed well before the twentieth century, but it was not until the rise of specialist, American pulp magazines in 1926 that science fiction, as it would come

¹⁴ Wyndham was born July 10, 1903.

to be called, became explicitly defined as a publishing category and literary genre.¹⁵ And though it would eventually outgrow its original print environment, sf's formative years passed in the pulps. In the service of a highly engaged and demanding fan base, pulp editors served as literary gatekeepers during the early decades of sf, ensuring that the stories they accepted complied with the many sf conventions and narrative features that fans came to expect from the genre. In the process, they helped to enact a kind of literary production built not on the output of a solitary author but on the collaborative cooperation of writer, editor, and fan.

But because the vast majority of the pulps were published in the United States, American fans had a disproportionate influence on the kinds of stories that editors would purchase, and thus on what counted as good sf, if not sf itself. As a result, England quickly fell behind the pace of American sf development, and authors caught between these two worlds found that the fiction they wrote for one market was not always transferable to another. The evolution of "John Beynon" and "John Beynon Harris" into "John Wyndham" is a prime example of this phenomenon, and a study of his correspondence with American and British editors and agents during the early years of his career, from 1926 to 1939, offers a benchmark for understanding the elusive origins of an author as he is caught in the evolutionary spasms of a genre, torn between American and British conceptions of sf.

Naturally, scholars who attend to an author's intention will be encouraged to find those views articulated by their subjects. For critics like Ketterer and Moore then, Wyndham's unpublished 1960 retrospective essay, written just after the publication of his

¹⁵ The two most famous ancestors of the specialized pulp magazines are the dime novel and the penny dreadful.

mid-century masterworks, is an invaluable resource. In “The Widening Gap,” Wyndham reflects on a career of nearly thirty years, and the essay makes three main points in regard to Wyndham’s early experiences with sf publishing. The first point concerns a perceived difference between American and British writing and the way that American and British editors characterized that difference. In the twentieth century, as Wyndham saw and experienced it, there arose “a situation in which the American editor’s most frequent complaint upon material submitted to him from [the United Kingdom was] that it [was] too slow, ‘too English’ for his market.”¹⁶ The notion that English writing was “too slow”—in terms of both narrative pacing and the events of the plot—was a critique that Wyndham encountered time and again from editors and agents, both American *and* English, throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Wyndham was able to overcome this obstacle, and by 1940 over 20 of his stories had appeared in American publications.¹⁷ But this achievement was tempered by the fact that Wyndham’s success abroad did not necessarily mean success at home. By writing for an American audience, Wyndham was unable to address his British audience, which brings us to the second important point about Wyndham’s early career: readers in the US and UK had very different conceptions of sf.

As sf rapidly developed in the American market, American readers set the tone for the genre. Again, looking back privately from his 1960 vantage point, Wyndham observes that because of this, “both the readers and the writers (and the editors, too) assembled a stockpile of convention which seem[ed] to them commonplace....In Europe,

¹⁶ John Wyndham, “The Widening Gap,” April 1960, Wyndham 5/3/18, 2. All primary source citations refer to holdings at the Wyndham Archive at the University of Liverpool.

¹⁷ “John Wyndham: Summary Bibliography,” *Internet Speculative Fiction Database*, accessed February 15, 2018, <http://www.isfdb.org/cgi-bin/ea.cgi?310>.

by contrast, the number of enthusiasts” was small, and because the vast majority of readers were unfamiliar with science fiction plots, themes, and conventions, they had “to be led gently from the familiar towards the suspension of [...] disbelief.”¹⁸ Putting it another way, Wyndham writes that the European reader had “to be wooed with cunning,” while the American was “willing and anxious to be slain with sensation.”¹⁹ Wyndham did not mean to suggest here that science fiction could only exist in the United States. In fact, Wyndham was closely involved with the many British sf fan groups that began to appear in the 1930s, and he was a frequent contributor to the first British sf magazines. By the end of the first rather orthodox phase of his career, it became clear to Wyndham that the European was “willing to accept the form,” so long as it was “adapted to his [the European’s] outlook” (11).

This growing awareness of audience distinctions, borne of his trans-Atlantic publishing experiences, led to a watershed moment in his vision of authorship. The third important point about Wyndham’s early career that emerges from his 1960 essay is that by the end of the 1930s, he was already beginning to move away from a focus on pleasing American readers, despite the fact that he had learned to cater to their taste. Here, on the eve of World War II, his subsequent long war service set the stage for the first major shift—both in style and identity—of his career.

But this study is not concerned with Wyndham’s vision of authorship, and while “The Widening Gap” reveals that Wyndham’s own interpretation of his career echoed traditional views privileging authorial intent, a historical examination of his early career highlights how Wyndham’s transatlantic situation frustrates both his efforts to write in

¹⁸ Wyndham, “Widening Gap,” 9-10.

¹⁹ Wyndham, 11.

the British tradition of sf and those of scholars receiving him as such. This alternative scholarly path will foreground the collaborative nature of pulp sf production and the import of both the editor and fan to writers like Wyndham and others working in the first years of the genre. It will also prepare us to examine the postwar novels of Wyndham, where the collaborative nature of production was veiled by the paperback medium, but was nonetheless vital to Wyndham's success.

Pulp origins

Though the history of sf magazine publishing has been well covered by a number of scholars, in order to put Wyndham's comments from "The Widening Gap" into a broader cultural context, it is necessary to trace a short history of sf as it first appeared in print. That history begins long before sf had a name, when, in the 1880s, widespread literacy, "mass-distribution techniques," and an increase in leisure time led to a "magazine-publishing revolution" in both the United States and United Kingdom.²⁰ That revolution ended early in Britain, where by 1910 "the rise of the popular daily press" led to the disappearance of most of these nascent niche market magazines and would contribute to a delay in the acceptance of sf as a literary genre.²¹ But in the United States, the demand for reading material continued to increase, and American publishers began to look for a twentieth-century successor to the popular dime novel format. By using wood pulp and steam to produce cheap paper in great quantities, American publishers created the "pulp magazine," a medium that would transform American literary culture for almost 50 years.

²⁰ *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, s.v. "Pulp," accessed February 12, 2018, <http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/pulp>.

²¹ Edward James, *Science Fiction in the 20th Century* (Oxford: Opus, 1994), 34.

The first pulp magazines included *The Argosy* (1888), *The Popular Magazine* (1903), and *Blue Book* (1905). These early pulps featured a combination of standalone stories and serialized novels, and typically ran general interest fiction. But just as “publishers of dime novels had realized that there were readers who liked only one kind of fiction—westerns, perhaps, or detective novels—eventually the pulps began to specialize as well.”²² In 1915, the publishing syndicate Street & Smith came out with *Detective Story Magazine*, “the first major specialist magazine” available to American readers.²³ More detective pulps would follow, as would Western pulps like *Western Story Magazine* (1919), Romance pulps like *Love Story Magazine* (1921), occult or fantasy pulps like *Weird Tales* (1923), and so on. Unlike these other genres, however, sf had yet to be formalized as a publishing category, and authors writing what would soon be called sf relied on the general interest pulps (and occasionally a magazine like *Weird Tales*), to circulate their stories. This changed with the innovations of editor and publisher Hugo Gernsback and his vision for a new kind of literary platform.

Gernsback’s early experiments in the pulps—magazines like *Modern Electrics* (1908) and *Radio News* (1919)—were mostly dedicated to science journalism and technical articles. Nevertheless, these titles occasionally included fiction, and Mike Ashley has shown that from the very beginning Gernsback “sought to develop scientific speculation in his magazines.”²⁴ His efforts culminated in the first sf magazine, *Amazing Stories (AS)*, which was published in April 1926. At the time, however, Gernsback used the term “scientifiction” for his fledgling genre, and defined its essence in *AS*’s first

²² James, 35.

²³ Mike Ashley, *The Time Machines: The Story of the Science-Fiction Pulp Magazines from the Beginning to 1950* (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2000), 37.

²⁴ Ashley, *Time Machines*, 35.

editorial: “the Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, and Edgar Allan Poe type of story—a charming romance intermingled with scientific fact and prophetic vision.”²⁵ Not only did these authors serve as literary ancestors for Gernsback’s scientifiction but they also supplied the content for early issues of *AS*, which relied almost entirely on reprints. The magazine was an instant success, and after he asked his growing fan base to vote on the ideal publication schedule for the magazine, an unprecedented 33% of readers responded in favor of a more frequent schedule. It was at this point that Gernsback “realized the potential of his readership. In the June 1926 editorial he noted his surprise at learning of the hidden army of fans in the country.”²⁶ Driven by his vision for the genre, Gernsback was quick to take advantage of the moment.

By 1927, Gernsback was regularly interacting with his readers through the editorial columns and letter boards printed in *AS*. These avenues for communication also allowed fans to interact with one another, which was “the real secret” of Gernsback’s magazine. “He had tapped into the secret dreams of the nation, and mostly the young, and allowed them a channel for expression. This was to lead to both an explosion in the interest in and of writing science fiction,” and would establish sf fandom for generations.²⁷ As the popularity of *AS* and the number of its increasingly demanding readers continued to grow, other sf plups sprang up around it, at first under the editorship of Gernsback. These included *Air Wonder Stories* (1929), *Science Wonder Quarterly* (1929), and *Science Wonder Stories* (1929)—it was in the pages of the latter magazine

²⁵ Hugo Gernsback, “A New Sort of Magazine,” editorial, *Amazing Stories*, April 1926, <https://archive.org/details/AmazingStoriesVolume01Number01>.

²⁶ Ashley, *Time Machines*, 51; 52.

²⁷ Ashley, *Time Machines*, 54-55.

that Gernsback would coin the term “science fiction.”²⁸ By 1930, *Astounding Stories of Super Science* was released under the direction of William Clayton, “the first genuine rival to Hugo Gernsback,” and the genre truly began its exponential growth.²⁹ This is not to suggest, however, that sf was an immediately distinctive form of literature. Like any genre, sf took time to establish, and for the first years of its existence, sf was deeply influenced by its pulp origins.

It is plain from the kind of fiction that was featured in Gernsback’s magazines that sf leaned heavily on older, established genres in its early years. In these first stories of scientifiction, “characterization was perfunctory and plots were often thinly disguised westerns, mysteries or lost-world romances. Several writers helped to translate these older formulas into what is now generally called ‘space opera,’” a story mode that became especially popular from 1926 to 1930 and that to some extent continues to link sf with pulp fiction today.³⁰ Space opera, which derived its pejorative name from soap opera, represents the epitome of early pulp sf. Space operas are characterized by “intrepid young heroes in spaceships who flew throughout the galaxy battling sinister aliens or space pirates with weapons ranging from planet-destroying rays to their fists.”³¹ There were some authors who attempted to push the boundaries of space opera and the other formulas of the genre, but for the most part sf magazines were populated by the work of

less talented or less daring writers [who] wrote endless variations on the tale of the young scientist who saves the world and wins his mentor’s approval with a daring new invention. Marriage to the elder scientist’s daughter often reinforced the fairy-tale nature of these stories. Using this

²⁸ Ashley, 55.

²⁹ Ashley, 69.

³⁰ Brian Attebery, “The magazine era: 1926-1960,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 35.

³¹ Gary Westfahl, “The Mightiest Machine,” in *The Cambridge Companion to American Science Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 23.

basic plot structure, the writer could introduce variations regarding the nature of the threat (aliens, rival scientists, natural disasters) and the invention (a time machine, a device to accelerate evolution, a death ray). The tone could be sombre, rapturous, or comic. The ending, though was nearly always happy, a vindication of the young hero's character and the reader's beliefs.³²

It would take only a few years before sf moved past this juvenile stage of development. Nonetheless, the composition of successful stories during the pulp era of the genre demanded conformity to the rules, often forcing writers to sacrifice "creative autonomy to the economic logic of genre."³³ John Wyndham was no exception, and his first efforts at writing fiction were unacceptable to American editors.

Wyndham's Editorial Encounters

As both an sf fan and aspiring writer, Wyndham was in a confounding position as an Englishman. Like many British readers of the period who preferred fantastic fiction, Wyndham had "a very early acquaintance" with the work of H.G. Wells, an author whose fiction was categorized as "scientific romance" long before Gernsback's first magazine.³⁴ In fact, Wyndham "wrote his first 'scientific romance' at the age of 13" and has been called by one critic "the truest disciple of H.G. Wells in English literature."³⁵ When Gernsback's *AS* arrived in England, then, Wyndham would have felt a certain affinity for scientifiction, especially given the fact that the work of Wells was featured so prominently in the first issues of the magazine. Indeed, thanks to Gernsback, Americans knew Wells as one of the originators of the genre, and for a very brief period it seemed as if both countries shared the same sf heritage. But the pulp environment of American sf

³² Attebery, "The magazine era," 36.

³³ R. E. Fulton, "Donald A. Wollheim's Authoritative Universe: Editors, Readers, and the Construction of the Science Fiction Paperback, 1926–1969," *Book History* 19, (2016): 352.

³⁴ John Wyndham, biography note, undated, Wyndham 11/1/25.

³⁵ Wyndham, biography note; Nicholas Ruddick, *Ultimate Island: On the Nature of British Science Fiction* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1993), 97.

was very different from that of British scientific romances. Because the works of Wells and his contemporaries “were generally of novel length, and in hardback form,” authors had more time to develop their stories, devoting long sections to description and characterization that were not possible in a pulp format. The “lively tone of the American writers [in the pulps]...contrasted so strongly with the rather staid and more literary tradition of British ‘scientific romance’” that soon US readers pulled away from Wells.³⁶ This was a fact that Wyndham would lament, and it would prove to be one of the major obstacles in his early career.

In 1932, Wyndham wrote to the English author J.M. Walsh about the sorry state of affairs for transatlantic writers of scientific romance, referencing in particular the decline in popularity of H.G. Wells among American readers. Wyndham argues in the letter that British authors are

up against a difference in taste on the two sides of the Atlantic. I mean, speaking broadly, that the American wants the fantastic to sweep him along and leave no space for thought, while the Englishman likes his fantasy to stimulate his thoughts into unusual channels. In support of this one reads a large quantity of American letters complaining of the ‘slowness’ of Wells, -- a strong accusation from the Englishman’s point of view.³⁷

Wyndham goes on to ask Walsh if he remembers when *AS* published Well’s *The Time Machine*; the editors of American pulps would not dare to do such a thing by 1932, Wyndham thinks, as their readers want stories that “must roar like a rocket plane – which it will do until it shakes itself to pieces.” In both of these comments about Wells and American readers, we see Wyndham’s exposure to the kind of difference in taste that he would write about in “The Widening Gap.” Wyndham, accustomed to slow and

³⁶ James, *Science Fiction*, 42.

³⁷ John Wyndham to J.M. Walsh, January 14, 1932, Wyndham 11/1.

thoughtful works of scientific romance, was at first unable to inject his writing with the kind of sensationalism and action that American readers craved, and he soon realized that acceptance by pulp editors and readers depended on an author's ability not to emulate Wells but to learn pulp sf convention and style. Wyndham's rejection slips are especially illustrative of this fact, many of which survive in the John Wyndham Archive at the University of Liverpool.

A rejection letter from Harry Bates, the editor of *Astounding Stories*, summarizes one of the main criteria authors had to meet to succeed in the early sf pulps. In the letter—a rejection of the “The Venus Adventure”—Bates wrote that Wyndham had “over-emphasized the human relations between the characters and their predicaments and skimmed on action-situations developed out of pseudo-science.”³⁸ There was also a problem, Bates felt, in Wyndham's attitude towards his writing; according to Bates, Wyndham's story did not come across as totally serious, or at least not as serious “as our readers require our authors to be. Probably some of our fans have senses of humor, but they are too busy bathing in the passing current of Science Fiction to spare the time for lighter things.” Bates goes on to say, frankly, that Wyndham might be too traditional for *Astounding*. “We are essentially an action story magazine,” Bates writes, and its stories

must have the greater action and greater pace and greater present excitement that is found in this type of American fiction as opposed to that of English. Important things must keep happening. The typical leisureliness of the English writer will usually not be tolerated by the readers, and therefore the editor.

Bates' rejection is illuminating for two reasons. First, it reflects the early nature of sf; driven by formulaic action, there was no room for excess verbiage or “leisureliness.” Secondly, while Bates admits that his readers might not be amenable to more leisurely

³⁸ Harry Bates to John Wyndham, December 18, 1931, Wyndham 11/1.

narratives, he also believes that the editor has a duty to those readers and that their expectations should determine the direction of the magazine. This allegiance to readership will begin to have a profound effect on the genre by the middle of the 1930s, and critic Janis Svilpis has even gone so far as to describe the literary production of early sf as a kind of “co-authorship” that occurred between readers, writers, and editors.³⁹

As Bates’ letter attests, sf fans enjoyed a close relationship with sf editors. Sf fans would often send in their feedback to editors, who welcomed the communication. “By encouraging such feedback, the magazines fostered a sense that readers could help shape the genre.”⁴⁰ Encouraged by this, fans began to share their preferences for certain kinds of plots, characters, and themes, and the overall consensus during the 1930s was that sf needed to break away from its pulp roots. Tired of stories that were “stylistically weak, awkwardly constructed and marked by a naïve ‘gee whiz’ attitude toward its gadgets and settings,” American fans began to push for higher quality fiction in the letter columns of the pulps.⁴¹ The early plots and space operas quickly became “hackneyed,” a phrase that appears time and again in rejection slips of the period, and the genre broke away from its early forms.

The impetus for growth in the field, in many ways, was the appearance of new magazine editors who came to the field with a new perspective on magazine editing. Reacting to the input of their readers, these editors outlawed space opera in favor of

³⁹ Janis Svilpis, “The Production and Reproduction of Pulp Fiction: The Case of Ace,” *English Studies in Canada* 25, issue 3/4 (1999): 329.

⁴⁰ Attebery, “The magazine era,” 38.

⁴¹ Attebery, 35; the writings of Clyde F. Beck, whose letters were collected into sf’s first volume of literary criticism, *Hammer and Tongs*, is one of the more articulate examples of these complaints: “There is an altogether deceptive appearance of easiness about it: seemingly one needs but to take the currently popular plot of pursuit, struggle, mystery, or intrigue, salt it with rockets or ray-guns, garnish it with a few strips of mathematics, pass it through interstellar space, the fourth dimension, the realm of the infinitely small—and behold, science fiction,” Westfahl, “The Mightiest Machine,” 24.

realism, and other new standards were codified in editorial policy.⁴² For example, in the pages of *Wonder Stories*, editor David Lasser “realized that science fiction had to survive by the strength of its characterization and realistic plotting.”⁴³ The effects of this realization become clear in a letter Wyndham received from Lasser in 1932. In the letter, Lassar informs Wyndham of policy changes that would affect contributors to his magazine; in addition to the fact that story lengths would be shortened, Lasser informed Wyndham that “readers of science fiction in these critical days will no longer stand for the old hackneyed⁴⁴ plots....And, by the way, ‘rays’ have been overdone. Use them as sparingly as possible, and if you must use them make them convincing. Readers are becoming tired of them.”⁴⁵ Here again, Wyndham found himself needing to adopt his writing to suit these developments, just as he would have been getting comfortable with the formulaic nature of the early pulps. And there was more change to come.

Sf in America experienced another wave of reform by the end of the 1930s, presenting still more problems for Wyndham. The refinements of the middle years of the decade were followed by further refinements, and by the time John W. Campbell Jr. took over *Astounding Stories* in 1938, sf had moved far away from its juvenile roots, an event marked by the beginning of what many critics call “The Golden Age of Science Fiction.” Because Campbell was able to appeal “directly to a mature and sophisticated readership” that had out grown out of the early years of sf, the “richness of the period” lives on in sf history.⁴⁶ Campbell’s vision for sf and his stable of talented authors that had absorbed the

⁴² Ashley, *The Time Machine*, 74.

⁴³ Ashley, 75.

⁴⁴ The same term was used by Charles Horning in a rejection letter from 1934—when he wrote that Wyndham’s story “Lone Handed” was “hackneyed—the young scientist inventing the dimension machine is old stuff and much over-used as the basis of stories” (February 26, 1934).

⁴⁵ Lasser to Wyndham, August 11, 1932, Wyndham 11/1.

⁴⁶ Ashley, *The Time Machines*, 111.

early tradition, along with the “willingness of fans to explore new fictional directions, helped transform the genre into something more sophisticated than its pulp beginnings.”⁴⁷ By this point, Wyndham had found some success in the pulps, but was still struggling to keep up with the fast pace of the genre’s development.

In May 1939, Leo Margulies wrote to Wyndham’s American agent, Otis Adelbert Kline, indicating that Wyndham’s recently submitted novel *Planet Plane* would not be acceptable for the readers of American sf pulps.⁴⁸ The story, “an account of the first rocket flight to Mars,” was “too elementary” for American readers, Margulies writes, and “while it would be a fair book for an audience uninitiated into science fiction, the regular reader would find it too slight, too usual.”⁴⁹ Here again is an example of Wyndham’s success in England not translating into success in the American market—*Planet Plane* had already been published in England as a stand-alone novel, and serialized in England under its better known title *Stowaway to Mars*. By 1939, stories that were successful in the early years of the pulps were too hackneyed for American readers, and authors like Wyndham had to adjust to the change. But what becomes clear in another piece of correspondence from this period of sf is that by 1939, pace was still a problem for Wyndham; though the genre had matured, Americans had not changed their mind about pace.

On this point, Margulies was eventually reinforced by Kline, who told Wyndham that his submissions of *Salvage* and *Sixth Sense* would also not be acceptable “for the

⁴⁷ Attebery, “The magazine era,” 38.

⁴⁸ It is difficult to say which pulp magazine Wyndham submitted the story to, as Margulies is said to have edited almost 46 magazines in the 1930s. Two likely possibilities include *Thrilling Wonder Stories* or *Startling Stories*.

⁴⁹ Margulies to Kline, May 3, 1939, Wyndham 11/1.

American market.”⁵⁰ In regards to the former story, Kline notes that “there is no menace or other story problem involving basic plot conflict until the yarn is nearly half over. American editors like to have a story problem based on plot conflict introduced very early in the story—the sooner the better.” And in another letter from Kline, the agent complains that “all U.S. writers have to” obey convention

in the vast majority of cases if they wish to sell regularly. It is true that the average tempo of all stories, not merely science fiction, is faster here than in England. I sometimes sell English novels to be serialized here with the provision that they may be boiled down to a half or even a third of the original length in order to speed them up for American reading.⁵¹

These rejection notices reveal much about publishing sf in the United States, and the predicament Wyndham found himself in throughout the first decade of his career.

British SF and the Outbreak of WWII

At the same time that American sf magazines were expanding on and improving the genre, British fans were struggling to put out their own publications and break away from American influences. Philip Harbottle points out in his seminal *Vultures of the Void* that by the early twentieth century, the only place English publishers were willing to include fantastic fiction radiating out from Wells’s major market scientific romances of the previous decade was in juvenile boy’s magazines.⁵² Furthermore, British literature that might have been called sf if published in the United States “lacked a recognized name, [was] not clearly associated with science, [was] not buttressed by arguments about [its] singular virtues, [and] did not enjoy organized support” on the scale of American fandom.⁵³

⁵⁰ Kline to Wyndham, May 27, 1939, Wyndham 11/1.

⁵¹ Kline to Wyndham, July 11, 1939, Wyndham 11/1.

⁵² Philip Harbottle, *Vultures of the Void: The Legacy*, (Cosmos Books, 2011), 13.

⁵³ Westfahl, “The Mightiest Machine,” 27.

It was not until sf magazines from the United States were imported to the United Kingdom, then, that British readers were first exposed to fiction explicitly labeled as sf. A small group of fans soon built up around these pulps, and as they communicated with one another, they realized that American magazines did not necessarily suit the taste of British readers. For one, early American sf, with its pulp influences, was too fast for British readers. Another common complaint was that British readers uninitiated to the genre would face a steep learning curve before grasping the basic conventions and common themes. As Wyndham put it in “The Widening Gap,” Americans had grown accustomed to sf, but British readers had not, and British fans realized that the best way to overcome this obstacle was to create their own sf magazines. “Not content with American imports” or the general situation of sf in the UK

the small (but vocal) fan groups made every effort to convince publishers that Britain had both talented writers and the market for a homegrown magazine. But all efforts seemed fruitless, with publishers believing that the adult readership would be too small, and that the ‘Yank Mags’ catered to them anyway. (44)

Finding no help from professional publishers, sf fans in Britain discussed the possibility of producing their own publications. Some fanzines were created, and though not always successful, British fans began to lay the foundation for the UK’s first “homegrown” professional magazine.

When Pearson’s took a risk and published the first English sf magazine *Scoops* in 1932, fans were encouraged, despite the fact that it was explicitly aimed at a juvenile audience. Because *Scoops* ran for twenty issues, it proved to fans that there was a market for British sf. And so even when *Scoops* ceased publication in 1934, “the march of

British fandom was not to be denied.”⁵⁴ T. Stanhope Sprigg, an editor at Pearson’s, began to compile a small roster of British contributors to *Scoops* in preparation for two British sf magazines he planned over 1935-1936.⁵⁵ Using this list, he contacted various English authors—including Wyndham—and was able to launch the first of his two titles, *Tales of Wonder*, in 1937.⁵⁶ *Tales of Wonder* was a relative success; on the one hand, British fans finally had a sf magazine marketed for adults. But on the other, *Tales of Wonder* could not compete with the pay rates of the American pulps, and the better authors who could afford to publish with *Tales* were usually receiving the bulk of their income from American sales. Correspondence between Sprigg and Wyndham reveals the editorial mindset behind the creation of British magazines, and some of the qualities that Sprigg was interested in for his publications.

In 1936, Wyndham sent Sprigg a copy of “The Perfect Creature,” a story that had been previously rejected by an American pulp magazine, for inclusion in *Fantasy* when it came out of development. Sprigg’s aside about the story, the fact that its rejection by a pulp was “not altogether without its recommendation to us,” reveals much about the attitude British fans and editors had toward American pulp sf.⁵⁷ For British fans, American sf was crude and overly exaggerated. The British did not want this kind of sf in their magazines, as Sprigg explains in the same letter: *Fantasy*, unlike its American cousins, was for stories of a “carefully-worked-out style, more or less Wellsian, and not too fantastic or incredible.” The kind of fiction Sprigg wished to include in *Fantasy* is

⁵⁴ Harbottle, *Vultures of the Void*, 51.

⁵⁵ Harbottle, 53.

⁵⁶ Though Sprigg remained an editor at Pearson’s, they turned down the proposal for *Tales of Wonder*, and Sprigg worked with publisher William Heinemann to put out the magazine.

⁵⁷ T. Stanhope Sprigg to John Wyndham, February 4, 1936, Wyndham 11/1.

further defined in a memorandum he sent to Wyndham and to all those on his roster of potential contributors:

Whilst the proposed British magazine will approximate in many respects to its existing American contemporaries, such as *Astounding Stories* and *Wonder Stories*, there will be certain important differences. We shall not assume, for example, the same knowledge of, or interest in, the more advanced aspects of science on the part of our readers, as do our American contemporaries. Thus, the so-called 'thought-variant' type of story will be avoided and, instead, we shall concentrate...on the more straightforward, fast-moving type of tale in which story-interest is of paramount importance and the scientific interest secondary.⁵⁸

Sprigg goes on to outline a few possible plots for the magazine's stories, and here emphasizes that "Interplanetary stories, to a limited degree, will be required, but will have to differ appreciably from the now hackneyed themes of this type which appear regularly in America." Wyndham was enthusiastic about the prospects for *Fantasy*, especially given its divergence from the American pulp model.

In correspondence with Sprigg, Wyndham gave his opinion of the fledgling *Fantasy* magazine, writing that the title was "as good as can be found," unlike the titles of the American magazines which "by their titles, and often by their covers, scare off many a timid potential buyer."⁵⁹ Indeed, *Fantasy* is an excellent title, Wyndham thinks, because it leaves "the whole thing excellently pliable...and yet far less vague than all these expressions of mere astonishment." Here Wyndham voices two of the major criticisms of American sf leveled by the British: first, that it had developed so fast in the United States that English readers faced an obstacle in getting initiated into the genre; and second, that American sf was perhaps too juvenile and certainly more garish than the British were

⁵⁸ Sprigg to Wyndham, March 25, 1936, Wyndham 11/1.

⁵⁹ John Wyndham to T. Stanhope Sprigg, June 22, 1938, Wyndham 11/1.

willing to accept. Despite the support for the project, *Fantasy* would take another two years to fully develop, the causes of which Sprigg describes in a third letter to Wyndham.

In a letter from Sprigg to Wyndham concerning the story “The Perfect Creature,” Sprigg explains the main reason for *Fantasy*’s failure. “The principal reason for the enforced postponement,” Sprigg wrote, “was due to “the dearth of suitable material in this field of fiction, particularly material by English writers.”⁶⁰ But Sprigg persisted, and by 1938, *Fantasy* was on the shelves. *Fantasy* enjoyed lavish production and higher pay rates (“twice that” of the pay offered by *Tales of Wonder*).⁶¹ These magazines made an impact on British fans, but due to the outbreak of World War II, were short-lived. Later, after *Fantasy* published its third issue, Sprigg had to join the RAF and the magazine folded, making it “the first British casualty of the war” (56). *Tales of Wonder* would soon follow when, in 1942, “paper rationing had gradually cut down the number of pages...” and Gilling “spoke of the difficulty he was having obtaining new stories by British authors because many of his writers had been caught up in the war” (56). This “was a tragedy for British science fiction, because had the magazine continued, further new British talent would have emerged much sooner than it eventually did” (57). But the war “brought local sf publishing to an end, leaving a vacuum which could be filled by American sf” imports.⁶²

Across the Atlantic, some pulps folded as a result of paper rationing, while most continued with reduced contents per issue or fewer issues per year. The end of the war brought a bounce-back in production, but rising paper costs and other market factors led most of the syndicates to downsize or terminate most of their titles within a decade. At

⁶⁰ Sprigg to Wyndham, February 19, 1936, Wyndham 11/1.

⁶¹ Harbottle, *Vultures of the Void*, 55.

⁶² James, *Science Fiction in the 20th Century*, 73.

the same time, World War II paved the way for the paperback book, a form that would allow sf to reach an even wider audience and to gain mainstream commercial acceptance by publishers. The boom in sf book publishing that followed, combined with Wyndham's personal experiences during the war, would lead to the second and most famous phase of his career, one marked by a significant departure from his initial pulp style and themes. Indeed, it was during this period that John Harris truly became John Wyndham and established himself as a powerful voice that, in many ways, transcended the postwar sf scene.

Chapter 2: Editorial Intervention in the Novels of John Wyndham

In the previous chapter I showed how, during the first phase of his professional career, John Wyndham relied on the input of pulp magazine editors—who in turn relied on the expectations of sf readers—to produce his short fiction. I argued that this relationship between author and publisher complicates attempts to identify authorial intention in Harris's short fiction. In this chapter I will continue that line of reasoning by examining the second half of Harris's career to show how the institutions of publishing impacted his postwar novels, further complicating a critical model for Harris's work that is based solely on authorial intention. Before examining the interplay between the institutions of publishing and Harris's artistic production during the second—and by far the most significant—phase of his career, it is worth examining the genesis of Harris's well-known penname, "John Wyndham," and tracing his formative experiences through the war. After all the, war was as important to Wyndham's novels as other external forces like the market were to his short fiction, and it is through the influence of these external forces that one dimension of "intention" is determined.

For John Harris and his countrymen, World War II became a reality far sooner than it did for most Americans. As the American pulps continued to break new ground in sf, the British began the fight for their very existence. Harris, like many men in England, found himself consumed with various wartime duties as the fighting developed. At first Harris worked with the Ministry of Information as a letter censor, a task that consumed his time and energy, leading to a period of "creative inactivity" common to many artists of the period.⁶³ Harris continued to serve the Ministry during the Battle of Britain, at

⁶³ Leslie Flood, introduction to *The Best of John Wyndham* (London: Sphere, 1973), 2.

which time he was stationed in London.⁶⁴ His future wife, Grace Wilson, had evacuated the city, but the couple kept up a correspondence through the ensuing years of fighting that records Harris's daily encounters with destruction and that sheds light on the trajectory his career took after the war.

Throughout his early letters to Wilson, Harris describes a sense of alienation and disbelief at the sights and sounds that confront him on a daily basis. Writing to Wilson shortly after her departure, Harris laments that "in some ways this has been a kind of ghost of a week — a great strain on reality and credulity. Some day we'll look back on it and be so incapable of renewing the spirit of it that it will seem to have happened to someone else."⁶⁵ The alienation expressed in this early letter would continue to mount, and by 1942, Harris, in characteristically elegant prose, expressed to Wilson existential dismay. "Before the war," he writes, "one had a sense of being a creature which inhabited the earth—an individual with a path to choose. Now one travels in the manner of a parasite upon some creature which chooses its path in a fashion which one's position among the fur makes it impossible to guess."⁶⁶ In addition to a feeling of alienation, Harris's exposure to violence and the constant threat of destruction would greatly influence his artistic mindset.

For those in London during the Battle of Britain, each day was punctuated by violence and destruction. In another early letter to Wilson, Harris described a "150 pounder" bomb that landed in the street without detonating. "The RE's⁶⁷ opinion was that it would have knocked the front out of most of the Red Court, and probably have cost us

⁶⁴ David Ketterer, *Literary Encyclopedia*.

⁶⁵ John Wyndham to Grace Wilson, September 1, 1940, Wyndham 10/1/8. All primary source citations refer to holdings at the Wyndham Archive at the University of Liverpool.

⁶⁶ Wyndham to Wilson, April 25, 1942, Wyndham 10/11/11.

⁶⁷ Likely a radio engineer.

more than our windows,” he writes. “I can see that this kind of thing might easily set up a conditioned reflex. Each time I go to the gents I expect something to drop now the moment I get well settled.”⁶⁸ Here we see Harris internalizing horrific scenes, becoming used to the chaos of war. During this period he witnesses traumatized citizens taking shelter in the tunnels of the Tube, sees houses and favorite establishments in ruin, and many nights, watches fires sweep across the city. In one letter he paints a particularly vivid picture, describing “terrific fires on the south bank down by the docks” whose light reflects “down from the clouds,” illuminating the city in a menacing orange glow.⁶⁹ The horror of the war would come to define the thematic material of his first two postwar novels, both of which were preoccupied with invasion and catastrophic destruction. Indeed, one can draw many indirect parallels between his wartime correspondence and his novels of the 1950s. But there is one instance in his correspondence with Wilson that directly mirrors a scene in Harris’s first postwar novel, *The Day of the Triffids*, and that serves as an excellent example of how the scenes of the Battle of Britain were used as inspiration for his postwar novels.

Though the bombing and destruction of London served as a thematic inspiration for the first two Wyndham novels, one description from his experiences during the Battle of Britain is especially connected to *The Day of the Triffids*. Harris writes to Wilson about a trip to see mutual friends, and says that it was “A rather odd journey because most of London seemed to be making up for lost sleep; even on Hampstead Heath there was a curious dearth of people.”⁷⁰ Readers familiar with Harris should hear echoes of this statement in the opening scene of *Triffids*, where the narrator awakes to a mysteriously

⁶⁸ Wyndham to Wilson, October 1, 1940, Wyndham 10/2/1.

⁶⁹ Wyndham to Wilson, September 11, 1940, Wyndham 10/1/9.

⁷⁰ Wyndham to Wilson, September 3, 1940, Wyndham 10/1/8.

silent London: “No wheels rumbled, no buses roared, no sound of a car of any kind, in fact, was to be heard. No breaks, no horns, not even the clipping of the few rare horses that still occasionally passed” (9). In Harris’s lived experience of the war, then, we see the seeds of inspiration that will influence his later work, both in terms of plot and theme, and we understand how changes in his character brought about changes to his artistic vision. Furthermore, through his letters, we come to understand one of the main motivations for his postwar career—a profound need to acknowledge and purge the effects of a war that seemed, for the first time in history, to threaten the very existence of mankind.

Harris describes the catharsis he experienced through writing in one of his letters to Wilson, providing further insight into his postwar career trajectory. In a letter from April of the last year of the Blitz, Harris asks himself: “Why do I write these things in as much detail? I don’t know quite [*sic*]. It’s not a desire to harrow, more than anything, I think, to convince myself that these fantastic things are happening.”⁷¹ For Harris, the unreality of the war was best tackled through writing, and when the war was over, he chased that therapy. As David Ketterer explains, his experiences left him “with a more profound and tragic sense of reality. [And] that enhanced understanding would contribute significantly to the new form of science fiction that he would shortly turn his hand to.”⁷² But Harris realized that the realist form required of his new fiction would depart significantly from his fiction’s pulp origins. So in order to distance himself from his early work, Harris adopted the penname “John Wyndham,” setting out a different artistic direction for his fiction. As he explains in an April 3, 1950, letter to Frederik Pohl (his

⁷¹ Wyndham to Wilson, October 8, 1940, Wyndham 10/2/4.

⁷² Ketterer, *Literary Encyclopedia*.

American agent): “The original idea of John Wyndham was that I was using it for a different style of stuff. . . . not cluttered up with memories of early *Wonder Stories*. . . . So if you are agreeable, we will adopt John Wyndham [for *Day of the Triffids*], and stick to it.”⁷³ Indeed, “his creativity having been pent up for six years, JBH came back from the war with renewed ambition and between 1946 and 1950 he completed three novels (and began a fourth)” as John Wyndham.⁷⁴

Of course, there is some debate in critical discussions on Harris as to whether or not we can distinguish so definitely between his pre- and postwar output. In particular, Matthew Moore explores the claims of Harris’s brother, Vivian Harris, who saw the transition between the pulp writings and the Wyndham novels as “more of an evolution” than an absolute break.⁷⁵ He also gives some credence to the work of David Ketterer, whose study of *The Day of the Triffids* reveals that the first Wyndham novel sprang from pre-war writings.⁷⁶ But ultimately, Moore seems in agreement with Harris’s own account of his career. Harris’s personal writings, covered in detail by Moore, reveal that the creation of the Wyndham name was a “deliberate and self-conscious reinvention” born of Harris’s experiences during the war, and he did not necessarily see his work as “already evolving in the direction” of the Wyndham novels.⁷⁷ This evidence, combined with the tone and content of Harris’s correspondence during the war, seems to support his own conclusions about the Wyndham brand.

⁷³ Quoted in David Ketterer, “John Wyndham: The Facts of Life Sextet,” in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008), 375.

⁷⁴ Ketterer.

⁷⁵ Matthew Moore, “Major Works,” 7.

⁷⁶ Ketterer, “The Genesis of the Triffids,” 12. Ketterer explains that one of the primary sources for *Triffids* was the short story “The Puffball Menace.”

⁷⁷ Moore, “Major Works,” 73.

***Triffids* and the Major Trade Houses**

Now that we have established the origins of “John Wyndham,” it is time to couple that understanding with a consideration of the ways in which the production of his novels was affected by the publishing institutions of the postwar years. Much like Harris’s experience in the pulps, his postwar novels were greatly shaped by editorial intervention and by the attempt to adapt his work for certain audiences. However, the medium of the sf book, as opposed to the pulp magazine, obscures the collaborative nature of the kind of sf literary production Harris engaged in after the war. Though Harris was able to find institutional support for his new sf in book publishing houses—where he was given the artistic freedom required to explore the themes of destruction, invasion, and human progress that occupied him throughout the 1950s—the format of the bound novel also began to distort critical appreciation for the sociological process of literary production. As a printed book, the novel gave a false impression of the autonomy of the sf author. What was once seen clearly as a collaborative process became the solitary product of one creator. Indeed, though the bound novel paved the way for mainstream acceptance of sf and for its thematic growth and maturity, it also led to a critical oversight that has affected the study of Harris’s works.

Science fiction truly began to move away from its pulp origins thanks to the sf book, but a major conceptual difference between magazine and book formats also encourages a false impression about the process of literary production. In examining this issue, critic R.E. Fulton writes that “whereas pulp magazines presented stories in combination with factual articles and letter columns, creating the sense of science fiction as a democratic forum...the [book] represented an individual fiction product, created by

an individual author and consumed by an individual reader.”⁷⁸ This representation undermined an appreciation for the influence of the sf editor, who had for so many years mediated the genre and the close relationship between readers and authors. And though the book allowed sf to reach a wider audience, to grow in commercial appeal, and to explore new themes, it also removed the editor from the public eye. By transforming sf “from a discourse to a commodity,” the sf paperback displaced the sf editor and readers lost the editorial platform that was so transformative in the early years of the pulps; thus the editor became “little more than a facilitator in the exchange of a single product between a creative author and a receptive reader.”⁷⁹ This process is clear in the literary production of Wyndham’s novels, which began with the massively popular *The Day of the Triffids*.

The catalyst for Harris’s success as John Wyndham came when *The Day of the Triffids* was published in the United States in 1951. The novel opens in London, where a mysterious meteor shower has caused the majority of the population to go blind overnight. The protagonist, his vision spared by chance, awakens to discover a city in panic. He eventually finds a sighted companion, and the two band together as they make their way out of the city. Complicating their escape (and their evolving romance) is a deadly, mobile plant species, triffids, who have made easy prey of the blind populace. The novel ends as a semblance of government begins to reassert itself, and overall the work reflects Wyndham’s skepticism towards human institutions and the preoccupation with mass destruction that characterized the postwar British imagination. But another one of the themes present in *The Day of the Triffids*, the perils of genetic engineering, only

⁷⁸ Fulton, “Donald A. Wollheim’s Authoritative Universe,” 368.

⁷⁹ Fulton, 369.

entered the novel after Wyndham's correspondence with his American editors; indeed, the tangled production history of *The Day of the Triffids* introduces many of the themes that would come to characterize the production of all the Wyndham novels that followed.

But American publication was a complicated affair, and was followed by the publication of a British hardbound edition with a variant genealogy that David Ketterer considers more authoritative. As he entered the world of publishing with the major hardbound trade houses, these textual distinctions collectively represent another indication of how much the war had changed the publishing dynamics he would encounter on both sides of the Atlantic. After the war, Harris attempted to shop a number of manuscripts in the United Kingdom—including an unpublished novel titled *Project for Pistols*—but found little success with British publishers. “Despairing of becoming an author of English novels in England because *Project for Pistols* had failed to find a UK publisher, at some post-March point in 1948,” John Harris began to prepare another novel, *Triffids*, for American publication.⁸⁰ His search for a publisher for *Triffids* was carried out via his American agent, Frederick Pohl, who was able to interest Walter I. Bradbury of Doubleday in the novel. Pohl and Bradbury received two copies of the typescript for *The Day of the Triffids* before it was published in the United States. These typescripts feature a substantial variation that help to trace the transmission history of the work.

In the first *Triffids* typescript sent to Pohl and Bradbury, the titular antagonists are alien invaders from Venus. But in the second, later version, prepared by Wyndham and sent again to his American agents, the triffids are said to be the result of genetic

⁸⁰ David Ketterer, “John Wyndham’s World War III and His Abandoned Fury of Creation Trilogy,” in *Future Wars: The Anticipations and the Fears*, ed. David Seed (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 107.

experimentation carried out in a Soviet lab. The source of this variation cannot be traced back to Harris alone, because when Pohl and Bradbury began to work with Harris on the first typescript of *The Day of the Triffids*, the story began to transform. “Doubleday editor Walter I. Bradbury had apparently recommended a few changes to the...typescript submission,” changes that Pohl agreed with.⁸¹ For example, Bradbury objected to the original narrative frame Harris conceived for the novel, as well as the extraterrestrial origins of the *Triffids*. Harris revised with these suggestions in mind, producing the second typescript.

Still, Bradbury and Pohl objected to the English colloquialisms in both typescripts, a criticism that Harris responded to by saying “Maybe the best way would be for me to let the words stand and ask that someone may be found kind enough to put in substitutes for those thought [too] baffling.”⁸² Here we see Wyndham transferring authorial responsibility to an editor at an American publishing house in a direct way. Harris wrote to Pohl to say that he would leave the top copy of the typescript with Pohl, “to do with as you think best.”⁸³ But before *The Day of the Triffids* was released in book form, Pohl submitted the original typescript to *Collier's*, who published *Triffids* in serial form. Thus the six-part series featured in *Collier's* retains the “inserted, second-thought Venus explanation that JBH had mistakenly believed would appeal more to an American publisher of sf than his original more mundane...explanation.”⁸⁴ But the typescript that was submitted to Doubleday for the book form of *Triffids* represented Harris's removal of the extraterrestrial origins and Pohl's reworked language.

⁸¹ Ketterer “The Genesis of the Triffids,” 13

⁸² Ketterer.

⁸³ Ketterer.

⁸⁴ Ketterer.

For this reason, arguments about authorial intention in the *Triffids* and complaints that the American text contains revision to Harris's original—as covered in the introduction to this thesis—become more complicated than originally assumed. Considering that Harris was willing to allow American editors to revise his typescript, and that he acquiesced to having the source of the triffids modified, it is difficult to claim that the British version of *The Day of the Triffids* is automatically more authorial. The same processes will also impact the next Wyndham novel, *The Kraken Wakes*, further complicating any notions that the preferred Wyndham edition can be determined on the basis of national lines alone.

After *Triffids* was published, British publishers gained confidence in the marketability of John Wyndham. “Shortly after Doubleday’s acceptance of *Triffids*, [Harris] approached his friend Robert Lusty who...worked for the prestigious British publisher Michael Joseph. [And] five months after the Doubleday publication, the Michael Joseph [hardcover] edition appeared.”⁸⁵ And though Michael Joseph would go on to publish all the British hardcover Wyndham novels of the 1950s, Harris only published with the American house Doubleday once. For the most part, his sales depended on the growing popularity of the paperback and the unique business model of Ballantine Books, who would become exclusive with Wyndham after *The Day of the Triffids*. In fact, the success of Wyndham and other postwar authors is undeniably linked to the introduction of the paperback sf novel, and in order to understand the influence of this publishing institution on *The Kraken Wakes*, an account of the new phenomenon of the paperback must be given.

⁸⁵ Ketterer *Literary Encyclopedia*.

The Postwar Paperbacking of SF

Until the years immediately following the Second World War, sf was published almost exclusively in the pulps, “very rarely achieving book publication, either in the United States or in Britain.”⁸⁶ Book publishers in both countries, “who remained firmly rooted in Nineteenth Century [*sic*] editorial traditions,” were unwilling to market sf titles, in part because sf was seen as a low-brow genre, and perhaps more importantly, because no one had yet demonstrated sf’s potential for revenue outside the world of magazines.⁸⁷ When sf did begin to appear in hardback, it was almost exclusively produced by amateurs who had formed their own publishing houses, (some of which were located in basements and garages).⁸⁸ But the paperback, which had been developing alongside the pulps, would prove to be the perfect medium to introduce sf to the world of mainstream book publishing.

Though the paperback existed in some form throughout the nineteenth century (in Germany especially), it was not until 1935 that it was first successfully introduced in the English-speaking market. It was in that year that the Englishman Allen Lane founded Penguin Books, a publishing house whose business model departed significantly from Lane’s family inheritance, The Bodley Head, which was a respectable (that is to say, traditional) publishing house. Lane believed he could reach an untapped market by publishing not for the hardback, trade bookstores but for the masses. Specifically, he wanted to develop in paperbound format “a new series of quality fiction and

⁸⁶ Edward James, *Science Fiction*, 62.

⁸⁷ Jack L. Chalker and Mark Owings, introduction to *The Science-Fantasy Publishers: An Introductory Critical History* (Baltimore: Mirage Press, 1991), xix.

⁸⁸ Chalker and Owings, 26.

nonfiction...to be sold in places that did not specialize in bookselling.”⁸⁹ Lane’s first run of Penguin paperbacks, sold in train stations, grocery stores, and newsstands, was immediately and immensely successful, and it was not long before American publishers began to take notice.

Lane’s revolution reached the United States in 1939, when Robert de Graff’s Pocket Books began to sell paperbacks in the American market.⁹⁰ “The overnight and overwhelming success of the Pocket Books venture...was unprecedented in American publishing history,” and just as Penguin had inspired de Graff, so too did Pocket Books beget a host of paperback publishers, including Avon Books, Pelican, Popular Library, Dell books, and an American branch of Penguin that would break away from its British counterpart after the outbreak of World War II.⁹¹ This is not to suggest, however, that the war had an adverse effect on the paperback market. In fact, “during the war,” paperback publishers “improved their own positions and radically increased the potential audience for paperback books” by producing portable entertainment for soldiers on the front. Some of the more successful wartime paperbacks included mystery novels, foreign language dictionaries for the invading Allies, and plane identification guides for civilian and military use.⁹² As soldiers returned to civilian life after the war ended, their desire appetite for paperbacks helped transform “the United States [into] a nation of paperback readers.”⁹³ This would set the stage for a period of substantial growth in the US paperback market, transforming the business of selling books, as well as sf, forever.

⁸⁹ Chalker and Owings.

⁹⁰ Kenneth C. Davis, *Two Bit Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), 12.

⁹¹ Davis, 13.

⁹² Davis, 57.

⁹³ R. E. Fulton, “Donald A. Wollheim’s Authoritative Universe,” 366.

After the war, newcomers to the paperback market Dell and Signet began to compete with Penguin and Pocket Books for a secure footing in the field. In the United States, the competition typically revolved around “mysteries and westerns with occasional forays into other areas of popular literature,” and in all instances featured colorfully illustrated covers.⁹⁴ These practices contrasted markedly with Penguin’s list in the UK, which focused on more “respectable” works of literature in unadorned covers. But “American department stores were not prepared to stock shoddy-looking English paperbacks, however fine their contents” (Lewis 212). Ian Ballantine—Penguin’s American director of operations—realized this, and despite Lane’s objections, continued to commission cover illustrations for Penguin books in the US. The situation was tense, and Lane did not hesitate to tell Ballantine that he and his American colleagues “had begun to take steps in a distinctly distasteful direction.”⁹⁵ The creative and editorial differences, fueled by Lane’s “very British views of what Penguin should publish,” led Ballantine to leave the company in 1945.⁹⁶ Taking his experience at Penguin with him, Ballantine formed Bantam Books and was able to use his marketing talent to grow the company into a worthy competitor.

With Bantam, Ballantine continued to focus on popular literature. In particular, “Bantam Books entered the softcover marketplace with a list aimed at competing head to head with Pocket Books.”⁹⁷ Part of his strategy was to spend “half a million dollars in its first six months on free racks for the dealers,” which would help to associate Bantam’s

⁹⁴ Fulton, 367.

⁹⁵ Davis, *Two Bit Culture*, 102.

⁹⁶ Davis, 103. Interestingly, this situation parallels to some degree the attitude of pulp editors towards British writers; as Lane’s business partner Victor Weybright suggested, Americans were “more elementary than the Britishers’ [*sic*] and had been ‘schooled from infancy to disdain even the best product unless it is smoothly packaged and merchandised’” (Lewis 217).

⁹⁷ T. L. Bonn, *Under Cover: An Illustrated History of American Mass-Market Paperbacks* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982) 34.

trademark rooster logo with quality American fiction in softcover. Bantam was a success, but Ballantine felt hampered by the traditional paperback model he had helped to perfect. Up until this point, paperbacks relied on the purchase of reprint rights to grow their lists. In other words, fiction and nonfiction had to be published in hardcover and then sold to paperback houses before it became available to editors. Driven by an ambition unparalleled in the publishing world, Ballantine broke away from Bantam to form yet another company, and in the process, he introduced the world to another important innovation in the book trade: simultaneous editions.

When Ian Ballantine formed Ballantine Books, he intended to sidestep the problem of reprinting rights. For the first time in publishing, Ballantine Books would publish a hardcover and softcover edition simultaneously, helping “to satisfy both writers and hardcover publishers” in one move.⁹⁸ Ballantine enlisted the help of hardcover publishers to copublish his author’s works, allowing “a hardcover edition for the bookstore trade” to “gain review attention while a paperback edition would reach the mass market.”⁹⁹ And by generating hardcover *and* softcover royalties for just one company (with a small concession to the hardcover co-publishers), Ballantine was able to pay authors a higher royalty. Of course, this would “not necessarily benefit” best-selling authors, but it would certainly help “lesser-known writers who needed exposure.”¹⁰⁰ Ballantine’s plan worked, and by the end of 1953, the company was competing with existing houses. His unconventional approach was reflected in Ballantine’s list, which “began to acquire an offbeat appeal.”¹⁰¹ Ballantine began to publish outside traditional

⁹⁸ Bonn, 36.

⁹⁹ Davis, *Two Bit Culture*, 161.

¹⁰⁰ Davis, 162.

¹⁰¹ Davis, 163.

publishing categories, including humor and academic self-help books. Soon, this would include sf.

For the majority of its time as a leading paperback publisher, “the genre that became almost synonymous with Ballantine Books was science fiction.”¹⁰² Up until this point, “book form science fiction...was limited to a few anthologies of magazine short fiction,” most notably in the Pocket Books anthologies edited by Donald Wollheim.¹⁰³ But “Ballantine radically changed that,” and thanks to Ian Ballantine’s innovations, science fiction became a viable publishing category for the mainstream market.¹⁰⁴ Soon other houses would follow suit, most notably Ace, under the guidance of Wollheim. From that point on, paperback sf would come to dominate the sf market, slowly driving the sf magazines out of business. But not all sf paperbacks were created equal, and between the two primary paperback houses Ace and Ballantine, there arose significant ideological differences.

Though Ballantine and Ace were the primary players in the science fiction paperback market, their titles differed significantly in content. “A comparison of their lists shows Ballantine going for more material from the post-pulp magazines and collections of previously unpublished stories, [while]...recycled pulp and pre-World War Two “classics” played no major part in the Ballantine list.”¹⁰⁵ In fact, “Ian Ballantine considered his books to be works of ‘adult science fiction’ because of their thematic seriousness, relative sophistication, and literary ambitions. By contrast, Ace paperbacks

¹⁰² Davis, 166.

¹⁰³ Davis, 166.

¹⁰⁴ Davis, 167.

¹⁰⁵ Svilpis, “The Case of Ace,” 341.

strongly—and consciously—resembled their magazine ancestors.”¹⁰⁶ As a result, the lists of Ace and Ballantine established a literary spectrum was established, in which work published by Ace was seen as belonging to an older tradition of pulp sf, while Ballantine’s list was generally seen as representative of a more mature direction in the field. This was significant for Harris, whose Wyndham novels were perfectly suited for Ballantine editions.

Paperbacking the Wyndham Brand

The second Wyndham novel, *The Kraken Wakes*, was first published in 1953; this time, Michael Joseph was the initial publisher, and in the same year, it was published in the United States as *Out of the Deeps* by Ballantine Books. This is the first instance—but not the last—in which a Wyndham novel was to be retitled as it crossed the Atlantic. *The Kraken Wakes*, like *Triffids*, opens with strange lights falling to Earth. As world governments and their scientists begin to realize that an intelligent and possibly hostile life form has infiltrated the deepest trenches of the ocean, a military response is initiated. As in the other Wyndham novels, Cold War fear and suspicion is palpable throughout *The Kraken Wakes*, and with it Wyndham continued to engage with the Wellsian tradition; just like *Triffids*, *Kraken* is directly inspired by a Wells short story. The thematic similarities between *Triffids* and *Kraken* led Brian Aldiss to declare Wyndham a master of the “cozy catastrophe,” a label that critics have pushed back against in recent years but that has nonetheless delayed scholarly appreciation for Wyndham.

Not nearly as much is known about the production process of *The Kraken Wakes*, but Matthew Moore does document at least one exchange between Harris and Ballantine editor Stanley Kauffman. In that exchange, Kauffman raises “serious objections” to a

¹⁰⁶ Fulton, “Authoritative Universe,” 368.

narrative frame that exists in the draft forms of *Kraken*.¹⁰⁷ Harris replies to the letter explaining the purpose of the frame, a prologue entitled “Rationale,” but in his letter he also gives Kauffman the deference of taste; “if you feel that it is unnecessary,” Harris writes, “that is okay.”¹⁰⁸ Apparently Kauffman did feel that it was unnecessary; as Moore tells us, “with such a lacklustre defence it’s no surprise that the Rationale is cut from the US edition of *The Kraken Wakes*.”¹⁰⁹ Here again we see Harris ceding some authorial control to his editor, complicating attempts to determine authorial intention.

While the “Rationale” is retained in the British edition, the ending of the novel in both printed versions reflects the wishes of Harris’s editor at Ballantine. As Harris explained in a letter to Kauffman, “I am grateful to you for having made your point strongly enough to cause me to alter it for the British edition, too. What I have done is, perhaps, a somewhat blatant getout, but much better than what was there before.”¹¹⁰ Several endings survive, including fragment variants, but Wyndham finally settled on replacing his original dark ending with humanity (and his protagonists) managing—just barely—to overcome the invaders. Here we see Harris happy with the intervention of his editor and willing to make changes to both manuscripts on the editor’s recommendation. Does it make sense then to argue that the “Rationale” should be retained, as some critics have argued, while simultaneously embracing the ending supplied by Kauffman? What the history of *The Day of the Triffids* and *The Kraken Wakes* suggests is that any determination of the “ideal text” based on a simple “American vs. British” dichotomy is unwise.

¹⁰⁷ Moore, “Major Works,” 151.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Moore, 151.

¹⁰⁹ Moore, 151.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Moore, 152.

The next novel published under the penname John Wyndham, *The Chrysalids*, followed the same production trajectory as *Kraken*; Michael Joseph published the hardback in the United Kingdom, followed by Ballantine's simultaneous release of the hardcover and paperback in the United States. The novel, a brutal examination of religious paranoia and patriarchal power, follows Peter, the son of a wealthy farmer, who was born into a world profoundly reshaped by nuclear war several centuries earlier. Peter's community, agrarian and technologically underdeveloped, guards against genetic mutation by means of a religious belief in purity; the members of his community are convinced that they represent the true image of God, and according to their modified version of Christianity, it is a moral imperative to destroy any crop, animal, or human that exhibits adaptive radiation. But when Peter meets Sophie, a girl with six toes on each foot, the ethics of his community—and his father—are challenged. Due to its nuanced portrayal of human evolution, otherness, and its biting critique of patriarchal society, the novel has been lauded by traditional literary critics as his best work.

In considering *The Chrysalids*, critics have consistently pointed out the novel's treatment of themes that do not appear in the more "cozy" *Triffids* or *Kraken*. In particular, Rowland Wymer has argued that *The Chrysalids* serves as the most potent rebuttal to those critics who believe that Wyndham is a "safe" author; as Wymer writes, by complicating the question of survival as an inter-species conflict rather than an intra-species struggle, Wyndham "encourages the reader to feel that social and political questions are being touched on...[and] opens up" the novel to multiple interpretations, "none of them particularly 'comfortable.'"¹¹¹ Indeed, the edition represents the moment

¹¹¹ Rowland Wymer, "How 'Safe' is John Wyndham," *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction* 55, (Summer 1992): 27.

in Wyndham's career when he truly sheds his pulp and Wellsian influences and began to deeply engage with his experience of destruction during the war. And yet despite this critical attention, the textual history of *The Chrysalids* has been lacking in the scholarship of David Ketterer. This is due in large part to the fact that not nearly as much is known about the production of *The Chrysalids*. Indeed, much of the transmission history is speculative.

Nonetheless, that speculation is grounded in reason. The only surviving typescript, housed at the Liverpool University's John Wyndham Archive, shows minor edits and larger cuts in the author's hand. A comparison of the typescript to the printed American and British editions of *The Chrysalids* shows that the American text is based on a lost, unedited typescript. The British text, on the other hand, follows the edits made to the typescript; where a passage is crossed out in pencil or ink by Harris, the British text also omits that passage. Based on the editing process of *The Midwich Cuckoos*, which will be covered shortly, it is safe to assume that the reasons for the textual variation can be traced back to Michael Joseph, who instructed Wyndham, for reasons now lost to history, to cut the manuscript by a certain amount. The American text, conversely, prints the original, longer text submitted in the typescript form. In order to understand the rationale for this speculation, we must turn to the final Wyndham novel of the 1950s, *The Midwich Cuckoos*.

The Midwich Cuckoos was first published in 1957 by Michael Joseph in hardback, and by Ballantine in hardback and softcover. *Cuckoos* is an especially poignant study of a community's reaction to the threat of destruction, and opens as the population of an entire English village, Midwich, falls unconscious. Military and government officials are

dispatched, but the ordeal is over almost as soon as it began. Months later, however, crisis strikes again when the women of child-bearing age in Midwich discover that they have all become pregnant. The novel moves forward to the birth and maturity of the women's offspring, who on the surface appear normal, except for their peculiar, glowing eyes. Psychologically, however, the children are quite unusual, possessing hyperintelligence and an interconnected consciousness; whatever one child learns, feels, and sees, the others learn, feel, and, see too. It is soon revealed that small groups of children with glowing eyes have invaded communities across the globe, and once they begin to pose a threat, are killed by their hosts. The same fate befalls the children of Midwich, and the novel comes to a close. The transmission history of *The Midwich Cuckoos* has been the subject of much scholarship by Ketterer, who considers the novel to be Wyndham's best. In that history, however, Ketterer also provides a crucial piece of history for understanding the editing of *The Chrysalids*.

Although *The Chrysalids* and *The Midwich Cuckoos* represent different thematic levels of the Wyndham writing persona, both novels share critical compositional and editorial characteristics. Just as the Michael Joseph version of *The Chrysalids* departs significantly from Harris's typescript through deleted passages, the same British publisher's edition of *The Midwich Cuckoos* has far less material than the American edition. Ketterer turns to the diaries of Grace Wilson to explain these variations, writing, "Although, apparently, no specific letter survives...[Harris] had been instructed by someone at Michael Joseph, for whatever reason, to significantly reduce the length of his typescript. [His] 'despairing' distress at the 'horrible grind' of cutting is clear from the

relevant entries in the diaries of his long-term partner...Grace Wilson.”¹¹² As a result of these significant variations, Ketterer declares that the American edition of *The Midwich Cuckoos* is preferable and prepares a sample table of contents for an ideal edition of the novel. This kind of absolutist thinking characterizes all the discussions of Wyndham’s postwar novels, and must be addressed by a more nuanced approach to textual and editorial theory that allows for multiple versions of a text to stand in dealing with variation. This approach is the subject of the final chapter.

¹¹² Ketterer, David, “The Complete Midwich Cuckoos,” 1.

Chapter 3: An Alternative Approach to the Wyndham Problem

A study of John Harris's prewar and postwar fiction has revealed that, as opposed to the autonomous process of authorship assumed by Wyndham's critics, Harris's fiction was the product of the work of multiple, inextricable sources. For this reason, future scholarship will need to adopt a new model to resolve the problem of textual variation in Wyndham's novels. Luckily, alternative models have been developing in editorial circles for some time, and in fact, the same issues that come to the surface in this textual examination of the Wyndham novels have been specifically addressed in recent editorial theory. As a result of these discussions, critics have proposed a sociological approach toward editing that applies directly to the Wyndham problem. In order to understand this model, we must first examine the theory and practice sociological critics were reacting to: the prominence of authorial intention and the construction of eclectic editions.

David Greetham has traced the history of textual editing back to the third century, but it was not until the twentieth century that the field began to resemble its modern form and that authorial intention and eclecticism came to dominate editorial activity.¹¹³ Before this time, textual critics worked mostly with Biblical and classical texts, but when scholars and universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century began to take an interest in vernacular literature, textual editors began to focus on modern texts as well.

¹¹³ David Greetham, *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1994).

In the late nineteenth century, Anglo scholars and university professionals began to scrutinize the uncritical methods resulting in the received text of Shakespeare, which in turn led them to promote a historical, material approach to texts. These scholars have come to be known as the New Bibliographers, united by their technical and systematic use of history in editing vernacular texts. The most famous New Bibliographer—and likely the most influential textual editor—was W.W. Greg, a British specialist in Elizabethan literature. Greg forever changed the field when he wrote “The Rationale of Copy Text,” which would come to represent the pinnacle of New Bibliographic investigation and would shape scholarship for decades to come.

The concept of the copy text as proposed by Greg provided a way whereby editors could “best represent...the author’s intentions,” or approach substantive readings with an eye towards preserving true authorial voice.¹¹⁴ By choosing a base text from the list of witnesses with which the editor could compare all subsequent and prior readings, the editor could reconstruct the author’s intentions by choosing between textual variants with informed judgment. At the end of the process, the editor would produce an eclectic edition, or one “in which readings from variant witnesses are combined to produce a text that approximates...the ideal...text but that is therefore unlike the text in any one of the witnesses.”¹¹⁵ This approach to textual editing was not completely new, but “the primary advocates of eclecticism arrive in the twentieth century.”¹¹⁶ And yet there was not complete agreement about the extent to which authorial intention could be reconstructed,

¹¹⁴ Marcus Walsh, “Theories of Text, Editorial Theory, and Textual Criticism,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Book*, ed Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and H. R. Woudhuysen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), accessed April 30, 2018.

¹¹⁵ Erick Kelemen, *Textual Editing and Criticism: An Introduction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009), 102.

¹¹⁶ Kelemen, 102.

and within New Bibliography and other editorial circles, divergent approaches were adopted.

While Greg was incredibly influential, not everyone who employed his copy text method edited texts in the same way. The contrast has much to do with the editor's belief in their ability to reconstruct the authorially intended text. For Greg, who wrote in 1932 that "history is not the enemy but the maker of meaning," each witness was treated with "a degree of authority," and he recognized that the eclectic edition could never be more than an editorial argument about what the ideal text *might* be.¹¹⁷ This thinking was sharply contrasted by other editors—many of them American—who, according to Kathryn Sutherland, misconstrued Greg's position in an almost moralistic attempt to rid the text of "error." In this way, American editors took Greg's method to the extreme, converting his eclectic "history of the text" into an inferred "intention of the text," and in the process dehistoricized evidence to establish "the authoritative notion of the 'ideal copy.'"¹¹⁸ For these editors, the author was "a single person with a single intention that others sometimes disrupt."¹¹⁹ They also spoke of channeling the author and recapturing an intention lost to history, and it was against this approach to textual editing that the most recent generation of textual editors reacted to, fueled in large part by the advent of critical theory in the academy.

The rise of critical theory in the second half of the twentieth century, challenged traditional views of the author and her "ideal" copy. In the context of literary criticism, essays by Roland Barthes, like "The Death of the Author," and "From Work to Text,"

¹¹⁷ Kathryn Sutherland, "Anglo-American editorial theory" in *The Cambridge Companion to Textual Scholarship*, ed Neil Fraistat and Julia Flanders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 45.

¹¹⁸ Sutherland, 47.

¹¹⁹ Kelemen, *Textual Editing*, 80. Of course, other definitions of "ideal copy" are possible, but this definition approaches the most widely accepted version.

both undermine the image of an author as a creative genius and articulate the postmodern positions of intertextuality and interactive, “writerly” reading, in addition to undermining the image of an author as a creative genius. Editorial theory was not immune to these radical changes, and with new conceptions of literary interpretation came new ideas about authorial intention. Following the revolutions in critical theory and the practice of criticism, “in the 1980s editorial circles witnessed a paradigm shift in which the concept of a definitive end product was widely replaced by the concept of process in which multiple texts represent the work” (Shillingsburg 77). This paradigm shift is especially apparent in the scholarship of Jerome McGann, whose *Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* challenged many of the field’s beliefs and practices. Though McGann was certainly not the only scholar to begin the conversation about alternatives to authorial intention, he is widely cited by others as the most convincing proponent of what has come to be called a sociological model of editing.

One of the underlying premises of the argument McGann makes in *Critique* is that the practices of early textual editors are no longer adequate for modern authors. Because textual editors like Greg and others were working with older texts, the principles they developed to guide their practices were based on “special historical circumstances,” or on the fact that much of the textual evidence of their subject works were lost to history.¹²⁰ For example, editors working on Biblical or Renaissance texts were attempting to reconstruct an original that they would never truly recover. As time went on, some features of that older editorial theory were preserved that were “irrelevant to the new sets

¹²⁰ Jerome McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Scholarship* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 55.

of problems” posed by modern authorship.¹²¹ As McGann writes, “The wide range of published and prepublished textual forms which the modern editor has at his disposal corresponds to various sorts of ‘intention’ conceived by the author alone, or by the author working in concert with the literary institution of his time and place,” undermining an attempt to pick out one unified authorial intention.¹²² The contemporary circumstances McGann describes are certainly reflected in the work of Ketterer, who is able to make his argument about editorial intervention because of the textual evidence that survives—with a few exceptions—in the Wyndham Archive.

The increasing survival of pre-published forms of a work in modern times has broader implications for McGann’s *Critique*, and also for our study of Wyndham’s novels. After tracing how authorial intention was introduced into editorial theory, McGann goes on to argue that authorial intention relies on “the concept of the autonomy of the creative” artist.¹²³ For McGann and others who share his views, the process of literary production is not autonomous and limited to an all-powerful author. Instead, literary production takes place in a network of circumstances and relations, and the concept of the autonomous author denies the reality of the writing process. It is for this reason that McGann’s approach is called sociological, as it attempts to account for the entire system in which an author operates. To this end, McGann writes that “the authority for the value of literary productions does not rest in the author’s hands alone,” and that

in all periods [literary] institutions adapt to the special needs of individuals, including the needs of authors (some of whom are more comfortable with the institutions than others). But whatever special

¹²¹ McGann, 38-39.

¹²² McGann, 58.

¹²³ McGann, 40.

arrangements are made, the essential fact remains: literary works are not produced without arrangements of some sort.¹²⁴

As a result of these arrangements, various forms of a text are left to posterity and accessible to editors. These “received textual forms reflect the achieved results of an actual literary production,” representing “divergent patterns of varying purposes and intentions rather than an ancestral series in which we are trying to track down the author’s final intentions.”¹²⁵ This perspective rests at the heart of McGann’s argument, and for those editors who accept it, has driven them to adopt a number of new approaches to editing.

One such editor, Hans Walter Gabler, has argued in regards to Shakespeare’s *King Lear* for a two-version hypothesis, or one that simply acknowledges the multiple forms of *Lear* instead of trying to resolve variation in an eclectic edition. Gabler believes that this conclusion—existing in some form since Samuel Johnson—was first explored by modern critics like the American scholar Madeleine Doran, but that W. W. Greg’s prominence and fixation on “analytic logic” and positivistic methods caused her to retract work that entertained the idea of multiple, independently authorized versions of Shakespeare’s *King Lear*.¹²⁶ Furthermore, he writes that the New Bibliographers’ insistence on bibliographic-centered editing prevented them from making the critical interpretations that support a two-version hypothesis, calling into question the wisdom of fiercely defended editorial positions. This last point is echoed in Donald Reiman’s argument for “versioning,” an approach to editing that springs from the sociological turn of the late twentieth century.

¹²⁴ McGann, 48.

¹²⁵ McGann, 61-62.

¹²⁶ Hans Walter Gabler, “Late Twentieth-century Shakespeares,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Textual Scholarship*, ed. Neil Fraistat and Julia Flanders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 79.

Versioning Wyndham ...

The use of versioning, or presenting texts that represent the various states present in the textual record, is essentially another offshoot of McGann's sociological model and one of the more popular approaches to editing that eschews authorial intention. Reiman coins the term in his essay "Versioning': The Presentation of Multiple Texts," where he argues that in many cases, primary textual documents are preferable to critical editions, and that "where the basic problem facing the scholar or reader involves two or more radically differing versions that exhibit quite distinct ideologies, aesthetic perspectives, or rhetorical strategies, the alternative to 'editing,' as conventionally understood, may be what I call 'versioning.'"¹²⁷ Almost immediately, the link to Wyndham is clear, as his texts exist in divergent British and American states. Reiman's reasoning further links versioning to the Wyndham problem, and offers a viable alternative to an eclectic edition based on authorial intention.

Reiman explains a number of benefits to his approach, some practical and others pedagogical, that make Wyndham an ideal candidate for versioning. Because textual editing is an expensive endeavor, versioning texts would allow editors to produce an edition that did not involve a time-consuming, laborious process of investigation, thus making a versioned edition attractive to publishers, who are typically wary of distributing apparatus-heavy specialist volumes like a critical edition.¹²⁸ This economy, which still preserves the documentary evidence, would help keep Wyndham accessible to readers, particularly students, who might not be experienced with reading (or gaining insights from) critically edited forms of a literary text. Considering the fact that Wyndham has

¹²⁷ Donald Reiman, "Versioning': The Presentation of Multiple Texts," in *Romantic Texts and Contexts* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 169.

¹²⁸ Reiman, 179.

been a staple of the UK's curriculum, any approach to editing his work that emphasizes the role of students is preferable. Furthermore, in terms of education, Reiman believes that presenting two texts as they exist in their distinct states while acknowledging their equal authority would allow readers to "discover the value of textual criticism" on their own. This is a belief that is echoed in Erick Kelemen's introductory textbook *Textual Editing and Criticism*, which begins with an essay that explores the benefits of teaching more students about the process of textual editing as opposed to more traditional courses on literary criticism.¹²⁹

Reiman anticipates one of the primary objections editors might have to versioning, namely the idea that with versioning, textual editing becomes obsolete. Reiman writes that versioning is not necessarily applicable to every textual problem, and the circumstances of a given author or text will determine whether an eclectic edition is preferable. However, in some cases,

it is both more useful and more efficient to provide critics and students with complete texts of two or more different stages of a literary work, each of which can be read as an integral whole, than to chop all but one version into small pieces and then mix and sprinkle these dismembered fragments at the bottoms of pages, or shuffle them at the back of the book as tables of 'variants or 'collations.'¹³⁰

This seems especially true in the case of Wyndham, whose particular situation is defined by two competing editions that were widely read and accepted by British audiences on the one hand and American audiences on the other.

A further benefit to the concept of versioning in relation to Wyndham has to do with the similarities between the situation of Romantic poets—Reiman's specialty—and Wyndham. While it was mentioned earlier that many documents survive in the Wyndham

¹²⁹ Reiman 169.

¹³⁰ Reiman 170.

Archive, it was also mentioned that this is not the case for every novel. Additionally, while many artifacts do survive in the Archive, compared to other authors, the documentation on Wyndham's fiction is severely lacking. Particularly in regards to *The Chrysalids*, there is sometimes a dearth of evidence that remains for editorial investigation. But "with separate presentation of each major...edition of a work, there would be less need for the editor to hypothesize events and attitudes where the crucial evidence concerning the author's involvement in the text is lacking," as is often the case with the Romantics.¹³¹ In the case of *The Chrysalids*, then, versioning would allow readers to experience both texts while avoiding the almost impossible task of accurately establishing a text that reflects authorial intention.

Finally, Reiman believes that versioning returns readers—and editors—to a concern with the text, avoiding the situation described by Gabler where critical insights are foreclosed by overly dogmatic theoretical positions. By redirecting "our energies away from the attempt to produce 'definitive' or 'ideal' critical editions and, instead, to encourage the production of editions of discrete versions of works," editors will restore the literacy artifact to the center of the edition, avoiding a slip into endless theoretical debates about best practices.¹³² Indeed, versioning focuses editors and readings once again "on the creative artists and their imaginative works of literature, to which we editors are ostensibly devoting our efforts, rather than on our achievements or the theoretical process of 'restoration.'"¹³³ It is for this reason, and those discussed earlier in this chapter, that the Wyndham problem might be best resolved through versioning.

¹³¹ Reiman 177.

¹³² Reiman 180.

¹³³ Reiman, 179-180.

The versioning of Wyndham's postwar novels would not involve a simple reproduction of the British and American texts in separate editions. This truly would cut out the editor from scholarship, and readers might just as well search out the Michael Joseph and Ballantine editions on their own. Instead, these editions would illuminate the non-linear evolution of the text, each bifurcating stage involving different cultural pressures and different degrees of collaboration with different interpersonal dynamics on each side of the Atlantic. A versioning of Wyndham would involve the careful reproduction of the British and American texts with editorial essays introducing the volume and the textual history of the novel in question. In addition to these editorial essays, each version would make clear that it belongs to a series of versions that together represent the final text, so that readers will not be mistaken in opening one version of a Wyndham novel and believing it to be the only version. Due to the popularity of Wyndham and the relatively short length of his novels, a versioning might look very attractive to publishers, who would be able to market and target both academics and the general reading public. These publishers might be further encouraged by the possibility of selling both versions next to each other in stores, or even as a set, which would boost their profits while ensuring that interested readers will have access to both the American and British texts. Indeed, the potential for innovation in the production of a versioned Wyndham is far greater than the innovation available to editors working on a traditional critical edition.

... Or Digitizing Wyndham

Of course, versioning is not the only possibility available to an editor working on Wyndham, and there exists another alternative to the eclectic text. From the perspective

of Charles Ross, a D.H. Lawrence specialist, the future of textual editing lies in the electronic edition. For Ross, “printed critical editions, despite all their scholarship, fail to liberate the multiple voices of textuality,” suppressing alternative passages which may warrant equal authority.¹³⁴ Though he was writing in the 1990s, Ross was on the cutting edge of computer technology in his proposal for an electronic edition of D.H. Lawrence. Ross argues that, due to its linear nature, “print always reinforces the teleology implicit in a theory of ‘final intentions,’” and to liberate the multiplicity of a text “we need editions...that set in motion textual ‘instability’ and that give readers displays of information in which to fashion new texts.”¹³⁵ Ross goes on to propose an electronic edition for Lawrence that allows users to explore the textual space in a way that is impossible in print. He draws primarily on McGann’s “Rationale of Hypertext” for his argument, and this is certainly understandable. In the early 1990s, McGann’s writing on hypertext editions was groundbreaking.

As McGann argues in the “Rationale of Hypertext,” digital mediums appear to be better suited to the study of literature than printed editions. This has much to do with the materiality of the book. A printed critical edition “function[s] at the same level as the material being analyzed,” or in other words, shares the same physical qualities as the codex form.¹³⁶ Thus when a book is used to study another book, the possibilities for analysis and interpretation are severely limited. To use one of McGann’s examples, a study of William Blake would benefit greatly from the inclusion of illustrations, engravings, and other visual materials. But with the physical reality of the book, which

¹³⁴ Charles Ross, “Lawrence in Hypertext,” in *Textual Studies and the Common Reader: Essays on Editing Novels and Novelists* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 141.

¹³⁵ Ross, 145; 148.

¹³⁶ Jerome McGann, “The Rationale of Hypertext,” *Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities*, September 25, 2016, <http://www.iath.virginia.edu/public/jjm2f/rationale.html>.

encompasses among other factors capacity and production cost, the inclusion of these visual elements is often not possible.

The limitations of the book form are also highlighted by the nature of the critical apparatuses included in every critical edition. As all new and semi-regular users of printed critical editions know, a critical apparatus is, if not outright difficult to use, at least slow and tedious. From McGann's perspective, the printed critical edition becomes a tangled web of information that is not well encapsulated by the page-bound book. Hypertext solves these problems while enabling faster research; but despite the advantages, there are a number of criticisms of digital editions that scholars like Ross—and anyone trying to create a digital edition of *Wyndham*—would have to contend with.

Kathryn Sutherland addresses a number of problems posed by digital editions that counteract their efficacy as critical tools, targeting McGann's "Rationale" specifically. Sutherland writes that McGann's conception of electronic textuality problematically takes print as its baseline. In other words, McGann does not recognize the fact that digital technology is a medium with "its own materiality, architecture, and functioning, as distinct from [that] of print." Until McGann and the scholarly community begin to recognize this fact, digital textuality can never develop separately from its print predecessor. Indeed, Sutherland suggests that "the real advantages of electronic editing will only become apparent as we shed ideas of how digitalization enhances aspects of the functionality of print culture." Instead of envisioning an electronic edition that improves on a print edition, reasons Sutherland, McGann should allow the materiality of the digital to reshape our conception of textuality itself. Only then will scholars be enabled to make use of digital platforms for serious research. And until that time, a digital or electronic

edition, though it does reflect the sociological model of editing well, is not the best choice for the Wyndham editor. Instead, it is the concept of versioning, which combines the lessons of critical theory and a new conception of the text with all the benefits of print in order to present Wyndham to the reading public and to the scholarly community.

What Versioning Wyndham Reveals

What exactly, then, will a versioned approach reveal about Wyndham's novels? For those novels that remain thematically linked to Wyndham's pulp origins and the Wellsian tradition—*The Day of the Triffids*, *The Kraken Wakes*, and *The Midwich Cuckoos*—a dual presentation will help not only to reveal both the transmission history of the British and American editions but also to shed light on the collaborative process that shaped their production. For example, a versioning edition of *The Kraken Wakes* and its American “cousin,” *Out of the Deeps*, would allow readers to understand the rationale that went into a dramatic change between texts, like the omission of the “Prologue” from the American edition. In the British edition, the first section of the novel explains how the narrator came to record the events that would shape his world, and included in this section is an explanation of the title's titular character by way of a full quotation of Tennyson's sonnet “The Kraken.” But the American edition cuts this opening entirely, and readers of a versioned set complete with textual essays would understand how the cut came about. The American edition also downplays the relationship between the narrator and his wife, which in the British edition is markedly subversive: against 1950s middle class assumptions about marriage, Wyndham depicts in *Kraken* a wife with superior intellect and control over her own destiny. This is seriously downplayed in the American

edition, and in a versioned presentation, some of the critics who have charged Wyndham with misogyny might be compelled to rethink their position.¹³⁷

A versioned presentation of *The Chrysalids* would achieve the goals mentioned above, but because the novel represents the final thematic growth of Wyndham, a versioned presentation will also help readers to understand the ways in which Wyndham's narrative strategies were altered for his different audiences. Especially in regards to the main character of the novel, a versioned approach will highlight a number of patterns in the British edition that stand in opposition to patterns in the American text. For example, in the British edition of *The Chrysalids*, the narration is focused and tightly controlled, while the American text (published as *Re-Birth*) includes material that Wyndham cut. While some of this material is at times extraneous to the main plot, it also serves to reinforce the self-conscious nature of the main character's reflections. In the American edition, Peter's accounts of past events become more detailed and his early character's self-awareness is exaggerated, and by versioning the text, readers will be able to experience Peter—and the narration as a whole—in both ways.

In addition to the overall narration and characterization of Peter, a versioned *Chrysalids* would allow readers to experience the sometimes clumsy process of revision; in one instance in the American text, the removal of a line strikes a subtle foreshadow that hints at revelations to come, and in another instance renders a proceeding passage incoherent. The first example comes in the first chapter, when Peter is told by Mrs. Wender not to reveal Sophie's dark secret: she has a sixth toe on one foot, an "abomination" in the post-apocalyptic world of the novel that should have resulted in infanticide—the normal solution in a society where the elimination of radiation-induced

¹³⁷ For example, Nicholas Ruddick or Thomas Clareson.

mutation (and indeed any form of natural variation) had become a religious imperative. In the British edition, Wyndham writes that Peter's telepathic companions, sensing the import of Mrs. Wender's warning, suddenly send Peter "a [telepathic] click that was almost audible."¹³⁸ Though only an observant reader would understand the full implications of this line—after all, Peter does not explicitly reveal his telekinesis until chapter 5—it stands out in a second reading of the text in its alternative form. This is a portentous "reveal" for the reader, since the telepathy that Peter and his friends hide represents the beginning of a natural evolution that will ultimately save mankind from a permanent return to the Dark Ages.

Another instance of revision stands out in chapter 7, in which a cut from the American text makes a paragraph less intelligible. When Peter asks his Uncle Axel to investigate the disappearance of a local boy who one day stopped communicating with his telepathic group, Axel asks for more information: "Any more [details]?"¹³⁹ In the following paragraph, Peter tells Axel everything he knows about the boy. But while Axel's inquiry is cut in the American text, the following paragraph is not, and the perceptive reader wonders why Peter seems to be answering a question that was never asked. Admittedly, the awkward nature of this cut is less apparent if the reader is only familiar with the American text; but after even a quick glance at the British text, the oversight becomes glaringly obvious.

The two examples of textual variation described in this section are only fragments of the data collected in the full collation of *The Chrysalids*. Through a carefully presented versioning of the texts, readers would be invited to find similar instances of alteration

¹³⁸ John Wyndham, *The Chrysalids*, (London: Michael Joseph, 1955), 15.

¹³⁹ Wyndham, 34.

through the pathways provided by extra-textual background essays and transmission histories. A versioned approach to Wyndham's four enduring novels is clearly ideal, and if executed with care, versioned editions would no longer attempt to disentangle their collaborative nature by severing the textual variations and the sociological factors that interacted with Wyndham to create such sustained and distinct differences in tone, thematic impact, and even narrative continuity. Furthermore, his novels could be appreciated as multiple, independently authoritative works of fiction. Future scholarship on Wyndham can use the sociological model described in this chapter to resolve the problem of textual variation in the novels that John Harris produced under this name—not by attempting to reconstruct an ideal text that never existed, but by clarifying the nature of literary production as enacted by one of sf's most important and elusive writers. Versioning then is for the benefit of the broad international audiences that he continues to reach, like students, teachers, cultural critics, and anyone interested in the reality of our written life.

Curriculum Vitae

Daniel Ryon Sweet

Education

August 2016-June 2018: MA, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis

Recipient of University Fellowship;
Master's program in English literature,
certificate program in professional editing,
graduated *summa cum laude*

2012-2016: BA, Ohio Wesleyan University, graduated *cum laude*

English and philosophy double major

Work Experience

Spring 2017-May 2018: Graduate Research Assistant, Center for Ray Bradbury Studies

One of the largest single-author archives in the United States; assisted the Center's director to publish *The New Bradbury Review* and a series of critical editions entitled *The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury*, both through The Kent State University Press. Grant writing duties, including a successful application to the Indiana Historical Society for equipment and staff funding. Developed a digital cataloging system for correspondence and artifacts. Redesigned the Center's website.

Summer of 2016: Editorial intern at Lexington Books

An academic imprint of Rowman and Littlefield;
assisted acquisitions editors by finding endorsements

and peer reviewers for manuscripts under development, producing promotional flyers, updating the company database, and editing manuscripts for copyright and house style.

August 2013-2016:

Senior Editorial Assistant at *The Historian*

A Wiley-Blackwell publication; general office work and copy editor for book review section. Helped oversee staff hiring and management. Redesigned journal website. Required mastery of the Chicago Manual of Style.

Academic Achievements

December 2017:

Master's thesis research grant

Awarded funds by Indiana University to conduct original research at the University of Liverpool

February 2017:

Panel chair, University of Louisville Conference on Literature

Chaired a graduate panel at the University of Louisville's Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900; presented a paper on the fiction of Earl Lovelace, a Trinidadian novelist. Introduced three additional graduate panelists and facilitated the question and answer session

Academic Awards

May 2016:

Ohio Wesleyan University Department of Philosophy,
Lloyd D. Easton Award, Excellence In Philosophy