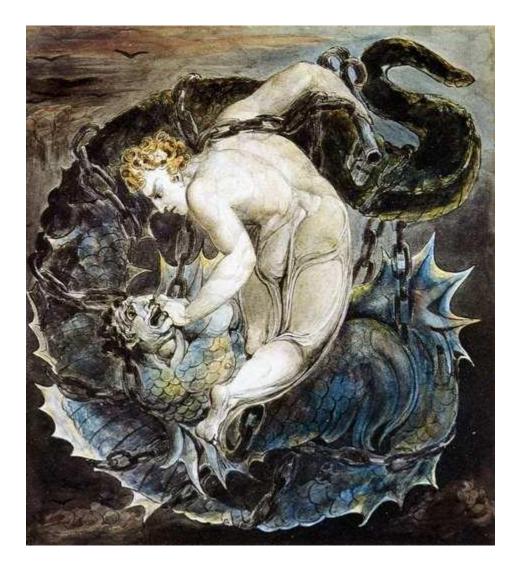**Sympathy for Devils :**

A Study into Sympathetically Perceived Villains in *King Richard III*, *Paradise*

Lost* and *Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus

Meike Bokma
4097599
BA thesis English Language and Culture
Utrecht University
Supervisor : Paul Franssen
Second reader : Lieke Stelling
Words : 10784
American English
28-10-2017

Illustrations

Blake, William. *The Angel Michael Binding Satan (He Cast him in to the Bottomless Pit, and Shut him up).* Digital image. *Harvard Art Museums collection object 1915.8.* Harvard Art Museums, n.d. Web. 1 Aug. 2017. <https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/art/298817>.

Abstract

The current thesis set out to identify a number of factors which contribute to the way in which villains can come to be perceived sympathetically by readers. To this end three separate narratives were chosen for study: William Shakespeare's *King Richard III*, John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: or the Modern Prometheus*. For each narrative two separate factors were identified as having the greatest impact on readers' perception. Each villain and their corresponding factors were then discussed in regards to Meier Sternberg's theory on primacy and recency effects in literature and the models of dynamic control which he identifies. The paper concludes with a summary of the findings and recommendations for further research.

Acknowledgements

Index

Introduction

Literature's greatest strength lies in its ability to resonate with people living outside its paper-wrought confines. Novels, for example, are capable of transporting an eager reader to whole new worlds purely through the vivid workings of their prose, creating "experiential states comparable to the experience of being there" even though their pages lack "almost all sensorically immersive capabilities" (Klimmt & Vorderer 347). Indeed, already in the time of the ancient Greeks, the philosophers Plato and Aristotle recognized literature's ability to affect its audience (Nightingale 41-46). Even fiction itself has been known to acknowledge this fact. Take for example Hamlet´s comments on the passionate emotional response of an actor acting out the story of Hecuba:

> Is it not monstrous that this player here,
>
> But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
>
> Could force his soul to his own conceit
>
> that from her working all his visage wann'd,
>
> Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect
>
> A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
>
> With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
>
> For Hecuba! (Shakespeare 2.2.522-29)

More recently, however, cognitive psychologists have been combining their insights with those in the field of literary criticism in an attempt to better understand the extent of emotional responses to fiction and the processes through which these responses come to be.

Whilst many psychologists interested in this area of study have chosen to focus on establishing literature's ability to increase a reader's empathic abilities (for example : Koopman), some have instead focused on understanding the processes through which reading can trigger an

emotional response in the reader. One commonly accepted theory is that readers automatically use their own experiences to fill in the gaps left in literary descriptions, making the described events feel more real as a result and triggering an emotional response (Sklar 11-12). The realness of the emotions this process brings to bear are still heavily debated however. Some believe that the reader experiences the story as if it were a type of computer simulation (Walton 38; Oatley 66), the emotions evoked "quasi-emotions" (Walton 38) rather than actual emotions. Others believe that the experience of reading could more easily be likened to that of dreaming and that regardless of the awareness that what is happening is not real the emotions evoked can be just as real as those experienced in daily life (Sklar 19-20). A notable example of an emotion that has been discussed this way is that of sympathy. Meier Sternberg in particular has formulated a theory of sympathetic perception related to temporal ordering and expositional modes in fiction which will be expanded upon in chapter 1 and which will be referenced throughout this paper.

But whilst theories on characters' ability to evoke an emotional response in general are abundant not much is yet known of the factors that contribute to the sympathetic perception of villains by readers. This is not surprising as the existence of a sympathetic villain seems to be very paradoxical indeed. According to the Oxford English Dictionary Online (OED Online) sympathy can be described as "[the] conformity of feelings, inclinations, or temperament, which makes persons agreeable to each other; community of feeling; harmony of disposition" and more specifically "the quality or state of being thus affected by the suffering or sorrow of another; a feeling of compassion or commiseration" (OED Online). A villain on the other hand, is described as being "originally, a low-born base-minded rustic; a man of ignoble ideas or instincts; in later use, an unprincipled or depraved scoundrel; a man naturally disposed to base or criminal actions, or deeply involved in the commission of disgraceful crimes" and "the character in a play, novel,

etc., whose evil motives or actions form an important element in the plot" (OED Online). A sympathetic villain then is a creature of inherent paradox. Depraved and morally unsound, these characters that should by all rights be abhorred by any who happen upon them, instead pull at the reader's heartstrings and conjure up feelings of sympathy.

The current study will attempt to create a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the way villains can come to be perceived sympathetically in written fiction. This will be accomplished through a close reading and in depth analysis of three different fictions: William Shakespeare's *King Richard III*, John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus*, with a focus on the sympathetic villains found therein and the factors that make them so. Each of these factors will then be examined in context of Meier Sternberg´s theories on primacy and recency effects (chapter 1). These literary works have been chosen based on the fact that they all feature villains who at one or multiple points in their texts can be perceived, and often times have been perceived as the most sympathetic character in their respective narratives. Furthermore it is believed, based on the diverse characteristics and backgrounds of these villains, that their sympathetic appeal stems from different factors, which should add to the wider applicability of possible findings. The narratives will be discussed in chronological order.

In Chapter 1 I will start, however, by summarizing Sternberg's theory on primacy and recency effects in literature and the four different models of dynamic control he identifies, so that these models may then be used in subsequent chapters to clarify shifts in the way the villains are perceived.

In Chapter 2 I will analyze Shakespeare's *King Richard III* and attempt to demonstrate how Richard's habit of addressing the readers increases their sympathy for him. I will also

discuss how shared judgement between readers and characters affects the readers' perception of him.

Chapter 3, on the other hand, will focus on John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and readers' perception of the archfiend Satan. To this end I will first discuss Satan's emotional complexity compared to other characters in the epic and how this might entice readers to sympathize with him. This will be followed by a discussion of the heroic imagery that is used to describe the fiend and how this might call to mind associations of heroism which can lead to increased sympathy for the fiend. It should be noted that parts of this chapter are based upon some of my earlier work.

Lastly in Chapter 4 I will attempt to explain how the Creature in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus* can come to be perceived sympathetically. I will do this by discussing the effect of the Creature's victimization, as well as the effect of the use of perspective on how he comes to be perceived sympathetically by the readers.

Advancements in this interdisciplinary area of cognitive psychology and literary criticism could result in gains for both fields. They might both benefit from more clarity on the mechanisms involved in this as of yet under-researched process. On the literary side it might also cast a new light on the ongoing discussions regarding these infamous villains.

Chapter 1: Primacy and Recency Effects

The primacy-recency effect as it was applied to literature by Sternberg is a literary theory which originates in the field of psychology. In psychology it concerns itself with the manner in which people form impressions of other people. Applied to literature it can be used to describe the way in which the order of information released about a character affects readers' impressions of said character. According to Sternberg (qtd. in Sklar) :

> A narrative leads readers to form impressions of a particular character (the "primacy effect") and then strengthens, modifies, or reverses those impressions by the subsequent (or more "recent") revelation of expositional detail (hence, the "recency effect") within the sequential unfolding and processing of the narrative as a whole. (57)

If primacy and recency are divided into blocks of equal length and salience the primacy effect has been shown to prevail over the recency effect (Sternberg 93-95). This means that information which is provided first will be seen as more representative of a character's behavior, whereas information provided in a later stage (if contradictory) will sooner be treated as an exception to the behavior established in the first part of the narrative. This does not, however, mean that it is impossible to readjust reader impressions. It merely indicates that an imbalance, or "tension" between primacy and recency must exist to change an already existing opinion. Manipulation of this tension is possible through manipulation of temporal ordering and the use of different expositional modes.

Sternberg identifies four different models of dynamic control that authors use when providing information about their characters. The first of these models is the basic, or "norm" (98) model. This model is named as such because it is the most "natural" (98) model and lacks conflict between primacy and recency. Where a norm model is used authors provide all the

necessary information for forming an impression of their character "at the beginning of the sujet, or before the need for it as a whole arises" (98). This way readers can form an impression of a character from the start that will not be challenged over the course of their reading. The portrayal of the character in this case is completely homogenous, meaning that a sympathetically portrayed character will remain sympathetic for the entire duration of the novel.

The second model of control Sternberg discusses is the one that contrasts with the norm most heavily. He terms this model "the rise and fall of first impressions" (99), it is a rhetoric based on surprise and consists of "a certain primacy effect being produced only to be shattered and ousted by subsequently disclosed exposition" (99). Authors making use of this model will first present a block of homogenous information, either positive or negative, to shape readers' perception of a character. Then, once they have firmly established this perception, they will present their readers with a block of information that so starkly contrasts what they had disclosed before that the readers' established perceptions from the first part of the narrative are completely disintegrated and even reversed. In this manner a character that for a large part of the narrative had been perceived unsympathetically might suddenly become sympathetic as more details are revealed or vice versa.

The third way in which authors can control readers´ perception of a character is through "gradual complication of the primacy effect" (103). This method is less extreme than the previous one but still has the author shaping a firm, homogenous perception of a character in the first part of the narrative. This model differs, however, in how the story continues once this perception is established. Instead of completely obliterating the expectations readers have formed up to this point, the author gradually begins introducing new facts, which whilst not contradictory, do introduce readers to new aspects of the character that were previously unknown

to them. If executed correctly implementing this way of control allows for authors to introduce more complexity into their characters without upsetting the image they have crafted in the first part of their narrative. In regards to sympathetic perception this means that if an author were to craft a strongly sympathetic primacy effect they could, through careful balancing of details, retain the sympathetic perception of characters by readers even after less savory details about said characters are released.

Last amongst the models Sternberg identifies is the "rhetoric of anticipatory caution" (129). Unlike with the other models this form of dynamic control does not present readers with a homogenous primacy effect, rather it is "perceptibly qualified from the beginning" (129). In this scenario the primacy effect is still made to lean towards presenting one view of a character (either sympathetic or unsympathetic) but simultaneously the text will be littered with hints that perhaps not everything is as clear-cut as it seems. These hints might not be picked up on by other characters in the narrative but are meant for a reader to detect. This "disparity of awareness" (132) between reader and characters produces an interesting difference in reaction when the true nature of a character is revealed. For the characters this might come as a great surprise, but the readers might have had their suspicions already. Their more objective, less-biased knowledge allows readers to "reconcile and integrate" (132) the views they have created during the novel´s early chapters with the conflicting data that follows it, making it easier for them to adjust their views. This allows for a more gradual transition as with the model of gradual complication, whilst at the same time creating as complete a transition between (somewhat) sympathetic and completely unsympathetic as with the rhetoric of surprise.

Of the models discussed above the rhetoric of anticipatory caution, the rhetoric of gradual complication and the rhetoric of surprise are of particular relevance for this thesis. The rhetoric

of anticipatory caution will be discussed once more in chapter 2 on Richard. In chapter 3

regarding Satan two models will be discussed, namely the rhetoric of gradual complication and

the model of anticipatory caution. The rhetoric of surprise will be touched upon once more in

chapter 4 concerning the Creature.

Chapter 2: *King Richard III*

My decision to pick Shakespeare's King Richard III as one of the sympathetic villains to be discussed here might surprise those familiar with the play. After all, the ambitious Gloucester (henceforth Richard) commits many atrocious crimes in his attempts to claim and keep the crown. These are no small offenses either; he arranges the murder of his brother, his young nephews and a large number of advisors and noblemen from both sides of the conflict. He is also suspect in the sudden death of his wife Anne. Furthermore even Richard himself does not describe himself as being a sympathetic character. Indeed, already in the first sentences of the play he implies he is "subtle, false and treacherous" (1.1.38) and states that his goal is "to prove a villain" (1.1.31) and ruin the peace that has finally befallen England. All for the simple reason that his deformity prevents him from "[having] delight to pass away the time" (1.1.26) now that there is peace.

Yet still I would like to argue that there are times when Richard is perceived sympathetically, even in light of his villainous nature and actions. It is these sympathetic moments and the sympathy-inducing aspects of Richard´s character that will now be discussed. In doing so I will focus on two different factors which I believe influence the degree of sympathy with which he is perceived the most, both positively and negatively. This will be done in light of the primacy-recency effect that was just discussed, particularly in regards to the rhetoric of anticipatory caution. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of Richard's fit into Sternberg's models.

Whilst *Richard III* was originally written as a stage play it is important to note that in the scope of this thesis I will discuss not Richard's impact on a live audience, but rather his impact on readers. As such, I will not refer to an audience when I speak of those that are impacted by the

narrative, but rather to readers. This decision is based on the fact that I would like to focus on the literary aspect of the play, and the effect the written word can have on readers. It also makes for a better, fairer comparison with the other two narratives to be discussed, something I believe would not be possible if I were to integrate the impact of auditory and visual cues in my discussion of the way Richard is perceived as well. It would, however, be interesting to discuss this in a future project.

2.1: Asides, Soliloquies and Shared Motivation

While near the end of the play Richard´s wicked nature is undeniable, at the beginning of the play he does not yet appear quite so malicious. In fact, the primacy effect Shakespeare has created, whilst not homogenous, is quite sympathetic. It is true that Richard already makes his devious plans clear in his opening monologue, but he does so in a convincing and charismatic manner. The fact that the narrative was initially written to be performed on stage allows him to exercise this charisma in an exceptional manner. As a character written for a play Richard is in the unique position of being able to break the fourth wall without it being obtrusive and interfering with the immersion of the reader. Shakespeare makes great use of this by having Richard interact with the audience directly through the means of a number of asides and soliloquies. These asides are occasionally used to express Richard's character as well as to clarify certain details for the readers' sake (Clemen 105) and they, together with the soliloquies I´d like to argue, also serve to "open up a field of interplay between actor and audience in which the audience becomes the confidant of the villain" (Clemen 105). By placing readers into this role of confidant Shakespeare makes it so that readers become complicit in Richard's crimes and involved in the successful execution of his plans. Their feeling complicit makes them less likely to blame Richard for his misdeeds. Furthermore Richard's goals are no longer just his, they are

the readers' as well, with as a result that readers are inclined to feel sympathy for Richard when his plans succeed. As a study by Fitzsimsons and Shah (passim) found, people are naturally inclined to feel positively towards those that enable them to reach their goals in real life. It is not such a big step to assume that in this regard fiction might be able to elicit a similar response to real life. After all, as has already been established in the introduction, it is perfectly possible for narratives to evoke real emotions in their readers. As such, when readers take on Richard's goals as their own they also become invested in his success and, since he is the only person who can bring these goals to completion, invested in Richard himself. This causes them to feel positively towards him and increases their sympathy for his plight.

Results from a related study by Fitzsimons and Fishbach (passim) might also be able to explain why, after Richard's goal has been completed and he has become king, readers start to distance themselves from him. On the basis of a number of experiments, they arrived at the conclusion that people will cease to draw closer to people who were instrumental to their goal once their goal is reached and will instead search out other individuals who can help them with goals that have not yet been attained (passim). Once Richard has become king, not only does he complete his (and by association the readers') goal, but he also seems to lose his ambition and does not immediately adopt a new, clear goal. Furthermore the number of asides at this point has declined and Richard no longer troubles himself to include the readers in his schemes. Compared to the first three acts, in which Richard addresses the readers a combined total of eleven times, Richard only speaks 4 more times to the readers after his coronation.

Combined, the lack of a clear goal beyond staying on the throne and the lack of asides make readers feel no longer involved in Richard's plans. By extension this also means they no longer need him to reach any of their personal goals. It is at this point that recency wins out over

primacy and the sympathy that was caused by this aspect of the readers' relation with Richard wanes. Instead their tentative liking is replaced by an indifference that soon turns to dislike once further aspects of Richard's character are revealed without goal-related or other sympathy-inducing factors balancing the scales in his favor.

2.2: The Influence of Shared Judgement on Perception

Another, perhaps even larger factor contributing to the charming impression Richard leaves during the narrative´s primacy is the way the other characters in the play respond to him. Take for example his courting of lady Anne. Lady Anne is the bereaved widow of the late Edward (son of King Henry VI) whom Richard killed in Shakespeare's preceding history play *Henry VI*. In *Richard III* she is first introduced to us as a woman deeply in mourning, grieving over her father-in-law's corpse as it is carried in on a hearse. She praises the deceased king's many virtues and curses the man who killed him and his son, her late husband. Yet she does not only curse Richard, she also curses his future wife:

> If ever he have wife, let her be made
>
> As miserable by the death of him,
>
> As I am made by my poor lord and thee! (1.2.26-27)

Upon seeing Richard, who halts the procession, she is overcome with rage and scorns him fiercely. She calls him, amongst other things, "a fiend" (1.2.34), "the devil" (1.2.45) and a "dreadful minister of hell" (1.2.46). She also points out how the wounds on Henry VI's corpse have "opened their congealed mouths and bleed afresh" (1.2.56). The reopening of wounds here refers to a common thought at the time that a murdered corpse's wounds would start bleeding once more if the murderer were to be present. All this comes together to paint a very clear picture of the low esteem in which Lady Anne holds Richard, and the hatred she has for him.

Richard's intent to court her, which he announced to the reader in a previous scene, therefore seems doomed to fail. As a result, when after a heated, wittily executed debate the ambitious duke actually succeeds in his courting it comes as a great surprise to the reader. His winning argument, that he had killed the king and his son not out of cruelty, but so he could win the love of Anne, is masterfully executed and leaves her no choice but to trust his intentions and accept his ring.

His victory over Anne does not only improve his standing with the Lady herself, it also improves his standing with the readers. Not only have they just witnessed Richard, the character they have identified as protagonist and thus are inclined to support, accomplish a difficult goal in an entertaining and witty manner, they have also witnessed how even a character who has been so wronged by Richard as Lady Anne was can come to forgive him his misdeeds. This has a significant impact on the readers' perception of Richard. When shared with readers the thoughts and feelings of fictional characters on another fictional character are known to be able to impact readers' perception of said character (Sklar 56). Sklar discusses this in light of a character who feels sympathy towards the main character correcting her. Implicit in his analysis however, is the fact that readers can come to share judgement about a character with other characters in a narrative. This sharing of judgement can then "reinforce the reader's sympathy towards said character" (56) if the judgement is positive or sympathetic in nature. In this manner watching Lady Anne side with Richard encourages readers to side with and forgive him as well. Richard disparaging her for giving in to him as soon as she leaves the stage might make some readers hesitate, but as he still addresses the readers, seemingly taking them into his confidence, it serves more to lessen readers' liking for Anne and increases their liking for himself.

A similar effect is obtained when Richard convinces Queen Elizabeth´s attendants to turn

their dislike of him against Queen Margaret instead (1.3.173-180). He manipulates the other characters masterfully once more and gains their trust, and the readers' sympathy. Other instances of this occurring are when Richard charms the king (2.1.54-74), when he manipulates a number of lords and attendants, and when he charms the mayor into admiring him (3.5). All together these moments create a positive impression of Richard and, as a result, a sympathetic primacy effect.

Sadly, Richard does not manage to hold the readers', nor the characters', regard for the entire duration of the play. In act 3 his wit starts failing him and he is no longer capable of charming and convincing the other characters as he pleases. When he loses the respect of his most faithful and loyal supporter the lord Buckingham in act 4 Richard's days as a sympathetic villain are well and truly over. It is at this point that the Richard readers' have been anticipating ever since the play's beginning finally emerges completely and recency wins out for good. Richard´s decision to execute Buckingham afterwards only adds to this effect. After all, if this character, who has stood with Richard from the very beginning, can so easily be executed and replaced there truly is no hope for the mad king any longer.

Buckingham is not the only character to have his doubts either. All characters have lost faith in Richard and the tides have turned. Just like the characters' positive attitudes towards Richard reinforced readers' feelings of sympathy for him in the first part of the play, their negative attitudes now demolish any remaining sympathy. No longer are Richard's witty remarks capable of curbing their negative opinions. Instead the play's characters are allowed free reign in their critiques of the villain. One particularly illustrative example of this is when he believes he has convinced Queen Elizabeth to let him marry the young Elizabeth but the readers can see that she only pretends to agree, and secretly schemes behind his back (4.5.7-8). Before he was the

one who, in grand displays, convinced other characters of his false intentions. Now, however, he himself is deceived and becomes the victim of dramatic irony as readers laugh at his obliviousness.

Other scenes which contribute to the negative switch in Richard´s impression on the reader are the scenes featuring the bereaved relations of Richard's victims, the Lady Anne, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Margaret. They bemoan their fates and the loved ones they have lost whilst simultaneously cursing Richard for all they are worth and each new curse detracts from his sympathetic appeal. Richard graces the stage less and less and when he does it becomes very clear he has lost all semblance of control. His schemes to discredit King Henry VI's sons as bastards do not come to fruition but are instead met with stone-cold silence. Messengers bring him tidings of war and Buckingham's betrayal, causing him to contradict himself and slap a messenger in his fury. He is no longer in control of his actions and lives and rules through fear. He has to blackmail the Lord Stanley into following him into battle, spends the morning of his decisive battle against Richmond spying on his men in fear of them betraying him, and his pre-battle speech, starkly contrasted with Richmond's, focusses on him winning by virtue of his being king, not on any virtue or power of his own. It is true that he has finally succeeded in his lifelong ambition to become king, but he has lost sight of himself in the process, and with it all sympathy anyone had for him.

2.3: Richard III and the Rhetoric of Anticipatory Caution

Because of the spotty, but mostly positive early impression Richard III leaves he is a classic example of a villain whose portrayal adheres to the rhetoric of anticipatory caution. The primacy effect Shakespeare has created is a heterogeneous one, favoring sympathy, but littered with hints at Richard's less savory personality traits. The many asides and soliloquies in which Richard

divulges his plans warn readers of his dark intentions early on, whilst his wit and charm allow him to still leave a mostly positive, sympathetic impression on his audience. He is helped in this respect by the fact that he is the first to speak and as such the first to provide the readers with information about himself and his circumstances. This gives him primacy when it comes to shaping readers' view of him. Further contributions to a sympathetic primacy effect are made by means of several asides and soliloquies which involve the readers in Richard's plans, and through shared judgement between reader and characters in the narrative. When characters other than Richard do eventually gain their turn in the spotlight and his success starts to wane, however, the way Richard is perceived by the readers starts leaning towards the unsympathetic. The turn from (mostly) sympathetic villain to simply villain thus occurs gradually and organically, for the readers at least. To some of the characters it comes as a great surprise when they realize they were tricked all along (see for example when Buckingham realizes he will not be rewarded and his eventual execution). This creates a compelling and complex character that is fun to read about and even allows for one final redeeming moment to be created in the final act (5.3.178-207), when Richard awakes from his ghost-riddled dream.

Chapter 3: *Paradise Lost*

Whilst my decision to include King Richard III as a sympathetic villain will probably have garnered some surprise, this probably will not be the case for John Milton's Satan. *Paradise Lost* has sparked many and varied controversies ever since its publication, ranging from critiques on Milton's use of blank verse rather than rhyme (Leonard 3-6), to the substance of the poem (King passim; Von Maltzahn passim). Much of this controversy, however, was to do with Milton's intentions for the epic, and more often than not, who he intended to be the hero of the narrative. Because whilst Milton claimed to have set out to "justify the ways of God to men" (*Paradise Lost* 1.26) it was unclear to many whether he intended for readers to sympathize with the devil or for them to "see, know and yet abstain" (Milton, *Areopagitica*). Indeed, the poet William Blake famously commented that "the reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels & God, and at liberty when of Devils & Hell, is because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it" (17). This stark contrast in the way heavenly and hellish matters are described has only added fuel to the debates that have since arisen about Satan's heroic appeal. This paper will not concern itself with the question of Satan's much debated heroism, however, although it will touch upon some of the reasoning commonly used in this argument. Nor will I concern myself with Milton´s intentions when he wrote the character. Instead, the focus will lie on the reader´s perception of Satan´s character and how this perception can come to be sympathetic regardless of his villainous nature.

To this end I will discuss two factors which I believe contribute most to reader's perception of Satan as a sympathetic villain. They will be discussed in light of the primacy-recency effect as it has been discussed in chapter 1. The chapter will conclude with a short summary of how Satan's perception fits in the models discussed by Sternberg. Particular

attention will be given to the rhetoric of anticipatory caution and the rhetoric of gradual complication.

3.1: Emotions, Identification and Sympathy

One of the main factors contributing to the sympathetic impact Satan has on readers is that he experiences a wide range of emotions throughout the epic, especially when compared to other characters in the narrative. In fact, it could be argued that, up until the very end of the narrative, he is the most emotionally-complete, and thus humanlike character in the epic. This makes it easier for readers to sympathize with him, as they recognize themselves more in his varied, realistic emotional displays than in the one-dimensional characterization of the other characters. As Charles Stutz put it: Satan's character in *Paradise Lost* is an extension of the emotionally complex devils of "the post-Faustian era" and as such "exemplifies a fragmented subjectivity [readers] recognize [and] he is therefore somehow human" (211, 212). This seeming humanity impacts the way Satan is perceived by readers positively and makes him appear more sympathetic in the epic's first books.

The process through which this emotional diversity affects readers' tendency to sympathize with characters in a narrative is that of identification. Identification has been defined and redefined many times (Busselle & Bilandzic 263), but in the scope of this thesis it refers to that process in which readers take on a character's perspective and "[perceive] the events in a story with the bias of a character" (Busselle & Bilandzic 263). Studies have shown that identifying with a character can affect real life perceptions and attitudes (Busselle & Bilandzic 255), but what factors exactly cause a reader to identify with a character is not yet clear. One opinion is that similarity between reader and character can play an important role in this process. Ien Ang (qtd in Cohen 185) for example, suggests that "identification can occur… through the

sensitive representation of an identifiable structure of feeling" in the character in question. Whilst this refers to identification with characters in televised media, there is no reason to assume such a fact does not hold for textual media. Emotional similarity could thus be a precursor for identification with a character. The similarity of Satan's emotional make-up to the reader's when compared to the other characters in the epic thus might make it easier for readers to identify with him, as they recognize themselves in him. This in turn then positively affects their attitudes towards the fiend and increases their sympathy for his plight.

It should be noted that these processes are also, if perhaps to a lesser extent, applicable to the character of Richard III which was previously discussed in chapter 2. He too displays a striking emotional complexity compared to other characters for a large part of the play, that is, until he becomes king (his final soliloquy after waking from his ghostly dream is an exception to this as it occurs in the final act of the play but is still a prime example of his emotional complexity). I have chosen to discuss these processes in relation to the character of Satan, however, as I believe them to play a bigger role in the way he is perceived than in the way Richard is.

That Satan is the most human-like character in the epic, however, at least with respect to his emotional complexity, might run contrary to what many expect when they first come to know of the narrative's premise. After all, when one envisions Satan, the devil and personification of evil one would not consider that he might be or feel anything but evil. The mere idea that he might also experience positive, arguably pure, emotions seems very paradoxical indeed. But, whilst it is true that he does experience a large number of fiendish emotions over the course of the epic, such as cruelty and rage, his emotional expression is not just limited to these kinds of negative emotions. There are, in fact, many occasions in which his dark emotions are coupled

with purer ones and the dual nature of his emotional range is on full display. One such instance

occurs early in book 1 when Satan first awakens in hell:

> [he was]Under brows
>
> Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
>
> Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
>
> Signs of remorse and passion… (1.601-05)

This illustrates the diversity of Satan's emotional capabilities, as it not only describes him as

experiencing the dark emotions of vengeance and cruelty, but also shows how he is capable of

feeling the pure emotions of passion and remorse for that which he has lost. Another, perhaps

even more pronounced instance of this is when Satan first glimpses paradise:

> Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
>
> The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized
>
> At sight of all this world beheld so fair. (3.552-54)

Again it becomes clear that his response is twofold: he feels wonder at the beauty of paradise,

whilst simultaneously experiencing feelings of envy at the blessed circumstances of the humans.

Perhaps the most profound occasion of Satan's good natured side coming to the fore, however, is

when he witnesses Eve in book 9 and is completely taken in by her beauty and innocence. Such

an impact has this sight on him that for a moment he stands:

> [Abstracted] From his own evil, and for [a] time remained
>
> Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,
>
> Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge. (9.463-66)

While he looks at Eve his evil nature retreats and all negative impulses flee his mind. For one moment there is nothing but good in the fiend and the fact that he is still capable of being "stupidly good" (9.464) impresses itself upon the readers, adding to their perception of him as an emotionally complex being.

Whilst these positive emotions are mostly linked to thoughts of Heaven they do not only serve to increase readers' perception of the beauty of God's creations, they also add to their perception of Satan. The existence of the negative emotions is of course not entirely negligible. They complicate the positive primacy effect to an extent, making it a heterogeneous one rather than homogenous. The general impression however, remains positive.

Compared to other characters in the epic Satan's often mixed emotional responses are surprisingly life-like. Traditionally good-natured characters, such as the members of the Heavenly host and the prelapsarian Adam and Eve, on the other hand are quite limited in their emotional responses. The Son for example is only shown to feel positive emotions such as "love without end" (3.142) and "without measure grace" (3.142) but at no point is it mentioned that he feels any negative emotions. God, too, is portrayed one-dimensionally. Every action of his is glorified, his creations are beautiful enough to inspire longing in even the Archfiend and the mere act of him speaking is said to fill heaven with "ambrosial fragrance" (3.135-36). The only action over the course of the epic which implies his capability to feel anything other than positive feelings is his casting out of the fallen angels, and this is quickly justified. Readers also do not gain any insight into the Almighty's emotions as he does so, resulting in a portrayal that in no way compares to the varied portrayal of Satan. Adam and Eve, on the other hand, do eventually become more emotionally complex, but this shift only occurs in the latter half of the epic. As in their prelapsarian states the humans are portrayed as one-dimensionally as the members of the

heavenly host. They spend their days proclaiming their love for God, their garden and each other, but do not show much else in terms of emotional diversity. This allows Satan to establish positive primacy early on by means of his varied emotional descriptions, and sees him receiving the resulting sympathy.

Satan too, however, does not hold the reader´s sympathy forever. After the humans´ fall from paradise they gradually gain more complexity, whilst Satan's appeal declines. It is at this point that primacy loses out to recency once more and readers´ sympathy switches from the fiend to the humans.

3.2: Satan and the Heroic Association

Another factor which contributes to Satan´s perception is the positive terms used to describe the fiend and, by extension, his hellish legions in the early books. When it comes to hell and its denizens, Milton uses imagery and descriptions which would more commonly be associated with classical epics and their heroes than with matters of evil. In this manner Milton creates a heroic and positive (if not entirely homogenous) primacy effect centered around Satan. He in particular is surrounded by "epic matter and motivations, epic genre conventions, and constant allusions to specific passages in famous heroic poems" (Lewalski 55). This is even made apparent in the description of his armaments. Satan is armed with "a ponderous shield/ Ethereal temper, massy, large and round" which "hangs on his shoulders like the moon" (1.284-85). For those who have read the *Iliad* the parallel with Achilles' shield which is "massive, flashing far and wide, like a full round moon" (Homer 375-80) is quite clear. Not all of these comparisons require readers to be acquainted with the great classical epics either, there are several instances where Milton makes use of adjectives which would normally be attributed to heroes when he refers to the legions of hell. When the devils are preparing for battle for example their actions are described

as follows:

> To heighth of noblest temper Heroes old
>
> Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage
>
> Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
>
> With dread of death… (1.550)

Not only does Milton directly refer to the devils as heroes, he also indicates how they breathe valour, and emphasizes their courage by mentioning their firmness in the face of battle. This image of the devils as heroes automatically also improves Satan's standing with the readers. It is easy for readers to assume, after all, that as their leader he must be just as valorous and courageous as his followers, if not more so. Similarly, the description of the demon's activities in hell and their golden capital Pandemonium also adds to Satan's heroic appeal. Whilst hell does still feature fire and brimstone in the form of burning lakes, "regions of sorrow" (1.65) and "torture without end" (1.67) the capital the demons create is "built like a temple" (1.713) and features "Doric pillars" (1.714), "golden architrave" (1.715) and a "fretted gold" roof (1.717). Furthermore the demons lounging around the capital think "elevated thoughts of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will and Fate" (2.558-59), practice sports "as at th' Olympian Games or Pythian fields" (2.530) and compose songs which feature "their own heroic deeds" (2.547-49).

These positive allusions towards heroism and valour do not, however, last Satan throughout the entire epic. His descriptions become less sympathetic as the epic continues and the positive image that was created in the early books slowly loses out to the more recent negative allusions that are made. Indeed, eventually his heroic luster diminishes and the true nature of the fiend is revealed. Where in book 1 he was compared to the great leviathan, in book 10 he and his legions are reduced to hissing snakes, Satan himself brought low and transformed

into "a monstrous Serpent prone [up]on his belly" (10.514). Even Satan's armaments which were mentioned earlier turn out to be less impressive than they at first seemed. At one point he uses his spear as a crutch (1.294-95), whilst the light touch of an angel's spear is enough to overpower him (4.810-13).

These negative aspects of his character are not limited in their appearance to the late books either. Even in the early books, where Satan appears most sympathetic, negative descriptions can be found. Near the very beginning of book 1 Milton introduces the fiend as follows:

> Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile
>
> Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd
>
> The Mother of Mankind …
>
> Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud
>
> With vain attempt. (1.34-44)

Here it is made very clear that Satan is, indeed, a fiend. He is described as being infernal, guileful and a deceiver, all characteristics which are unbecoming of a hero. Furthermore he is vain and proud, also bad qualities, and the war he raises is impious. Lastly his sinfulness is made clear through the mention of envy and revenge. As such it becomes apparent that the primacy effect surrounding Satan is not just homogenously positive, but does, in fact, contain negative notes.

3.3: Satan's Mixed Model Fit

Whether Satan can truly be confined to one of Sternberg's models of primacy and recency is questionable. Arguments could be made for both the rhetoric of gradual complication and the rhetoric of anticipatory caution. But perhaps this ambiguity is exactly the problem which lies at

the heart of the long ongoing debates concerning the fiend. How Satan is perceived seems to be very much a result of the way readers interpret the early books of the epic. If one does not read carefully it is easy to miss the negative descriptions of the fiend that indicate he is not as charming as it seems. Blinded by his devilish luster in the early books some readers might instead feel inclined to buy into the idea of Satan as a classical hero of surprising emotional complexity. They might argue that Paradise Lost adheres to the rhetoric of gradual complication, where their primary view of the Archfiend is homogenously sympathetic and is then slowly adjusted towards a less sympathetic one. Those readers that do notice the occasional hint at the Fiend's true nature, however, or for whom the association of the devil is stronger than the newly created idea of the Greek hero might instead place his portrayal in the rhetoric of anticipatory caution, where it is clear from the start that he will become less sympathetic as the narrative continues.

Chapter 4: *Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus*

Frankenstein's Creature is perhaps one of the most recognizable characters found in contemporary horror stories: A hulking green monstrosity held together by stitches and the pins in his skull, that grunts, moans and stumbles its way across the page, usually followed by a horde of pitchfork and torch toting villagers. The creature as Mary-Shelley originally wrote it however, is far removed from this dull-witted, zombie-esque monstrosity. Whilst its appearance is indeed quite horrid, as can be seen in the following description:

> [he had] yellow skin [that] scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set, his shriveled complexion and straight black lips. (50)

the novel version of the Creature is, in fact, quite well spoken. This allows for a much more complex portrayal of the Creature and his struggles than if he were truly the abhorrent mute many people know him as, as he is allowed to tell his tale with his own voice. This does not of course take away the many bad deeds he has committed and he remains, undoubtedly the villain of *Frankenstein*. It does, however, allow him to develop his character into something which I´d like to argue could at times be perceived as sympathetic.

   To illustrate this I will, as I did in the previous chapters, expand upon two factors which I believe contribute most to the sympathetic manner in which the Creature is perceived. This will once more be accomplished with an emphasis on how his perception fits within the framework of the primacy-recency effect as discussed in chapter 1. The model of dynamic control which

will most prominently be featured in this instance, however, will be that of the rhetoric of surprise.

4.1: Perspective and Sympathy

Central to the manner in which the Creature is perceived is a shift in the perspective from which the story is told: namely a shift from Victor's perspective to that of the Creature. As studies have shown "perspective-taking" can enhance a person's sympathies for another person. Batson, Early and Salvarani (passim) for example have shown that taking the perspective of a person in need by "imagining how [the other person] perceives a situation and how that person feels as a result" (751) produced higher levels of empathy (a construct which they define as including sympathy) than if a person were to remain objective and not take the perspective of the distressed person.

Literature as a medium is capable of enhancing this process, as readers do not always need to imagine how a character feels, they can be granted direct insight into a character's experience. *Frankenstein* is an example of this as the format in which it is written lends itself very well to making readers adopt the perspective of its characters. Its story is told both through means of a series of letters to a loved one in the case of Walton, and also through means of a story told directly to a listener in the cases of Victor and his Creature. The listeners in both cases, however, do not interrupt their respective story-tellers at any point, creating the illusion that the stories that are told are addressed directly to the reader. This immerses readers' in these narratives to the extent that they assume the perspective of the character who is, at that time, telling their tale. Furthermore both Victor and the Creature go into great detail about their mindset and the emotions they experienced at each point in time whilst telling their stories, which makes it easier for readers to imagine their respective situations.

During the first part of the novel, excluding a few pages which detail Walton's

experiences in the North, readers learn everything they know about Victor, the Creature and their situation from Victor's perspective. As a result readers' sympathy for the unfortunate scientist increases. This causes them to adopt Victor's views on the situation and, more importantly, on his creation. The readers gain great insight into Victor's distress and without any other perspectives to balance his opinions readers can do nothing but agree with him. As such the primacy effect that is created is homogenous and strongly in favor of Victor, whilst the Creature is perceived as an evil and unsympathetic fiend.

Once the Creature starts his own tale, however, this changes. What he explains about his motivations and morality contrasts starkly with Victor's and, consequently, the readers' expectations. New information comes to light and it is of such salience that it completely alters readers' perception of the Creature. Whereas before they would have felt inclined to agree with Victor's negative opinions they now turn their sympathies towards the Creature. The recency effect that is created as a result strongly favors the Creature and, even though Victor does eventually take back the spotlight readers have become aware that there is another side to the story which does not agree with his. As such readers end the story with strong feelings of sympathy towards the Creature.

4.2: The Creature and Victimhood

It is widely accepted that "witnessing the suffering of others often invokes emotional reactions in the observers" (Dickert & Slovan 297). One such emotional reaction is that of feeling sympathy for those who are suffering: the victims. I would like to argue that this same brand of sympathy also applies to the Creature and that he is not just limited to being the narrative's villain, but is also, at times, its greatest victim.

Once the Creature starts his tale recency wins out over primacy as we find out that he is

more than the cruel, vengeful murderer Victor has made him out to be in the first part of the novel: he is also a living being with all the emotions and experiences that come with being alive. Unlike most, however, he was abandoned by his creator at the hour of his creation, left to blindly and helplessly wander a world he has no knowledge of. When he first awakens he is not even capable yet of separating "the strange multiplicity of sensations that seize[s] [him]" (99). He cannot distinguish between his different senses and as a result everything appears "confus[ing] and indistinct" (99) to him. After he retreats to the forests surrounding the place of his creation he experiences cold and hunger and survives only through virtue of his instincts. When he tries to emulate the sounds of the songbirds he finds he is incapable and when he tries to communicate in his own way he is frightened by "the uncouth and inarticulate sounds" (100) he produces. Similarly the first time he encounters a fire he is overjoyed to feel its warmth, but it is not long after that he is burned by the flames as he has no knowledge of its harmful properties (101).

This innocent wonder followed by hurt becomes a recurring theme in the Creature´s story, but it is particularly prominent in his interactions with humans. The first time he encounters a human village he views it as something "miraculous" (103) and the buildings all "engage [his] admiration by turns" (103), only to be forced to escape as he is attacked viciously once the villagers catch sight of him. Following his escape he hides in a hovel neighboring a small cottage that is inhabited by a small family of three (eventually four). This family then quickly attract the Creature's sympathy. He comes to consider them his friends and helps them in their labors for no reward other than their happiness, all whilst remaining unseen. The time he spends at the cottagers' showcases his inherently good nature and drives home the fact that he truly was innocent at one point, and how differently the story could have gone if only he had been given a chance. It illustrates the fact that he was not created evil but rather good instead,

Bokma 33

and that it was the way he was treated which turned him into a villain. He feels so at ease with his cottage life that he believes his future to be "gilded by bright rays of hope and anticipations of joy" (114). As such when he finally shows himself to the cottagers and the male cottager beats him whilst the females flee and faint at the sight of him it is heartbreaking. These feelings of sympathy are further compounded when the Creature decides to return and ask for forgiveness, only to find that the cottagers have fled their home for good in their fear. Blinded by his despair he tracks down his creator in a last bid for companionship. There he encounters William Frankenstein, Victor's younger brother and attempts to take him so he can raise the child to love him, believing that his youth might have shielded him from the prejudices of his elders. The child, however, shatters his expectations and calls him a monster. When the Creature then finds out he is Victor's relative he is overcome by despair and anger and strangles the boy. It is at this point that he gives up hope that there will ever be a human who sympathizes with him and as a result he turns to Victor and begs him to create a mate for him. Victor at first acquiesces but later reneges on his promise and rips the Creature's future mate apart before his eyes. All these unfortunate happenings come together to paint a clear picture of the despairing Creature and the circumstances which drove him to commit his horrid crimes.

The Creature himself further reinforces this idea that he is a victim of his environment by reflecting on his circumstances. When convincing Victor to hear him out he states that it was "misery [that] made [him] a fiend" and this sentiment is repeated in the final pages of the book when he explains himself to Walton and states that: "[his] heart was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy" (227) and that it was "misery [which] wrenched it to vice and hatred" (227). Thinking of *Paradise Lost* he observes that "even [the Devil] had friends and associates in his desolation" (229), but that he has always been alone.

As a result it becomes apparent that the killer Victor knows and fears was created and shaped in much the same way that his reviled body was. This impression the Creature leaves of victimhood is of such strength that it manages to overcome the negative primacy effect of the first half of the novel and completely changes the direction of the readers' sympathy. Whereas before readers' sympathies lay fully with Victor they now turn towards his miserable creation because of the shock the Creature's revelations have brought.

Victor himself, of course, is a victim as well. In fact, he starts and ends the story as a victim. Yet after the Creature has revealed his side of the story Victor remains less sympathetic than his creation. This is because Victor has brought his agonies upon himself through his hubris, whereas the Creature is a mere victim of circumstance. Victor, whilst initially overcome with nothing but good intentions, oversteps his boundaries when his desire to have "a new species bless [him] as its creator" (46) drives him to engage in repulsive acts, regardless of the fact that "[his] human nature turns with loathing" (46) at the thought. His greatest crime, however, is that he then fails to take responsibility for his creation, abandoning it within moments of its awakening. Victor is a victim to his own designs and there are none who can be blamed for his unfortunate circumstances but himself. The Creature on the other hand is, as he himself put it, "[driven] from joy for no misdeed" (96). This comparative innocence makes it so that readers will be inclined to view the Creature with more sympathy than his Creator.

4.3: The Creature and the Rhetoric of Surprise

Unlike the other villains I have discussed the Creature does not start out sympathetic. In fact, the primacy effect that Mary Shelley has created paints him in a wholly unsympathetic light. From the readers' first encounter with the mysterious hulking shape on the ice up until Victor's meeting with the Creature in the alps they know nothing of him but that he is a daemon, a fiend

and a wretched monster which torments his creator's thoughts and murders innocent children. The primacy effect which is established is negative and does not allow for even a hint of sympathy to be felt towards the deformed being through its homogeneity.

When the novel's perspective shifts towards the Creature's, however, all this changes. The readers are regaled with the tale of his suffering and quickly come to realize that not all is as it seemed. Victor has wronged his creation greatly, as has the rest of the human world, and the shock of this revelation completely changes readers' perceptions. Recency wins out over primacy and it does so in an abrupt manner. As such *Frankenstein* is a classic example of a novel which adheres to the rhetoric of surprise. The strongly negative primacy effect regarding the Creature is at once shattered by the revelations recency brings in the form of a change of perspective and the realization that the Creature is as much a victim as his creator, if not more so.

Conclusion

There are several factors which contribute to the way villains can come to be perceived sympathetically by readers. I have discussed a number of these factors as they relate to a trio of fictional villains: Richard III, Satan and the Creature. To better explain the shifts in the way they were perceived I compared how they were perceived to Meier Sternberg's theory of primacy and recency effects and the different models of dynamic control that he discusses.

With regard to Richard there were two factors which contributed most to the impact he has on readers: His tendency to address readers and the shared judgement between readers and characters in the narrative. These factors together create a positive and sympathetic primacy effect, but not a homogenous one. As such it comes as no surprise when his character takes a turn towards the worse, making *King Richard III* a good example of a narrative which is structured according to Sternberg's rhetoric of anticipatory caution.

Concerning Satan I once more discerned two factors which had the greatest impact on readers' perception of him, namely his emotional complexity compared to other characters in the narrative and the heroic associations conjured by the terms used to describe him and the other devils. Again the primacy effect that was created was positive, but whether it is perceived homogeneously or heterogeneously is not as clear-cut a matter as it was with Richard. The negative descriptors in the first part of the narrative are hidden amongst a large number of positive ones and might be missed by an unsuspecting reader. As a result it can be argued that Satan fits both the rhetoric of anticipatory caution (if one were to notice the negative descriptors) and the rhetoric of gradual complication (if one did not).

Lastly I identified two factors which I felt had the greatest effect on the way in which the Creature is perceived by the readers. These were the perspective used in the narrative and the

fact that besides being a villain, he is also the novel´s greatest victim. Unlike the other two villains I have discussed, the Creature is described as homogeneously unsympathetic in the first part of the novel, after which this primacy effect is at once shattered by a positive recency effect. His description therefore is a prime example of the rhetoric of surprise.

The current research supports Sternberg's theory that temporal ordering and the use of different modes of exposition can have an impact on the way characters are perceived in fiction, and extends it to the perception of villains. One thing that should be noted, however, is that Sternberg places a large emphasis on the importance of the author's intentions in determining readers' feelings towards a character. Consider for example his use of the word 'control' when discussing his modes of dynamic control. His theory suggests that authors are in control of readers' perceptions and that there is a set way to shape a narrative which will result in readers forming the desired opinions. In doing so, however, he fails to take into account the inherent attributes of readers, such as personal abilities, opinions and experiences, which might affect their perceptions of a character and make them more or less susceptible to the deliberate structuring of the narrative. This makes it difficult to fit some narratives to one exact model, as can be seen in the current study with *Paradise Lost,* where readers' perception of Satan partially depends on their attention to detail.

Whilst I tried my hardest to give a detailed and complete description of the factors involved in the shaping of the villains' impact on readers there are still several ways in which this thesis could have been improved.

One such improvement would have been to take the influence of literary genre into account when studying which factors contribute to the sympathetic perception of the villains. All three of the narratives discussed belong to different genres after all, namely: a stage play (*King*

Richard III), a work of epic poetry (*Paradise Lost*) and a novel (*Frankenstein*). As I mentioned in chapter 2 this applies to *King Richard III* in particular, as its intended medium, the stage, would have allowed for visual and auditory cues, rather than just the written word. In the scope of this thesis, however, I deemed it unwise to treat it as such as it would skew the comparison between the three narratives. In a future study where genre is taken into account, though, this would certainly be an interesting angle to explore. Perhaps something new might even be gleaned by comparing the factors relevant for the written perception as they were found here to the factors that contribute to the perception of a stage performance.

Another limitation of this study is that the scope is quite small, as only three villains are discussed. It would of course have been preferable to include and compare many more sympathetic villains, but sadly there was not enough time for such an ambitious endeavor. Further study will be required to increase validation of and expand on the current findings.

Another angle of study which might be of interest for future studies is to study contemporary or more recent sympathetic villains and see if the same factors that were found here also contribute to their sympathetic perception, or if they differ and in what manner.

Lastly a practical study involving participants reading (pieces of) the three fictions followed by questioning them on their perception of each of the three narratives and the factors they believe contribute to their perception of the villains might also further validate the current findings or contribute new ones. Another variant of this in which participants are provided with structured narratives specifically created to emphasize and test the impact of one particular factor could also be considered.

Altogether this is an as of yet relatively new area of interdisciplinary studies which would benefit greatly from further attention. As a result the importance of this study is not just limited

to discovering the factors involved in generating a sympathetic reader response, but also as an acknowledgement of the emotionally evocative strength of literature in general. The fact that written words cannot only evoke sympathy for fictional characters, but also evoke feelings of sympathy for those villains so morally deprived they could, by all means, be considered devils is a testament to this.

Works Cited

Batson, C. Daniel, Shannon Early, and Giovanni Salvarani. "Perspective Taking: Imagining How Another Feels Versus Imaging How You Would Feel." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 23.7 (1997): 751–758. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. Web.

Blake, William. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Vol. 321. Oxford University Press, USA, 1975.

Busselle, Rick, and Helena Bilandzic. "Fictionality and perceived realism in experiencing stories: A model of narrative comprehension and engagement." *Communication Theory* 18.2 (2008): 255-280.

Clemen, Wolfgang. "A Commentary on Shakespeare's Richard III, trans." *Jean Bonheim,* London, 1968.

Cohen, Jonathan. "Audience identification with media characters." *Psychology of entertainment* 13 (2006): 183-197.

Dickert, Stephan, and Paul Slovic. "Attentional Mechanisms in the Generation of Sympathy." *Judgment and Decision Making* 4.4 (2009): 297–306. *Judgment and Decision Making*. Web.

Fitzsimons, Gráinne M., and Ayelet Fishbach. "Shifting Closeness: Interpersonal Effects of Personal Goal Progress." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 98.4 (2010): 535–549. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Fitzsimons, Gráinne M., and James Y. Shah. "How Goal Instrumentality Shapes Relationship
Evaluations." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 95.2 (2008): 319–
337. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Homer, *The Iliad*, tr. Robert Fagks. New York, 1990.

King, John N. *Milton and Religious Controversy: satire and polemic in Paradise Lost*.
Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Klimmt, Christoph, and Peter Vorderer. "Media Psychology 'is not yet there': Introducing
Theories on Media Entertainment to the Presence Debate." *Presence: Teleoperators and
Virtual Environments* 12.4 (2003): 346-359.

Koopman, Eva Maria Emy. "Effects of 'Literariness' on Emotions and on Empathy and
Reflection after Reading." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 10.1 (2016):
82.

Leonard, John. *Faithful Labourers: a Reception History of Paradise Lost, 1667-1970: Volume I:
Style and Genre; Volume II: Interpretative Issues*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2012.

Lewalski, Barbara Kiefer. *" Paradise Lost" and the Rhetoric of Literary Forms*. Princeton
University Press, 2014.

Milton, John. *Areopagitica, A Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicenc'd Printing
to the Parliament of England*. 1644. Web. 18 October 2017.

---. *Paradise Lost*. Ed. John Leonard. London: Penguin, 2003.

Nightingale, Andrea. "Mimesis: Ancient Greek Literary Theory." *Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide*, edited by Patricia Waugh, Oxford Guides, 2006, pp. 37-47.

Oatley, Keith. "A Taxonomy of the Emotions of Literary Response and a Theory of Identification in Fictional Narrative." *Poetics* 23.1-2 (1994): 53-74.

Shakespeare, William. *Richard III.* Dover thrift edition. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications Inc., 2014.

---. *Hamlet*. Dover thrift edition. Mineola, N. Y.: Dover Publications Inc., 2014

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus*. 1831. London: Vintage Books, 2014.

Sklar, Howard. *Linguistic Approaches to Literature: Art of Sympathy in Fiction : Forms of Ethical and Emotional Persuasion.* Amsterdam, NL: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2013. ProQuest Ebrary. Web. 1 August 2017.

Sternberg, Meier. *Expositional Modes & Temporal Ordering in Fiction.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978.

Stutz, Chad P. "No 'Sombre Satan': CS Lewis, Milton, and Re-presentations of the Diabolical." *Religion and the Arts* 9.3 (2005): 208-234.

"sympathy, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, June 2017. Web. 19 August 2017.

"villain, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, June 2017. Web. 19 August 2017.

Von Maltzahn, Nicholas. "The First Reception of Paradise Lost (1667)." *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 47, no. 188, 1996, pp. 479–499. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/517926.

Walton, Kendall. "Spelunking, simulation, and slime: On being moved by fiction." *Emotion and the Arts* (1997): 37-49.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STATEMENT

Utrecht University defines "plagiarism" as follows:

"If, in a thesis or some other paper, data or parts of a text produced by someone else are used without the source being identified, this shall be considered plagiarism. Among other things, plagiarism may entail the following:

cutting and pasting text from digital sources such as encyclopaedias or digital journals, without using quotations marks and references;

cutting and pasting any text from the internet without using quotation marks and references;

copying from printed material such as books, journals or encyclopaedias without using quotations marks and references;

using a translation of the above texts in your own work, without using quotations marks and references;

paraphrasing the above texts without using references. A paraphrase should never consist of merely replacing some words by synonyms;

using pictures, sound recordings, or test materials produced by others without references, such that it appears that this is one's own work;

copying work by other students and passing this off as one's own work. If this is done with the other student's consent, the latter shall be an accomplice to the plagiarism;

even in cases where plagiarism is committed by one of the authors collaborating on a paper, the other authors shall be accomplices to plagiarism if they could or ought to have known that the first-mentioned author was committing plagiarism;

submitting papers acquired from a commercial source (such as an internet site offering summaries or complete essays) or written by someone else for payment."

I have read the above definition of plagiarism and certify with my signature on the preceding page/**this page** that I have not committed plagiarism in the appended essay or paper.

XMeikeBokmaX