LILLEY, LUCIANA D. Ph.D. Feasting Bodies: Structural Cannibalism and Literature in the 19th Century. (2023)
Directed by Dr. Anne Wallace. 197 pp.

This dissertation presents what have I have termed "structural cannibalism," a theoretical framework that examines embedded cannibalistic violence within human power structures. Structural cannibalism is identified through consumptive metaphors (e.g., legally defining and treating the enslaved as cattle) that function to both hide and uncover the unstable power dynamics of oppressor as cannibal and oppressed as cannibalized, as the oppressor consumes oppressed peoples to sustain and maintain their power. My study explores this framework through the litany of consumptive metaphors found in diverse 19th-century British and American texts: poetry, autobiographies, social problem novels, and the gothic from 1788-1861. Each chapter defines various aspects of structural cannibalism, exploring the ways that the oppressors/cannibals justified, denied, abused, and consumed the oppressed/cannibalized. Using this lens to explore the primary 19th-century power structures of slavery, capitalism, and the patriarchy, I demonstrate that the binaries of eater/eaten are not dichotomous, instead shifting and morphing as the oppressed resist and are transformed from eaten to eater, even if temporarily. For instance, women are typically presented as sexual objects to be consumed, yet they can also be the aggressive sexual consumers. Because the systems of race, gender, and class overlap, this analysis emphasizes how enmeshed and interconnected the structures of oppression are. Ultimately, structural cannibalism pervades all forms of power dynamics, beyond the confines of 19th-century texts and society, offering a more holistic analysis of various forms of oppression while uncovering resistance and equality.

FEASTING BODIES: STRUCTURAL CANNIBALISM AND LITERATURE IN THE 19th CENTURY

by

Luciana D. Lilley

A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Faculty of The Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Greensboro

2023

Approved by

_____

Dr. Anne Wallace
Committee Chair

DEDICATION

To God who has been my foundation throughout each step of this doctoral process and given me a heart for the oppressed.

To my husband, Jordan, who has been my champion, supporter, and encourager, who has had endless patience with the process, emotions, time, and financial commitment that this has demanded, picking up the slack around the house when I was working, being excited for me when I was in the weeds, and loving me through it all. You were my rock as I explored, learned, and grew. It was your entrepreneurial spirit that infected me and has expanded my understanding of my strengths, shifting how I worked and approached my dissertation. It is because of you and the opposite balance that you provide, the sturdiness and security, the planning and drive, that my creative spirit was allowed to fly. You only ever said "yes" to my dreams and goals, never once doubting me or my capabilities, but always reminding me that I can do it; so, it is only because of you that I did.

To all the voices/texts that fed this study, without you offering your stories up to the public for consumption, especially the voices of the oppressed, I would not have been able to identify the consumptive metaphors and incorporate them into the theoretical framework of structural cannibalism.

To my parents who emboldened me and encouraged my love of literature as well as fostered my creativity; to my friends, Becca, Alex, Kayla, and so many others who have believed in me, given me space when I was focused and filled my cup when I needed it. My beautiful framily, your prayers, meals, venting sessions, pottery painting sessions, games, and couch potatoing have sustained me. You all never laughed at my ideas, although you sent me many a meme and made plenty of jokes and puns, wholeheartedly joining in the never-ending game of

"that's cannibalism," your support and listening helped me push through all of the hard times, finding the good.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by Luciana D. Lilley has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair

Dr. Anne Wallace

Committee Members

Dr. María Carla Sánchez

Dr. Risa Applegarth

Dr. Jennifer Park

February 20, 2023

Date of Acceptance by Committee

February 20, 2023

Date of Final Oral Examination

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This whole crazy theory would not have been possible without my incredible chair, Dr. Anne Wallace. You gave me the freedom and encouraged my different approach. This has been many years in the making with your teaching guiding me for the past 9 years, shaping me into the academic that I am today. You have helped me to hone my skills as a writer, which of course still needs work, had countless conversations about my study, and always been willing to tackle my messy drafts. Your kindness, frankness, and friendship mean so much and I honestly would not have made it through this without you as my mentor. You embraced the crazy ideas that I had, assisting me as I refined them into the more complex and nuanced topic that has become this dissertation. You are an amazing educator and scholar, and I am honored to have been your student.

I am eternally grateful to UNCG for introducing me to Dr. Kristie L. Ellison and Dr. Cindy Damm McPeters, we may not have been of the same cohort, but we formed our own. You all have been the calm to my storm, empathizing, brainstorming, editing, celebrating, and encouraging. Your friendships have been invaluable, and I have cherished your honesty and willingness to just be available. We have stuck together through it all, the exhaustion, the life events, the frustration, and it is your perseverance and dedication that has inspired me. It is because of you, Dr. Kristie, that I was introduced to the incredible dissertation coaching program, *Stuck to Unstoppable* and all the remarkable women there, receiving the holistic support I needed to keep moving forward. It is because of that program and my amazing coach, Dr. Tara Sievers-Hunt, that I have started believing in my competence and finding my confidence. You all supported me as I worked through the many sticky points of this dissertation

and encouraged me to find my voice, dig into my passion for helping people, and find the aspects of this heavy study that bring me joy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: "PLAYING THE" CAMERIERE: AN INTRODUCTION TO STRUCTURAL CANNIBALISM

> For worse than Philomel you us'd my daughter,
> And worse than Progne I will be reveng'd.
> And now prepare your throats. Lavinia, come,
> Receive the blood, and when that they are dead,
> Let me go grind their bones to powder small,
> And with this hateful liquor temper it,
> And in that paste let their vile heads be bak'd.
> …
> So now bring them in, for I'll play the cook,
> And see them ready against their mother comes.
> (Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* 5.2.194-200, 204-5)

Titus Andronicus, Shakespeare's infamous cannibalism play, sparked my development of a theory of structural cannibalism as well as gained me the title of "cannibalism researcher." Sure, I, along with most others, find the gothic macabre of something like cannibalism fascinating, but my love for humor and satire as found in my dearest Fanny Fern and Jane Austen convinced me that the feminist world of humor would have been my home. Verging on an oddly romantic declaration, I can only say that cannibalism found me in *Titus* and in every subsequent thing that I read, saw, or heard, and my thoughts about the subject have continued to unfold in bigger and more complex ways than I could ever have imagined. I began to see cannibalism, both literal and metaphorical, in almost everything – popping up in the latest tv shows, music, social media, and advertisements (the most obvious ones are *m&m* commercials that use cannibalism of a new *m&m* as a way to sell the deliciousness of the new flavor or *Cinnamon Toast Crunch* which adds auto-cannibalism to the mix) – with the phrase "that's cannibalism" coming out of my mouth before my brain could even fully articulate what someone else was metaphorically or literally consuming.

It makes sense, though, that this study's cannibalistic feast enmeshed in metaphors (as we will soon see) began with literal cannibalism. Shakespeare's tragedy, *Titus*, is well-known for its ruthless, power-struggle dynamics and increasing violence, leading us to the climactic epigraph above where Titus kills the two brothers who raped and maimed his daughter, Lavinia. But if Titus were to simply kill the brothers in revenge, it would be like any of the other Shakespearian tragedies; instead, Titus goes beyond the murders by "play[ing] the cook" (5.2.204) as he prepared the brothers' dead and dying bodies, cooking them into a human meat pie and feeding them to their mother, Empress Tamara.

My initial analysis of the cannibalism in *Titus* led me to search for other moments of consumption in the text, returning me to Lavinia's rape scene as the brothers cut out her tongue and removed her hands. The tie between Lavinia's marred mouth signifying her rape and powerlessness and Tamara's queenly consumptive mouth as she unknowingly cannibalizes her own sons bridges Tamara's literal cannibalism and her sons' metaphorical cannibalism as they raped (with Tamara's blessing) and consumed Lavinia's "honey" (2.3.131) and "nice-preserved honesty" (2.3.134) as they "satisfi[ed] their lust" (2.3.180). The consumptive language that describes both Titus' cooking and Tamara's cannibalism of the human bodies was echoed in the metaphorical language that was used to describe Lavinia's rape. As Titus horrifically reveals Tamara's violation of societal norms (the cannibalism alone as well as the breaking of her motherly role in consuming her own children), the moment stands out, shocking those at the "feast" and those in the audience, surreptitiously overshadowing the (less literal) cannibalism of Lavinia. This consumptive phenomenon was not a solely Shakespearean trope, as I found yet again literal and metaphorical cannibalism in a 19th-century American text, George Thompson's

Venus in Boston,[1] leading me to ask the question, where else in literature do we find the eating of humans?

While Titus Andronicus "play[ed] the cook" (5.2.204) preparing the cannibalism pie, let me instead "play the cameriere" or waiter – for parallelism –as I search to answer the question of consumption and navigate between the cooks, cannibals, and cannibalized, identifying and serving up for examination the dishes of human flesh that are eaten throughout a wide variety of 19th-century British and American texts. You will have to forgive me as I belabor the food puns and metaphors throughout this study. When one is writing of consumption, and not just any consumption but that of cannibalism, one's only seasoning to momentarily brighten up the heavy dishes of oppression are puns. These are in no way meant to mock the subject matter but are judiciously measured to provide a moment of breath as I define, identify, and analyze what I term "structural cannibalism": a theoretical framework on human power structures and the oppressors' cannibalism of the oppressed in order to create and maintain power dynamics.

I am aware that, as the waiter, I will be navigating a lot of complicated and heavy meals, so I want to address my positionality as well as the position that I am placing you in as the reader consuming both my text and the texts that we are analyzing. While I am not someone who has experienced most of the oppression that I will be exploring in this study (technically none since this is focused in the 19th century), I am aware of my privilege as a white, female scholar and will do my best to carefully navigate specifically the issues of race and slavery, paying attention to my language use, that, as we see via Judith Butler's "On Linguistic Vulnerability" later on in this chapter and bell hooks' *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* in Chapter 2,

[1] Thompson's Venus in Boston is a wild, semi-pornographic American novel published in 1849 where there is also revenge cannibalism and attempted rape with various forms of consumption.

language enacts violence. This study hinges on language choice and metaphor, uncovering how consumptive metaphors both reinforce and reveal oppression; it relies on historically contextualizing the term "cannibalism" and the weaponization of language to Other and therefore oppress a wide variety of people groups. I will do my best to not further the oppressive linguistic violence; however, as we will also see in Chapter 2, it is nigh impossible to escape the embedded structural violence within societies that have privileged "whiteness" and demeaned anything that is not "white," which includes myself and my best of intentions. I also acknowledge that the very nature of this study places you, the reader, and me as consumers of the texts as we therefore complicitly engage with the cannibalistic structures.

As I began to explore where else I found consumption, I realized that the question I was looking to answer was not "where" as it appeared in almost everything that I read, but now "what" is being consumed? What I saw amidst the textual consumption were people eating other people, consequently framing it as cannibalistic. This led to my next question: "how is cannibalism identified?" What I overwhelmingly found were metaphors of consumption that functioned both as signifiers as well as veils for structural cannibalism. The moments of ingestion centered on power dynamics between human eater and human eaten, which led me to my last question, "when consumption is occurring, who gets the privilege of consuming and who gets consumed?" Throughout my study, the eaters are always portrayed as monstrous and threatening, highlighting the power differentials and the cannibalistic violence that occurs.[2] The

[2] That is not always the case. In Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), structural cannibalism appears as Janie Crawford seeks independence and freedom. It is hard fought as she appears to float or be forced into one bad relationship after another; however, she is eventually forced to break the cycle, choosing her own life over that of her last spouse's, Tea Cake. She returns to the only real home she has ever had, Eatonville, Florida, and to her only real friend, Pheoby Watson. Janie uses consumptive metaphors to offer her freedom through her

order of these ideas, however, will be dealt with in reverse. Because "cannibalism" is such an incredibly nuanced term with a longstanding history of associations and prejudices, I begin this study instead with the concept of 19th-century power structures and theories of structural violence. I then move through my understanding and analyses of metaphors to end with historically contextualizing and defining the complicated and nuanced term of "cannibalism." These questions I will explore throughout the rest of this study on "structural cannibalism," analyzing consumptive metaphors in a variety of 19th-century texts, identifying cannibalistic power structures and the ways that those power structures are not only reinforced through consumption but are also restructured/resisted by it.

Power Structures

As important as creating a clear understanding of the term "cannibalism" with its violent imperial history is – addressed later on – I will first examine the large-scale power dynamics by attending to the power structures that both allow and survive on the consumption of oppressed humans since one cannot talk about cannibalism without power dynamics. While I am not a Marxist scholar, in order to discuss the positionality and power dynamics between oppressed and oppressor in the 19th century, it is contextually and historically useful to build on Karl Marx's categorizations of power structures. My pairing of "structural" with "cannibalism" relies specifically on Johan Galtung's theory of structural violence as initially presented in "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." Examined further throughout the rest of these chapters, we will see

---

body/story to Pheoby who is "hungr[ily] listening" (10): "mah tongue is in mah friend's mouf" (6). This empowers Pheoby to share Janie's story and at the end to make a change in Pheoby's own marriage. While the text has plenty of examples of monstrous cannibalism as found in all of Janie's spouses and even in her mother's and grandmother's lives, Janie's self-sacrificial, cannibalistic offering for her friend is beautiful.

how the notion of "structure" is built, altered, or inverted, but the physicality and presence of that power structure remains, which is why I determined that Galtung's theoretical term was more useful than the current, preferred academic term of "systemic." The idea of "systemic" oppression becomes nebulous, making it a useful term that broadly encompasses and pervades all; however, in some ways, the term "systemic" is more nuanced and does not directly point to the imposing oppression of power structures, their rigidity, and the violence that they commit. Galtung's theory, along with Rob Nixon's expansion of it in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, identify the types of hidden violence that are entrenched within power structures while signifying their threatening, ever-present dominance. Combine this with Marx's contemporaneous relevance, these Marxist theories assist with the identification of cannibalistic power struggles.

Galtung identifies "structural violence" as: "violence [that] is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (171). Structural violence, then, is any sort of inequality or power differential within structures that prevents individuals or groups from reaching their "*actual somatic and mental realizations*" (168). Galtung's working definition of violence is a blanket term to encompass all potential power differentials that might harm individuals;[3] however, this study narrows that focus from all potential violence to cannibalistic violence. Francis B. Nyamnjoh in "Introduction: Cannibalism as Food for Thought" pushes back against the colonialized and racialized assumptions surrounding and founding the

[3] Galtung's fuller definition of violence is thus: "violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (168); in essence, "when the potential is higher [for the individual or group of human beings] than the actual is by definition avoidable and when it is avoidable, then violence is present" (169).

term "cannibalism" and instead proposes that cannibalism is not a survivalist rarity or the act of the uncivilized savage Other but is natural and a part of all living beings, and that "cannibalism and cannibalisation are, in one form or other, the only game in town, a necessary evil" (4) for survival. What Nyamnjoh suggests is that cannibalism is a necessary form of violence found naturally within all parts of society. This cannibalistic violence, as I have specified, is embedded within the power structures thereby making it difficult to identify when compared with personal violence which Galtung defines as: "[v]iolence with a clear subject-object relation is manifest because it is visible as *action*. It corresponds to our ideas of what *drama* is, and it is personal because there are persons committing the violence. … Violence without this relation is structural, built into structure" (171). Structural violence is often more ambiguous and unrecognizable as there is no clear "actor" committing the violence. Instead, the "actor" is often too large and amorphous to pin down; for example, governments or societies with constructed ideologies that have more than a few people directly involved make it much harder to identify who enacted the violence (e.g. was it the military in combat, the commanders giving the orders, the government who control the commanders, etc.) and grasp its extent (e.g. the violence that affected the direct individuals for the event, the families of those affected, the town, country, etc.). The more people are involved in committing the violence, either directly or indirectly, the more complicated and fuzzier the "actor" becomes as well as the more expansive and overwhelming.

Structural violence can even masquerade as peace when the dominant power structures are able to convince those involved that what is occurring is not violence (173) because of how embedded the violence is and how powerful the structures are. This notion of camouflaging or hiding is another important aspect of structural cannibalism. Galtung only briefly mentions the

persuasiveness of structural violence as well as its invisibility, yet these are especially important points that are further highlighted for my reticulation of "structural" and "cannibalism." Where Galtung states that embedded violence is difficult to isolate, his explanation for this important aspect of structural violence consists of complaints made or not made by the objects of the violence and whether the society is "*static*" or "*dynamic*" (173):

> Structural violence is silent, it does not show – it is essentially static, it *is* the tranquil waters. In a *static* society, personal violence will be registered, whereas structural violence may be seen as about as natural as the air around us. Conversely: in a highly *dynamic* society, personal violence may be seen as wrong and harmful but still somehow congruent with the order of things, whereas structural violence becomes apparent because it stands out like an enormous rock in a creek, impeding the free flow, creating all kinds of eddies and turbulences. … [For example,] thinking about structural violence (in the Marxist tradition) was formulated in highly dynamic northwest-European societies. (173)

He states that static societies focus on the moments of personal violence, hiding the structural, whereas dynamic societies are in essence overwhelmed by the personal violence becoming individually indistinguishable thereby revealing structural violence and its extensive effects on society. Sara Ahmed's *Complaint!* expounds upon the violence that is identified and resisted when complaints are made. Ahmed argues that listening to complaints is crucial, opening up oneself to the violence: "[t]o become a feminist ear is to indicate you are willing to receive complaints" (9), and to not let them be silenced. The 19th-century texts that we will be exploring are either written by the oppressed or on behalf of the oppressed – all except Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* – voicing complaints and bringing attention to the oppression and silencing that is going on in the 19th century. The oppressors are not willing to "receive complaints," further veiling their cannibalism; yet, by listening with a feminist ear, we can uncover the structural cannibalizing of the oppressed.

Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence* expands on Galtung's structural violence by focusing on the temporal aspects of large-scale, systemic violence. Nixon works to uncover and situate the types of invisible, structural violence: "[t]he insidious workings of slow violence derive largely from the unequal attention given to spectacular and unspectacular time. In an age that venerates instant spectacle, slow violence is deficient in the recognizable special effects that fill movie theaters and boost ratings on TV" (6). By focusing on the temporal, Nixon zooms out and is able to trace the long-standing effects of environmental destruction. Nixon argues that the root causes of these types of violence fade long before their effects are felt or made visible: "[t]he explicitly temporal emphasis of slow violence allows us to keep front and center the representation challenges and imaginative dilemmas posed not just by imperceptible violence but by imperceptible change whereby violence is decoupled from its original causes by the workings of time" (11). What I draw from Nixon as applying to "structural cannibalism" is the focus on the temporal and the long-term effects of structural violence. An example of this would be tracing the 19th-century slavery that we are exploring in the 2nd chapter to racism, police brutality and biases that are occurring today in the 21st century. Many have tried to trace backwards to ascertain the specific actors of the systemic oppression of Black and African peoples; however, the slow progression of racism and oppression, the economic, political, and personal actors, have merged and faded. The dynamic moments such as the United States' Civil War and the selective publicized killings of Black people overshadow the microaggressions and systemic oppressions. Long before the personal violence occurred and long after it has ended the structural violence remains; this is what we see in structural cannibalism, where power structures such as the patriarchy, slavery, and capitalism stand firm, regardless of when we are analyzing or what, and that structural violence is the violence of cannibalism.

What Galtung vaguely points to with structural violence, and what Nixon misses with slow violence, is that personal violence and structural violence are not two disconnected/binary categories. The prior focuses too broadly with an either/or dichotomy between personal and structural violence and the latter focuses too narrowly on one aspect of large-scale violence by ignoring the personal violence. The tendency, as Nixon points out, is to focus on the flashy and sensational moments of personal violence and miss the more "insidious workings of slow violence" (11), but, I argue, one does not miss the slow violence or structural violence by examining the personal. More often than not, these aspects of violence are enmeshed, and by focusing on one aspect over the other as Nixon does, or pitting them against each other as Galtung does, we miss the connections between the structural violence and the personal, and how the personal is often a result or effect of the structural. In my modification of "cannibalism" with "structural," I seek to incorporate both, exploring moments of personal violence to uncover the large-scale, structural violence. Mary Prince, Harriet Jacobs, Harriet Wilson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Elizabeth Gaskell, Charles Dickens, Rebecca Harding Davis, and even Matthew Lewis all write about moments of personal violence, providing us clear actors for the cannibalistic violence. Prince names her enslavers – some she gave aliases to, yet others she unabashedly named – detailing and categorizing their consumptive acts of torture and abuse, accusatorily pointing her readers to the subject, her oppressors, and their objectification of her and her fellow enslaved. These specific moments of personal violence direct us to the structural violence that upholds and encourages the personal violence. Prince textually takes to task her immediate oppressors as well as the nation of Britain and its system of slavery. In my own study of structural cannibalism, then, analyzing the personal violence that the enslaved, the working class, and women experienced at numerous critical moments throughout the 19th century reveals the

larger, sinister, and interwoven abuse of power structures through the nuance of consumptive metaphors.

"Cannibalism," as we will soon explore in greater detail, is based in racism and power structures, so "structural cannibalism" then identifies the specific type of insidious consumptive violence that is inherent within power structures. My intent is not to classify all violence as cannibalistic, but to show how most, if not all, power structures are cannibalistic, and that the violence that they enact results in the using up or consuming of anything within that power structure. Also, I do not attempt to categorize or rank different power structures as more or less inherently cannibalistic because my point is that they are all cannibalistically violent in a variety of ways, even if some consumption is more visible than others. What makes the invisible structural violence visible is my analysis of the consumptive metaphors[4] found in moments of personal violence throughout the 19th century that collectively reveal structural cannibalism. This study, therefore, seeks to use the theory of structural cannibalism as a lens through which to critically explore various forms of human consumption of humans, offering up new ways to examine the negotiation of power structures via oppression and resistance that occur throughout diverse 19th-century texts. Structural cannibalism reframes power structures as cannibalistic, identifying the consumptive power dynamics (specifically within 19th-century Britain and the United States) regardless of positionality within the consumptive food chain. The cannibal is, most often, the dominant power consuming oppressed humans to reinforce or validate the

[4] The amount of times that my fingers have typed "meataphors" instead of metaphors is a Freudian slip that has both amused me and made me contemplate whether I should start terming them as such in place of consumptive metaphors. My hesitation is such that 1) not all consumptive metaphors pertain to meat even though all the metaphors refer to the meaty human body, and 2) that I have already created one term and do not wish to confuse things by creating another.

cannibal's own power, or to eliminate any threats to the structure necessitating the eating of the oppressed.

I use the term power structures often (typically specifying it in the terms of slavery, patriarchy, or capitalism), so to clarify my usage, I am relying mostly on a Marxist definition of power from "The Communist Manifesto" (1848):

> The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman—in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes. (Marx 246)

What Marx establishes is an ongoing, universal struggle between oppressor and oppressed, which breaks down to a binary "us versus them" dynamic that is a constant site of friction and struggle for domination. Marx oversimplifies the power structures by reducing the classes into only two classes, the proletariat and bourgeoisie. His structure sharply defines all powers as either proletariat or bourgeoisie, but structural cannibalism, which focuses on a different binary of eater/eaten, is a power structure *dynamic* in which a variety of power structures intervene and coalesce. The eater/eaten dynamic is one that inevitably shifts or erases its boundaries as Kyla Wazana Tompkins points out in *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the 19th Century*: "[e]ating threatened the foundational fantasy of a contained autonomous self—the 'free' Liberal self—because, as a function of its basic mechanics, eating transcended the gap between self and other, blurring the line between subject and object" (3). Structural cannibalism thereby uncovers the possibility and potential within the shifting oppressor and oppressed power dynamics revealing both the power structure's instability as well as permanence.

While Marx focuses on the large-scale power structures of oppressor and oppressed, Michel Foucault traces the power structures' struggles down to the physical human body. As Foucault points out, "[t]he classical age discovered the body as object and target of power" ("Docile Bodies" 136). Bodies are inherent sites of power, that, if properly controlled, can be used, consumed. As Foucault points out, in the late 18th century there was a refinement of discipline that led to the creation of docile bodies, centering the body as a site of political and economic power. This notion of manipulating human bodies for economic and political gain serves as the basis for power struggles in the 19th century. The three major societal oppressors in the 19th century were slavery, capitalism, and the patriarchy, all structures focused on what bodies were allowed or belonged and what or who were not. Oppressors, in an effort to control, reinforce their positions through embodied, often violent acts.[5] I am reading cannibalism as an act of manipulating and controlling bodies as the oppressor consumes and incorporates the oppressed, extending Foucault's theory. He declares that: "power relations have an immediate hold upon [the body]; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" ("The Political Investment of the Body" 100). Understood in this light, structural cannibalism is the ultimate act of "marking" bodies and controlling and dominating the oppressed.[6] Like slow violence, most metaphorical consumption of human bodies

[5] Elaine Scarry's *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, extends Foucault's controlling of the body by exploring how torture attempts to control and extract from the body. Scarry will be brought in in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

[6] As is by now more than evident, I am specifically focused on the consumption of humans and the human body, but structural cannibalism could be extended to the environment, speciesism, etc. My study does not take a speciesism approach, oppositely exploring how humans are reduced to less than human – the degradations of associations with animals that are often consumed – however, the reverse could be just as effective for examining how people distance themselves from animals and humans who are abused and oppressed. Environmental approaches

occurs over an extended period of time such as slavery, and labor exploitation, with the commodified bodies torturously consumed through beatings, starvation, unsafe labor practices, fear, and more. Even rape, which can happen quickly and be over in one moment, indelibly marks the 19th-century female body as a used commodity. While the power structures are crafted and upheld by governments and societies, my study always comes back to the human body that is being controlled and consumed.

Cannibalism

Cannibalism is a weighty word because of the societal familiarity with its supposed meaning both inside and outside of academia, and my research has revealed that this term is much more complicated and tendentious than initially appears. So, I will start by defining what "cannibalism" is historically and sociologically in a more global sense, and then explore Western society's employment of that term. These two parts will help me to discuss how my use of "cannibalism" compares against the common usages.

"Cannibalism" is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as, "the practice of eating the flesh of one's own kind" (1.). The word, "cannibal," stems from a Spanish (Carib peoples, plural canibales) and Latin (canibales) (1.a.) etymology and can be found as early as 1541 referencing literal acts of cannibalism, specifically humans eating other humans, with a figurative use appearing in 1563 referring to savageness and barbarity. Scholars like Dan Beaver have shown that: "[h]istorically, the term *cannibal* often has expressed the unreflective hatred and distrust of one culture for another, leading some scholars to approach the term as a metaphor for the 'primitive' or 'savage,' likely to reveal more about the observer than the observed" (672). Taken

---

could similarly explore power structures' use of consumptive metaphors to identify structural cannibalism in the abuse and destruction of the environment.

further, Kelly L. Watson differentiates between the violent colonialism of the term versus the act of cannibalism in *Insatiable Appetites: Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World*: "[i]t is important to separate the very real physical act of anthropophagy from the idea of the cannibal. The cannibal is a construct produced by imperialism and maintained through discourse. The image of the cannibal was the product of a complex set of interactions and assumptions" (15-16). The very concept of the "cannibal" as synonymous with "savagery," a point that I will explore soon, and is one that is "construct[ed]" in language by the Western world powers and was perpetuated through rhetoric that reinforced the idea of the native as lesser and Other. Since it was through the creation and terming of the "savage cannibal" or "cannibal" that legitimized oppression of non-Western people groups, my research seeks to open an interstice between the literal and figurative definitions of "cannibalism" by exploring the ways that human consumption of fellow humans is constructed.

"Cannibalism" is often framed against a gothic horror background, implying violence and deviancy; however, when talking sociologically, anthropologically, or even biologically about cannibalism, it is often not a violent or macabre action. It is in the death of the person to be consumed that we can find violence, sacrifice, accidents, or even nature or survival instincts; and, while the literal carving or preparing of the body to be ingested can be violent depending on the circumstance, the locus of the potential violence is not in the act of cannibalism itself, but more associated with the killing of the human than the ingesting of it.[7] The act of eating a human

[7] This is emphasized by the famous sailor's trial for the captain/crew of the *Mignonette* in the late 19th century. It is a case that is still widely used in legal studies today as an example of torte law, where the issue was not that of the cannibalism but instead the murder that was openly admitted to have been committed by the captain. There was a societal understanding in the 19th century that survival for sailors at any cost (including cannibalism) was more important, but all of the other cases of sailor cannibalism were accepted/dismissed because they claimed to have cast lots

body is not, as Western society has deemed it, inherently violent or "unnatural." There are different types of cannibalism that have been documented from as far back as the 16th century to today, none of which are culturally deemed as taboo. For example, Bill Schutt's *Cannibalism: A Perfectly Natural History* outlines how cannibalism is a natural act found throughout many species in nature and is not inherently taboo. Claude Lévi-Strauss' *We are All Cannibals: And Other Essays* presents cannibalism as a more nuanced and widespread practice than a macabre, savage phenomena. Lévi-Strauss begins the essay, "We are All Cannibals," by discussing cannibalism found in the 1950s in New Guinea, where the cannibalized body was a deceased member of the family or community, and the dead were memorialized through the cannibalism (83-85); it is reverential. In Brazil, the practice of cannibalism takes many forms and has been documented from the 16th century beginning with the ingesting of the body of an enemy warrior as a way of consuming their power, and while the killing may have been violent, the cannibalism itself is sacred and humane (Strauss 87, Montaigne). According to Lévi-Strauss in 1993, "[o]n the border of Brazil and Venezuela, the Yanomi Indians… even now consume the bones, ground up beforehand, of their dead" (87). Some mothers from the United Kingdom and the United States currently consume their placenta to help their bodies recover after births believing that it assists with post-partum depression along with other potential health benefits; this is deemed medical, natural, or a placebo depending on who you talk to.[8] Richard Sugg in "Medicinal Cannibalism in Early Modern Literature and Culture" and Lévi-Strauss suggest that blood

---

making it fair and less murder-esque; it was only the openness about murdering a crewman that was the problem. For more information on survival cannibalism and the *Mignonette* see A. W. Brian Simpson and Lewis F. Petrinovich.

[8] For more information on placentophogy/placenta consumption see Riley Botelle and Chris Willott, and Rachel Vaughn.

transfusions and organ donation/transplants, which save lives, are also forms of cannibalism (Strauss 85-87, Sugg 833-4). The world's understanding of cannibalism is complex, commonly non-violent as it is assumed to not harm those involved, and often misunderstood or denied as such by Western society. Cannibalism, Sugg argues is something that specifically the Western world has made taboo, while simultaneously burying their own cannibalistic backgrounds with mumia or medicinal cannibalism even though it was widely accepted in the Renaissance era and was practiced as late as the early 20th century in Europe. Arguably, we could say that medicinal cannibalism is still an acceptable practice concerning the current medical uses of transplants, transfusions, placenta consumption, etc., with Lévi-Strauss hesitantly suggesting that: "we can even go so far as to say that [cannibalism] also exists among us" (89).

To further the distinction between the non-violent (with the exception of some of the medicinal cannibalism practices), anthropological cannibalisms listed above and the violent imperialist history of the cannibalism that I am exploring, I would argue that the anthropological cannibalisms listed above would be better classified under the term "anthropophagy," which is based in the Latin root words of "anthropo-" meaning: "Forming terms relating to humanity or human beings" and "-phagous" meaning: "Forming adjectives with the sense 'that feeds on (the first element).'" The pairing of these two Latin roots conveys the act of anthropological cannibalism without the Western construct of racism and colonialism: "A person who eats human flesh; a cannibal. Also: a member of any human-like race of creatures said to eat human flesh" ("anthropophagus"). As Watson further defines:

> it is important to note that *cannibalism* and *cannibal* differ from the more formal descriptive terms *anthropophagy* and *anthropophagite*. Cannibals and cannibalism came to be associated with a whole host of other savage traits and bear a heave discursive legacy. *Anthropophagy*, on the other hand, derives from the Greek and simply means human-eating. (18)

Anthropophagy, the non-imperialist, and therefore non-violent term to describe literal cannibalistic practices is *not* the type of cannibalism that I will be focusing on; nor am I arguing whether cannibalism is natural or unnatural. What my study is founded on lies in the subtle distinctions between the literal word "anthropophagy" and the colonialized history of the word, "cannibal." As referenced earlier, the term "cannibal" originated in Latin and Spanish etymologies that is historically curated, imperialized, and arguably weaponized by the leading Western world powers from its first iterations. It is an inescapably violent colonial term justifying the Western domination (and cannibalization, as I will argue) of Othered peoples, lands, and resources. This is the cannibalism that I am exploring, a cannibalism that is built on domination, subjugation, and brutality.

Scholarship has shown that the term "cannibalism" has historically been used by imperial powers to further demonstrate the baseness of the "Other" by reinforcing superiority and difference. Maggie Kilgour demonstrates this in her book *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* through her analysis of "inside" and "outside" and the boundaries that are subsequently created when identifying what is inside as good and outside a threat. For instance, when the peoples, Carib, are conflated with the term "canibales" thereby tying an Othered people group with what the Western world deemed as "uncivilized" – the "barbarous" and "savage" action of humans eating other humans – we see the creation and reinforcement of boundaries defining the native peoples as "outside" and the Western world as "inside." In his classic essay "Of the Caniballes" originally published in French in 1580, Michel de Montaigne argues that there is nothing inherently "civilized" about Western society, decimating any notions of Western superiority that serve as the basis for judging an unfamiliar society's customs. Montaigne reveals that the indigenous Brazilians' practice of cannibalism in

the 16th century is more humane than the supposedly religious actions of "civilized" Western society:

> I am not sorie we note the barbarous horror of such an action [cannibalism], but grieved, that prying so narrowly into their faults we are so blinded in ours. I thinke there is more barbarisme in eating men alive, than to feed upon them being dead; to mangle by tortures and torments a body full of lively sense, to roast him in peeces, to make dogges and swine to gnaw and teare him in mammockes (as wee have not only read, but seene very lately, yea and in our owne memorie, not amongst ancient enemies, but our neighbors and fellow citizens; and which is worse, under pretence of pietie and religion) than to roast and eat him after he is dead. (223-4)

Montaigne reveals still his own prejudice as he notes the "barbarous horror of such an action" yet he situates the Western world's torture and treatment of their "neighbors and fellow citizens" as "more barbar[ous]" claiming that they "eat[] men alive." Prior to this declaration, Montaigne defines barbarism as "that … which is not common to them" contrasting everything that is Other by "the example and *Idea* of the opinions and customes of the countrie we live in" (219). He is positioning the Western world as the greater "savage" or cannibal with the metaphorical consumption of its citizens through various violent acts, lessening or evening dismissing the supposed literal cannibalism of the native Brazilians. The idea of the European as cannibal is not new or original to Montaigne: "[m]any sources reveal instances when Native peoples called Europeans cannibals and feared them for their cannibalistic reputation" yet the more powerfully dominant European texts shape the narrative as "[t]he image of the savage cannibal Native has lingered and prospered over time; the figure of the bloodthirsty cannibal European, however, has not" (Watson 16).

Montaigne's argument hinges on the Western world's weaponized usage of the words "barbarity" and "savage" that construct and frame the act of cannibalism as repulsive and taboo. John O'Brien explores the contextualized history of cannibalism in Renaissance Europe during

the time of Montaigne's publication and how the words "barbarous" and "savage" were viewed as synonymous by a variety of Montaigne's contemporaries (221-223). Montaigne identifies that the terms "barbarity" and "savageness" are used to define that which is outside of the realm of one's own knowledge and experiences, and specifically those outside of Western European culture; thereby, anything that is "unknown" is defined as savage and barbarous because it is not a part of Western culture. O'Brien picks up on a two-pronged approach that Montaigne is using in his rhetorical argument. The first is Montaigne arguing that "the Brazilian cannibal was just the modern version of the classical Scythian" (228) establishing a civilized and Western historical association that his readers would have understood. The second is that he is lambasting Renaissance Europe for its uncivilized and cannibalistic behavior:

> The disordered brutality of the Wars of Religion had, for some, erased or at the very least threatened to erase the conceptual distinction between Christian and cannibal, and indeed, in practice, had even far too often converted the former into the latter. Similar changes dangerously blurred the dividing line between man and beast or, again, between rational and passionate action, to the consternation of contemporary commentators. The behaviour that they so roundly condemned in New World cannibals was just as true, or even truer, of their fellow countrymen. This sense that cannibals could be found plentifully at home as well as abroad and that watertight compartments of behaviour were not as well sealed as the French blithely assumed proved an enduring source of dismay, if not scandal; taken-for-granted, clear-cut oppositions became uncomfortably unstable. (226)

O'Brien highlights the instability of the term "cannibal" in that the act of cannibalism is not confined to Othered and lesser nations and societies but can be uncomfortably found at home as well. Montaigne's specific example from the previous quote, points out the problem with the usage of the term "cannibal" to establish a hierarchical society by framing the Brazilian practice of cannibalism, and, by extension, Brazilian culture, as more humane than Western "civilized" culture regarding Western society's treatment of humanity. It is unclear what specifically

Montaigne is framing as cannibalistic and torturous, but there is no missing the implication that he is calling his society cannibalistic by declaring their actions as "barbarism" (Montaigne 223). In modern-day terms, iterations of the words "barbarism" and "savage" synonymizing cannibal equates to *Starbucks'* naming their tea lattes chai tea since chai translates to tea in Hindi. My scrutiny of the term "cannibal" follows Montaigne's by refusing the simple us versus them dichotomy (civilized vs. savage, or as Kilgour articulates, inside vs. outside) that Western power structures weaponized to legitimize imperialist conquest of the "savage" Other.

In "Medicinal Cannibalism" Sugg highlights the lengths that the Renaissance Era would go to in order to distinguish between themselves and the barbarous cannibal (tea tea lattes anyone?). Sugg parses out the nuanced differentiation between mumia (an Early Modern "medical" practice) and cannibalism, exploring how individuals in North and South America who consumed humans were called cannibals (savages), while simultaneously in England, mumia, the act of consuming dead or mummified human remains for curative purposes, was deemed as medicine because it was "enlightened and scientific." Current scholarship (re)defines the practice of mumia as medicinal cannibalism, reframing it as cannibalistic to rend Western civilization's self-aggrandizing veil erected between "civilized" Europe and the "savage" Other: "[l]ooking at traditional European attitudes to the 'savage' cannibals of the New World, few would have guessed that the real cannibals – those operating a vastly more widespread, systematic, commodified and proto-scientific form of man-eating – were in fact the Europeans themselves" (Sugg 831). That there existed the delineation between cannibalism and mumia reveals the importance that Early Modern Europe placed on the dichotomy of inside/outside to maintain the fallacy of civilized power domination, the right to rule per se. By reframing

cannibalism to focus on consumptive power structures, my study is doing a similar move to that of redefining "mumia" as medicinal cannibalism.[9]

Before I go any further, I must specify the difference between "cannibalism" and its broader referent "consumption," as they are terms that I use often throughout this study. Let me first define my use of the word "consumption" that begins with the *OED* definition: "[t]he action or act of eating or drinking something, or of using something up in an activity" (*OED* 5.a.). However, it is not just the eating that pertains to cannibalism but the act of "using something up," the destruction that results from consuming something or someone, whether partial or complete, that is important for my study: "[t]he action or fact of destroying or being destroyed; destruction" ("Consumption" *OED* 1). Essentially, consumption refers to the using up, internalizing, or ingesting of anything with a basic power structure tied to its use/action creating a false dichotomy between eater and eaten. According to the *OED*, both the first definition of "consumption" in a broader sense, and the one that specifically ties to eating is described as "[t]he action or fact" of consumption. This suggests that there is no "wiggle room" per se because *factually* the eater eats, and the eaten is eaten, creating a power differential where the eater is the one in power and the eaten is not. Kilgour analyzes the eater/eaten dichotomy that is loaded with fear and boundary violation:

---

[9] If we were extending my argument to its fullest, the term "medicinal cannibalism" is still Euro-centric, qualifying the *type* of cannibalism that Western Europe participated in for hundreds of years. Other forms of cannibalism are not specified; for example, the cannibalism performed in New Guinea is not specified as "religious cannibalism" or "ceremonial cannibalism," and the Donner Party's cannibalism is not termed "survival cannibalism." While calling "mumia" "medicinal cannibalism" is a move towards eliminating the "civilized" distinction between Western culture and the "uncivilized," taboo-breaking Others, it still frames the cannibalism as "medical," instilling it with a "civilized" distinction between the cannibalism that is performed by non-Westerners and the "scientific" medical practices of Western Europe.

> The relation between an inside and an outside involves a delicate balance of simultaneous identification and separation that is typified by the act of incorporation, in which an external object is taken inside another. The idea of incorporation … depends upon and enforces an absolute division between inside and outside; but in the act itself that opposition disappears, dissolving the structure it appears to produce. (4)

What Kilgour fixates on is the absolute binary between inside and outside, yet the binaries are not as firm as they initially appear because the boundaries between them are constantly shifting. The act of consuming something or someone enacts violence by eliminating or "using something up" as we see in the *OED* definition,[10] but it also ingests, incorporates, and internalizes that which is being consumed; meaning, that which was eaten is then biologically transformed into eater.

Therefore, throughout this study, when I use the term "consumption" I am focusing more on the ingestion of the act and the subsequent "using up" or internalizing that occurs when one consumes. I am also frequently analyzing the hierarchy that is created between the consumer and the consumed, with the consumer most often inhabiting the position of power. While bringing into focus hierarchies and power structures, the definitions for "consumption" do not encompass the potential for the blurring of boundaries or resisting those hierarchies. "Consumption" suggests a unilateral direction, reinforcing the hierarchical food chain and the dichotomous delineation between eater and eaten. Unlike "consumption," the word "cannibalism" simultaneously creates a power differential while also inferring equality. One cannot use the

---

[10] The etymology of "consumption" is one that stems from the historical medical term for an illness that would cause death: "Anglo-Norman and Middle French *consumpcion, consumption* (French *consomption*) wasting of the body (13th cent. or earlier in Anglo-Norman in a medical context; … and its etymon (ii) classical Latin *consumption-, consumptiō* process of consuming or wearing away, in post-classical Latin also destruction (Vulgate), death (5th cent. in Augustine)" (*OED*). The lexical history of the word integrates consumption with death, but death that did not have a direct actor beyond an illness.

word "cannibal" without immediately signifying sameness, and, for the case of this study, humanity. This goes against the oppressor's extended efforts to dehumanize and lessen the oppressed. As much as the Europeans of the Early Modern era attempted to arm themselves with superiority and difference brandishing the term "cannibal," there were those like Montaigne who turned it against them by tracing a shared humanity. The bivalence of shared humanity and colonialized Othering are the two main reasons why I chose the term "cannibalism" over "consumption."

Additionally, "consumption" can further veil the violence that occurs when one human consumes another human. Rather than excoriate the consumer, the term "consumption" softens the alimentary violence that the term "cannibal" signifies. The term "cannibalism" enacts imperial violence (unlike "consumption") and forces the eater to recognize its shared humanity: "one's own kind" ("cannibalism"). Whereas "consumption" focuses on a generalized hierarchy and "using up," "cannibalism" can then be understood as a complex negotiation of Western power structures that Others and forcibly recognizes the shared humanity of the eaten.

It is important to note that while the consumer is typically the power holder, it does *not* mean that they have all the power and that the consumed are powerless as Tompkins argues in *Racial Indigestion*. Even in their oppressed positions the eaten can resist consumption, make the consumption difficult, or even upset the digestion of the consumer; however, there is always a power structure in play between the eater and the eaten.[11] Also, the positions of consumer and

---

[11] Tompkins is specifically focusing on the consumption of Black, enslaved bodies in mid-late 19th-century United States as she identifies that the "black bodies and subjects stick in the throat of the (white) body politic, refusing to be consumed as part of the capitalist logic of racism and slavery as well as the cultural and literary matter that they produced. / Whether impeding absorption—getting stuck in the craw or producing colicky white bodies and thereby disturbing the easy internalization of blackness—or whether testifying from the space of imminent death

consumed are not set as Kilgour infers, for we will see throughout my study that the consumptive power structure is often shifted or inverted, transforming the cannibalized into the cannibal and vice versa, blurring the boundaries.

While the eater is often the one in power, that is not always the case as the power can be held by someone over the eater. For example, in Mary Prince's *The History of Mary Prince* (1831), Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig* (1859), and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851), there are multiple instances where the enslaved are forced to eat specific foods or are only provided certain foods. The enslaved or oppressed individuals do not have the ability to reject or choose what they eat, so the power is not really the consumer's (although they often exert whatever power they have in preparing it or growing/foraging to supplement it) but those over the consumer such as the enslavers.[12] Mary Prince was "given some Indian corn boiled in water" for breakfast, "ate our corn soup called *blawly*" for lunch, and for dinner her "master gave us each our allowance of raw Indian corn, which we pounded in a mortar and boiled in water for our suppers" (19). Prince not only had to work the salt ponds from 4 am till dusk, but her only

---

and expulsion from the bowels of a slave-dependent nation, black bodies and subjects in these encounters fight back, and bite back" (8). Tompkins does not include all who are eaten, instead focusing on the consumed Black body; however, I will extend her argument to class and gender as well, showing how oppressed of all types are consumed and resist consumption in different ways.

[12] Frado in Wilson's *Our Nig* was only allowed at the age of 6 "a bowl of skimmed milk, with brown bread crusts" (29), and we are told years later that she "still took her meals in the same manner as formerly, having the same allowance of food" (67-68). Though Frado was a free-born, Black girl in the North, she had no power over what she consumed. Instead, the dominant consumer – the white abolitionists, Mrs. Bellmont and her daughter Mary – restricted her consumption while they "spic[ed] the toil with 'words that burn,' and frequent blows on her head" (30). Frado resisted though, for even when given the chance of something akin to decency food-wise, she refused to eat the additional food proffered to her off her master's dirty plate; instead allowing her dog to lick it clean before she used it, clearly signifying that her beloved pet was better than the beastly abolitionists.

nutrition was variations of cheap corn that were not provisions for a well-rounded or healthy diet, nor enough calories to offset the hard, manual labor they were forced to perform (21). In Stowe's *UTC*, Tom resists the dehumanization at Legree's plantation by refusing to push the weak out of the way to prepare his food; instead, assisting them by grinding theirs first and then grinding his own (317).

The power over what the enslaved ate is not confined to the denotative but also extends to the connotative. For example, in *UTC*, Legree's main plantation hands, Sambo and Quimbo who were also enslaved, were "trained … in savageness and brutality as systematically as he had his bull-dogs; and, by long practice in hardness and cruelty, brought their whole nature to about the same range of capacities" (315). They were used to beat, threaten, abuse, rape, and torture their fellow enslaved consuming alive the enslaved on Legree's behalf and behest. While Tom was faced with the same position as Sambo and Quimbo, he chose to use his minimal consumptive power by refusing to beat another enslaved; however, he was beaten to death because of his choice. So, Sambo and Quimbo only had the options of eating their fellow enslaved alive or dying themselves, not much of a choice. Many different types of oppressed peoples are denied or unable to have power over what they consume, for instance, the starving lower classes in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton: A Tale of Manchester Life* (1848) consuming whatever they were given, whether it was cows' head soup (240) prepared and served by one of the "masters" or tea, gruel, and bread from another struggling working-class person (99-100). The oppressors then, not only have the power to control what and who they eat but also what the eaten eat.

One would assume, like Kilgour does, that cannibalism is all about controlling what one eats, especially when it comes to the differences between mental and physical consumption. Through an extension of Walter Ong's *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for*

Cultural and Religious History and Freud's theory of "Negation," Kilgour argues that cannibalism and "mental acts of identification by which the self knows … other humans, and takes them into itself to create its identity" are "opposite" (10). She decisively declares that: "[c]annibalism is relatively easy to determine and control (as Ong says, it's a matter of taste, you either do or you don't, and there isn't really any *tertium quid* in the matter), but the mental absorption of others … is much more difficult to determine and regulate" (10). While it might appear on the surface that literal cannibalism is an easy "yes" or "no" as compared with mental consumption, which is more complicated and nuanced, Kilgour does not allow for unknowing or intentionally ignorant consumption, which is either presented to us as something else or is not identified at all before it is eaten.

An example from my own personal experience illustrates the difficulty surrounding "knowing" what one is eating – although to clarify it is in no way related to cannibalism. I do not like anchovies. The idea of whole-bodied, little fish that are saltily preserved and then eaten whole in some form, whether pureed or not, is mentally a concept that I cannot get over, with one notable exception: Caesar salad. I know that Caesar salad dressing relies on pureed anchovies for that delicious umami flavor, but I choose not to think about it when I am eating this salad that I enjoy. In this instance, I *know* that something I would object to in any other physical form is hidden in this dressing, in some ways I *taste* the anchovies because I have the knowledge that anchovies provide that incredible umami flavor, so when I taste the delectable umami, my brain knows that what I am tasting and therefore eating are anchovies. Because of that tasting, the anchovies are not really hidden, yet I refuse to dwell on *why* my beloved salad dressing is so good; why the salty, sweet, and sour work together so well is because of the umami anchovy. In this instance, I rely on my brain to veil the ingredient that I would say "no"

to, to misdirect it by focusing on the umami of the parmesan, the subtle spiciness of the black pepper, or the acidity of the lemon (and if the Caesar salad is particularly well-crafted, the sweetness of a candied nut). My brain fixates on these yesses while refusing to dwell on that which I would deem distasteful.

Obviously, the above example is not an instance of cannibalism as defined by a human eating another human; however, it is an experiential example of willfully ignoring what I am eating and/or tasting that is not an easy "yes" or "no." In the case above, there was an intentional veiling of a sort on my part that led to tasting and consuming that which would otherwise have been a no. By refusing to acknowledge the presence of anchovies in my beloved dressing, I am highlighting the ability the eater has to avoid responsibility for what they are consuming. This also reveals the power that the eater has beyond just the decision to consume, as they ignore or change that which they are consuming into something that is more mentally and physically palatable. Societies or individuals can and often do deny their involvement or connection to oppression, thereby willfully blinding themselves or denying responsibility for their part. For an example that is both explicitly cannibalistic and textual rather than experiential, we can return to Tamara's cannibalization of her sons above in *Titus Andronicus*, as she was most assuredly an unwilling participant in the cannibalism and would not have eaten them if she had known or had a choice. This is the kind of thing that I will be looking at textually in the 19th century, where we will see a veiling of cannibalism that reveals an unwillingness to recognize the cannibalism and shared humanity or the careless consumption of oppressed human beings. Cannibalism then, is not as clearly identified as Kilgour or many others would like to assume, which is why it has remained hidden among the world's power structures as they willfully and/or ignorantly employ

consumptive metaphors. Dominant power structures cannot acknowledge that what they are consuming – oppressed yet fully equal humans – positions them as the ultimate cannibal.

Consumptive Metaphors: Veil and Vehicle

Consumptive metaphors willfully veil the hidden structural violence from the oppressors, but it is also through the recognition of the consumptive metaphor's veiling that we can unveil the structural cannibalism.[13] According to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By*, "[t]*he essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another*" (5). Metaphors are employed in rhetoric so that a familiar experience can be created by linking two things that are dissimilar to each other to better understand the primary "thing;" uncovering unseen likenesses or similarities between the dissimilar objects. Kilgour also reveals how metaphors can be used to defamiliarize a known "thing" through the same process, thereby making something familiar new or unknown (12-13). Kilgour had declared that cannibalism was an easy "yes or no," yet when consumptive metaphors are the cannibalistic vehicles, hiding and defamiliarizing the eating of human beings, it is not that simple.

As referenced briefly above, consumptive metaphors deform the oppressed from humans into consumable objects and defamiliarize or make foreign that which is "same."[14] It is through

---

[13] Interestingly, Nyamnjoh's argument to de-Other cannibalism in "Introduction: Cannibalism as Food for Thought," purposefully does not distinguish between literal and metaphorical, assuming that the cannibalism is visible regardless or even more apparent in a metaphorical sense than in a literal sense. This does not lessen the impact of the cannibalism and instead works to reframe it so that it is not deemed uncivilized and savage.

[14] As I have been arguing, the consumption of human bodies manipulates and controls those lower in the power structures, and by exploring the veiled consumptive metaphors I uncover the cannibalistic violence within the power structures. Judith Butler's "On Linguistic Vulnerability" develops the theory that language not only motivates or causes violence, but that it "enacts is own kind of violence" (9). Like Lakoff and Johnson state above that metaphors reveal more, the consumptive metaphors used to describe structural cannibalism are not merely depicting or

the metaphors that the oppressors/eaters create distance between themselves and their cannibalistic actions by veiling it as that which it is not: "[t]he very systematicity that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another … will necessarily hide other aspects of the concept" (Lakoff and Johnson 10). By utilizing consumptive metaphors, the cannibals hide their cannibalism from themselves. In terms of the specific 19th-century texts that this study explores, the consumptive metaphors not only veil the cannibals' actions from themselves, but they also veil them from the readers. As we will see in Chapter 2, Prince's use of consumptive metaphors is judicious, employing them almost solely to refer to the enslaver's treatment of the enslaved. Prince does not directly accuse her readership of allowing slavery, she also does not denotatively tell her white, British audience that her white, British enslavers are cannibals. Instead, Prince insinuates that her readers hide behind willful ignorance allowing enslavers to connotatively consume the enslaved alive. Like Lakoff and Johnson suggest, consumptive metaphors associate oppressed human bodies with consumable objects, thereby creating new associations that reinforce their cannibalistic position while also "hid[ing the] aspect[]" of cannibalism from themselves. Instead of the eaten textually presented as humans who are cannibalized, we find consumptive metaphors that veil the oppressed as consumable objects – e.g., the female body as "bread" (Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure* I. iii. 51-53), the enslaved as consumable animals like "chickens," "cows," or "hogs" (Prince 10, 37-8), objects that are being butchered, processed, or cooked like the working class and factory towns where the sun "fr[ies Coketown] in oil" (Dickens 92), and not as oppressed humans who are being cannibalized by their fellow humans. Consumptive metaphors, then, are both the vehicle and the veil for

---

veiling consumption in various 19th-century texts but enact their own cannibalistic violence by reinforcing the structures.

structural cannibalism, hiding the structural cannibalism as well as allowing us to identify and uncover it.

Structural cannibalism deforms the eater and the eaten through metaphors as it unveils what is being consumed by the oppressor is *not* food or resources but fellow human beings. Because this identification as cannibal would be a horrifying status for the Western world with its construction of cannibalism as taboo, the language of the oppressor works hard to dehumanize the oppressed through metaphors as stated above. Isabel Wilkerson's *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* identifies this effort: "[t]o dehumanize another human being is not merely to declare that someone is not human, and it does not happen by accident. It is a process, a programming. It takes energy and reinforcement to deny what is self-evident in another member of one's own species" (137). The overwhelming number of consumptive metaphors found in these 19th-century texts and so many others proclaim the "programming" of societies that have cultivated a system of oppressing specific people groups. For the most easily accessible examples of consumptive metaphors and their dehumanization we will look at Peter Fryer's exploration of racism and slavery in Britain in *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*. Structural cannibalism identifies that eaters are often compelled to veil their actions through metaphors in an attempt at easing their guilt and hide the truth from themselves. Fryer summarizes this disassociation when discussing the initiation of the slave trade in Britain:

> To justify this [slave] trade, and the use of slaves to make sugar, the myths were woven into a more or less coherent racist ideology. Africans were said to be inherently inferior, mentally, morally, culturally, and spiritually, to Europeans. They were subhuman savages, not civilized human beings like us. So there could be no disgrace in buying or kidnapping them, branding them, shipping them to the New World, selling them, forcing them to work under the whip. English racism was born of greed. (8)

It is easiest to recognize the dehumanization of the enslaved since chattel slavery treated the enslaved like a consumable commodity; bought and sold, used up to the point of death, and then replaced with another. Fryer uses a consumptive metaphor to identify the capitalist practice of slavery: "the grandest and richest people in England were eager for a slice of slave pie" (21). Fryer does not qualify his sentence, instead relying on the obvious correlation that identifies the capitalism of enslaved individuals as a delicious "pie" to consume. Similarly, Wilkerson references a lynching postcard from 1916 that was a photograph of a burned, Black body: "'[t]his is the Barbecue we had last night'" (94), without any further analysis by Wilkerson.

Fryer goes on to identify the imperial British world power's active dehumanization of the enslaved declaring that they created a "racist ideology" through scientific and religious "facts" to justify their enslavement of fellow human beings. According to Fryer, the enslaved were treated as less than human in a variety of different ways with this first shining example: "William III, King of England from 1689 to 1702, had a favourite black slave, a bust of whom used to be on display at Hampton Court, complete with 'carved white marble collar, with a padlock, in every respect like a dog's collar'" (23). Here we are confronted with the image of an enslaved Black body forever memorialized in marble with a "'dog's collar'" around their neck, pronouncing the metaphorical association between a kept dog and an enslaved human. Fryer also notes lost/runaway notices that had lesser monetary rewards than for lost animals (22), and that enslaved humans were treated as pets and toys for British children (21). When analyzing MP Charles Davenant's *Discourses on the Publick Revenues* (1698) declaration that the enslaved Black body was "'the first and most necessary Material for Planting'" (257) Fryer identifies their objectification by stating that the enslaved were "looked on…as replaceable tools" (18). Wilkerson, after detailing numerous counts of dehumanization by Nazi Germany and the United

States, points out that the enslaved were even dehumanized through the denial of the most basic human emotions, feelings, and actions: "[t]hey were punished for the very responses a human being would be expected to have in the circumstances forced upon them. Whatever humanity shown through them was an affront to what the dominant caste kept telling itself. They were punished for being the humans that they could not help but be" (140). The constructed dehumanizing ideology attempts to maintain the lies that justified the oppressor's cannibalistic abuse, and *anything* that endeavored to rend their carefully woven veil, even natural human actions, was punished. This brief picture of dehumanization from the Britain and the United States' historically documented abuse of the enslaved as consumable objects will be greatly expanded on throughout the rest of this study as it works to identify and explore the extent that the oppressed are consumptively dehumanized throughout the 19th-century British empire and the United States republic.

Dehumanization does not occur in a unilateral direction, only metaphorically transforming the oppressed. Through consumptive metaphors we can see that structural cannibalism deforms both oppressed into the eaten/prey as well as the oppressors, disfiguring them into the savage cannibal/predator. Prince's *The History* and Stowe's *UTC* refer repeatedly to the deformative effect that slavery has on the slave owner. Prince decisively declares that "slavery hardens white people's hearts" (11) and Stowe mirrors these sentiments by restating throughout the text the hardness that slavery brings to anyone involved in or surrounded by the slave trade. So, even the dehumanizing ideology that was maintained through consumptive metaphors did not just construct the identity of the oppressed as less than human even though they were absolutely human, but also constructed that of the oppressor as monstrous. In the act of

fraudulently dehumanizing the oppressed, the oppressors became that which they created, savage cannibals that were less than human.

Context

The long 19th century is ripe for identifying and exploring structural cannibalism because it is filled with moments of political and societal change. Stemming from the initiation of conversations regarding human rights and equality beginning in the mid-18th century, there proceeds a struggle between the set and "traditional" ways of life concerning power structures and humanity in colonial 19th-century Britain and the United States. Through moments such as the violation of class distinctions and the creation of a middle class, struggles surrounding slavery and evolutionary rights of domination, gender roles and tensions between public and private spheres, etc., we find textual attention focused on the struggles between oppressors and oppressed. The 19th century is filled with moments of personal violence, upheaval, and uncertainty for Western civilization that was fraught with structural violence such as the French Revolution, the American Civil War, the Industrial Revolution, imperialism and colonization, fights for rights and equality for the enslaved, the working class, and the woman question (to name a few). These events shifted the way humanity and humans were perceived. All of the societal changes are compounded with the rise of consumerism and capitalism. The transition away from rural, farming life towards a factory and product-driven society sanctioned consumerism; objectifying through a more blatant justification of the consumption of people. Consumerism and the overwhelming rush of technology coalesce to create a culture of hierarchy that is reliant upon cannibalism. The 19th-century history is ideally situated for exploration of structural cannibalism framed against the background of massive moments of societal change and friction, magnifying the cannibalistic power structures.

When contextualizing power structures in the 19th century, Marx's unique position as a contemporary philosopher of that time qualifies him to identify and critique the power structures that framed the Western world. He classifies the 19th-century Western world as a capitalist society:

> Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, has cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. (250)

Marx defines the capitalist, bourgeois system as barbarous, reinforcing the already inextricable tie with cannibalism by utilizing terms such as "famine" and "subsistence." While Marx qualifies the statement as a recent temporal development, structural cannibalism reveals the interconnected nature of cannibalistic power structures, foregrounding the temporal quality as an ongoing one that can be traced backwards as well as continuing forward through today. As we will explore in greater detail the oppression of the working class in Chapter 3, we find in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854), and Rebecca Harding Davis' "Life in the Iron Mills" (1861) that even when the oppressed rise up or are finally given justice and can potentially shift the roles of eater and eaten, the outcomes are often just as violent as before the restructuring of power; the oppression does not stop, it just takes on a new face. Marx traces the destruction of 19th-century society back to consumerism, commerce, and ultimately capitalism. The consumerism founded in 19th-century culture through the industrial revolution has continued to shape the global economy and our current, 21st-century capitalistic system, and therefore assuredly lends a 21st-century relevancy to structural cannibalism.

I have referenced several of the texts that I will be analyzing in my study throughout this introduction but have yet to address the reasons for the wide variety of 19th-century British and United States literatures. My first reason stemmed from my desire to analyze and prioritize the voices of the oppressed over the voices of the oppressors, so I have included Mary Prince's *The History of Mary Prince* and Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig*. The former is a slave narrative published in Britain in 1831 about her enslaved life in the West Indies and the latter is an autobiographical novella first published in the United States in 1859 about the life of a free Black servant in the North. Both of these texts by women of color, free and enslaved, voice their abuse and oppression firsthand. Then we have texts written mostly by white women on behalf of the oppressed (both the enslaved and the working class) with Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a fictional novel about slavery published in the United States in 1851, and William Cowper's slave poetry: "The Negro's Complaint," (1788) and "Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce" (written also in 1788 but published in 1836) published in Britain. Then, for the working-class literature there is Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, a fictional novel about the plight of the working class published in Britain in 1848, Rebecca Harding Davis' "Life in the Iron Mills," a short story about the United States working class published in 1861, and Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*, a fictional novel published in Britain in 1854. All of these texts are attempting to bring to light various forms of oppression and foreground them in different ways – American and British, male and female, oppressed and privileged, white and people of color – with all relying heavily on consumptive metaphors to bring to light the oppression of the enslaved and working class.

My second reason has to do with the similar motives that Mary Prince, Harriet Wilson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Rebecca Harding Davis, William Cowper, Charles Dickens, and Elizabeth Gaskell all share. To use a 21st-century term, all of the above texts have either implied

or self-proclaimed social justice goals behind the writing/publishing of their narratives. Prince's enslaved narrative and Stowe's fictional novel both offer the excuse of white people's perceived ignorance as the reason that the inhumane practice of slavery is allowed to continue. This same sentiment regarding the bourgeois is repeated by the character John Barton in Gaskell's fictional novel *Mary Barton*. Prince, Stowe, and Gaskell all directly state, either throughout the texts or in the preface, their goals for writing and publishing such texts: to call attention to the plight of the oppressed and consequently enact change. While Davis, Cowper, and Dickens do not directly express their authorial desire for change, Dickens' narrator clearly laments the treatment of the working class as well as the necessity for change, and Davis' narrator similarly hints at the sad but necessary reason for "tell[ing] my story" (4-5). Talking about authorial intent is complicated, I know, but Prince, Stowe, and Gaskell all directly state their intention, and Davis, Cowper and Dickens indirectly state it. They all have the same objective, to bring to light the difficulties of the oppressed.

Last but not least, the texts in this study, which include all those previously listed, as well as the gothic novel, *The Monk*, published in Britain in 1796 by Matthew Lewis, provide a wide selection of authorial voices and genres spanning from autobiographies and non-fiction to social problem novels, poetry, and the gothic. None of these texts speak to each other directly, covering different topics at different points in time; however, it is their relative disconnectedness which is useful for a study like this. To argue that structural cannibalism is widespread and not a phenomenon found in a certain group, genre, issue, or even specific text, the comparative aspect of these diverse 19th-century texts demonstrates structural cannibalism's interrelatedness as they span the imperial world from the West Indies to Britain, the United States, and Spain, and begin as early as 1788 through 1861. While Lewis' gothic novel would appear to be an aberrant outlier

as contrasted with all of the overt social justice texts, *The Monk* reveals how pervasive consumptive metaphors are, in that, structural cannibalism can be found almost anywhere. In fact, by including Lewis' pro-patriarchal text portraying women as consumable objects, we find in the oppressor's own macabre fictions not only the same consumptive metaphors, but also the oppressor's fears surrounding oppressed resistance within structural cannibalism. The collective weight of consumptive metaphors as found in all of these texts reveals how embedded and overarching structural cannibalism is.

That the chapters themselves are separated out by race, class, and gender (in that specific order) is done purely for functionalities' sake so that I can focus on one broad category of oppression at a time and not get lost or overwhelmed by them. Race, gender, and class are the three largest societal issues of the 19th century, and by bringing all three into conversation, I reveal how enmeshed structural cannibalism is within 19th-century society. That is to say that racism, classism, and sexism are all functioning and present within each of the chapters, and my argument for structural cannibalism does not suggest the opposite; however, I argue that we need to look at all of these simultaneously in order to see how they interact, build upon each other, and are irrevocably tied. These categories, as structural cannibalism will show, are not impermeable and easily defined; they are not able to be isolated and analyzed in sanitized sections. By starting with slavery, I begin with what is the most immediately identifiable yet undefined form of structural cannibalism, revealing how, even at levels of extreme resistance to the dominant power, the oppressed unconsciously employ the dehumanizing consumptive metaphors of structural cannibalism. I then move on to capitalism which is reliant upon a lot of the same tropes

as slavery.[15] The stacked metaphors of capitalism cover and reveal the imperialist shame of Othering fellow British and American countrymen. It is almost impossible to identify the extent that the working class are consumed without first understanding the oppressor's reliance upon enslaved consumptive metaphors. Lastly, I address the patriarchy, which reveals consumptive gender dynamics as well as the permeability of dominant power structures through the enmeshed layers of consumptive metaphors that simultaneously reinforce and redistribute those structures throughout the 19th century. Structural cannibalism allows us then, to not only identify oppression through consumptive metaphors but also suggests resistance through the forced recognition of: "one's own kind" ("cannibal"). My fourth chapter practices this on a global and generic scale with an interrelational approach, returning to slavery at the end of the chapter to expose how coalesced these categories are. In my argument, structural cannibalism is the overarching umbrella that encompasses all forms of oppression; whether it be slavery, capitalism, the patriarchy, etc., structural cannibalism does not merely run through them in an isolated manner but reveals the necessity of looking at the larger picture. And by focusing on the smaller, personal moments and varying levels of oppression that is enacted in 19th-century society, one uncovers the oppression of the (predominantly white, male) cannibal.

In Chapter 2, "Primo: Enslaved as the Soffritto of Structural Cannibalism in Colonialized 19th Century," many critical race scholars such as Kyla Wazana Tompkins have made the passing comment that slavery is cannibalistic so that is where the chapter begins, by establishing that

---

[15] Harriet Beecher Stowe has an entire chapter, "XIX," devoted to the similarities between slavery and the working class in *UTC* (as scholarship has shown, this is a problematic and privileged claim, for in many ways Stowe suggests that oppression of the British working class is worse than U.S. slavery); however, she highlights some interesting connections that reinforce the interconnected ties between slavery and the working class.

which has been assumed, the longstanding history of slavery as cannibalism. Using primarily Prince's *The History*, as well as Stowe's *UTC*, and Cowper's poems on slavery, I do an extended close reading by first exploring how the metaphors are veiling cannibalism in the texts and then uncovering and identifying structural cannibalism. I first explore the language and actions of the eater in Prince, how the Black bodies are defined as consumable, and then I look at the places of structural cannibalism and how they reinforce the enslaved's consummability. Slavery's consumptive metaphors provide a foundation for uncovering the pervasiveness of structural cannibalism; functioning as the soffritto, or base flavors, that build the rest of the meal that this study explores. Prince is extremely careful as an enslaved women of color in employing consumptive metaphors, almost never using dehumanizing language for herself or other enslaved. Instead, the text fixates on the oppressor's consumptive metaphorization of the enslaved; however, even Prince cannot extricate herself from structural cannibalism as we see her briefly describe an enslaved man as a worm when he was being tortured. In contrast, Cowper and Stowe have multiple moments of dehumanizing violence writing from their positions of white privilege. Even their best attempts at decrying slavery leave them guilty of enacting cannibalistic violence on the enslaved because of their authorial positions as a white woman and a white man revealing how ensnared Stowe and Cowper are within structural cannibalism. Cowper's poems intentionally hinge on the oppressor's employment of consumptive metaphors, while Stowe's text unintentionally reinforces the cannibalistic power dynamics. *UTC* reveals the oppressor's fears about the instability of the power structure and the potential that the oppressed/eaten have for becoming the eater. Structural cannibalism uncovers the possibility for erasing the boundaries between predator and prey due to the oppressed's ability to invert the

structure. Collectively, Prince, Cowper, and Stowe employ a wide variety of consumptive metaphors revealing the foundational basis for structural cannibalism.

In Chapter 3, "Secondi: The Cannibalized Commodification of the Working Class in 19th-Century Britain and the United States," I begin with a brief reading of Marx, establishing cannibalistic dynamics between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The proletariat's position in society made them a commodity of capitalism – an extension of the machines that they labored on, a product, part of a system that used and discarded them when they were no longer productive. Marx reveals the proletariat as consumable, but what does consumption of the working class look like in the Victorian era? Unlike the assumed connections between slavery and cannibalism, the cannibalism of the working class has yet to be identified as such. The positionality of the 19th-century working class, what is most commonly white men in the texts, is that of privilege as compared with the enslaved. However, the identification and analysis of consumptive metaphors in Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, Dickens' *Hard Times*, and Davis' "Life in the Iron Mills" depends on an understanding of the consumptive metaphors identified in slavery. Instead of referring to the working class as consumable foods like the enslaved, we see in *Mary Barton* a more subtle focus on the abundance of, or lack of, food, eating, cooking, and hunger standing as metaphors for the cannibalism of the lower classes. It conversely contrasts the comfort and fullness of the bourgeois with the starvation and death of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie's cannibalistic acts are veiled in Gaskell, Dickens, and Davis's texts through a consistent foreignizing and racializing of the proletariat that revokes their status as British citizens and disgorges them as colonized, off-white individuals. This alienation was not limited to the working class but was also extended to the manufacturing towns they lived in as the towns were physically pushed to the margins of the British empire and United States republic. My

research seeks to reframe current working-class power structure analyses by revealing the cannibalistic violence of capitalist power structures in the Victorian era.

In Chapter 4, "Dolce: Gendered Representations of 'Sweet' Prey and 'Wild' Predators in the Long 19th Century," we expect to find women objectified as prey in 19th-century literature, yet *The Monk* and Prince's *The History* often violate the binary between prey/predator. Lewis' infamous gothic novel, *The Monk*, titillatingly presents female bodies for various forms of consensual and non-consensual sexual consumption. Despite *The Monk*'s construction of a strict formal power structure framed by the patriarchal Spanish Catholic church presented as impermeable and all-powerful, many of the novel's female characters transgress their boundaries embodying the text's fears of fluid power dynamics and patriarchal impotence. Through characters such as Matilda (a cross-dressing novice and female sorcerer), Beatrice (the ghostly bleeding nun whose sexual desires cause her to break her vows), and Agnes (a nun whose broken vows force her to seize her body's power), the novel exposes moments of slippage where the patriarchal structure is threatened and the boundaries are blurred, where the eaten becomes the eater. The brutality and barbarity that are part of the lexical history of the word "cannibal" is embodied by Ambrosio, the monk, yet the text reveals a variety of ways that women also embody predatory power. The European female characters of *The Monk* become consumers with surprising ease; however, this same process of transformation from prey to predator and vice versa looks drastically different when the subjects are women of color. When we trace these same binaries of predator/prey in Prince's *The History*, the dichotomies become more complicated and more subtle as the repercussions of violating the structural boundaries become more severe. Prince's even more Othered position does not prevent her from seizing her power through her orality and her subsequent fight for equality. However, unlike the Spanish women in

The Monk, Prince's transformations into predator are limited because her race and enslavement leave her vulnerable to further consumption within 19-century society. Reading these two texts with attention to the potential fluidity of power as found within 19th-century gender constructs with the additional constraints of race allows us to see how the patriarchal power structures are not simply reinforced but also where and how they are violated, and how they coalesce.

These three chapters build on each other as they collectively uncover dominant power structures as inherently cannibalistic, consuming oppressed peoples underneath them through consumptive metaphors revealing structural cannibalism throughout the 19th century. The chapters in this study are titled after a multi-course Italian meal, signifying the conflation of my Italian American identity with food, and the ways in which we all consume ideas and texts. The consumptive metaphors are the key for identifying and hiding structural cannibalism, revealing the unstable power dynamics of oppressor as cannibal and oppressed as cannibalized. The unstable "binaries" of eater/eaten shift and morph; combined with the overlapping power structures, we can see how someone can simultaneously embody the position of both cannibal and cannibalized as well as how the consumed can become the consumer and vice versa. Structural cannibalism is not just another theory that reveals our perpetually oppressed and oppressor positions within power structures. It is through the seemingly invincible structures of oppression that we find opportunities in structural cannibalism for resistance and equality and increase awareness by continuing to unveil it. Mangia! Mangia!

CHAPTER II: *PRIMO*: ENSLAVED AS THE SOFFRITTO OF STRUCTURAL CANNIBALISM IN COLONIALIZED 19TH CENTURY

Ralph Waldo Emerson famously declared in his 1844 speech "An Address Delivered in the Court-house in Concord, Massachusetts, on 1st August, 1844: On the Anniversary of the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies": "[l]anguage must be raked, the secrets of slaughter-houses... must be ransacked, to tell what negro-slavery has been" (5). Emerson's metaphor of choice, "slaughter-houses" (one of many consumptive metaphors seasoning his speech), equates slavery with animal butchery, framing the abuse cannibalistically. He forcefully declares "language" as being the key to understanding and unlocking the true horrors of slavery, and, in his heavy-handed use of cannibalistic metaphors, we can read both his audience's familiarity with these consumptive descriptions of slavery as well as the presence of structural cannibalism.

Emerson is one of many voices employing consumptive metaphors to describe the horrors of slavery in the 19th century that collectively evince a long-standing, rhetorically cannibalistic tradition found in texts by both the enslaved and dominant cultures. Authors such as Mary Prince, William Cowper, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Harriet Jacobs, Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Charles Chesnutt utilize various tropes of consumption to elucidate the horrors of slavery and racism. Cowper's abolitionist poetry (1788), which predates Emerson's speech by 56 years, satirically employs consumptive metaphors. In Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) we find a familiar reference to Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* presenting the enslaver's desire to rape and maim the enslaved Linda as cannibalistic: "He came towards me, with ill-suppressed rage, and exclaimed, 'You obstinate girl! I could grind your bones to powder!'" (58). The enslaved, Black female speaker in Elizabeth Barrett

Browning's poem, "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" (1848) talks about her child (conceived in rape by her enslaver) and herself as "fruit" that was "plucked…to make them wine, / And sucked the soul of that child of mine / As the humming-bird sucks the soul of the flower" (159-161) positioning the "white angels" (157) as the eaters with the clear descriptor of "white" (116-117, 125) associating her child, the enslaver, and the angels all as one. Frederick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* (1845) poignantly contrasts and links the starvation of the enslaved with his enslavers' (and the enslaver's close friends, Methodist preachers') eating: "[t]hey used to take great pleasure in coming there to put up; for while he starved us, he stuffed them" (43). Chesnutt's *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901), when describing a white, racist mob seeking to maim and kill free Blacks, unabashedly states: "[w]hy any particular negro was assailed, no one stopped to inquire; it was merely a white mob thirsting for black blood, with no more conscience or discrimination than would be exercised by a wolf in a sheepfold" (177). I have cherry-picked these consumptive metaphors from a wide range of genres (poems, autobiographies, and novels) spanning the long 19th century from both slavery and post-slavery eras, yet they only represent a small sampling from a much larger buffet that predates and extends beyond the time period of 19th-century slavery. I argue that the abundance of slavery's (and racism's) consumptive metaphors goes beyond objectifying the enslaved by indicting the consuming enslavers revealing them (and any who benefit from slavery) as cannibals.

While many scholars, notably Kyla Wazana Tompkins' *Racial Indigestion*, have discussed the consumptive and cannibalistic nature of slavery, none, up to this point, have focused on the identification of the enslaver's cannibalism and slavery's consumable power dynamics. Tompkins makes several references to slavery as cannibalistic but does not define

why or how it is functioning. Even bell hooks who references "cannibalism" (31) in "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance" ties it to capitalism and sexual desire but stops shy of naming dominant white culture "cannibals" even as she claims that they "eat" and "own" the Black body through sex. However, I argue that consumptive metaphors are the key to reading cannibalism differently: they are the rhetorical location of structural cannibalism, the tropes that both encode cannibalism as structural and reveal the power differentials between eater and eaten.

I will be analyzing four texts that explicitly engage with slavery through consumptive metaphors: Mary Prince's *The History of Mary Prince* (1831), William Cowper's "A Negroe's Complaint: A Song" (1788) and "Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce, *or, The Slave-Trader in the Dumps* " (1788[16]), and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). The primary text that I will be focusing on is Prince's *The History*, a narrative of her enslaved experiences during the late 18th and early 19th century in the colonized British West Indies (known today as the Caribbean) and Britain. *The History*'s convoluted authorship reveals structural cannibalism in a distinctive way as the narrative of Prince, told by herself, written down by her amanuensis, Susanna Strickland, and edited by Thomas Pringle, uses an overwhelming amount of consumptive metaphors that passed through many different hands as it was published, pointing to structural cannibalism's pervasiveness. In "Pringle's Pruning of Prince: *The History of Mary Prince* and the Question of Repetition," Jessica L. Allen makes some important connections between the use of repetition and authorial voice in *The History*. She states that Pringle's self-

[16] The date that I am using for Cowper's "Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce" is the date it was written and not the date that it was published. It was written in March of 1788, the same time as he wrote "The Negro's Complaint"; however, "Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce" was published posthumously by Robert Southey in 1836 in *The Works of William Cowper, Esq., Comprising His Poems, Correspondence and Translations with a Life of the Author*.

acknowledged editing of Prince's *History* through his excising of Prince's repetitions, etc., reveals the strangled nature of the text; however, "[m]any of Prince's authorial decisions do emerge in the text, and, as many have argued, Prince wisely found ways to encode the meanings that she could not say outright" (517). I find considerable supporting evidence for Allen's view as Prince's encoded voice subtly repeats specific rhetorical terminology as well as larger themes that can be found throughout the text. We will see versions of encoding, or "veilings" (another term I will commonly employ when referencing the hidden, double entendre meaning of consumptive metaphors) throughout this chapter and the next two as I work to identify structural cannibalism's function in a variety of texts.[17]

I will examine the collective *effect* the consumptive metaphors have in *The History* by using the same approach that Suzanne Rintoul takes – based on Gillian Whitlock's *The Intimate Empire: Reading Women's Autobiography* – in "'My Poor Mistress': Marital Cruelty in *The History*." In reference to Whitlock's own delicate approach, Rintoul proposes that: "I am not, then, necessarily concerned with proving what Prince meant to do…; I am working with what the highly mediated narrating subject Prince *achieves* in the context of this broader social discourse and the elements of the text that enable those achievements" (45). By looking at what the consumptive metaphors "*achieve*[]" in *The History*, as well as in Stowe's *UTC* and Cowper's

[17] Pringle admits his own consumptive agenda for Prince's *History* with the confession of "prun[ing]" and attempts to "render it clearly intelligible" (3). One of the definitions for "render," in addition to the clarifying aspect, is to cook down fat from a piece of meat (*OED* 20. a.). His admission, then, reveals that he cannibalistically "render[s]" Prince's subjectivity and authorial control, consequently, inviting the reader to interpret the implicit, encoded language of Prince by opening up the door to broader interpretations. My point is not that Pringle's editing invalidates Prince's account of her enslaved experience, but instead reveals the minutest cannibalistic traces of a self-proclaimed abolitionist such as Pringle.

poems, we focus less on authorial intent and instead on the structural cannibalism that the metaphors reveal.

In the spirit of Emerson, my research also seeks to "rake" (5) the rhetoric used to describe slavery in order to first identify the specific tropes of slavery as cannibalistic, revealing the larger structural cannibalistic framework functioning within slavery. Prince's, Cowper's, and Stowe's texts "ransack" (Emerson 5) slavery, unveiling the secret cannibalistic acts of slavery by printing the terrors Prince and other enslaved (autobiographical and fictionalized) experienced at the hands of enslavers in the British empire and United States republic. Throughout the narratives, Prince, Stowe, and Cowper consistently refer to the abuse of the enslaved using consumptive metaphors that obfuscate and veil the humanity of the consumed (e.g. spices, fruits, butchery, cooking, markets and consumable animals), framing the power dynamics between the oppressor and the oppressed as that of eater and eaten. Emerson declared that "[the slave had] no security from the … appetites of his master" (5), positioning the enslavers as the eaters and slavery as the cannibalistic act. By digging further into this binary power dynamic of eater and eaten that Emerson metaphorizes, we expose that the enslavers' "appetite[]" was for the Black flesh of the *human* enslaved, revealing the oppressive power dynamics that enact structural cannibalism.

I am starting with slavery's consumptive metaphors because they are the most recognizable and therefore most accessible. Within the 19th century, we see authors' excessive employment of consumptive metaphors reveals 19th-century society's widespread understanding of slavery as cannibalistic. This pervasive knowledge and utilization make slavery's consumptive metaphors the most visible; more so than gender even though the patriarchy is also well-known for its consumption, and definitely more than the working class where cannibalism is even more heavily veiled. I have identified 5 interwoven categories of consumptive metaphors:

"Consumption," "Preparation," "Dehumanization/animalization," and "Location," which provide a foundation for locating and understanding how metaphors cover/unveil structural cannibalism. Consumptive metaphors code the eating of the oppressed as normal; they cover the enslaved's humanity by associating them with something that is readily and easily consumed (such as an animal). The enslaved's treatment *as* consumable objects are not simply metaphors, for while they are objects being bought, sold, bred, and abused, they are still humans – humans who are being used up and ingested by fellow humans.

Commodification – Literal and Metaphorical

Enslavers inarguably commodified the Black body, yet that commodification was extended beyond the metaphorical to embodied consumption through the ingestion of the very products that those bodies produced revealing a historical cycle that is rooted in the triangular trade that feeds Western society (and specifically for the case of my study, the United States and Britain). William Cowper's famous abolitionist ballad, "The Negro's Complaint," reveals that the triangular trade did not just consume Black bodies but also the byproducts of those bodies. In the terms of Cowper's poem, he identifies their blood, sweat, tears, flesh, etc. that were expended for the sake of Western ingestion through the capitalist production and consumption of sugar:

> Why did all-creating Nature
> Make the plant, for which we toil?
> Sighs must fan it, tears must water,
> Sweat of ours must dress the soil.
> …
> Think how many backs have smarted
> For the sweets your Cane affords. (17-20, 23-24)

Cowper's poem confronts the reader with the products of the enslaved body: their salty tears and sweat both watering and providing nutrients to the soil that grows the sugar cane. The enslaved speaker reveals a mingling or merging of the Black body with the very product, sugar, that will

be ingested by Western society inversely evoking its cannibalistic orality. The enslaved's sweat and tears have now become part of the sugar cane that will eventually become the "sweets" that the white Western world eats.

This consumptive connection between the sugar and the enslaved body is extended by the lines: "[t]hink, how many backs have smarted / For the sweets your Cane affords" (23-24). These lines turn on the phrase "Cane," which references both the canes that have been used to beat the enslaved bodies and the ingestible sugar cane. We will see further examples of how whips and beatings would literally remove parts of flesh, blood, and sweat. In this instance, the object that is doing the removing or consuming of the Black body – the "Cane" – is also the object that will be eaten. The white reader is confronted with a gory sugar cane, coated with the flesh of the enslaved that is then turned into sugary "sweets" for the white Western world to inadvertently consume. It is quite literally a stomach-churning food that Western society would never consent to eating, especially a food that is "tainted" with Black blood or sweat. Cowper makes the literal, elemental conversion of Black flesh into white sugar rhetorically visible. The poem indicts more than just the enslavers or those who physically oppressed and abused the enslaved as it places the instrument of torture, the cane, in both the hands of those who physically beat Black bodies, and those who "merely" ate the blood and sweat infused sugar.

Cowper's poem traces the capitalist system's triangular trade as he connects the expiration and consumption of the enslaved with its start in the purchase and forced removal of Blacks from Africa: "Forced from Home and all its pleasures / Afric's coast I left forlorn, / To increase a stranger's treasures / … Men from England bought and sold me" (1-3, 5). The cycle continues with their work and torture for a product such as sugar that is then bought and ingested. Cowper then implies, in his poetic version of the capitalist cycle of slavery, how the demand for sweets

required that the ship yet again return to Africa for more Black bodies to feed the white appetite (23-24). This capitalist cycle's horrifying abuse of Black humanity for financial gains, implicated by the word "affords" and solidified in the last verse with the exclamation: "[s]laves of Gold!" (53), is well-documented in texts such as Peter Fryer's influential work, *The History of Black People in Britain*.[18] The scholarship focused more on the capitalism and commodification of the enslaved, yet as Cowper gorily illustrates above, the capital gains that were a result of the triangular trade and the consumption of commodities such as sugar or salt intertwined the use of the enslaved Black body and its byproducts with the very commodities that they were being used to produce, positioning the commodity consumers as cannibals of the enslaved.

Cowper's use of consumptive metaphors arrests the reader with the enslaver's gruesome abuses of the enslaved thereby covering the cannibalism of the oppressors while also inferring it. In *The History*, Prince similarly targets the cannibalistic power dynamics within slavery through metaphors. Prince declares that the abuse and ingestion of the enslaved is allowed to occur because it is hidden:

> Since I have been here I have often wondered how English people can go out into the West Indies and act in such a beastly manner. But when they go to the West Indies, they forget God and all feeling of shame, I think, since they can see and do such things. They tie up slaves like hogs – moor* them up like cattle, and they lick them, so as hogs, or cattle, or horses never were flogged; – and yet they come home and say, and make

[18] Peter Fryer notes the effects the triangular trade had on British industrialism stating that "[r]ising British capitalism had a magic money machine, an endless chain with three links: sugar cultivation; manufacturing industry; and the slave trade. And the slave trade was the 'essential link'. The whole system 'was frankly regarded as resting on slavery'" (16). While Fryer is only focusing on sugar, both Michelle Speitz and Matthew Rowney talk about the larger impact that enslaved salt harvesting had for the Americas and Britain since salt was necessary for the functioning of daily life. Because salt was the main ingredient for preserving foods in the 18th and 19th centuries, slavery and enslaved salt raking was the foundation for Western society functioning and was more important and widely used than the "indulgent" commodity of sugar.

> some good people believe, that slaves don't want to get out of slavery. But they put a cloak about the truth. It is not so. (37-8)

Slavery's deception, according to Prince, is indivisible from consumption since references to the enslaved treated like "hogs," "cattle," and "lick[ing]" are intertwined with slavery's lies. Prince calls out the hypocrisy of those in any way involved with slavery, saying they can get away with their beastly actions because they "put a cloak about the truth" and, using even stronger language, that the white men outright lie: "[t]he man that says slaves be quite happy in slavery – that they don't want to be free – that man is either ignorant or a lying person" (38). Prince directly confronts the cloaking of slavery by identifying the Western world's use of consumptive metaphors while simultaneously employing them to reveal the Westerner's "beastly" behavior.

Prince carefully navigates slavery's cannibalistic power structures in *The History* by focusing on the enslaver's use of consumptive metaphors. Attempting to not employ consumptive metaphors in her own descriptions of the enslaved, Prince reveals the "truth" (Prince 38) hiding in plain sight as it were, that the enslaved are humans who are dehumanized and cannibalized by the enslavers: "[o]h, the Buckra people who keep slaves think that black people are like cattle, without natural affection. But my heart tells me it is far otherwise" (Prince 18). Prince's lament draws the attention of the reader to two primary "truth[s]": that the "Buckra people," those who are white, have convinced themselves that Black people are "like cattle," to be butchered and eaten, contrasted with Prince's declaration that her "heart tells [her] it is far otherwise." While the language that Prince uses functions as a plea, it also redirects the reader from the enslaver's attempts at deforming the enslaved into readily consumed animals who are "without natural affection," to the human emotions located within a shared signifier of humanity, the heart. Prince contrasts the consumptive metaphors of the enslavers with the humanity of the enslaved,

resisting, or, as Tompkins would beautifully articulate it, "stick[ing]" (8) in the gullet of the cannibals.

The readers, enslavers, and the white Western world willingly accepted the veiling the metaphor provided, willfully covering the underlying humanity of the enslaved. Because cattle are animals, the use of the term "cattle" to describe the enslaved and their treatment creates the initial association as that of dehumanizing rhetoric. This is part of the metaphor's effects creating associations between unlike things – cattle equals enslaved – and yet there is another layer that covers the root of the metaphor. The term "cattle" is meant to represent the treatment of the enslaved meaning that the metaphor also points to the shared positionality between the enslaved and the cattle. It is the "truth" that cattle are animals that are eaten by humans without apology, yet the enslaved cannot physically be dehumanized since their embodiment as people remains even while they are treated as cattle. The metaphor obscures this by making it a matter of inference, fabricating a literary relationality of "unlikeness" between their treatment. The only "unlikeness" that is present in the consumptive metaphor is that cattle are assumed to be treated and eaten as cattle, whereas the humans are *not* cattle, yet they are also treated and eaten as cattle. "Cattle," then, is not merely a metaphor that dehumanizes through unlike associations, but actually highlights the uncomfortable similarities, revealing the enslaver's cannibalism even as it covers it up. Obviously, Prince's oppressed and Othered positionality is such that she would be unable to directly accuse those involved with slavery of cannibalism for a variety of reasons, but primarily because her audience was white, British citizens. There is another reason, as we can see through the complicated valances of consumptive metaphors, that cannibalism is not directly named – it is because structural cannibalism is so embedded within slavery that it is exceedingly

difficult to identify – however, we can see its impact, its effects, on Prince, Cowper, and Stowe through their overwhelming use of consumptive metaphors.

So far in this chapter I have been intent on demonstrating how slavery's employment of consumptive metaphors is integral to its acceptance/functioning within the 19th century. I have belabored the 19th-century commodification of the enslaved body and its consumption because the functioning of structural cannibalism is incredibly nuanced. At first glance, it appears obvious, the number of consumptive metaphors combined with the objectification and consumerism of the enslaved body as a product screams "cannibalism"; yet the metaphors go beyond mere associations as they subtly construct and deconstruct identities. While the consumptive metaphors stand in as fabricating like and unlike correlations, the actions of the enslavers accusatorily point to the "truth"; the enslaved are *not* consumable animals or even *like* them, yet they are treated, traded, sold, and abused as such or worse.

There are different types of consumptive metaphors, dehumanizing both the eater and the eaten through extended close readings of Prince, Cowper, and Stowe. Because of slavery's overt reliance upon consumptive metaphors, I provide a few basic categories that allow us to begin to analyze the power dynamics within structural cannibalism. What will become apparent as we study the cannibalistic metaphors is that they are not easily classified and almost resist categorization because they are so intertwined. The categories as they loosely stand are Ingestion (actions of eating or incorporation specifically), Preparation (treatments of the enslaved bodies), Dehumanization (or animalization), and Location. As we will see with the term "lick," the first consumptive metaphor I analyze in *The History*, it is both a noun and a verb, an action of eating and of abuse, literal and slang terminology. As soon as one begins examining the orality of "lick" we slide from the category of consumptive action to its dehumanization. When we explore the

dehumanization and animalization of the enslaved, we shift from the analysis of consumable chickens to their preparation, and then to the location where it occurs. It is almost a matter of multiplication; the doubled and tripled effect of consumptive metaphors increases the consumability of the enslaved. All of these "categories": Ingestion, Preparation, Animalization, and Location point to the "intent" of white desire and consumption of the enslaved Black body.

Categories of Structural Cannibalism: Ingestion

Prince will anchor my analysis of the cannibalistic categories in slavery because her narrative provides the strongest and most varied use of metaphors, with Cowper and Stowe sprinkled throughout to provide nuance and contrast regarding their differing privileges and perspectives. Allen provides us with an easy entrance into the category of "Ingestion" in Prince's *History* as Allen studies the importance of repetition within African narratives and specifically Creole linguistics, stating that the use of repetition is not a sign of redundancy and ineffective communication, but that it is used to emphasize the importance of a point. While Allen's argument focuses on the employment and effects of repetition within Prince's *History*, she does not specify the types of repetition that are found. One of *The History*'s most striking and consistent uses of repetition is the word "lick":

> I have seen their flesh ragged and raw with licks. – Lick – lick – they were never secure one moment from a blow, and their lives were passed in continual fear. My mistress was not contented with using the whip, but often pinched their cheeks and arms in the most cruel manner. My pity for these poor boys was soon transferred to myself; for I was licked, and flogged, and pinched by her pitiless fingers in the neck and arms, exactly as they were. (15)

The repetition of the word "lick" not only uses onomatopoeia to emphasize the sound of the beatings, but also the regular and repetitive nature of abuse and torture that both the enslaved children, Cyrus and Jack, as well as Prince experienced. In *The History*'s short pamphlet, "lick"

peppers the pages. Found a grand total of 13 times in the 35-page narrative, the term overpoweringly flavors the text, bringing attention to more than just quantity and extent of abuse by also playing on the numerous connotative ways "lick" can be interpreted.[19]

The consumptive dynamics of "lick" is complex, going beyond signifying abuse as it evokes the oral act of licking. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Prince's slang and contextual use of "lick" in *The History* means: "To beat, thrash. Also, to drive (something) *out of* (a person) by thrashing. *to lick off*: to cut off clean, to slice off" (6.); it is physical, violent, and even psychological. The violence of this image is increased when the primary use of "lick" is defined: "To pass the tongue over (something), e.g. with the object of tasting, moistening the surface, or removing something from it" (1.) It is the first definition listed in the dictionary and it is a transitive verb transferring the action from the subject, Mrs I—, the abuser, to the objects, Prince, Cyrus and Jack. The sentence structure enforces the content of the description, rendering the enslaved as passive grammatical objects of the enslavers' active abuse. The very linguistic structure of the consumptive metaphor reduces the enslaved to the position of consumable object while positioning the enslaver as the "lick[er]" and eater.

---

[19] Torture is another way the oppressed are dehumanized as Elaine Scarry points out in The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World: "[i]t is the intense pain that destroys a person's self and world, …. Intense pain is also language-destroying: as the content of one's world disintegrates, so the content of one's language disintegrates; as the self disintegrates, so that which would express and project the self is robbed of its source and its subject" (35). By destroying the ability to express one's inner self, one's humanity, through language, by reducing the oppressed and tortured individual's expression to that of inarticulate, animalistic cries and howls of pain, the tortured is deformed and dehumanized. We see this glaringly in slavery as well as in capitalism, where torture is often consumptively metaphorized and the animalistic, inarticulate cries of pain are viewed as further justifications for their oppressed and consumed positions.

While licking is not the most obvious physical act of ingesting, tasting – the primary reason for licking – in many ways is irrevocably tied with the act of chewing, and eating. Quite often it is the first stage of ingestion as it initiates the destruction and internalization that occurs when a person eats, yet it is not only the beginning. The definition also indicates that licking can take something away from the object involving tasting and swallowing the flavor or portions of the object to consume. My imperfect example would be the licking of an ice cream cone, which is not solely the tasting of the ice cream but is simultaneously the eating of it as well. Similarly, as the enslavers in Prince's *The History* beat or whip the enslaved, and specifically Prince, through licks, we are confronted with the image of a whip, or stick, such as Cowper's "Cane" (24) above consumptively removing blood, muscle, skin, and salty sweat with each and every lick. "Lick" focuses the reader on the orality of the oppressor and the physicality of their cannibalistic abuse.

Categories of Structural Cannibalism: Preparation

The same scene from Prince above introduces another consumptive action, "pinch," which emphasized the preparation of the Black body as food to be eaten or "lick[ed]." "Pinch" is another form of abuse and physical violence that is associated with cooking and, by extension, eating. Pinching connotatively implies food through the imagery of pinching or sealing a piecrust, testing the doneness of a cooked piece of meat or the ripeness of fruit, or serving as a cooking measurement with "a pinch of salt" ("pinch" I. 1., 2., 2. c., 12.). Pinching is paired in Prince's recorded list of abuse with "lick[s]" separated by "flogged," not only implying a difference between the types of abuse (specifically a distinction between "lick[ings]" and "flogg[ings]"), but that the consumptive metaphors build upon each other, bookending the list of abuses. If we understand structural cannibalism as oppressors cannibalizing the oppressed, then

The History's abuse, slavery's abuse, is an inherently violent form signifying Western savagery. Its compounding consumptive metaphors through both Preparation and Ingestion of the enslaved body in this scene consistently and repetitively point to cannibalistic violence; more than that, combined with the description of the enslaver's abuse as "not content," "cruel," and "pitiless," we see that the oppressor's desire for Black flesh is insatiable.

Another form of preparation is seasoning or flavoring the flesh, which Prince denotatively identifies when she describes her and her sisters, Hannah's and Dinah's, first time being sold at a slave market. After arriving at the market, Prince notes the effects that slavery has on both the enslaver and the enslaved by contrasting the enslaver's hard hearts (11) with the description a moment before that Prince's "heart throbbed with grief and terror ... as though it would burst out of [her] body" (11). The reader is presented with the juxtaposition between the hardness and virtual inedibility of a white person's heart versus Prince's emotional and tenderized heart that is being prepped for the market.[20] This is expounded upon as Prince's preparation progresses from that of a tenderization process to a seasoning one: "and many of them were not slow to make their remarks upon us aloud, without regard to our grief – though their light words fell like cayenne on the fresh wounds of our hearts" (11). The enslaved sisters are being prepared for an enslaver's dinner table, treated like so many living, raw pieces of meat. Even the very act of preparation is torturous for Prince as the spicy, inflammatory cayenne burns and flavors Prince's heart. Cayenne itself is a unique Caribbean spice descriptor, one that the British may not

[20] The hardness of heart metaphor is commonly found in slavery. It can be found in Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* and Stowe's *UTC* where we see slavery as hardening not just the enslaver's hearts like Mr. Shelby, Haley, and Legree, but slavery hardening the hearts of the enslaved like Eliza, George, and Cassy (with the exceptions of course of Mrs. Shelby, George Shelby, Evangeline, and Tom).

have been as familiar with. It is a chili that is described as "hot, pungent and biting" ("Cayenne Pepper"), an aggressive and violent spice that is itself consumptive in its flavoring. It is not a spice that adds flavor but packs a punishing heat.[21] Instead of the physical abuse we found with the "pinch" preparation, we are now confronted with emotional abuse that the tenderizing and cayenne seasoning disgustingly highlights.

Cayenne's connotative function is taken up by the denotative functions of salt in *The History*. It is a trope that has been briefly analyzed by Michele Speitz and Matthew Rowney. What is unique about Prince's narrative, as argued by both Rowney and Speitz, is the focus on the savory, specifically salt, as compared with sweet and sugar. While many other enslaved and abolitionist texts focused on the luxury commodity of sugar resulting in its being boycotted, *The History* focuses on salt, which was a commodity that was necessary to life and survival in the late 18th and early 19th centuries because of its preservative and curative properties (Rowney 358). Prince draws particular attention to salt, not just the metaphorical uses, as we will briefly examine, but also the economical, physical, and psychological impacts it had on the world, and specifically enslaved individuals. Prince spent 10 years painfully raking salt ponds in Grand Quay. The language that is used to describe Prince's time there conveys the horrifying and grueling conditions that enslaved individuals were forced to endure in order to preserve and support the world economy and the dominant power structures:

> We were then called again to our tasks, and worked through the heat of the day; the sun flaming upon our heads like fire, and raising salt blisters in those parts which were not completely covered. Our feet and legs, from standing in the salt water for so many hours, soon became full of dreadful

---

[21] Many chilis have curative properties and are used as treatment for various ailments. It is ingested for medical issues such as indigestion and circulatory issues, as well as rubbed topically into the skin in order to treat swelling and joint pain. There are several references to spices in *The History* that will be further explored – salt in particular, which is another curative spice.

> boils, which eat down in some cases to the very bone, afflicting the sufferers with great torment. (Prince 19)

Here, we are confronted with salt that both painfully tortures and consumes as Prince unflinchingly records the effects of salt eating the flesh of the enslaved down to the bone through the boils. While the boils may have performed the act of eating the flesh, salt began the process by irritating the skin and opening the flesh and continued it as the boils festered and grew in the salt water. We are confronted with the image of salt ingesting the enslaved "down to the bone."[22] That it was the salt and not the enslaver consuming the enslaved's flesh initially creates a distance regarding the cannibalism, yet tracing the actors of the violence back, we know that Prince is forced to painfully rake the salt ponds because of her enslavers.

The veiling of the oppressor's cannibalistic actions is further complicated since the salt that consumes Prince's objectified body is also the salt that she is harvesting for the white, Western world to consume. Speitz points out that "[s]alt literally breaches the boundary between the commodity and the laboring body. ... She [Prince] is cannibalized by salt; she exists as a human commodity, a slave, and harvests a commodity, salt, that devours her flesh." Speitz argues that salt cannibalizes Prince as it eats her flesh, suggesting that Prince becomes the very salt that she is harvesting. While *The History* certainly lends itself to a reading like that, I believe that the text focuses more on the salting of Prince – the seasoning as you will – of enslaved individuals. The text draws attention to the extended amount of time that the enslaved spent in salt water as it broke down their flesh, tenderized it, and, as Speitz emphasizes, pervaded their flesh. It is almost as if they are being marinated or brined (an aqueous solution of liquid and salt

[22] Salt was also forcibly consumed by the enslaved because salt water was a common remedy for illness and was believed to have healing capabilities even though, according to Prince, it made them sicker (Rowney 359).

most often used to flavor meat) in the salt as it slowly consumes them. Any number of cooking websites such as tasteofhome.com, thekitchn.com, or cooksillustrated.com talk about the "benefits of brining:" "[b]rining … seasons the meat down to the bone. / Brining promotes a change in the structure of the proteins in the muscle. The salt causes protein strands to become denatured, or unwound. This is the same process that occurs when proteins are exposed to heat, acid, or alcohol." ("The Science of Brining"). According to *Cook's Illustrated*, brining seasons "down to the bone"; this phrase is unnervingly familiar. *Cook's Illustrated* is *not* a website of cannibal recipes, yet the treatment of the enslaved enacted the same brining process. Going beyond the simpler act of flavoring, brining transforms the meat giving it a better texture, which also happens when meat is cooked. Salt, then, works as more than just a seasoning, cooking as well as consuming the enslaved. To zoom out from the microscopic level of salt flavoring and transforming the enslaved to the macro: the salt is meant for the consumption of the white, dominant power structures, and since the salt is consuming the enslaved, they are, as Speitz suggests, becoming one with the salt, which is then consumed by the white, Western world. Different from Cowper's imagery of the sugar cane grown through the tears, sweat, and blood of the enslaved and used as a weapon of torture, the process of salt eating the flesh of the enslaved that is then eaten by the Western world makes the act more visceral by focusing on the incorporation and internalization of Black flesh. We are confronted with the circuitous ingestion of the Western world literally cannibalizing the enslaved's flesh as they ate the salt that ate the enslaved.

Salt's metaphorical and literal consumptive qualities in *The History* are complex, seasoning as well as transforming Black flesh. Salt also has destructive and corrosive properties that perform cannibalism for the oppressor. Meredith Gadsby's *Sucking Salt: Caribbean Women*

Writers, Migration, and Survival references a common action in slavery: "'seasoning'" an act of torture where "a whipped slave whose bleeding wounds are rubbed in salt or washed with brine" (45). Prince provides a detailed account of "seasoning" with old, enslaved Daniel, where the slave owner, Mr D—:

> would order him [Daniel] to be stripped and laid down on the ground, and have him beaten with a rod of rough briar till his skin was quite red and raw. He would then call for a bucket of salt, and fling upon the raw flesh till the man writhed on the ground like a worm, and screamed aloud with agony. This poor man's wounds were never healed, and I have often seen them full of maggots, which increased his torments to an intolerable degree. He was an object of pity and terror to the whole gang of slaves, and in his wretched case we saw, each of use, our own lot, if we should live to be so old. (21)

This stomach-turning scene provides a clear example of "seasoning" that goes beyond torture to ingestion as the maggots slowly consumed his raw, rotting flesh. The enslaver had Daniel "seasoned" because he was old and lame; consequently, he was no longer deemed a "valuable" object. The salt is an added level of torture that amplifies the pain and dehumanization as well as causing it to fester and rot causing it to be eaten by maggots. No longer able to rake the salt ponds, he is abused by the very product that destroyed his objectified body. Daniel's "seasoning" decimated his flesh, deforming him from a living human being to what is essentially a living corpse. Maggots only consume rotting, dead flesh, so even though he was still alive, his flesh was dead, revealing his positionality as that of living death (Oldroyd). It is a moment that signifies how Daniel's life has been used up – his body and his health – and the consumptive process that began with his enslavement will end with his death as the maggots eat his rotting flesh in both life and death. Prince clarifies that this is not a singular case, but that all who are enslaved will meet such a horrific end.

Categories of Structural Cannibalism: Dehumanization (or Animalization)

The oppressors are not always the ones enacting their cannibalism and often force others lower in the structure to perform the abusive actions on their behalf. We see this clearly with Prince's mother who dehumanizes herself and her daughters, Prince, Dinah, and Hannah. Dehumanizing the enslaved, viewing them as objects, most often as animalistic or even less, in many cases, than animals, creates a physical distance in the food chain between white humanity as the dominant power and enslaved peoples. Isabel Wilkerson's *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* identifies this false distancing, stating that:

> the dominant caste lived under the illusion of an innate superiority over all other groups of humans, told themselves that the people they forced to work for up to eighteen hours, without the pay that anyone had a right to expect, were not, in fact, people, but beasts of the field, childlike creatures, not men, not women, that the performance of servility that had been flogged out of them arose from genuine respect and admiration of their innate glory. (56)

This self-constructed power dynamic positioning white people as the dominant caste of society conversely fabricated the "illusion" that the enslaved were not human even though their bodies identified them as such. Even Wilkerson's inclusion of such a term as "childlike," which suggests at least some level of humanity, is succeeded by the term "creatures." To the furthest extent of society, fully sanctioned by the dominant governing bodies, Black people were legally classified as non-human in order to sustain the lie that justified their objectification and consumption of another set of peoples.

Prince depicts the dreadful moment as a child where she learns of her societally sanctioned objecthood when she is taken to be sold at the slave market. Prince's mother mournfully defines their oppressed positionality: "'See, I am *shrouding* my poor children; what a task for a mother!'" (10). The emphasis, original to the text, focuses the reader on the image of

burial and death that awaited her enslaved children while in the same breath claiming her humanity, specifically her motherhood. Paired with this statement, Prince's mother utilizes consumptive metaphors to describe both herself and her children: "'I am going to carry my little chickens to market'" (10). First, we have the acknowledgement of age and size through the descriptor "little." Then there is the commodification metaphor equating the children with chickens, a commonly consumed livestock. This underscores the mother's role which has been perverted to that of mother "hen," rendering herself and her children inhuman with the analogy. She is also made an accomplice in the cannibalistic abuse as she is forced into the role of poultry farmer conveying her children to the market to be sold for consumption. She acts as a delivery person, the go-between, but her position as enslaved complicates the reading. She is both a consumed product herself as well as someone who is required to treat her own daughters as consumable products. A common occurrence found throughout the history of slavery where the enslaved are compelled to become complicit in cannibalistic acts. Mirrored in Stowe's *UTC*, the enslaved are forced to hunt down fellow escaped enslaved as well as torture and rule over others as overseers.[23] Dehumanization of the enslaved through consumptive metaphors distances the enslaver from their abusive actions, and by forcing the enslaved to enact violence on the enslaver's behalf, it creates additional distance, intensifying the abuse.

Prince's, Hannah's, and Dinah's dehumanization is increased because of their gender; their Black female bodies signifying them as consumable visually, sexually, and physically. Prince's mother attempts to hide their female bodies from the consumptive gaze of those at the market: "[w]e followed my mother to the market-place, where she placed us in a row against a

[23] Such as Sambo and Quimbo from Stowe's *UTC*.

large house, with our backs to the wall and our arms folded across our breasts" (11). Their crossed arms both present for and hide their breasts from consumption while simultaneously attempting to physically protect their bodies and maintain a sliver of human dignity. There is a subtle shift in Prince's description as she is put up for sale. No longer is the focus on her and her sisters' bodies, the focus is now on the actions of those involved with slavery as they animalize the enslaved: "the vendue master, who was to offer us for sale like sheep or cattle, arrived" (11). At the slave market they are further presented and treated like animals to be eaten:

> He took me by the hand, and led me out into the middle of the street, and, turning me slowly round, exposed me to the view of those who attended the vendue. I was soon surrounded by strange men, who examined and handled me in the same manner that a butcher would a calf or a lamb he was about to purchase, and who talked about my shape and size in like words – as if I could no more understand their meaning than the dumb beasts. I was then put up to sale. The bidding commenced at a few pounds, and gradually rose to fifty-seven;* when I was knocked down to the highest bidder; and the people who stood by said that I had fetched a great sum for so young a slave. (11-2)

The physicality of this scene is grating – Prince is a child whose hand is taken by an adult and led to the butcher's block. The language above evinces the unwilling, and perverse nature of selling humans with the word "exposed" (*OED*) signifying her body on display like a piece of living meat. It was a common practice to physically strip the enslaved bodies in preparation for the auction so as to not hide anything from buyers[24] – it also reveals the enslavers' shamelessness

---

[24] For instance, *Slave Auctions: Selections from 19th-century Narratives of Formerly Enslaved African Americans*, provided by the National Humanities Center, includes similar excerpts on slave auction practices from five slave narratives: Henry Watson's *Narrative of Henry Watson, A Fugitive Slave*, Henry Bibb's *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb, an American Slave, Written by Himself*, Josiah Henson's *Truth Stranger than Fiction: Father Henson's Story of His Own Life*, William J. Anderson's *Life and Narrative of William J. Anderson, Twenty-four Years a Slave; Sold Eight Times! In Jail Sixty Times!! Whipped Three Hundred Times!!! Or the Dark Deeds of American Slavery Revealed*, and William Wells Brown's *Narrative of William W. Brown, A Fugitive Slave, Written by Himself*.

and inhumanity, most likely another reason why Prince's mother crosses her daughters' arms across their breasts. The sexual nature that is obviously implied with the statement about their breasts as well as their being exposed – for even one as young as Prince and her sisters – is particularly sickening. Her body was visually consumed by the buyers at the market as she was rotated, exposed, and examined, specifically by white men, with her entire body available to them.

Each of these consumptive categories are so enmeshed with each other that we cannot discuss the dehumanization of the enslaved body without discussing the preparation of that body for consumption. The animalization of Prince as a chick, lamb, or calf justifies the preparation of her body for ingestion and vice versa as the slow rotation of Prince's body invokes the image of meat being rotisseried as it is slowly roasted over a fire. Note again the reinforcement of her young age by using the names for young animals. Compounding the visual consumption, Prince was physically handled "in the same manner that a butcher would a calf or a lamb he was about to purchase" (11). Prince excoriates the enslaver's dehumanization as she equates the white men with butchers and their treatment of her body as an animal to be slaughtered and then eaten. It is her careful attribution of animalized treatment of the enslaved to the enslavers' actions and language that allows her to then turn their own despicable, dehumanization against them by calling them "butcher[s]" (11). The enslavers treat her like an animal, talk about her as an animal, view her as an animal, and are given the title of butchers. After being sold, the comments upon her worth are tied to her monetary value as part of an economic system, finalizing Prince's body as a consumable food product within slavery's structural cannibalism.

The animalization that dehumanizes and deforms the enslaved is not unidirectional within structural cannibalism, as the consumptive dehumanization deforms the enslaved and enslaver

alike, although in very different ways.[25] Prince resists employing animalization metaphors to herself and her fellow enslaved, yet even as careful as she is in ascribing the consumptive metaphors to the enslaver's rhetoric and actions, we see above, in her description of the enslaved Daniel's "seasoning," a simile that compares his writhing in pain to that of a "worm" (21). Structural cannibalism is so prevalent in slavery that even Prince who is exposing the abuses of slavery slips into the common language of slavery's dehumanization.

Returning back to Prince's excoriation of the British, we see the contrast between Daniel's dehumanized and lowest position (because of his age, disability, and enslavement) within structural cannibalism with the dehumanized enslavers: "Since I have been here I have often wondered how English people can go out into the West Indies and act in such a beastly manner. But when they go to the West Indies, they forget God and all feeling of shame, I think, since they can see and do such things" (37-8). This time, instead of focusing on the slavery's veiling through consumptive metaphors, we see Prince's identification of the deformation that occurs when "civilized" British citizens are actively engaged in the enslavement of human beings. They become "beasts," forgetting their humanity and their God as they abuse and consume fellow humans. Wilkerson expounds further on the dehumanization of the enslavers stating:

> The people whose ancestors had put them atop the hierarchy grew accustomed to the unearned deference from the subjugated group and came to expect it. They told themselves that the people beneath them did not feel pain or heartache, were debased machines that only looked human and upon whom one could inflict any atrocity. The people who told themselves these things were telling lies to themselves. Their lives were to

---

[25] It is important to note that while I will use phrases like "slavery's dehumanization" or "slavery's deformation," I am in no way removing the enslaver's culpability for their actions and abuses. I am working within the language of the texts which focuses on slavery as the actor. This rhetorical move lessens the "sting" of the indictment while focusing on slavery as a whole as the evil and not individuals.

> some degree a lie and in dehumanizing these people whom they regarded as beasts of the field, they dehumanized themselves. (56)

Instead of the Black bodies as beasts or animals, it is the white Western body politic that slavery has dehumanized; it is a metaphorical transposition that flips the positions of the enslaved and the enslavers. No longer are the enslaved the societal "savages," slavery has inversely deformed the "civilized" Western world and has revealed them as the cannibalistic brutes. Prince's intentionality in avoiding (for the most part) the animalization and dehumanization of the enslaved is similarly found in her embrace of the consumptive metaphors to describe the enslavers as she upends and weaponizes the same consumptive metaphors the enslavers used for the enslaved by turning their own savage rhetoric against them.

Prince continues her condemnation of the enslavers' cannibalism by providing two specific examples of deformed enslavers. She begins by identifying both of her enslavers, Capt. I— and Mr D—, as "butcher[s]:" "I hoped, when I left Capt. I—, that I should have been better off, but I found it was but going from one butcher to another" (20). Prince contrasts these two animalistic enslavers, presenting them as equally dehumanized. Their cannibalistic and consumptive signifiers are strengthened by the pairing of their titles of "butchers" with this description of their physical and mental state when they abused her:

> There was this difference between them: my former master used to beat me while raging and foaming with passion; Mr D— was usually quite calm. He would stand by and give orders for a slave to be cruelly whipped, and assist in the punishment, without moving a muscle of his face; walking about and taking snuff with the greatest composure. Nothing could touch his hard heart – neither sighs, nor tears, nor prayers, nor streaming blood; he was deaf to our cries, and careless of our sufferings. – Mr D— has often stripped me naked, hung me up by the wrists, and beat me with the cow-skin, with his own hand, till my body was raw with gashes. Yet there was nothing very remarkable in this; for it might serve as a sample of the common usage of the slaves on that horrible island. (20)

Capt. I—'s abuse was filled with visible violence, hatred, and anger. He raged and foamed at the mouth, animalistic imagery that is reminiscent of rabies, a viral disease that is spread primarily by biting. It focuses on his orality through his verbal actions, the raging, and his physical ones, foaming at the mouth. Prince's description of Capt. I— is very different from the cool and immovable Mr D—. Where before we had a bestial characterization filled with rage and violence, Mr D— is portrayed as having no emotion whatsoever. In this representation, it is his very lack of human emotion that reveals his dehumanized status. We are confronted with a disturbing image of a human without humanity, who's "hard heart" is not touched by human sorrow or bodily distress, who's "deaf" and who's actions reveal him, even more than Prince's bestowed title, as being a human butcher as he strung up Prince's body, draining the blood and stretching the skin flaying her alive. The brutal wildness of Capt. I— and the inhumane coldness of Mr D— differently yet equally expose them as deformed, monstrous predators. Their cannibalistic savagery was not isolated to just Prince's personal experience, as she reminds the reader that slavery's abuse was widespread: "there was nothing very remarkable in this; for it might serve as a sample of the common usage of the slaves on that horrible island" (20).

Categories of Structural Cannibalism: Location

Finally, we have the last category of structural cannibalism, Location, exploring how spaces, and for the sake of this specific study public places, reinforce and extend the consumptive power dynamics. Tompkins' *Racial Indigestion* focuses on the kitchen and hearth, even the structures of houses, as mouthpieces for the construction of the white body politic. These private, domestic spaces such as kitchens are where one would expect to find the preparation of the enslaved bodies, yet the capitalistic nature of slavery reveals the preparation, consumption, and animalization to be just as commonly found in public spaces. Prince, Stowe,

and Cowper identify these public spaces such as slave markets and auctions as having the ability to both deform and construct consumptive identities and power structures. Returning to Prince's mother's mournful declaration once again, this time with the focus on the space of the slave market we see a consumerist dynamic presenting the Black body as food and the market as the place where food (human and non) is taken: "'I am going to carry my little chickens to market,' (these were her very words)" (10). It is the common definition according to the *OED* that animals, not humans, get taken to the market to be sold. In fact, the entire dictionary entry on the noun "market" only mentions slavery once, and it pertains to the action of selling and not the location (II. 4. e.). The primary definition for market is simple and concise: "A place at which trade is conducted" (1.) with a specific emphasis on the market as being: "A meeting or gathering together of people for the purchase and sale of provisions or livestock, publicly displayed, at a fixed time and place; the occasion or time of this" (a.). There is no reference to humanity or enslaved peoples anywhere in this primary definition, but what is included is "livestock." Because we know that some markets were solely slave markets or included sales of the enslaved, the vague term "livestock" must silently include enslaved peoples. They are cannibalistically viewed and treated as objects, not subjects, livestock such as chickens, sheep, and cattle, not humans. Combine the consumable objecthood of the enslaved with Prince's mother having to "shroud[] [her] poor children" (10) for the market, the consumptive metaphors create a haunting image of the marketplace as being equivalent with death and slaughter for the enslaved human beings.

We find a denotative reference of the enslaved as "livestock" in a footnote from Thomas Pringle in *The History* when describing a slave auction. Immediately following the slave market scene, Pringle portrays a similar circumstance where other enslaved peoples were sold with the

qualifying comment that "[t]he resemblance [between market scenes] is easily accounted for: slavery wherever it prevails produces similar effects" (12). Pringle's sweeping declaration on the effects of slavery reveal its widespread cannibalism. In this note, the enslaved are sold as part of a farm auction at the Cape of Good Hope:

> Among the stock of the farm sold, was a female slave and her three children. … The whole family were exhibited together, but they were sold separately, and to different purchasers. The farmers examined them as if they had been so many head of cattle. While the sale was going on, the mother and her children were exhibited on a table, that they might be seen by the company, which was very large. (12)

We find at this public auction similar consumptive metaphors identifying the enslaved as the "stock of the farm" and treating them as consumable cattle. There is a subtle difference in this description of the auction as compared with the slave market: the enslaved family were "exhibited on a table" (12). Displaying the Black bodies on a table merges private and public spaces, inviting the public buyers to intimately feast on the enslaved. Treated as cattle and included amongst the "stock of the farm" yet presented on a table, the structural cannibalism categories are collapsed. Instead of only animalization of the enslaved family through their treatment and inclusion as livestock, we see preparation as they are handled and "examined" as well as the final consumptive feast. Structural cannibalism is not contained to only public or private spheres (nor can it be defined through categories of consumptive metaphors) but can be found in both. The slave auction reveals the inability to isolate the public consumption from the private as the enslaved Black bodies were presented food for the "purchasers and spectators" to consume physically and visually.

The terms used to define the locations for the selling of the enslaved progresses from the invisibility and erasure of the enslaved that occurs at the "market" to the undeniably consumptive "mart" in Cowper's "The Negroe's Complaint: A Song" revealing the locations themselves to be

functioning, complex consumptive metaphors. Cowper's poem frames *The History*, focusing the reader on the consumptiveness of slave marts or markets with "The Negroe's Complaint" as the epigraph found on *The History*'s title page: "'By our sufferings, since ye brought us / To the man-degrading mart,-- / All sustain'd by patience, taught us / Only by a broken heart,--" (Prince 1). Cowper's use of the term "mart" in his poem foregrounds consumption and dehumanization. The very first entry in the *OED* under "mart" defines mart using consumptive, butchery terms: "[a]n ox or cow fattened for slaughter, *esp.* one which is subsequently salted or smoked as winter provision" ("mart, n.2" 1. a.). The primary definition for "mart, n.3:" "[a] regular gathering of people for the purpose of buying and selling (in early use esp. in the Low Countries); a market or fair" (*OED* I.1.a) uses Cowper's line as an example of this definition in 1788. The enveloping of the location as a consumptive metaphor is intricately layered as the double entendre for "mart" reveals the butchering aspect of the slave mart location along with a sly nod to slavery's "buying and selling" of human beings with the *OED*'s use of Cowper's poem as an example. Combined with the phrase "man-degrading," "mart" becomes a locus of power, dehumanizing the enslaved. The terms "mart" and "market" become their own consumptive metaphors that erased the enslaved identity while pointing to their position as food that sustains the white, dominant power structures.

White Desire and Consumption of the Black Body

On a grander scale, the consumptive metaphors of slavery reveal white desire and the power dynamics of cannibalistic oppression. In Stowe's (in)famous American abolitionist novel, *UTC*, her well-intentioned attempts at presenting the Black, enslaved body as human results in her reinforcing racial stereotypes, revealing her own implicit biases. Tompkins takes an incredibly delicate approach to Stowe's novel through several beautiful close readings analyzing

the pain and consumption present in all forms of slavery, even in moments that are meant to portray relational familiarity and tenderness such as Aunt Chloe cooking and feeding the child-master, George, in chapter IV. At first glance, this scene strikes one as sentimentalizing the relationship between the enslaved and the slave owner; however, Tompkins reveals the violence and pain that are ever-present for enslaved and master relationships with even as "nice" of a character as kind, enslaver George Shelby (108-111). Tompkins uncovers the white desire to consume the Black body that underlies even Stowe's best abolitionist attempts: "[i]f Stowe's representation of blackness as food serves to develop the metaphor of objectification … it also renders the black body appetizing to her readers. … The text thus aligns the white reader with sentimentality's political paradox: to empathize with the slave is to internalize her, but to do so is also to annihilate her subjectivity" (112-3). Tompkins argues that Stowe's presentation of the Black body as food through delectable and mouthwatering food descriptions, beautiful and heart-warming images of the hearth, kitchen, and cooking (primarily versions of white domesticity) makes the Black body an object of consumable desire and white appetite. Tompkins extends this to reveal the effects this has on the political body of white feminism and ultimately the construction of America's whiteness. Her compelling argument uncovers the different levels of insidious white desire that is ever present in slavery as the United States of America attempted to protect and define the white body politic. While Tompkins focuses on white desire for the Black body, an admittedly integral part of cannibalizing the enslaved body, it is the act of consuming the Black body – the violent using up and obliterating of the enslaved as defined in Chapter 1 – that reveals the intricacies of structural cannibalism.

Standing in stark contrast to Stowe's representation of the delicious Black body in *UTC*, we see in the passages from Prince's *The History* quoted above that Prince does not present the

Black body as desirable for consumption, refusing to satiate the white appetite (or even pique it), similar to Tompkins' analysis of Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig*. Prince starkly and unflinchingly recounts the stomach-churning abuse and treatment of fellow human beings by denouncing those involved with slavery. Situated in-between Stowe's delicious Black flesh dishes and Prince's unpalatable "truth" we have Cowper's "Sweet Meat Has Sour Sauce *or, The Slave-Trader in the Dumps*," where the delectable "Sweet Meat" – the Black body – is recognized as both deliciously and capitalistically desired by the white appetite yet it is coated in a "Sour Sauce" ("sour") that is gastronomically disturbing and upsetting. In some ways, Cowper's satirical use of the proverb which meant good things must always be spoiled ("meat" I. 1. c.), deliberately pairs the slave trader's "complaint" about his job loss with the enslaved's body as a consumable object part of an economic system. Cowper makes the proverb less metaphorical and more literal, tying it to the physical "meat" of Black bodies and flesh and how they are ingested throughout his poem. Unlike Stowe who presented the enslaved body as delectable and desirous, and Prince who refuses to sugar coat the cannibalizing of the enslaved, Cowper's satirical use of consumptive metaphors deliberately presents the Black body as food in a disgustingly pleasing way.

Instead of leaving the delicious food as stand-ins for the Black body as Stowe does, Cowper's unique satirization of consumptive metaphors and deliberate pairing of the enslaved body with colloquial food phrases uncomfortably uncovers the cannibalism of the enslaved. The text equates food with specific body parts, bodily excretions and what is quite glaringly pain and torture: "[h]ere's padlocks and bolts, and screws for the thumbs, / That squeeze them so lovingly till the blood comes, / They sweeten the temper like comfits or plums" (17-19). The reader is first confronted with the oxymoron of "lovingly" crushing or screwing thumbs and exacting "blood." This visceral description of torture is presented as "normal" and done with all of the enslavers'

supposed best of intentions and care in preparing the enslaved objects for the market. Then the torture is metaphorically equated to the consumption of "comfits or plums." Comfits were processed sweets (primarily for freshening the breath) and plums, in addition to the fruit, also meant "to satisfy one's hunger by eating (one's full). Frequently with *up*." (*OED* 2. a.). References to foods that would have been tantalizing and filling are deliberately countered by the torturous abuses that the enslaved endured. The enslaver's torture is quite literally preparing the enslaved to be consumed at market: "[t]hus going to market, we kindly prepare / A pretty black cargo of African ware, / For what they must meet with when they get there" (25-27). Later in the poem, the enslaved are presented as being cooked while crossing the Middle Passage: "'[t]would do your heart good to see 'em below, / Lie flat on their backs all the way as we go, / Like sprats on a gridiron, scores in a row" (29-31). Sprats were small fish that were for eating and fishing according to the *OED* (I.1.), and a gridiron was: "[a] cooking utensil formed of parallel bars of iron or other metal in a frame, usually supported on short legs, and used for broiling flesh or fish over a fire. Also formerly: a girdle or griddle" ("gridiron" 1.a.) The speaker proudly presents for the reader's ingestion the enslaved bodies crushed, crammed, and cooked. If one read the descriptions above without the Black bodies as the nouns, the "food" sounds delicious and enticing, yet the intentional pairing of consumptive metaphors with slavery' torture sickeningly portrays the enslavers' white appetite for Black bodies and denounces them as sadistic cannibals.

What happens when we look at only one representation of consumption or one representation of systemic oppression, such as the enslaver's, is that we miss the connections to other moments of oppressive consumption. In this specific instance, by focusing only on the white desire of the enslaver, we miss the white desire and consumption of a much more subtle oppressor, the abolitionists. Tompkins focuses on the formation of the white, female domestic

sphere and the subsequent construction of the white body politic by exploring the domestic white abolitionist appetite in Wilson's *Our Nig*, yet we will find in both Stowe and Prince unveilings of capitalistic abolitionist consumption. Women were by far the largest consumers of the American literary marketplace, so Stowe took advantage of this by directly addressing and engaging the female reader and mother throughout her text.[26] However, as Sarah Meer identifies in *Uncle Tom Mania: Slavery, Minstrelsy, and Transatlantic Culture in the 1850s*, Stowe's *UTC* was singular in its wide-spread reception bridging classes, races, genders, and countries as it was reproduced and rewritten in a wide variety of forms, genres, and products, both positively and negatively, as contrasted with the reception of Cowper's poems and Prince's *The History*. *UTC* is distinctive in its 19th-century popularity becoming a world-wide phenomenon termed "*Tom* mania" (Meer). This fictional story about slavery written by a white woman is a necessary contrast with Prince's enslaved narrative, which was a much smaller, abolitionist pamphlet. There was a level of commodification of the enslaved and their experiences that financially benefitted Stowe as compared to Prince, as well as all those who then produced, published, sold, and even theatrically presented *UTC*. This was poignantly highlighted in a review of *UTC* by William J. Wilson whose penname was Ethiop, a Brooklyn correspondent for the *Frederick Douglass' Paper* published on June 17, 1852:

> This species of abolitionism finds its way into quarters here, hitherto so faced over with the adamant of pro-slavery politics, unionism, churchism, and every other shade of "ism" hammered out, and welded on by his satanic majesty and faithful subjects, for the last half century, that it completely staggers belief and puts credulity wholly at fault. Shopkeepers

---

[26] See María Carla Sánchez's "'Prayers in the Market Place': Women and Low Culture in Catharine Sedgwick's 'Cacoethes Scribendi'" for the impact of the American female literary marketplace, and see Jane P. Tompkins' "Sentimental Power: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Politics of Literary History" for a focus on specifically Stowe's influence on female readers in the 19th century.

> that heretofore exposed for sale, but fancy articles for Southern gentry, ponderous volumes for the benefit of Southern slavery, Webster speeches and other dough-faced articles for Southern benefits; or, exhibited in their windows Zip Coon, or JIM CROW, with his naked toes kicking out the panes, for general amusement, profit and loyalty to the Southern God; I say that these very shopkeepers are now proud to illume those very windows through the windows of my Uncle Tom's Cabin; while good Old Aunt Chloe peeps out just to see what the matter is. (3)

In a darker turn, Stowe's publication becomes the new commodification of the enslaved and their experiences: "[it] was not only popular, not only expanded the midcentury concept of [literary] success, but made the slavery question marketable" (Meer 4). Larger than any other autobiographical publication, more widely read, purchased, adapted, and commented-on, *UTC* becomes, as Wilson stated, the next popular and "humanistic" "'ism'" to be mass marketed making *abolitionism* marketable. What commodified and capitalized on racism and slavery before shifted to capitalize on the new market demands and sold abolitionism through the enslaved experience because it was more profitable. Not only that, but according to Meer, Stowe's text was widely appropriated by both anti- and pro-slavery producers (as well as many other causes not related to slavery at all) seeking to use *UTC* for their own financial gains: "[*Tom*] mania was thus fueled by the countless writers and manufacturers who attempted to hijack Stowe's creation for their own purposes" (6).

Abolitionist's capitalistic treatment of the Black body can be found in the perverse production and sale of "Tomitudes," objects that had images and scenes from Stowe's text. For example, "Handkerchief, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," is a cotton handkerchief printed with scenes from *UTC*. It stands as a representation of a form of cannibalism of the enslaved body through consuming products printed on the very object that the objectified enslaved were used to harvest – cotton. Mirroring slavery's commodification and consumption of the enslaved in Cowper's "A Negro's Complaint," we find abolitionism similarly guilty of capitalistic consumption of the

enslaved by selling and purchasing the cotton handkerchief made from a product that the enslaved sweated, bled, and cried over as they harvested cotton for white products. Yet again, in complete willful ignorance, 19th-century "abolitionists" (put in quotations since anyone could purchase a "Tomitude" signaling to others that they were sympathetic to the enslaved without actually doing or saying anything else to end slavery) are purchasing objects like the handkerchief with key scenes from *UTC* printed on it that focus more on the anguish of the enslaved than on the enslaver. They could then tuck into their fashionable pockets the racist representations of the enslaved and pull it out, using it to wipe their brows or blow their noses, placing their own bodily excretions on the enslaved while romantically signifying their "abolitionism." While one could argue that it was done, at least by some, with the best of intentions, it leads to the question of how a handkerchief that summarizes the main plot points of *UTC* with pictorial scenes of abuse helps the enslaved? At least in the review above by Wilson, it is clear that the selling of "Tomitudes" did not financially support the abolitionist endeavors but was done so primarily for the profitability of the store owners and those who produced such products. Consumption of the enslaved experience went beyond the literal commodities that were produced and sold, additionally found in the widespread, global exposure and reading of *UTC*. George Sand, an international reviewer of *UTC,* writing in *La Presse* on December 17, 1852, makes the extraordinary scope of abolitionist consumption clear: "This book is in all hands and in all journals. It has, and will have, editions in every form; people devour it, they cover it with tears. It is no longer permissible to those who can read not to have read it" (495). The commodification of the enslaved experience, especially through Stowe's *UTC*, allowed a much

broader, mostly white, and abolitionist audience to now consume, or, as Sand's declares, "devour" the enslaved experience.[27]

Cannibalism of the enslaved, then, is not limited solely to enslavers but also sadly extends to the abolitionists' capitalist consumption of the enslaved experience, fictionally as in *UTC*, as well as auto-biographically through the demand and desire for bodily proof of Prince's enslaved experience. The abolitionist responses to Prince's *The History* demanding physical, bodily proof were so numerous that Thomas Pringle added this specific Appendix to Prince's publication: "[As inquiries have been made from various quarters respecting the existence of marks of severe punishment on Mary Prince's body, it seems proper to append to this Edition, the following letter on that subject, written by Mrs Pringle to Mrs Townsend… of the 'Birmingham Ladies' Society for Relief of Negro Slaves.']" (Prince 64). Doubt was generated regarding the "truthfulness" of Prince's account (having nothing to do with Prince's narrative and everything to do with her race), with such numerous demands for proof as to the abuse that Prince's body suffered that it was deemed necessary to publish an appendix providing this additional "proof." One would assume the demands for evidence were from pro-slavery individuals attempting to discredit Prince; however, the letter included in the Appendix that details Prince's bodily examination was addressed to the "'Birmingham Ladies' Society for Relief of Negro Slaves,'" and while this was just the letter that was included in the new edition of *The History*, it is clear that there were many more who demanded that Prince's body, and not just her words, account for

[27] Objects that commodified the enslaved experience were not solely an American or even *UTC*-related phenomenon. For instance, this "Birmingham Ladies Society for the Relief of Negro Slaves Bag" with a scene from slavery printed on it of a distraught enslaved woman with a child draped across her lap was bought and sold by the Birmingham Ladies' Society.

her enslavement. The abolitionists were not satiated with just consuming Prince's recorded experience, consequently demanding physical verification so as to consume her body as well.

The physical process of documenting and examining Prince's body shifts the structural cannibalism from the abolitionists' desire for her body to its visual consumption. Positioning Mrs. Pringle, Susanna Strickland and the other white women as the visual consumers on behalf of those who desired Prince's bodily proof, the letter details the "documented" marks on Prince's body:

> I beg in reply to state, that the whole of the back part of her body is distinctly scarred, and, as it were, *chequered*, with the vestiges of severe floggings. Besides this, there are many large scars on other parts of her person, exhibiting an appearance as if the flesh had been deeply cut, or lacerated with *gashes*, by some instrument wielded by most unmerciful hands. … I beg to add to my own testimony that of Miss Strickland…together with the testimonies of my sister Susan and my friend Miss Martha Browne – all of whom were present and assisted me this day in a second inspection of Mary's body. (Prince 64-65)

Sounding eerily similar to Prince's account of her first time being sold, we now get a crowd of four white women surrounding Prince's naked body, scrutinizing it, checking it against her spoken experience, criticizing it. Her body is yet again, in her supposed "freedom" in Britain, put on display, but this time it is for the consumption of the white abolitionists. Do not miss the subtle "second inspection" clearly indicating that it was not the first time, but the *second time* that her body has been forcibly displayed so as to satiate any doubts that the abolitionists might have as to the truthfulness of her narrative. Prince's body is still dehumanized, even by the abolitionists, as her body is forcibly subjected to the critical gaze of the women who examined her, the Birmingham Ladies' Society for Relief of Negro Slaves, and all those who read *The History*. Prince's body is still not her own; instead belonging to the abolitionists so as to cannibalize at their leisure.

While it would appear that the British abolitionists only consumed Prince's body and experience textually in contrast to the financial capitalism of Stowe's *UTC,* especially when contextualized with Thomas Pringle's "Preface" at the beginning of *The History* stating that any moneys gained from the sale of her narrative would go to assist Prince (4); however, when looking closer at the letter to the Birmingham Ladies' Society for Relief of Negro Slaves we find there was a lurid exchange of money for her body of proof. Mary Pringle's response letter, according to Clare Midgley, was crafted and sent because the "members of the Female Society for Birmingham felt in need of such reassurances from women of their own race and class before making the decision to allocate £5 to start a fund for support of Prince and to recommend her *History* to their members" (88). In a lurid exchange of fees and flesh, the Birmingham Ladies' Society for Relief of Negro Slaves requested physical proof, ultimately Prince's body, subsequently granting Prince and the Pringles the requested financial aid. The abolitionists' privilege of whiteness still places them in a position of power over the enslaved as the eater hierarchically. The "verification" of Prince's narrative through the physical examination of her body slakes both the abolitionists' macabre curiosity and verifies her narrative so that they can release funds for her legal defense. Prince's horrifying descriptions of abuse were not solely sufficient so her body must now also account those same terrors. The capitalism of Prince's enslaved experience reveals how embedded the consumption of the enslaved are within structural cannibalism; so much so that we find even the abolitionists who claim a desire to assist the enslaved are also guilty of cannibalizing them.

White desire for Black flesh can take many different forms as we see in the above examples with both enslaver and abolitionist consuming in a variety of ways the enslaved body. In those instances, it is presented as power. While the consumptive metaphors reveal white

desire, it is not just the desire that provides control and domination, but it is in the eating, the cannibalizing, of the human oppressed that we find the violence and power of the eater. It is the cannibal ingesting the oppressed body who is in control of the power dynamics directing who or what is consumed and how. It was the white Western world that controlled and oppressed the enslaved through their ingestion of the enslaved Black body. This appears to create a structural binary between eater and eaten, with the eater holding the predatorial power and the eaten as prey. The very nature of structural cannibalism relies on the façade that it is a firm and set binary that cannot be changed or disrupted; however, we will find that the predatory power structure is not a static, unidirectional consumptive binary, but a dynamic that can be inverted, unsettled, or shifted when the oppressed are pushed too far.

Black Desire and Consumption of the White Body

While we saw several examples above describing the enslavers as monstrously deformed by slavery, stripping them of their humanity and revealing them to be savage, cannibalistic brutes, this is not the only transformation that can be found within structural cannibalism. The potential for the upheaval of white power and, more specifically, white desire, instills in the oppressor fear of Black desire for white power. We find this strikingly expressed in Stowe's enslaved, sweet, god-fearing Eliza who runs away and escapes slavery only to protect her child, Harry, from being sold. Scholarship typically sees Eliza as a soft, feminine representation of salvific power, which she exemplifies throughout the majority of the novel, missing the fierceness and dominance that she temporarily embodies in her desperate escape as she attempts to protect her child from slavery.[28] In my analysis, we will see in Eliza the possibility and

[28] Jane P. Tompkins points out Eliza's salvific position as mother and wife in "Sentimental Power;" and Elizabeth Ammons in "Heroines in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" examines the various ways

realization of cannibalistic power embodied through a transformative process that she undergoes from eaten prey to eater predator. The character of reformed slave owner, John Van Trompe, defines Eliza's desperate escape to protect her child as both natural and an example of slavery's predatory dynamic: "'[t]hat's natur now, poor crittur! hunted down now like a deer,—hunted down, jest for havin' natural feelin's, and doin' what no kind o' mother could help a doin'!'" (84). John's description of Eliza presents her as prey, concluding that she was driven to this extreme situation, being hunted, for the desire that what *Mother* "natur" created in Eliza – to protect her only child. Eliza's positionality is overwhelmingly presented as prey throughout the novel – as a victim, as an animal, most often a deer – being pursued and hunted by the evils of slavery, but specifically by Haley, the slave-trader; consequently, the few sentences that present Eliza as the opposite of prey and instead as a threat are easy to miss.

Eliza's incredible transformation from eaten to eater begins when she discovers her only child is sold, awakening her Black desire and appetite for white power. The moment she hears that Harry is being sold, we see her metamorphosis from submissive, enslaved prey to fierce predator: "[p]ale, shivering, with rigid features and compressed lips, she looked an entirely altered being from the soft and timid creature she had been hitherto" (32). Eliza has immediately become hardened and determined. Her compressed lips imply an inability to eat while fleeing slavery. Eliza's previous position as eaten has gone on for too long, so now she must awaken her own Black appetite, its hunger for freedom. This desire has always been present but now takes a

---

that motherhood and femininity were upheld and upturned the patriarchal system of slavery. *UTC*'s Mrs. Bird is another example of motherhood's transformative predatory power as she becomes stern and forceful when she finds her boys abusing a kitten. Taken to the extreme, we see the enslaved mistress, Cassie, killing her remaining baby in order to prevent its being sold as yet another example.

fearful turn towards bodily power that is the direct result of starving desperation. The hardened Eliza will do anything, even reverse cannibalistic dynamics to protect her child. She is unrecognizable from the "soft and timid creature" that she was as a subservient slave, and her refusal to eat along with her determination awakens her fierce Black desire.

Eliza's progressive transformation throughout this scene is striking. What began with more of a subtle shift, a hardening and forcefulness of will that resulted in her seizing her own bodily power by running away with her child, physically presents her as "an entirely altered being" (32). The metamorphosis continues throughout the first night and day of Eliza's escape to Ohio as she takes on the embodied form of something much more than determination, becoming a physical force:

> How the touch of [Harry's] warm arms, the gentle breathings that came in her neck, seemed to add fire and spirit to her movements! It seemed to her as if strength poured into her in electric streams, from every gentle touch and movement of the sleeping, confiding child. Sublime is the dominion of the mind over the body, that, for a time, can make flesh and nerve impregnable, and string the sinews like steel, so that the weak become so mighty. (46)

We are provided with the image of Eliza's Black desire as a burning fire from within that does not consume her, but instead represents her hunger for freedom, spurring her on and adding to her resolve.[29] The transformation is much more aggressive now than it initially was when she was "[p]ale, shivering, with rigid features and compressed lips" (32). In its place we have an intimidating predator who is not just strong, but, according to the *OED* definition of "impregnable," has become a fortress: "Of a fortress or stronghold: That cannot be taken by

[29] Fire is a very common consumptive metaphor that we will more fully explore in the next chapter finding that it signifies both the active cannibalizing of the oppressed in Gaskell's *Mary Barton* as well as a cooking implement in Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*.

arms; incapable of being reduced by force; capable of holding out against all attacks" (1.). The language used to describe Eliza's current embodied state is a militaristic term that evokes images of war, power, and dominance: mind over body, Black body over slavery, and ultimately Black body over white body. It is a frightening image of metamorphosis as her very muscle has been transmuted from sinew to "steel" and has made the "weak," enslaved, female Black body a coalescence of oppressive identifiers: strong, threatening, and terrifying.

Eliza's body appears to have no need for human sustenance as her predatory transfiguration increases her desire for white freedom and its bodily power leaving her with an inability to eat. She refuses her son's offer of food when "he tried to wedge some of his cake into her mouth, it seemed to her that the rising in her throat would choke her" (47). The steeled resolve that her motherhood bestows and the transformative process that she is undergoing from timid prey to threatening predator prevents her from eating: "'No, no, Harry darling! mother can't eat till you are safe!'" (47). Harry's safety must be ensured at all costs and she will not risk allowing her awakening hunger to be satiated by something as sugary and temporary as cake.[30] Eliza is starving herself, working up her appetite for bodily power, freedom that is signified by the white body's flesh (specifically skin color).

Eliza does eventually eat (47); however, her eating does not satiate her hunger, but instead serves as fuel for her consumptive desire, feeding the transformation and internal fire:

---

[30] In the next chapter we will explore further the effects of awakening hunger and its transformative powers in Gaskell's *Mary Barton* when John Barton, an oppressed, out-of-work mill worker, is deformed through his starvation in order to increase his hunger for the consumption/murder of a mill owner's son. Like Eliza, Barton's oppression is pushed too far forcing him to attempt to invert the power structure through violence; however, unlike Eliza, Barton becomes weak and emaciated whereas Eliza's natural maternal instincts transform her into a fierce predator.

"[f]or her there was no rest. As a fire in her bones, the thought of the pursuer urged her on; and she gazed with longing eyes on the sullen, surging waters that lay between her and liberty" (48). Freedom, described here as "liberty," from slavery, white oppression, and protection for her child drove Eliza, and nothing less than freedom that the white body signifies would satiate her hunger. The text consumptively frames Eliza's desire as filled with "longing" and as a fire that will not be quenched; yet we see by Eliza's transformation that *only* freedom will slake that desire and not mere bodily food. Prince similarly identifies freedom using consumptive rhetoric, yet the rhetoric is very different from Stowe's. Prince declares that "'[t]o be free is very sweet'" (31, 38). This phrase is identically found twice in *The History*, and the repetition signals to the reader both its import as well as its truthfulness: freedom is "sweet." It is a simple phrase that ties freedom with sugary, indulgent, good things to eat. Innocent and beautiful in its hopefulness and optimism, Prince's statement stands in stark contrast to Stowe's representation of predatory Eliza. *UTC* presents a complicated, dangerous, and threatening image of Black appetite through fire. More frightening than it is comforting, fire symbolizes destruction and wildness; power to consume everyone and everything if unchecked. Eliza's desire embodies white fear of Black appetite and its potential for destruction; upending the very racist systems that support white power and consumption.

In the middle of Eliza's transformative process, *UTC* stops to remind the reader of the constructed racial hierarchy by re-stating the expected consumptive dynamics and attempting to properly resituate enslaved Eliza as prey. The narrator endeavors to arrest the metamorphosis by repositioning Haley as the predator when he finally catches up to the escaped Eliza: "he was after her like a hound after a deer" (54). The reader is presented with the expected predatory image of the slave-trader as a vicious hunting dog pursing the enslaved prey. In this scene, we find both

the white man and the Black woman are transformed from human beings into an animalistic, predator-prey dynamic. The attempt at correcting the consumptive power dynamics after having presented Eliza's menacing transformation is jarring mid-scene as we are abruptly and forcefully reminded of what *should be* – white appetite and ingestion of the Black body – and what, fearfully for the white oppressor, is *not* when Black appetite is awakened.

When the oppressed are pushed too far, structural cannibalism can be inverted, switching the predator-prey dynamic as oppressor becomes eaten and oppressed becomes eater. Eliza's momentary repositioning as prey does not arrest her transformation into a predator, for when she leaps desperately across the remnants of the frozen Ohio river, clutching her child as she risks both their lives, she was "nerved with strength such as God gives only to the desperate, with one wild cry and flying leap, she vaulted sheer over the turbid current by the shore, on to the raft of ice beyond. It was a desperate leap—impossible to anything but madness and despair" (54-55). The narrator initially states that her strength was given by God as is typically appointed to those most oppressed for their assistance, yet the other adjectives employed in that same description starkly counter the heavenly sentiments since Eliza's actions are portrayed as "wild," "desperate," "despair[ing]," and "madness." The successive list of deleterious adjectives portrays Eliza not as a sane human being but a wild animal ("wild" *OED*).[31] Her escape is a feat that goes beyond the limits of humanity, read as either superhuman or animalistic strength. Haley, however, takes quite a different opinion of Eliza's desperate escape: "'[t]he gal's got seven devils in her, I

[31] Madness in the 19th century meant more than just insanity or mental illness as it could also be a referent to rabies – see the *OED*'s definition for "madness, n." In Prince's narrative, I noted that one of her enslavers, Capt I—, is described using language that similarly signifies rabies as he foamed at the mouth while abusing the enslaved (20), yet here we have an enslaved woman, who is "wild" (Stowe 54) and has rabies infested madness, a complete inversion of positions.

believe!' said Haley. 'How like a wildcat she jumped!'" (56). He first voices his fear by associating her superhuman, or superpredator feats with the devil, the opposite of God and an ominous image. Haley no longer views Eliza as a delicate "deer" to be hunted but instead as a "wildcat" – fierce, able to maim or kill (unlike the deer), and capable of consuming Haley – a threat to both his position as oppressor and his masculinity.[32]

Eliza's escape across the frozen river is not what one would initially describe as a predatorial or consuming action, positioning her not as Haley's consumer but merely allowing her to escape the hunt; however, Haley paints her escape in a much more consumptive light: "'[w]hat did I want with the little cuss, now,' he said to himself, 'that I should have got myself treed like a coon, as I am, this yer way?'" (57). No longer a hound hunting a deer, Haley has been deformed into a hunted raccoon, even potentially akin to an enslaved individual himself, with Eliza having "treed him"; she has trapped him and is waiting to kill/consume him. Inversely, Eliza has metamorphosed from a tamed, domestic animal, to wild prey, and finally to a wild predator. The simultaneous transformations upend the predator-prey dynamics, positioning the Black enslaved (specifically a Black, enslaved *female*) as a threat to white humanity and white masculinity. One could argue that Eliza's transformation does not represent white fear of Black desire and being cannibalized, but instead represents the possibility that freedom provides the enslaved; however, the threatening language that *UTC* employs to describe the shifted power

[32] Haley's use of the predatorial term "wildcat" to refer to Eliza was a misogynistic term for women who would not be contained by patriarchal expectations of femininity: " *figurative*. Applied to a savage, ill-tempered, or spiteful person, esp. a woman" ("wild cat" *OED*). Haley's employment of this term reveals the precariousness of his masculinity since, what was supposed to be a delicate, beautiful, enslaved woman, was really a fierce predator who outmaneuvered and escaped him.

dynamics between Blacks and whites (especially when contrasted with Prince's rhetoric) reveals a fear of impotence and their own potential oppression.[33]

My argument has focused on establishing the basis for reading slavery as cannibalistic and then providing a framework of consumptive metaphors that reveal the encoded structural cannibalism. Structural cannibalism then exposes white desire and ultimately white consumption of the enslaved, identifying the white oppressor as the cannibal and the enslaved as the cannibalized. The enslaved are consistently not thought of, referred to, or treated as human, and are therefore governmentally sanctioned to be consumed in the 19th century. Because of this, the consumptive metaphors alone function as a veil; justifying and hiding not just the oppression of people groups but arguing for a fundamental and inherent difference. Thus, the encoding and veiling of white appetite and cannibalism through consumptive metaphors distances and marginalizes the humanity of the enslaved; yet, as we saw with Prince, Cowper, and Stowe, structural cannibalism acknowledges the sameness and humanity of the enslaved as they find the potential for resistance and even dominance within the consumptive structure.

---

[33] Tompkins points out that Stowe's "solution" to the Black body's refusal to be easily consumed represents a digestive upset for the white body politic and therefore needs to be defecated or expelled by removing them from the United States and returning them to Africa (114-117). This can also be a "solution" to the threat of inverted power dynamics, because freeing the enslaved and removing them from the physical landscape of the United States prevents them from consuming the white body politic of the United States from Africa.

CHAPTER III: *SECONDI*: THE CANNIBALIZED COMMODIFICATION OF THE WORKING CLASS IN 19TH-CENTURY BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES

The overt deformation and consumption of the enslaved in Chapter 2 presenting the enslaved as consumable animals for the enslavers to eat is missing in the working-class texts of Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848), Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854), and Rebecca Harding Davis' "Life in the Iron-Mills" (1861), the three texts that I will be analyzing in this chapter. Instead, we find stacked metaphors that connect labor exploitation with consumption through the racialization, objectification, and abuse of factory workers in mid-19th-century Britain and the United States. No longer directly transforming the oppressed into chickens or cattle, the working-class texts focus attention on the contrasts of abundance or lack of food, eating, cooking, and starvation in order to further veil the cannibalism of the lower classes. Gaskell's novel, my primary text for this chapter, specifically contrasts the comfort and fullness of the upper and middle classes with the starvation and death of the lower, working class highlighting the structural oppression of the workers. All of the texts offer a scathing critique of the abuse of the lower, working classes that frames the middle and upper classes as oppressive cannibals. Collectively, the structural cannibalism that I argue is present in these three working-class texts reveals the racialization and consumerist objectification of the working class to justify their oppression as the overwhelming power of the cannibals – the mill owners, upper class, and even governments – violently cascades downwards. Through the tracing of structural cannibalism's violence, we will find the complicated and dangerous results of attempting to disrupt or wield that violent consumptive power, ultimately ending with the failure to reverse or change the power structures and the death of the workers.

Karl Marx's critiques of capitalism and its exploitative labor practices in "The Communist Manifesto" (1848) are a useful 19th-century framework for identifying class structures in the Victorian era. He points out the objecthood, both monetarily and societally, of the working class:

> In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market. (251)

Marx uses consumptive, consumerist rhetoric to argue that the proletariat are only worth something to the bourgeoisie as long as they are productive or adding economic value. They are viewed by the bourgeoisie, and to a degree, themselves, as a commodity. Gaskell, assuredly not a disciple of Marx, places this same rhetoric in the mouths of her working-class characters. For example, when John Barton and George Wilson are taking care of a fellow out-of-work mill-worker, Ben Davenport, who is starving, ill, and dying in Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, Barton decries: "'[y]ou'll say (at least many a one does), they'n [the masters] getten capital an' we'n getten none, I say, our labour's our capital, and we ought to draw interest on that'" (104). In this moment of desperation, Barton identifies the consumerist mentality of the capitalist system and self-identifies the workers' commodified labor and, by extension, their bodies. Marx declares that the capitalist system forces the proletariat to "sell themselves piecemeal, ... a commodity, like every other article of commerce." Marx equates the working class with a commodity, a consumable product, employing the metaphor of "piecemeal," evoking the image of carving and serving piece by piece the working-class body. Marx signifies, but does not overtly claim, the cannibalism of

the working-class body as his rhetoric focuses on the capitalist consumerism that commodifies and objectifies a lower class of humanity in order to serve the upper classes.

Cannibalism occurs when a set of humanity, specifically the enslaved, are no longer seen as human but instead consumable animals; when something, *someone,* is deformed, used, consumed and then thrown away or defecated when all its use has been extracted. Slavery as cannibalistic is a known concept, but capitalism as cannibalism is less so. This chapter transitions from that which was more visible and readily accessible in 19th-century texts, cannibalizing the enslaved, to that which is more heavily veiled, cannibalizing the working class. Chapter 2 provided a loose framework for identifying and analyzing consumptive metaphors within texts by establishing four categories found within structural cannibalism: Preparation, Consumption, Dehumanization, and Location. We will informally see those categories and terms scattered throughout this chapter as we continue forward with the assumption that they are intertwined. The need to "prove" capitalism's cannibalistic consumption of the working class, in some ways, is more necessary than it was with slavery because of the more heavily veiled structural cannibalism. The structural cannibalism of the working class is, as we will see in many ways, reliant upon slavery's consumptive metaphors. Therefore, I will continue to elaborate on several of the consumptive metaphors identified in the second chapter as the enslaved and their experiences became appropriated metaphors for capitalism's abuse and cannibalism of the working class.

Slavery Metaphors

Discourse on the capitalist system in the 19th century relied heavily on slavery metaphors to describe the positionality of the working class and their abuse. The first instance of this in Gaskell's *Mary Barton* is by the main, working-class character, John Barton. We will see that

when the working-class characters employ slavery metaphors, it is meant to reveal their oppressed, consumed positions by associating the working class with the most oppressed in 19th-century society, the enslaved. As we saw in Chapter 1, consumptive metaphors create both a distance as well as signal the structural cannibalism functioning within the system of oppression; however, appropriating slavery metaphors to describe the oppression of the working class stacks the metaphors creating an additional layer of separation. Instead of the enslaved metaphorically represented as consumable animals framing the enslaved as the cannibalized and the enslaver as the cannibal, we have the working class metaphorically represented as the enslaved who are metaphorically animalized that reveals the structural cannibalism. The very first chapter of *MB* reveals the fraught and complicated consumptive nature of power structures within the text as John Barton bitterly proclaims: "'[w]e're their slaves as long as we can work; we pile up their fortunes with the sweat of our brows, and yet we are to live as separate as if we were in two worlds; ay, as separate as Dives and Lazarus, with a great gulf betwixt us: but I know who was best off then'" (40). This dark revelation ending a longer speech on the dire state of the starving, dying working class links the proletariat's position in Manchester with those of the enslaved: "we're their slaves as long as we can work," yet it is only their physical labor that creates that association since, unlike the enslaved, the working class have a level of personal freedom even if it is limited. Barton metaphorically equates the working class's positionality with those of the cannibalized enslaved, thereby connecting the abuse of the working class with that of the lowest and most consumed individuals in the 19th-century British Empire.

Appropriating slavery as a metaphor for the working class's position within 19th-century British society is admittedly problematic, as much feminist research has shown. The appropriation of the enslaved experience, abuse, torture, etc., to further white feminist causes

was both an erroneous equation of oppression while covering their own racism and bigotry as they fostered and fought for the oppression and segregation of Black women. [34] A similar effect can be found in these working-class texts as the authors extensively employ racializing metaphors to the workers and factories/towns, arguing for the workers' "freedom" while ignoring race altogether; however, the appropriation is a jarringly effective method for highlighting as well as lambasting the factory owners' oppression of the working class. In exploring the associations of the working class with the enslaved, we will find the slavery metaphors further obfuscate the consumptive language. Unlike Chapter 2 where we readily established the inherent cannibalistic nature of slavery, in this section, we will find almost no overtly consumptive metaphors. Instead, we will explore the degrees of separation and, by correlation, association of consuming the working class through the metaphors that incorporated and related them with the cannibalized enslaved. We will proceed forward with the assumed understanding that the slavery and racialization metaphors imply, by extension, the cannibalism of the working class since they are being portrayed as if they were the cannibalized enslaved.

The appropriation of slavery as a metaphor in John Barton's declaration that the working class are the bourgeoise's slaves is continued with the common term for factory owners: "master(s)." "Master(s)" is a term found commonly within *MB*, a total of 100 times, its use broadly suggesting deference and difference between genders and age, the power dynamics of many human structures as defined by the *OED* (A. I. 1. a). In *MB*, "master" is used 86 times to refer to the mill owners while the other 14 times are used by women to refer to men (husbands,

[34] See bell hooks' "Racism and Feminism" and Suzanne Rintoul's "'My Poor Mistress': Marital Cruelty in the History of Mary Prince" for a more detailed analyses of the appropriation of the enslaved experience for other forms of oppression.

gentlemen, and even young boys) and young men referring to older men. The general usage is one that suggests power and most often possession: "[c]hiefly with possessive. A woman's husband" (*OED* A. I. 6) and "[a] person who has the power to control, use, or dispose of something at will" (*OED* A. I. 5. a). Referring to the factory owners as "masters" goes beyond power dynamics as it is a denotative reference to slavery that reinforces the metaphorical associations between slavery and class: "[a] person who employs another; (formerly *esp.*) the employer of a servant or apprentice (cf. sense A. 14). Also: the owner of a slave" (A. I. 2. A). The first time "master" is used in Gaskell's *MB* is in the "Preface": "the bitter complaints made by them [the workers], of the neglect which they experienced from the prosperous—especially from the masters whose fortunes they had helped to build up" (29). The author's voice validates the usage as we again we find slavery terminology that ties the working class's objectified position with the fortunes and fatness of the mill owners. The term functions as a sort of key, a gate keeper between the oppressed lower classes and the affluent middle classes as identified by the narrator in *MB*: "[s]ome [masters] were steadily and vehemently opposed to the dangerous precedent of yielding one jot or one tittle to the outward force of a turn-out [strike]. It was teaching the workpeople how to become masters, said they" (239). Using biblical language to imply the seriousness of giving in to the demands of the workmen that held the masters "hostage," we see that a compromise is more than just an acquiescing or acknowledgement of the working class's struggles. By consenting to meet any of the workers' strike demands, the masters are giving away their positionality and the power that comes with it. The line between the "workpeople" and "masters" is one that must be clearly delineated since it could grant the workers access to the power that the title "master" holds. "Master" also dehumanizes the working class as masters are: "[t]he owner[s] of an animal; the person whom an animal is accustomed to

obey" (3. a). The term, "masters," serves as a constant reminder of the working class's position in relation to the mill owners – the workers are not their own and their bodies belong to the masters – as the term gives a sense of ownership and consequently objectifies the working class, deforming them into an enslaved, consumable product.

More elusive than the working class calling themselves slaves or the middle and upper classes being called "masters," reading for the visible racialization of the working class and the British factory town, Manchester, in *MB* slyly reveals structural cannibalism. The working class are described as "dark" (79, 234, 287), "black" (86[35], 234, 235, 288), "brown" (414) and covered in "a dark shade of Indian ink" (79). While Gaskell uses a few of the traditional and expected descriptors for factory workers such as "dirty" (118, 142) or "grimy" (79, 234) and "grimed" (118, 163), the number of racialized adjectives greatly outweighs the expected and characteristic adjectives for the factory workers. The examples above are not the only uses of "black," "dark," and "brown";[36] however, the references above are only those that are used to describe the people and the town and are found only when describing the person or persons in general and not their clothing. Gaskell's denotative use references the workers' filthiness from working and living in a factory town, yet the connotative employment is markedly different as she uses descriptions of color that are more commonly found describing people of color and the enslaved. It draws specific attention to the working-class status as sharing more with the enslaved than the metaphorically similar conditions of their work. Whiteness is the well-known standard that the

[35] This particular reference has to do with the mill fire consuming the mill walls, which initially would appear to have nothing in common with the other, more explicit references; however, later on in this chapter I will connect the mill and the workers as synonymous, so this current inclusion applies.

[36] "Black," "dark," and "brown" can be found a total of 123 times throughout the novel.

British used to justify their empirical reign and colonization of half of the known world in the Victorian era. By using descriptors of color for the British workers, the text infers that the working class are off-white or non-white. Continuing to connect them beyond a metaphorical association with the word "slaves," the working class are physically and visually grouped with the enslaved and their consumable position in society.

While Dickens does not directly racialize the workers, with the exception of Stephen Blackpool's name,[37] he does employ racializing metaphors to describe the fictional manufacturing town, Coketown. The racialized metaphors portray Coketown as an African or Indian "savage" when first introduced in the text:

> It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it; but, as matters stood it was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. (Dickens 23)

The narrator uses a profusion of foreignizing metaphors. Instead of sounding like a British industrial town, the text reads like a place from Africa or India. The employment of "red and black" signifies the non-whiteness of the factory town similar to Gaskell's description of the working class, but *HT* takes it a step further by pairing "red and black" with the word "savage"

---

[37] Dickens, widely known for his intentionality when naming his characters (e.g. Thomas Gradgrind who reduces children and people to facts and numbers and who's listless son frames Blackpool, or Mr. M'Choakumchild who systematically extinguishes creativity from the children he teaches), uses "black" as part of the last name of the main working-class character; an innocent man who is oppressed by the law, industrialism, and middle-class privilege, and who lives and works in a racialized town. His name may even be a slant reference to Liverpool that was a slave-trade port in Britain, racializing the white, working-class character.

(*OED*). *HT*'s simile goes beyond inference as it denotatively equates Coketown's coloring with animalistic, sub-human, and dehumanized people of color. As I have already shown, the use of the noun "savage" is tied to a racist ideology that functions to Other as well as justify imperialization because of the "savage's" "primitive and uncivilized" ("savage") nature. This is further emphasized when the noun is understood as the person, place or thing's active state of being, they are and always will be "savage" and consequently will always need ruling. Describing Coketown using "savage" language justifies the abusive and oppressive treatment by demonstrating that the town needs the British empire's ruling in order to civilize it.

The foreignizing of Coketown moves the factory town from civilized Britain to the uncivilized wilds of Africa or India. The factory, its effluent, and its machinery in *HT* evokes imagery of dangerous and unfamiliar (to the British) animals: "interminable serpents of smoke" and "the piston of the steam-engine…like the head of an elephant" (23). Wild African and Indian-esque images locate the factories and Coketown on the edges of the British empire.[38] The elephant steam-engine is portrayed as if it is charging or threatening with its head that "monotonously worked up and down…in a state of melancholy madness" (23). The image of the elephant is loaded with colonialized meaning. John Miller states that the symbol of the elephant in G.M. Fenn's *Begumbagh* represents Britain's imperialistic ability to control the savage, wild, India (485-487). Additionally, Tabitha Ketabgian claimed that the masters of Coketown who barbarously oppressed the workers and "tamed" the elephant machines also presented a controlled threat to the civil British society:

---

[38] Gaskell also foreignizes Manchester and the working class during the wintertime: "[h]ouses, sky, people, and everything looked as if a gigantic brush has washed them all over with a dark shade of Indian ink" (79); although Gaskell focuses more on the foreign metaphors racializing the people and less on the town.

> As the masters of these Eastern captives, Coketown's industrial elite have reproduced systems of barbaric oppression that enlightened Western practices presumably sought to curb. Moreover, they are served by creatures whose appearance of exaggerated mechanical consistency is—because coerced—no guarantee of truly docile actions or feelings. Dickens's industrial jungle thus presents a fusion of modern technology, Asiatic temperament, and imperial fantasy that is deeply rooted in concerns surrounding the effects of power and the nature of submission. (663)

Even though the elephant appears threatening, it is ultimately under control of the British empire, therefore it is not a real threat, just another justification for the British mastery of the workers and factories. The canal is described using similar language to that of a wild African or Indian river as found in various travelogues and scientific journals of the 19th century – dark and poisonous – immediately implying death for any white travelers or colonizers adventurous or stupid enough to explore.[39] The language is not that of a warm, inviting British town, instead, Coketown is seen as an ominous, potentially violent, and threatening place for white, British citizens – a place where only the "savage" natives, people of color who were en masse enslaved, could live and survive.

Hard Times introduces the manufacturing town even before introducing its workers and thus, by association, Coketown's racialized representation encompasses all those who work the factories; foreignizing, racializing, and dehumanizing the working class, the factories, their living spaces, the religious spaces, etc. The factory machine that is described as an wild "monotonous…elephant" (23) is further portrayed thus: "[b]ut no temperature made the

[39] Jessica Howel explores the various ways in which the foreign places of Africa that were colonized by Britain were rhetorically presented to the British public as poisonous and detrimental to white health, especially the white female traveler or explorer in "'Climate Proof': Mary Kingsley and the Health of Women Travellers." For primary Victorian texts see Mary Kingsley's *Travels in West* Africa, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and H. Rider Haggard's *She* for examples about the threatening and toxic nature of the anti-white land of Africa.

melancholy mad elephants more mad or more sane. Their wearisome heads went up and down at the same rate, in hot weather and cold, wet weather and dry, fair weather and foul" (93). The zoomorphized machinery is animalistic and simultaneously robotic with its ever-constant workings, presenting the town and factories as abnormal and threateningly non-human. The people of Coketown, specifically the working class, are similarly portrayed as both foreign and robotic:

> It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work, and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and to-morrow, and every year the counterpart of the last and the next. (Dickens 23)

The monotonous and consistent lives of the working class are echoes of the animal machines, implicating the working class as animalistic, subhuman, non-white individuals by correlation. They are further dehumanized by the comparison, for the zoomorphized factory machines are not human, nor are they civilized, and now the working class are portrayed as mirroring the zoomorphized machinery. They are "all very like another," the machines to the streets, the streets to the people, the people to each other; they are interwoven, like the very fabrics the loomers wove within the factories. The workers are viewed as part of the factories, part of the machines and are consequently consumable products. The white, working class are no longer proper British citizens, nor is the town a civilized, British town; they have all been subsequently dehumanized, foreignized, and racialized, fabricating a false distance between the consumed working class since they are metaphorically associated with the enslaved and physically marginalized, shoved outside of the borders of Britain and located instead in the wilds of Africa or India.

Across the pond in the United States, we find in Davis' first short story, "Life in the Iron-Mills," similar foreignizing descriptions of American factory workers. Unlike Gaskell and Dickens whose texts focus on British citizens and the British working class, Davis did not write about local, "American-born" citizens; instead, she focused on the plight of immigrant workers in an American iron-mill town. While Davis described the town and river with some foreignized language, the narrator denotatively employs slavery metaphors:

> The river, dull and tawny-colored, (*la belle rivière!*) drags itself sluggishly along, tired of the heavy weight of boats and coal-barges. What wonder? When I was a child, I used to fancy a look of weary, dumb appeal upon the face of the negro-like river slavishly bearing its burden day after day. Something of the same idle notion comes to me to-day, when from the street-window I look on the slow stream of human life creeping past, night and morning, to the great mills. (3)

Instead of using language such as "black," "brown," "dark," or "red" like both Dickens and Gaskell, Davis uses terms her American readership would have been intimately familiar with to evoke a correlation between American slavery and United States capitalism such as "slavishly," "tawny-colored" ("tawny" B. 3.) and "negro-like." "Life in the Iron-Mills" directly connects the factory town with slavery unlike Dickens and Gaskell who employ more connotatively foreignizing metaphors. Not leaving the enslaved description as applying solely to the mill town – in a similar fashion to Dickens' description of Coketown – Davis then associates "the slow stream of human life" with the "negro-like" enslaved river as the workers go and come from the mills. The narrator qualifies these metaphorical associations as merely "fancy" and "idle notion" (3), yet the denotative metaphors stand, identifying the immigrant workers as enslaved.

These working-class literatures extend the expected and typified employment of slavery metaphors by correlating the oppressed position of the working class with that of the enslaved by startlingly racializing and foreignizing the white working class. They reveal the extent to which

the upper and middle classes will go in order to justify their oppression of the working class. The thoroughness of the racializing is impressive as they present the people as off-white or non-white and foreignizing the towns, factories, and machinery, displacing the manufacturing towns and their workers to the colonialized fringes of the British empire and United States republic. The slavery metaphors create an additional distance between the consumption of the working class and the masters, framing the factory owners as more passive enslavers and not the active cannibals of the oppressed.

Feeding the Fire

Although most of the consumptive metaphors in literature about the working class operate indirectly through their associations with slavery, or, as we will see shortly, contrasting food with starvation, there is one directly consumptive metaphor that is featured prominently within these texts – fire. Fire consumes wood, coal, almost anything, even human flesh, in order to survive. When putting out a fire, the terms for physically extinguishing it are phrases such as snuffing, beating out, or smothering, and it is starved when not fed any more fuel. All the phrases, acts, and imagery of fire imply violence, death, and consumption. Fire is a complicated and nuanced consumptive metaphor that represents both sustenance of human life as well as cannibalism of the working class.

Throughout Gaskell's novel, fire stands in as a symbol of health and financial security. Richard Leahy notes the power of fire in *MB* in "Fire and Reverie: Domestic Light and the Individual in *Cranford* and *Mary Barton*" stating that:

> In the Manchester of Gaskell's *Mary Barton* – a bleak, dull, grimy place – firelight stands out thanks to more than just its illumination. Within the homes of the industrial sector's inhabitants, fire is the centre of the home. Yet its power as a binding force is amplified by the fragility of life as compared to a place like Cranford. Fire is life, and to extinguish it is death, both in terms of reality – keeping warm, cooking and lighting the

> home – and in terms of the symbolic value of fire as an inspiration to hope and reverie. (80)

An example of this is one of the early references in *MB* to the warm fire in the Barton's home that is later contrasted with John's starving or non-existent fire after he had lost work and the will to live. This image is repeated in the Davenports' quarters as the lack of a fire and Ben Davenport's illness and death are visibly tied together, further emphasized as the restoration of fire and food bringing life to Davenport's wife. Mr. Carson's home, which is always cheerily and warmly lit with bustling fires found in the kitchen as well as in the breakfast room stands in stark, immediate contrast to the Davenports' fireless squalor when George Wilson goes from the Davenports' abode to the master, Mr. Carson, for an infirmary order for Ben:

> So he was ushered into a kitchen hung round with glittering tins, where a roaring fire burnt merrily, and where numbers of utensils hung round, at whose nature and use Wilson amused himself by guessing. Meanwhile, the servants bustled to and fro; an out-door man-servant came in for orders, and sat down near Wilson. The cook broiled steaks, and the kitchen-maid toasted bread, and boiled eggs.
> The coffee steamed upon the fire, and altogether the odours were so mixed and appetising, that Wilson began to yearn for food to break his fast, which had lasted since dinner the day before. If the servants had known this, they would have willingly given him meat and bread in abundance; but they were like the rest of us, and not feeling hunger themselves, forgot it was possible another might. So Wilson's craving turned to sickness, while they chatted on, (106)

This descriptive passage anthropomorphizes the fire, signifying it as more than a tool. It is first introduced as "roaring," which alone could be a threatening image, but paired with "merrily" we are provided with fire as an inviting, warmth that represents comfort, security, and vivacity. The scene continues with the fire's own exuberance echoed by the "bustl[ing]" of the kitchen staff indicating health and life surrounded by quantities of food (most notably the protein of steak) that had to be cooked using that fire and the unfamiliar (to Wilson) kitchen utensils that cooked the foods over the hearth all indicate wealth, abundance, and security. Contrasted by the

Davenports' starvation – both the bodies and the fire – that Wilson had just witnessed along with his own lack of food, fire assumes an important and complicated representation of consumption. *MB* relies on fire as a source of imagery and metaphor that represents life and eating that is needed to sustain it (not to mention thrive), while fireless households represent death and an inability to ingest enough in order to survive.

The initial metaphor of fire as consumptive takes a much more violent turn when we examine the burning of Carson's mill and the industrial effects of consumption. The narrator draws attention to the mill owner's perceptions of the factory and the workers as pieces of their capitalist, money-making machines: "[t]he mills were merely worked to keep the machinery, human and metal, in some kind of order and readiness for better times" (94). In this brief, passing comment that comes after the fire has burned the mill, the narrator gives the readers a glimpse into the minds and opinions of the factory owners. According to the masters, the workers are merely objects in the mills, machinery that is used and discarded when broken or outdated. The workers' bodies are subsumed as components of the mills, unrecognizable individually. Reducing the factory workers from human to machinery solidifies the workers' positions as consumable products for both the mill and for feeding the subsequent mill fire.

Unlike in Chapter 2 where we saw the enslaved predominately dehumanized as consumable animals, in these working-class texts we see that the proletariat are dehumanized in a more capitalistic manner. Most often denied humanity or even the status of a living thing, the working class are commonly presented as inanimate objects, parts of bodies ("hands"[40]), parts of

[40] The reduction of the proletariat to a body part that is the only useful object for the bourgeoisie – "hands" – is something that is only briefly referenced in *MB* but found more in *HT* and "Life in the Iron-Mills." One of the upper-class men in "Life in the Iron-Mills" expounds upon this: "'[i]f I had the making of men, these men who do the lowest part of the world's work should be

the very products that they process, or parts of the machines that they operate. Mr. Carson, the mill owner, consistently views his workers as objects, not humans, that he uses to keep his own fortune and belly full. This is exemplified when Wilson is delivered to Carson's breakfast table on behalf of Davenport to request an infirmary order:

> "Please sir, Davenport's ill of the fever, and I'm come to know if you've got an infirmary order for him?"
> "Davenport—Davenport; who is the fellow? I don't know the name?"
> "He's worked in your factory better nor three year, sir."
> "Very likely; I don't pretend to know the names of the men I employ; that I leave to the overlooker." (109)

While Carson refers to his workers as men, a brief concession to their human form, in the same breath he declares that he not only cannot be bothered to know the names of his workers but that he is boastfully proud of such ignorance. His tone in the text is dismissive declaring that the identity of an ill and dying "former" worker of three years is of no concern; however, Judith Butler expounds on how names and naming are important in defining and recognizing humanity and that they are tied to human identity. Butler states in *Excitable Speech*:

> One is not simply fixed by the name that one is called. In being called an injurious name, one is derogated and demeaned. But the name holds out another possibility as well: by being called a name, one is also, paradoxically, given a certain possibility for social existence, initiated into a temporal life of language that exceeds the prior purposes that animate that call. Thus the injurious address may appear to fix or paralyze the one it hails, but it may also produce an unexpected enabling response. If to be

---

machines, – nothing more, – hands. It would be kindness. God help them! What are taste, reason, to creatures who must live such lives as that?'" (16). Appearing to at least acknowledge the working class's shared physical humanity through the backwards statement that he would have made them "machines" or "hands" with no brains or emotions since their lives were so torturous and miserable. This sentiment is echoed in *HT* when the narrator describes the condition of the workers in Coketown: "among the multitude of Coketown, generically called ‘the Hands,’—a race who would have found more favour with some people, if Providence had seen fit to make them only hands, or, like the lower creatures of the seashore, only hands and stomachs" (56). The upper and middle classes only value the workers for their jobs, their parts running the machines and factories, not their humanity.

> addressed is to be interpellated, then the offensive call runs the risk of inaugurating a subject in speech who comes to use language to counter the offensive call. (2)

Butler points out the problem with abusing someone using injurious language, building on Louis Althusser's theory of interpellation. [41] When hailing someone, calling them by any name, even one that is hurtful, immediately produces a subject and recognizes their individual identity and humanity functioning within that ideological construct. The opposite can also be said, because when refusing to acknowledge someone by any name, you are refusing them any agency and human identity. When Mr. Carson proudly declares his refusal to learn his workers' names, he actively objectifies them, denying them their subjecthood and even the ability to "counter" or respond through language voicing their presence and abuse. Disallowing the working class their individual, human identities does not animalize them; it objectifies them by de-animating them. Differently than the slavery rhetoric that dehumanized the enslaved, the de-animation and objectification that occurs in the working-class texts employ industrial metaphors to address the oppression of the workers, making them parts of the capitalist machine. Dehumanization occurs yet again when the British government refuses to even see the delegation of working-class union representatives. Refusing to allow them the language power of sharing their personal struggles, not acknowledging their subjecthood in front of the government forbids their identity and presence within British society. In this context, the working class are only visible to the bourgeoisie as objects, not subjects. The consumptive metaphors in these working-class texts,

---

[41] This is mirrored in the educational system in *HT* with Thomas Gradgrind's and Mr. M'Choakumchild's treatment of the school children. Thomas calls the children by numbers and not names, for example: "'Girl number twenty'" (8). Even after Gradgrind learns her name and mocks her for being called "Sissy," he still calls her by "girl number twenty'" (10). The children are repeatedly reduced to numbers and facts, disallowing for their subjecthood and dehumanizing them.

then, look slightly different as they take on a capitalist framing, objectifying the proletariat for consumerist consumption by the upper and middle classes.

In addition to the consumerist cannibalism of the working class as objects, we see the extent that this is taken to, as referenced briefly earlier, through the fiery consumption of the working-class that occurs when Carson's mill burns. In describing the destructive mill fire, the narrator uses consumptive language: "[the] triumphant fire. …sent forth its infernal tongues from every window hole, licking the black walls with amorous fierceness it was swayed or fell before the mighty gale, only to rise higher and yet higher to ravage and roar yet more wildly" (86). In that same scene you can find "devouring flames" as well as the image that "the fire had consumed the old wooden staircase at the other end of the building" (87). Fire is anthropomorphized through its licking tongues, triumphant ravaging, and its devouring and consuming flames. As established above, the factory and the workers are synonymous, so when the factory is burning, the human machinery is implied to be burning as well. Lastly, Gaskell used "black" to refer to the working class, so when the flames are consuming the "black walls," we are confronted with the image of the workers described as both black and industrial machinery being consumed by the flames. The mill fire, then, is consuming the objectified workers.

The mill fire's consumption continues as Gaskell portrays the disastrous impact the fire has on the workers and their families. By describing the devastating effects for the workers in Carson's mill, we see a very different image of consumption, that of starvation:

> There were homes over which Carson's fire threw a deep, terrible gloom; the homes of those who would fain work, and no man gave unto them— the homes of those to whom leisure was a curse. There, the family music was angry wails, when week after week passed by, and there was no work to be had, and consequently no wages to pay for the bread the children cried aloud for in their young impatience of suffering. There was no

> breakfast to lounge over; their lounge was taken in bed, to try and keep warmth in them that bitter March weather, and, by being quiet, to deaden the gnawing wolf within. (95)

The fire left the mill workers and their families in a state of starvation as they were slowly consumed by their own bodies. The narrator makes it clear that it was not laziness that caused their starvation, it was their objectification that positioned the workers as dependent on the masters who would not "g[i]ve unto them." There was no food because there was no money for food, and the imagery of their slow starvation is that of a "gnawing wolf" representing their bodies slowly eating them from the inside out. The fire resulted both in metaphorical consumption through the loss of livelihood and their representation as human machinery, as well as physical consumption through starvation as the body eats itself by consuming first fat and then muscle in a desperate attempt to stay alive.

The associations between the workers and the mill machinery are extensive in *MB* presenting a variety of ways that the workers are consumed; however, the fire that consumes the worker machines has not yet been tied to cannibalism. In order to see that next extension of the consumption, we must see the fattening of the cannibal which Gaskell uncovers by identifying the masters as profiting from the destructive fire:

> John Barton was not far wrong in his idea that the Messrs Carson would not be over-much grieved for the consequences of the fire in their mill. They were well insured; the machinery lacked the improvements of late years, and worked but poorly in comparison with that which might now be procured. Above all, trade was very slack; cottons could find no market, and goods lay packed and piled in many a warehouse. … So this was an excellent opportunity, Messrs Carson thought, for refitting their factory with first-rate improvements, for which insurance-money would amply pay. They were in no hurry about the business, however. The weekly drain of wages given for labour, useless in the present state of the market, was stopped. (94-95)

The fire that consumed the human "machinery" also consumed the workers' livelihoods; the exact opposite state of Carson and his family. The fire actually profited the masters since more money was deposited into the masters' pockets. Instead of having to pay for renovations and machinery updates, the Messrs Carson were well insured so their insurance paid them not to simply rebuild their factory as it stood prior to the fire, but to improve the factory and the machinery. By updating the machinery, the masters did not have to pay as many human machines meaning that more money would be going to the masters and not to, what were now, unnecessary and outdated workers. There was also no rush to rebuild the mill since there was not a large economic demand for British textiles at the time, so the masters lingered over the rebuilding, not having to pay human "machinery" to simply keep well-oiled. Lingering over more than just the rebuilding, the masters, as a consequence of the fire, were in the privileged position of "loung[ing] over breakfast" (95) as they leisurely ate their food. Mr. Carson, therefore, was in a much better position after the fire, more well-fed if you will, by not paying other people to live, and getting updated equipment resulting in more money for the masters in the future.

In *Hard Times* we find a different form of fire with fire no longer standing as the sole consuming force; instead, the fire has become the instrument of death as it cooks alive the workers and fictional factory town of Coketown. The factory town and workers are described using cooking metaphors with the sun transformed into a fiery cooking apparatus that fries the town, specifically the factories and factory workers:

> The streets were hot and dusty on the summer day, and the sun was so bright that it even shone through the heavy vapour drooping over Coketown…. Stokers emerged from low underground doorways into factory yards, and sat on steps, and posts, and palings, wiping their swarthy visages, and contemplating coals. The whole town seemed to be frying in oil. There was a stifling smell of hot oil everywhere. The steam-

> engines shown with it, the dresses of the Hands were soiled with it, the mills throughout their many stories oozed and trickled it. The atmosphere of those Fairy palaces was like the breath of the simoom, and their inhabitants, wasting with heat, toiled languidly in the desert. … Sun-blinds, and sprinklings of water, a little cooled the main streets and the shops; but the mills, and the courts and alleys, baked at a fierce heat. … But the sun itself, however beneficent generally, was less kind to Coketown than hard frost, and rarely looked intently into any of its closer regions without engendering more death than life. (92-93)

The sun, which would usually be a sign of life and warmth, is presented as not "beneficent," the juxtaposition of what it usually would be in more rural settings. Instead, the sun is described using violent language portraying it as a hostile, violent bringer of death. Simultaneously, the factories and workers which are drenched in "hot oil" are reconstituted as ingredients that are being fried by the sun in the oil of capitalism that coated all who worked the mills. While the narrator declares that the entirety of Coketown is being fried, the focus of the reader is consistently directed to the factories and the working class by listing out first the factory machinery, then the workers, then the mills. That list glaringly misses the rest of the town except for specifying their privileged ability to control the heat and cool themselves: "[s]un-blinds, and sprinklings of water, a little cooled the main streets and the shops," distinctly dissimilar to the factories and workers. Those who are higher up the food chain, who benefit from the capitalist system such as the shopkeepers and middle class, are not dying or being cooked alive because they have access to resources that allow them to cool themselves. However, those unfortunate enough to be at the bottom of the capitalist food chain – the factory workers – are being "baked" alive at a "fierce heat." If there was any confusion as to the results of frying and baking the hands, the last sentence clarifies that it ends with death.

While employing a variety of cooking metaphors, the narrator does not directly implicate the masters as the consumers of the cooked hands. Instead, they are implied through not only the

established power structures, but also through Dickens' satirization of the plight of the factory owners. In the paragraph preceding the above fried foods recipe in *HT*, the narrator outlines the "hardships" that the factory owners face when having to consider their workers as more than just capitalist objects. In true Dickensian style, the "poor" factory owners are sarcastically pitied over their financial losses resulting from any legislature that was focused on bettering the lives of the workers and protecting their health:

> [the masters] were ruined, when they were required to send labouring children to school; they were ruined, when inspectors were appointed to look into their works; they were ruined, when such inspectors considered it doubtful whether they were quite justified in chopping people up with their machinery; they were utterly undone, when it was hinted that perhaps they need not always make quite so much smoke. (92)

The "chopping" of the hands positions the factory owners as the cooks *and* the diners as they not only prepare/kill the humans but they also benefit financially from the cooking thereby also becoming the cannibal. The narrator mocks the factory owners while uncovering their intentional ignorance that is "ruined" every time legislation forces them to see their workers as more than machinery. The capitalists do not care about the condition of the working class and their health: they only care about making money at any expense, even at the maiming and deaths of their workers.

Consumptive Power Structures Violently Overflow

Repeated images of the consuming upper classes with full, bountiful tables, hearty eating, and wasted, or leftover food can be found throughout *MB* intricately contrasted with the "clemmed," gaunt, emaciated working class and their empty cupboards, and bare, cold, and fireless houses. The representation of the starvation of the working class in the Victorian era and within Victorian texts is the focus of Andrew Mangham's *The Science of Starving in Victorian Literature, Medicine & Political Economy*. Mangham explores the Victorians' complex and

conflicting relationship with starvation and the struggling working class. He identifies Malthusian political economy[42] as prominently held by many in the Victorian era. Malthusianism argued that starvation and plague were all a part of nature's balance, ultimately placing the onus on the working class for their circumstances while absolving the upper and middle classes and government. Many others, scientists, authors (such as Gaskell and Dickens), politicians and humanists argued against those ideas by visually and scientifically representing hunger and starvation in two ways:

> firstly, they identified the actual, physical processes involved in starvation—the weakness, the wasting, and the suffering experienced when bodies effectively consume themselves in an effort to stay alive. … The second and more complex way in which … scientists and medical men created an opposing idea of starvation to Malthus's consequentialism was in their insistence upon the ambiguity of hunger as a material reality. … Until intracorporeal imaging was developed in the twentieth century, starvation was one of the body's *terra incognita*, an environment governed by laws whose languages were barely understood. (Mangham 4-5)

What those in the Victorian era who pushed back against Malthusianism recognized, was the cannibalistic nature of starvation through various scientific processes as well as the difficulty of scientifically defining starvation and hunger. Starvation was both that which was visible and that which was invisible – it was unveiled because the starving bodies signified their starvation and veiled because the process and cause of it was biologically difficult to isolate; thereby revealing the reliance between the corporeality of starvation and the physical intangibility of the language used to identify it. The Victorians centralized the working body as a site of power conflict. Mangham builds on Maude Ellman's *The Hunger Artists*, stating that: "'the starving body is itself a text, the living dossier of its discontents, for the injustices of power are encoded in the savage

---

[42] See T. R. Malthus' *An Essay on the Principle of Population* for his presentation of Malthusian theory.

hieroglyphics of its sufferings'. [Ellmann's] theoretical position insists, I would argue rightly, that all forms of starvation are a response to (or a result of) unjust, often hegemonic … forms of power" (10). Colonialized and cannibalistic language noted, in the social problem literature and scientific and political texts of the Victorian era, the starving, working-class body was a crossroads that signified and materialized suffering, capitalism, religion, and economy. The idea that starvation was a form of cannibalism, "'famine cachexia'" (Mangham 46) or auto-cannibalism, is one that is presented by many modern-day academics as well as the Victorian scientists' theories on starvation. Those responsible for the auto-cannibalism, however, whether it be the government for their lack of legislation and, as we see in *MB*, their dismissal of Chartist complaints (143), or the middle and upper class's refusal to assist and/or make changes in their industries, the oppressors are not indicted as cannibalizing the workers. Similar to Malthusianism in abdicating the dominant caste's social responsibility, terming starvation auto-cannibalism shifts the responsibility from those accountable for the circumstances of the consumption to the workers themselves.

Starvation in the Victorian era was more than just the wasting away of bodies due to its embroilment with capitalism and political and social concerns. Gaskell explores this in detail, weaving back and forth between the logical, emotional, personal, and political arguments throughout *MB*. As Mangham observes, even Gaskell's overwhelming use of the term "clemming" points to the common consumptive aspect of starvation:

> As [Charles] Kingsley notes in his review of *Mary Barton*, Gaskell tells us everything we need to know about clemming (the dialectal term derived from the Old English *clemen*, meaning *pinched*) in modern times. What … is critical, is the way Gaskell explores political and rhetorical uses of *clemming* as a metonym for broken social order. In radical and socialist contexts, Gaskell shows, *clemming* and *starving* had become bywords for crimes inflicted by the bourgeois on the working population. (Mangham 12)

There is a fixed relationship between starvation (consumption) and the oppression that the working class suffered at the hands of the masters. The rhetorical usage of "clemming" and "starving" reveal the "broken social order," yet Mangham does not dig into the cannibalistic aspects of starvation, hunger, and specifically "clemming." Harkening back to Prince and the preparation of the enslaved body through "pinch" (*OED*), "clemming" (*OED*) consumptively tied starvation with consumption. The contrast between the "clemming" of the workers such as Barton and master Carson's own experiences is clearly delineated at the end of the novel: "[i]n the days of his childhood and youth, Mr Carson had been accustomed to poverty; but it was honest, decent poverty; not the grinding squalid misery he had remarked in every part of John Barton's house, and which contrasted strangely with the pompous sumptuousness of the room in which he now sat" (455). Mr. Carson admits that he has never experienced the type of poverty that leads to clemming, the type of poverty that Ben Davenport and John Barton, alongside many others of the working class, experienced. The extreme disparity highlights the differences in experiences as well as positions – Barton who is dying of starvation (as well as guilt over murdering Carson's son, Harry) was oppressed and cannibalized in a way that Carson never experienced. Carson's own rich, fat comfort appears gaudy and gluttonous as compared with Barton's squalid and empty house and his gaunt and skeleton-like body. It is in these moments contrasting consumption – both a lack of eating that leads to a body cannibalizing itself or an overabundance of eating – that we can identify structural cannibalism.

The juxtaposition between the rich "masters" and the workers can be most clearly seen when hungry, self-denying George Wilson went to get an infirmary order from Mr. Carson for Ben Davenport. Wilson enters Carson's sumptuous house through the kitchen and meets Mr. Carson in their library where he is finishing breakfast at the breakfast table. The path that Wilson

takes on behalf of the starving, ill, and dying Davenport, a former workman of Carson's for 3 years, is the route that food travels in the rich household. Wilson's entrance to the kitchen is jarring when immediately compared to the Davenport's squalid residence right before. As we saw above, the kitchen was bustling and filled with light from the roaring fire, food, and life as the "servants bustled to and fro" (106) fed and busy, whereas the Davenport's residence was dank, dark, cold, and lifeless. Wilson's trip from the kitchen to the breakfast table mirrors the presentation of food for eating. He stands in for Davenport who is too weak due to the consumption of his body through starvation and typhoid fever – "'[t]he fever'" that the book declares is "(as it usually is in Manchester) of a low, putrid, typhoid kind; brought on by miserable living, filthy neighbourhood, and great depression of mind and body" (99). It is a fever that only consumes the lowest, and most miserable in society.[43] The description of Davenport is such that portrays his living situation, as well as his body and mental state, as animalistic and even that which is below an animal:

> He lay on straw, so damp and mouldy no dog would have chosen it in preference to flags; over it was a piece of sacking, coming next to his worn skeleton of a body;…when Wilson re-appeared, carrying in both hands a jug of steaming tea, intended for the poor wife; but when the delirious husband saw drink, he snatched at it with animal instinct, with a selfishness he had never shown in health. (100)

The painful imagery reveals a deformed Davenport who is unrecognizable as a living human being. He has sunk so low due to his clemming and fever that his living conditions are

---

[43] Fever, disputed widely by the Victorians as a result of starvation and consumption, is another form of bodily cannibalism. "Fever", according to the *Brittanica,* is believed to do many things, but primarily it increases the body's heat so that it can attempt to help fight disease. In the bodies of the starved, fever becomes an out of control "fire" raging, quickening the slow consumption of starvation. See Mangham's "Starvation Science and Political Economy" (57-63) and "fever" for a fuller understanding of the effects of fever as consumptive.

worse than even a dog would endure. Davenport's body is described as a skeleton; an object that not only represents death but is itself death. His behavior is not that of a person's but of a wild animal due to his body's clemming, his survival instincts have overwhelmed his natural characteristics as a caring, loving husband; instead snatching the tea away from his clemming wife. Davenport is being cannibalized through starvation and fever, deforming him because he has no work, yet Mr. Carson is still full, healthy, and content.

The contrast between the masters' and the workers' consumption or lack thereof highlights the food and the class structures while obfuscating the cannibalism of the working class. With so many extremes presented in *MB* between the starving working class and the satisfied middle classes, the metaphors direct the attention to *what* is being consumed and how much not *who*; yet as we have examined the starvation and repleteness metaphors, we have uncovered the cannibalism that is embedded within them. The juxtaposed extremes of the consumers/consumed peculiarly misdirects the readers causing them to focus on want and fullness and not who is causing the want and who is consequently satiated. Contrasting the differences reveals the degree to which the workers are oppressed/consumed. Barton painfully and angrily describes it saying: "[the masters have] screwed us down to th' lowest peg, in order to make their great big fortunes, and build their great big houses, and we, why we're just clemming, many and many of us" (104). This time, Barton cites the bourgeoisie's abuse and torture of the proletariat enacted to ensure the factory owners' position of power and control. The image presented by Barton is that of a violent and forceful, fixed place at the bottom of society; it is an image of torture. The torture of oppression is consumption as the working class starved so that the bourgeois could increase their fortunes.

The ladder metaphor provided by John Barton is apropos when thinking about a consumptive food chain and the relationship between the working class and the masters by conveying the directional flow of power. We have seen how the workers are oppressed and consequently cannibalized because they are the lowest within the British capitalistic structure, yet the oppressed also embody a threat to this violent system as a result of the prolonged, abusive consumption. We will now trace how that violence flows within the structure and what occurs when that violence is disrupted or redirected. When analyzing the violence that is inherent within structural cannibalism, the image of a chain of waterfalls would be even more fitting when describing the overflow of consumptive violence. The power and violence that starts with the top of the food chain inevitably spills over into the next level, and the next, and the next, finally crushing or destroying the lowest on the food chain. With systems such as capitalism and industrialism that are mired in violence, the violence does not simply remain isolated to those in power; it inevitably impacts each class below. What Gaskell attempts to highlight in *MB* is the inevitability of the violent cascade and the effect of that violence when those who are on the lowest rungs finally attempt to disrupt the cannibalistic cycle.

Within the industrial environment Gaskell points out the overwhelming violent, cascading nature of consumptive power structures. The consumptive power flow can also be found in slavery such as in Prince's *The History,* where a free Black woman who was a paid worker in the Wood's household poorly treated Prince:

> Mrs Wood…hired a mulatto woman to nurse the child; but she was such a fine lady she wanted to be mistress over me. I thought it was very hard for a coloured woman to have rule over me because I was a slave and she was free. Her name was Martha Wilcox; she was a saucy woman, very saucy; and she went and complained of me, without cause, to my mistress, and made her angry with me. … The mulatto woman was rejoiced to have power to keep me down. She was constantly making mischief; there was no living for the slaves – no peace after she came. (26)

Prince makes it clear that the introduction of another level of power in the house, a free Black woman, made their cannibalized position even worse because, in addition to her enslaver's abuse, she was now also being consumed by Martha Wilcox. She "wanted to be mistress," and "rejoiced to have power to keep [Mary Prince] down." Instead of being sympathetic and recognizing her better (and more powerful) position as one that could aid or at least ease the abuse of those lower than herself (behavior that Gaskell points out is missing regarding the factory owners and middle-class individuals), Martha lords her power and freedom over the enslaved. She makes the enslaved's lives worse, ensuring that Martha maintains her own, small though it may be, tenuous position of power. We do not know if Martha was born free or was freed at some point prior, however, Martha is aware of her better position, especially as compared with the more oppressed position of the enslaved, and she not only drew attention to her position of relative power, but actively tortured and cannibalized them as well.

Prince frames the power struggles seen in *The History* as those particular to slavery proffering freedom as the solution; however, Gaskell's *MB* clearly delineates the battle for power between the classes as a perpetual one: "the differences between the employers and employed,—an eternal subject for agitation in the manufacturing districts, which, however it may be lulled for a time, is sure to break forth again with fresh violence at any depression of trade, showing that in its apparent quiet, the ashes had still smouldered in the breasts of a few" (54). The ongoing fight for power is "eternal," appearing to be inevitably repeated, a sentiment that mirrors Marx's. Within structural cannibalism, where there is oppression, there will be those who fight against it and those who fight to keep their control – it is a cascading structure of violence and anger. The language used by the narrator appears to place the responsibility for the violent structure on the working class, seemingly absolving the middle class of their oppression resulting from the nature

of capitalism contingent on the whims of supply and demand. In "The Imperial Addiction of *Mary Barton*," Liam Corley points out the struggles between the workers and the masters:

> In relation to the workers' strike, th[e] connectedness [with a world-wide "economic hegemony"] results in a double-bind in which both the workers and the industrialists can be seen as responding to forces apparently beyond their control. Since the narrator excuses the industrialists for lowering wages by invoking the need to guarantee foreign demand, she legitimates a world in which workers would always bear the brunt of fluctuating foreign demand. (Corley 4)

Corley believes that Gaskell is absolving the middle classes of their oppression of the working class because she makes several qualifying statements throughout the novel that distract from the abuse by pointing to the larger, more global-scale of the system; however, Mangham argues that it was more of a side-step than an absolution, and that the problems of the starving working class were too important to be caught up in arguments of political economy.[44] What is more important is that Corley points out the hierarchical nature of the class system in that because of their position within structural cannibalism, the industrialists will ultimately not suffer want. Since the masters are higher up within the class system, there will always be those below them that they can consume so they do not go hungry;[45] however, because the working class are at the bottom

---

[44] Mangham states that:

> If [Gaskell] did have such an encounter with a labourer [that inspired her to write her social problem novels], it shows in her industrial novels, all of which, I argue, demonstrate some antipathy towards proselytizing on the basis of various kinds of social, statistical, and economic theory, not because, as she disingenuously suggested, she knew 'nothing of Political Economy, or the theories of trade,' but because she believed the ready-made, popular rhetoric to be guilty of both obfuscating reality and discouraging the kind of critical reflection that the social problems of the age required. (109)

[45] This interaction between Job Legh and Mr. Carson at the end of *MB* encapsulates the differences between the masters and the workers during times of financial difficulty:

of the economic food chain, they "bear the brunt" of the cannibalism. The violent consumptive cycle is one that cascades down the power structure starting with the bourgeoisie and continuing to the proletariat. When the cascade ends with the those lowest on the food chain with the workers, there is nothing left for them to consume resulting in their slow cannibalization through starvation.

Structural cannibalism is reliant upon the perception that cannibalistic power is unidirectional; that the oppressors will always be the enactors of consumptive violence and that the oppressed will always be the consumed. The very rhetorical nature of structural cannibalism relies on the assumption that it is immovable and unchangeable. The masters continuous reduction of the workers' wages and hours till they could no longer support themselves and their families resulted in a mill strike. Corley suggests this occurs because the workers in *MB* believe that they can disrupt the consumptive cascade with the strike: "[t]he worker's attempt to upend the hierarchy of dependence through their trade unionism depends on an understanding of the

---

> [Mr. Carson:] "We cannot regulate the demand for labour. No man or set of men can do it. It depends on events which God alone can control. When there is no market for our goods, we suffer just as much as you can do." [Job Legh:] "Not as much, I'm sure, sir; though I'm not given to Political Economy, I know that much. I'm wanting in learning, I'm aware; but I can use my eyes. I never see the masters getting thin and haggard for want of food; I hardly see them making much change in their way of living, though I don't doubt that they've got to do it in bad times. But it's in the things for show they cut short; while for such as me, it's in things for life we've to stint. For sure, sir, you'll own it's come to a hard pass when a man would give aught in the world for work to keep his children from starving, and can't get a bit, if he's ever so willing to labour." (471-2)

Carson tries to argue that they "suffer just as much" as the workers do, but Job Legh respectfully disagrees, pointing out the differences – that suffering is not merely doing without parties or trips or frivolous purchases – it is doing without food, warmth, proper shelter and an inability to do anything to change the situation. The workers have no resources available to them while the masters still do during times of difficulty.

relationship between masters and workers as one of reversible need .... coercion proved the logic faulty" (Corley 6). The mill strike is an attempt at reversing the hierarchy by placing the workers' needs and demands as equal if not above the masters'. Ultimately, the strike fails because the workers do not appear to have the power to consume those above them. The only power they have is in their own bodies as commodities; yet because the masters already have the position of power, the group of unionists was no match against the amassed power of the masters. Instead, the strike reveals there are those on the ladder who are lower than the workers, those who are willing to work regardless of the conditions, the "knob-sticks" (248) or scabs.[46] The knob-sticks are more economically oppressed and therefore more desperate than the politically and emotionally stronger trade unionists. The workers do not have power at the strike negotiation to enact change because there was yet another, more desperate group of peoples, the knob-sticks, who were willing to work for even the smallest amount of pay.

The "knob-sticks" provided the union workers with a lower level to consume, and they do so through beatings and the throwing of vitriol, an acid. When the readers are first introduced to the worker's violence, it is by one of the masters: "'[t]he d—d brute had thrown vitriol on the poor fellow's ankles …. He had to stand still with the pain, and that left him at the mercy of the cruel wretch, who beat him about the head till you'd hardly have known he was a man. They doubt if he'll live"' (240-1). Almost as a confirmation that the workers are an animalistic threat, the "brute" of a unionist abused a poor knob-stick breaking the unionists' strike by throwing acid on him and beating him. When John Barton is asked to go visit another knob-stick who was

---

[46] Another slang referenced in the *OED* definition of "knobstick" that reduces those lowest in the power structure to a representation of a wound. As will be further evidenced, dehumanized to the point that they are now mere representations of sores and injuries, something to be picked off or discarded.

similarly abused with vitriol, Barton describes what he saw to the trade unionists: "[t]he man lay, his face all wrapped in clothes, so I did not see *that*; but not a limb, nor a bit of a limb, could keep from quivering with pain. He would ha' bitten his hand to keep down his moans, but couldn't, his face hurt him so if he moved it e'er so little" (249). The acid consumed the knob-stick's flesh, and suggestively left him willing to auto-cannibalize his hand to try to silence himself and his pain. The lower-class knob-sticks revealed the echoing violence of oppression as their position uncovered the unionists' own small bit of power that they violently wielded over a people group lower than themselves.

Barton's sensitivity for, or, as Mangham would argue his ability to see, the oppression of those of his own class and those lower than himself uncovers the cannibalistic cycle he and the other union workers were caught in and perpetuating:

> power-loom weavers living in the more remote parts of Lancashire, and the neighbouring counties, heard of the masters' advertisements for workmen; and in their solitary dwellings grew weary of starvation, and resolved to come to Manchester. Foot-sore, way-worn, half-starved looking men they were, as they tried to steal into town in the early dawn, before people were astir, or late in the dusk of the evening. And now began the real wrong-doing of the Trades' Unions. As to their decision to work, or not, at such a particular rate of wages, that was either wise or unwise; all error of judgment at the worst. But they had no right to tyrannize over others, and tie them down to their own Procrustean bed. Abhorring what they considered oppression in the masters, why did they oppress others? Because, when men get excited, they know not what they do. (229-30)

Gaskell's narrator highlights the violence within the capitalistic structure, that the oppressed will oppress others when they have the ability or power to do so; yet viewed within light of structural cannibalism, it is unsurprising that the violence and abuse that the unionists have lived with all of their lives gets passed down to the knob-sticks when they identify a group that they can bully and consume in an attempt to keep their own supposed bit of power. Barton however, who had

personally witnessed the results of their violent cannibalism, acknowledges the disastrous and oppressive results of the unionists' actions: "[b]ut bless your life, none on us would ever throw vitriol again (at least at a knob-stick) if they could see the sight I saw to-day" (249). Barton's experience brought to light the violence that comes from consuming those weaker than themselves and subsequently revealed the humanity of their victims. Another Chartist in Barton's union who was jailed for participating in the abuse of the knob-sticks acknowledged the similarities between themselves and the knob-sticks, describing the knob-stick he attacked as "weak" and "clemmed" (248). Confronted with their shared humanity, the unionists were forced accept their perpetuation of abusive cycles that instilled sympathy for the knob-sticks' desperate position leading to a recognition of equality.

Gaskell presents the master-unionist relationship as a foil to the unionist-knob-stick relationship for when the masters described the unionists as "wild, earnest-looking men …. Had they been larger boned men, you would have called them gaunt; as it was, they were little of stature, and their fustian clothes hung too loosely upon their shrunk limbs" (241). The masters and unionists were in relative positions of power with the masters over the unionists and the unionists over the knob-sticks, yet the masters were unwilling and consequently unable to see the shared humanity consequently remaining blind to their cannibalistic oppression. The equality of the knob-sticks, however, was unveiled to the unionists resulting in an attempt to change the power cycles. The knob-sticks and the unionists were both being consumed by the masters and Barton points out the wrongness with further consuming those who were also oppressed and alone. They were ultimately weaker than the unionists, lacking the support of a union, the knob-sticks lived without community support, basic funding, and even more limited options for work. Barton does what Martha Wilcox does not do in *The History*; more importantly, he does what the

masters refused to do: stop the cascading violence, stop the consumption of those weaker who have absolutely no power, no voice (as we never hear from them), and no subjecthood.

As a result of his encounter with the knob-stick, John Barton understands more fully his own position and power within society: he can choose to continue or stop the consumption. The masters were not incapable of physically seeing the pathetic state of the working class, yet they still viewed them through a dehumanized lens distancing their lives and living from that of the workers: "'Poor devils! they're near enough to starving, I'm afraid. Mrs Aldred makes two cows' heads into soup every week, and people come many miles to fetch it; and if these times last, we must try and do more. But we must not be bullied into any thing!" (240). This master has seen the pain, the cannibalism occurring as a result of the starvation of the working class and then, while the master suggested that they should "try and do more," also declared that they should not be "bullied into any thing!" This ironic statement ignores their part in bullying and beating the working class into submission by refusing to work with the Chartists. More importantly, it reveals their desire to hold on to their power and their fear over losing even a portion of it to the workers. The master saw the effects of structural cannibalism but did not take action because his own power and position were more important than helping those who were starving and dying. Unlike the master, Barton sees the abusive oppression of those lower than himself, the knob-sticks, and the wrongness of transferring the masters' violence that the workers have experienced upon the knob-sticks.

Barton refuses to continue the consumptive cycle and instead attempts to reverse it. He declares that he will not participate in cannibalizing those weaker than himself: "'ha' seen enough of what comes of attacking knob-sticks, and I'll ha' nought to do with it no more'" (249). He sees

them as equally human, undeserving of the violence, and refuses to interfere with whatever little power that they can exercise in choosing whether to work the reduced wages or not:

> "I've thought we han all on us been more like cowards in attacking the poor like ourselves; them as has none to help, but mun choose between vitriol and starvation. ... Have at the masters!" ... "It's the masters as has wrought this woe; it's the masters as should pay for it. Him as called me coward just now, may try if I am one or not. Set me to serve out the masters, and see if there's aught I'll stick at." (250)

The knob-sticks' position within society is such that they are stuck between being consumed through starvation or acid, and Barton refuses to continue enacting that consumption. He discontinues the cascading cannibalism by calling the unionists' actions "coward[ly]," refusing to participate in any further abuse of the knob-sticks, and reversing the direction by turning their consumption on the masters. Because of the violent nature of the consumptive cascade, the violence, like electricity, must go somewhere; it must have some final outlet, and since Barton refuses to continue to the flow of destruction downwards, the inevitable shift results in redirecting the violence towards those above them, the masters.

Barton excoriates the masters for their part in the cannibalistic cascade and identifies them as the origination of their misery and starvation, ending with a call to action: "serve out the masters" (250). "Serve out," according to the *OED* is defined as "to punish, take revenge on; to retaliate on one for something objectionable *colloq.* (orig. *Boxing slang*). Also (*Hunting slang*), to ‘punish’ or smash (a fence)" ("serve" 49.). It defines the action of "serv[ing] out the masters," the eventual murder of Harry Carson, as that of violence: delivering a beating or a "punishment," framing the resulting murder as justice for the abuse and consumption they have suffered. It also indicates a hunting slang, connoting the working-class prey as metamorphosed into the predators

of their oppressors.[47] Interestingly, while the rhetoric places the workers in the position of predator, there are not any clear descriptors that portray the masters as prey like we saw with Eliza's transformation in Stowe's *UTC*. The only hint of the masters as prey falls under the other definition of "serve out": "to distribute or deal out (food, ammunition, etc.) in portions" (43. c.). This second definition relates to food, specifically "serving out the masters," with the initial sentence structure replacing the serving of food with the serving of the masters, presenting them piecemealed as food to be eaten. What Barton is suggesting, then, is a violent, cannibalistic act that inverts the positions of consumer and consumed, but not predator and prey. While it is an attempt by the working class to seize power for themselves and disrupt the cascading cannibalistic structure, what Barton does not recognize is that he is still caught in the structural paradox of consumer and consumed. By desiring to cannibalize the masters, Barton transposes his own position from that of cannibalized to that of the cannibal, becoming what he despises.

---

[47] The working class are most commonly dehumanized capitalistically through literal objectification, yet the workers are also animalized into predatorial animals that need to be hunted. The animalization of the working class does not take the form of easily consumable animals; instead, we see a more threatening image. Reminiscent of Eliza's predatorial status, Gaskell explores the desperation of the oppressed and the resulting threat that they present; however, unlike Eliza whose transformation also resulted in a simultaneous deformation for her oppressor, the workers are presented as threatening animals that need to be controlled: "'[a]ye, I for one won't yield one farthing to the cruel brutes; they're more like wild beasts than human beings'" (Gaskell 241). In Davis' "Life in the Iron-Mills" the Welsh workers are similarly animalized from vague beasts to wolves starting with Hugh Wolfe, the main character, who is simply referred to primarily as "Wolfe," with the narrator using language like: "I cannot tell why I choose the half-forgotten story of this Wolfe" (5) zoomorphizing him. It is a repeated image, representing desperation and starvation not just in Hugh or Deborah's lives but for the whole working-class condition. There desperation was described as that of "a starving wolf's" (15). A wolf is an aggressive, violent animal, made particularly dangerous when starving, yet presenting the working-class as a predatorial animal does not present a serious threat to the oppressors as we will explore later, the failed forms of working-class resistance found in these working-class texts.

Much of the older scholarship on Gaskell's *MB* originally wrote off the murder of Harry Carson as poor writing on the part of Gaskell. Having initially created a sympathetic, working-class character that has suffered much trauma, Barton then becomes a murderer, "ruining" her call for action and change. More recent scholarship has refuted the "poor writing" scenario, and instead views the murder as a warning to the upper and middle classes as to the danger of ignoring the oppressed and their cries for a livable, human life. I argue that we can also read the murder Barton commits as the inevitable violent result of structural cannibalism. After refusing to continue the downward consumption and oppression of those lower than himself, Barton's redirection of the violence finds outlet and fulfillment in the murder of Harry Carson. The text describes the violent cycle thus: "[i]t is a great truth, that you cannot extinguish violence by violence. You may put it down for a time; but while you are crowing over your imaginary success, see if it does not return seven devils worse than its former self!" (240). Foreshadowing the murder of Harry Carson, the narrator uncovers the violence that is being enacted by the masters and portends the "return [violence]…worse than its former self!" The impending threat of working-class violence is more than just a warning, it is fulfilled through the redirection of violence away from the knob-sticks and realized through Harry Carson's murder.

As a result of fate, Barton ends up tasked with the murder of Harry Carson; therefore, in preparation for the murder, Barton stops eating. He is described as "haggard and wildly anxious-looking" (256) as well as "savagely grave" signifying Barton's transformation from prey to a predator who is "'larning to do without food"' (257). Echoing Eliza's fasting during her metamorphosis into a predator, the typical, working-class food that Mary offers to Barton is refused because he needs to unnaturally increase his hunger for violence and for Harry Carson. As stated previously, the use of the word "savage" racializes Barton, grouping him with the

barbarous, uncivilized, and assumed cannibalistic "Others" as found throughout the colonized British empire ("savagely"). Combine this self-inflicted abstemiousness with the murder which enacts Barton's call to "serv[e] out the masters" (250), the imagery frames John Barton as the cannibal working up his appetite in order to consume Harry Carson through murder.

The reversal of structural cannibalism that began with Barton's self-inflicted abstemiousness initiating his transformation from prey to predator, increasing his hunger, and inverting his position from cannibalized to cannibal, did not end with the murder or result in a change in the structure. Barton's cannibalistic action, the shooting and murder of Harry Carson, was not successful. Instead of finding the description of Harry's body laden with consumptive rhetoric, we are confronted with the body of Harry left almost entirely unaltered and unmarred by the cannibalism: "[t]hey lifted up some of the thick chestnut curls, and showed a blue spot (you could hardly call it a hole, the flesh had closed so much over it) in the left temple" (272). We see a physical change in all the rest of those who were cannibalized: e.g. Davenport, the starving working class, the knob-sticks, John Barton, etc., were all deformed into sub-human, animalistic, or inanimate objects that signified death and left their bodies as "skeleton[s]" (100, 455) – defleshed bodies with only their bones remaining. This is not the case with Harry who has been "served out" (250) but still looks alive even in death; so much so that his mother talks about him as if he is sleeping or playing: "'Harry is so full of fun, he always has something new to amuse us with; and now he pretends he is asleep, and that we can't waken him. Look he is smiling now; he hears I have found him out. Look!' / And, in truth, the lips, in the rest of death, did look as though they wore a smile, and the waving light of the unsnuffed candle almost made them seem to move" (275). While Harry's life was consumed by the gunshot, his body physically resisted the cannibalism and satiating Barton's hungry quest for power. In some ways, the

attempted consumption does not deform but transforms his body and his beauty, making him appear more human and more vibrant: "it looked more like sleep than death, so very calm and full of repose was the face. You saw, too, the chiselled beauty of the features much more perfectly than when the brilliant colouring of life had distracted your attention" (274). Barton's murder of Harry resulted in his death and the consumption of life yet it failed to consume Harry Carson's body and power to enact change.

The violence cycles back yet again, as the narrator in *MB* predicted, this time towards Barton, his family, and his friends – those he was advocating and trying to protect and provide for with his fight against the masters. The "fasting" that transformed Barton and awakened his "savage" hunger for Harry's flesh turns against himself as his body consumes itself through self-imposed starvation. Barton's guilt manifested in his consumed body:

> He sat by the fire; the grate I should say, for fire there was none. Some dull, grey ashes, negligently left, long days ago, coldly choked up the bars. He had taken the accustomed seat from mere force of habit, which ruled his automaton-body. For all energy, both physical and mental, seemed to have retreated inwards to some of the great citadels of life, there to do battle against the Destroyer, Conscience.
> …
> And as for his face, it was sunk and worn,—like a skull, with yet a suffering expression that skulls have not! (437)

This is the first glimpse that we have of Barton after he murders Harry Carson. Some time has passed, and we see that he is sitting in a fireless home, the fire grate lifeless and "choked" with ashes, smothered with its own by-products, killing itself. Barton's body is no longer human but an "automaton" as his personified "Conscience" destroys his body and mind "with the inward gnawing of his remorse" (435-6). Taken even further, his face looks like a skull, no flesh remains filling out his features because the auto-cannibalism of starvation has consumed it leaving behind just the bones. While Barton makes it clear that he was not committing suicide for fear of his sins

pursuing him even after death (448), the violent cycle turned against his own body as it starved itself to death: "[h]e ate,—but without relish; and food seemed no longer to nourish him, for each morning his face had caught more of the ghastly foreshadowing of Death" (440). Barton's murder resulted additional violence and destruction of livelihoods: e.g. the accusation and trial of Jem Wilson for the murder of Harry Carson; his daughter, Mary, nearly died trying to prove Jem's innocence; Jem lost his job; and no one would hire him even though he was found "not guilty," societally exiling Jem and Mary from Manchester as they were forced to move to Canada in order to survive.

Barton's attempted reversal of structural cannibalism is unique when compared with the other working-class fictions we have examined in this chapter. None of the other texts resist consumption and claim power in such a physical and violent manner. "Life in the Iron-Mills" is most similar with its direct stealing of power when Deborah filches money from an upper-class man for the man she loves, Hugh Wolf. Seeing Hugh's despair of his wretched, oppressed life (5), and hearing that money, declared by the upper- and middle-class men, was the reason for the divide between the classes and the solution to a better life (18), Deborah decides to take that power for Hugh. The middle- and upper-class men openly mock the workers in front of them, flaunting their own money and joking that the workers will now strike in order try for more money (18). Hugh's life overwhelmed him with its endless drudgery and monotony, his powerlessness, and the death of his hopes to be a sculptor and artist, to be something more: "[t]he slow tides of pain he had borne gathered themselves up and surged against his soul. His squalid daily life, the brutal coarseness eating into his brain, as the ashes into his skin: before, these things had been a dull aching into his consciousness; to-night, they were reality" (18). Hugh was being slowly cannibalized by his life with no way out of the oppression; that is, until Deborah,

gave him a chance with the stolen money. When Hugh saw the possibility of equality and, more specifically, beauty in his life, suddenly accessible to him, he responded thus: "[a] consciousness of power stirred within him. He stood up. A man,—he thought, stretching out his hands,—free to work, to live, to love! Free! His right!" (24). The stolen money imbued Hugh with a sense of power, freedom; restoring his humanity to him. His attempt at accessing these things failed, however, as he was caught and, according to the masters, justly sentenced to 19 years in prison (25-6). The stolen money temporarily gave Hugh access to the bourgeousie's "power," but it did not result in a reversal of roles. Taking the money (arguably a trifling amount for the masters), does not lower them in this instance; if it caused anything, it evoked the masters' wrath and a desire to make their power felt. Hugh's endeavor at wielding the monetary power is short-lived because his working-class station yanks him back, imprisoning him even lower than he was before. The narrator describes the (in)"justice" of Hugh's life in the final moments of his imprisoned life: "I think that all the low, vile life, all his wrongs, all his starved hopes, came then, and stung him with a farewell poison that made him sick unto death" (31). Hugh ends up committing suicide because he cannot face 19 years in prison. His entire life was consumed by the masters, with his one attempt at seizing his "right," freedom as a human being, culminates in what is equivalent of a death sentence. Hugh's oppressed position within the structural cannibalism of capitalism "poison[s]" him and consumes his life.

In direct contrast with John Barton's violent attempted reversal and Hugh Wolfe's stolen power, Stephen Blackpool from Dicken's *HT* is an example of the impossibility of the reversal of power for the working class. Blackpool is an oppressed worker, shackled in marriage to an alcoholic wife, who ends up framed for a bank robbery by a lazy, gambling addicted, middle-class young man, Thomas Gradgrind, Jr. Even more unjust than Jem Wilson's trial as a

repercussion of Barton's crime in *MB*, the accusation of the bank robbery (committed by a middle-class man) forces Blackpool to run so he will not be convicted as an innocent man since his position as a working-class made him an easy target. Yet even as Blackpool returns to his master's house for a chance to clear his name, Stephen falls in the "Old Hell Shaft" (212), one of many old "deserted coal-shafts" (136) on master Bounderby's property – remnants of capitalism gone by. Stephen's body, and eventually his life, is consumed by capitalism and middle-class power domination, confronting the reader with the imagery of being literally swallowed alive by an old mine shaft:

> "I ha' fell into th' pit, my dear, as have cost wi'in the knowledge o' old fok now livin, hundreds and hundreds o' men's lives—fathers, sons, brothers, dear to thousands an thousands, an keepin 'em fro' want and hunger. I ha' fell into a pit that ha' been wi' th' Fire-damp crueller than battle. I ha' read on't in the public petition, as onny one may read, fro' the men that works in pits, in which they ha' pray'n an pray'n the lawmakers for Christ's sake not to let their work be murder to 'em, but to spare 'em for th' wives and children that they loves as well as gentlefok loves theirs. When it were in work, it killed wi'out need; when 'tis let alone, it kills wi'out need. See how we die an no need, one way an another—in a muddle—every day!" (215-6)

Similar to Gaskell's summation of the violent power structures, Stephen ties the oppressive history of the mines to the current oppression of the mill workers, identifying the inevitable cannibalism of the working class. The mine shaft, then, signifies the consumption of workers' lives from a time long before the current factory abuse and presents the insatiable hunger of the bourgeois that continues forward with the mine shafts as gaping maws snatching workers and "murder[ing]" them. Ketabgian suggests that Blackpool's fall was a self-containment of his anger at his unjust oppression so that his "violence is not turned toward others but rechanneled and visited onto himself" (671), yet Stephen's fall was not purposeful or intentional. If anything, it could potentially be read as Dickens' containment of any potential violence meted out on the

middle classes. However, I argue that the language from Blackpool's long speech above implies the mine shaft as having a certain power of its own stemming from the bourgeois and their class oppression. As Stephen lay dying after being rescued from the mine shaft, he stated: "'[w]hen I fell, I were in anger wi' her [Louisa], an hurryin on t' be as onjust t' her as oothers was t' me'" (216). Justifiably, Stephen was angry at the unjustness of his treatment and suggests that there was a return violence he was intending to serve to the bourgeois Louisa and her husband, Stephen's master, Mr. Bounderby; yet before we even know what that "onjust[ness]" was, he dies. Blackpool did not attempt to take power from the masters like the unionists were desiring, nor did he try to please his master as Bounderby wanted, yet he ended up consumed by industrialism anyways.[48] No matter how innocent or hard-working Stephen Blackpool was in the games of the greedy and privileged middle classes, Blackpool could not escape the structural cannibalism.

The common thread with all of the endings for these working-class texts is their lack of ability to enact substantive change. Whether it was through the murder of a master, the stealing of money, or the intent to achieve some sort of revenge, their oppressed position within structural cannibalism remained and resulted in their lives being consumed. This trope was found in a lot of texts on the working class. So much so, that there is even a Victorian parody of Dickens' *HT*, published 3 years after *HT* in 1857, that intentionally changes the ending so that Bounderby is chased by an angry mob of workers and consumed by the very machine animals he "owned,"

---

[48] "'If aw th' things that tooches us, my dear, was not so muddled, I should'n ha' had'n need to coom heer. If we was not in a muddle among ourseln, I should'n ha' been, by my own fellow weavers and workin' brothers, so mistook. If Mr. Bounderby had ever know'd me right—if he'd ever know'd me at aw—he would'n ha' took'n offence wi' me. He would'n ha' suspect'n me'" (Dickens 216).

physically inverting the structural cannibalism.[49] By identifying the stacked metaphors of cannibalism in Gaskell's *MB*, Dickens' *HT*, and Davis' "Life in the Iron-Mills," we are able to see the consumptive power structures and their oppressive violence. All of the workers' attempts at escaping, reversing, or taking that power ultimately failed, resulting in death for all 3 workers – John Barton, Stephen Blackpool, and Hugh Wolfe – whether by their own hand (such as Wolfe did due to his unjust prison sentence), the remnants of capitalism (such as Blackpool), or the return violence that resulted in Barton's own death (shooting Harry Carson then dying from guilt-inflicted starvation). All of these workers lived with the extended, long-term consumption of structural cannibalism, as, piece by piece, their bodies were eaten without any ability to stop it or free themselves from it. This is a very different dynamic than Eliza's successful transformation into a predator during her escape in Stowe's fictional *UTC*, yet we see that the failure to achieve freedom or power is a much more common thread in the auto-biographical slave narratives such as Mary Prince's *The History*. Prince was never able to attain true freedom by returning to her homeland of Jamaica to be with her husband and family; instead, she was stuck in Britain with her health issues increasing as a result of the climate. The working-class texts and the enslaved texts were written with the intention of enacting change, yet the change they sought – freedom from oppression, equality, and the subsequent power that comes with it – is represented, perhaps inadvertently, as inaccessible. This will be wildly different in the next chapter as we explore gender roles in a titillating, pornographic text, Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* (1796). This gothic novel, written from the perspective of the British patriarchy in the Romantic era presents both the

[49] See Philip Collins' "From 'Hard Times (Refinished)', *Our Miscellany*" for the parody.

idealized gender roles as well as the women who defy, thwart, and invert those roles within structural cannibalism.

CHAPTER IV: *DOLCE*: GENDERED REPRESENTATIONS OF "SWEET" PREY AND "WILD" PREDATORS IN THE LONG 19TH CENTURY

The past chapters have focused on presenting the framework for structural cannibalism. Chapter 2 established its function within power structures through a metaphorical cannibalistic framework in slavery revealing the cannibal identity of the European powers. Chapter 3, the working-class chapter, built on that foundation by revealing the cyclical nature of structural cannibalism. While both of those chapters referenced gender, this chapter will build on the complicated consumptive positions of race and class through a feminist analysis. I will study the cannibalized and cannibalizing female bodies found primarily in Matthew Lewis' gothic novel, *The Monk: A Romance* (1796), returning at the end to a few texts on slavery revealing the compounded and interconnected nature of structural cannibalism.

Viewing slavery as cannibalistic was common in the 19th century, and a similar trope can be found in the Western world's patriarchal objectification of the female body in the late 18th and 19th century. 19th-century authors (as well as modern-day scholars[50]) excoriated the objectification and subsequent consumption of the female body and identity. Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) uses a wide variety of

---

[50] Here are some examples of modern scholarship that addresses the consumability of women. Framing Ellen Moers definition of Female Gothic, Lauren Fitzgerald in "Female Gothic and the Institutionalisation of Gothic Studies" explores the governmental and societal consumption of women by highlighting the connection between women's battle for property ownership, their bodies, and their literature (15-17). Laura Mulvey's foundational feminist theory, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," tackles the voyeuristic and consumptive male gaze in movies. However, these examples rarely extend their analyses overtly to cannibalism. Even in Jay Dolmage's "Eating Rhetorical Bodies"we find attention drawn to the cannibalizing of the female body, yet he focuses more theoretically through myths such as Zeus's cannibalized wife, Metis, and Medusa, and does not examine the rhetoric of gendered cannibalism and its specific effects in historical time periods.

consumptive language to highlight the objectified position of women in the late 18th century, arguing that education was the key to women's enlightenment from animals to their actual "assumed" status as humankind.[51] In common law, the British law of coverture objectified women declaring that both a woman's property and legal identity were consumed by her husband once married, effectively erasing their individual identity. William Blackstone clearly articulates this subsummation process in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765): "'[b]y marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law; that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and cover, she performs everything'" (430). "Incorporation" is to consume, to bring into oneself. In the legal sense, it is strictly a term of subsuming assets under the husband; however, the *OED* definition ties it to a physically embodied act, framing marriage during the 18th and 19th centuries cannibalistically (1.a.). Women in the 18th and 19th centuries were denied their own legal and societal identities; consequently, their assumed invisibility makes their cannibalized status both that which is imperceptible as well as explicit.

The female body is commonly presented as a consumable object, most often cannibalized through sex, reduced from a whole human being to objectified body parts. This objectification seeks to assert the patriarchal power structures and reinforce the female position as prey. For power structures to function, they *must* be viewed as permanent, strong, unyielding to mobility or force; consequently, power structures are reliant upon dichotomies or at least perceived

---

[51] Wollstonecraft's publication – by many scholars considered to be a foundational feminist text – is one of the texts that problematically relies on the rhetorical use of slavery to define the oppressed position of women in the late 18th century, yet this aspect again introduces another cannibalistic layer to her argument.

dichotomies. The oppressors cling to clear, delineated positions, fearful of anything that might disrupt, or steal their power. My research has studied many such dichotomies like cannibal and consumed, master and enslaved, bourgeois and proletariat, white and people of color, oppressor and oppressed, but one that has consistently been popping up throughout my research is the structural dichotomy of prey and predator. This consumptive binary can be found in all of my research as the metaphors mark the bodies of the oppressor and oppressed with predatory signifiers. The definition of "prey, n." lends itself to an understanding of both rape and cannibalism: "[a] person who is pursued or controlled by another; a person who is easily deceived or harmed" (*OED* 2.a.) and "[a] person who or thing which is hunted, pursued, or plundered" (*OED* I.). Even more cannibalistic, prey can mean: "[a]n animal that is hunted or killed, esp. (and now only) by a carnivore for food; the kinds of animal, collectively, that are hunted by a carnivore and form its diet" (*OED* I.1.a.). We have seen the oppressor's terror of the oppressed bodies that manage to transgress their delineated position of consumable prey such as enslaved Eliza from the second chapter who is transmogrified from hunted deer to vicious wildcat taking Haley's power and masculinity, or in the third chapter with John Barton's violent, attempted power reversal as he, a starving working-class man, murdered the privileged middle-class Harry Carson, son of a factory owner and a representative for the masters.

These moments of slippage, of deep-seated fears being conveyed through veiled metaphors, both hide and uncover the tenuousness of power structures and the subsequent fragility of dichotomies that those power structures are founded on. The individuals or peoples who threaten those systems are presented as warnings, embodied terrors of the unknown (and somehow secretly known) threat of instability and impotence that occurs when the dichotomies are not as firm as those in power ignorantly pretend or desperately need them to be. What

happens when those dichotomies are not set, when those who occupy oppressed positions can permeate the boundaries and move from one to the other? This chapter will examine the answers to those questions as I seek to flesh out the predator/prey dichotomies found in Lewis' *The Monk*; a text that fearfully probes the destruction or restructuring of those dichotomies and the chaos that ensues as a result.[52]

As Kyla Wazana Tompkins points out in *Racial Indigestion* (2012), the problem with ingesting Othered individuals is that you risk internalizing their otherness, eliminating the bodily boundaries between Other and self as those in power ingest that which is foreign to the body: "[e]ating threatened the foundational fantasy of a contained autonomous self—the 'free' Liberal self—because, as a function of its basic mechanics, eating transcended the gap between the self and other, blurring the line between subject and objects as food turned into tissue, muscle, and nerve and then provided the energy that drives them all" (3). Eating both creates identity while also threatening it as the eater risks becoming or internalizing that which they are eating. Maggie Kilgour focuses on the self/Other dichotomy as she explores binaries associated with cannibalism and incorporation, revealing the instability of a foundational binary: inside and outside:

> To consider other oppositions by the means of this one [inside and outside] is one way of showing how they are constructed not by essential

---

[52] Lewis is a young, 19 year-old, upper-class, British male writing a gothic text situated in Spain. In the tradition of the gothic, many of the early novels, written by white, British authors, were situated in places such as Spain or Italy: Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) was set in Spain, Anne Radcliffe's *The Italian* (1796) and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) were set in Italy and France, to name a few. By placing the gothic texts in these secondary European countries, it creates, as María DeGuzmán in *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire* would title, a "double movement of *repulsion* … and *romancing* (xiii). These gothic texts vilify the Catholic religion and the off-white Spaniards and Italians, well-known "lesser" nationalities in relation to Britain, while the readers simultaneously voraciously consume the characters and the wide variety of sins they commit.

> differences by position, suggesting in turn that they, like Hiawatha's mittens, are infinitely reversible. But the apparent firmness of this opposition is deceptive. The relation between an inside and an outside involved a delicate balance of simultaneous identification and separation that is typified by the act of incorporation, in which an external object is taken inside another. (4)

Kilgour explores how the dichotomies of inside and outside "depend[] upon and enforce[] an absolute division; but in the act [of incorporation] itself that opposition disappears, dissolving the structure it appears to produce" (4). Kilgour's analysis of the binary of inside and outside identifies them as vague, shifting terms that construct identity and individuality, while also establishing a political body and Otherness. Through incorporation, the outside can become inside, thereby reshaping or digesting the boundary that was perceived to be so clearly delineated.

The predator/prey dynamic can be reduced, in its simplest form, to eater/eaten, cannibalistically framing who gets to consume and survive and who does not. Kilgour relies upon the assumption that eater/eaten are the same binaries as that of inside/outside, but there is a key distinction between the two sets of binaries that is not clearly stated by Kilgour, and it is that the dichotomy of inside/outside constructs the identity of the consumer and therefore determines who gets the privilege of incorporation as well as constructing the identity of what or who gets eaten. Eater/eaten and inside/outside are not synonymous but are linked. The eater gets to distinguish that which is inside as well as that which is outside; they get to decide (most of the time)[53] what they will consume. What is missing from Kilgour's analysis is the hierarchy, the

---

[53] As I referenced in Chapter 1, depending on how oppressed you are, you do not have the privilege of choosing what you will consume since that is decided by those in power. Another example of this can be found in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848), where John Barton recounts the illness and resulting death of his young son that could have been cured by "good nourishment" (56). Barton tells how he, jobless, penniless, and starving himself, "stood at one of

food chain, the power structures, that determine how much power one gets and who or what one can eat. In Lewis' chaotic text, we see a clear patriarchal and parochial power structure, with the Catholic church and males at the top supposedly wielding the most power and determining the eaters and eaten cascading down from there. With a strict formal power structure that is ruled by the Catholic church first and then the state (both male dominated/run) continuing on down, the expectation would be for the characters to fall in line with the firm structure, yet there are many characters who transgress their boundaries – whose positions as predator/eater and prey/eaten are not static. Instead, the characters, primarily women, embody the text's fears of fluidity and patriarchal impotence by both exploring and excusing (I will go into this more in a bit) male and female deviancy. Structural cannibalism's oppression of those lower in the system creates the illusion that the structure is set and cannot be changed; however, the women in *The Monk* expose the weakness of the patriarchal structure and the variable positionality of the prey/predator dichotomy.

Since my primary focus for this chapter will be Lewis' *The Monk*, a gothic novel, it is important that I briefly address the common tropes in this literary genre that lend themselves so well to the detailed inspection of consumption within the text. One of the most prominent themes is that of the veil., used literally and metaphorically for a variety of reasons in the gothic genre. The scholarship on veils examines three things: the covering itself, what it is hiding, or an

---

the shop windows where all edible luxuries are displayed; haunches of venison, Stilton cheese, moulds of jelly—all appetizing sights to the common passer-by. And out of this shop came Mrs Hunter [the mill owner's wife]! She crossed to her carriage … with purchases for a party. … Barton returned home with a bitter spirit of wrath in his heart, to see his only boy a corpse!" (56). Barton's son died of an illness that could have been cured with any number of the good foods he saw at the shop, but he and his family could not eat the "edible luxuries" because "his master had failed" (55) resulting in Barton losing his job. This meant that he and his family starved and his son died, while the master and his family still ate well and "part[ied]."

essential truth that is being hidden or uncovered.[54] With structural cannibalism's particular focus, we will see the metaphors of veils in *The Monk* bring attention to or cover the predator/prey identities, with importance on who or what is doing the veiling or unveiling. Another trope of the gothic is a fixation on consumption or lack thereof. There is a lot of focus on gluttony or starvation found within the gothic,[55] even the gothic texts themselves being voraciously consumed by the readers as identified by Clara D. McLean in "Lewis's *The Monk* and the Matter of Reading": "[p]ursuers of the tantalizing secret, curious to the point of deadliness, wind their way through a marvelously labyrinthine architecture which the novel both thematizes and structurally repeats" (111). The gothic genre developed out of a historically tumultuous time period for Europe. Nick Groom highlights this, framing *The Monk* against the background of the French Revolution as Lewis graphically paints the British fears of mob rule, corrupt power structures, and anti-Catholic sentiments in setting the novel in Madrid, Spain. *The Monk* explores those fears through corrupt catholic powers as found in a libidinous monk, a murderous convent, sorcery, a brutal mob, incest, rape, murder and so much more (vii-xi). What is particularly striking about this text is the attention to abusive power structures and consumptive tropes presenting the female body as (unsurprisingly) an object to be consumed by those in power. More importantly, *The Monk* delves into the metamorphic power of consumption and sexual desire that consequently transforms and deforms both men and women. Many critics have

---

[54] For more information on the history of veils in the gothic see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Clara D. McLean.

[55] Elizabeth Andrews "focus[es] on the two extremes of appetite: starvation and cannibalism" (vi) representing the severe lacking of food or non-eating and gluttony; however, my research has shown that starvation is another form of cannibalism, whether it is auto-cannibalism in an attempt to control or subjugate one's own body or starvation that occurs because of a person in power's actions. Seeing it as a consumptive scale positions starvation as a form of cannibalism, allowing for the identification of power struggles over the body.

studied the gothic sexual and religious perversions that are prevalent in *The Monk*; however, the consumptive sexual appetites of the women in the text as well as the monk, Ambrosio, have yet to be thoroughly fleshed out.[56]

The consumptive tropes found within the genre of the gothic, however, are not, solely found within gothic texts. While the gothic foregrounds consumption making it all the more identifiable, we have seen in the previous chapters, in slavery and capitalism, that consumptive metaphors are not confined to the gothic and can be found anywhere there are power structures. As we will see in the next paragraph, Lewis uses William Shakespeare to establish a consumptive narrative, validating not only his consumptively sexual plot but tracing the consumptive metaphors beyond the confines of the gothic and historically situating it with the well-known and well-respected Shakespeare.

Conventional Predator/Prey

From the very first epigraph in Lewis' *The Monk*, the females throughout the novel are presented using consumptive language. In Chapter I, Volume I, there is a quote from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*: " —Lord Angelo is precise; / Stands at a guard with envy; Scarce confesses / That his blood flows, or that his appetite / Is more to bread than stone" (1.3.50-53). Lewis intentionally frames *The Monk* by presenting sexual desire as consumptive using the word "appetite" to describe sexual desire and implying that the "bread" that the appetite

[56] It is worth noting that Ambrosio's sexual desire is consistently described throughout the novel using consumptive terms: prey, lust, desire, fire, insatiable, appetite, fast, glutted, etc. so cannibalistic terminology is not simply confined to his rape of Antonia. In fact, his first introductions to sexual desire are framed through consumptive terminology as Matilda describes a man's love as a "master" (48), and the narrator presents her desire and joy as "dr[inking]" (48) Ambrosio's words, while Matilda's continued presence in the novitiate will "nourish[ish]" (48) her romantic feelings. All of this language presents romance and desire as consumptive, a point that Kilgour briefly touches on (8).

will potentially desire is the female body. Shakespeare's plot in *Measure for Measure* is one that will read familiar to those who have read *The Monk* and vice versa as it is presents a strictly moral deputy, Angelo, who is given temporary power over the city of Vienna, his moral code blinding him to his own weaknesses resulting in a violent extreme, kidnapping virginal Isabella and attempting to blackmail her into having sex with him in order to save her brother. Lewis's use of *Measure for Measure* as the epigraph not only sets up the plot for *The Monk*, but specifically focuses on male sexual deviance consumptively preying on the female body. This subtle reference flavors *The Monk* with cannibalistic meaning, as, from the very beginning, the readers are confronted with its horrific bodily and gendered implications.

The Monk attempts to place the men and women into one of two binary categories: prey and predator. The expected categorizations of men as predatory and women as prey are written in the patriarchal and parochial structure; however, the plot/characters do not "behave themselves," with the actions and/or characterizations breaking down the expected binaries. As the text fails to create a firm structure, chaos emerges through the disruption in that order, generating a fear of the disorder. There is also arguably a third category, but it is less of a category and more of a transitory state that the body does not inhabit long but passes through from one category to another. While I could analyze most if not all of the characters in *The Monk* under the structural binary of predator/prey, I start my analysis with the expected cannibalization of the female body. This oppressive power dynamic of structural cannibalism also uncovered the unexpected as I found a litany of female characters that transgressed the delineated category of prey. It is because of this that, in addition to analyzing Ambrosio and Antonia first as the typical and quintessential representations of the consumptive patriarchal power structure, I will explore the ways that

Matilda, Agnes, and Beatrice defy the categorization of prey in a variety of ways leading to the destabilization of Ambrosio's status as the ultimate predator.

Another expected set of binaries for both contemporary readers of the long 19th century and for modern scholars is used to define the women in *The Monk*: virgin or whore. This dichotomy textually validates women's structural positions as predator or prey and whether they deserve to be eaten or are vilified as a predatorial threat. Of the female characters that are presented in *The Monk*, we have the virginal and sexually desirous (at least at some point) Antonia (virginal until right before the end of the novel), Agnes (virginal until her vows end up consensually/non-consensually broken), Matilda (cross-dressing, novice Rosario who is virginal until she willingly offers herself to Ambrosio), and Beatrice (the spectral, Bleeding Nun who is virginal until she chooses to break her vows). All of these women are presented as desirous, at least initially, and are portrayed at some point as prey in the text. Antonia, who functions in a lot of ways as the control subject, is presented as sexually desirous (by Lorenzo, Ambrosio, the narrator and implicitly the readers) throughout the entirety of the novel. At the end of the novel, the reader, and consequently, Lorenzo, do not get a chance to determine if Antonia is still sexually desirable because she was murdered after she was raped, thereby ending her desirable status after the consummation of the incestuous rape. Historically, she would no longer be desired as a sexual object and would be considered "damaged goods." The only way to save her innocent soul narratively was to kill her before she gets rejected by Lorenzo, his rich family, and society.

We must first take a look at the "delicacy" (8) that is Antonia and the consumptive position she is placed in from her entrance in *The Monk* so as to better understand how and to what extent the other women and even Ambrosio align or violate the binaries of prey/predator.

The very first sentences used to describe Antonia present her as if she is on a platter ready to be eaten: "[t]hese words were pronounced in a tone of unexampled sweetness. … / The voice came from a female, the delicacy and elegance of whose figure inspired the Youths with the most lively curiosity to view the face to which it belonged" (8). Before even her face had been seen, Antonia's voice and figure are described as "sweet" and a "delicacy" (*OED*). Her voice and body evoke three of the five senses: hearing, sight, and taste and, in an effort to experience more sensations ("lively" *OED* 3. c.), the young men looked about with "lively curiosity" as they desired more. The consumptive language continues as Lorenzo, one of the two youths described above, observes that her "charms" would have "rendered" her "the envy of the Women and adoration of the Men" (9). Like we saw in the first chapter, Mary Prince was "rendered" at the slave market; however, this time we have the "sweet" "delicacy," Antonia, cooked down in a church, prepared for consumption, and potentially even already eaten by the men *and* women of Madrid.[57] She is proffered as the quintessential embodiment of femininity and it is because of this – her body and her "charm[]" – that she is desired by all. Inversely, Antonia also represents that which everyone should *want* to consume, her body, beauty, and character (modesty, chasteness, innocence) are presented as *the* meal to eat.

As I stated earlier, Antonia's consumptive position reveals not just her consumability and her textual identity as food, but also as prey. The very first chapter of *The Monk* delineates Antonia's positionality through the foreshadowing of her rape and murder in a dream that Lorenzo had immediately after his introduction to Antonia. It is in this dream that the narrator

[57] Contextualized as "envy" is with "rendered" along with the cannibalistic adoration of the men of Madrid, "envy" is implied to also be consumptive since the women are jealous and desirous of the charms that Antonia embodies (*OED*).

guides the readers to the textually explicit predator (Ambrosio, the monk) and prey (Antonia, the virgin) as the narrator describes the gothic Cathedral and subsequent dream wedding scene:

> [Lorenzo] still fancied himself to be in the Church of the Capuchins; but it was no longer dark and solitary. Multitudes of silver Lamps shed splendour from the vaulted Roof; Accompanied by the captivating chaunt of distant choristers, the Organ's melody swelled through the Church; the Altar seemed decorated as for some distinguished feast; it was surrounded by a brilliant Company; and near it stood Antonia arrayed in bridal white, and blushing with all the charms of Virgin Modesty.
> ...Sudden the door leading to the Abbey unclosed, and He saw, attended by a long train of Monks, the Preacher [(Ambrosio)] advance to whom he had just listened with so much admiration. He drew near Antonia. (Lewis 22)

The gothic cathedral has been transformed from that which was "dark and solitary" to a sexually evocative, warm, and inviting wedding scene. From the outset, there is a sense of holy festivity, with the glowing lamps, choir, and suggestively "swell[ing]" organ music. The altar, a specially endowed (in both senses) religious centerpiece for the Catholic church as well as this dream scene, is "decorated as for some distinguished feast." Not only does the narrator specifically mention the altar, but also that it is laden for consumption. It can be understood that this feast is not just symbolic of a wedding feast, but also where the wine and bread are located for the Catholic rite of the Eucharist.[58]

---

[58] The cannibalistic imagery found throughout the novel is extended to the altar where the Eucharist is located, a contested anthropophagous site. Throughout the history of Christianity, there have been debates over the meaning behind the Eucharist, whether it is literal or metaphorical. This was of especial concern during the British Romantic era where the distrust of Catholics varied from severe to tolerable depending on the historical event. The suspicions surrounding transubstantiation were high as Diane Long Hoeveler points out: "the Catholic belief that priests have the spiritual power quite literally to turn wine into the blood of Christ during the mass, invest[ed] the priest with what appear to the common folk to be ‘magical’ powers (widely known and condemned by Luther as 'priestcraft’)" (39). Consequently, the late 18th/early 19th-century British viewed priests as dabbling in the black arts in addition to being anthropophagi. The Oath of Supremacy and Allegiance, which started as far back as 1534 and reinforced in 1672 through the Test Act, forced priests and the priesthood to refute the "black magic" and

Positioned close to the table is Antonia, displayed in all her virginal chastity and modesty, blushing with sexual desire. Antonia's sexual status is specifically brought to the reader's attention, and then who is placed next to her? The revered monk, Ambrosio, enters in all of his supposed religious fervor and appears to be attracted to Antonia's virginal chastity by "dr[awing] near" (22) her. This reveals Ambrosio's sexual desire, and, in an inversion of the wedding ceremony, the monk and the bride are paired at the altar instead of the groom and bride, deliberately coupling Ambrosio and Antonia and corrupting the wedding altar.

Ambrosio then undergoes an immediate metamorphosis from monk to monster in the feast scene as he disappears from the altar by Antonia and rushes between her and Lorenzo:

> an Unknown rushed between them. His form was gigantic; His complexion was swarthy, His eyes fierce and terrible; his Mouth breathed out volumes of fire; and on his forehead was written in legible characters—'Pride! Lust! Inhumanity!'
> Antonia shrieked. The Monster clasped her in his arms, and springing with her upon the Altar, tortured her with his odious caresses. She endeavored in vain to escape from his embrace.... a loud burst of thunder was heard. Instantly the Cathedral seemed crumbling into pieces... the Altar sank down, and in its place appeared an abyss vomiting fourth clouds of flame. Uttering a loud and terrible cry the Monster plunged into the Gulph, and in his fall attempted to drag Antonia with him. He strove in vain. Animated by supernatural powers She disengaged herself from his embrace; But her white Robe was left in his possession. (Lewis 22-23)

This disturbing dream clearly foreshadows Antonia's rape by Ambrosio, but also solidifies her place in the patriarchal power structure as that of prey and eaten. The monster seizes Antonia and takes her upon the altar, the feast table, and proceeds to cannibalize her through sexual assault.

"anthropophagus" transformation of wine and bread into the blood and body of Christ by "requir[ing] all office holders to swear that they did not believe that they were literally eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ (the doctrine of transubstantiation) in the sacrament of communion" (21). These beliefs during the time of *The Monk*'s publication contextually situate Ambrosio's position as the Abbot, along with his devious sexual practices, as systematically structured cannibalism.

Raping Antonia on the altar presents her body as a sacrifice to be consumed by the monster's fire; reminiscent of biblical sacrifices consumed by holy fire in the Old Testament and Pentateuch. Antonia's body replaces the Eucharist on the altar as the wine and bread are transfigured into her body and her blood, perverting the Eucharistic rite as she is now presented for sexual/physical consumption by the monster. Consequently, Antonia embodies the "distinguished feast" (22) that Ambrosio – embodied by the monster – eats on the altar through forced consummation of their depraved marriage. There is no metamorphosis of Antonia's body into prey as we have seen in previous chapters and as we will see with the other women and Ambrosio. Instead, Antonia escapes the monster's clutches leaving her virginal wedding dress behind as she transcends to heaven naked. Her nakedness and lack of transformation reinforce her femininity by displaying her objectified female body. Significantly, Antonia does not undergo any sort of deformation into prey as her structural position – her gender, her body/beauty, and her low-class status – consistently marks her as prey.

Ambrosio, on the other hand, is viewed as the most respected and moral man in Spain as well as the Spanish Catholic church and consequently goes through a visual deformation from the revered Abbot to the predatory "Unknown" (22) symbolizing the monk in all of his future downfall: a monster ruled by "'Pride! Lust! Inhumanity!'" (Lewis 22). The description of Ambrosio as the monster connects with previous descriptions of him as human: "there was a certain severity in his look and manner that inspired universal awe, and few could sustain the glance of his eye at once fiery and penetrating" (15). His eyes, described as "fierce" (22), were also "fiery" and suggestively "penetrating," a word used quite often throughout the novel to describe Ambrosio's person. Once again, we find the consumptive trope of fire, this time connected with a specific person, Ambrosio, and his cannibalism of those around him.

Ambrosio's fiery eyes are mirrored in the monster's breath and foreshadow Ambrosio's inability to control his sexual desires as he consumes Matilda and eventually Antonia. He is, to borrow a biblical idiom, a wolf in sheep's clothing, an esteemed monk, who is seeking to eat the innocent Antonia.

While Lewis uses the term "monster" to describe "The Unknown," it is clear that this strange being is still humanoid indicated by his complexion, forehead, eyes, and mouth, even while simultaneously imbued with demonic and bestial characteristics. Along with the monster's consumptive description, the reader is told what sins he embodies by the words on his forehead. What is interesting though, is the inclusion of the word "Inhumanity." The *OED* defines the word as, "[t]he quality of being inhuman or inhumane; want of human feeling and compassion; brutality, barbarous cruelty" (1.a.). As established in the introduction, the term "cannibal" is historically synonymous with "barbarism" and "brutality," so now we have the monk identified by this word: "Inhumanity," signifying his role as cannibal. Furthermore, "being inhuman" can also mean: "Not pertaining to or in accordance with what is human, in form, nature, intelligence, etc.; not of the ordinary human type" ("inhuman" 2.). Calling Ambrosio, the monster, inhuman does not mean that he is denotatively inhuman, rather it identifies his actions as that which do not conform to human nature and thus violate Western human law; this acts as a further valance. By identifying him as an inhuman monster, we focus on his dehumanized deformation and not on his humanity. Yet we see that, even amidst all of the gothic and supernatural tropes of *The Monk*, he is not literally transformed into a monster. Instead, he physically remains a human seeking to consume another human thereby cannibalizing Antonia. The monster commits this "inhuman" act through his eventual rape of Antonia, which turns out to also be incest, and his cannibalism of Antonia marks him as committing the two most "unnatural" acts known to Western humanity.

Presented as a foil to Antonia and her status as prey, Ambrosio is portrayed as a predator through monstrously consumptive descriptions: "'and when He spoke about Sinners He seemed as if He was ready to eat them'" (Lewis 18). However, his increasing sexual appetite is uncovered by Matilda, a woman disguised as a novice known as Rosario. Rosario's introduction in the novel overtly established a fondness between him and Ambrosio, but when Rosario is revealed to be Matilda, a woman in love with Ambrosio who entered the order to befriend and seduce him, the monk's virtue is immediately put in danger and Matilda threatens to kill herself if Ambrosio does not let her stay: "'[t]ell me that you will conceal my story,... or this poignard drinks my blood!'" (51). In this instance, Matilda frames the suicidal action as that of the phallic knife which will consume Matilda's blood, killing her. This scene is where he is first introduced to sexual desire as consumption because Matilda reveals part of her breast as she is poised to kill herself: "[h]is eye dwelt with insatiable avidity upon the beauteous Orb.... A raging fire shot through every limb; The blood boiled in his veins, and a thousand wild wishes bewildered his imagination" (51-52). The reader is quickly moved from the knife's vampirical consumption of Matilda's blood to the monk's vividly detailed visualized sexual consumption of her body. Ambrosio's viewing of her breast is described as "insatiable" (*OED*). The reference to "[a] raging fire" extends the text's previous descriptions of the monster's consumptive fire. The first descriptions of Ambrosio in the text suggested a level of control when he was a monk, but the monster in him was awakened with the fire raging out of control and consuming Ambrosio, blood and all, as he longs for, and will eventually consume, Matilda and Antonia's bodies.

The Protestant English viewed priests, monks, etc. as metaphorical bloodsuckers, preying on the poor and ignorant, with monks portrayed later on in 19th century novels as actual vampires (Hoeveler 39). Calling Ambrosio a monster would seem like a strong enough vilification, but

these terms only serve to hide the greater horror. The metaphors disassociate him from humanity, redirecting the reader by associating him instead with the mythical, the fictional, the unreal; yet, he is a man, preying upon an innocent woman, Antonia, along with the Spanish community at large. Ambrosio's first attempted assault is described thus: "Ambrosio no longer possessed himself; Wild with desire, He clasped the blushing Trembler in his arms. He fastened his lips greedily upon hers, sucked in her pure delicious breath, violated with his bold hand the treasures of her bosom, and wound around him her soft and yielding limbs" (Lewis 201-2). Ambrosio is cannibalizing Antonia as he "greedily" consumes her "delicious breath," framing the assault and Ambrosio as predatorial. The narrator denotatively identifies Antonia's position in the text as Ambrosio's prey: "reluctantly He quitted his prey" (Lewis 202). Lewis' characterization of the monk raping and bloodsucking the innocent, poor, and ignorant Antonia prefigures the later 19th century literary monkish vampires. Antonia is referred to as prey multiple times throughout the novel by both the narrator and Ambrosio. "Prey" implies both a forced sexual conquest as well as the status of an animal, or in the case of Antonia, a person who is hunted for the sake of being eaten as she is manipulated, attacked, and sexually assaulted by Ambrosio. All of this consumptive language is meant to signify Ambrosio as the ultimate predator, breaking the most taboo Western "laws" of cannibalism and incest.

Ambrosio became obsessed with sex, and the language shifts from implicit to explicit consumption: "[n]o longer repressed by the sense of shame, He gave a loose to his intemperate appetites" (173). Here, the narrator is directly correlating his sexual desires with consumption. They are "intemperate" signifying a lack of control as well as violent and unnatural, violating set societal boundaries ("intemperate"). Not only does this apply to sexual deviance (which, in the case of the monk's broken vows, leads to cannibalistic rape), but also to the breaking of his vows.

Any sexual behavior violates his vows of celibacy; therefore, he is completely outside of human boundaries. The narrator claims that his celibacy is unnatural and is consequently the reason he is a lecherous monster: "his long [sexual] Fast had only given a keener edge to his appetite" (173). The use of the phrase "keener edge" implies sharpness and violence, a knife even, which is used to carve up and consume women. In a week's time, Ambrosio is said to have become "glutted with the fullness of pleasure" (181); however, this does not mean that his gluttonous, consumptive desires have been satiated, but rather that they have grown full of his consensual possession and consumption of Matilda, and now seek other outlets. His sexual desire has increased to "the cravings of brutal appetite" (181) indicating sexual violence and misuse of Matilda. The shift in Ambrosio can be traced through the novel as the monk's unnatural celibacy leads to sexual desire and fulfillment of that desire, to a quick loss of control, and ultimately to sexual violence within his mutual sexual relationship.

From the loss of interest in Ambrosio's consensual but illicit sexual relationship with Matilda to the loss of control over his sexual desires, his consumption of Antonia begins by initiating sexual assaults that lead to murder, kidnapping, rape, incest, and sorcery. When first encountering Antonia, Ambrosio immediately obsessed over her and envisioned ways to rape her (Lewis 187, 197); however, the connection between rape and cannibalism is quickly established the more he is determined to violate her: "his passion was too violent to permit his abandoning his design.... He waited for the opportunity of satisfying his unwarrantable lust" (198). His violent passion as sexual appetite is stressed through the pairing of "passion" (*OED* 8. b.) and "lust" (*OED* 4.). The descriptors for the monk's sexual actions and desires have slowly gotten stronger and more animalistic as he gradually deforms from revered monk to predatory monster, his sexual desire becoming "degrading animal passion." Connotatively deformed from human to

beast – Antonio's metamorphosis foreshadowed in the dream sequence at the beginning of the novel is completed. It is Ambrosio's continuous violations of the accepted societal human behaviors, that directly correlates his actions with animalistic behavior; devolving into a predatory monster.

The culmination of Ambrosio's consumptive desires is found in his cannibalistic rape of Antonia: "[t]he Ravisher… treated her with the rudeness of an unprincipled Barbarian, … He gradually made himself Master of her person, and desisted not from his prey, till He had accomplished his crime and the dishonour of Antonia" (Lewis 295). The monk owns Antonia's body through rape, and he physically cannibalizes her as his hunt finally ends in success and he eats his prey. The description is not just one of rape but focuses on the consumption of Antonia's body, "'[t]he produce of [his] guilt'" (291). The cannibalism does not end with the rape, however, as Ambrosio then consumes her through murders with Matilda's poignard (300) – arguably the very poignard that she poised over her own bosom and threatened would "'drink[] [her] blood'" (51) – is used to drink Antonia's as Ambrosio "now enforced [Antonia's] silence by means most horrible and inhuman. He still grasped Matilda's dagger: Without allowing himself a moment's reflection, He raised it, and plunged it twice in the bosom of Antonia!" (301). Embodying his consumptive rape, Ambrosio now drinks her blood by stabbing her bosom and killing Antonia. Nothing is left of her. Her only protection in life, her mother, was murdered, her home was taken from her (or the reverse is more accurate), and in a sepulcher, surrounded by rotting bodies, her virginity and innocence was brutally consumed, ending with her life taken – Ambrosio cannibalized all of her. This dynamic between the villainous Ambrosio as the predator of *The Monk* and Antonia as the prey selectively reads as a clearly defined plot structure. There would be no quibbling over Antonia as the virginal sacrifice, or Ambrosio's metamorphosis into the

horrific Catholic monster; yet there are other characters in *The Monk* that are presented as prey. These female characters, Agnes, Beatrice, and Matilda, all appear in various ways as prey, yet they do not stay confined to that dichotomy, taking on predatorial positions and violating the power structures by destabilizing it and Ambrosio's position as the apex predator.

Aberrant Predator/Prey

We will now explore how women can exercise various forms of predatory and consumptive power, even from supposed positions of weakness as prey. Agnes is similarly presented like Antonia in the text, as both sexual and religious prey, and is consequently sexually consumed by her lover and physically consumed by the prioress of the nunnery through imprisoned starvation. Unlike Antonia, Agnes' status as sexually desirable is an understated one. When her lover, Don Raymond, tells how he met her, he does not use predatory, consumptive language; however, we can assume she is sexually desired because he invades her convent garden and there consummates their relationship while she is a nun. Kilgour references sexual incorporation, noting how the physical union between two bodies is a futile one that ends with violence and that the similarities between cannibalism and sex are uncannily and uncomfortably close (7-8). When Agnes and Raymond consummate their relationship, the initial impression suggests a consensual union, but the language portraying Agnes and Raymond's sexual liaison is rather muddied: "[s]carcely was the first burst of passion past, when Agnes recovering herself started from my arms with horror" (144). The admission of passion and the act of "recovery" on the part of Agnes implies that she was, at least to some degree, swept up in the moment and that on some level the sex may have been consensual; however, immediately following this brief phrase, all of Agnes' actions and words convey feelings of betrayal, horror, and signified rape: "[s]he called me infamous Seducer, loaded me with the bitterest reproaches, and beat her bosom

in all the wildness of delirium" (144). Her words reveal a despair and unwillingness on her part, accentuated by physical violence towards Raymond:

> Ashamed of my imprudence, I with difficulty found words to excuse myself. I endeavoured to console her; I threw myself at her feet, and entreated her forgiveness. She forced her hand from me, which I had taken, and would have prest to my lips.
> 'Touch me not!' She cried with a violence which terrified me; 'Monster of perfidy and ingratitude, how have I been deceived in you! I looked upon you as my Friend, my Protector: I trusted myself in your hands with confidence, and relying upon your honour thought that mine ran no risque. And 'tis by you, whom I adored, that I am covered with infamy! 'Tis by you that I have been seduced into breaking my vows to God, that I am reduced to a level with the basest of my sex! Shame upon you, Villain, you shall never see me more!'
> … I endeavored to detain her; But She disengaged herself from me with violence, and took refuge in the Convent. (144-5)

Agnes' actions and language all imply an unwillingness, and even potentially rape: her refusal to allow Raymond to physically comfort her, even by holding her hand; her violent emotive language scaring Raymond; calling him a "Monster" as she declares his sexual actions a predatorial consumption of her "honour." In at least Agnes' opinion, Raymond has been deformed from the man she loves and trusts to a consumptive monster, language that mirrors Ambrosio's deformation above. The recognition of Raymond's predatory power, one that Agnes admits she succumbed to willingly, she becomes the implied prey.

While Agnes inhabited the position of prey during sex, in a striking inversion, she seizes power; her "horror" transforming her into a predator with her "wildness of delirium" (144), most assuredly no longer the prey. Her words, her physical actions, and her body language convey power and dominance as she towers over Raymond who is cowering at her feet. She beats her own body, a physical reminder of the control she has over own body, and when he attempts to raise her hand to his lips, Raymond's attempt at further consuming Agnes, she "forced her hand from [him]" (144) claiming her body and her space as hers and hers alone. Raymond will not

violate or consume her again. While identifying Raymond as the predator that consumed her chastity and consequently her body, Agnes shames Raymond, rebuking him for his consumptive "reduc[tion]" (144) of her to a sexual object such as other lascivious women, women like the Bleeding Nun, whose story Agnes was familiar with. She then uses physical violence, again refusing to allow Raymond any possession over her body and denying him further access to her convent garden, both euphemistically and literally as she continues to wield her power, this time threatening to report the gardener if he continues to assist Raymond in violating the convent garden: "[f]ruitless were my attempts to conquer his [the gardener's] resolution. He denied me all future entrance into the Garden, and Agnes persevered in neither letting me see, or hear from her" (145). His attempts to gain access were "fruitless" as Agnes refuses him food, her body, the initial consumable object, as well as the power of orality, speech. He is *rendered* impotent as Agnes now controls what he eats, or more accurately, does not eat.

The language and context of this scene is a strange one textually – it is drastically different from Antonia's rape and dishonoring. Instead of stylistically dwelling on the sexual moment, presenting Agnes' body and its sexual conquest for the reader's visual consumption and titillation, the text skips over both the moments leading up to as well as the actual consummation. Narratively, the presentation of the sexual is described because the speaker, Raymond, is conveying the story to Agnes' brother, Lorenzo. It would be shockingly twisted if the lover rhetorically lingered over his sexual violation of Agnes while talking to her brother in an attempt to gain approval and assistance for rescuing her from the nunnery (although if Raymond were to unveil this moment like he unveiled Agnes, it would not textually be out of line with the rest of the lascivious novel). What this sugarcoating accomplishes, textually, is to present Agnes as still virtuous and even desirable. She does not belong in the same category with Beatrice (the

Bleeding Nun who, as we will see next, flaunted her sin), or Matilda (the sexually promiscuous, cross-dressing she-devil), or even a common prostitute. Instead, even after she has lost her virginity, Agnes maintains her status as a moral and repentant individual, worthy of romantic desire as she endeavors to cling to the Veil and atone for her broken vows. When she discovers that she is pregnant, she then tries to do what is best for her bastard child by attempting to escape the convent and marry its father, Raymond. This creates sympathy for her future imprisonment and sets her up to be the damsel in distress needing to be, and worthy of being, rescued later on after her horrific imprisonment by the Prioress.[59] Eventually the text forces the aberrant Agnes to return to her position as prey; yet, by fixating on her reaction to the consummation, the dichotomies of prey and predatory break down as we see Agnes wield her power, limited and short-lived though it may be, as a predator and not as prey.

As Raymond consumed Agnes, there was a causal effect for her: the sexual cannibalism that broke her vows required Agnes to commandeer her power becoming the predator. Sexual consumption, however, was not the cause for transforming Beatrice de las Cisternas, the ghostly Bleeding Nun, into a predator: required to "'t[ake] the veil at an early age, not by her own choice,

---

[59] Attempting to escape the convent in order to marry Raymond and protect her unborn child, Agnes' condition gets found out by none other than the holy Abbot, Ambrosio, who then berates the Prioress. Because of her humiliation in front of the esteemed Ambrosio, the Prioress fakes Agnes' death and imprisons her in the catacombs (foreshadowing Antonia's faked death and imprisonment by Ambrosio). The Prioress is described similarly to Ambrosio, as a "Tyrant, a Barbarian, and an Hypocrite" (273-4), and she wields the predatory power that she has over Agnes by imprisoning her and starving her: "[f]ood shall be supplied you, but not sufficient for the indulgence of appetite" (313). Agnes' child died hours after birth and Agnes became "an absolute skeleton" (319) as the Prioress consumed her alive. Here again, we have Agnes taking the position of prey for the remainder of the novel, but even in her imprisonment, she holds on to whatever little power she may have by refusing to allow them to take her dead child from her arms. Instead of a man consuming Agnes, the one who gets the closest to a completed cannibalism is the female Prioress.

but at the express command of her Parents'" (134), Beatrice becomes a predator by intentionally breaking her vows of celibacy. Because she entered the nunnery at such a young age, maturing into an adult woman while in the convent, her adulthood imbued her with a voracious sexual appetite that led to her pursuing men, breaking her vows, throwing feasts and orgies, and murderously consuming her lover. Her original virginity is not really portrayed, but it appears that the nun's veil hid her sexual appetite:

> 'She was then too young [in taking the Veil] to regret the pleasures, of which her profession deprived her: But no sooner did her warm and voluptuous character begin to be developed, than She abandoned herself freely to the impulse of her passions, and seized the first opportunity to procure their gratification. This opportunity was at length presented, after many obstacles which only added new force to her desires.' (134)

While Beatrice is portrayed as the victim for being forced into a cloister at too young of an age, the narrative immediately shifts from Beatrice as a victim to her as a sexual predator, actively hunting and pursuing her male prey. The narrative connects the two dichotomies revealing yet another causal effect: being prey leads to being a predator (at least according to the British Protestants who blame the "restrictive" and unnatural religion of Catholicism). Instead of a traumatic experience such as the consummated bridal veil triggering Agnes' shift to a position of power, we have the paralleled trauma of the unnatural nun's veil confining and imprisoning Beatrice. The veils represent the singular husband's confinement in marriage sanctioned by the patriarchal government as well as the Catholic church signifying structural cannibalism's control of the female body. Refusing to be cloistered away, consumed by the Catholic church and her parents' choices, Beatrice's Bildungsroman is that of prey to predator. As Beatrice moves from youth into womanhood, her "'voluptuous character'" simultaneously marks her body as delicious as well as revealing her own predatory "appetite" ("voluptuous" 1.a.). She was hunting for

someone to sexually consume, and the confinement of her cloister made it like a game, an apex predator toying with her food, getting hungrier as a result of the chase.

Beatrice planned to break her vow of celibacy and succeeded when she "'contrived to elope from the Convent, and fled to Germany with the Baron Lindenberg'" (134). The employment of the word "elope" suggests that she left a veil of celibacy in pursuit of the sexual veil of matrimony. Being refused her desire for marriage by the Baron, obliged instead to become his concubine, Beatrice's predatorial consumption found wilder outlets: "'[h]er feasts vied in luxury with Cleopatra's, and Lindenberg became the Theatre of the most unbridled debauchery'" (134). Beatrice's orgies tie eating with "debauchery," a word that connects many different kinds of consumption: "extreme indulgence in bodily pleasures and especially sexual pleasures … behavior involving sex, drugs, alcohol, etc." ("Debauchery"). In sketching a scene of the Bleeding Nun as she haunts the castle, Agnes also associates the nun's predatory, spectral hauntings with food: "[i]n the fore-ground appeared a Groupe of figures, placed in the most grotesque attitudes; Terror was expressed upon every countenance. … Some had concealed themselves beneath a Table, on which the remnants of a feast were visible" (108). Her predatorial power terrorized and consumed numerous individuals: her guests, the town, the Baron, and all the descendants/future inhabitants of the Lindenbergs' castle. She wanted her own way and cannibalized any and all to get what she wanted. A small detail that almost gets missed in the scintillating ghost story reveals the fullness of Beatrice's (dis)embodied identity as predator: "'[p]ossessed of a character so depraved, She did not long confine her affections to one object'" (134). Instead of the men objectifying the women as consumable objects, a woman with an avid sexual appetite objectifies the men, a complete reversal of the consumptive power structures affronting the patriarchy.

The Wandering Jew (another mythological character), who is telling Beatrice's story to Raymond, portrays her as a victim of circumstance and manipulated by the men in her life. His attempted victimization of Beatrice misdirects the reader, so instead of seeing her power, her strength, and the threat that she (dis)embodies, we see a sinful, sympathetic woman who has been forced into decisions without her consent and without thinking of the consequences; someone who is a used and abused object and not a subject. Framing her narrative thusly, she appears more as prey, as someone who is commanded by all the others in her life – from her parents, the convent, the Baron, his brother, the exorcist, and the Wandering Jew – even though the text proclaims her consumption of those around her and her sexual objectification of the men in her life.

The back-and-forth question of whether or not Beatrice is prey or predator continues. While it was Beatrice who initiated her sexual predatory lifestyle, she does end up becoming the victim of the Baron who keeps her in a transitory or purgatory-like state, dependent on him as he uses her but refuses to marry her. Shifting focus from the Baron to his power-hungry brother, the text describes him as a man who "'returned her passion just sufficiently to increase it; and when He had worked it up to the desired pitch, He fixed the price of his love [marriage] at his Brother's murder'" (135). As noted previously, the text declares that denying sexual appetite increases it, and now, instead of the Catholic church being the cause of Beatrice's sexual frustration and intensified hunger, we have the Baron's brother "'work[ing] it up to the desired pitch.'" How else does one work up their appetite if not denying or starving the body? The Baron's brother then appears to be sexually starving Beatrice so that she will be hungry enough to do whatever he desires, and his desire is for her to cannibalize the Baron through murder.

Beatrice's identity once again appears to be that of manipulated prey or a lower food-chain predator who is being used; however, her status as prey is temporary, for it is through the murder of the Baron (resulting in her own murder) that Beatrice transforms and maintains the position of predator. The description of Beatrice as she murders the Baron foreshadows Raymond's sexual consumption of Agnes: "'The Baron slept in the arms of his perfidious Mistress, when the Castle-Bell struck 'One.' Immediately Beatrice drew a dagger from underneath the pillow, and plunged it in her Paramour's heart'" (135). Before Raymond was decried by Agnes as a "'Monster of perfidy'" (144), Beatrice owned that identity as the "'perfidious mistress'" implying that the first monster of perfidy was a woman. She is a physical threat to her lover, the brother of the Baron, because of her monstrous, predator-status; therefore he had "'to free himself from a Woman, whose violent and atrocious character made him tremble with reason for his own safety'" (135). The power-hungry brother who used her sexual appetite and predatory nature as a weapon against his brother in order to become the heir of the family fortune was so intimidated that he "tremble[d] with reason for his own safety." The *OED* defines tremble as: "Of persons (less commonly of animals), or of the body or a limb: To shake involuntarily as with fear or other emotion, cold, or weakness; to quake, quiver, shiver" (1.a.). "Tremble" is the causative effect of fear, created by someone or something intimidating; it is a term that is used to describe Ambrosio's predatory and consumptive effect on those around him (16, 18, 36), and infers the person or animal that is trembling is prey. The Baron's brother trembled "with reason" because he knows he is the prey and that Beatrice is the predator. She has killed one brother and she could kill the other, so out of fear for his own life, the Baron's brother murdered Beatrice with the very knife that she used to murder the Baron. In her death, Beatrice became further transmogrified from consumptive predator to a spectral ghost that haunted and

hunted the Baron's brother till he died, and then proceeded to haunt the castle and the Lindenbergs for 200 years "'[d]rest in her religious habit in memory of her vows broken to heaven, furnished with the dagger which had drunk the blood of her Paramour'" (135).

Although Beatrice's sexual appetite transformed her from prey to predator, her ongoing fluctuation between these roles suggests two different, non-progressive readings: she embodies either a condition of continuous transition, or one in which she is both prey and predator at all times. She is imprisoned at the castle until Raymond takes her bones and lays them to rest in his family vault, the vault of the de las Cisternas' (their shared family lineage), yet it is her haunting of Raymond that compels him to give her a proper burial. The physically consumptive cycle that began with Beatrice's murder of the Baron does not end with her consuming the life of her lover: "'his heart burst, and one morning He was found in his bed totally deprived of warmth and animation'" (136). Attempting to solidify his position as predator, the brother used her power to gain his own position of power, then metaphorically consumed her with the "'dagger which had drunk the blood of her Paramour'" (134) vampirically drinking her blood through murder and dooming her to a cursed, spectral existence; yet Beatrice confounded this effort to cannibalize her, instead haunting him to death. In some ways, the brother's murder of Beatrice and her subsequent existence as a specter revealed how powerful a predator she was, continuing to consume even in (un)death. Her inability to achieve her desires of marriage and a peaceful death similarly reveals her status as prey; however, it is because of her predatory haunting that Raymond buries her bones and gives her peace. At every turn of the story, Beatrice is shown as trying and willing to do whatever she can to get what she wants; to push back and attempt to consume the power structures that dominate and consume her. Beatrice's ability to seamlessly shift between, and even arguably maintain, a predator/prey identity uncovers the instability of the

binaries that the patriarchal power structures rely upon as she seized power at will—sexually, murderously, and spectrally consuming them.

Unlike Beatrice's constant shifting and (dis)embodiment between eater and eaten, Matilda surreptitiously maintains a predator identity by pretending to be prey. From Rosario/Matilda's first introduction in *The Monk*, there is a sense of mystery and ambiguous androgeneity about them as Rosario claims to be a young male novitiate at the monastery. What the reader, and Ambrosio, come to find out, is that Rosario is a cross-dressing female who sexually desires Ambrosio. [60] Unbeknownst to Ambrosio and the reader, Matilda has implemented a premeditated, predatory long con to ensnare him. Spun as a romantic accident, the "lovelorn" youth declares that she spurned all other young men until she supposedly fell in love with Ambrosio, has herself painted as the Madonna, which she secretly sells to Ambrosio (who has both a sexual and religious desire for the virgin), then cunningly reveals herself for what was supposedly purely religious, then romantic, and finally sexual desire/consumptive intentions. Matilda hides her intricately devious plans behind the guise of a love-sick female who pretends she had no intentions for romance, masquerading as prey: identified as a virgin, presenting innocence, softness, ignorance, femininity and religious fervor, these qualities that make Antonia such a delectable and desirable dish to all of Madrid, are fraudulently mirrored (or more accurately foiled) in Matilda's initial description of herself as she serves her body to Ambrosio and the readers (44-64).

[60] Ambrosio's very name marks him from the outset for consumption since "ambrosia" was "[t]he food, drink, or anointing oil of the gods, often having the property of conferring immortality" ("ambrosia" I.1.).

Performing the role of womanly, ignorant prey, Matilda lures Ambrosio in with her "broken heart" as she "innocently" tells him how she came to be hopelessly in love with him after hearing his first sermon. Masterfully preying upon his religious fervor and pride, she laces her transportive religious experience with sexually consumptive language:

> "My heart remained without a Master, till chance conducted me to the Cathedral of the Capuchins. Oh! surely on that day my Guardian-Angel slumbered neglectful of his charge! … You cannot but remember the lively enthusiasm which your discourse created. Oh! how I drank your words! How your eloquence seemed to steal me from myself! … I retired from the Church, glowing with admiration." (48)

Here again we find the term "Master" implying a consumptive power dominance that Matilda is claiming Ambrosio unknowingly wielded over her. *Matilda* is the one who sets up the power structure placing Ambrosio in a position of power over her and Ambrosio (and the reader) eats it up, greedily taking the supposedly dominant position. However, if one has the ability to "place" someone in a position of power, then the placer is truly the one in control, so it is Matilda who is in the position of eater, not Ambrosio. This is furthered by the telling of her love-sick story as well as placing herself in a position of subservience and reservedness that piques Ambrosio's sympathy and curiosity.

Furthering the inverted consumptive power structure, Matilda hungrily consumed his words, and by extension, Ambrosio, since he held his powerful religious oratory skills as the most important part of his identity. When Matilda had finished cannibalizing Ambrosio (sermon and all), she was left suggestively "glowing." The word glowing implies more than just a transcendent feeling and is laden with consumptive meaning: "[t]o burn with bodily heat; usually with the accompaniment of heightened colour. Also const. with predic. adj." ("Glow" 5.), "[t]o burn with the fervour of emotion or passion. Said of persons and their feelings" ("Glow" 6.), and "[t]hat glows with passion; ardent, impassioned, fervid" ("glowing" 3.). It carries the connotation

of specifically sexual passion and appetite consumptively tied to burning and fire. Glowing physically marks Matilda for more than just potential religious fervor, it reveals a sexually consumptive desire for Ambrosio.

While Matilda claims her desire is the result of an intentional action by Ambrosio when stating that he "seemed to steal me from myself," the context clarifies that Ambrosio did not set out to claim ownership of Matilda, to enslave her heart to him. It is a sleight of hand on her part that strokes Ambrosio's ego and pride as well as a successfully redirecting the reader to Ambrosio's flaws and power while veiling Matilda's own actions. This intentional veiling by Matilda is different than the veils that represented marriage, whether to the church or to a man. Matilda/Rosario has hidden herself in a monastery, not a nunnery. She was not forced there by family or forced into marriage or the consummate representation of one, instead, Matilda willingly and willfully masqueraded as a man, veiling herself with a masculine cowl instead of a marriage veil, then intentionally removed the masculine veil to masquerade femininity. It is a funhouse mirror maze with veil upon veil hiding Matilda's true predatory identity, so much so, that even at the end of the novel, Lucifer says:

> "I long have marked you for my prey … I seized the fit moment of seduction. I observed your blind idolatry of the Madona's picture. I bad a subordinate but crafty spirit assume a similar form, and you eagerly yielded to the blandishments of Matilda. Your pride was gratified by her flattery; Your lust only needed an opportunity to break forth; You ran into the snare blindly, and scrupled not to commit a crime, which you blamed in another with unfeeling severity." (337)

In hell, triumphantly holding the contract for Ambrosio's soul, Lucifer claims that Matilda was a demon sent to trap him and drag him down to hell. In fact, Lucifer makes the claim that the entire twisted plan was his and that Ambrosio fell fully and "'blindly'" for the "'snare.'" The first question that needs to be asked is whether or not Lucifer is a reliable narrator. In the recounting

of his "successes" and evil doings, Lucifer states that Ambrosio was going to be pardoned from the auto de fe (338), yet the crimes that Ambrosio committed were not such as would have been pardonable by the Grand Inquisition and we cannot know whether that was true or not because Ambrosio was taken to hell before the guards entered; so how are we to take as gospel the word of Lucifer when he states that Matilda was in fact not a female, but a demon? Regardless of whether or not Matilda was actually a demon, the physical form that she presented for the entire novel was that of a woman masquerading as: a man, a puerile virgin, a religious intellectual, a sexual offering, a humble servant. The effect on the reader and the plot is that the embodied *woman,* Matilda, is devious and dangerous.

While Matilda is a powerful and crafty figure, she presents herself as merely a puppet – doing her master's, Ambrosio's, bidding. She willingly gives herself to him sexually, attempting to satisfy his desires, then, when his desires outgrew her own body and became more wild and dangerous, she assisted him in his attempts to seduce and rape Antonia. Bradford Keyes Mudge in *Whore's Story* and Nick Groom both focus on Matilda as a "seductive fiction" (Mudge 220) and a "mass of contradictions, embodying inexplicable inconsistencies" (Groom xxix). They focus on the "trouble" that such a cunning female presents to the plot as a whole but miss the cannibalistic power that she wields. Matilda textually represents the rhetorical origins of *mētis* as defined by Dolmage in "Eating Rhetorical Bodies": "Metis is known through Greek myth as Zeus's first wife, as the deity embodying, and naming, the cunning intelligence (*mētis*) that Zeus would claim for his own when he swallowed her whole. …The form of intelligence … was represented as dangerous, as Other, and as eminently powerful" (198). Because of the cunning and power that the femininely embodied *mētis* represented, she was a threat to the patriarchal and masculine power structure of Zeus; therefore:

> Mētis must be made to fit into an ordered world or rejected. Because it calls on changing opinions and positions, Plato allied mētis with charlatanism and this with the pleasures of the body. For mētis to be acceptable, it had to be digested. … If mētis exists at all in Western thought, it is mētis with the cunning wrung out, placed into an ordered, proportional, hierarchized, and cerebral epistemology. (199-200)

Matilda physically embodies the female intelligence and consumptive power that is a threat to the patriarchy; therefore, Lucifer attempts to claim and consume her as Lewis narratively uses him in an endeavor to remove the female threat to the patriarchy. However, Zeus's cannibalism of the pregnant Metis was an attempt to claim her power and kill the threat that she and her children presented. This unsuccessful power move resulted in Metis' children birthed from Zeus' head, ultimately failing to eliminate Metis' threatening power and intelligence. Similarly, Matilda's power lingers as a disruption to the structural hierarchies. Instead of reading her textual character as chaotic and flawed, her "inconsistencies" (Groom xxix) mark her transformative power and the ability to present herself as sexual prey while also being the predator who had marked Ambrosio for her prey, violating the set patriarchal boundaries.

If we understand these inconsistencies or fluctuations as the sign of transformative power, then the scene of Ambrosio's sexual arousal carries additional significance. This time, Matilda's suicidal threat takes on a more complex hue: "'Either your hand guides me to Paradise, or my own dooms me to perdition! Speak to me, Ambrosio! Tell me that you will conceal my story, that I will remain your Friend and your Companion, or this poignard drinks my blood!'" (51). Matilda expertly manipulates Ambrosio into getting her way: he has told her he cannot let her stay but she refuses to accept this answer. Instead, she shocks him by saying that she will commit suicide on the consecrated ground of the monastery doubly "'doom[ing her soul] to perdition.'" At first glance, Matilda appears to take ownership of her suicide, placing the onus on *her* hand and *her* actions; however, this follows her statement that Ambrosio could "'guide [her]

to Paradise"' if he lets her stay. If she is giving Ambrosio the power to save her, it implies that his decision to not let her stay would actually be what sends her soul to hell. Additionally, Matilda directs the attention to the knife, phallically anthropomorphizing it by attributing the deadly action to the knife as it threatens to consume her blood. This distance that Matilda creates with the knife hides the auto-cannibalism that would have occurred if she killed herself. The knife cannot "'drink [her] blood"' if her hand holding the knife does not plunge it into her own chest. Matilda pretends to cede power to Ambrosio, manipulating him to get the decision that most benefits her, while simultaneous veiling her own consumptive control.

This moment is, as stated earlier, where Matilda intentionally snares Ambrosio by awakening his starved sexual desire. When she is poised to kill herself, she purposefully exposes her breast (51-52). Matilda could have easily threatened to kill herself by placing the knife over her heart and over her clothes. The effect would have been just as strong if the true action would have been to commit suicide; however, Matilda is purposefully exposing her body – a part that is easily identifiable as consumable – her breast. This is the first of several instances where she offers her body as prey, encouraging and strengthening Ambrosio view of himself as a predator. Couched in femininity, the focus on her femaleness hides her female consumption of Ambrosio. Later on, she "accidentally" lets her hood fall back from her face after having "carefully" concealed it from him and all others at the monastery for some time, revealing her to be the exact replica to his painting of the Madonna that he religiously and sexually worshipped (61):

> "Oh! since we last conversed together a dreadful veil has been rent from before my eyes. I love you no longer with the devotion that is paid to a Saint: … I lust for the enjoyment of your person. The Woman reigns in my bosom, and I am become a prey to the wildest of passions. … My bosom burns with love, …. Tremble then, Ambrosio, tremble to succeed in your prayers. If I live, your truth, your reputation, your reward of a life past in sufferings, all that you value is irretrievably lost. I shall no longer

> be able to combat my passions, shall seize every opportunity to excite your desires, and labour to effect your dishonour and my own." …
> She took his hand: Confused, embarrassed, and fascinated, He withdrew it not, and felt her heart throb under it.
> "Feel this heart, Father! It is yet the seat of honour, truth, and chastity: If it beats to-morrow, it must fall a prey to the blackest crimes." …
> He sat upon her Bed; His hand rested upon her bosom; Her head reclined voluptuously upon his breast. … Drunk with desire, He pressed his lips to those which sought them: His kisses vied with Matilda's in warmth and passion. (70-71)

If Matilda were genuinely concerned with protecting Ambrosio from breaking his vows and gratifying his sexual appetite, then she would not have dwelt on her cannibalistic hunger for him. Her passionate declaration of sexual desire is not one that is found commonly coming from a woman's mouth in the late 18th century, just as revealing her breast to him is not a feminine act. Her orality here, challenging Ambrosio's own powerful orality, is a masculine, predatory role conveyed by words such as: "'lust,'" "'enjoyment of your person,'" "'wildest passions,'" "'my bosom burns,'" commanding Ambrosio to "'tremble,'" warning him that she will "'seize every opportunity to excite his desires,'" "'labour[ing] to effect [his] dishonour,'" and forcing him to feel her breast. Her language and actions are violent, commanding, signifying masculinity and physicality. She orders, belabors in ferocious language her desire for him, and declares at length that she will predatorily hunt him until he breaks his vows. All of this is done while claiming that "'Woman reigns in [her] bosom, and [she] is become a prey.'" Yet again, she puts on "'Woman,'" for the performance, pretending to have become prey, yet the rest of the text belies this statement, revealing that it is Ambrosio who she has intoxicated with her desire, and that it is *her* passion and *her* predatorial position that he must match with his "kisses," "warmth" and "passion" (71).

Later on, the text tries to attribute her commanding and threatening presence as "masculine", stripping her of her femininity and awarding her instead with manly characteristics:

> He could not reflect without surprize on the sudden change in Matilda's character and sentiments. But a few days had past, since She appeared the mildest and softest of her sex, devoted to his will, and looking up to him as to a superior Being. Now She assumed a sort of courage and manliness in her manners and discourse but ill calculated to please him. She spoke no longer to insinuate, but command: He found himself unable to cope with her in argument, and was unwillingly obliged to confess the superiority of her judgement. Every moment convinced him of the astonishing powers of her mind … He grieved that Matilda preferred the virtues of his sex to those of her own; … her expressions … [were] cruel and unfeminine. (178)

Completely ignoring Matilda's earlier commands and intelligence, her more masterful oratory skills convincing him and manipulating him into sin, Ambrosio attributes her characteristics as that which are not supposed to belong to her "sex." This sudden recognition of her predatory position and his own weaker status affected him such that "what She gained in the opinion of the Man, She lost with interest in the affection of the Lover" (178). Ambrosio, as well as the text, cannot allow her to be both feminine and powerful; therefore, she *must* be contained according to the patriarchal order. If she is intellectually superior and powerful, then she must be masculine, thereby qualifying her predatory position as a structurally justified one. Agnes' own femininity and status of "Woman" is not questioned in the text because she does not maintain her predatory status. It is Matilda's predominant position of predator that requires the text to question her gender and attribute it to the masculine. However, these attempts within the text, through Lucifer and Ambrosio, to quantify Matilda's actions as that of a man or a demon reveal the porousness and societal construction of the dichotomies of female prey and male predator, placing Matilda, not Ambrosio, as the apex predator of *The Monk*.

These women in *The Monk*: Antonia, Agnes, Beatrice, and Matilda, have been textually portrayed as either prey, predator, or both using consumptive metaphors. These metaphors are both plentiful and varied conveying the range and extent to which the structural cannibalism of

the patriarchy is functioning. Just as Agnes, Beatrice, and Matilda enact both the objectified prey and the consumptive predatory power that comes from owning one's sexuality in the Romantic era signifying a threat to the patriarchy, Ambrosio also embodies that warning. He is textually presented as both the religious predator of Madrid, standing as the flawed idol of Catholic and governmental power, and sexual predator, consuming Matilda and Antonia (and wanting to consume every woman he sees (181)) – the novel is clearly titled after him. However, Ambrosio's representation of patriarchal and parochial predator fails as he falls prey to Matilda's consumption and control. Matilda consumes Ambrosio, controlling who and how he consumed Antonia, Antonia's mother, Agnes' child and the death of the Prioress and any other nuns who were killed or burned by the angry mob after finding out what the Prioress had done[61]. Antonia and Ambrosio's characters embody both the patriarchal ideals of male predators and female prey, yet Agnes, Beatrice and Matilda progressively and increasingly reveal the impotence of the patriarchy. The dichotomies such as predator and prey that provide the shaky foundation for gendered power structures are inherently permeable and shifting.

Race and Predator/Prey

I have focused solely on *The Monk* because it provides such a range of women in various classes and positions of dependence as prey/predator, but what is glaringly missing from my analysis is that these women are all "white" to a degree. While they are technically Spanish women, and in the eyes of the British, that identifies them as off-white or not truly white, most of these women are able to obtain power and inhabit predatory positions because of their status as

[61] At one point in the novel, recalling Agnes' curse on him when he refused to have pity on her, Ambrosio guiltily almost relents and intervenes in the prioress' punishment of Agnes, yet Matilda stops him with the argument that it will reveal his own sexual sins.

European and Christian women, a status that Black women who were enslaved during this time period would not or could not attain. Returning back to the first chapter and embracing the cyclical nature of structural cannibalism, I am now going to briefly explore how positions of power differently affect women of color in the late 18th to mid-19th century. As I stated in the introduction, separating race, class, and gender was done so as to focus on how structural cannibalism operates within these 3 primary categories found within the long 19th century, but these categories are not separate, and it is why I did not focus on only one oppressive power structure. By isolating race, class, and gender from each other, we cannot see the larger, foundational nature of structural cannibalism. And, by cycling back to the beginning of the meal, we can now see how the flavors and textures of these categories are layered. Structural cannibalism does not affect solely race, class, or gender. We have seen in this chapter that class affects the consumptiveness of the women and their ability to take power (e.g., Antonia is penniless and consumed easily and readily whereas Agnes, Beatrice, and Matilda all come from varying levels of wealth imbuing them more readily with access to power). Examining now how race positions the consumability of women of color (and briefly men), we will find that their position as prey, their access to predatory power, as well as the repercussions that occur when that power is taken, looks very different than it did for the women in *The Monk*.

The women in *The Monk* are accorded a level of privilege because of their Europeanness and light skin.[62] In fact, to harken back to Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, escaped enslaved, George was able to move "freely" among the white men of the South as he made his escape North

[62] For a more detailed exploration regarding the construction of race and specifically white and off-white nationalities see Matthew Frye Jacobson, DeGuzmán, and Dolmage's "Disabled Upon Arrival."

because he has light skin that he dyed slightly yellowish enabling him to pass for a Spanish gentleman:

> George was, by his father's side, of white descent. His mother was one of those unfortunates of her race, marked out by personal beauty to be the slave of the passions of her possessor, and the mother of children who may never know a father. From one the of the proudest families in Kentucky he had inherited a set of fine European features, and a high, indomitable spirit. From his mother he had received only a slight mulatto tinge, amply compensated by its accompanying rich, dark eye. A slight change in the tint of the skin and the color of his hair had metamorphosed him into the Spanish-looking fellow he then appeared; and as gracefulness of movement and gentlemanly manners had always been perfectly natural to him, he found no difficulty in playing the bold part he had adopted—that of a gentleman travelling with his domestic. (Stowe 98)

George can pass for a Spanish gentleman and claim a level of privilege because his Black mother was raped by her white enslaver, imparting to George the benefits of "fine European features" and "gracefulness of movement and gentlemanly manners." His "rich, dark eye" "compensate[s]," as the narrator so kindly clarified for the reader, for George's Black heritage, necessitating a "slight change" to his "mulatto tinge" and hair color in order to pass. This "privilege" (and I use that term loosely since it was the result of legalized rape that genetically imbued George with European features) of taking power by assuming a predatorial position of dominance that allowed him to escape, physically metamorphosed into a Spanish gentleman and travelling through the South with his own "domestic." Framing George's passing through European "whiteness" allows us to better understand the privilege that Europeanness afforded the women in *The Monk*, enabling them to use and embody power more easily because of their whiteness – suggesting that predators "should" be white, and that somehow that categorization carries over even into texts where race does not seem operative such as *The Monk*. Additionally, when the Spanish women in *The Monk* violate the patriarchal power structures, their consequences are typically less severe as well. For someone like Agnes, her upper-class position

and white privilege allowed her to survive her punishment even though her child did not. Even the death of her child made it easier for her to rejoin the world of the living in late 18th century society. She was also still able to marry Raymond in an almost return of her virginal morality, atoning for her "'frailty,'" we see that Agnes has been correctly resituated within the patriarchal structure once more: "'my conduct has been highly blameable, and while I attempt to justify myself, I blush at recollecting my imprudence. … assuring you, Raymond, that you shall have no cause to repent our union, and that the more culpable have been the errors of your Mistress, the more exemplary shall be the conduct of your Wife'" (320). These types of "happy" endings are much harder, if not near impossible to come by for people of color.

White female privilege is clearly revealed in Harriet E. Wilson's *Our Nig*, an autobiographical "novel" published in 1859 about a free-born Black woman who is terrorized by her abolitionist female employers. As Kyla Wazana Tompkins cogently points out: "Wilson allows us to see that which both Hawthorne and, to a lesser extent, Stowe do not allow us to see: the sadism of white female domesticity, which can exist as diversions, as little theatrical 'scenes,' even within an abolitionist household" (Tompkins 119). Mirroring the abuse of white female enslaver such as can be found in Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), Wilson's *Our Nig* excoriates Mrs. Bellmont and her eldest daughter, Mary, who are Northern, white, female abolitionists by recording their torture and abuse of the free, mixed Frado who worked in their house from the ages of 6 to 18. These women are the unarguable predators in *Our Nig*, terrorizing even the men in the household who will not or cannot successfully stand up to Mrs. Bellmont to protect or intervene in her abuse of poor Frado. Tompkins points out how Mrs. Bellmont is attempting to portray Frado as monstrous when beating her, disfiguring her by

stuffing her mouth with wood; yet, in torturously disfiguring Frado, Mrs. Bellmont is revealed as the real monster:

> Frado's [mouth], which remains forced open, hungry, and wordless, stuck in the shape of a perpetual but silent scream. This representation seems to render Frado's open mouth and face monstrous, but in doing so the image testifies to white inhumanity: the image of the black mouth opened is not simply a sign of physical torture; it confronts the figurative open mouth of the sentimental reader with its mirror image. (Tompkins 120)

Holding accountable the "sentimental reader" for their participation in consuming and desiring the Black body, Wilson's torturous scene denies that desire, instead confronting the reader with their monstrous consumption. Continuing the cycle of structural cannibalism, we see that it is not just men who predatorially consume women, but that these white women consumed Frado, their free Black servant. The predator/prey dynamic is not confined to white male/white female and can be found wherever there is oppression of a people group. Whatever power can be grabbed will be; however, even in the retelling of Frado's story, we find the ability to resist consumption and the static identity of prey as Wilson denies white desire for the Black body and unflinchingly reveals the oppressive abuse of white "abolitionist" women in the North.[63]

Mary Prince's *The History of Mary Prince* (1831) textually implies a future of freedom for Prince: she no longer is enslaved by the Woods, she works for the abolitionist family, the Pringles, she was being taught to "read the word of God" and was being shepherded by several clergymen (36-7). However, history and Prince's own brief sentiment at the end of her narrative

---

[63] This is commonly seen in the slave narratives where the white female enslavers consume and abuse the enslaved Black women such as in Mary Prince's *The History* and Harriet Jacobs *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Also, as stated in an earlier footnote, Agnes was consumed by a woman, the Prioress of the convent, who imprisoned and starved her. The prioress clung to her power and wielded it over Agnes standing as yet another example of the "evil" Catholic church and how it corrupts even women. Women abusing and preying on other women is common and varies based on the power dynamics.

suggest a gloomier ending. Prince, who constantly pushed back against the structural cannibalism of herself and her fellow enslaved never gained the freedom that she fought for: "I still live in hope that God will find a way to give me my liberty, and give me back to my husband. I endeavour to keep down my fretting, and to leave all to Him, for he knows what is good for me better than I know myself. Yet, I must confess, I find it a hard and heavy task to do so" (37). Prince reveals that while she is legally not enslaved while living in Britain, she still explicitly is held captive, unable to return to her home and her husband since her enslaved status returns immediately upon leaving Britain's soil. Thomas Pringle further details the "type" of Prince's freedom saying that she "possessed that qualified degree of freedom, that a change of domicile will determine it" (62). Many tried to assist Prince with her longing to return back to the Caribbean and her husband as a free woman, but the courts and Mr. Wood would not allow her: "[h]e has since obstinately persisted in refusing her manumission to enable her to return home in security, though repeatedly offered more than ample compensation for her value as a slave; … in her order to *punish* her for leaving is service in England, though he himself had professed to give her that option" (56). Pringle asserts that Mr. Wood is "*punish*[ing]" Prince for having the audacity to claim her freedom in Britain, the final act of resistance and refusal to maintain the status of prey. The courts upheld that she was still an object owned by the Woods if she left England, and the Woods refused to sell her so that she could be free. Instead, Prince is forced to remain in Britain, a climate that worsens her illness. It is historically unclear if she ever managed to go back to her home or died "free" and yet still enslaved in Britain.

Unlike Agnes who was returned happily to the land of the living and whose promise of marriage redeems her soiled virginal status, Prince is left imprisoned in a land that she does not want to be in, held captive by the British government and her enslavers. Denotatively, Harriet

Jacobs directly addresses the question of a happy ending for Linda Brent in *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861):

> Reader, my story ends with freedom; not in the usual way, with marriage. I and my children are now free! We are as free from the power of slaveholders as are the white people of the north; and though that, according to my ideas, is not saying a great deal, it is a vast improvement in *my* condition. The dream of my life is not yet realized. I do not sit with my children in a home of my own, I still long for a hearthstone of my own, however, humble. I wish it for my children's sake for more than for my own. (186)

While despising that she had to be bought out of slavery, an action that reinforced her position governmentally as an object, through the "kind-heartedness" of her employer, Linda was able to rejoice, not in matrimony like Agnes, but in her status as no longer enslaved. Unlike Prince, Linda is legally free no matter where she would go, although that is an incorrect notion since the practice of stealing free Blacks and enslaving them was also common. While free from slavery, Linda was not free from racism, which she experienced immediately upon arriving in New York after her escape from the South (162-164); however, by stating that she has more in her life to achieve, she acknowledged that this was not the end of her story but a continuation.

Other than the obvious differences between the fictional gothic account of *The Monk* versus the auto-biographical accounts of Wilson's *Our Nig*, Prince's *The History*, and Jacobs' *Incidents*, Agnes' freedom looks very different from Linda's or Prince's, with Agnes humbly accepting her submissive position as Wife at the end of her story. She takes back on the role of prey while Linda defiantly desires a greater future – equal to those of the free whites around her. Even Prince's imprisonment in Britain was the final attempt at limiting her power and denial of long-term predatory status. This was a causal effect because Prince claimed her power and identity through her narrative. Just as we saw Ambrosio's orality proclaim his power and predatory status, Prince's orality transformed her from prey to predator as she claimed her

experience and excoriated the abuse and dehumanization that the enslaved suffered, actively unveiling the monstrous enslavers, both male and female. Prince chewed the Woods up and spat them back out for public consumption. Her orality is predation that reveals her power, resulting in a defensive response from the Woods suing her in an attempt to shift her from predator to prey. In all of these autobiographical accounts of slavery, racism, and abuse, Harriet Jacobs, Harriet Wilson, and Mary Prince proclaim their positions of power through the claiming of their experiences. These texts directly refute notions of slavery and freedom in Wilson's case, revealing and even naming their abuse and abusers. Their final acts of textual unveiling point to their predatory positions as they consume their abusers. In the last paragraph of her narrative, Prince reveals that free white servants have the power to decide who they work for and why, and while we see in the third chapter that the working class were more limited than Prince initially envisions, Prince also accurately identifies the workers' privilege as one that she and her fellow enslaved so desperately desire. She delineates the power structures, noting that the workers are not abused and dehumanized in the same way that the enslaved are; they are not consumed with "lick[s]" (38) or worked to death until there is nothing left. The predator/prey dichotomy is one that is constantly shifting, yet Prince asserts her position of predator, her orality living on for over 200 years, continuing to echo and shape history regardless of the Woods and others like them as she claimed her "truth" (38):

> What's the reason they can't do without slaves as well as in England? No slaves here – no whips – no stocks – no punishment, except for wicked people. They hire servants in England; and if they don't like them, they send them away: they can't lick them. Let them work ever so hard in England, they are far better off than slaves. … They have their liberty. That's just what *we* want. … But they won't give it: they will have work – work – work, night and day, sick or well, till we are quite done up; and we must not speak up nor look amiss, however much we be abused. And then, when we are quite done up, who cares for us more than for a lame horse? This is slavery. I tell it, to let English people know the truth; (Prince 38)

CHAPTER V: *DIGESTIVO*: WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE LEFTOVERS?

I am a 2nd generation Italian American proudly named after my incredible Italian grandmother, a WWII war-bride who came from Northern Italy to New York in 1947. Food – specifically cooking and eating – has always been a large part of my identity as our family connected, served, and loved through food in overwhelming portions (to this day I have no concept of portion sizing and have a visceral fear of running out of food when cooking for others). As we have seen in this study, consumption is an act that constructs identity and boundaries while simultaneously violating those boundaries as food is ingested. Consumption has constructed my identity as an Italian American, conflating food and cooking with who I am as a person (I am nicknamed the sauce boss for my sauce-cooking skills), and this is why I have titled the chapters of this study after a multi-course Italian meal. I have served up for you my theoretical framework of structural cannibalism, and while I did not cook or prepare the cannibalistic meals that I have identified, yet we have consumed the concept of structural cannibalism, tasting how it functions within/constructs race, gender, and class in the long 19th century. It is because of the interconnectedness between the eater and what they are eating that it is so important to approach the construction of 19th-century power dynamics more holistically instead of a segmented analysis, looking from the individual identity formation where we find personal violence to the larger picture of cannibalistic structural violence.

Structural cannibalism underlies the power structures found in 19th-century British and American literature (un)veiling the cannibal's ingestion of the oppressed through consumptive metaphors that reinforce and destabilize those power structures. I started by labeling and categorizing the interwoven types of consumptive metaphors easily identified in 19th-century texts on slavery, creating a loose framework for further exploration in the texts on working class

and gender. The structural cannibalism found within slavery established an underlying historical assumption associating slavery with cannibalism and uncovered the instability of that power structure. Next, I explored the stacked consumptive metaphors in the working-class texts as the metaphors created added distance and justification for the oppression of the working class. This was achieved through racialization of the proletariat as well as redirecting the focus from the cannibalized working-class bodies to the lack or excess of food. The working-class texts reveal the cyclical and cascading nature of structural cannibalism. Finally, I delved deeper into the animalization/dehumanization category of structural cannibalism, analyzing the consumptive dynamics of the predator/male versus prey/female and the ways that these dichotomies were reinforced or violated. The chapters collectively defined various aspects of structural cannibalism, exploring the ways that power structures – the oppressors/cannibals – justified, denied, abused, and consumed the oppressed/cannibalized. It was through structural cannibalism that we unveiled the humanity and equality of the oppressed as well as their ability to stick in the gullet as Kyla Wazana Tompkins says in *Racial Indigestion*, resisting and even at various moments dominating their oppressors.

As we wrap up this odious meal, I want to leave you with some continued thoughts for digestion as you sip your sweet, alcoholic, after-dinner beverage. While most of this study has focused on the long 19th century and the structural cannibalism functioning within a British and American colonialized and imperialized framework that overtly oppressed the enslaved, the working class, and women, the identification of these specific cannibalistic structures expands beyond the ripe 19th century. Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence* reminds us of the importance of examining the long-term, temporal effects of violence, suggesting how we should continue to trace structural cannibalism in the oppressive power structures functioning from before the 19th

century till now. Similar if not the very same consumptive power structures and more can be observed in our 21st-century society. Everything from rape to sex-trafficking, child labor, sweat shops, racism, police brutality, inequity among education, immigration laws, biases in work, school, health care, government, and so much more, all these systems are examples of power structures that consume those lower than themselves. It is not a question of whether or not structural cannibalism is functioning within today's society, but a question of *how* it is functioning, and does it look different than the structural cannibalism identified in the 19th century? Are there ways that 21st-century structural cannibalism is more visible, or have new veilings developed that are different than the 19th century's? Have the consumptive metaphors shifted or become further stacked? Does the cannibalized resistance to the cannibal power structures and inversions of the oppressive dichotomies look the same or are they transformed/deformed?

In a different register than the Othered, literal cannibalism of the 19th century, cannibalism today is having a "moment" so to speak. While vampires, and later-on, zombies, increased in popularity within the 21st century, with everything from the *Twilight* series, and *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Slayer*, to *The Walking Dead* and *iZombie* series to name a few, these representations of cannibalism maintained a mythical and fictionalized distancing. There was a fascination with such an intimate form of violence and taboo-breaking committed by individuals who are deemed "no longer human" either because of a virus, mutation, or magic. Yet this distancing between the act of cannibalism and the human enacting it seems diminished or dissolving at this present moment. In a recent *NY Times* article, "A Taste for Cannibalism: A Spate of Recent Stomach-churning Books, TV Shows and Films Suggests we've Never Looked so Delicious — to One Another," Alex Beggs identifies a slew of new pop-culture that embraces

and delves into unabashed cannibalism. In it, Beggs has a quote from Bill Schutt, author of *Cannibalism: A Perfectly Natural History* speaking to the distancing that fiction provides: "'When you take something that is so horrible and put it through this lens of fictionalization … we get charged up about it, but we know we're safe'" (Beggs). Beggs cites a slew of new cannibalism texts: novels like *Lapvona* (2022), *A Certain Hunger* (2020), shows like *Yellowjackets* (2021-2022) and movies like *Fresh* (2022), *Raw* (2017), and *Bones and All* (2022). These texts are all works of fiction, not based on historical or factual accounts; however, I would argue that the veil between fictionalization and the real world is slowly but most assuredly rending.

The question Beggs poses is "why now?" What about today's society has lent to an embrace of this discomforting taboo? A couple of the authors of these cannibalistic narratives that Beggs interviews offer a variety of suggestions pointing to covid, the political and societal upheaval, etc., all potentially valid; however, I think the shift in the trend from mythical cannibals to literal cannibals is more important. While the new cannibalistic narratives I have cited above still fall into the category of fiction, there is a missing item from Beggs' list: the most controversial cannibalism show of the year, Netflix's new crime documentary, *Dahmer: Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story* (2022) (the first in a new "monstrous" universe on serial killers). The argument of fictionalization for *Dahmer: Monster* is a thin one; for while the series itself is a narrative, it is still based on a real-life cannibalistic serial killer. By glamorizing real people like Jeffrey Dahmer and transforming his oppressive cannibalism into pop-culture Halloween costumes with a large internet fandom, there is a tendency to fixate on the grotesque and taboo of his crimes while ignoring the power structures that are almost always present when killing and consuming a person or consuming them alive. Dahmer's murdering and cannibalizing

of mostly homosexual men of color and the failure of the police to intervene or assist people of color gets overshadowed by the fascinating brutality of a cannibal serial killer. Inevitably, the cannibal has power over the cannibalized, so we need to make sure that the fascination is always balanced with the acknowledgement and analysis of the power differentials. With this, we circle back to my question from the beginning: who gets the privilege of eating?

The theory of structural cannibalism is, in many ways, distasteful. The oppressors in the 19th-century texts actively resisted responsibility for their roles in consuming the oppressed. They did not want to be labeled cannibals, instead dehumanizing the oppressed and veiling the abuse as that which was considered more "natural": consumable animals, delectable delicacies and sweets, racializing and blaming global consumerism, etc. Being identified as a cannibal is horrifying! It makes us queasy and disrupts our ignorant digestion as we are forced to reflect on and confront the systems of power we are a part of and how we might be (and most likely are) consuming those below us. How then, does the notion of structural cannibalism flavor our current actions and power dynamics? As we Italians say, "parla come mangi!" literally translated speak the way you eat!

WORKS CITED

Ahmed, Sara. *Complaint!* Duke UP, 2021.

Allen, Jessica L. "Pringle's Pruning of Prince: *The History of Mary Prince* and the Question of Repetition." *Callaloo*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2012, 509-519.

"ambrosia, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/6217.

Ammons, Elizabeth. "Heroines in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*." *American Literature*, vol. 49, no. 2, 1977, pp. 161–179.

Andrews, Elizabeth. *Devouring the Gothic: Food and the Gothic Body*. 2008. University of Sterling, PhD dissertation.

"anthropo-, comb. form." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/8416.

"anthropophagus, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/8472.

Beaver, Dan. "Flesh or Fantasy: Cannibalism and the Meanings of Violence." *Ethnohistory*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2002, pp. 671-685.

Beggs, Alex. "A Taste for Cannibalism?" *The New York Times*, 23 July 2022. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/23/style/cannibalism-tv-shows-movies-books.html.

Blackstone, William. "Of Husband and Wife." *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. 1, Clarendon P, 1765, pp. 421-33. *Project Gutenberg*, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/30802/30802-h/30802-h.htm#Page_421.

Botelle, Riley, and Chris Willott. "Birth, Attitudes and Placentophagy: A Thematic Discourse Analysis of Discussions on UK Parenting Forums." *BMC Pregnancy & Childbirth*, vol. 20, no. 1, Mar. 2020, pp. 1–10. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/10.1186/s12884-020-2824-3.

Browning, Elizabeth Barrett. "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point." *Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Selected Poems*. Edited by Marjorie Stone and Beverly Taylor, Broadview P, 2009, pp. 193-202.

Butler, Judith. "On Linguistic Vulnerability." *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, Routledge, 1997, pp. 1-42.

"cannibal, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/27102.

"cannibalism, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/27107.

"Cayenne Pepper." *The Epicentre*, http://theepicentre.com/spice/cayenne-pepper/.

Chesnutt, Charles W. *The Marrow of Tradition*. 1901. Edited by Werner Sollors. 1st ed., W.W. Norton, 2012.

"clem | clam, v.1." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, September 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/34148.

Collins, Philip. "From 'Hard Times (Refinished)', *Our Miscellany*." *Charles Dickens: The Critical Heritage*, Routledge, 2003, pp. 325-328. *EBSCOhost*, https://search-ebscohost-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=89071&site=ehost-live.

"comfit, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/36887.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. 1899. Edited by D. C. R. A Goonetilleke, 3rd ed., Broadview Editions, 2020.

"consumption, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/39997.

Corley, Liam. "The Imperial Addiction of *Mary Barton*," *The Gaskell Society Journal*, vol. 17, 2003.

Cowper, William. "The Negro's Complaint." 1788 *The Poems of William Cowper*, edited by John D Baird and Charles Ryskamp, vol. 3, Clarendon Press, 1980, pp. 12-14.

-- "Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce: Or, The Slave-Trader in the Dumps." 1836. *The Poems of William Cowper*, edited by John D. Baird and Charles Ryskamp, vol. 3, Clarendon Press, 1980, pp. 15-16.

Dahmer: Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story. Created by Ryan Murphy and Ian Brennan, *Netflix*, 2022. *Netflix*.

Davenant, Charles. *Discourses on the Publick Revenues, and on the Trade of England*. Printed for James Knapton. Vol. 2, Crown, 1698.

Davis, Rebecca Harding. "Life in the Iron Mills." 1861. *A Rebecca Harding Davis Reader: Life in the Iron Mills, Selected Fiction, and Essays*, edited by Jean Pfaelzer, U of Pittsburgh P, 1995. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=2045566.

"Debauchery." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*. Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/debauchery.

DeGuzmán, María. *Spain's Long Shadow: The Black Legend, Off-Whiteness, and Anglo-American Empire*. U of Minnesota P, 2005.

"delicacy, n." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/49358.

Dickens, Charles. *Hard Times*. 1854. Edited by Fred Kaplan, 4th ed., W.W. Norton & Company, 2017.

Di Trocchio, Paola. "Birmingham Ladies Society for the Relief of Negro Slaves Bag." *National Gallery of Victoria*, https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/birmingham-ladies-society-for-the-relief-of-negro-slaves-bag/.

Dolmage, Jay. "Disabled Upon Arrival: The Rhetorical Construction of Disability and Race at Ellis Island." *Cultural Critique*, vol. 77, 2011, pp. 24–69.

-- "Eating Rhetorical Bodies." *Disability Rhetoric*, 1st ed., Syracuse UP, 2014, pp. 193-224.

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. 1845. Edited by William L. Andrews and William S. McFeely, 2nd ed., W.W. Norton & Company, 2017.

Ellmann, Maude. *The Hunger Artists: Starving, Writing, and Imprisonment*. Harvard UP, 1993.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *An Address Delivered in the Court-house in Concord, Massachusetts, on 1st August, 1844: On the Anniversary of the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies*. James Munroe and Co., 1844. *Slavery and Anti-Slavery: A Transnational Archive*, link.gale.com/apps/doc/O0100000515/SAS?u=gree35277&sid=bookmark-SAS&xid=fa9fa9c9&pg=5.

"envy, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/63106.

"expose, v." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, September 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/66705.

"fever." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 13 Aug. 2020, https://www.britannica.com/science/fever.

Fitzgerald, Lauren. "Female Gothic and the Institutionalisation of Gothic Studies." *The Female Gothic: New Directions*, edited by Diana Wallace, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 13-25.

Foucault, Michel. "Docile Bodies." *Discipline and Punish*, Vintage Books, 1995.

-- "The Political Investment of the Body." *The Body a Reader*, edited by Mariam Fraser and Monica Greco, Routledge, 2005, pp. 100-104.

Fryer, Peter. *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*. Pluto P, 2018. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv69tgjn.

Gadsby, Meredith M. *Sucking Salt: Caribbean Women Writers, Migration, and Survival*, U of Missouri P, 2006. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=3570907.

Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 6, no. 3, Sage Publications, Ltd., 1969, pp. 167–91, http://www.jstor.org/stable/422690.

Gaskell, Elizabeth. *Mary Barton*. Broadview P, 2000.

"glow, v.1." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/79220.

"glowing, adj." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/79227.

"gridiron, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/81386.

Groom, Nick. "Introduction." *The Monk*. 1796. Edited by Howard Anderson, introduction and notes by Nick Groom, Oxford UP, 2016, pp. vii-xxxviii.

Haggard, H. Rider. *She: A History of Adventure*. 1887. Edited by Andrew M Stauffer, Broadview P, 2006.

"Handkerchief, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*." *Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum*, http://cprhw.tt/o/2C1W8/.

Hoeveler, Diane Long. "Anti-Catholicism and the Gothic Ideology: Interlocking Discourse Networks." *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and Anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780-1880*, U of Wales P, 2014, pp. 15-50.

hooks, bell. "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance." *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, Routledge, 2015.

-- "Racism and Feminism." *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, 2nd ed., Routledge, 2015.

Howel, Jessica. "'Climate Proof': Mary Kingsley and the Health of Women Travellers." *Exploring Victorian Travel Literature: Disease, Race and Climate*, Edinburgh UP, 2014, pp. 109-136.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. 1st Harper Perennial Modern Classics ed., HarperCollins, 2006.

"impregnable, adj. and n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/92684.

"incorporation, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/93966.

"inhumanity, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/96008.

"insatiable, adj." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/96621.

"intemperate, adj." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/97425.

Jacobs, Harriet A. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. 1861. Edited by R. J. Ellis, Oxford UP, 2015.

Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*. Harvard UP, 1998.

Ketabgian, Tamara. "'Melancholy Mad Elephants': Affect and the Animal Machine in *Hard Times*." *Victorian Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Social, Political, and Cultural Studies*, vol. 45, no. 4, 2003, pp. 649–76. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/10.2979/vic.2003.45.4.649.

Kilgour, Maggie. *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation*. Princeton UP, 1990.

Kingsley, Mary. *Travels in West Africa*. 1897. Penguin Classics, 2015.

"knobstick, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/104084.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. U of Chicago P, 1980.

Leahy, Richard. "Fire and Reverie: Domestic Light and the Individual in *Cranford* and *Mary Barton*." *The Gaskell Journal*, vol. 28, 2014, pp. 73-IX. *ProQuest*,

https://login.libproxy.uncg.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/scholarly-journals/fire-reverie-domestic-light-individual-cranford/docview/1630428881/se-2.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude. *We Are All Cannibals and Other Essays*. Translated by Jane Marie Todd, Columbia UP, 2016.

Lewis, Matthew. *The Monk*. 1796. Edited by Howard Anderson, introduction and notes by Nick Groom, Oxford UP, 2016.

"lick, v." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, June 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/108002.

"lively, adv." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/109317.

"lust, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/111374.

"madness, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, June 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/112066.

Malthus, T. R. *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. 1798. Edited by Geoffrey Gilbert, Oxford UP, 2008.

Mangham, Andrew. *The Science of Starving in Victorian Literature, Medicine, and Political Economy*. Oxford UP, 2020.

"market, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, September 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/114178.

"mart, n.2." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/114405.

"mart, n.3." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/114407.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. "The Communist Manifesto." 1848. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited by Robert C. Tucker, 2nd ed., W. W. Norton & Company, 1978.

"master, n.1 and adj." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, September 2020, www.oed.com/view/Entry/114751.

McLean, Clara D. "Lewis's *The Monk* and the Matter of Reading." *Women, Revolution, and the Novels of the 1790s*, edited by Lang-Peralta, Linda, Michigan State UP, 1999, pp. 111-131.

"meat, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/115517.

Meer, Sarah. *Uncle Tom Mania: Slavery, Minstrelsy, and Transatlantic Culture in the 1850s*. U of Georgia P, 2005.

Midgley, Clare. *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870*. Taylor & Francis Group, 1995. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=199930.

Miller, John. "Rebellious Tigers, a Patriotic Elephant and an Urdu-Speaking Cockatoo: Animals in 'Mutiny' Fiction." *Journal of Victorian Culture*, vol. 17, no. 4, Dec. 2012, pp. 480-91. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/10.1080/13555502.2012.733066.

Montaigne, Michel de. "Of the Cannibals." 1580. *The Essays of Michael, Lord of Montaigne*, translated by John Florio, J.M. Dent & Sons, 1910, pp. 215-229.

Mudge, Bradford Keyes. *The Whore's Story: Women, Pornography, and the British Novel, 1684-1830*. Oxford UP, 2000.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Visual and Other Pleasures*. Indiana UP, 1989, pp. 14-26.

National Humanities Center Resource Toolbox. "Slave Auctions: Selections from 19th-century Narratives of Formerly Enslaved African Americans." *The Making of African American Identity, 1500-1865*, vol. 1, chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai/enslavement/text2/slaveauctions.pdf. PDF download.

Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard UP, 2011. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=3300958.

Nyamnjoh, Francis B. "Introduction: Cannibalism as Food for Thought." *Eating and Being Eaten: Cannibalism as Food for Thought*, Langaa RPCIG, 2018, pp. 1-98.

O'Brien, John. "'Le Propre de l'Homme': Reading Montaigne's 'Des Cannibales' in Context." *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, vol. 53, no. 2, Apr. 2017, pp. 220-34. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/10.1093/fmls/cqw056.

Oldroyd, Harold. "dipteran." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 30 Oct. 2018, https://www.britannica.com/animal/dipteran.

"passion, n." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/138504.

Petrinovich, Lewis F. *The Cannibal Within*. Aldine De Gruyter, 2000.

"-phagous, comb. form." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, March 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/142107.

"pinch, v." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, June 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/144068.

"prey, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/151115.

Prince, Mary. *The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave*. 1831. Edited by Sara Salih, Penguin Books, 2000.

Radcliffe, Ann. *The Italian, or, the Confessional of the Black Penitents: A Romance*. 1796. Edited by Frederick Garber, Oxford UP, 2020.

-- *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. 1794. Edited by Dobrée Bonamy, Oxford UP, 2020.

"render, v." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, June 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/162386.

Rintoul, Suzanne. "'My Poor Mistress': Marital Cruelty in The History of Mary Prince." *English Studies in Canada*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2011, pp. 41-60. *ProQuest*, https://login.libproxy.uncg.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/my-poor-mistress-marital-cruelty-history-mary/docview/1314897052/se-2?accountid=14604.

Rowney, Matthew. "Preserver and Destroyer: Salt in *The History of Mary Prince*." *European Romantic Review*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2018, 357-363.

Sánchez, María Carla. "'Prayers in the Market Place': Women and Low Culture in Catharine Sedgwick's, 'Cacoethes Scribendi.'" *American Transcendental Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2002, p. 101-113.

Sand, George. "Review of Uncle Tom's Cabin." 17 Dec. 1852. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: *Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*. Edited by Elizabeth Ammons, 2nd ed., W.W. Norton, 2010, pp. 495-499.

"savage, adj. and n.1." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, September 2020, www.oed.com/view/Entry/171433.

"savagely, adv." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2020, www.oed.com/view/Entry/171437.

Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. Oxford UP, 1985.

Schutt, Bill. *Cannibalism: A Perfectly Natural History*. 1st ed., Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2017.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "The Character in the Veil: Imagery of the Surface in the Gothic Novel." *PMLA*, vol. 96, no. 2, 1981, pp. 255–270.

"serve, v.1." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, September 2019, www.oed.com/view/Entry/176665.

Shakespeare, William. *Measure for Measure. The Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans and J. J. M Tobin, 2nd ed., Houghton Mifflin, 1997, pp. 584-621.

-- *The Tragedy of Titus Andronicus. The Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans and J. J. M. Tobin, 2nd ed., Houghton Mifflin, 1997, pp. 1069-1100.

Simpson, A. W. Brian. *Cannibalism and the Common Law: The Story of the Tragic Last Voyage of the Mignonette and the Strange Legal Proceedings to Which It Gave Rise*. U of Chicago P, 1984.

"sour, adj. and n.1." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/185179.

Speitz, Michele. "Blood Sugar and Salt Licks: Corroding Bodies and Preserving Nations in *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave, Related by Herself.*" *Circulations: Romanticism and the Black Atlantic*, U of Maryland. *Romantic Circles*, www.romantic-circles.org/praxis/circulations/index.html.

"sprat, n.1." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/187603.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: *Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*. 1851. Edited by Elizabeth Ammons, 2nd ed., W.W. Norton, 2010.

Sugg, Richard. "Medicinal Cannibalism in Early Modern Literature and Culture." *Literature Compass*, vol. 10, no. 11, 2013, pp. 825–835. doi:10.1111/lic3.12109.

"tawny, adj. and n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, June 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/198256.

Thompson, George. "Venus in Boston: A Romance of City Life." 1849. *Venus in Boston: And Other Tales of Nineteenth-Century City Life*, U of Massachusetts P, 2002.

Tompkins, Jane P. "Sentimental Power: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Politics of Literary History." *Uncle Tom's Cabin: Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*, edited by Elizabeth Ammons, 2nd ed., W.W. Norton, 2010.

Tompkins, Kyla Wazana. *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the 19th Century*. New York UP, 2012. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=865513.

"tremble, v." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, September 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/205482.

Vaughn, Rachel. "Food, Blood, Nutrients: On Eating Placenta & the Limits of Edibility." *Food, Culture & Society*, vol. 22, no. 5, Nov. 2019, pp. 639–56. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/10.1080/15528014.2019.1638127.

"voluptuous, adj." *OED Online*. Oxford UP, December 2021, www.oed.com/view/Entry/224588.

Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story*. 1764. Edited by W.S. Lewis, Oxford UP, 2008.

Watson, Kelly L. *Insatiable Appetites: Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World*. New York UP, 2015.

"wild, adj. and n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, June 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/228988.

"wild cat, n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, June 2022, www.oed.com/view/Entry/228992.

Wilkerson, Isabel. *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*. Random House, 2020.

Wilson, Harriet E. *Our Nig: Or, Sketches from the Life of a Free Black, in a Two-Story White House, North: Showing That Slavery's Shadows Fall Even There*. 1859. Edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr., introduction by Richard J. Ellis, expanded ed., Vintage Books, 2011.

Wilson, William J. [*published as* Ethiop]. "From Our Brooklyn Correspondent." *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, 17 Jun. 1852, p. 3. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/sn84026366/1852-06-17/ed-1/.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. 1792. Open Road Integrated Media, Inc., 1976. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=1913261.