

Spectrality In The Novels Of Toni Morrison

This book analyzes a significant group of contemporary historical fictions that represent damaging, even catastrophic times for people and communities; written “after the wreck,” they recall instructive pasts. The novels chronicle wars, slavery, racism, child abuse and genocide; they reveal damages that ensue when nations claim an exalted, exceptionalist identity and violate the human rights of their Others. In sympathy with the exiled, writers of these contemporary historical fictions create alternative communities on the state’s outer fringes. These fictive communities include where the state excludes; they foreground relations of debt and obligation to the group in place of individualism, competition and private property. Rather than assimilating members to a single identity with a unified set of views, the communities open multiple possibilities for belonging. Analyzing novels from Britain, Australia and the U.S., along with additional transnational examples, Susan Strehle explores the political vision animating some contemporary historical fictions.

The Ghostly and the Ghosted in Literature and Film: Spectral Identities reads a variety of texts, from the Gothic novels of late eighteenth-century England to modern Asian horror films, arguing that, as different as these stories are, the theme beneath the hauntings is the same. The essays in this collection all develop the concept of social ghosting and explore what it means to be ghostly while alive, marginalized at the edges of community and society.

At the heart of this book is a spectral theory of world literature that draws on Edward Said, Aamir Mufti, Jacques Derrida and world-systems theory to assess how the field produces local literature as an “e;other”e; that haunts its universalising, assimilative imperative with the force of the uncanny. It takes the Middle Eastern novel as both metonym and metaphor of a spectral world literature. It explores the worlding of novels from the Middle East in recent years, and, focusing on the pivotal sites of Middle Eastern modernity (Egypt, Turkey, Iran), argues that lost to their global production, circulation and reception is their constitution in the logic of spectrality. With the intention of redressing this imbalance, it critically restores their engagements with the others of Middle Eastern modernity and shows, through a new reading of the Middle Eastern novel, that world literature is always-already haunted by its others, the ghosts of modernity.

The Queer Uncanny: New Perspectives on the Gothic investigates the diverse roles that the uncanny, as defined by Sigmund Freud, Helene Cixous and other theorists, plays in representing lesbian and male gay sexualities and transgender in a selection of contemporary British, American and Caribbean fiction published 1980-2007. Novels by Christopher Bram, Alan Hollinghurst, Randall Kenan, Shani Mootoo, James Purdy, Sarah Schulman, Ali Smith, Sarah Waters, Jeanette Winterson and other writers are discussed in the context of queer theory and gothic critical writing. The notion of the uncanny as ‘tangential and to one side’ and ‘appearing on the fringe of something else’, as defined by Cixous and Rosemary Jackson, appropriately evokes the situation of the queer individual living in a minority sub-culture and existing in oblique relation to hetero-normative society. Motifs with uncanny connotations discussed include secrets that society would prefer to remain hidden but come to light, spectral visitation, the emergence of repressed fears and desires, the double, and the homely/ unhomely house. Writers employ them to explore topics integral to queer existence. These include secrets relating to the closet and AIDS; homosexual panic; lesbian social invisibility; transgender subjectivity; the intersection between sexuality and race; the vilification of the queer subject as ‘monstrous Other’; the domestic life of the gay couple destabilised by homophobic influences from the public world; and the heterosexual family disrupted by homosexual secrets from within. The queer recasting of gothic motifs, such as the haunted house, the uncanny city, the grotesque body, and the breakdown of the family due to paternal incest, receives attention.

The popularity of such widely known works as “The Lottery” and *The Haunting of Hill House* has tended to obscure the extent of Shirley Jackson’s literary output, which includes six novels, a prodigious number of short stories, and two volumes of domestic sketches. Organized around the themes of influence and intertextuality, this collection places Jackson firmly within the literary cohort of the 1950s. The contributors investigate the work that informed her own fiction and discuss how Jackson inspired writers of literature and film. The collection begins with essays that tease out what Jackson’s writing owes to the weird tale, detective fiction, the supernatural tradition, and folklore, among other influences. The focus then shifts to Jackson’s place in American literature and the impact of her work on women’s writing, campus literature, and the graphic novelist Alison Bechdel. The final two essays examine adaptations of *The Haunting of Hill House* and Jackson’s influence on contemporary American horror cinema. Taken together, the essays offer convincing evidence that half a century following her death, readers and writers alike are still finding value in Jackson’s words.

The Female Servant and Sensation Fiction: ‘Kitchen Literature’ explores why Victorian sensation fiction was derided as literature fit only for maids and cooks and how the depictions of fictional female domestics, from *Jane Eyre* to Neo-Victorian novels, reflect contemporary social concerns about the blurring of the boundaries of class and gender. Ravishingly beautiful and emotionally incendiary, *Tar Baby* is Toni Morrison’s reinvention of the love story. Jadine Childs is a black fashion model with a white patron, a white boyfriend, and a coat made out of ninety perfect sealskins. Son is a black fugitive who embodies everything she loathes and desires. As Morrison follows their affair, which plays out from the Caribbean to Manhattan and the deep South, she charts all the nuances of obligation and betrayal between blacks and whites, masters and servants, and men and women.

Shirley Jackson and Domesticity takes on American horror writer Shirley Jackson’s domestic narratives – those fictionalized in her novels and short stories as well as the ones captured in her memoirs – to explore the extraordinary and often supernatural ways domestic practices and the ecology of the home influence Jackson’s storytelling. Examining

various areas of homemaking – child-rearing and reproduction, housekeeping, architecture and spatiality, the housewife mythos – through the theoretical frameworks of gothic, queer, gender, supernatural, humor, and architectural studies, this collection contextualizes Jackson's archive in a Cold War framework and assesses the impact of the work of a writer seeking to question the status quo of her time and culture.

Meet the women writers who defied convention to craft some of literature's strangest tales, from *Frankenstein* to *The Haunting of Hill House* and beyond. Curated reading lists point readers to their most spine-chilling tales.

Placing the popular genre of neo-Victorian fiction within the context of the contemporary cultural fascination with the Victorians, this book argues that these novels are distinguished by a commitment to historical specificity and understands them within their contemporary context and the context of Victorian historical and literary narratives.

At first glance, *Beloved* would appear to be the only “ghost story” among Toni Morrison’s nine novels, but as this provocative new study shows, spectral presences and places abound in the celebrated author’s fiction. Melanie R. Anderson explores how Morrison uses specters to bring the traumas of African American life to the forefront, highlighting histories and experiences, both cultural and personal, that society at large too frequently ignores. Working against the background of magical realism, while simultaneously expanding notions of the supernatural within American and African American writing, Morrison peoples her novels with what Anderson identifies as two distinctive types of ghosts: spectral figures and social ghosts. Deconstructing Western binaries, Morrison uses the spectral to indicate power through its transcendence of corporality, temporality, and explication, and she employs the ghostly as a metaphor of erasure for living characters who are marginalized and haunt the edges of their communities. The interaction of these social ghosts with the spectral presences functions as a transformative healing process that draws the marginalized figure out of the shadows and creates links across ruptures between generations and between past and present, life and death. This book examines how these relationships become increasingly more prominent in the novelist’s canon—from their beginnings in *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula*, to their flowering in the trilogy that comprises *Beloved*, *Jazz*, and *Paradise*, and onward into *A Mercy*. An important contribution to the understanding of one of America’s premier fiction writers, *Spectrality in the Novels of Toni Morrison* demonstrates how the Nobel laureate’s powerful and challenging works give presence to the invisible, voice to the previously silenced, and agency to the oppressed outsiders who are refused a space in which to narrate their stories.

Abstract: Of Toni Morrison's novels, *Beloved* (1987) would appear to be the only "ghost story," but spectral presences and places abound in her work. In this dissertation, I explore how Morrison uses specters in her fiction in order to presence African American culture and history. According to Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, "haunting indicates that, beneath the surface of received history, there lurks another narrative" (*Spectral America* 5). In order to retrieve this narrative of lived African American history, Morrison peoples her novels with spectral figures that function as bridges, connecting individuals to their personal and cultural histories. I analyze Morrison's specters in the contexts of Latin American magical realism and of the African American literary tradition and through the critical lens of poststructuralism (in particular Derrida's theories of hauntology and spectrality). Deconstructing fixed Western binaries, I argue that the spectral plays a double role: it indicates power through its transcendence of corporality, temporality, and explication, and it also serves as a metaphor of erasure for characters who are dismissed by society and "ghosted," even though they are alive. The metaphor of the ghosted individual signals the absence of these people and their stories from the larger Western-oriented historical narrative, and it is the haunting of the specter that "unghosts" these elided individuals and creates links among past and present, life and death, and generations. Through the metaphoric power and the poststructural binary-dissolving possibilities of the specter, Morrison pursues her cultural work of presencing the actual lived experience of African American history in America and those individuals who lived it.

This book examines representations of the specter in American twentieth and twenty-first-century fiction. David Coughlan’s innovative structure has chapters on Paul Auster, Don DeLillo, Toni Morrison, Marilynne Robinson, and Philip Roth alternating with shorter sections detailing the significance of the ghost in the philosophy of Jacques Derrida, particularly within the context of his 1993 text, *Specters of Marx*. Together, these accounts of phantoms, shadows, haunts, spirit, the death sentence, and hospitality provide a compelling theoretical context in which to read contemporary US literature. *Ghost Writing in Contemporary American Fiction* argues at every stage that there is no self, no relation to the other, no love, no home, no mourning, no future, no trace of life without the return of the specter—that is, without ghost writing.

This gothic classic, “*The Turn of the Screw*” is one of the most famous ghost stories of all time. On Christmas Eve, Douglas reads a manuscript written by a former acquaintance, the governess, whom Douglas claims to have known and who is now dead. The manuscript tells the story of how the young governess is hired by a man who has become responsible for his young nephew and niece after the tragic deaths of their parents. He is uninterested in raising the children. The governess’s new employer gives her full responsibility for the young siblings and explicitly states that he is not to be bothered with communications of any sort. Set in a remote estate this critically acclaimed novella tells the tale of a governess who, looking after two children, becomes convinced that the grounds are haunted. This story has been adapted many times for film and television, most recently in *The Turning* (2020). Famed for its ability to create an intimate sense of confusion and suspense, this novella is a must-read for all horror and ghost story fans.

This collection of essays that examines historical fiction from the eighteenth century to the present. In doing so, it provides a clear sense of both the shifts and continuities in the way historical recollection, strategies of representation, and reading practices intersect.

The ghost story 1840-1920: A cultural history examines the British ghost story within the political contexts of the long nineteenth century. By relating the ghost story to economic, national, colonial and gendered contexts' it provides a critical re-evaluation of the period. The conjuring of a political discourse of spectrality during the nineteenth century enables a culturally sensitive reconsideration of the work of writers including Dickens, Collins, Charlotte Riddell, Vernon Lee, May Sinclair, Kipling, Le Fanu, Henry James and M.R. James. Additionally, a chapter on the interpretation of spirit messages reveals how issues relating to textual analysis were implicated within a language of the spectral. This book is the first full-length study of the British ghost story in over 30 years and it will be of interest to academics, graduate students and advanced undergraduates working on the Gothic, literary studies, historical studies, critical theory and cultural

studies.

Monstrous textuality emerges when Gothic narratives like *Frankenstein* reflect the monstrous in their narrative structure to create narratives of resistance. It allows writers to meta-narratively reflect their own poetics and textual production, and reclaim authority over their work under circumstances of systemic cultural oppression and Othering. This book traces the representation of other Others through Black feminist hauntology in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) and *Love* (2003); it explores fat freak embodiment as a feminist resistance strategy in Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* (1984) and Margaret Atwood's *Lady Oracle* (1976); and it reads Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy (2003–13) and Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* (1995) within a framework of critical posthumanist and cyborg theory. The result is a comprehensive argument about how these texts can be read within a framework of critical posthumanist questioning of knowledge production, and of epistemological exploration, beyond the exclusionary humanist paradigm.

Meet the women writers who defied convention to craft some of literature's strangest tales, from *Frankenstein* to *The Haunting of Hill House* and beyond. *Frankenstein* was just the beginning: horror stories and other weird fiction wouldn't exist without the women who created it. From Gothic ghost stories to psychological horror to science fiction, women have been primary architects of speculative literature of all sorts. And their own life stories are as intriguing as their fiction. Everyone knows about Mary Shelley, creator of *Frankenstein*, who was rumored to keep her late husband's heart in her desk drawer. But have you heard of Margaret "Mad Madge" Cavendish, who wrote a science-fiction epic 150 years earlier (and liked to wear topless gowns to the theater)? If you know the astounding work of Shirley Jackson, whose novel *The Haunting of Hill House* was reinvented as a Netflix series, then try the psychological hauntings of Violet Paget, who was openly involved in long-term romantic relationships with women in the Victorian era. You'll meet celebrated icons (Ann Radcliffe, V. C. Andrews), forgotten wordsmiths (Eli Colter, Ruby Jean Jensen), and today's vanguard (Helen Oyeyemi). Curated reading lists point you to their most spine-chilling tales. Part biography, part reader's guide, the engaging write-ups and detailed reading lists will introduce you to more than a hundred authors and over two hundred of their mysterious and spooky novels, novellas, and stories.

The historical novel has been one of the most important forms of women's reading and writing in the twentieth century, yet it has been consistently under-rated and critically neglected. In the first major study of British women writers' use of the genre, Diana Wallace tracks its development across the century. She combines a comprehensive survey with detailed readings of key writers, including Naomi Mitchison, Georgette Heyer, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Margaret Irwin, Jean Plaidy, Mary Renault, Philippa Gregory and Pat Barker.

Dismemberment in the Fiction of Toni Morrison is a multifaceted study of Toni Morrison's fiction. It investigates racism and the concomitant experiences of dismemberment in Morrison's fiction from multiple perspectives, including history, psychology, and culture. Looking at dismemberment from multiple perspectives, rather than the more generic and abstract expression of fragmentation, likens the impact of racism on individuals to the splitting of bodies, amputation, phantom limbs and traumatic memories, and in more concrete and visceral terms. Morrison's art of story-telling involves an interactive conversation from multiple perspectives, demanding more attentive participation from her readers in deconstructing the meaning of her narratives. Studying her fiction from multiple perspectives suggests various ways of examining the pernicious impact of racism which produces various forms of dismemberment in her characters. This investigation does this without giving prominence to one perspective at the expense of other equally relevant modes of interpretation. Morrison's depiction of the trauma of racism on the psyche of her characters and the concomitant experiences of dismemberment has its roots in the historical and social realities of African Americans. The psychological impact of racism on Morrison's characters requires viewing through the lens of the historical and social realities that play a significant role. Morrison enacts racial alienation and dismemberment as complex processes; it is consequently important to look at her project from multiple perspectives. Examining the lived reality of African Americans from only one perspective ignores dismemberment in the light of the socio-political and historical realities of African American experience in the United States, and entails reconsideration of the physical, historical, social and psychological realities. This investigation argues for the importance of combining these historical and psychological, as well as sociocultural, analyses of Morrison's fiction in order to acquire a more rounded understanding of racism and its debilitating effects on the psyche. By situating Morrison's fiction within a variety of discourses, this study offers a multifaceted, highly interdisciplinary framework for a more rewarding analysis of her fiction.

Even as Stephen Graham Jones generates a dizzying range of brilliant fiction, his work remains strikingly absent from scholarly conversations about Native and western American literature, owing in part to his unapologetic embrace of popular genres such as horror and science fiction. Steeped in dense narrative references, literary and historical allusions, and experimental postmodern stylings, his fiction informs a broad array of literary and popular conversations. *The Fictions of Stephen Graham Jones* is the first collection of scholarship on Jones's ever-expanding oeuvre. The diverse methodologies that inform these essays—from Native American critical theory to poststructuralism and gothic noirism—illuminate the unique complexity of Jones's narrative worlds while positioning his works within broader conversations in literary studies and popular culture. Jones challenges at every turn the notions of what constitutes Native American literature and what it means to be a Native American writer. Contributing editor Billy J. Stratton foregrounds these heavily contested questions and their ongoing relevance to readers and critics alike.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE GOTHIC "Well written and interesting [it is] a testament to the breadth and depth of knowledge about its central subject among the more than 130 contributing writers, and also among the three editors, each of whom is a significant figure in the field of gothic studies ... A reference work that's firmly rooted in and actively devoted to expressing the current state of academic scholarship about its area." *New York Journal of Books* "A substantial achievement." *Reference Reviews* Comprehensive and wide-ranging, *The Encyclopedia of the Gothic* brings together over 200 newly-commissioned essays by leading scholars writing on all aspects of the Gothic as it is currently taught and researched, along with challenging insights into the development of the genre and its impact on contemporary culture. The A-Z entries provide comprehensive coverage of relevant authors, national traditions, critical developments, and notable texts that continue to define, shape, and inform the genre. The volume's approach is truly interdisciplinary, with essays by specialist international contributors whose expertise extends beyond Gothic literature to film, music, drama, art, and architecture. From *Angels and American Gothic* to *Wilde and Witchcraft*, *The Encyclopedia of the Gothic* is the definitive reference guide to all aspects of this strange and wondrous genre. *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Literature* is a comprehensive, scholarly, authoritative, and critical overview of literature and theory comprising individual titles covering key literary genres, periods, and sub-disciplines. Available both in print and online, this groundbreaking resource provides students, teachers, and researchers with cutting-edge scholarship in literature and literary studies.

What exactly is goodness? Where is it found in the literary imagination? Toni Morrison, one of American letters' greatest voices, pondered these perplexing questions in her celebrated Ingersoll Lecture, delivered at Harvard University in 2012 and published now for the first time. Perhaps because it is overshadowed by the more easily defined evil, goodness often escapes our attention. Recalling many literary examples, from Ahab to Coetzee's Michael K, Morrison seeks the essence of goodness and ponders its significant place in her writing. She considers the concept in relation to unforgettable characters from her own works of fiction and arrives at conclusions that are both eloquent and edifying. In a lively interview conducted for this book, Morrison further elaborates on her lecture's ideas, discussing goodness not only in literature but in society and history—particularly black history, which has responded to centuries of brutality with profound creativity. Morrison's essay is followed by a series of responses by

scholars in the fields of religion, ethics, history, and literature to her thoughts on goodness and evil, mercy and love, racism and self-destruction, language and liberation, together with close examination of literary and theoretical expressions from her works. Each of these contributions, written by a scholar of religion, considers the legacy of slavery and how it continues to shape our memories, our complicities, our outcries, our lives, our communities, our literature, and our faith. In addition, the contributors engage the religious orientation in Morrison's novels so that readers who encounter her many memorable characters such as Sula, Beloved, or Frank Money will learn and appreciate how Morrison's notions of goodness and mercy also reflect her understanding of the sacred and the human spirit.

Espectros is a compilation of original scholarly studies that presents the first volume-length exploration of the spectral in literature, film, and photography of Latin America, Spain, and the Latino diaspora. In recent decades, scholarship in deconstructionist "hauntology," trauma studies, affect in image theory, and a renewed interest in the Gothic genre, has given rise to a Spectral Studies approach to the study of narrative. Haunting, the spectral, and the effects of the unseen, carry a special weight in contemporary Latin American and Spanish cultures (referred to in the book as "Transhispanic cultures"), due to the ominous legacy of authoritarian governments and civil wars, as well as the imposition of the unseen yet tangible effects of global economics and neoliberal policies. Ribas and Petersen's detailed introductory analysis grounds haunting as a theoretical tool for literary and cultural criticism in the Transhispanic world, with an emphasis on the contemporary period from the end of the Cold War to the present. The chapters in this volume explore haunting from a diversity of perspectives, in particular engaging haunting as a manifestation of trauma, absence, and mourning. The editors carefully distinguish the collective, cultural dimension of historical trauma from the individual, psychological experience of the aftermath of a violent history, always taking into account unresolved social justice issues. The volume also addresses the association of the spectral photographic image with the concept of haunting because of the photograph's ability to reveal a presence that is traditionally absent or has been excluded from hegemonic representations of society. The volume concludes with a series of studies that address the unseen effects and progressive deterioration of the social fabric as a result of a globalized economy and neoliberal policies, from the modernization of the nation-state to present.

Analysing David Peace provides an exciting, challenging and accessible critical introduction to the work of contemporary British novelist David Peace. Through a detailed analysis of his writings, as well as the socio-cultural contexts of their production and dissemination, the collection explores Peace's attempts to capture the sensibilities of late twentieth century society and contributes to an ongoing debate in the media about his representations. Peace is an emerging author who is widely read and taught and whose novels are increasingly celebrated. In the past decade Peace has won the James Tait Black Memorial Award and was named as one of Granta's Best of Young British Novelists. The four novels of his Red Riding Quartet interrogate British society of the 1970s/80s through the prism of the hunt for the serial killer dubbed the Yorkshire Ripper. GB84 examines the machinations of the 1984–5 UK miners' strike, while The Damned United explores relationships between masculinity and football through the doomed reign of manager Brian Clough at British football club Leeds United in 1974. In the Tokyo Trilogy, Peace develops an interest in occupation and the occult, interrogating Japan's post-war legacy of defeat and its resonance to our contemporary world. This collection offers an essential guide to the work of David Peace, as well as a unique insight into his canon to date.

Victorian Hauntings asks its reader to consider the following questions: What does it mean to read or write with ghosts, or to suggest that acts of reading or writing are haunted? In what ways can authors in the nineteenth century be read so as to acknowledge the various phantom effects which return within their texts? In what ways do the traces of such "ghost writing" surface in the works of Dickens, Tennyson, Eliot and Hardy? How does the work of spectrality, revenance and the uncanny transform materially both the forms of the literary in the Victorian era and our reception of it today? Beginning with an exploration of matters of haunting, the uncanny, the gothic and the spectral, Julian Wolfreys traces the ghostly resonances at work in Victorian writing and how such persistence addresses issues of memory and responsibility which haunt the work of reading. 'Taking the familiar genre of the Gothic as a point of departure and revisiting it through Derridean theory, Wolfreys' book, the first application of "hauntology" to the domain of Victorian Studies is a remarkable achievement. Wolfreys never reduces reading to instrumentality but remains alert to all the potentialities of the texts he reads with a great attention to their idiosyncrasies. Victorian Hauntings should bring a new tone to Victorian Studies, this clever book is quite perfect. - Jean Michel Rabate, Professor of English, University of Pennsylvania 'You'd have to be dead to know more about ghosts than Julian Wolfreys.' Martin McQuillan, University of Leeds

Unlike any other book of its kind, this volume celebrates published works from a broad range of American ethnic groups not often featured in the typical canon of literature. • Highlights the most important print and electronic resources on multicultural literature through a detailed bibliography • Features entries from 50 contributors, all of whom are experts in their fields • Includes cultural works not often highlighted in traditional textbooks, such as Iranian American literature, Dominican American literature, and Puerto Rican American literature

Ghostly Alterities analyses the meaning of ghostliness in contemporary Anglophone novels – Patricia Grace's Baby No-Eyes (1998), Toni Morrison's Beloved (1987), J. M. Coetzee's Foe (1986), Vivienne Cleven's Her Sister's Eye (2002), Ben Okri's The Famished Road (1991), Pat Barker's The Ghost Road (1995) – in which the figure of the ghost is often entrusted with the task of questioning Western culture and history. After an introductory chapter which investigates Freud's concept of the uncanny along with theoretical issues raised by Iain Chambers and Jacques Derrida, Ghostly Alterities discusses the novels from different critical orientations (postcolonialism, poststructuralism and psychoanalysis), presenting ghostliness as intersecting with three major themes: the problem of the spectre's visibility and "bodily" nature; the particular melancholic state of mind the ghost can trigger which brings about a very special kind of (g)hospitality; the spectral nature of history and its relationship with the characters' personal memory.

This book explores the history of women's engagement with writing experimentally. Women writers have long used different narratives and modes of writing as a way of critiquing worlds and stories that they find themselves at odds with, but at the same time, as a way to participate in such spaces. Experimentation—of style, mode, voice, genre and language—has enabled women writers to be simultaneously creative and critical, engaged in and yet apart from stories and cultures that have so often seen them as 'other'. This collection shows that women writers in English over the past 400 years have challenged those ideas not only through explicit polemic and alternative representations but through disrupting the very modes of representation and story itself.

Winner of the 1974 National Book Award "A screaming comes across the sky. . ." A few months after the Germans' secret V-2 rocket bombs begin falling on London, British Intelligence discovers that a map of the city pinpointing the sexual conquests of one Lieutenant Tyrone Slothrop, U.S. Army, corresponds identically to a map showing the V-2 impact sites. The

implications of this discovery will launch Slothrop on an amazing journey across war-torn Europe, fleeing an international cabal of military-industrial superpowers, in search of the mysterious Rocket 00000, through a wildly comic extravaganza that has been hailed in *The New Republic* as “the most profound and accomplished American novel since the end of World War II.”

Exploring the pervasive presence of the Victorian past in contemporary culture, these essays use the trope of haunting and spectrality as a critical tool with which to consider neo-Victorian works, as well as our ongoing fascination with the Victorians, combining original readings of well-known novels with engaging analyses of lesser-known works.

Ratmoko (English literature, U. of Zurich and comparative literature, Yale U.) traces the genealogy of ghosts through philosophical, literary, and religious texts of the Western canon. He discusses the spectral history of guilt in law, the historical truth of spectrality, spectrality in the era of Christianity and Greek tragedy, and phantom formations after the Renaissance. Annotation :2006 Book News, Inc., Portland, OR (booknews.com).

“They shoot the white girl first. With the rest they can take their time.” So begins Toni Morrison's *Paradise*, which opens with a horrifying scene of mass violence and chronicles its genesis in an all-black small town in rural Oklahoma. Founded by the descendants of freed slaves and survivors in exodus from a hostile world, the patriarchal community of Ruby is built on righteousness, rigidly enforced moral law, and fear. But seventeen miles away, another group of exiles has gathered in a promised land of their own. And it is upon these women in flight from death and despair that nine male citizens of Ruby will lay their pain, their terror, and their murderous rage. In prose that soars with the rhythms, grandeur, and tragic arc of an epic poem, Toni Morrison challenges our most fiercely held beliefs as she weaves folklore and history, memory and myth into an unforgettable meditation on race, religion, gender, and a far-off past that is ever present.

The *Spectralities Reader* is the first volume to collect the rich scholarship produced in the wake of the “spectral turn” of the early 1990s, which saw ghosts and haunting conjured as compelling analytical and methodological tools across the humanities and social sciences. Surveying the past twenty years from an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural perspective, the Reader displays the wide range of concerns spectrality, in its diverse elaborations, has been called upon to elucidate. The disjunctions produced by globalization, the ungraspable quality of modern media, the convolutions of subject formation (in terms of gender, race, and sexuality), the elusiveness of spaces and places, and the lingering presences and absences of memory and history have all been reconceived by way of the spectral. A primer for the wide readership engaged with cultural interpretations of ghosts and haunting that go beyond the confines of the fictional and supernatural, *The Spectralities Reader* includes twenty-five groundbreaking texts by prominent contemporary thinkers, from Jacques Derrida and Gayatri Spivak to Avery Gordon and Arjun Appadurai, as well as a general introduction and six section introductions by the editors.

This collection of essays is dedicated to examining the recent literary phenomenon of the 'neo-historical' novel, a sub-genre of contemporary historical fiction which critically re-imagines specific periods of history.

Haunted Selves, Haunting Places in English Literature and Culture offers a series of readings of poetry, the novel and other forms of art and cultural expression, to explore the relationship between subject and landscape, self and place. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach grounded in close reading, the text places Jacques Derrida's work on spectrality in dialogue with particular aspects of phenomenology. The volume explores writing and culture from the 1880s to the present day, proceeding through four sections examining related questions of identity, memory, the landscape, and our modern relationship to the past. Julian Wolfreys presents a theoretically informed understanding of the efficacy of literature and culture in connecting us to the past in an affective and engaged manner.

Acts of cross-cultural reading have ethical consequences. In *Haunting Encounters*, Joanne Lipson Freed traces the narrative strategies through which certain works of fiction forge connections with their readers across boundaries of difference. Freed uses the idea of haunting—an intense, temporary, and transformative encounter that defies rational understanding—as a metaphor for the kinds of ethical relationships that such works cultivate with their readers across boundaries of difference. Freed points out how such works as Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* strike a delicate balance between empathy and alterity. Their engaging narratives, Freed argues, bring unfamiliar characters and distant settings to life for readers who encounter them as "other," but they also highlight the limits of fiction, holding in check the impulse to colonize another's experience with one's own. *Haunting Encounters* is a sensitive and perceptive application of theory to real-world concerns. It draws together the fields of postcolonial fiction and narrative ethics and suggests original modes of engagement between readers and books that promise new ways of looking at the world.

Post-millennial writings function as a useful prism through which we can understand contemporary English culture and its compulsion to revisit the immediate past. The critical practice of hauntology turns to the past in order to make sense of the present, to understand how we got to this place and how to build a better future. Since the Year 2000, popular culture has been inundated with representations of those who occupy a space between being and non-being and defy ontological criteria. This *Pivot* explores a range of contemporary English literatures - from the poetry of Simon Armitage and the drama of Jez Butterworth, to the fiction of Zadie Smith and the stories of David Peace - that collectively unite to represent a twenty-first century world full of specters, reminiscence and representations of spectral encounters. These specters become visible and significant as they interact with a range of social, political and economic discourses that continue to speak to the contemporary period. The enduring fascination with the spectral offers valuable insights into a contemporary English culture in which spectral manifestations signal towards larger social anxieties as well as to specific historical events and recurrent cultural preoccupations. The specter confronts the contemporary with the necessity of participation, encouraging the realisation that we must engage with it in order to create

meaning. Narrative agency is the primary motivating force of its return, and the repetition of the specter functions to highlight new meanings and perspectives. Harnessing hauntology as a lens through which to consider the specters haunting twenty-first century English writings, this Pivot examines the emergence of a vein of hauntological literature that profiles the pervasive presence of the past in our new millennium.

White hires Blue, a New York City private detective, to keep an eye on Black, but eventually Blue finds his own life in danger

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