



HOW THE QUEER IN THE VICTORIAN NOVEL UNDERMINES IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY

By Alexis Dadelahi

OVERVIEW

- Background
- How the Queer Opposes Imperial Ideology
 - Failure of Heteronormativity
- Works to establish the notion that at the heart of the empire is decay.



POWER THROUGH A FOUCAULTIAN LENS

- “The analysis, made in terms of power, must not assume that the sovereignty of the state, the form of the law, or the over-all unity of domination are given at the outset; rather, these are only the terminal forms power takes” (Foucault 92).
- Power exists as a system of Force Relations



FOUCAULTIAN LENS CONT'D.

- The symbolic order
 - Language
- Discourse creates a web of linked ideas
 - Codification= Power (Ideology)

Ideas → Linked Ideas → Discourse → Field of Discourse
and Power → Ideology



THE QUEER IN IMPERIALISM

- Queer- the odd, uncanny other
- Exogamy and traffic/exchange in women
- Homosocial desire=covert pacification of class tensions
- Heterosexuality=power (over women, colonies, servants, miscegenation etc)



http://historymike.blogspot.com/2007_08_01_archive.htm



HETERONORMATIVITY AND *LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET*

- Robert Audley and George Talboys
 - Robert fails to uphold/deserve his class—emasculates him (androgynous male)
 - Subversion of heterosexual type—heterosexuality doesn't come naturally
- Slippage into the homoerotic (Clara Talboys)
 - Ultimately fails to foreclose his homosocial ties



HETERONORMATIVITY AND SHERLOCK HOLMES

- Holmes=champion of the middle-class
 - Middle class is active—still failing
- Hope rests on Holmes but...
 - He is afflicted with a torpor
 - Eternal Bachelor—obsessed with criminality
 - Denial of heterosexual power



CORRUPTION AT THE CORE

- Slippage of heterosexual power is a failure of imperialism
 - Chaos in Force Relations—Class boundaries become blurred
 - Failure of in-group
- Failure of “natural marriage” is failure of the empire



WORKS CITED

Braddon, Mary Elizabeth. *Lady Audle's Secret*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. Print.

Doyle, Arthur Conan. *A Study in Scarlet and The Sign of the Four*. San Bernardino: 2013. Print.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. Trans. Robert Hurley 1st Vintage ed. 1. New York: Random House Inc., 1980. Print.

