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# Ludic Economies of *Wuthering Heights*

Brian Olszewski

“I have said nothing about *Wuthering Heights* because that astonishing work seems to me a kind of sport.” R. F. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*

In explaining why he says “nothing” about *Wuthering Heights* in *The Great Tradition*, Leavis actually gestures toward saying much more than he supposes. While the novel may become a sport by breaking with Victorian novelistic conventions as he suggests, Leavis encroaches upon a reading of the novel that has yet to receive serious attention in its critical tradition, namely the role that play assumes as an important narrative economy in it. Although Johann Huizinga writes how the nineteenth century “had lost many of the play-elements so characteristic of former ages” (195), it has become clear in recent years that the Victorians not so much lost the element or desire for play. Rather the Victorian era witnessed the restructuring of traditional and popular play activities and the introduction of new forms of play as a result of industrialism and the cementation of cities as cultural centers.<sup>1</sup> Play, like work, emerges as an important discourse during the era, and as counter intuitive as it may seem at first glance, Brontë’s novel becomes a striking if unorthodox statement of the potential work that play could perform in a work of nineteenth-century fiction. In particular, the plot of *Wuthering Heights* and the narratorial interplay between Lockwood and Nelly emerge as respective expressions and alter-

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ations of *fort-da*, the rhythmic game of disappearance and return played by Freud's grandson. While the story of the Heights is marked by the returns and disappearances of Heathcliff and Catherine (in life and in death), the Nelly-Lockwood narrating-dyad draws on the play of *fort-da* only to reproduce it in different form.

Less a product of how the novel remains in a state of transition between acts of narrating the same story, this interplay becomes an expression of how the novel produces a shared final product, a merging of focalizations, temporalities and rhetorical positions (teller/listener) of those who narrate it.<sup>2</sup> Not simply one iteration or the other, Brontë's novel periodically erupts as a simultaneous narration of Nelly's and Lockwood's version of the Heights' story. By oscillating between two iterations of a story the novel yet formalizes these two separate but inseparable iterations into a block of narration, *fortda* rather than the *fort-da* informing the novel's plot. The reading of *fort-da* that follows performs its own back-and-forth alternations by moving to-and-fro Peter Brooks' model of plot and Brontë's novel.

What makes *Reading for the Plot* a compelling point of entry for a reading of *fort-da/fortda* in *Wuthering Heights* is the way in which the novel harnesses the play driving plot in Brooks' model of narrative and reproduces it as a narratorial dynamic. His essay "Freud's Masterplot" remains indebted to a ludic discourse that gestures toward a reading that Brooks does not explicitly pursue, namely that plot works by playing. In particular, the "playground" that plot becomes results, in part, from the returns and repetitions of what appear and disappear in a story, a formulation of *fort-da's* play that I hope to draw out and make more explicit. Situating *fort-da* at the center of *Wuthering Heights*, then, becomes its own gesture, one that aims at suggesting the play at work as a functional dynamic or drive of narrative, but one that does not remain bound to narrative plotting: by putting *fort-da* to work as narratorial *fortda*, *Wuthering Heights* exploits a ludism inherent to narrative and extends the rules of the novelistic game during a century that was keenly interested in the relationship between work and play.

## Context and Playtext

*Reading for the Plot* begins by explaining Brooks' focus on nineteenth-century narratives: the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed

an increased need for plots, in part, because previous masterplots of culture ceased to provide answers they used to. The loss of such “providential plots” leads to a situation in which “the plotting of the individual or social or institutional life story takes on new urgency when one no longer can look to a sacred masterplot that organizes and explains the world. The emergence of narrative plot as a dominant mode of ordering and explanation may belong to the large process of secularization” (Brooks 6). However, Brooks acknowledges that such claims are “sweeping generalizations” (7). In returning to such broad claims as he does, for instance, in his discussion of serialization and the development of mass journalism and their influence on plot during the nineteenth century, he yet may miss a contemporary flashpoint or two that may shape what narrative plotting becomes, such as the relationship between work and play that develops during this time. A closer look at the discourses underpinning this relation allows for the consideration of not why there was such a need for plots but rather what cultural/historical narratives may have influenced the development of narrative plotting when it becomes a dominant mode of ordering and explaining the world.

An 1834 edition of the *Saturday Magazine* includes a short passage suggesting that the significations of the word “play” include “relaxation, diversion, amusement, and recreation.” The passage further clarifies each of the four meanings with a succinct definition and defines recreation as “the refreshing of the spirits when they are exhausted by labor, so that they may be ready in due time to resume it again.” The “it” referred to here is labor or work. An article simply titled “Recreation” (1879) appearing in *The Nineteenth Century* further parses the term “recreation.” According to this essay, recreation is nothing more than “re-creation,” the “forming anew” and “a re-novation of the vital energies; leisure time and appropriate employment serve to repair organic machinery which has been impaired by the excess of work” (402). The author of the article is confident enough in his assertions to claim that what the nation’s “forefathers saw in recreation was not so much play, pastime, or pleasantry, as the restoration of enfeebled powers of work” (402). If there was a tendency “to turn play into work” (Roose 506) during the Victorian period, the article “On the Benefits of Recreation” (1848) positions narrative as a recreation itself, suggesting that “one of the most charming recreations that can be fostered in a family is that of NARRATIVE,” (59, emphasis in the original text).

George Henry Lewes' essay on *Tom Jones* (1860) reminds his Victorian readership that narratives are not simply recreations. By turning play into an important economy of the workings of a fictional plot, Lewes positions narratives as operating according to a logic that puts play to work.

Lewes contends that in the construction of a plot there "must be an easy play and fluctuation of various elements" so as to not disturb the fictional illusion that plot works to create.<sup>3</sup> Lewes' realist aesthetic leads him to position narrative plotting as the guarantor for an illusion, which it must maintain, in part, by playing in an easy fashion. To see narrative plotting at work in a fiction is for this "machine" to "creak," threatening the integrity of an illusion, which ultimately could cause it to "vanish" (333). On the one hand, Lewes implies that to not play easily is to play, narratively speaking, improperly or at least dangerously. On the other hand, it is clear that Lewes understands the workings of plot as dependent upon an economy of play, as without the "easy play and fluctuation of various elements" a fiction risks disappearing the illusion that it should work to preserve. If it does not directly inform how our "common sense" of plot "has been molded by the great nineteenth-century narrative tradition," (Brooks xi), the aforementioned small and incomplete sample that is representative of a larger discourse and philosophy of Victorian work-play becomes an indispensable if muted contextual dynamic pressuring Brooks' theory of plot.

### Plotting Play

Although the game of *fort-da* does not figure prominently in Brooks' reading of plot, a closer look at "Freud's Masterplot" reveals its reliance on a discourse of play to suggest the middle of plot's concomitant operations of delay, return and repetition, which he terms a "playground."<sup>4</sup> As a dynamic playground plot establishes a form of narrative mastery that parallels how repeating the game of *fort-da* helps Freud's grandson overcoming feelings of abandonment felt when the child helplessly watches his mother leave him. Freud's model of repetition as mastery allows Brooks to theorize that a narrative generates meaning by returning to or by the return of scenes, moments and images that work to bind a story together. As the first reference to games and play in the essay, *fort-da* initiates a ludic discourse to which it returns repeatedly.

If Brooks can claim that Freud plots *Beyond* in ways “that have little to do with its original intention,” (97), his reading of Freud makes Brooks susceptible to a similar observation. Attenuating ourselves to the repetitions and returns that bind “Freud’s Masterplot,” we find that an important bundle of its textual energetics unfolds through its return to play. The work of plotting as play becomes most apparent in Brooks’ discussion of the play of repetition: “As with the play of repetition and the pleasure principle, forward and back, advance and return interact to create the vacillating and apparently deviating middle” (105). Here as elsewhere, Brooks often returns to play in order to elucidate the finer points of the psychoanalytic narratives underpinning his own narrative of plot. “Play” and the family of related terms and concepts he deploys (“playground,” “space of play,” “instinctual play”) becomes the means by which he attempts to make us understand the complex because coterminous operations of plot.

This constellation of play-terms, in other words, works to establish plot’s binding processes—Brooks puts it to work in the service of the pleasure principle, the death drive and the generation of readerly desire, but not as a specific narrative drive or process itself: the “vacillating play of the middle,” is “where repetition as binding works toward the generation of significance” (108). Brooks, it appears, cannot discuss plot’s narrative middle, where narrative’s drives interact to produce meaning, without thrusting readers into the middle of his ludic discourse. In so doing, Brooks invites us to consider the possibility that play does not only function as an effective way to express the working of narrative’s drives, but rather that play itself emerges as a productive drive and functional dynamic of plot. His theory of plot becomes all the more appropriate for an elucidation through nineteenth-century narratives since *Reading for the Plot*, in particular “Freud’s Masterplot,” emerges, in part, as an expression of the Victorian truism that extended the purview of work to that of play. To read the plots of nineteenth-century novels, is for Brooks to emplot a version of work-play in the process, one that is strikingly similar to the actual play of *fort-da*, its means, not the end of the game that so interests Freud.

In one sense, Brooks repeats how Freud loosens *fort-da* from its ludic context, as in *Beyond* the game evolves as an expression of mastery, of overcoming trauma. In addition, the “economic motives” of *fort-da* lead

Freud into a discussion of the pleasure the game generates, which becomes a springboard for his consideration of the pleasure principle. In so doing, he produces an economy of the game in which his discussion makes “gone” the play of the game by emphasizing the work it performs. For if Freud describes his grandson “staging the disappearance and return of objects within his reach” (14), Freud stages the disappearance of the ludic charge of this game as a consequence of how his “interest” in it “is directed to another point” (15). This point is the end of the game, what the game comes to mean and represent for Freud, which is the starting point for its redeployment in Brooks’ narrative of plot: “Freud’s Masterplot” stages its own disappearance of *fort-da* when Brooks uses the game as the means to move into a discussion of repetition and mastery that simultaneously launches his discourse of play.

But does Brooks really disappear the game? Or does it remain therein as an operational dynamic of plot, if in different form? The back-and-forth movements underpinning narrative plotting for Brooks, it would appear, emerge as a correlate to the rhythmic alternations of *fort-da*. Despite the minimized role the game plays in his model of plot, *fort-da* yet remains a powerful if implicit analogue for the playground that plot becomes: its means express the play driving plot even if Brooks applies its psychoanalytic ends to the workings of narrative. Part of the gambit in returning to Brooks to suggest the play underpinning narrative plotting is not to focus so much on what the play of *fort-da* means, but rather how the game works and what dynamics inform the actual play of the game.

## The Playgrounds

*Wuthering Heights* unfolds in the discourse of narrative plotting: Heathcliff returns to the Heights after a prolonged absence, Catherine returns from the grave to haunt Heathcliff and Lockwood (in his dream), and Lockwood returns to the Grange after his own absence. In addition, members of the second generation of this community become the namesakes of the first—Catherine/Cathy, Edgar Linton/Heathcliff’s son Linton. Heathcliff’s name, the name given to him by Earnshaw is the name of the latter’s son who died in childhood. Ultimately, the novel performs its crowning delay by withholding what happens to Heathcliff between the years that he runs away and then returns as a young man, what Nelly refers to as

a “cuckoo’s story.” The workings of the novel’s plot, then, surface as part of the story it works to tell, emerging in the playground the Heights becomes in which agonisms and cruel impulses freely circulate and are played out.<sup>5</sup> Patricia Yaeger writes that the novel evolves as a “‘field of force,’ an arena for the display or warring social formations” (209). For Brooks, the energetics of plot produce its own network of force: “in the motors and engines I have glanced at, including Eros as motor and motor as erotic, we find representations of the dynamics of the narrative text, connecting beginning and end across the middle and making of that middle—what we read through—a field of force”(47).

The shuttling back and forth between the settings of the Grange and the Heights further fortifies how the story of this community emerges in terms of the play of narrative plotting. Brooks repeatedly accounts for the workings of plot as a sequence of to-and-fro movements, of advance and return: “the concept of repetition hovers ambiguously between the idea of reproduction and that of change, forward and backward movement” (Brooks 100). Such a description is often used to identify the movement of play itself. Georg Hans Gadamer situates play at the center of aesthetic experience, describing it as “the to-and-fro movement which is not tied to any goal which would bring it to an end” (93). He also writes how “the movement backwards and forwards is obviously so central for the definition of a game that it is not important who or what performs this movement” (93). But if Gadamer suggests that to attribute the play of to-and-fro and of moving backward and forward as unimportant, it is important to emphasize how this dynamic becomes synonymous with play in the present essay. As noted above, Brooks returns to such formulations to account for the movements of plot but only to designate the dynamics underpinning it, not to suggest the play that drives plot, how plot becomes a form of narrative play, which is the claim the present essay explicitly makes.

If the movement of to-and-fro is equated with play, the game of *fort-da*, of making an object disappear and then reappear, depends upon a similar motility. The game described by Freud is one in which his grandson makes a spool disappear by moving it away from his person, in his case by throwing it. The child or another person makes the spool reappear by returning it, either by retracting the string attached to it, or by picking it up or by taking it back to the child’s bed, which Freud describes as “quite a business” (13). Much of the business of the play of the complete game, of



disappearance and return, however, Freud describes as a movement of the spool moving to-and-fro from the child: "What he did was to hold the reel by the string and very skillfully throw it over the edge of his curtained cot, so that it disappeared into it" (14). The disappearance of the spool is accompanied by the child's "o-o-o-o-," or what Freud interprets as *fort*. The act of pulling the spool into the bed, its reappearance is greeted with a "joyful da," or there (14). While this moment very well may be the child working out the unpleasure of his mother's leaving through the pleasure of a game, Freud's account of this moment implies how the game depends on a to-and-fro movement of its own.

In Freud's own words, the game works by an act of disappearance defined as the object moving away from the child (fro) and its eventual return (to). Freud may not invoke these exact terms, but the terms that he does use to describe the play of the game depend upon this very alternation, suggesting that the play of this game unfolds as the ludic movement described by Gadamer. Perhaps at the same time that Freud's grandson masters his trauma, he also masters a simple game, or at least learns that playing with the simple alternation of to-and-fro could lead to new and different games or variations of the same game. The game of revenge staged by Catherine in her bedroom becomes such a variation as an intense expression of *fort-da*, but one that ultimately masters her.

### States of Play

Suggesting how in Brontë's novel boundaries remain in a state of flux, Steven Vine writes the following of "wuthering": "Trembling between internality and externality, wuthering becomes a movement of othering: a passing of boundaries that takes the outside in and the inside out, where the familiar is made strange (the domestic interior Lockwood encounters is riven by the storms it should exclude) and the strange comes to inhabit the familiar" (340). In Vine's reading of "wuthering" there is not so much a movement or passing through boundaries as there is a passing of them into another arrangement: we become aware of how inside and outside inhabit each other in the novel. Catherine's self-imposed illness suggests how it "wuthers," not as an "othering" but as an "anothering" by oscillating as play and seriousness, fiction and fact, "real" and performance at the same time. Embodying the back-and-forth movements of *fort-da*, Cather-

ine's episode also emerges as a variant of the game that channels an overwhelming trauma that she cannot contain or bind.

After the confrontation between the recently returned Heathcliff and her now-husband Edgar, Catherine finds herself emotionally torn between the two rivals and her inability to negotiate their hate for each other. Frustrated, Catherine tells Nelly, "I'll try to break their hearts by breaking my own" (100) after mentioning how she is "in danger of being seriously ill" (99). Despite Catherine's "ghastly countenance, and strange exaggerated manner" and how she locks herself in her room for three days, Nelly still "could not get rid of the notion that [Catherine] acted a part of her disorder" (103). When Nelly lies and tells Catherine how Linton acts composed among his books when she is locked in her room for three days, Catherine responds, "he imagines me in a pet—in play, perhaps" (103).

What readers can be sure of is that Catherine cultivates a scenario without knowing to what degree it is genuine or "played" by her. While Nelly clues us in to her doubts about the authenticity of Catherine's malady, the novel never conclusively clarifies this issue. The confluence of the numerous possibilities informing her condition—she is sick, she plays at being sick and/or both—puts the actuality of her condition and the role she "plays" in its making beyond a reader's ability to localize it because it emerges as the merging of these possibilities.<sup>6</sup> Nelly's confusion as a participant of the diegesis becomes the confusion of one who reads the diegesis. If Susan Rubinow Gorsky claims that medical professionals could not adequately diagnose Catherine's illness, neither can readers of the novel. Riddled with potentials and possibilities, the "wuthering" of which denies any one more precedence or relevance than the other, her condition eludes<sup>7</sup> the attempt to definitively bind it to a singularity.<sup>8</sup> But what is striking about the "text" of Catherine's "illness" is how its touchstone moments are expressed as *fort* if not as *fort-da*.

Catherine is hardly a child when she has her episode. But Nelly remarks that Catherine finds "childish diversion" in pulling feathers from a pillow, which soon progresses into her removing them "by handfuls" (104–105). After imploring Catherine to sit still, Nelly moves around the room "here and there collecting" the feathers (105). It is Nelly's gathering of the feathers that secures this moment's analogue as *fort*, not by her performing its back-and-forth/to-and-fro movements (here and there), but by how her collecting of the feathers becomes part of this moment's play.

Nelly's collecting of the feathers reinforces how this moment infantilizes Catherine, as she assumes the role of the adult in this drama by picking up the playthings of the child, or in this case the feathers thrown about by the childlike Catherine. The actions that separate the roles performed by Catherine and Nelly here into those of child and adult emerge as an expression of the division of labor in the game of *fort*, of disappearance, the game described by Freud prior to his discussion of what he calls the "complete game" of *fort-da*. Derrida writes how the game of *fort*, which Freud admits to witnessing more often than *fort-da*, unfolds as a divided process. In this game labor is divided between the play of the child who disperses manipulated objects or playthings, and the work of an adult who reassembles the playthings (309). While she may not reassemble the pillow, Nelly does assemble the feathers strewn about the room, a version of the work referred to by Derrida.<sup>9</sup> These collected feathers concomitantly suggest the anxiety spurred by the possible disappearance of Heathcliff from Catherine's life as they intimate her own oncoming disappearances, namely how she temporally and spatially disappears herself from herself and her ultimate disappearance as death.

During her ravings she becomes a much younger Catherine who beckons her childhood companion Heathcliff to join her in a romp on the moors by directly addressing him in his absence: "But Heathcliff, if I dare you, will you venture?" (108). Earlier she claims to have thought she was home, her childhood home of Wuthering Heights, because, she relates, "my brain got confused" (106). But the most compelling example of how Catherine becomes dislocated from herself is when she does not recognize her own reflection. Despite Nelly's attempts to convince Catherine that she sees her own reflection on the wall, "she was incapable of making her comprehend it to be her own" (105), which impels Nelly to cover it up, to make what is unrecognizable for Catherine, her own image, disappear. Ironically, Catherine "anxiously" hopes that "the image will not come out when [Nelly] [is] gone" (105), when she has already made "gone" herself. The disappearance of the childlike Catherine's reflection staged in front of a mirror intensifies this moment's analogous relation to *fort*.

In a footnote to his discussion of *fort*, Freud writes how Ernst plays a game of disappearance in front of the mirror by making his own image gone (14), suggesting how the child taps into to the potential of the gone-there/to-fro dynamic to expand into different spheres of play, different

playgrounds. The game moves from the child's bed to in front of a mirror, and the child transforms from the player who plays with an object (spool and thread), to a player who plays with himself; his image becomes the object with which he plays (self as subject and object) in front of the mirror. *Fort-da* and its variations, it appears, is subject to the rules that guide its play; it does not appear and disappear, but it does move from the bed to the mirror—here and there or to and fro—displaying its versatility as motility. While Samuel Weber's cogent reading of Freud's footnote is used to disrupt Lacan's re-writing of the game as the emergence of the subject into the symbolic and the realm of language, his observations bear repeating here. Weber suggests the game the child plays in making himself disappear becomes a formulation of the Lacanian mirror-stage, the process in which the subject's ego consolidates itself in the attempt to replace the ideal image of the self-as-other represented by the reflection in the mirror. Making the image of himself disappear suggests that Ernst's conception of selfhood enters a stage of development in which the child attempts to attain for itself the apparent unity possessed by his image.

What is important to consider is how the game marks the development of a normal or healthy subject. For Freud the game serves as the subject's assertion of control and mastery of trauma, while for Lacan, the game suggests the subject's entering the symbolic and the emergence of the narcissistic ego. The health of a subject in psychoanalytic terms, in part, depends upon a child moving through such stages as one's life narrative unfolds. Weber concludes his discussion of Freud's footnote by reinforcing the notion that the subject/child who expresses the absence of the mother through *fort-da* seeks to "remain (itself) in spite of the other" (97). But Catherine absents herself from herself by not recognizing her own reflection, a sign of her unhealth and instability: she is both there and not there. She is there, the seeing subject that disappears her own reflection, but not by moving out of the mirror's frame, as Ernst does when he plays *fort*. She cannot or does not see the image of herself that remains right in front of her. While this moment is rife with possibilities for readings indebted to the Lacanian mirror-stage,<sup>10</sup> it also reinforces how the novel expresses Catherine's selfhood and the bond that she shares with Heathcliff as *fort-da*. Robin DeRosa suggests that only in death can Catherine merge with Heathcliff. This may be so, perhaps, because in life the duo forges a relationship that undulates and then erupts as gone and there, to and fro, in

which one experiences the other as an intense absence. But is this game bound by the absolute separateness of life and death as DeRosa implies? At the very least it certainly unfolds in terms of life and death.

Unable to be Heathcliff's friend and unwilling to tolerate Edgar's jealousy of her relationship with him (Bronte 100), plunges Catherine's life on a course toward death inaugurated by her out-of-control theatrics. The edict Edgar levels at Catherine, that she cannot be friends with Heathcliff, repeats a command issued by her brother Hindley to her when she was a child. She remembers this moment during her delirium, and the "misery" that "arose" from "the separation" (107). Alone for the first time in her life at that point, without Heathcliff and with her father recently dead, Catherine falls into a "paroxysm of despair" (107). Facing a similar separation, a life without Heathcliff so recently after his return, Catherine harnesses the intensity his separation generated in her previously to hurt those who cause her distress before Heathcliff disappears from her life again. Dispersing feathers in the room becomes less a sign of her mastering trauma; while it expresses her anxiety, this display, like her inability to recognize her own reflection, instead of containing and binding her anxiety becomes a forum that allows for its fomentation and dissemination as anger and rage. It is through such acute moments that Catherine actively and assertively laments and protests her frustrated relationship with Heathcliff, as he appears destined to move in and out of her life without her being able to control his disappearances and the unpleasure they generate, which is why, perhaps, her episode levels her displeasure at those around her with such vehemence.

Catherine's attempt to harness the intensity of the trauma caused by her separation from Heathcliff doubles as her attempt to control the rhythm of their there-and-not-there relationship, an attempt that assumes a life of its own beyond her control. While the novel repeatedly references the intricate if frustrated bond Catherine and Heathcliff share,<sup>11</sup> for much of the novel the duo appears doomed to a relation articulated as *fort-da* and its variations, but one that transcends the boundaries of life and death with the advent of her demise: Heathcliff returns after his three-year disappearance. Edgar repeats the injunction of Hindley that seeks to disappear Heathcliff again. But the ghostly presence Catherine becomes in death that returns to Wuthering Heights in Lockwood's dream does not remain bound to the realm of dreams, or seemingly even to that of death. Heath-

cliff's pleading for her to return to him one more time after Lockwood relates his dream suggests how Catherine remains a presence at the Heights, one that is yet not there or has not fully returned.

Prior to her death, she tells Heathcliff, who holds her in his arms, that he has killed her and asks him, "How many years are you to live after I am gone?" (135). As part of their melodramatic dialog as Catherine verges on death, she insists on their never being parted, and should what she say now "distress" him later, she would "feel the same distress underground" (136). Later Heathcliff desperately exclaims, "oh God! Would you like to live with your soul in the grave?" (138). After her death, Heathcliff meets with Nelly, who wishes that Catherine wakes in the other world as gently as she passed into it. Heathcliff responds by wishing that Catherine "not rest" as long as he lives, urging her to haunt him, to be with him always in "any form" because he cannot live without his "life" and "soul" (143). But it is Lockwood who best captures how the *fort-da* of this relationship transcends the absolute separateness of life and death and recruits death as another ground for its play. After his dream Lockwood refers to Catherine as a "spectre that showed a spectre's ordinary caprice" (23). A spectre, both there and not there, gone and there, which moves to-and-fro the realms of life and death or even existing in a sort of life-in-death, suggests not only the thwarted story of love that is their union: their relationship becomes symptomatic of a narratorial interplay materializing as an altered expression of *fort-da*.

### Narrating Play

The overlapping iterations of the story of the Heights that Nelly tells and Lockwood retells exceeds attempts to frame them, just as Catherine's illness exceeds the attempts of diagnosis and how she becomes a figure that refuses to be framed or contained by death. Rather than providing clear and distinct narrative "levels" or "frames," narration thrusts the novel into an overdetermined state that carries the charge of multiple frames at once. The novel produces such a state by harnessing the play of narrative plotting, the ludic alternations implied by Brooks' theory of plot. But in the process, Bronte collapses the alternating logistics informing the movements of *fort-da* into a singular block of narration that elides the iterations of the story we read. Nancy Armstrong suggests that all the frames in the

novel—the frames that enclose the story, as well as the frames represented in the story—“are violated” (430). Perhaps the narrative framework violates our expectation of what constitutes a narrative frame by putting into play as a result of its play another kind of narrative framework.

The basic scheme of narration in the novel is as follows:<sup>12</sup> Lockwood records the story of the Heights and his experience there, but within this narrative, narratorial roles fluctuate among various characters. Although narrating duties revolve around Lockwood and Nelly, other figures temporarily displace them as primary narrators. This back-and-forth pattern of narration gravitating around Nelly and Lockwood becomes apparent soon after the ill and bedridden Lockwood urges Nelly to tell him more about the history of Wuthering Heights. At this moment Lockwood relinquishes the narrating duties that have been his since the novel’s opening. Nelly begins narrating her portion of the story at a point when Catherine and Heathcliff are children. But while telling her tale, she briefly adopts the focalization of Heathcliff to relate the adventure that befalls he and Catherine at the Grange. In so doing, Heathcliff’s embedded narrative encodes Nelly as a narratee to the narrative that she tells to Lockwood.

Twice during the telling of the embedded narrative is Nelly marked as a listener to it. When explaining to Nelly how the Lintons’ dog Skulker attacked Catherine, Heathcliff remarks, “the Devil had seized her ankle, Nelly” (41). After the Lintons bring the children inside to care for Catherine, the family cannot help but abhor Heathcliff’s appearance and his vulgar manners, which fails to dissuade Heathcliff to alter his behavior. He interrupts his story to make the following comment: “I recommenced cursing, Nelly—don’t be angry” (42). Such direct addresses to Nelly situate her as a listener of Heathcliff’s story when she actually re-narrates it to Lockwood. While narrating the embedded narrative to Lockwood, Nelly refrains from offering any commentary or her own interjections to him, as Heathcliff does to her during his rendition of it. The lack of such asides or direct addresses further inscribes Nelly’s narratee status at moment when she actually re-narrates this story. Although Nelly narrates to Lockwood what has been narrated to her by Heathcliff, it remains clear that she preserves his narrative when she re-narrates it, refusing to alter it in her re-narration to the point that she recreates her original role of listener to it.<sup>13</sup>

Such a peculiar process of narration, in part, depends upon Nelly returning to a prior relationship and role to the incident she tells as a process

of telling it to a new audience, namely Lockwood. This return, however, is accompanied by a disappearance as well. In returning to the story Heathcliff tells her, Nelly, when narrating it to Lockwood, re-positions herself as narratee, thereby producing an effect that makes her present relation to the story disappear. In other words, the very act of narrating a past event makes her present relation to the story, that of narrator, of one who has already heard the story and who now tells it to another, at least momentarily, appear to be gone. But not completely. We know that Nelly narrates this episode and that she returns to her original relationship to it when narrating. In leaving an opening for such a return as a process of narrating, she must at least disappear a part of her narrating self or not make herself appear as the only narrator of this episode.

A similar dynamic occurs when Lockwood re-tells the story of the Heights that Nelly narrates to him in her own words. What ostensibly is Nelly narrating for much of the novel is actually Lockwood repeating Nelly's narrative, but in so doing, he maintains her focalization. For instance, beginning in Chapter 15, as he nears full recovery from his sickness, Lockwood begins narrating again, briefly assuming the role previously adopted by Nelly. But he does so by reporting what Nelly has told him in the days prior, which includes the entirety of Catherine's history. Since she is a "fair narrator," Lockwood decides to preserve the narrative Nelly has told him as he re-tells it by maintaining her focalization. The only adjustment he admits to making is that he condenses her story "a little" (132), a move toward "narrative efficiency," according to Jeffrey Williams. Lockwood refers to what Nelly says in the third person—"she said"—but soon after, the narrative adopts the voice and focalization of Nelly again as he virtually disappears as narrator despite how he re-narrates what has been narrated to him. Repeating Nelly's curious narratorial technique, Lockwood returns to Nelly's focalization when he narrates the story of the Heights that she narrated to him.

By re-presenting Nelly's narrative in "her own words," Lockwood depresents himself as narrator, but never entirely; he reminds us of his role in editing and narrating the story of the Heights explicitly and implicitly throughout the novel. One particular exchange emphasizes the fluidity that binds the narrative frames of Lockwood and Nelly. When Dr. Kenneth arrives and interrupts the story Nelly tells to the bed-ridden Lockwood, she says, "My history is dree, as we say, and will serve to wile away another



morning" (132). Lockwood begins narrating as she takes her leave: "Dree and dreary! I reflected as the good woman descended to greet the doctor" (132). By respeaking "dree" Lockwood reminds us of the words just spoken by Nelly to him. The shared word choice here figures their shared narrational duties and how their separate but inseparable narrative frames co-exist as a result of Lockwood re-narrating Nelly's narrative from her point of view. "Dree," then, offers an instance of how the novel's narrational framework "wuthers"; it at once marks the overlapping of narrative frames while serving as a concrete marker that is at once inside Lockwood's frame but outside of it as well, since it carries the charge of Nelly's frame into Lockwood's.<sup>14</sup>

A subsequent editorial comment further launches the novel into a state of overdetermined narration. In relating Cathy's first meeting with her cousin Hareton, the narrator(s) reminisces about Heathcliff's reign at the Heights. But this episode is interrupted by the following remark: "This, however, is not making progress with my story" (168). The narration then picks up where it left off, detailing the fallout of the encounter between Cathy and Hareton. The "my" here apparently references Nelly, who admits to relying on hearsay for any news of Heathcliff and Wuthering Heights since her relocation to Thrushcross Grange. Additionally the next sentence in the paragraph references "Miss Cathy," which more than likely indicates the discourse of Nelly. But at the same time the "my" could mark Lockwood's reproduction of this story as told to him by Nelly. Is this a moment in which Lockwood's "narrative efficiency" surfaces in his iteration of the story? We cannot be sure either way. While Nelly's history may be "dree," the context of her admission invites a number of possibilities. In addition to "worrisome" and "tedious," the *OED* lists "difficult to surmount or get over" as an additional meaning to the word. The editorial interjection about making progress with the story assumes a dreeness of its own as an emblem for narration in the novel, as readers cannot attribute it to solely Nelly or Lockwood. Both remain viable options here and elsewhere.

Narration and narrative, then, become an important bundle of textual energies in this novel's plot. But more than acting as a complication to the novel's plot, the act of narrating, of producing narrative, reproducing it and transmitting it, becomes its own complicated process by overinvesting in the ludic dynamics informing the operations of plot. In particular, the

narratorial interplay of the novel, its investment in simultaneous processes of returning and disappearing as a logic of narration can be understood as an extension and alteration of *fort-da* that underpins the machinations of plot for Peter Brooks. Nelly's narration of Heathcliff's recounting of what happens to him at Thrushcross returns her to the position of listener to it, just as Lockwood's narration of what Nelly first narrates to him returns him to a similar position, while positioning readers in relation to an earlier iteration of the story that is being narrated. Apparently, to bring forth a story for an audience is to "make gone" its narrator.

While Brooks emphasizes the role of repetitions and returns in his theory of plot ("repetition creates a return in the text, a doubling back" (100) and "repetition and return are perverse and difficult, interrupting simple movement forward" (100)), and in the process, as these passages suggest, conflates them, he under appreciates the dynamic that arises between returns and disappearances, how what returns must first be disappeared: what allows the play of repetition is the play of what first disappears so that it can return again. He opens up the possibility of considering this very relation by briefly mentioning the game of *fort* Ernst plays, how the child stages "disappearance alone" (97). But this observation functions as a relay for a longer discussion of repetition that Brooks explicitly grounds in returns: "Repetition creates a return in the text, a doubling back. We cannot say whether this return is a return to or a return of," whether origins or the repressed is under consideration (100). One might claim that Brooks over-invests in a game of *da* in his reading and application of *Beyond* to narrative plotting in which he effects a rhetorical strategy that effectively disappears the dynamic of disappearance from plot.

Brontë's novel articulates how returning is dependent upon disappearing first. Heathcliff's return changes the course of life at the Heights, and the success of his plotting and vengeful designs instantiates the devolution of the community and the constitution of the Earnshaw and Linton families. But his return to the Heights depends upon his disappearing from it first, *fort* and then *da*. But as noted above, the narratorial interplay between Nelly and Lockwood establishes a different dynamic, an economy of returning as disappearing. After Hindley's death Nelly contrasts his life with Edgar's. She makes the following direct address to Lockwood when she concludes: "But you'll not want to hear my moralizing, Mr. Lockwood: you'll judge as well as I can, all these things; at least, you'll think

you will and that's the same" (157). Nelly then continues with her narrative, as retold by Lockwood. But before doing so, her address to Lockwood reinscribes him as narratee when he actually narrates this passage.<sup>15</sup>

Adhering to Nelly's narrative so closely that he preserves her as the focalizer and refuses additional commentary on what he (re)narrates creates a situation in which Lockwood refers to himself in the third person as he narrates. It is not "me," or "I," but "Mr. Lockwood" who will not hear of Nelly's moralizing. This moment emphasizes the role Lockwood performs in relation to the narrative the first time he hears it, that of listener or narratee to Nelly's narration, while it de-emphasizes his role as re-teller of the tale. Such a move returns the story to an earlier iteration of it and returns Lockwood to a position of listener, which makes his status as narrator of the story less certain, less there, and more "gone." The repetition of such a narratorial economy implicitly invests in what Jean-Francois Lyotard terms a heteronomical narrative ethos.

For Lyotard, heteronomical narrative involves an etiquette in which every "narrator presents himself as having first been a narratee" (32). By emphasizing the pole of the narratee, heteronomy recuperates what the default mode of Western narrative—autonomy—erases in its privileging of speakers/narrators. Rather than offering himself as the creator of the story he tells, Lockwood moves away from such an autonomous position by explicitly and implicitly reminding us how he retells the story Nelly tells him. In a brief conversation occurring after Catherine's death and Cathy's birth that is set off from the rest of the story of the Heights by white space, Nelly asks Lockwood whether he thinks "people are happy in the other world" (141). He does not respond to her question because it strikes him as "heterodox." His non-response to her address to him or not sharing the reasons that prevent him from responding to it fuels this exchange's own heterodoxical quality; his narrator and narratee roles conflate and overlap. By foregrounding his role as a narratee when he narrates, Lockwood suggests that telling a story does not mean forgetting how he first was a listener to it.<sup>16</sup>

Because narrating reinscribes Lockwood and Nelly as narratees, their respective focalizations fold into each other, which refashions their narratorial *fort-da*, their give and take or their back and forth, but also their returning and disappearing, into a block of narration. The Lockwood/Nelly block of narration oscillates not only from one to the other but also as one

and the other in a singular ludic movement. Such a relationship recasts their back-and-forth movement as backforth; the game of narration becomes one of *fortda* rather than *fort-da*.<sup>17</sup> The terms of the play of narration remain the same as the play of plot, but the rules of the game change. Consider the following remark by Brooks concerning the forces at work in the middle of plot, which enact “the necessary distance between beginning and end, maintained through the play of those drives that connect them yet prevent the one collapsing back into the other (108). If the play of plot connects but prevents beginnings from collapsing into endings, the play of narration in *Wuthering Heights* results in the collapse of the distinction between iterations of the story; we do not know for certain where Nelly’s version ends and Lockwood’s begins. Their iterations come to occupy shared narrative territory in which one cannot be extracted fully from the other because the very idea of distinct and separate stories is thwarted by their ludic block of narration.

In his classic reading of the novel, Walter Allen claims that Catherine and Heathcliff exist as two rivers or two territories “that flow into each other,” but whose courses “are diverted, their proper channels dammed” (196).<sup>18</sup> The narratorial interplay between Nelly and Lockwood experiences no such damming. Rather each flows into the other without encumbrance or blockage in a process akin to what Deleuze and Guattari describe as deterritorialization and reterritorialization, as each iteration occupies distinct narratorial terrain that converge into a new relation. Underpinning this dynamic is how a pair of distinct objects or singularities, in this case, Nelly’s and Lockwood’s iterations of the story of the Heights, become a composition of both when the novel carries one into the other. For Deleuze and Guattari, such an operation depends upon on a dual movement in which one iteration reterritorializes the other at the same time that the process of reterritorialization happens to it. The movement of each iteration into the other occurs at the same time each diminishes the integrity of its own territory, which instantiates a narratorial zone that oscillates as both. To move into the other, which is to move with and as the other, the novel establishes a relation between narrations of the story that remains in-between one and the other, a block that moves and shifts as a nebulous coexistence that relies on the terms and interplay of *fort-da* to establish a new arrangement, *fortda*.

While for Catherine separation from Heathcliff becomes the trauma

that she cannot overcome as it masters her, the novel's narratorial *fortda* emerges as a sort of traumatic shock to nineteenth-century novelistic conventions that yet paradoxically stabilizes the novel. It does so because it can harness and exploit the resources needed to move beyond a threshold of an order that Catherine cannot in her life. She succumbs to the excessive expenditure of energy that takes her mind and body to heights from which it never recovers. For instance, Catherine reminds Nelly of her "passionate temper," which verges on "frenzy" (100). She is "delirious" and in a "delirium" and in a "tempest of passion with a kind of fit" (111). Such terms suggest a violent and unstable subjectivity, even if in play, since her game ultimately overcomes her in the end. But the novel, in expending energy that upends a narratorial order, expands the very possibility of narratorial order in the process: *fortda* as *Wuthering Heights* is the result of harnessing an energy to produce stability that at the Heights only produces disorder and instability.<sup>19</sup>

The repeated and intensive shuttling between the narrations of the story of the Heights—intensive because repetitive in the sense of how Lockwood repeats what Nelly tells him—instantiates a situation not so much in which the inside of Lockwood's iteration never fully moves outside of Nelly's. Rather the concepts of inside and outside become destabilized or deterritorialized through the assemblage their interplay becomes in a *fortda* that takes narration to another narrative order.

This re-formed novelistic order is summed up in Catherine's often-quoted description of her bond with Heathcliff: "Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff—he's always, always in my mind—not as pleasure . . . but as my own being—so don't talk of our separation again—it is impracticable" (70). If Catherine makes the case for her inseparable existence with Heathcliff, the novel presents Lockwood and Nelly as an inseparable block of narration whose respective stories practically cannot be extracted from the other's. Blocks and assemblages, then, emerge as a pan-narrative repetition, what the novel returns to as a matter of content and a logistic of form in order to bind the story of the Heights. The inseparability of Heathcliff-Catherine, however this union is parsed, and the shared narrations that become the Nelly-Lockwood iteration suggest that *Wuthering Heights* holds itself together not only through repetition, but by repeatedly returning to *fortda* as a refrain, what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as "any aggregate of matters of expression that draws a territory and devel-

ops into territorial motifs” (323). *Fortda* becomes such a narrative refrain by drawing the relationship of Catherine and Heathcliff as well as the telling of their story into its domain; it emerges as an organizing because repeated locus of different terrains of the novel, those of narration and the subjects that are narrated. *Fortda*, then, territorializes the form and content of *Wuthering Heights* even as the novel re-territorializes it as part of the larger story it tells.

By virtue of this narratorial block, the structure or form of *Wuthering Heights* works in concert with depictions of violent and excessive play that move beyond “acceptable” ludic expressions during the mid-Victorian era, which expands the scope of the “sport” the novel becomes. Coupled with the overdetermined logistics underpinning how the novel represents, the violence and excesses represented in the novel form a complementary block, a sporting whole in which form and content and/or form as content undoes by redoing the genre. D.A. Miller writes how “the narrative that seems to resist a novel’s control becomes a means of achieving it” (27). The Nelly/Lockwood blocks of narration, by virtue of their repetition, bind the structure of the novel as instances of excessive play at the Heights bind the novel’s plot: as a traumatic force that unbinds a familiar expression of narratorial mastery in the novel form *fortda* concomitantly emerges as another kind of mastery that effectively rebinds *Wuthering Heights*.

## Endgame

It is only proper, then, that the conclusion of the novel lingers in a moment that gestures toward an order of life that transcends the frames that birth and death give it. At the graves of Heathcliff, Catherine and Linton Lockwood muses, “I watched the moths fluttering among the heath and harebells, listened to the soft wind breathing through the grass, and wondered how any one could ever imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth” (287). Despite his attempt to diffuse the possibility of life after death, he cannot do so—others still imagine unquiet slumber for Catherine and Heathcliff. But it is the fluttering of the moths that suggests how the duo yet persists in some form of life-in-death. Gadamer writes that when the word play is examined, “we find talk of the play of light, the play of waves, the play of component in a bearing-case, the inter-play of

limbs, the play of forces, the play of gnats, even a play on words. In each case what is intended is the to-and-fro movement which is not tied to any goal which would bring it to an end" (93). Much of this essay navigates the novel's to-and-fro movements, plot's *fort-da* that becomes *fortda* as a narratorial dynamic. But here, the fluttering moths, like the play of gnats described by Gadamer, announce a to-and-fro ludic that refuses the goal that would end it. Are Catherine and Heathcliff really, finally gone (*fort*)? Have they returned to the Heights in different form? Are they yet there (*da*)? Of course, the novel cannot refuse to conclude, but at the same time, we should not expect it to end with a finality that attempts to limit the play in which it revels for so long. The fluttering moths more than suggest the lingering presence of Catherine and Heathcliff at the Heights; such fluttering rehearses the novel's propensity to play, to be in play even after it concludes.

## Notes

1. For instance, see Peter Bailey's *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational recreation and the contest for control, 1830–1885*; Hugh Cunningham's *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution c.1780–c.1880*; G.M. Golby and A.W. Purdue's *The Civilization of the Crowd*; Richard Holt's *Sport and the British: A Modern History*; R. W. Malcolmson's *Popular recreation in English society 1700–1850*; J.A. Mangan's (editor) *A Sports-Loving Society: Victorian and Edwardian Middle-Class England at Play*.
2. In one sense, the present essay reverses the relationship between liminality and play in the novel outlined by Mark Hennelly in his two-part essay "Wuthering Heights: The Initiatory Step." He establishes the Heights as a liminal culture in which members of the community pass through societal boundaries and rites of passage, in part, by playing. But a number of questions remain concerning the quality, repetition and significance of the play depicted there and how the novel form itself incorporates a similar logic as a feature of its narration. One of my major claims is that *Wuthering Heights* exacts an overdetermined narratorial state that is in-between iterations as much as it is the coming together of these iterations.
3. Alexander Bain similarly theorizes a model of plot that remains in debt to play. Consider the following footnote accompanying his discussion of why humans remain keenly interested in plot taken from *The Emotions and the Will* (1859): "The attractions of plot, in its narrowest sense, is due, largely, to the play of intellect and of will in curiosity and imaginative anticipation" (222). While Lewes argues that plot should work by the easy play of its parts, Bain suggests that a plot creates an economy of play in the minds of readers.

4. Focusing on the implications of the ludic discourse in Brooks' model of plot obviously means I de-emphasize some of the more explicit concerns he broaches, such as narrative's life-and-death-drives and the circulation of desire. For a closer reading of such dynamics as they play out in *Reading for the Plot*, see Judith Roof's *Come As You Are*.
5. Heathcliff and Hareton's degrading of Lockwood early in the novel suggests the violence and cruelty that could erupt at any moment when this community plays. When they laugh at his inability to free himself from under the dogs that pin him to the ground, this moment becomes Lockwood's and a reader's indoctrination to the palpable violence underpinning much of the social interaction at Wuthering Heights. His bleeding nose attests as much and becomes the first indication of the way in which this community remains grounded in a cycle of vicious play. By relegating Lockwood to a bloody spectacle, Heathcliff and Hareton obviously exceed boundaries of civility; he becomes an object of amusing spectacle for them, as the tandem exacts much visible and audible pleasure from his predicament. His demeaning situation makes clear that in this novel playing too much, using the misfortune of another as entertainment, becomes an impediment to social cohesion, an irritant that often erupts into violence and a reminder of what a cruel playground the community becomes, which reinforces how the Heights becomes "another kind of culture" (Weissman 385).
6. Susan Rubinow Gorsky writes the way in which Catherine's illness, "with its mixture of volition and helplessness, its physical and psychological elements, was far beyond Nelly's or the doctor's comprehension, and would have been beyond the comprehension of most nineteenth-century physicians" (182). Her reading examines how a culture of disease and unhealth must be overcome at an individual and societal level in order to establish a culture of well-being and happiness at the Heights. Most interesting is how Rubinow Gorsky describes Catherine's condition by twice using the word "beyond" in the quoted passage above, which not only emphasizes how ill-equipped doctors of the Victorian era may have been in diagnosing cases such as Catherine's. The repeated use of "beyond" suggests how Catherine's complicated condition escapes attempts to define or frame it adequately. I am interested in how Catherine's illness becomes a symptom of unpleasure associated with Heathcliff's departure(s) that she cannot overcome because it is too overwhelming.
7. Ross Chambers uses this construction in *Loiterature* in his discussion of ludic evasions in narrative (89).
8. To interpret or diagnose her illness requires the negotiation of the various possibilities informing it, a process that mirrors the interpretation of a text, which for Roland Barthes involves appreciating a text's plurality as "a galaxy of signifiers, not a struc-



ture of signifieds . . . we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one” (5).

9. The union of the play and work in *fort-da* (which may not be so cleanly or clearly divided in *fort*, as Derrida suggests) is what allows Derrida to read the work-play of *fort-da* as the apparatus to a game that dislocates itself in a family drama of the child attempting to separate himself from a family that would return him to it, as well as how the child becomes separated from himself in the process (310).
10. For instance, Robin DeRosa writes that the black press, or “printing press” that Catherine sees in the mirror rather than her own image “is the symbolic order that both allows Catherine access to the death drive and which simultaneously allows her to mourn the loss of her childhood innocence” (34).
11. Philip K. Wion reads their relationship “as a displaced version of the symbiotic relation between mother and child” in a culture that lacks mother and over-relies on Nelly as a mother figure (146–148).
12. For a narratological mapping of the narrative frames, see Jeffrey Williams’ chapter on *Wuthering Heights* in *Theory and the Novel*. His reading of dispossession in/as the novel is quite suggestive, as is John T. Mathews’ essay “Framing in *Wuthering Heights*,” which argues the story of the Heights becomes “the only mode of being in a world of instabilities” (4). Both essays serve as exemplary readings of the narrative frames in the novel. My reading takes a different approach by looking at the way in which the conflation of iterations of the story of the Heights emerges as a result of a ludic impulse that instantiates a narratorial block that is not so much dispossession as a co-possession, and at the same time, emerges as a force that destabilizes as it stabilizes the form of the novel.
13. Isabella twice displaces Nelly in a similar manner. The first instance occurs when Isabella writes a letter to Nelly in Chapter 13 after eloping with Heathcliff and returning to the Heights. Shortly after at the Grange she narrates in great detail to Nelly her pitiful life in Chapter 17 after escaping from Heathcliff. Both extended narratives are reported by Nelly but in Isabella’s words. Later in the novel Zillah becomes the narrator when she explains to Nelly how Cathy adjusts to life at Wuthering Heights for five pages in Chapter 30.
14. See Jeffrey Williams’ essay for an extended discussion of this dynamic.
15. In “*Wuthering Heights* and The Rhetoric of Interpretation” Michael S. Macovski writes how a “vital structure of the novel” is “an epistemological disjunction between

- listeners and speakers” (367). Macovski makes the case for the importance of interpretation as a necessity in the novel, but situating narration as simultaneously telling and listening falls outside of his reading. He does emphasize how Nelly is both a teller and listener of narratives, but does not examine how she occupies both positions at the same time. His discussion of how Heathcliff projects himself into the position of another character as form of self-analysis comes closer to the point I am making.
16. Walter Ong describes the orality informing the bard/storyteller’s performance in the following manner: “The oral song (or other narrative) is the result of interaction between the singer, the present audience, and the singer’s memories of the song sung” (146). Lockwood’s heteronomical narrative additionally remembers and acknowledges specifically who first tells him the story of the Heights he then tells. I suspect there is more to say about an oral logistics informing the contours of the novel’s narrative structure.
  17. I borrow the idea of *fortda* from Deleuze and Guattari. In *One Thousand Plateaus*, they write that *fort-da* is not oppositional. Rather they suggest how *fort-da* works in unison as a block or assemblage (299–300).
  18. See Michael S. Macovski’s discussion of how Catherine and Heathcliff’s union emerges by moving beyond “one’s contained existence, to establish creation and being through another,” which brings together Freudian and Bakhtinian paradigms (375).
  19. Henri Lefebvre remarks how the trafficking back and forth of information and energy at the level of an organism’s membranes leads to further “diversification and intensification of the interaction between inside and outside” (176). Such an account applies to the dynamics informing the emergence of narratorial *fortda* in *Wuthering Heights*.

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