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What Judges Your Story? Moral Deixis and Readerly Orientation

How are intentional, subversive, political, and ideological orientations communicated in narrative storytelling? Stories require not only an orientation in regards to the communicative act but also a moral or ethical orientation in relation to the values that characterize the narration and, to a larger extent, the narrative world. Borrowing from the field of linguistic pragmatics, this paper focuses on the narratology of deixis and specifically the function of deictic expressions. In strict linguistic terms, these expressions are used to orient the addressee in relation to the place, time and condition or situation of the speaker at the time of speaking. Deixis is also used to name those narrative words and expressions—like up/down, here/there, near/far, now/then, sooner/later—that orient the reader within the spatio-temporal axes of the storyworld. We ask: by means of what deictic markers are readers oriented within the moral and ethical axes of the narrative world? How are values like right/wrong, good/bad, true/false signaled to the implied reader? By what kinds of narrative vectors? And into what kinds of dynamic relations do these expressions enter in order to communicate the invisible but powerful moral-ethical environments that enable the construction of narrative meaning?

Keywords: narratology; deixis; ethics; morality; reading

In the environment of a volume that asks, "Who tells your story?", this paper engages the issue of how that story is judged by asking how a narrative establishes the moral environment of the storyworld, how this intersects with the moral compass articulated by the narrative, and how deixis might be involved. If deictic markers function to establish spatial and temporal environments, anchored in deictic centers, we ask whether narrative judgments participate in this functionality. This paper approaches the question through a series of case studies: Alice Walker's "Am I Blue?" (Madsen), Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by*

Herself (Bouchelaghem), Octavia Butler's *Lilith's Brood* (Frohreich), and Mary Wilkins Freeman's story "Louisa" (Martin).

The function of personal, spatial, and temporal deictic markers is well known. Pronouns and proper nouns establish inter-personal relations; expressions like 'here' and 'there,' or 'near' and 'far,' provide spatial anchors while terms like 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' imply 'today' as the point of reference and establish the temporal point that is 'now.' Our question is whether narratives use similar deictic markers to establish moral and ethical orientations. We use a common terminology, borrowed from Peter Stockwell's *Cognitive Poetics: A New Introduction* (2020). Stockwell distinguishes six kinds of deixis: 1) *perceptual deixis*: expressions encoded in pronouns, demonstratives, definite articles, verbs of mental states, etc.; 2) *spatial deixis*: locatives, verbs of motion, spatial adverbs, etc.; 3) *temporal deixis*: temporal locatives, temporal adverbs, verb tense, "story-now" versus "discourse-now," etc.; 4) *social deixis*: expressions that encode the social relationships and situations of authors, narrators, characters, and readers, including point of view and focalization, naming conventions, etc.; 5) *textual deixis*: expressions that foreground the textuality of the text, including explicit "signposting" such as chapter titles and paragraphing, co-reference to other stretches of text, reference to the text itself or the act of production; and 6) *compositional deixis*: elements of the text that foreground its texture, that manifest the generic type or literary conventions, and might include intertextuality, allusion, or generic tradition (54). To this theoretical lexicon we add *moral* and *ethical deixis*: expressions that encode the moral viewpoint and ethical values of authors, narrators, characters, and readers.

Carnophallogocentrism and Vegan Narration: From Emotional to Moral Deixis in Alice Walker's "Am I Blue?"

In Alice Walker's narrative, deixis conditions the moral and ethical tension between the carnophallogocentric storyworld and the apparent ethical veganism of the autobiographical narration. The Vegan Society defines ethical veganism as "a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude—as far as is possible and practicable—all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals." *Dietary* vegans are motivated primarily by personal health issues and *ethical* vegans by animal rights, environmentalism, and other social justice issues. Carnophallogocentrism is defined in Jacques Derrida's 1991 interview, entitled "'Eating Well,' or the Calcula-

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tion of the Subject," as the intersecting patriarchal dominations of women and animals that produce the sovereign Western subject. The complex intersectionality that produces this (actually) very simple concept is described by Carol J. Adams and Matthew Calarco: logocentrism generates the "privileges and priorities granted by Western philosophy to the rational, self-aware, self-present, speaking subject" (32). Self-presence is rationality, reason, speech (the Enlightenment subject, possessed of full human rights); phallocentrism adds "the quintessentially virile and masculine aspects of Western social institutions and conceptions of subjectivity"; and carnism demands anthropocentrism, human superiority, and the literal as well as figurative consumption of flesh. Thus, carnophallogocentrism is an active process that creates the subject as "a fully self-present, speaking, masculine subject but also as a quintessentially *human, animal-flesh-eating* subject" (33). While meat-eating is the paradigm, carnophallogocentrism instantiates the right to consume all living entities, which are rendered into objects that are usable and killable (recall Giorgio Agamben's conception of "life that does not deserve to live"; 136), by powerful discursive processes such as animalization.

A powerful image that arises from this discourse of animalization is the image of the African-American woman as the "mule of the world" (138), from Zora Neale Hurston's 1937 novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God.* This image stands for the complex situation of Black women, where race and gender intersect to multiply the association with animality. Patriarchal whiteness underpins the distinction between human and animal; the challenge posed by "Am I Blue?" is to move beyond the personal to engage the systemic nature of intersectional oppression to expose that the enslavement of humans and the enslavement of animals are enabled by the ideology of carnophallogocentrism. A. Harper Breeze notes in *Sistah Vegan*, "the exploitation and torture of nonhuman animals come from the same master/oppressor ideology that created atrocities such as African slavery" (12). Marjorie Spiegel extends this argument when she remarks that "[c]omparing the suffering of animals to that of Blacks (or any other oppressed group) is offensive only to the speciesist: one who has embraced the false notions of what animals are like. […] To deny our similarities to animals […] is to continue actively struggling to prove to our oppressors, past or present, that we are *similar to our oppressors*, rather than those whom our oppressors have also victimized" (25, emphasis in original).

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In the following analysis, I will argue that the narrative fails to engage the ideology of carnophallogocentrism and it is a close attention to deictics that can show us why. I focus on the final passage of the text:

> And so Blue remained, a beautiful part of our landscape, very peaceful to look at from the window, white against the grass. Once a friend came to visit and said, looking out on the soothing view: "And it *would* have to be a *white* horse; the very image of freedom." And I thought, yes, the animals are forced to become for us merely "images" of what they once so beautifully expressed. And we are used to drinking milk from containers showing "contented" cows, whose real lives we want to hear nothing about, eating eggs and drumsticks from "happy" hens, and munching hamburgers advertised by bulls of integrity who seem to command their fate.
>
> As we talked of freedom and justice one day for all, we sat down to steaks. I am eating misery, I thought, as I took the first bite. And spit it out. (Walker 8)

The passage starts with the phrase "And so," a textual deictic marker of the kind that Stockwell calls a "pop" or move to a higher level of narrative ontology; here, the text moves from action to narratorial commentary. The phrase "What they once so beautifully expressed" is an internal reference, a flashback to the narrator's description of Blue's "look of independence, of self-possession, of inalienable *horseness*" (6) which contributes to the human-animal dynamics created in the passage. Perceptual deixis works to instantiate a structural human/animal binary: (I+us+our) versus (them+their). This is developed through the "friend" who de-subjectifies Blue and who, via this designation as "friend," is aligned with the narrator. Note that only animals are named by species; humanity functions as the invisible norm. Spatial deixis further deepens the human/animal binary: Blue is assimilated to "nature" via the landscape ("part," "against"). Blue offers a spectacle for the human viewers (who are looking out) who are placed at a distance ("from") and above (looking "on") the scene, which suggests superiority. Even the spitting "out" of animal flesh suggests an inside/outside dichotomy, dramatized through abjection, that preserves the separation of human and animal. Temporal deixis works to fix the human/animal binary within an objectifying temporality. Blue is rendered static: he "remained" stuck in the present; the flashback ("once") to the friend's visit is repeated *exactly* in order to locate, in the past, the possession of sovereignty by non-human animals (Blue's once "inalienable *horseness*").

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Between "then" (the "once" of both Blue's "horseness" and the friend's carnism) and "now" (when Blue "remained"), several processes of transformation have occurred: first, animal "becoming" where animals are transformed into images for human consumption and, second, the human normalization of animal sacrifice. The passage starts in the present, moves to the past, then into the future, back to the present with "*first* bite" (emphasis added)—which suggests the first of many future refusals to eat flesh. This then is the third process of transformation. Compositional deixis indicates the narrator's apparent shift from carnism to veganism through the absence of punctuation around "misery," in contrast to the use of quotation marks for direct speech and as "scare quotes." The shift is emotional (via the term "misery") rather than logical, personal rather than political, and individual rather than systemic. Social-perceptual deixis makes explicit the hierarchical species separation of the human and the animal: "peaceful" is an adjective, "soothing" is a transitive verb; both indicate focalization through the "friend." But the objectification of Blue goes beyond seeing him as an "image"—the story of Blue's traumatic experience and suffering, which the narrator has witnessed and the telling of which has just concluded, contrasts profoundly with these descriptors (peaceful and soothing) and highlights by contrast the narrator's previous emotional identification of the horse, Blue, with her enslaved ancestors. The present participles (drinking, eating, munching) sustain the human/animal binary through grammatical word order: "we" is the subject and animals/meat are the object in relation to the continuous form of the verb. We drink milk, we eat eggs, we munch hamburgers: human subject – verb – animal object. The narrator tells a story of animal and human enslavement, in the interest of "justice for all," but the telling of the story is located within a human/animal binary that implicitly validates carnophallogocentrism even while the narrative explicitly rejects it.

This creates a narratological inconsistency that has significant implications for the moral and ethical effectiveness of the text, shown by a recent quantitative study of the capacity of the narrative to change readerly attitudes. The work by W. P. Małecki, Alexa Weik von Mossner, and Małgorzata Dobrowolska indicates that for the majority of readers "'Am I Blue?' turned out not to have a positive impact on attitudes toward animals in general" (369), but did have an impact on attitudes towards horses specifically (370). The function of deictic markers helps to explain the ineffective evaluative or judgmental workings of this narrative, which seeks the "abolition" of animal slavery by identifying it with historic human chattel slavery. As von Mossner claims, Walker evokes readerly em-

pathy through autobiographical narration and anthropomorphism or "the attribution of mental and emotional states to the horse itself, inviting the reader to experience trans-species empathy directly, without the detour through the human interlocutor" (372–373). However, in terms of cognitive rather than emotional empathy, the ultimate *cause* of these emotions relates to the narrator's continual flashbacks to human enslavement and parallels with the enslavement of non-human animals. That is, the exposure of systemic, carnophallogocentric abuse is obscured—even contradicted—in the narrative by the deictic field of the human narrator and her discourse of anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism can be a productive strategy for representing animal sentience if, as David Herman counsels in *Narratology Beyond the Human*, it is applied critically. He explains that "[t]his means anchoring anthropomorphic statements and inferences in our knowledge of species's [*sic*] natural history, perceptual and learning capabilities, physiology, nervous system, and previous individual history" (5).

"Am I Blue?" does not do this; the histories and epistemologies attributed to Blue are human, situated in the narrative's single deictic field (that of the narrator), despite the narrator's explicit recognition of what she calls his "inalienable *horseness*" (6). Thus, while appearing superficially to articulate a moral compass that is determined by the values of ethical veganism, on the level of the deep structure that is exposed through deictic analysis the narration is aligned with the carnist storyworld. It is ironic that this narrative has become (in)famous as a banned "vegan" text, when readers necessarily fail to empathize with the values of anti-anthropocentrism that are central to the philosophy of ethical veganism but are structurally superficial and marginal in Walker's narrative.

Paratext as Moral-Ethical Orientation in Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* (1861)

Jacobs's autobiography begins with several paratextual elements, including two epigraphs, one of which is a quotation attributed to an anonymous "Woman of North Carolina" and the other a verse from the Book of Isaiah, a "Preface by the Author," and an "Introduction by the Editor," the noted Abolitionist Lydia Maria Child. These paratexts invest the narrative with anti-slavery values and work at the level of deixis to produce an ethics of reception that identifies apathy towards slavery as wrong and Abolitionist action as right. The epigraphs establish the main moral interpreta-

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tional frames of reference of the narrative—biblical (Christian) ethics and witness account—that are further sustained by two prefatory addresses.

The ethics of reception is the process by which a narrative instructs readers on their "ethical obligations […] to […] itself, to its materials, and to its author" (Phelan). The effectiveness of the ethics of reception of Jacobs's narrative relies on what Philippe Lejeune has termed the "autobiographical pact": the claim that the implied author—Linda Brent, Jacobs's pseudonym—"is identical to the [autodiegetic] narrator" (17). The autobiographical pact creates the impression of a continuum between the diegetic and extradiegetic levels, encouraging readers to use the ethics constructed in the paratexts as orientation to interpret the narrative itself.

The epigraphs, the Preface, and the Introduction call on white Northern women to fight slavery. The discourse on gender prominent in the mid-nineteenth century explains the significance of women for the narrative's ethics of reception. In her study "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," Barbara Welter emphasizes that, as readers, women were considered "susceptible to persuasion" (166). However, quoting the nineteenth-century women's journal *The Lady's Amaranth*, Welter shows that women were also believed to be able to "govern[] […] by persuasion" (171). In the Introduction, Child evokes the discourse of True Womanhood by professing the "duty [of women] to exert moral influence on the question of Slavery" (748).

The epigraphs and the Preface use spatial deixis to construct the narrative ethics of reception. Spatial markers that reference height follow a moral logic: height is associated with moral righteousness, whereas depth figures (inaction towards) slavery. The Preface describes awareness of slavery spatially as an upward movement: "I do earnestly desire to arouse the women of the North to a realizing sense of the condition of two millions of women at the South" (745). Following the same logic, the first epigraph represents slavery by way of depth: "*Northerners* […] *have no conception of the depth of* degradation *involved in that word,* SLAVERY" (743, emphasis in original). Reinforcing the negative coding of depth, the Preface imagines slavery as a "deep, and dark, and foul […] pit of abominations" (746). Biblical allusions supplement the spatial figuration of slavery with compositional deixis, further engaging female implied readers. The image of the "pit" echoes the Book of Isaiah, which tells that, on Judgment Day, "the kings of the earth […] will be gathered together like prisoners in a pit" (Isaiah 24:21–22). The Preface thus repeats the association of the pit with bondage to assess slavery as sinful. The adjective "foul" sustains this evaluation by recalling the trope of rot describing the

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pit in Psalm 55: "But you, God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of decay" (Psalms 55:23). Through the tropes of descent and deterioration to define immorality, the epigraphs and the Preface appropriate biblical rhetoric and thus appeal to the implied piousness of Jacobs's female audience.

Based on the metaphorical contrast between height and depth, the epigraphs and the Preface metaphorically locate the moral deictic fields of the Woman of North Carolina and of the implied author above those of the Northerners and of the Northern women addressed in these paratexts. The ability of the Woman of North Carolina to discern Northerners' obliviousness to the "depth" of slavery suggests that she positions herself figuratively above slavery; she can only spatially perceive depth if she is above it. In the Preface, the perceptual marker "that," designating the "pit of abominations," constructs physical distance between the implied author-narrator and the morally and figuratively low stance of slavery. Conversely, the epigraph from Isaiah commands its addressees to "Rise up!", implying that their current spatial positioning is lower than it should be (743). The Preface, in which Brent addresses the readership in her own voice, uses conciliatory language but repeats the content of the more overtly judgmental second epigraph. The verb "arouse" places "the women of the North" on a moral level from which Brent needs to raise them figuratively (745). Following the Preface, the Introduction maintains the implied author's deictic center by reiterating the verb "arous[e]" when discussing the "duty" of the women of the North in the fight against slavery (748).

The first epigraph and the Preface lend credibility to the Abolitionist ethical deictic field of the Woman of North Carolina and of Brent by way of the topological markers "South" and "North." The marker "North Carolina" points to the "South," which comprises the "Slave States[s]" (745). While there is no evidence that the Woman of North Carolina is African American or enslaved, her southerly positioning makes her a witness of the ongoing normalized and institutional practice of slavery in the U.S. In that regard, she contrasts with the "Northerners" and their implied lack of perception. Likewise, the Preface identifies reality with the deictic field of the implied author-narrator. Brent tells of having "remained in a Slave State twenty-seven years" (745), and the word "experience" (746), though it is not a deictic marker per se, functions as a co-referent with "South" to designate her awareness of "what Slavery really is" (745). The marker "really" carries a positive moral connotation, thus the Preface claims that, to orient themselves adequately within a world that normalizes slavery

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(such as the storyworld of Jacobs's narrative) Northern women must adopt the deictic field of Brent and of the Woman of North Carolina.

The Preface avoids attributing too bold a claim of ignorance to its Northern female readership, the key addressees of the narrative's ethics of reception, lest they be offended rather than compelled to advance Abolition. The implied author-narrator thus nuances her own sense of superiority; she uses social and textual deixis to characterize herself as less lettered than her audience. She claims that drafting an autobiographical narrative exceeds her writing skills:

> I wish I were more competent to the task I have undertaken. But I trust my readers will excuse deficiencies in consideration of circumstances. [...] When I first arrived in Philadelphia, Bishop Paine advised me to publish a sketch of my life, but I told him I was altogether incompetent to such an undertaking [...] but I trust my motives will excuse what might otherwise seem presumptuous. (745)

According to Stockwell, evaluative markers and modality markers create social deictic shifts in narrative (65). By using the modality markers "may seem" and "might seem" with the evaluative textual markers "incredible," "incompetent," "deficiencies," and "presumptuous," Brent projects what she anticipates as the deictic field of her socially superior audience. She balances the spatial deixis that constructs her moral superiority with a social deixis that characterizes her as modest, such that the Preface does not "antagoniz[e]" the readers (Genette, *Paratexts* 198) and thus secures its rhetorical purpose.

Despite Brent's modest characterization of her technical abilities, she still needs to establish her legitimacy in publishing her account. Her justification employs a frequent trope in prefatory rhetoric: she "place[s] a high value on the *subject* [of the publication], even if that means alleging [...] the inadequacy of its *treatment*" (Genette *Paratexts* 198, emphasis in original). She constructs an "ethics of writing/producing" (Phelan), which decenters personal gain in favor of the common good: "I have not written my experiences in order to attract attention to myself; on the contrary, it would have been more pleasant to me to have been silent about my own history. Neither do I care to excite sympathy for my own sufferings" (Jacobs 745). The evaluative markers "earnest" and "pleasant" set up a tension between ethics and personal interest. Regarding the ethics of reception of *Incidents,* Brent's ethics of producing implies that it is wrong to be more concerned with aesthetic talent than with the truth. The preface not

only anticipates challenges to the implied author's right to write her experience but condemns such criticism from the outset.

The epigraphs, the Preface, and the Introduction adjoined to Jacobs's autobiography use spatial, social, and compositional deixis to compel Northern women reading the text at the time of first publication to act against slavery. These paratexts center the ethical deictic fields of women who either experienced or witnessed slavery in the mid-nineteenth century and turn biblical ethics against American democracy at the time. The ethically aligned deictic fields of Brent as implied author-narrator and of the Woman of North Carolina provide readers the deictic frames of reference necessary to respond to the narrative in accordance with its Abolitionist purpose.

"Something is *wrong*": Moral Deixis and the 'alien' Other in Octavia Butler's *Lilith's Brood*

In Octavia Butler's 1989 trilogy of novels, *Lilith's Brood*, an alien species named the Oankali rescue human survivors from a post-apocalyptic earth.[1] They restore the planet and return humans to Earth, but in return, expect a "trade"—to mate with humans. Those humans who refuse the "trade" are sterilized, while those who accept the "trade" participate in the evolution of a new hybrid species. Multiple opinions regarding Otherness are raised in the texts and, in the first two novels, human and alien bodies are continually altero-characterized as "wrong." Likewise, character discourse shapes the debate over species purity versus species mixing as either morally right or "wrong" according to the speaker's perspective. However, the third novel displaces the question of what is "wrong" with bodies from difference and hybridity to that of health and bodily integrity. In tracking the instances of "wrong" in the trilogy, I argue that the narrative thus conveys a morality of the body which advocates the freedom to be and become Other, but only within human and/or Oankali terms.

The difficulty in locating the moral deictic center of the novels, which is evident in the criticism on the trilogy, is partly due to Butler's use of narrative perspective. Jeffrey Tucker cites the debates surrounding the narratives, a reflection of those that occur within the diegesis. For instance, Tucker notes that Hoda Zaki is "troubled" by what she calls "'Butler's unmediated connections between biology and behavior'" (qtd. in

[1] The trilogy was originally published under the title Xenogenesis, including the novels *Dawn* (1987), *Adulthood Rites* (1988), and *Imago* (1989).

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Tucker 166). Zaki's conclusion suggests that the Oankali point of view is the moral center of the narrative. To reach his own conclusion, Tucker cites Butler's extratextual discourse, as if to equate the trilogy's "message" with authorial intention. Indeed, Butler's voice appears to be absent from the trilogy precisely because the heterodiegetic narrator of the first two novels lacks a distinctive voice, consistently focalizing through the main characters, while the third novel uses a homodiegetic narrator. Character discourse alone guides the narration, and in this respect, Tucker is right to argue that "the series foregrounds contending attitudes towards difference" (167). Both Lilith and Akin, the primary focalizers of *Dawn* and *Adulthood Rites*, voice counter-arguments to the human and Oankali opinions they hear, while their own perspectives shift throughout the narrative—Lilith gradually accepts the Oankali lifestyle, while Akin moves in the opposite direction and sees the need for human species purity. If Lilith's perspective serves to challenge human xenophobia and validate Oankali views of difference, Akin's focalization then displaces the Oankali as morally superior beings. In all three novels the word "wrong" consistently illustrates that both human and Oankali characters misjudge bodies.

While the third novel continues to question the Oankali position as morally superior regarding their judgment of bodies as right or "wrong," it also reinforces some of their views concerning health and bodily integrity—and it does so through its homodiegetic narrator, Jodahs. Jodahs's perspective is underlined in contrast to other perspectives, both through perceptual and textual deixis. Not only is it the only homodiegetic narrator of the trilogy, its story is the final installment of the trilogy entitled *Imago*.[2] Cathy Peppers notes that "imago" "means the 'perfect stage' of an animal at the end of its evolution." Jodahs's characterization as the first of a new hybrid human/Oankali species emphasizes the progressive maturation of human/Oankali hybridity which is hinted at in the titles of the three novels: *Dawn*, *Adulthood Rites*, and *Imago*. According to Nikanj, Jodahs's ooloi parent, Jodahs is "perfect," a statement which counters all human and Oankali observations of its body as "wrong" (539). Yet "imago" can also simply mean "image"—it is the word Jacques Lacan uses for the image an infant sees of itself during the mirror stage. "Imago" might then point to the multiple ways in which Jodahs's body changes in relation to its environment and the characters with whom it comes into contact. This might be the trilogy's meaning of "perfection," as well as

[2] The gender-neutral pronoun "it" is used for Jodahs's sex, the third sex of the Oankali, called "ooloi."

part of the way that the narratives use allegory to illustrate that humans are shaped through metonymy, defined through identification and opposition. However, the image that Jodahs has of itself (or its self and/or its body) is largely shaped by Nikanj and, accordingly, to a certain extent, the Oankali. So while perceptual deixis foregrounds Jodahs's perspective, social and textual deictics highlight Nikanj's influence on Jodahs's—and thus the trilogy's—morality of the body.

It is Nikanj who teaches Jodahs that there are "wrong" ways in which the body can develop, reinforcing Oankali discourse regarding health as a moral obligation. Discussing the changes that Jodahs makes to a cell in Nikanj's body, Jodahs tells it that "it didn't seem wrong or dangerous," "it just felt … out of place" (549). Jodahs's difficulty in characterizing the cell as other than "wrong" and "dangerous" is signaled by the textual deictic of the ellipsis, the compositional deictic of the simile, ending with the spatial deictic of "out of place." But Nikanj then equates Jodahs's "out of place" with "wrong" and "dangerous," emphasizing the morality behind bodily integrity and health. In this manner, Jodahs accepts and reproduces the Oankali moral obligation to maintain the bodies with which it comes into contact, as well as its own body, in a healthy state, as defined in either human or Oankali terms. Confronted with a growth on its hand, Jodahs's mother asks it if it hurts, to which Jodahs replies, "No. It just feels … *wrong*. Like a weight tied there where it shouldn't be" (555, emphasis in original). The perceptual and compositional deictics of the ellipsis, italics, and simile work with the spatial deictic of Jodahs's body, suggesting that the growth is foreign—much like the cell in Nikanj's body—and should not be included on or in the boundaries of the body.

Yet the morality of bodily integrity extends beyond the discourse of health, so that despite the trilogy's blurring of gender and species identity categories, and despite Jodahs's own path as the first of another new species, Jodahs and Nikanj convey the belief that there must be certain limits to the ways in which bodies take shape. This is most evident when Jodahs's fellow construct sibling, Aaor, also an ooloi, becomes "[un]recognizable" during its metamorphosis and must be saved with Nikanj's and Jodahs's help (681). For Jodahs, Aaor is:

> Not like a Human or an Oankali or any construct I had ever seen.
> Its skin was deep gray. Patches of it still glistened with slime. […]
> It was hairless.
> It could not speak aloud.
> Its hands were webbed fingers.

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> "It keeps slipping away" Nikanj said. "I'd brought it almost back to normal, but it has no control left." […]
> Something had gone seriously wrong with Aaor's body, as Nikanj had said. […] It had no control of itself, but like a rock rolling downhill, it had inertia. Its body "wanted" to be less and less complex. (681–682)

The social-perceptual markers in Jodahs's and Nikanj's discourse equate the "something" that is "seriously wrong with Aaor's body" to its difference from human, Oankali, and construct bodies—the new "normal." Textual deictics—the list-like description of Aaor in short sentences and paragraph breaks—emphasize its difference from this "norm." Skin color and texture, the presence versus the absence of hair, the capacity for speech, and again, bodily integrity ("webbed fingers") are thus signs of Aaor's (ab)normality. Here, the discourse of health intersects with able-bodiedness and animality.[3] Textually, Aaor's "webbed fingers" recall the moment in which Jodahs itself had become similar to a "frog," a shape that Nikanj hopes Jodahs will not adopt again (604). Aaor's body is also "wrong" because it has "no control," despite the fact that "its body wanted" to be in a different state. The compositional deictic marker of the quotation marks around the word "wanted" points to the mind/body dichotomy and suggests that Jodahs sees Aaor's body as wanting something different than its mind, a loss of control rather than the control over the body that Jodahs and the Oankali advocate. The morality of the body that is thus conveyed here is that the boundaries of the body must be controlled and that they must remain healthy and definably human, Oankali, or construct—categories that are defined in opposition to disability and animality.

Butler's trilogy thus conveys a morality of the body which is not countered through divergent character discourses. In the final novel, the discourse of health overlaps with bodily integrity, excluding illness and Othering disability and animality. The diegesis ultimately establishes a new 'norm' through definable human/Oankali traits and forecloses the possibility of bodies taking shapes in ways that would be characterized as 'unrecognizable.'

[3] One could also argue that the reference to Aaor's skin color functions as a compositional deictic which situates the somatic signifier in relation to tensions over race and racism within the diegesis, as well as allegorically, where the alien Other might point to racial Otherness extra-diegetically.

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Between Lexis and Deixis: Working Out Textual Ideology in Mary Wilkins Freeman's short story "Louisa"

In Freeman's 1890 short story "Louisa," the eponymous character is faced with the dilemma of either marrying for money or performing strenuous tasks to save her family from ruin. The young woman revolts against the idea of a loveless marriage and is determined to "wrest a little sustenance from their stony acre of land" (Freeman 399) much to the discontent of her mother, Mrs. Britton, who deems her behavior irrational and morally reprehensible. The two protagonists defend their respective points of view through reported speech, thereby constituting two identifiable ethical deictic centers in the narrative. However, since the rest of the story is mediated by an anonymous voice, the primary deictic center of the discourse is in fact the heterodiegetic narrator whose moral positioning is obscured by their use of external focalization and paralipsis yet can be inferred indirectly through their characterization of the protagonists.

My analysis is based on narratologist Susan Lanser's approach to narrative perspective from the angle of speech act theory, which examines "the relationship to aesthetic and social ideology that is structured through point of view" (102). Central to her theory is the notion of "the *textual* point of view, a synthesis of narrative voices and perspectives that goes beyond taking 'inventory' of each persona" and reflects instead "the structure of authority that emerges from the text" (240, emphasis in original). If one conceptualizes narrative point of view in terms of moral deixis, retrieving textual ideology then consists in figuring out the text's overall deictic field, composed of each character's deictic field organized—or rather, hierarchized—in terms of their respective position and authority in the narrative communication process. Since deixis is always attached to a speaking subject, textual ideology might be said to correspond to the implied author's deictic field, which is more difficult to access than the characters' or the narrator's, given that the authorial voice is always mediated through several layers of discourse. Thus, Lanser explains, "the extrafictional voice becomes the 'deep structure' of the narrative, the final authority in textual terms and yet a voice that must be uncovered by working through the other narrative levels in the text" (147). One of the factors that endow certain narrative points of view with more authority than others is the distinction between "explicit" and "embedded ideology," the latter being "ideology carried at 'deep structural' levels of discourse" (216). According to Lanser, the location of ideological content within this structure necessarily affects its efficiency—that is, its persuas-

ive power: "the more deeply embedded an ideology, the greater its chance of being apprehended subliminally and without argument" (216). The following analysis will test and nuance this hypothesis in the light of Freeman's short story.

In "Louisa," the two protagonists each construct a moral deictic field in relation to the main issues that arise in the course of the narrative. These include (but are not restricted to) their relationship to dress and physical appearance, their attitude towards manual labor as well as towards wealth and social class, and their views on gender roles and marriage. The moral axes along which the two characters evaluate these various topics are for the most part expressed in terms of necessity, desirability, morality, or rationality. However, two characters' discursive positions in relation to the same topic may be determined by different ethical parameters. For example, while Mrs. Britton considers wealth to be a worthy objective in itself—therefore evaluating money in terms of importance and desirability—Louisa has a more pragmatic stance and orients herself primarily in relation to the axis of necessity. Conversely, Mrs. Britton envisages the question of marriage solely in terms of its rational (that is, economic) implications, whereas Louisa's stance is determined by moral and emotional concerns.

The narrator's stance in relation to these various issues is harder to determine since there are few explicit narratorial comments in the narrative, but it can be inferred on the basis of stylistic or compositional choices. For instance, while Mrs. Britton passes negative judgments on her daughter's looks on several occasions, the narrator's descriptions of Louisa are either neutral or imbued with positive connotation: "Her hands were all brown and grimy with garden-mould; it clung to the bottom of her old dress and coarse shoes. […] As she stirred, a faint earthy odor diffused itself through the room. It was like a breath from a ploughed field" (391). The narrator's description, first factual, then slightly poetic, is incompatible with Mrs. Britton's idiolect as constructed through direct speech: "Sit there like a stick if you want to!" (391); "Jest look at your face… red as a beet" (394). The contrast in figurative language and diction, combined with the emphasis on sensory impressions, suggests that the description is focalized externally, through a center of perception inside the diegesis that is distinct from the characters' and the narrator's (by definition extradiegetic). Indeed, the entire passage abounds with verbs of perception that have no identifiable referent: "Louisa's silence *seemed to* strike her mother's will with an electric shock"; "Louisa's face *looked* fairly dull; her obstinacy *seemed* to cast a film over it" (391, emphasis

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added). External focalization thus enables the narrative voice to naturalize their endorsement of Louisa's character through a supposedly objective and disembodied center of perception that conveys the narrator's sympathetic stance towards Louisa while simultaneously masking their moral deictic center and anchoring it in the storyworld itself.

Although a large proportion of Freeman's short story consists of direct speech and descriptions, the narrator occasionally pauses the narration to deliver a short situation report or make a comment. These intrusions, unaltered by the characters' perceptions, are crucial to the reconstruction of the textual ideology as they reveal the narrator's ethical orientation. For instance, after learning that Louisa has hired herself out as a housekeeper, Mrs. Britton is described as

> a born aristocrat, with that fiercest and most bigoted aristocracy which sometimes arises from independent poverty. She had the feeling of a queen for a princess of the blood about her school-teacher daughter; her working in a neighbor's kitchen was as galling and terrible to her. […] There was no more sense, to her mind, in Louisa's refusing him than there would have been in a princess refusing the fairy prince and spoiling the story. (399)

The narrator's social deixis associates Mrs. Britton with royal imagery (possibly the British monarchy given her surname) and establishes a set of binaries in terms of which the characters are positioned. While Mrs. Britton is aligned with tradition and class prejudice, Louisa is characterized as a disruptive force which does not fit in any predetermined cultural script. Slightly later in the narrative, after Louisa deliberately alters her looks to drive her suitor away, the narrator comments:

> She had never heard of the princess who destroyed her beauty that she might not be forced to wed the man whom she did not love, but she had something of the same feeling, although she did not have it for the sake of any tangible lover. Louisa had never seen anybody whom she would have preferred to Jonathan Nye. […] She had only her dreams, which she had in common with other girls. (400–401)

In addition to reiterating Louisa's non-conformity, the narrator's comment contrasts starkly with the previous passage in its refusal to intrude into Louisa's consciousness and reveal her motives. This form of 'incomplete' focalization, which Gérard Genette terms paralipsis, evidences a "voluntary omission" (*Figures III* 211) of Louisa's ethical system. The closing sentence of the narrative further emphasizes the opacity of Louisa's con-

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sciousness even while sanctioning her decision through an elaborate description of a peaceful sunset: "[She] turned again from him [i.e., Jonathan] to her sweet, mysterious, girlish dreams" (408). The story's moral orientation thus ultimately hinges not on the narrator's disclosure of, and agreement with, Louisa's convictions, but on poetic justice, the responsibility of which rests with the implied author, the highest level of narrative authority.

The story's construction of a textual ideology consistent with Louisa's ethics is both obvious and elusive. While Mrs. Britton's conservative ideology is exposed through psychonarration and undermined by her characterization, Louisa's progressive thinking with respect to gender roles is never stated explicitly, on any ontological level. Instead, the narrator's characterization and figurative descriptions create a moral deictic field based on the Protestant work ethic with which she is unwittingly aligned and which corresponds to the implied author's norms. Indeed, Louisa's silent claims for financial autonomy and self-determination are ultimately supported through the story's resolution rather than the narrator's endorsement. Thus, to return to Lanser's initial hypothesis that the more deeply an ideology is embedded the more effective it is, it seems here that the narrative's authorization of Louisa's sense of morality is distributed across multiple levels that work in conjunction to conceal and naturalize it, and that it is this double process of erasure and naturalization, as with any discursive formation, that makes it particularly effective.

Conclusion

Let us return to the questions with which we began: what categories of deictic markers orient readers within the moral and ethical axes of the narrative storyworlds? How are values like right/wrong, good/bad, or true/false signaled to the implied reader? What kinds of dynamic relations do these deictic expressions create in order to communicate the moral and ethical environments that enable the construction of narrative meaning? In a text that lacks an authoritative narrator, such as *Lilith's Brood*, the ideological center is located either within the confrontation among diverse and conflicting character discourses or, where a conflicting discourse is absent, in the repetition of specific moral deictic markers that reinforce distinctions between "right" and "wrong." In narrative generally, each layer of discourse generates individual moral deictic fields, the degree of authority of which is determined, in part, by the ontological level at which

they operate. “Am I Blue?” presents an explicit ethical vegan discourse on the level of autobiographical reflection, which is contradicted by deictically-constructed carnophallogocentrism at the level of the words that comprise the narration. In “Louisa,” the protagonist’s ethical system remains implicit but is supported by the norms underlying the narrator’s discourse and the implied author’s compositional choices. The ethical coordinates of Freeman’s story, as a whole, emerge from the dynamic interplay among the discursive levels of protagonist, narrator, and author. Although the deictic markers attributed to the implied author must be inferred indirectly by the reader from textual elements such as characterization, figurative devices, or the story’s resolution, ultimately these markers function as the moral compass in relation to which other moral deictic fields either coincide or diverge. In *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, moral deictic markers such as ‘right’ versus ‘wrong,’ and ‘real’ versus ‘unreal,’ provide explicit coordinates for readerly orientation within the Abolitionist ethical framework of Jacobs’s slave narrative. Moral and evaluative deictic markers are mapped on to the deictic field of characters, narrators, the implied author, and the implied reader. The ontological level at which such deictic markers are employed in the paratext of Jacobs’s autobiography promotes the moral alignment of the reader with the implied author and narrator, and thus with the ideological project of the text. Here, as in all the case studies we have explored, complex relations between what a narrative says and how it says it are both constructed and mediated by narrative deixis, which orients readerly judgments in fundamental ways.

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