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Social Issues in Three 21st Century Texts About Growing up Canadian

Abstract

Stories about growing up traditionally focus on the development of the protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences – and often through a spiritual crisis – into maturity and the recognition of his or her identity and role in the world. More recently, as Tobias Boes notes, feminist, postcolonial, and minority writers have reworked the genre to not only represent the formation of the protagonist, but also the “transformation” of the society or nation. In this paper, I look at the way three authors of the 21st century reconfigure the form of the novel of formation to engage with current social, historical and political issues in Canada. In the works of Alissa York, Mariko and Jillian Tamaki, and Richard Wagamese, the novel of formation merges with the social novel to critique and make explicit concerns about animal rights, environmental degradation, homelessness, gender, race, Indian residential schools, and sexual abuse. By telling stories of those who need our assistance, creatures, places, and people who have been injured and unjustly treated, these three works educate, inform, and elicit affect in readers. They enable us to understand the difficulties of growing up in less than ideal conditions and transform the way we see every day struggles.

Résumé

Histoires de grandir concentrent traditionnellement sur le développement de l'esprit et le caractère du protagoniste, dans le passage de l'enfance à travers des expériences variées - et souvent à travers une crise spirituelle - dans la maturité et la reconnaissance de son identité et son rôle dans le monde. Plus récemment, comme le note Tobias Boes, féministes, postcoloniales, et des écrivains minoritaires ont retravaillé le genre de représenter non seulement la formation de la protagoniste, mais aussi la « transformation » de la société ou d'une nation. Dans cet article, je regarde la façon dont trois auteurs du 21^{ème} siècle reconfigurer la forme du roman de formation à coopérer avec les problèmes sociaux, historiques et politiques en vigueur au Canada. Dans les œuvres d'Alissa York, Mariko et Jillian Tamaki, et Richard Wagamese, le roman de formation se confond avec le roman social de critiquer et faire des préoccupations explicites sur les droits des animaux, la dégradation environnementale, l'itinérance, le sexe, la race, les pensionnats indiens, et l'abus sexuel. En racontant des histoires de ceux qui ont besoin de notre aide, les créatures, les lieux et les personnes qui ont été blessées et injustement traitées, ces

trois œuvres éduquent, informent et suscitent des répercussions sur les lecteurs. Ils nous permettent de comprendre les difficultés de grandir dans des conditions moins idéales et de transformer la façon dont nous voyons les luttes quotidiennes.

Stories about growing up traditionally focus on the development of the protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences – and often through a spiritual crisis – into maturity and the recognition of his or her identity and role in the world (Abrams 132). In his study of the *Bildungsroman* in European culture, Franco Moretti argues that the *Bildungsroman* was the great cultural mediator of 19th century Europe, restoring harmony between the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy, usually through marriage (Moretti 1987, viii, 64). Heroes of *Bildungsroman* are depicted as having the “right to choose one’s ethics and the idea of happiness, to imagine freely and construct one’s personal destiny” (Moretti 1987, 15). More recently, as Tobias Boes notes, feminist, postcolonial, and minority writers have reworked the genre to not only represent the formation of the protagonist, but also the “transformation” of the society or nation (240). In this paper, I look at the way three authors of the 21st century reconfigure the form of the novel of formation to engage with current social, historical and political issues in Canada. My approach borrows from feminist, affect, ecocritical, race and postcolonial theories, as well as from genre theories on the *Bildungsroman*. In the works of Alissa York, Mariko and Jillian Tamaki, and Richard Wagamese, the novel of formation merges with the social novel to critique and make explicit concerns about animal rights, environmental degradation, homelessness, gender, race, Indian residential schools, and sexual abuse. These three texts provide excellent examples of the ways contemporary Canadian authors have expanded the form of the *Bildung* by using different sub-genres of the novel, such as the graphic novel, or by reworking the novel of education for their purposes. No longer are the stories about a “European, white, middle-class male,” the typical hero from well-known examples such as Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister* or Joyce’s *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Redfield ix). The three works reveal dissimilar conditions of growing up in Canada in the late 20th and early 21st century, showing the heterogeneity of contemporary youth’s developmental experiences.

Alissa York’s *Fauna* and Sanctuaries

Alissa York’s *Fauna* changes the individualistic *telos* of the *Bildungsroman* by depicting the lives of a group of young people and animals who find themselves living at the edge of the city of Toronto. If one were to strictly follow Karl Morgenstern’s definition of the genre from the 1820s, as a portrayal of “the hero in its beginnings and growth to a certain stage of completeness” (as qtd by Swales, 12), York’s novel would not be classified as a *Bildungsroman*. Implied in Morgenstern’s definition is

the focus on one individual, but Alissa York's novel depicts the development of at least two, possibly three individuals from childhood to a "certain stage of completeness" through flashback narratives and long sections devoted to them. Waifs and strays, both human and animal find an unconventional sanctuary together in an auto-wrecker's yard, enabling the novel to critique the human tendency to destroy what we do not understand. With her use of flashbacks and intertextuality, York transforms our fear and hatred of abject bodies – the depressed, the homeless, the stray – into feelings of sympathy and understanding. In doing so, the book does "further the reader's *Bildung*" as Morgenstern noted (qtd by Swales, 12). York also raises our awareness of the ways the constructions of cities, roads, buildings and the diversion of rivers have facilitated progress but also greatly reduced paths for bird migration, damaged animal habitats, and blocked animal corridors.

York gathers a group of orphaned and lost characters together at Guy Howell's untraditional shelter near the Don Valley River to highlight the ways our environment, human lives, fauna have been destroyed in our efforts to urbanize and modernize. The novel is about people who have temporarily lost their way: Edal Jones, a federal wildlife officer, is on a stress leave after discovering a woman trying to smuggle in 400 tortoise eggs into the country, most of which died in transit. Stephen is suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome after serving in the army in Kandahar; while Lily, a sixteen-year old, is running away from an abusive home and lives in a tent with her dog. These characters are all relatively young, which is in keeping with novels of formation according to Moretti (5). Their stories fit the "coming-of-age narratives" that are characteristic of recent models of the *Bildungsroman* which Tobias Boes argues are "fragmentary narratives of transformation and rebellion" (Boes 231). The marginalized people form a community and care for various hurt and stray animals, suggesting parallels between humans and animals who have been injured. The novel thus introduces problems of homelessness in big cities, issues from animal, memory, and environmental studies.

The issue of homelessness in Canada is raised through the character of Lily who is a teen runaway. She has been sleeping in a tent with her dog Billy for about two months and is troubled, counting her nights "of freedom" by cutting herself on her forearm (102). Stephen Gaetz, Tanya Gulliver and Tim Richter estimate that in Canada, because of the decrease in funding for social housing over the last twenty years, over 235,000 different Canadians will experience homelessness in a year (5). Most of these are temporarily homeless rather than chronically homeless, but many of these include young people, women fleeing violence, and aboriginal peoples. When Lily arrives in Toronto, she is directed to a shelter, but finds that "the regulars all had bugs" and that her dog was not allowed to stay (67). Even though her sleeping bag which she took from home has an odour of the previous owner "strong enough to give her nightmares" (101), she finds sleeping with her dog, with a knife in a tent a better alternative to the shelters. Lily is attacked by intruders several times, and lives a precarious existence. The instability of her position is lessened only when Chin, the

owner of a Chinese restaurant, offers her a dishwashing job, which gives her some financial support, and allows her to stop panhandling.

Significantly, Chin, the Asian-Canadian is not depicted as the stranger here but as the host offering hospitality to Lily, the stray. In Jacques Derrida's sense of the term, Chin offers Lily hospitality that is unconditional: "The master of the home, the host, must welcome in a foreigner, a stranger, a guest, without any qualifications, including having never been given an invitation" (Derrida, as qtd by Westmoreland 2008, 4). Chin finds Lily looking through the garbage behind his restaurant for morsels of food for Billy and offers her a job without her asking: "You know how wash dish, right?" (York, 129). When Lily hesitates, he offers to take in her dog and give him lunch, as well as lunch for her. "Come on, no-name girl. ... Work to do" Chin says (York, 130). While his hospitality does require her to work, it is better than what a social welfare agency could give Lily because Chin offers her dignity, freedom, and a place for her dog. It is an example of how one person offering hospitality without question can help solve a social problem.

Although the novel does not focus on issues of multiculturalism and diversity, York depicts the city of Toronto as a cosmopolitan space where racial and gender differences are part and parcel of the community. When Lily walks along the streets of Toronto with her dog, Billy, they both observe the urban space with attention: "he has less interest in the supermarkets – Fu Yao and Trinity and Cai Yuan – but Lily likes the outdoor mounds of scaly nameless roots, the bags of sweating green beans long as licorice whips. Who knew there were so many kinds of oranges? ... Around the Corner on Broadview, Billy grows hopeful again. The Sing Sing BBQ House makes him cow-eyed. Pork quarters hang like fatty, gathered curtains alongside orange mini-monsters with tentacle legs. Lacquered ducks dangle from hooks wound through their necks, eyes like seed pods, beaks and legs nubs charred" (York 125). York's detailed description of the couple of blocks near Gerrard Street and Broadview Avenue presents east Chinatown as an exotic yet enticingly familiar space for those residing in Toronto. Dog and dog owner are attracted to the shops and restaurants for different reasons.

York is similarly even-handed in her depiction of characters who are racial minorities. In her groundbreaking study *White Women, Race Matters*, Ruth Frankenberg reminded us that though "white people have too often viewed themselves as non-racial or racially neutral, ... white people are 'raced,' just as men are 'gendered'" (Frankenberg 1993, 1). In contemporary fiction, we tend to assume that characters called Susan, Tom, etc. are white, while racialized characters are marked by foreign-sounding names, like Chin, or else are described by racially-specific tags, such as having dark skin. In *Fauna*, we are introduced to a character called Kate who works in an animal rehab centre, and who befriends Lily and her dog. She is shown to be a competent worker, struggling a bit with her unrequited feelings for straight girls she meets. It is only much later in the novel that we find out in a flashback that her father's name is Vikram and that he came from India. The father disapproves of her

choice of occupation as well as her lesbian lover (York 151). The reason the placement of this information is important is because we see Kate as an individual before we are made aware of her ethnic background. When Lily meets her, Lily sees her as an attractive “runner” (175), again with no reference to her South Asian background. Only in the last third of the novel do we hear that Kate’s skin is “the colour of caramel sauce” and that she has “long, dark hair” (232). These oblique and discreet references to racial difference suggest that for this group of Torontonians, issues of race and gender are subsumed into other contemporary problems, such as homelessness, unemployment, etc. York’s novel suggests an awareness of intersectionality, acknowledging the multiple intersecting issues and kinds of identities in urban cities.

Another issue York raises in the novel is the treatment of animals. Through her use of the animal perspective in sections of the novel, she encourages us to think of animals as sentient beings, as creatures with the ability to suffer, as Jeremy Bentham had suggested in the 18th century (Dardenne). In one scene, an old raccoon watches a woman throwing out garbage in order to learn how to open them: “He has a clear view of the containers now ... For several nights in a row they’ve resisted him, thwarting his hands while they wafted a maddening scent. The treasure they guard is ripe: chicken bones and pig fat, softening apples and half-eaten ears of corn He can wait, though. He can watch and he can learn” (34-35). In another scene, the mating of a pair of squirrels is tenderly described: “He wasn’t the first to answer her silent, scented call, though he’s played that part with others in the past: the days-long, tentative dance; the first hard-won sniff; the wild morning when she emerges with her perfume fully blown. Her *quack* is a soft question, his *whick* the only possible response. ... No female wants the nearest male, a dull neighbor who might well be her own close blood. She wants the fleet-footed outlier, the squirrel she barely knows. She wants him” (169). York ascribes desire to the squirrels, inspiring us to see animals as feeling and sensitive beings.

Significantly, the characters who gather together at Guy’s auto-wrecker share not only meals but books. Individually and together they read books about animals, such as Rudyard Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*, Gavin Maxwell’s *Ring of Bright Water*, and Richard Adams’ *Watership Down*. Edal is named after the otter in *Ring of Bright Water*, and the reference to a book about a man who loves an otter more than humans captures the character Edal’s imagination when she was growing up. Edal looks at photographs of the otter and Jimmy and describes them in sexualized terms: “She lay beside him on a hillside, her tail draped over his thigh, her forepaw folded in his loving grip Her gaze was soft and somehow private in the one where they lay together on the flowering hill” (45). If we acknowledge that animals are capable of feeling strong love and fidelity, then the issue becomes how we justify our continued “speciesism,” or the “sacrifice of the animal and the animalistic to maintain that fantasy figure called the human” (Cary Wolfe, as qtd by Castricano 186). Cultural critic Jodey Castricano argues that “empathy and compassion have a role to play in

the epistemological and ontological shift with regard to animals" (189). In *Fauna*, York fosters our empathetic responses to the raccoons, foxes, skunks, squirrels, birds, and even coyotes that live in and around the city of Toronto.

Aside from abused youth, animals, York also writes about soldiers who return from war with post-traumatic stress disorder and who also need rescuing and care. According to an article in the *Globe and Mail*, "nearly one in 10 of the Canadian military personnel who took part in the mission in Afghanistan are now suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder" (Galloway 22 Jan 2016). In the novel, Stephen suffers from the symptoms usually associated with PTSD, including "uncontrollable flashbacks, avoidance of places or people that trigger bad memories, depression and emotional outbursts" (Galloway 22 January 2016). While serving in Kandahar, Stephen had caught a virus, and the infection had damaged his heart. He is transferred back to Canada not in glory but in illness, so he is no longer fit for service: "No matter how many counseling sessions and job placement workshops he attended, no matter how his physical condition improved, he remained quietly sick at heart" (193). He has traumatic memories of the war, including coming upon a young turbaned man dying from gunfire holding the "red mass of his guts" in his hands (282). Stephen is one of the characters saved not by government-run services, but by the community of friends that gather together at Guy's sanctuary.

In her depiction of Toronto, Alissa York reconfigures the city from one of concrete, shops, streets, fences, parking lots, and buildings to one that contains hidden green spaces, forests, footpaths, creeks, rivers, wetland, wildlife, and ravines. The novel asks us to imagine the city as a natural environment under threat, bringing up questions of sustainability and environmental degradation. But, in spite of humans, the beauty remains: "there was something about that remnant of river stretched in its scrubby bed that caused the blood to thrill in his veins. When it was light out, the trees showed him their crowns, still black and bare; winter worked like an X-ray, the space between branches revealing riverbank and brush, trash-strewn campsites, snow and broken grass. When it was dark, the sunken forest grew. The river glinted" (52). This passage is told from the perspective of Darius, the one young man whose formation or *Bildung* fails to develop happily. Though he seems initially to appreciate certain kinds of beauty, he remains antagonistic and angry towards the city's wild animals and is intent on killing the coyotes off.

Tamakis' *Skim* and Ugly Feelings

Though there are no organized social justice movements in Alissa York's *Fauna*, the novel raises many issues, such as homelessness, animal rights, the rehabilitation of outcasts, and environmental degradation. York presents a mostly positive solution of rehabilitation and rescue, albeit through the group effort of individuals, rather than a government agency. In contrast, in Mariko Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki's graphic novel, *Skim*, the use of the first-person narrator and the visual representation of Skim's diary allow insights into the mind of one Japanese Canadian teen who

struggles with self-esteem, body image, and heteronormative expectations of gender identity. Skim cannot participate in what Sara Ahmed calls the “happiness commandment,” which for many girls “means taking up the cause of parental happiness as her own” (Ahmed 58). Instead, the use of black backgrounds and gutters of the graphic narrative highlight the Gothic-like atmosphere of Skim’s closeted high school life and the difficulty of growing up lesbian in contemporary Canada.

Like many *Bildungsromane* which are partly autobiographical and “highlight the intimate connection between personal and historical change” (Boes, 242), Skim’s story is partly based on the author, Mariko Tamaki’s own life. In an interview with Suzette Chan, Mariko Tamaki says, “I always thought I was an ugly Canadian ... I thought I had these ugly eyebrows, until later, when I thought of myself as Japanese ... Other people make me Japanese: some people really badly want you to come from outside” (Chan). In *Skim*, Kimberly Cameron, the mixed-raced protagonist, keeps a diary, which reveals her social awkwardness, her parents’ divorce, and her crush on her English teacher, all of which cause her to feel alienated and unhappy. Through black and white illustrations that shift radically in perspective, *Skim* reveals the often wildly excessive and fluctuating emotions in teens’ lives that are often ignored or not taken seriously. In the graphic narrative, the Tamakis show the effects of loneliness, of bullying, for one’s racial or sexual orientation can lead to depression, overeating, even suicide.

In the graphic novel, *Skim* is full of what Sianne Ngai calls “ugly feelings” (Ngai). She is self-conscious about her appearance, believing that she is overweight, unattractive, has chunky legs, and is not liked by the popular girls in school. Mirroring her feelings, the illustrations often exaggerate the size of her legs with close-up shots. The popular girls at school do not include her in their circle. She recalls the last costume party she attended when she was thirteen, and how everyone but she and Hien, a Vietnamese adoptee, were the only ones not dressed as feminine ballerinas. Halfway through the night, the ballerinas chase Skim and Hien out of the house. Skim is too ashamed to share the racist incident with anyone, even her mother. The only person in her life who seems to pay attention to her is her English teacher, who tells Skim that she has “serious” eyes (31). The forbidden relationship arouses intense but ambivalent feelings in Skim, which she cannot share with her friends. But when the teacher suddenly leaves the school, she spends her time moping around, eating, unable to concentrate on her schoolwork.

In her study of *Ugly Feelings*, Sianne Ngai argues that it is important to examine feelings like envy, anxiety, paranoia, irritation, what she calls “ugly feelings” because, even though they are “less dramatic” than Aristotle’s cathartic “pity and fear” (6, 7), they are more suited for diagnosing the character of late modernity. These “mean and ignoble affects are indexes of social conditions of powerlessness and frustration” (Chua). The kinds of weak and ugly feelings expressed in Tamaki’s *Skim* reveal a “general state of obstructed agency with respect to other human actors or to the social” (Ngai 2). Ngai argues that “these situations of passivity ... can also be

thought of as allegories for an autonomous or bourgeois art's increasingly resigned and pessimistic understanding of its *own* relationship to political action" (Ngai 2). Skim's feelings of irritation, anxiety, sadness reveal what Eu Jin Chua calls "the unlocalizability and diffuseness of such emotions" which "correspond to structures and institutions and practices that operate diffusely and without discernible manifestation" (Chua). While Skim's disaffection and negativity do not lead to any kind of collective action, by highlighting scenes of negativity, sour emotions, and ambivalence, Mariko Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki reveal some of the ways young people feel disempowered and pressured to conform to cultural norms.

Skim's focus on a single protagonist makes it conform to the genre of the *Bildungsroman* better than *Fauna*, with its multiple protagonists and narrators. Yet the Tamakis also show that Skim's story of marginalization is not unique to her. During the course of the year, Skim and her high school friends hear rumours about the ex-boyfriend of the most popular girl in school, Katie Matthews. John Reddear is not shown in the novel, but his absent presence haunts the work. He is associated with mystery and awe, firstly because he breaks Katie Matthews' heart (Tamaki, 11), and he is supposed to have "shot himself" (21). At his memorial service, the students and teachers do not talk about his death as a suicide, but Skim surmises that although he seemed like a happy, outgoing athlete, he was "secretly suffering from depression" and that he was maybe "also in love with a boy who was on the St. Michael's second-string volleyball team" (94). The teachers tell them to celebrate the "living spirit" rather than dwelling on "past tragedy" (93). No one dares to talk about the possibility that John might have been gay. His story provides a darker echo of Skim's troubles, and highlights the secrecy, shame, and guilt that LGBTQ (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer) youths experience.

In *Skim* although the protagonist herself is able to find a new friend, suggesting a successful integration with her community, not all protagonists of novels of formation are able to do so. Following Wilhelm Dilthey, Franco Moretti believes that in the classical *Bildungsroman*, the individual eventually finds a connection with the "outside, an ever wider and thicker network of external relationships with human things" (18). He argues, "self-development and integration are complementary and convergent trajectories, and at their point of encounter and equilibrium lies that full and double epiphany of meaning that is 'maturity'" (19). However, when outside conditions are unbearable, when your family and your heritage are being attacked, what Moretti calls integration and maturity are more difficult to achieve.

Wagamese's *Indian Horse* and Reparation

Ojibway author Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse* represents the horrific prison-like atmosphere of Indian residential schools, and chronicles the young protagonist's escape through playing hockey. While the novel focuses on one character, the testimonial style of the protagonist about his experiences at the residential schools make the work similar to a documentary. The novel begins with a first person singu-

lar account: "They took me to St. Jerome's Indian Residential School.... St. Jerome's took all the light from my world" (43). Saul, an Ojibway boy from Northwestern Ontario, uses light and dark imagery to reveal the terrors of residential schools. But the narrative switches to first person plural shortly after when the protagonist sees how all the Indian boys are similarly mistreated: "the priest made us stand and threw handfuls of delousing powder over us.... A pair of nuns scrubbed us with stiff-bristled brushes. The soap was harsh. They rubbed us nearly raw. It felt as though they were trying to remove ... our skin" (44). The use of "we" and "us" depict a collective and common experience in the institution. The tone echoes that of a witness testifying: "I saw kids die of tuberculosis ... I saw young boys and girls die standing on their own two feet. I saw runaways carried back, frozen solid as boards" (55). Gerald Vizenor has observed that texts written by residential school survivors express a sense of "survivance" (as qtd by Eigenbrod 277), and Renate Eigenbrod has argued that literature about childhood in residential schools "reclaims the power of the imagination" in order to evoke "survival, resistance, and continuance of cultures against colonial policies aimed at the annihilation of Indigenous presence most aggressively in the residential schools" (Eigenbrod 280). The catalogue of ills and exploitations, and the resulting psychic damage on the protagonist and his other aboriginal friends serve as an indictment of the history of trauma and abuse in residential schools.

More importantly, *Indian Horse* reveals the need for psychic and intersubjective reparation in order for First Nations peoples to heal. Social justice in terms of the redistribution of goods and resources, is undoubtedly necessary and urgent, but it is not enough.

The protagonist Saul reflects on what happened in residential schools: "When your innocence is stripped from you, when your people are denigrated, when the family you came from is denounced and your tribal ways and rituals are pronounced backward, primitive, savage, you come to see yourself as less than human" (Wagamese 81). When Saul and his hockey team, the Moose go to play in small towns in northern Ontario in the 1960s, he recalls that other teams did not see them as hockey players: "they only ever saw us as Indians. They only ever saw brown faces where white ones should have been" (132). During the games, the spectators taunt Saul by calling him names and denigrating his aboriginal identity because he initially refused to fight back on the rink: "Hey, it's Chief Chicken," and "Injuns are s'posed to wear war paint, not make-up" (141).

When he played as a rookie, the name calling worsened "When I made a dash down the ice and brought the crowd to their feet, I was on a raid. If I inadvertently high-sticked someone during a tussle in the corner, I was taking scalps. When I did not react to getting a penalty, I was the stoic Indian" (163). One reporter described him as "bright-eyed as a painted warrior bearing down on a wagon train" (163). Thomas King notes that in the North American imaginary, "[f]ilm dispensed with any errant subtleties and colourings, and crafted three basic Indian types. ... the blood-

thirsty savage, the noble savage, and the dying savage" (King 34). The names the spectators and commentators of the games used for Saul are all influenced by such Hollywood representations. Similarly, Brian Klopotek has talked about the way the colonizing culture has attributed the hypermasculine images of "noble or ignoble savages, wise old chiefs, and cunning warriors" (as qtd by Robinson, 95) which is why Cree-Metis scholar Kim Anderson suggests that "it is more difficult for men than it is for women to define their responsibilities in the contemporary setting and reclaim their dignity and sense of purpose" (as qtd by Robinson, 97).

In order for a young individual to integrate and become part of the community, as successful heroes of *Bildungsroman* do, he or she needs to feel welcome, which Saul does not. In an essay called, "Rethinking Recognition," feminist philosopher Nancy Fraser talks about the limitations of the "politics of recognition" because it "may actually promote economic inequality; insofar as it reifies group identities, it risks sanctioning violation of human rights and freezing the very antagonisms it purports to mediate" (Fraser). Instead, she proposes the term "misrecognition": "to be misrecognized, ... is not simply to be thought ill of, looked down upon or devalued in others' attitudes, beliefs or representations. It is rather to be denied the status of a full partner in social interaction, as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of cultural value that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect or esteem" (Fraser). The name calling and stereotypes constitute forms of misrecognition, and to redress misrecognition means "changing social institutions, or ... changing the interaction-regulating values that impede parity of participation at all relevant institutional sites" (Fraser).

By telling stories of those who need our assistance, creatures, places, and people who have been injured and unjustly treated, these three works educate, inform, and elicit affect in readers. They enable us to understand the difficulties of growing up in less than ideal conditions and transform the way we see every day struggles. Unlike the *Bildungsromane* studied by Moretti, such as Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, which end in marriage, none of these novels end with such a conventional scene of acceptance and socialization. They reframe the *Bildung* to reveal structural inequities and forms of misrecognition. Instead of integration into a community, these narratives end with minor and temporary resolutions, reminding us of the need for social and institutional change.

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