

Genre mutation in YA Gothic: the dialectics of dystopia and romance in Holly Black's *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*

Genres mutate, perhaps because they exhaust their potential or because of dramatic social change. But, more so than in other eras, with the increasing commodification of literature, shifts in generic expectations for popular fiction seem to be motivated purely by market forces, reducing the autonomy and even the integrity of the author. Certain genres of Young Adult (YA) fiction have displayed this conspicuously in recent times – the boom of vampire paranormal romance following *Twilight* (2005) slumped, to be overshadowed by the success of a certain style of dystopia with *The Hunger Games* (2008) and its imitators.

These YA dystopias have come under attack from some quarters; unlike classic, socially critical dystopias of the past, these are alleged to be works of agitprop for capitalist individualism.¹ This is a rather crude reading of *The Hunger Games* itself, but this chapter is concerned with another generic transformation that has taken place in response to those novels. For the vampire romance has not been killed off; it has risen again in new clothing. Ingeniously, a few writers have exploited this situation, enhancing the genre of vampire paranormal romance by fusing it with the dystopia: prominently, Julie Kagawa's Blood of Eden series, beginning with *The Immortal Rules* (2012), and Holly Black's *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown* (2013).

Thus, a new hybrid subgenre has emerged where vampire romance meets the apocalyptic landscapes of dystopia. Paranormal romance is in turn hybrid, as is the Gothic which forms one of its components. The novel form itself can be characterised by its eager consumption of other genres. Genres bring with them perspectives on the world, and the collision of genres allows for an interesting dialectical play between worldviews. And the best among these new developments are certainly not apologies for capitalism. They are critical in ways that are connected to but not confined by their YA status. Many critics of YA literature focus on the liminal status of adolescence.² I see that liminality as being metonymous with states of transition and existential choice more generally, so my reading of these YA texts, perhaps paradoxically, will temporarily ignore their categorisation as YA and posit a more universal readership. However, in the course of my argument I will return to this point and particularise that reading by briefly drawing attention to the young adult status of the protagonists and intended readership.

Black's *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown* exemplifies this dystopic vampire romance. The novel articulates concerns with contemporary technology, particularly surveillance, in a neoliberal world characterised by expansive, generalised commodification. This world also has a strange glamour, offering the lure of a lawless alternative culture and a haven for transgressive romance. The novel is more complex and subversive than simplistic readings of the new dystopias allow and its generic hybridity facilitates this. In this chapter I will trace how the interplay of genres in this novel represents the reification and distorted subjectivity of capitalism that neoliberalism aggravates. Then I explore how utopian forces within this novel emerge to challenge that omnipresent domination.

Paranormal romance

I will first sketch the formal properties involved in these shifts of genre. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the popular fiction genre of paranormal romance emerged, finding a significant readership among young adults. This peaked dramatically, most notoriously with Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* (2005; film 2008), though that was not without precursors. Paranormal romance takes the plot conventions of romance fiction and stylises it with a Gothic mood. All the dark dangers and terrors of the Gothic give an edge to the sunniness of romance by introducing the monstrous lover.³ Thus humans have love affairs with vampires, werewolves, and all manner of supernatural creatures that once haunted tales of sheer horror, humanising the Gothic mode while problematising romance.

Genres shift, in part, as the Russian Formalists and Czech Structuralists showed, because their capacity to make things strange wears out and new devices are required to combat the familiarisation of dead literature. The Formalist Shklovsky wrote: 'A new form comes into being not to express a new content, but to replace an old form that has lost its artistic character'.⁴ But this is not entirely the case; such changes often coincide with socio-cultural shifts. Generic shifts can both defamiliarise well-worn forms and also enable new perspectives to emerge, expressing 'a new content', in part because readers' dreams and worldviews have shifted. Marketing pressures on the novel as commodity cannot be ruled out either, though this raises questions about the complex interaction between desire and the market, why and how they respond to each other and motivate each other. Yet while market forces may fuel the impulse to innovate, they do not determine the form of that innovation.

Genres can be associated with epistemological perspectives, with ways of knowing, or questioning, the world. As Bakhtin says: ‘In an intentional novelistic hybrid [. . .], the important activity is not only [. . .] the mixing of linguistic forms [. . .] as it is the collision between differing points of views on the world that are embedded in these forms.’⁵ In paranormal romance, the romance element expresses desire and consummation; the Gothic stylisation of amatory plots insinuates a darkness to this with a suggestion of the unconscious, destructive forces at work. In the further hybridisation that I discuss, this is harnessed to a political critique through the dystopian setting.

The vampire as political metaphor has a long history. The rapacious creature took on the potential to be a political symbol right from the inception of vampire narratives in the eighteenth century; for example, *The Craftsman*’s article ‘Political Vampires’ of 1732 was an interpretation of the vampire scare in Eastern Europe as a response to tyranny.⁶ Marx developed Enlightenment critique further and uncovered that parasitism in capitalism. In one of several examples of this figure, he says ‘Capital is dead labour which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks’.⁷ I will show how Black employs the political force of the vampire figure as a critical dramatisation of capitalism in its current form, often characterised as neoliberalism.⁸

It is significant that in the late twentieth century there was a shift towards a greater social affirmation of identities, most commonly race and sexuality, which once were inscribed upon the monster. One aspect of the sympathetic monsters of paranormal romance is that they are a means of tackling issues of the contemporary politics of identity by representing outsiders, or ‘Others’, as the demon lover figure.⁹ So racial and ethnic others, people with alternative sexualities, and so on – once the monstrous others of horror – become assimilated to society through these Gothic-styled love stories. This concern with identity accounts for much of the force of paranormal romance, but Black does much more than this and I will situate her particular response to the more specific changes in modern life of neoliberalism.

The vampire romance also contains a utopian force. Amongst other things, this new conjunction of genres allows that utopianism – which I will identify later – to be played off against the fully-fledged apocalyptic dystopia. This dialectic is what I want to explore in this essay through an analysis of *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*, which depicts a dystopia where vampires have emerged into the open. They are contained in

‘Coldtowns’, along with their infected victims, but some roam loose. The novel begins on a note of teenage dissidence. Tana wakes up hung-over after a party. She then finds most of the partygoers dead after a vampire attack. She discovers her charming, amoral, manipulative boyfriend, Aidan, tied up in a darkened room with another boy, pale and handsome, in chains. He is a vampire, Gavriel. Tana rescues them from a horde of vampires who are about to break in and who appear to be Gavriel’s enemies. This is an episode of pure Gothic horror, in language that heightens that mode:

Two creatures stood framed by the doorway – one male and the other female. Their faces were puffy and pink, bloated from all the blood they’d consumed. Their mouths and sharp teeth were ruddy, their eyes sunken, clothes stiff and stained dark. They weren’t the slick vampires from television; they were nightmares and they were coming at her, [. . .] flinching from waning pools of light.¹⁰

The vampires, in their blood-glutted phase, have all their romanticism stripped away. They are simply monstrous, a reversion from sparkly lovers to the folkloric vampire of Eastern Europe. However, ‘slick vampires from television’ reflects on the generic effects and suggests both the way that commodified media presentations of the vampire in Black’s world conceal the savagery beneath the glamour, and the romanticised vampires of paranormal romance itself. Having escaped these monsters, Tana, Aidan and Gavriel make their way to the Springfield, Massachusetts Coldtown as Tana thinks she may have been infected by a vampire scratch. They meet Midnight and her twin brother Winter, who are captivated by the Gothic and the glamour of Coldtown, and take them on as passengers. As one expects with paranormal romance, Tana and Gavriel become attracted to each other.

The genres of romantic fiction and Gothic horror meet and mate in such stories. Here, Tana spontaneously kisses Gavriel, the powerful but attractive vampire:

She wasn’t supposed to want this.

When he kissed her again, she gasped against his cold mouth – her breath held too long since he didn’t need to breathe at all – her tongue sliding against his, brushing against sharp teeth.

[. . .]

Tana’s heartbeat seemed to have moved into her whole body and thrilled it with a single speeding pulse. [. . .] she wanted him to feel

like she did, like he'd done something forbidden, wanted to give him something he'd like and *really* wasn't supposed to have, something that would feel wrong, something he wanted. (159)

The style could almost be Mills and Boon romance, though it is not excessively clichéd. Thus the focalisation is on the woman, revealing her subjective and physiological experience. The kiss provokes gasps and thrills; her body responds with breathlessness and a heightened pulse. The vampire kiss is a central motif in vampire paranormal romance. It has all the familiar tropes of danger and forbidden love from romance fiction, and the suggestion of initiation into penetrative sex that is commonly found in romance. But the danger is heightened here by the lightly suggested touch of fangs, 'cold mouth', and his lack of breath – this is the Gothic stylisation of romantic fiction.

Neoliberal dystopia

This fashionable Gothic–romance stylisation is brought to life in the world of the novel, with Black writing metafictionally on paranormal romance: 'There had been plenty of books and films romanticizing vampires over the last century. It was only a matter of time before a vampire started romanticizing himself' (11). The vampire here is Lucien Moreau, who has broken the ancient code of secrecy and brought vampires into the open, making them a glamorous spectacle in doing so. This sets up the dystopian world of the novel, for this is also the birth of the Coldtowns – the militarised containment centres set up to quarantine the infected.

I am using 'dystopia' to refer to a malignant political arrangement or social organisation that extrapolates from existing characteristics of our own society. Thus, it is dystopia not in the sense of a planned utopia that has gone wrong but closer to the 'postapocalyptic dystopia', where a sudden catastrophe (here, the emergence of vampires) 'can turn existing communities into dystopias marked by secrecy, fear, and control, as those in power use violence and repression to maintain what little social structure remains'.¹¹ Note that the dystopia is not confined to the enclaves of Coldtowns; the coercion infects the wider community, just as detention centres in our own society exist in parallel with paranoid monitoring of social life, repressive border controls, and wars abroad. Thus, the genre of dystopia irrupts into the text as here:

All infected people and captured vampires were sent to Coldtowns, and sick, sad, or deluded humans went there voluntarily.

It was supposed to be a constant party, free for the price of blood. But once people were inside, humans – even human children, even babies born in Coldtown – weren't allowed to leave. The National Guard patrolled the barbed-wire-wrapped and holy-symbol-studded walls to make sure that Coldtowns stayed contained (54-55).

The archaic irrationalism of holy symbols secures the borders alongside militarised technology.

However, the world of *Coldtown* is not predominantly a world of Gothic superstition but rather that of neoliberalism. This is a much-contested concept, but I use it to characterise late capitalism as having the following features: the freedom of the market from state interference and the resulting anarchy and asociality, and the devastation of what has come to be known as 'austerity economics'. The destruction of welfarism is followed by the illusory freedom of 'meritocracy', whereby the self-motivated individual can prosper through their own efforts.¹² In parallel with the retreat of the welfare state, there is the *extension* of state power into ordinary life – particularly through enhanced technologies of surveillance.¹³ A prominent presence in this novel is the faux democracy of TV reality shows, where everyone can be a celebrity, and how surveillance becomes normalised as entertainment. Black satirises this media phenomenon acutely. This is one aspect of the aggressive commodification of all aspects of life that characterises neoliberalism.

Thus, the apocalyptic vision of Coldtown is not unlike those inner-city zones abandoned in the flight of capital in our own neoliberal times. It is of 'a fallen landscape, the magnificent ruination of a city' (154) – a Gothic touch. Tana has seen such sights, 'alien and yet familiar', mediated by TV: 'on the news':

the blackened, burned remains of old buildings [. . .] what had once been a row of store-fronts, now with spiderweb shatters in the glass, with blankets and plastic bags covering the empty frames of windows [. . .] Great domed buildings pulsing with distant music. A landscape gone feral. (154-55)

Coldtown is like a third-world shanty town or war zone or disaster area. However, 'the distant music' is a hint of forces that might resist that decay. The economy of Coldtown seems to prefigure capital's collapse, or mimic its fringes – the coffee stall with milk provided by a tethered goat, the barter payment in 'tomatoes, a skinned rabbit' (255).

The ‘ecosystem that works’, as Tana’s new-found friend Jameson describes Coldtown, is a microcosm of twenty-first-century capitalism, where

The vampires need lots of living people to supply them with blood, willingly [. . .] But when something shakes Coldtown up, we descend into chaos very quickly. Whether it’s human terrorists breaking the windows of the Eternal Ball and setting themselves on fire or turf wars between rival vampire gangs. (208-09)

Haunted by the spectre of instability through terrorism or crime or economic disturbance to the circulation of blood, Coldtown mirrors our own unstable world.

Capitalist metamorphoses

Black shows the history of this restless economic transformation in a flashback to the transitional moment when some vampires had revolted against the old order, presaging their emergence into public life. The emergence of capitalism itself lies further back, obviously, but Black chooses a period where symptoms of advanced modernity are recognisable. The origins of neoliberal theory may be found in the Vienna of the *fin-de-siècle* and early twentieth century: ‘neoliberal globalism [is] an intellectual project that began in the ashes of the Hapsburg Empire’.¹⁴ Significantly, this is the same period during which Black’s vampires modernise themselves:

Vienna in 1912 was very different from Paris a mere twenty years before. The streets were full of motorcars and bicycles during the day, and at night the whole city glowed with electric lights. [. . .] The modern age was well under way, and everyone believed themselves to be marching forward to a better tomorrow. But prostitutes still prowled the ground where gallows had once hung, willing to lie down on top of tombs with a man for the price of a newspaper. Other things prowled there, too. Vienna was a city with its lights on, and no one wanted to acknowledge what happened in the dark. (284)

This is very self-aware about Enlightenment optimism, of modernity and its utopian promises of ‘a better tomorrow’, foreshadowing the disillusionment to follow after the First World War. It helps form the highly intelligent conjunction of sex, death, trade, and mass media that lies at the heart of the novel. The phrase ‘willing to lie down on top of tombs’ links commodified sex and death; Black’s focus on media as

commodities is further invoked by ‘the price of a newspaper’. What happens ‘in the dark’ is, of course, the prowling vampires as well as prostitution, but it is also the wider darkness of modernity. It is very revealing of the book’s themes, of what lies concealed beneath the light of Enlightenment. (It is notable that this passage mentions the writings of Freud and Jung as appearing in the city at this time.) Black captures precisely and dramatically that sense of revolutionary transformation into modernity that Marx expressed in his famous aphorism, ‘All that is sacred is profaned; all that is solid melts into air’, and with all its dialectical contradictions. For vampiric capitalism in its reifying commodification both desecrates the traditional in an emancipatory way and evaporates away much that is genuinely human. (Though, in late capitalism, Gothic irrationalism may re-emerge, as in the holy symbols that protect Coldtown.)

At the crucial moment of radical innovation, in the Vienna of 1912, Lucien Moreau, Gavriel’s sire, will unleash a new, uncontrolled version of vampirism, breaking the rules maintained by the ‘Ancient vampires [who] ruled over their portion of the world like feudal lords’ (286). On the verge of the Russian Revolution, as Lucien confronts the Spider, the ruler of the vampires, he muses: ‘Here, among all the trappings of modern Vienna, one might be tempted to think the time of monarchs was past, but whatever revolutions happened elsewhere in the world, none was likely to occur among the shadowy governance of vampires’ (288). And yet this aristocratic governance will be challenged; Lucien is a bourgeois revolutionary. He ‘hated their ridiculous obsession with ancestry, as though it mattered what blood ran through one’s veins when all of it was stolen’ (288-89).

Lucien’s new vision is of the vampires as modern, anti-feudal, perhaps neoliberal – and is linked to deceptively utopian dreams, anticipating a new world ‘remade by us into something glorious, something where men aspire to be immortal’ (330). The revolutionary force is overt and self-conscious, and opposed to the ‘ancient vampires’, whose ‘dream of returning to the old ways is like the Romanovs’ dream of a return to power’ (330). The old vampirism is characterised not only by its secrecy (in the Gothic tradition of vampires who lurk in castles or crypts) but also its restraint; the old vampires do not share the expansive drive to infect and reproduce others in their image that the rebel vampires share with capitalism.

Reality TV and new media

Coldtown shows how this vampiric revolution accords with contemporary capitalism

and how the rebel vampires exploit it. One aspect of neoliberalism is the increased intrusion of the state into the private sphere, assisted by new technologies. Surveillance is now ubiquitous and, some claim, has been interiorised so that subjects willingly perform this upon themselves. Reality TV is one manifestation of this submission to the panoptical eye. Reality TV can be understood as a quintessentially neoliberal genre; various critics, says Guy Redden, ‘propose that reality TV shows depict people navigating various life challenges in line with new constructions of citizenship in a neoliberal post-welfare society’.¹⁵ It is one manifestation of ‘an economic and political “structure” [. . .] which *requires* that its agents voluntarily submit themselves to comprehensive surveillance in order to facilitate the mass consumption of consumer products’.¹⁶ In this way, much cultural analysis has argued that Reality TV helps foster a subject that is more amenable to surveillance. As Catherine Chaput says, ‘Reality TV’s politics of surveillance encourages us to find community through watching, recording, and discussing the events – large and small – of our everyday lives’.¹⁷

Black reworks the motif of Reality TV employed in *The Hunger Games*. In that series, a post-apocalyptic North America has been divided into twelve Districts from which contestants are selected annually to take part in a televised battle to the death in a dystopic extrapolation from the exploitative competitions of Reality TV. Coldtowns similarly cater to voyeurism, feeding images of the glamour of vampirism to the outside world. Lucien Moreau exploits his own commodification, having ‘sold licensing rights to his image so that posters of him could be sold at malls across the country’ (208). Lucien speaks with a ‘voice that had enchanted so many children hungry for the grave, the voice that mesmerised viewers the world over’ (279). The conventional hypnotic powers of the vampire have now become the glamour of the media celebrity.

Then there is the underground spectacle of Lucien Moreau’s decadent parties, which can be watched ‘online and on certain late-night local channels, but no mainstream station would broadcast them unedited’ (206). The viewer sees Lucien ‘promising you with the curve of his mouth and the brightness of his eyes that no matter how loudly you screamed, you’d like whatever he did, and you’d never be the same once he was done’ (206); this may be the masochistic appeal of the Gothic itself.¹⁸ However, the values here are the same as the mainstream; the apparently countercultural mediation here confirms the status quo.

In *Coldtown*, the internet technology of blogging also plays a central part in this culture of state and mutual surveillance. There is a darkly satiric view of online activism and the power of these new forums. In this confusion of values, the new arena is awash with a nihilistic death wish. Midnight and her brother, Winter, yearn for the exotic life of vampirism and have been celebrating it online. Midnight's appallingly naïve scheme is to enter the Coldtown, despite not being infected, and to begin a new life there, revelling in its imagined glamour, unaware of its danger and sordidness. These yearnings are part of an online subculture that Midnight has played a part in disseminating:

We're part of this online network for people who are planning to go to Coldtown. We used to post all the time about meeting our destiny. Claiming all the stuff that normal people don't want. [. . .]

We say that you've got to be willing to die to be different. (75)

Note the parody of political activism and the invocation of difference. (And yet, Coldtown, in its way *is* a haven for otherness: utopia and dystopia become confused, as will be seen below.)

Mirroring the official networks, the alternative forums equally commodify the spectacle of death – Midnight's blog will fund her life in Coldtown (76). Vampire deaths, as with many contemporary atrocities in real life, are freely available on YouTube (18). There is the horror of the spectacle of suicidal vampires burning, observed by '[a] crowd of humans' (171). This is all filmed and it is also a grotesque agora itself, where humans seek 'money or information' (172) from the dying vampires. In addition, the carnage is aggravated by the impulse to capture everything as image: 'He wanted to record what happened. We *all* did [. . .] Things just got out of control' (243). The surrender to the image-making process undermines autonomy. And the diminution of agency is a central concern of the novel. After Midnight has turned, and becomes thoroughly monstrous with insane grief over her killing of her brother, she warns her audience that 'The videos are disturbing, but we always say that we want to see the real stuff, so here it is' (263). This shows the ambivalent appeal of filmed violence which is, in part, the appeal of Gothic horror itself; however, in this novel Gothic fiction is a commodity that can unmask itself.

Commodification and alienation

The interaction of modern media and state surveillance is one aspect of neoliberal

capitalism. But this spectacle is also a commodity, and Black reveals how commodification and the reification of human qualities lie at the heart of capitalism. The ultimate commodification is that of the human subject. Here, the consciousness itself becomes alienated and thing-like. The Marxist concept of alienation, writes Istvan Mészáros, is

characterized by the universal extension of ‘saleability’ (i.e. the transformation of everything into commodity); by the conversion of human beings into ‘things’ so that they could appear as commodities on the market [. . .] and by the fragmentation of the social body into ‘isolated individuals’ who pursued their own limited, particularistic aims ‘in servitude to egoistic need’.¹⁹

Thus, there is another political theme being played out alongside the state incarceration mechanisms of the Coldtowns and the commodified surveillance that spectacularises them. ‘The monster is bigger than human. It represents abundance – overabundance’ (374), says a professor talking about monsters on the History Channel. It is the abundance of consumerist capitalism, fostered by insatiable and cynical marketing:

And if people argued that [. . .] the infection was still spreading, that romanticizing the dead was making the problem worse, well then, one only had to look at [. . .] how much money there was to be made by continuing to let things stay just the way they were. (109)

This is exemplified by the Dead Last Rest Stop on the outskirts of Coldtown – an arcade which cashes in on death, selling consumer goods associated with the place. We see the crass and careless commodification of everything and (literally) nothing: T-shirts with slogans like ‘CORPSEBAIT’, ‘DEADEST GENERATION’, ‘NOTHING IS THE NEW EVERYTHING’; ‘mirrors with cartoonish rivulets of blood running from two puncture wounds [. . .] so that when you looked into the mirror, it seemed as if you’d been bitten’ (99). The mirror is always significant in vampire narratives; here, it also serves as an emblem of nihilistic narcissism. There is a suggestion of a critique of the fashionable death chic of goth culture: the ‘lacy satin gowns with names like Innocence Shattered and Ruined Blossom’ (99–100). Here is the fusion of Thanatos and Eros which, of course, is at the heart of vampire paranormal romance itself; these could be the titles of novels in the genre.²⁰

Midnight is steeped in the counter-cultural love affair with death. Yet this is

shown to be a refraction of the dominant neoliberalism. Midnight blogs advice to the many teens who yearn to go to Coldtown and be turned: bring cash, tradable commodities, weapons (for this is raw, lawless capitalism). She advises them to bring the technology to circulate one's image, to accentuate their individualism by bringing commodities that convey the right sort of charismatic persona in order to achieve the stardom of meritocracy: 'bring the thing that shows off the way you're unique. You want the vampire to see why you deserve to live forever' (128). This seems to work *against* the homogenisation of commodity fetishism, but this is an inauthentic individualism: it is to be unique in order to be consumable, to be a commodity oneself rather than an autonomous subject. Midnight dispenses advice on how to commodify one's subjectivity in the rapacious market of Coldtown, which is the outside world stripped of its cosmetic facade: 'there are images and experiences that you have access to that you might be able to trade for what you need' (129).

Commodification in Marx's analysis extends to the human subject, whose vital, creative capacity to labour is itself a commodity. The vampire is the supreme force of objectification, as shown through Aidan's bloodlust: 'He kept staring and his expression shifted. She didn't think he was seeing her anymore. He was seeing skin and bone and blood' (60). This is a dramatisation of the masculine objectification of women, but also of the reification of capitalism. Aidan's distorted vision sees Tana as thing, as blood (that is, exchange value) – yet, aware of this distortion, his consciousness is still potentially free: 'but that's not – I know that's not how you look. I can't see things right anymore' (242–43). This is a very novel idea in vampire fiction; the gift of heightened perception is routinely employed in vampire romances as one of the tempting benefits of becoming a vampire alongside longevity and increased strength and agility, especially because of the intensified sensuality that accompanies it (as in *Twilight*). In this text, vampiric perception is seeing *wrongly*; in identifying its prey it transforms people into objects.

The 'cold' of 'Coldtown' is a figure for this reification. As Tana is infected, the central motif of coldness envelops her: 'The stone steps were cold on her feet. She felt that chill rising up through her legs to freeze her belly, to rime her throat with a frost that would never melt' (311). The cold inhumanity of things has begun to reify her, turn her into the voracious thing that desires only the medium of circulation: Discovering a group of captive girls and boys in Lucien's cellar, 'she could almost see the warmth radiating off them'; 'they all seemed heart-stoppingly beautiful to her' as

food and sexual object merge. ‘The scent of their blood welled up from underneath their skin, making her veins sing with need’ (312). However, there is a fascinating recapitulation of this heightened but alienated perception towards the end of the novel, where it takes on a benign quality; I will return to this below.

Vampires are themselves model consumers, infected with the restless consumerism of the age since they ‘like anything and everything that keeps them from getting bored’ (169). Yet the vampires are also prey in this rabid consumerism. Thus, vampire blood is a rare commodity, and even the persons of vampires become objects that the wealthy can use to buy freedom from the state’s incarceration in Coldtown: vampire hunters can get a bounty for capturing vampires or a marker to allow one human to be released (so the vampire-as-capital metaphor becomes fluid, breaking away from a simplistic allegory).²¹ Tana is aware that Midnight might ‘carve [Aidan] up. She’d know she could bottle that stuff up and sell it to the highest bidder’ (230). Gavriel’s value is such that the temptation to exploit him is very strong. Tana is briefly tempted, speculating that she could not only get a lot of money for turning him in but even host her own TV show, ‘*Teenage Bounty Hunter*’ (146). Thus commerce and the media are again intimately bound together. Black shows how this world and the promise that vampirism seems to offer turns everyone into reifying creatures little different from vampires themselves, in a Hobbesian struggle for the precious commodity of infected blood.

Desire

I have enumerated some of the dystopian elements in the novel. However, the dystopia is inflected by the mode of paranormal romance, which is concerned with desire. In turn, the Gothicisation of romance renders visible darker, unconscious forces.²² As I noted earlier, Black juxtaposes the conventional pale beautiful Byronic vampire of paranormal romance with their bloated bloody counterpart from folklore after they have fed, subverting the stereotype and revealing the base grossness behind the glamour, just as Marx exposes the blood price beneath the allure of the commodity. The fatal glamour of vampires combines sexual allure with the promise of immortality:

Vampires were fairy tales and magic. They were the wolf in the forest that ran ahead to grandmother’s house, the video game big boss who could be hunted without guilt, the monster that tempted

you into its bed, the powerful eternal beast one might become. The beautiful dead, *la belle morte*. And if, after gorging themselves in an orgy of death, they became less lovely, if they became bloated and purple and horrible, then they hid it well. (108)

Note here the brilliant analysis of the vampire's appeal, in all its various modes: the objectification of the other meeting the thrill of the chase as in video games; the sexual appeal of the demon lover 'that tempted you into bed'; the utopian promise of 'the powerful beast one might become' (with the additional ambivalent temptation of succumbing to animality) (108). There are also the more archaic instinctual temptations of 'The beautiful dead', where sex and death are united. But finally, Black reminds us of the pathological voraciousness beneath the bright surface.

In *Coldtown*, desire is not unconnected with commodification. The beauty of the vampire is offered up on TV as an object for consumption (though, in turn, one that threatens to consume the viewers' subjectivity): 'They looked absurdly gorgeous, glowing from the television like fallen angels. [. . .] People liked pretty things. People even liked pretty things that wanted to kill or eat them' (107). These 'pretty things' evoke desire. Black characterises their dangerous fascination in an image that has a long history in Gothicised romance from the Byronic vampire, through the Brontës, and on – demonic lovers as 'fallen angels'. Lucien is 'beautiful the way the devil might have been, just before he fell' (317) and Gavriel is 'every bit the debauched angel, far from heaven' (355). These satanic lovers reveal their humanity in a way that makes them charming: Gavriel 'smiled, a real smile, the kind real boys gave real girls' (158). But this authentic, 'real' humanity is in tension with their equally desirable otherness. There is a dramatic amplification of the classic allure of the 'bad boy', which Tana experiences first with Aidan and then more intensely with Gavriel as 'like being out on a very dangerous date' (344).

Passion is a radically different source of terror than alienating capital, and it may serve as its antithesis, yet it carries its own dangers of the dissolution of identity and agency. I quoted the description of Tana's first kiss with Gavriel earlier in this essay. The first kiss is an essential narrative episode in the romance genre, and is all the better if spiced with a sense of its being forbidden (especially when, in YA fiction, the possibility of sex, of giving the lover 'something that would feel wrong, something he wanted' is suggested (159)). Tana herself is a risk-taker and something of a sympathetic delinquent: 'It was bad enough that she'd kissed him *like that*, but it

was the same impulse as hitting the gas on an icy road' (190). After this kiss, 'scared of him as she had been', Tana is 'more frightened of herself' (160). There is always one such impulsive, dangerous moment where free will is in abeyance; it is the stuff of romantic fiction, of course, intensified by the demonic nature of the lover and the ever-present suggestion of the bite.

Black ingeniously gets around the problem of credibility that a two-hundred-year-old vampire would find a seventeen-year-old woman *the* unique love object by stressing that Tana is the only one who has ever helped him, the only one to see him as redeemable. That is, she sees him as an agent rather than a thing. It is a genre cliché, of course – the agonised demonic lover tormented for centuries and finding that one person (compare Francis Ford Coppola's *Dracula* or Joss Whedon's *Angel*), but works well in this context of concerns over autonomy. Gavriel loves because Tana recognises his subjectivity and moral agency: 'You expected me to be good, and because of you, I tried.' But, he says, 'you should get away from me as fast as you can [. . .] Even my love is monstrous' (348). It is precisely this love that makes him not monstrous. 'Who in the world would allow me to be saved?', he asks Lucien, in awe that Tana would (393). He tells her, 'You're brave and you're good [. . .] – you dared to save even an unhappy creature like myself, merely because I needed saving' (118), and especially 'In all my long life, though there were many times I prayed for it, no one has ever saved me. No one but you' (303). In turn, Tana recognises him as a free agent, undetermined by any essence such as corruption; she reveals his own autonomy to him: 'You're very, very dangerous [. . .] and you're prone to some very theatrical brooding, but don't let yourself mistake that for some kind of inner corruption' (350). The idea of reforming the rake is a classic trope of romance plots from Richardson's *Pamela* onwards, but Black transforms it into an existentialist project.

I mentioned the threat of the bite in Gavriel and Tana's kiss. The moment of biting or being bitten is a crucial expression of desire in vampire romance. The act of biting is exhilarating; Midnight tells her audience, 'Drinking blood is like an explosion of rose petals, it's like honey and milk and every warm thing in the world. It's like drinking pure light' (262). Here, there is a retreat to infancy ('milk') and a 'warmth' that the coldness of Coldtown and the dead State belies. But already Midnight has tasted despair too. She has killed her twin brother, hoping for greater closeness, and is now totally alone. She knows this would not have happened had she not 'wanted to be a marvellous monster and beautiful like the dawn' (263) – a dawn

she will now no longer see.

Desire in paranormal romance is thus dangerous but it also has a redemptive element; at its best, rather than imposing an unambiguous and conservative heteronormativity, it adumbrates an emancipated and mutual love. There is a touchingly realistic aspect in their relationship, one stripped of any deceitful glamour, as Gavriel promises to stay with Tana and work cooperatively to help her fight the infection while, as she says, ‘puking and probably pissing my pants, not to mention screaming’ (416). There is thus a utopian drive at work in Tana and Gavriel’s project of reciprocal redemption from monstrosity.

Utopia

There are other strands of utopianism. Black prefaces each chapter with an epigraph on death; these do not always seem to have a point, but some certainly do. Perhaps inadvertently, Henry Wood Beecher’s lines politicise the realm beyond death, revealing it as the utopian republic for those who feel estranged in this world: ‘On this side of the grave we are exiles, on that citizens’ (309). Montaigne’s epigraph to chapter 16 is very apt on the appeal of vampirism: ‘Death, they say, acquits us of all obligations’ (142). This suggests the lawlessness of rabid, individualistic capitalism but equally opens up a realm of existential freedom (a common concern in YA Gothic).²³

As embodied subjects, we are confronted with the physicality of our body and the limitations imposed by that corporeal burden. Vampires offer an escape from this. Ernst Bloch, though speaking here on the utopian hopes of transcending death in religion, can also elucidate the eternity of life offered by the vampire’s gift of blood: ‘Whether such overarching [. . .] into the postmortal sphere [. . .] was the opium of the people or rather a strengthening of the sense of the infinite value of their own souls and thus a strengthening of the will not to be treated like cattle here and now’.²⁴ Bloch’s dialectical analysis of the promise of the afterlife usefully suggests both the passivity induced by submission to the vampire (and perhaps the vampire romance itself) and the refusal not to be prey or a commodity to be consumed. Thus, this hope may have a politically critical dimension. For Adorno, in discussion with Bloch, without this yearning to transcend death, there would be no straining beyond the realism of passive acceptance of how things are: ‘[W]ithout the notion of an unfettered life, freed from death, the idea of utopia [. . .] *cannot* even be thought of at

all'.²⁵ This is a reminder of the promise that vampirism offers in paranormal romance. Recall, in particular, Lucien Moreau's vision above 'where men aspire to be immortal' (330). Black qualifies this; in the *Twilight* series and many other novels in the genre, immortality is an unambiguous good but here it has a dystopian colouring. Tana will, at the end, renounce the temptation of eternal life and enlist the power of her monstrous lover to ward off her own monstrosity.

However, other characters uncritically embrace the gift. Thus, after her transformation, Midnight posts on her blog, journaling the fear of decay which she now feels emancipated from:

I've posted lots of times about hating every second I was getting older. You saw all my freak-outs that my cells were dying and my hair was falling out. [. . .] Sometimes I thought I could feel the decay inside me, taste the rot in my mouth before I brushed my teeth in the morning. (261-63)

There are suggestions here of anorexia and body dysmorphia ('I couldn't eat, because the idea of food disgusted me' [262]), for vampirism is, too, the triumph over the body. And yet, unlike many vampire romances, this particular utopian moment is demystified and the promise of eternal life exposed as not only pathological on the personal level but a further aspect of exploitation. Thus, in an obvious reference to abuse and to criminalisation, but also the false promises of capital generally, Lucien 'recruits kids off the streets, offers them food and a place to sleep, says they can earn eternal life' (313).

There is one other suggestive utopian moment. Vampires have always been sexually ambiguous. Black makes an explicit link between the outsider status of the vampire and the transgender character Valentina, who came initially to Coldtown to preserve her transfigured state from ageing in a paradoxical urge to make fixed what is fluid. Black delineates Valentina's otherness and her reasons for desiring vampirism: she had come with a friend from the 'same small town' [. . .] We didn't fit in, and we thought we were going to run away to a place where everyone was like us and we'd be transformed' (226); "I wasn't born a girl," Valentina said, shifting her long, elegant legs to stand. "At least not on the outside. [. . .] If I was turned, I figured at least I could keep looking like I do now" (228). This echoes the promise of a haven for difference that Midnight has cultivated in her blogs.

Valentina has the same urges to freedom that have driven her to 'escape' to

Coldtown; it is prison camp and yet promised land, particularly for those whose otherness renders them outcasts, ‘a place where everyone was like us and we’d be transformed’. This is the metamorphosis that money offers but rarely delivers; vampirism promises similar transformations, facilitating sex change (the endlessly dissolving powers of capital), and also the usual vampiric prize of eternal life so that Valentina’s transformed femininity can be preserved. Thus in Coldtown there is an ambivalent haven for those excluded by society, notably in the Eternal Ball – ‘a party that had started in 2004 and raged ceaselessly ever since’ (54) – for Valentina, at least, though she has now shunned immortality. There is a perfect (and knowing) moment of carnival, as Valentina and Jameson dance together, with the promise of love between them:

And Tana finally understood how the wildness of the Eternal Ball was the wildness of grief, the intoxicating dance of carnival, where one leaves oneself at home and becomes something else for a night, hoping that the old skin will still fit when one comes back to it in the morning. (411)

However, this also reminds us that the inversion of order that capitalism in carnival offers is only temporary and leaves the structures of oppression intact, for Coldtown is still a prison.

Among these glimpses of an alternative to the all-consuming world that Black depicts is a brief but powerful suggestion that even the predatory instincts of the vampire might become benign: ‘it was time to hug Pearl again, to tell her that she loved her, to drink in the warmth of her skin and listen to the thunder of her heart’ (412). The monstrous uncontrollable appetites of consumption have become humanised and unalienated, transformed into sensuous sisterly love. This is reminiscent of Marcuse’s utopian anticipation of the benign transformations of the perversions in an emancipated society, where ‘inhuman, coercive, compulsive, and destructive forms [. . .] have an instinctual substance [which] may well express itself in other forms compatible with normality in high civilization’.²⁶

In another reversal at the end of the novel, the surveillance culture of this world is also reappropriated, turning the spectatorial process into something emancipatory, where Tana prepares to film herself overcoming the infection, transforming object into subject with her body and in the media. Thus, Tana’s self-surveillance (as do the televised actions of her revolt) demystifies the glamour of the

vampires and the neoliberal dystopia that both contains them and thrives off them. Likewise, the remarkably saleable commodity that is paranormal romance unmasks its own workings through *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*, laying bare the conventions of vampire romance by employing it as a representation of the deceptive allure of dystopic neoliberal capitalism.

Conclusion

Coldtown is a story of monsters resisting reification and regaining autonomy from the omnipotence of capital and this emancipation is adumbrated by the utopianism despite the apparent conservatism of the ending. The question has been raised of how radical these YA dystopian fictions are. Many conclude with the overthrow of the actual dystopian system or, at least, the anticipation of that goal. However, Basu, Broad and Hintz claim ‘YA dystopias that end in romantic fulfilment tend to include a retreat from society [. . .] turning away from the social and political involvement that motivated the narrative’.²⁷ *Coldtown* does not exactly turn away from politics, despite the dawn of that ‘romantic fulfilment’. It is rather pessimistic than conservative; the novel is open-ended and utopian possibilities emerge only at the individual and not the social level. However, it is still a biting political critique and does not affirm the current state of affairs; the acute registering of social malaise through the genre of dystopia is supplemented by the use of paranormal romance to celebrate human values.

After she has been turned, Midnight blogs on the sense of estrangement that has driven her to this point:

I know you feel the same way sometimes, like there’s something wrong with us because we’re not the magnificent monsters we were meant to be. Well, you’re right. I can tell you know, from the other side, that we were right. Everything feels right now. (262)

In this alienation lies the despair of unrealised utopian aspirations. Black exposes Midnight’s alienated mode of self-expression as Bad Faith (in the Sartrean sense). Acquiescing in the general reification that makes human qualities and powers thing-like, she passively accepts her monstrosity. Tana, in contrast, refuses to become monstrous and exercises her autonomy, enlisting the co-operation of Gavriel (who is fighting his own battle towards humanity).

However, the alienation dramatised here is not merely an adolescent state; the

anxieties of young adults are often implicated in wider human experience. Jürgen Habermas, drawing on work by Kenneth Keniston, notes a significant shift in adolescent crisis during the 1960s, where the problems are ‘no longer those of adjusting to the system [. . .] possibilities of social experimentation and identity formation have been expanded, with results that are often incompatible with the privatistic needs of the system’.²⁸ This is perhaps even more the case with the increased colonisation of the lifeworld by system in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, and in the world of *Coldtown*, where money and power both insinuate themselves into everyday life, reifying the interactions between people.²⁹ There is a universal condition that can be represented by the indeterminacy and transient state of young adulthood as described by Carrie Hintz and Elaine Ostry: ‘authority appears oppressive, [. . .] no one feels more under surveillance than the average teenager. [. . .] The adolescent [. . .] feels the limits on his or her freedom intensely’.³⁰ I would argue that adolescence can be a metonym for revelation, for moments of breaking through uncritical, habitual acquiescence. Hence the adolescent, sensing and testing these limits, can stand for the wider body of alienated subjects under neoliberalism.

Basu, Broad, and Hintz claim that, ‘Perhaps one of the strongest sources of appeal for young adult dystopias, then, is the unequivocal clarity of their message [. . .] This blatant didacticism signals to readers the problems with society while offering something like a training manual on how to overcome the dilemma, reverse the damage, and start anew’.³¹ But *Coldtown* does not do this, and that is another reason for treating it as a work that escapes the confines of the YA classification. Likewise, it avoids the ‘prescriptive qualities and unveiled moral messages’ that are ascribed to the genre.³² Perhaps it is the modulation by paranormal romance that subverts this. The dystopian genre sets up the stark world of alienated life, extrapolating from our own society of commodified spectacle. Modulating this with the already hybrid genre of paranormal romance allows the monolithic reification of that dystopia to be fractured and illuminated by gleams of emancipation, even if, as yet, that remains on the level of individual consciousness. Hence, romance ‘can play a key role in shaping the dystopian narrative and the possibilities for social change enacted in the novel’.³³ In *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*, romance reveals countervailing forces and the Gothic mode mediates between this and neoliberal horror. Holly Black’s dialectical interplay between genres defamiliarises genre

conventions to delineate our vampiric world (a world where, three years after *Coldtown* was published, a Reality TV star can become President of the USA) and reveal the potential of its transformation.

Notes

¹ See, for example, Ewan Morrison, ‘YA Dystopias Teach Children to Submit to the Free Market, Not Fight Authority’, *Books: The Guardian*, 1 September 2014 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/sep/01/ya-dystopias-children-free-market-hunger-games-the-giver-divergent>> [accessed 24 May 2019]; and Andrew O’Hehir, ‘“Divergent” and “Hunger Games” as Capitalist Agitprop’, *Salon*, 22 March 2014 <http://www.salon.com/2014/03/22/divergent_and_hunger_games_as_capitalist_agitprop/> [accessed 24 May 2019]. My emphasis here is on received mainstream opinion, though critical writing, too, has found a conservative tendency; for example, Katherine R. Broad, who sees the romance component as itself conservative (‘“The Dandelion in the Spring”: Utopia as Romance in Suzanne Collins’s *The Hunger Games* Trilogy’, in *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers*, ed. by Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad, and Carrie Hintz, Children’s Literature and Culture (Abingdon, Oxon. and New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 117–30). This ignores the ambivalences possible in the romance genre and its utopian, transformative potential.

² See, for example, Alison Waller, *Constructing Adolescence in Fantastic Realism* (New York and London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 32–3.

³ Of course, the dark lover has a long history, but paranormal romance makes these lovers explicitly monsters in the supernatural sense. For paranormal romance in general, see Joseph Crawford, *The Twilight of the Gothic: Vampire Fiction and the Rise of the Paranormal Romance* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014).

⁴ Viktor Shklovsky, cited in Jurij Striedter, *Literary Structure, Evolution and Value: Russian Formalism and Czech Structuralism Reconsidered* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 30.

⁵ M. M. Bakhtin, ‘Discourse in the Novel’, in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982), pp. 360–61.

⁶ See Christopher Frayling, *Vampyres: Genesis and Resurrection from Count Dracula to Vampirella*, 3rd edn (London: Thames and Hudson, 2016), and Sam George and Bill Hughes, 'Introduction', in *Open Graves, Open Minds: Representations of Vampires and the Undead from the Enlightenment to the Present Day*, ed. by Samantha George and Bill Hughes (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 1–23 (pp. 7–15). For the vampire as representation of wider cultural symptoms, the classic texts are Nina Auerbach, *Our Vampires, Ourselves* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995) and Ken Gelder, *Reading the Vampire* (London: Routledge, 1994).

⁷ Karl Marx, *Capital*, trans. by Ben Fowkes, intr. by Ernest Mandel (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), I, p. 342. See also Chris Baldick, 'Karl Marx's Vampires and Grave-Diggers', in *In Frankenstein's Shadow: Myth, Monstrosity, and Nineteenth-Century Writing* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 191–40.

⁸ The political force of the vampire in neoliberal times has been explored by: Aspasia Stephanou, *Reading Vampire Gothic Through Blood: Bloodlines*, Palgrave Gothic (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Susan Chaplin, *The Postmillennial Vampire: Power, Sacrifice and Simulation in True Blood, Twilight and Other Contemporary Narratives* (New York, NY: Palgrave Pivot, 2017); Stacey Abbott, *Undead Apocalypse: Vampires and Zombies in the 21st Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018); Sorcha Ní Fhlainn, *Postmodern Vampires: Film, Fiction, and Popular Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). For neoliberal Gothic narratives in general, see Linnie Blake and Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet (eds), *Neoliberal Gothic: International Gothic in the Neoliberal Age*, International Gothic Series (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019).

⁹ The genealogy of the demonic lover has roots in the monstrous couplings from ancient myth, old ballads, and 'Beauty and the Beast'. The line runs through Lovelace in Richardson's *Clarissa*, touched by Milton's Satan, to the vampire created in Byron's image (or self-image) by Polidori from Lady Caroline Lamb's semi-autobiographical Gothic novel *Glenarvon*, and to the dark heroes of the Brontës, Daphne du Maurier, and Mills and Boon.

¹⁰ Holly Black, *The Coldest Girl In Coldtown* (London: Indigo, 2013), p. 38. Further references are to this edition in parentheses.

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- ¹¹ Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad, and Carrie Hintz, 'Introduction', in *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers*, ed. by Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad, and Carrie Hintz, *Children's Literature and Culture* (Abingdon, Oxon. and New York: Routledge, 2015), pp. 1-15 (p. 3).
- ¹² For a concise summary of neoliberalism, see David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- ¹³ See Peter Bloom, *Monitored: Business and Surveillance in a Time of Big Data* (London: Pluto Press, 2019).
- ¹⁴ Quinn Slobodian, *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), p. 13.
- ¹⁵ Guy Redden, 'Is Reality TV Neoliberal?', *Television and New Media*, 19.5 (2017), 399–414 (p. 405).
- ¹⁶ Beverley Best, 'Raymond Williams and the Structure of Feeling of Reality TV', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2.7 (2012), 192–201 (p. 197).
- ¹⁷ Catherine Chaput, 'Affect and Belonging in Late Capitalism: A Speculative Narrative on Reality TV', *International Journal of Communication*, 5 (2010), 1–19 (p. 11).
- ¹⁸ Miichelle A. Massé explores the idea that 'it is a critical commonplace that the [Gothic] genre is "about" suffering women whose painful initiations provide some vague pleasure for women authors, characters, and readers' (*In the Name of Love: Women, Masochism, and the Gothic* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 1).
- ¹⁹ Istvan Mészáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*, 4th edn (London: Merlin Press, 1970), p. 35.
- ²⁰ I do not think that Holly Black is demonising Goth culture, by the way, though I do think she may be uncovering something destructive at the heart of our fascination with darkness – and that includes the allure of her own story. By introducing the Goth characters Midnight and Winter, she is able to play with the associations of Goth subculture and Gothic fiction in order to say something very acute about the glamour of Gothic style.
- ²¹ Compare the commodification of blood in the TV series *True Blood* (analysed in Stephanou, *Reading Vampire Gothic*, and Chaplin, *The Postmillennial Vampire*).

²² Emma Clery uncovers in women's Gothic, 'wild passions, the sublime, supernatural phenomena, violent conflict, murder and torture, sexual excess and perversion, outlandish passions, strange minglings of history and fantasy' (*Women's Gothic: From Clara Reeve to Mary Shelley*, 2nd edn, Writers and Their Work (Horndon: Northcote House, 2004), p. 2).

²³ 'This need to recognize one's own agency is a central pattern of adolescent literature', Roberta Seelinga Trites, *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2004), p. 129. Glennis Byron and Shannon Deans argue that this concern with agency is particularly prevalent in YA Gothic: 'adolescent power is depicted in a far more positive and empowering fashion [than in mainstream YA texts] in teen Gothic texts, where power structures are shown to be challenged, compromised, and defeated' ('Teen Gothic', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Modern Gothic*, ed. by Jerrold E. Hogle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 87–103 (p. 97)).

²⁴ Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, trans. by Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight, 3 vols (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), III, p. 1108.

²⁵ Ernst Bloch and Theodor Adorno, 'Something's Missing: A Discussion between Ernst Bloch and Theodor W. Adorno on the Contradictions of Utopian Longing', in Ernst Bloch, *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature: Selected Essays*, trans. by Jack Zipes and Frank Mecklenburg (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), pp. 1–17 (p. 10).

²⁶ Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 1987), p. 203.

²⁷ Basu, Broad, and Hintz, 'Introduction', p. 8.

²⁸ David Ingram, *Habermas and the Dialectic of Reason* (Yale University Press, 1989), n. 27, p. 232.

²⁹ For the philosopher Jürgen Habermas, the lifeworld is that realm of mutual understanding where communicative action takes place. In late modernity, this is increasingly rationalised and encroached upon – 'colonised' – by the dehumanised, autonomous systems of economics and administrative power. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action Vol. 2: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functional Reason*, trans. by Thomas McCarthy (Cambridge: Polity, 1985).

³⁰ Carrie Hintz and Elaine Ostry, 'Introduction', in *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*, ed. by Carrie Hintz and Elaine Ostry (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 1–20 (pp. 9–10).

³¹ Basu, Broad, and Hintz, 'Introduction', p. 5.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.