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Transmedial Migration: Properties of Fictional Characters
Adapted into Actual Behavior

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Abstract

Research in the field of fictional and possible worlds examines the real and its hypothetical counterparts. The interaction between the actual and the fictional is a cause of debate within this field, and includes questions concerning the ontological status of fictional characters and their relation to reality. The following discussion will engage current positions in this debate. These include questions of reference regarding the correlation between fictional characters and actual personalities. Studying the transmedial migration of character properties from fictional worlds into the actual world engages with the possible as dependent on the actual, as well as the influence fiction can have on reality, by demonstrating how individual characters are perceived as packages of properties, some of which we identify and recognize as adaptable to our own behavior. Transmedial migration requires compatibility between different media. Accordingly, it is explained through the direct correspondence of fictional properties to actual properties, and the indirect correspondence of fictional characters to actual people. I am claiming that an interaction can be observed between different media, such as fictional worlds and the actual world, with particular emphasis on the example of fictional characters and their properties. In order to comprehend this we need a robust framework and the model that I am proposing here comprises the essential elements for such a framework. The transmedial migration of character properties from a textual medium, such as a Sherlock Holmes story, into the physical, social medium of the actual world is the action of adapting a fictional character's package of properties into an actual person's behavior. The agency of actual people in adapting fictional character properties to their corporal, social actions is what constitutes transmedial migration. This is a specific example of behavioral learning that recognizes certain behavior by the means of a label or trademark that is acquired from a fictional character. It is conceivable that any number of behavioral attributes, such as attitudes or habits, could be scientifically proven to have transmedially migrated by means of experimentation. Nevertheless, culturally and socially, it is only the definite identification of such character properties that substantiates my argument of transmedial migration through adaptation.

Keywords: fictional worlds; fictional being; fictional properties; possible worlds; possible being; adaptation; ontology; transmedial migration; transmediality;

Introduction

Fictional-worlds study is part of a greater interest in possible-worlds theory in addition to being an important aspect of the understanding of narrative construction. Its primary concerns are with the ontology of fictional characters and worlds, and how those worlds are constructed in a way that makes communication between writers and readers consensual regarding the nature of a fictive presentation of reality. Previous research, depending on the main emphasis of the study, has focused on the general nature of fictional worlds—confronting them as a literary device, an alternate reality or a possible world—or concentrated on certain aspects of them, such as the ontological status of fictional beings or the extent to which fictional worlds imitate the actual world. The approach advocated in this paper aspires to build upon the knowledge and ideas that have already circulated. What I specifically address in this theoretical area I call transmedial migration, the adaptation of properties of fictional characters into actual behavior.

According to Lubomír Doležel, a fictional world is “a possible world constructed by a fictional text or other performative semiotic medium” (1998, 280). In the case of the Sherlock Holmes stories, it is the author Arthur Conan Doyle who constructs this world in a textual medium that is reconstructed in the actual world by one or more persons. Although the textual world is fictional, this text is read by readers who live in the actual world, so this world is conceived in reality. Nevertheless, the ontological status of authors and readers as actual people does not

guarantee that what originates in an author's mind will influence extra-mental reality through readers, for although both authors and readers inhabit the actual world, readers may be separated from an author by time, space, and culture. How the original fictional world can be expanded and modified into different spheres through transmedial migration is demonstrated in transfictionality, the methods that expand a work of fiction beyond its original boundaries, and transmediality, which according to Henry Jenkins is "the flow of content through multiple media platforms" (2). In these two concepts, the premise is a broad general claim that the transmedial migration of character properties from fictional worlds to the actual world can occur.

My concept denotes not just migration, the passage from one place to another, but the transition from one condition to another. Transmedial migration across worlds begins with the presupposition that in order for fiction to be intelligible to actual beings, it must correspond directly or indirectly to the actual world. Accordingly, it is fiction's reference to reality, imitation of reality, impact on reality, and origin in reality that has been touched upon by various scholars and researchers (Pavel, 1986; Ryan, 1992; Ronen, 1994; Doležel, 1998). There are descriptions of fictive properties that relate to reality, which makes their transmedial migration from fiction to reality possible through adaptation. The extent to which fiction imitates reality determines the level of adaptability and migratory freedom of such properties. This, in turn, allows them to have an impact on reality. Any such theorization must begin with the real in order to speculate about the fictional. Some scholarship has attempted to explain this relation comprehensively, which we find in possible-worlds theory (Kripke, 1963; Plantinga, 1974; Lewis, 1986). Others have focused specifically on particular aspects, which is common in fictional-worlds studies. With my contribution to an understanding of the relation between the fictional and the real, I will first demonstrate that certain character properties can transmedially migrate from fiction to reality. After explaining how this takes place, I will show that specific influence by an individual character can be determined.

The main object of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of the ontology of fiction and how fiction affects reality by means of an analysis of what I call the transmedial migration of character properties. Properties of fictional characters distinguish them. A reader understands what is particular about characters based on their unique properties. While the narrator may tell readers outright which properties a character possesses, they are often demonstrated through actions. What

the character does, or consequently does not do, helps readers to draw conclusions as to who these characters are. Descriptive adjectives are signposts in the text that prompt readers what to think. There is interdependency between the fictional world and the characters that populate it, since the characters require a fictional world to inhabit, and this world is partly constructed in relation to its characters. Some characters persist in popularity and are used in a wider cultural context, expanding their influence to outside the text. These characters can be very complex, and via their textual presentation, the author asserts of them a seemingly extra-textual existence, which is why discussions of ontological status are so relevant. Fictional characters' unique properties are particularly significant because the textual encounter with them can be traced through their impression on readers. This is because the alteration of actual personalities and the transmedial migration of character properties from the fictional world into the actual world are documented in changes of behavior.

One example is Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, where the main character commits suicide out of despair for his love of a married woman. Published in 1774 in Germany, it appears to have started a trend among young men committing suicide, some of whom modeled their action on Werther's distinct, literary feat. So convinced were authorities of this effect, the book was banned in places such as Italy, Leipzig, and Copenhagen (Phillips, 340). This so-called Werther effect is not acknowledged by everyone, but David P. Phillips makes a convincing case using statistics from well-publicized suicide cases to argue that, via suggestion, they cause an immediate increase in overall occurrences wherever the information is available. Suggestion, according to *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* is the "implanting of an idea in the mind of another by a word or act so as to influence conduct or physical condition" and it explains how the Werther effect could influence those who commit suicide. Furthermore, it has a notable affinity to transmedial migration. Documenting such characters from their original manifestation in one or more texts to a wider, cross-cultural fame will help to identify how some of their properties can transmedially migrate. Accordingly, the example of Sherlock Holmes will be devoted specific attention, since his character, along with his properties, has followed the transfictional and transmedial development of his fictional world. In the following section, character properties will be explained as written into the fictional world by the author and subsequently accessed by readers via transmedial migration. Examples of how these character properties obtain an ontological foothold in the actual world

through actions performed by real people upholds the line of demarcation between the actual and the fictional, while simultaneously demonstrating a relationship across the divide.

Properties attributed to fictional characters are textually discerned by readers as having a direct relation to a character's proper name. In the actual world, we mentally distinguish properties in a person, without necessarily needing to formulate them with words. For that reason, an adaptation of fictional properties must occur in order for them to transmedially migrate from one medium into another. The textually constructed and limited medium of a fictional narrative and the physical and social medium, what we call the actual world, are two such media. When a character property of Sherlock Holmes is adapted from his fictional world into the actual world, it has transmedially migrated. Since my argument is that not all properties, but only particular ones are adaptable from the fictional to the actual state, an appropriate place to engage in determining fiction's relation to reality is an investigation of such properties and their transmediatory capabilities. Not all properties share reference to both fictional and actual worlds, so this analysis will require studying properties that demonstrate ontological independence from the fictional world and the characters that exhibit them.

Fictional characters qualify as possible beings, I will argue, and although they do not exist, the kinds of things they say and do are not confined to their fictional personality. The acts that they commit are acts that can be adapted, which makes certain character properties involved in this act reproducible. It will be argued that the famous literary detective Sherlock Holmes is a possible being, the parameters of which will be discussed in the following sections. Although a fictional entity, his characteristic method of applying deductive reasoning in the solving of crime is documented as not only repeatable by actual beings, but relevant and useful in the solving of real crime cases. Arthur Conan Doyle is responsible for stipulating the fictional state of affairs where such practices are put to use, but no such occurrence ever took place in the actual world with Sherlock Holmes involved, at least not as far as we know. While the actual world determines what is possible in the textual one, the ability of fiction to present the plausible and ontologically possible has the potential to direct the course of real events through the transmedial migration of character properties.

Fictional Being as Possible Being

In this section, I argue that Sherlock Holmes as a fictional character is also a possible being. Although Sherlock Holmes as a fictional character only has an indirect correspondence to anything that may be found in reality, certain character properties of his persona correspond directly to entities in the actual world. He has no existence in the actual world, but the text engages the minds of readers to form an impression of him as a person through the direct correspondence that some of his properties have to real phenomena. Ascribing an ontological status to Sherlock Holmes confronts many of the ontological issues that face any discussion of beings, whether actual or possible. Exploring some fundamental aspects of ontology and applying them to validate Sherlock Holmes as a possible being clarifies what makes certain properties of fictional characters capable of transmedially migrating into the actual world.

One way of explaining the relation of fiction to reality is mimesis, the imitation of the real world in fiction. According to Doležel, “the basic move of mimetic interpretation is to assign to a fictional entity an actual prototype” and therefore the mimetic function can be expressed as fictional particular $P(f)$ represents actual particular $P(a)$ (1998, 6). Some fictional worlds imitate the actual world. For instance, the Napoleon of Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* represents the Napoleon who actually existed. Nevertheless, since Sherlock Holmes has no actual particular, then mimetic semantics cannot explain the totality of his fictional being. Possible-worlds semantics, however, can account for all fictional beings by showing that all fictional particulars, such as fictional characters and their properties, are nonactualized possible entities, although with an entirely different ontology from actual ones. Since transmedial migration implies that the actual world reciprocally imitates the fictional in certain cases, these character properties must overcome this ontological divide.

Like certain fictional beings that have a direct link to actual counterparts, such as Tolstoy’s Napoleon, certain fictional character properties and their actual prototypes are connected by a transworld identity which is “a relationship of identity between entities that are located in different possible worlds” where the actual world is a realized possible world (Doležel 1998, 282). This assumes that there is a similarity between the fictional entity and the actual prototype, that they share some essential properties. Writers of fiction may choose to use verisimilitude, or alter these properties when constructing a fictional world, what Doležel calls “nonessentialist

semantics” (17). Ruth Ronen writes “by attributing fiction to the realm of the possible and the contingent, the capacity of fiction to actualize alternative or contingent properties (enabling Napoleon in fiction to diverge from Napoleon in history) can be explained” (54). The adaptation of these properties requires an explanation for what remains consistent about a property across all possible worlds despite these changes, so that every embodiment of it is linked. According to Saul Kripke, this link is called “a rigid designator if in any possible world it designates the same object” the way it is used in the actual world and “a nonrigid or accidental designator” if it does not (48-49). Sherlock Holmes is semantically distinct from other proper names because of its unique origin in Doyle’s stories, and from there it transmedially migrates through other possible worlds. Likewise, the descriptive adjective ‘Holmesian’ is a rigid designator, but if something ascribed to Sherlock Holmes exists in the actual world as a property of actual individuals, then it must be determined how it can be considered distinctly Holmesian.

Since what makes Sherlock Holmes’ properties particular to him is the distinctive nature of his character, then his properties are understood in relation to a comprehensive conception of his character. The use of language in a literary text like the Sherlock Holmes stories is very similar to instances when we cannot determine the truth value of an utterance about a real life event because we have no direct observation of it. In such cases, we analyze them through comparison to other evidence relating the same frame of reference or contrast and classify them to other frames of reference that we are aware of. In the absence of direct experience, we are reliant on other sources to confer information as well as our own point of view. There are, in best case scenarios, ways to determine a real state of affairs since the referents actually existed at some point. In a literary text, the characters and states of affairs are specific to its internal field of reference (Harshaw, 230). Therefore, there is no way to find information about them apart from the text. Nevertheless, this internal field of reference contains verbal testimonies and other evidence that provides readers with the information necessary to draw a conclusion about them, through the same kind of compare, contrast and classify strategy employed in the case of real life situations in the absence of direct experience. In this sense, a character property does not transmedially migrate as an isolated entity, but as part of the Holmesian package of properties that includes them. In an instance of transmedial migration readers reassemble the elements with a new trademark, having identified them by the context

provided by the package, and adapt them to the new environment. This is very significant, since we call it a Holmesian character property if its Holmesian character is recognizable.

Descriptions of Sherlock Holmes also refer to character properties, but serve as nonrigid designators because the designations are dependent on verbal form. For example, if designating Sherlock Holmes by the definite description “Mycroft Holmes’ brother” or “the only unofficial consulting detective” these definite descriptions carry intensions manifest by the different verbal forms. Doležel says that “if the writer assigns the two kinds of singular reference to his fictional persons in a consistent way, then his texture displays a regularity of naming” so all such definite descriptions are inclusive to the term Holmesian, which refers to Sherlock Holmes’ properties, or the proper name Sherlock Holmes, which includes them (1998, 140). Since the identification of a fictional property is so important for transmedial migration, a fictional being must have character properties that are identifiable by the trademark, and in order for a fictional being to establish a trademark it must embody this consistency of reference.

At this point, the question of possible being in fiction begins with the real, and predicates the possible in terms of a construction of fictional reality. The intelligibility of a possible being depends on its relation to actual being, or to state this in Thomas Pavel’s terms, “we may distinguish between primary and secondary universes within dual structures, the former constituting the foundation upon which the latter is built” by which he means that an imaginary or fictional thing in a secondary universe corresponds contingently to an existing thing in the primary universe (57). In other words, to consider a fictional character like Sherlock Holmes with respect to whether a real thing can or does correspond to him is to consider possible being in relation to actual being. Since it is possible to conceive of things that could become real, or could have been real, but that remain fictional, the possible is best understood in contrast to the actual. The following discussion assumes that the actual world is “a realized possible world that is perceived by human senses and provides the stage for human acting” (Doležel 1998, 279). It is a physical, social medium within which human agents can adapt fictional properties to their own purposes.

While Pavel does not address possible being specifically in his book *Fictional Worlds*, his discussion of fictional and possible worlds as distinct from reality includes this concept. As mentioned earlier, he refers to the actual world as the

primary universe and the fictional world as a secondary universe. Readers employ a dual structure, imposing a salient world on the primary universe (reality) in order to create a secondary universe (fiction). Pavel borrows the term *existentially conservative* and *existentially creative* from philosopher Gareth Evans to describe the correspondence between the two universes. The conservative model resembles mimesis since it assigns one element in the primary universe to one element in the secondary universe. In the case of the creative model, which can be applied to the case of Sherlock Holmes, there are elements in the secondary universe, the fictional world of the novel, that have no direct correspondent in the primary universe. It is important to point out that existential creativity does not imply the absolute otherness of the secondary universe, since this would be unintelligible to those in the primary universe. Rather, an author draws upon experience and knowledge in the primary universe to create the entities and states of affairs in the secondary universe. Thus, there occurs an indirect correspondence between the two universes where certain elements of both, such as character properties, can correspond directly insofar as the things in the fictional world are possible. If the elements are truly impossible, having no correspondence to anything that is known to exist in the primary universe and therefore unintelligible, then this suggests a different understanding of the *existentially creative*. In the case of Sherlock Holmes the fictional character, he corresponds indirectly to an Englishman living around the time of the novel's creation. He is *existentially creative* because there is no such person in the actual world. An *existentially conservative* Sherlock Holmes would have a direct correspondent in the actual world for his fictional identity as a person in the novel. Although Sherlock Holmes has no basis in the actual world as a specific individual, he indirectly corresponds as a possible being through his character properties, and these properties correspond directly to actual properties. Moreover, if the line of demarcation between the fictional and actual is ever bridged, it is not done so by an entire fictional character. What transmedially migrates are the character properties that can be identified by their fictional formulation, but are accessible to actual people through the world-making capacity of the reader's imagination that contextually places them in an actual state of affairs.

Here the Aristotelian/Thomistic dichotomy of act and potency can be helpful in further elucidating what is meant by a fictional being's candidacy for possible being, and the means by which fictional properties can adapt (Anderson, 29-32). To

begin with, potency is an intrinsic capacity of existing things. Act is limited by potency, where potency is the capacity for actuality. Nevertheless, potency does not determine possibility in the sense that things could come into being; the principle of potency is the principle of change and limitation. Thus, potency is the capacity that accounts for change or limitation to already existing things, but it does not describe the possibility of something that does not exist to do so under the right circumstances. For example, an acorn has the potency to become an oak tree. Its potential is said to be actualized when the acorn (being-in-potency) develops into a fully grown oak tree (being-in-act). A possible being does not have the potency to change into an actual being; therefore possible being is not to be confused with potency. A being-in-potency is always real. This is what the usefulness of potency lends itself to. Potencies do not exist apart from their actualities because they exist *through* actuality. Since potential already exists via the thing in which it resides, then the potential and actual do not need to be contrasted. According to this view, it would be incorrect to view Sherlock Holmes as a potential being who could be actualized. Rather, since Sherlock Holmes does not exist, he is still in the realm of possible beings and disqualified as a being-in-potency. Nevertheless, a character property has the potential to adapt to different media, and thus can be actualized through the process of adaptation.

One aspect of a possible being is essential possibility, its indirect correspondence to beings that exist. It is an indirect relation—without potency—because even when the entire fictional character does not have direct correspondence—potency—to an actual being, it has properties that can correspond directly to actual properties. Belonging to a fictional being with essential possibility, the character properties of Sherlock Holmes must directly correspond to be considered being-in-potency. This is because character properties are compatible through a direct correspondence to real physical and psychological properties. Although a fictional character does not exist, as a possible being its character properties can correspond contingently to existing ones in the actual world. Accordingly, the second definitive aspect of a possible being is its contingent (or ontological) possibility, which is reliant on the existence of its cause. A possible being cannot as an entity cross over into the real world, but its package of properties, which have a dependent existence through contingent possibility, transmedially migrate through their potential to be adapted. For example, an actual person can refer to these properties with words, as in a Sherlock Holmes story. The author Arthur Conan Doyle

can refer to them when composing the text, and so can readers when adapting properties as described in the strings of text they have read to their real life situation. Thus, actual people supply the existence the character properties need to enter the actual world, with particular emphasis on the reader, through the adaptation of these character properties to their real life experience.

The claim that a fictional character cannot as a single entity transmedially migrate might hypothetically be challenged by suggesting the creation of an artificially intelligent being that has all of Sherlock Holmes' properties. The problem is it would be based on a fictional character that is presented in the narrative without an exact physical form to duplicate. Although Sherlock Holmes' alleged humanity is no more than an assumption based on fictional references to human-like properties, it is a necessary property for any actual embodiment of him. With such an intricate design unique to each individual, no being could totally embody a human without obeying the instructions found in its DNA. Instead of DNA, Sherlock Holmes has textual descriptions, which could be used as instructions for building a model of him in the actual world. Nevertheless, an artificially intelligent being's body would be comprised of at least some parts that are conceived and filled in by its creator, apart from any direct reference to the text. Moreover, even if it is sensitive to its environment in a human-like way, any simulation of the fictional events of a Sherlock Holmes story would only be an adaptation of the fictional narrative. Thus, whatever of Sherlock Holmes that transfers from the textual medium into the social medium of the actual world is a transmedial migration of character properties into physical and psychological actions. They would be real, but this being would not be the human the text implies Sherlock Holmes is. Because of his incompleteness, Sherlock Holmes coming to life remains up until this point in the realm of the truly impossible.

There are extreme cases when transmedial migration cannot occur, due to a lack of intelligibility or identifiable properties. For example, a square circle is truly impossible because it violates the law of noncontradiction. Square and circle have mutually exclusive definitions. We can mention them, and discuss them in relation to each other and everything else imaginable because the mind entertains the impossible as well. As Umberto Eco states, "language can name nonexistent and inconceivable entities" but a square circle is impossible because it is unintelligible (Eco, 81-83).

In the case of Sherlock Holmes, he is not described in a contradictory way. He is presented as a man and he is therefore intelligible as a man. Examples of changes

that would imply contradiction would be if the text gives conflicting information about a character that makes it impossible to identify. If someone wrote a book where all of the characters have one and the same name, then we could not ascribe one package of properties to one character in that case. Even if the text intends to present these many characters as one, they clearly are not. There is no way for people in the actual world to reconcile this conflicting information. This is to say that none of the character properties from this text transmedially migrate, because members of a linguistic community have no way of arriving at a consensus as to a trademark. It would be truly impossible for one character to be several at the same time. The analysis of transmedial adaptation can only happen insofar as members of the linguistic community can recognize the behavior as, for instance, Holmesian. This means that in order for a package of properties to be identified it must belong to an identifiable character. If this cannot be done, then the phenomenon of transmedial adaptation cannot be recognized for what it is. The package of properties must be sufficiently distinct to be acknowledged as corresponding to their fictional origin. Since Sherlock Holmes does not have any such conflicts, his package of properties can be attributed to one character and bear a single trademark, which is necessary in order to identify transmedially migrated character properties in the actual world.

While no one argues that Sherlock Holmes is a real person inhabiting the spatiotemporal universe, readers of, for example, *The Valley of Fear* detect a relation to the actual world that is vital to an understanding of his character. Pavel writes, “An inference system is needed that would relate passages of the book to an extratextual cultural and factual framework” (17). Sherlock Holmes is a fictional being that causes the reader to conclude that he corresponds to a similar man in the actual world, and the parts he is made up of include character properties. Sentences about Sherlock Holmes are considered true or false in the fictional world, which serves as a source of their confirmation once it was constructed by Doyle’s writing. Here it is important to recall that “a possible entity is converted into a fictional existent when it is authenticated by a felicitous, authoritative performative” (Doležel 2010, 42). As an authenticated possible, Sherlock Holmes can be accessed, admired, and talked about by readers; because they can understand him they can emulate him. The authority of the speaker is a required felicity condition of such a performative, and Watson serves as a generally reliable narrator.

The analysis of fictional being as possible being derives from the internal approach to understanding fiction. With its emphasis on the reader's conception of fictional beings, it narrows the focus and examines fictional being in relation to possible being. Pavel's distinctions between the internal and external approach to understanding fiction provide a framework for a discussion of the ontology of fictional beings, their properties, and the subsequent consideration of possible being. The external approach, however, with its emphasis on ontological questions, challenges the legitimacy of the internal approach by claiming that the basic assumptions about the accessibility of fictional and possible worlds are spurious. Accordingly, it is addressed in the next section.

Fictional Worlds and Possible Worlds

Doležel defines a fictional world by saying "it is a small possible world shaped by specific global constraints and containing a finite number of individuals who are compossible" (1998, 20). The "global constraints" dictated by the fictional world of Sherlock Holmes designate it as a "natural world", so he is not only compatible with Watson and everything else in that world, but with the actual world as well. Nevertheless, "the laws of the actual world are but one instance of many possible 'general orders.' A general order controls the entry of constituents into the world: only those entities that comply with the general order are admitted" (Doležel 1998, 19). This does not restrict the number of possible worlds, but does establish a standard of compossibility between a world's internal logic and individuals—along with their properties. The fictional world of Sherlock Holmes is compatible with the general order of the actual world, his character is identifiable as a package of properties, and transmedial migration is possible. Moreover, transmedial migration is possible across all possible worlds, providing that the migrating element complies with the internal logic of the world it enters. There are physical, biological, and technological constraints that would prevent some properties from transmedially migrating into actual human behavior.

Nevertheless, advocates of the external approach, in contrast to the internal approach, which is satisfied with readers' experiences, insist that if a statement cannot be verified through sense data, it is meaningless (Pavel, 13). Subsequently, they conclude that all fictional statements are false and no fictional terms relate to the

actual world. They are satisfied in pointing out that fictional characters such as Sherlock Holmes are not real, physical human beings, but this ignores the direct and indirect correspondence that takes place through readers' experiences of fictional narratives. Such skepticism would certainly reject the possibility of any fictional properties transmedially migrating into the actual world. Pavel resists the segregationist outlook by distinguishing between what he calls metaphysical questions concerning fictional beings and truth and demarcation questions about where to draw the line between fiction and reality (12). This is relevant for the present discussion of character properties since they must have potency, or directly correspond to real properties, if they are to transmedially migrate from fictional worlds to the actual world, and fictional beings must correspond to actual beings if they are to display such properties. Furthermore, any transmedial migratory activity will necessarily engage the question of demarcation between fiction and reality and thereby possible worlds.

Although Pavel differentiates between the natures of such questioning, he is not suggesting that they are unrelated. Rather, he is pointing out that each theoretical area needs to recognize its specific philosophical concerns. By addressing them separately one can avoid applying the conclusions drawn in one area to the entire fictional world discourse. If metaphysical concerns take precedence, as exemplified by the external approach, then the ontological priority of the actual world would render fiction as mere falsehood. This is not helpful in understanding fiction or readers' experiences, however. Furthermore, marking a sharp theoretical line of demarcation between fictional worlds and the actual world does not say anything about how readers are affected by fiction or how that effect expresses itself in the real world. Accordingly, Pavel states that "fictional texts enjoy a certain discursive unity; for their readers, the worlds they describe are not necessarily fractured along a fictive/actual line" (16). Here the role of readers in the transmedial migration of character properties becomes clearer. The world that readers encounter seems to incorporate elements of both the fictional and the real, so the internal approach is better suited for the task. If readers are able to synthesize fictional properties with their sense of the real, then this allows for transmedial migration from fiction to reality.

Like Pavel, Hans-Georg Gadamer believes that the reading experience allows for the transfer of knowledge without the need to explain everything in terms of either

the ontologically real or the spurious. More specifically, he wants to discover what fundamentally makes the scientific approach possible and determines its limitations. For Gadamer, truth is something that happens when one encounters something greater than oneself, as in the reading experience of imagining an entire fictional world, not simply establishing the existence and authenticity of an object via the application of a method through which a discerning subject verifies the accuracy of its perception. Like Pavel and Doležel, he is critical of logical positivism in particular, and while he does not claim that this external approach is outright false, he insists that it is not foundational for truth.

Gadamer uses the term play to designate what happens in between the subject and truth. He opposes subjectivism by claiming that in order to experience truth one must be absorbed into something greater than oneself. There are parallels here with Pavel's internal approach which aims at "constructing a model that represents the *users'* understanding of fiction once they step inside and...lose touch with the nonfictional realm" (Pavel, 16). Marie-Laure Ryan's concept of re-centering provides clarification of what Pavel mentions in general terms. She has readers considering the fictional world apart from consciously acknowledging its relation to the actual world. She uses this term to describe the deliberate way readers re-center their focus from the actual world to a fictional world because of the way language indicates the fictional world as real. Marco Caracciolo supports Ryan on this point, but says she keeps the analysis at the metaphorical level. He takes it a step further, claiming that "the comprehension of a narrative text grants us virtual access to the fictional world it constructs; but given the structural resemblance between our virtual access to the real world and our virtual access to fictional worlds, our reconstruction of narrative space will be mediated by the same cognitive strategies we adopt to apprehend real space" (Caracciolo, 120). A reader's "virtual body" in the fictional world is then necessary to explain this similarity.

Like Caracciolo's virtual access, Gadamer's concept of play addresses readers' internal method for analyzing information, and delineates the process whereby they can gather truthful information from the text without being bogged down by external, metaphysical concerns. It is not a passive experience where the subject is merely carried along. Rather, play strives to persist in its active state, "the self-presentation of the game involves the player's achieving, as it were, his own self-presentation by playing - that is, presenting - something" (Gadamer, 108).

Metaphysically oriented theories identify truth by recognizing the original, such as the external approach's comparison of fictional entities with the actual entities, but as Caracciolo asserts, the cognitive strategies for conceiving of fictional worlds does not require that we reconcile our reconstructions with some exact model in the actual world. For that reason, Gadamer's theory is not concerned with any exact relation to an original, but rather with a presentation which is truer than the original: our intuitions while reading leads to an encounter with truth. The play that occurs during this encounter with the fictional world should lead one to behold oneself anew; the subject must be altered by the encounter, such as when reading fiction results in bovarism. This alteration is caused, in part, by the transmedial migration of character properties, which are adapted into readers' actions. The recognition is of the dynamic relationship, what one becomes and what has changed, not the static relation of what was. To experience truth is to be made present with something, and this intimate relation fuses readers with the narrative through the reading experience.

If we take the internal approach and allow for character properties to transmedially migrate through readers' conceptualization of fiction, the question remains how to account for fiction in relation to reality. Regarding the strictly metaphysical line of questioning, Pavel demonstrates that Saul Kripke's use of modal logic provides a semantic for discussing possible worlds in a meaningful way. He argues that applying modal semantics to an internal theory of fiction, and possible-worlds theory to fiction in general, will "lead to a typology of worlds, imaginary or not, pointing the way to a flexible definition of fictionality" (Pavel, 43). If all possible worlds must contain an identical number of beings as the real one, as some possible-worlds theorists have suggested, then fictional beings of the existentially creative kind would be inconceivable. Nevertheless, a reader's intuition is that a fictional character like Sherlock Holmes is compatible with the actual world, and any semantic system that wishes to take this intuition seriously must allow for new individuals. Since possible-worlds theories demonstrate how modal semantics can be employed to understand the nature of fictional worlds, it is useful to examine a theory to see how this is accomplished.

Alvin Plantinga's actualism refers to possible worlds as abstract objects. They are a maximal state of affairs, where maximal means that all propositions have a truth value (Plantinga, 149-153). There are some propositions that are true in every world, where a world is one that is constructed out of propositions. The proposition 'S' that

Sherlock Holmes is possible is true if and only if there is a possible world w and a haecceity (i.e. an individualizing essence) e such that 'S' applies to e at w , that is to say, if and only if the property [being Sherlock Holmes] and e are coexemplified in w . However, since there is no such haecceity exemplified in the actual world, or since there is no such haecceity in its essential domain, nothing actual is a possible Sherlock Holmes. Thus for Plantinga, possible means an abstract object that could be exemplified or obtain (existence). For example, it is possible that John F. Kennedy could have lived until he was 85 years old. If he had, he would have obtained. This can be useful for explaining the transmedial migration of character properties because if they are designated as abstract objects that could obtain, then this would move them from possible worlds to the actual world. For that reason, it will be pertinent to return to this later on in the paper.

Plantinga demonstrates that it is possible to infer something about nonactualized states of affairs that is helpful in determining what could take place in the actual world. If some fictional character properties have the ability to obtain existence in the real world, then making such an inference is necessary. Fictional worlds presented in a textual medium like the Sherlock Holmes stories are possible worlds accessible to readers. Thus far, fictional being, fictional worlds, possible being and possible worlds have all been discussed as playing a role in understanding the transmedial migration of fictional character properties into actual behavior. Next, we turn our attention to transmedial migration itself.

Transmedial Migration through Adaptation

The position we have arrived at is that Sherlock Holmes has character properties that directly correspond as being-in-potency to real counterparts in the actual world. This is due to the contingency of the secondary universe (fiction) on the primary one (reality) within the dual structure of the fictional and the real. If they are in potency then they must exist to begin with, and change during the process of actualization. Character properties are demonstrated as having potency when they are actualized through transmedial migration. If this is the case, then character properties are something fiction and reality can share, and transmedial migration is something that can occur.

If all fictional characters that are possible beings share certain properties, it is necessary to distinguish them by their more particular ones. One property that all fictional characters possess, by virtue of what they are, is fictionality. On the other hand, certain character properties distinguish what is particular about different kinds of characters. Even fictional characters that have properties in common can have particular ones that vary. Properties are what make characters unique, and can further individualize those that have more detailed descriptions and fictional exploits. When Sherlock Holmes applies methods of forensic science in the solving of a crime, the method itself can be imitated easily enough by a real person, but the distinguishing property of Sherlock Holmes is in how and why he applies it. His adeptness at applying knowledge, his resolute and unwavering commitment to deductive reasoning, his attentiveness to detail, and his extraordinary patience in observation are what contribute to his unique effect. If these are communicable to readers, it is vital to understand how and why a reader adapts one or several of these character properties.

As demonstrated earlier, a real thing is something that exists in itself, apart from a person's mind. Nevertheless, insofar as the author is real, and descriptions of character properties are inscribed by the author into a fictional state of affairs that indirectly correspond to an actual state of affairs, what is inscribed can be real through its potential adaptation. A fictional character property is a textual assembly that supplies the building blocks of thoughts and actions in the actual world. Writing down thoughts on paper is a transcription. The thoughts themselves are in the consciousness, and exist at that moment. To transcribe is to make a copy, to adapt these thoughts to a new medium, text. This permits actual beings to adapt properties via transmedial migration of what is described textually as performative acts in fiction. Accordingly, they can attribute partial counterparts to fictional beings, so that certain fictional character properties correspond to their actual counterparts, which are in potency, or in other words, adaptable. When these character properties are formed in the author's mind the innate components of which the author has actual experience are implied in the fictional description. Once a reader receives this description it is reassembled according to equivalent experiences of similar components in their actuality. The property's potency is in each component's ability to be assembled in such a manner in the real order and thereby adapted. A character property can transmedially migrate as an isolated entity, but it is only recognizable as part of the package of properties that belongs to an identifiable character. In transmedial

migration, readers reassemble the elements with a new label or trademark indicative of this adaptation, having identified them by the context provided by the package and adapted them to the new environment. We call it a fictional character property if its transmedial origin is apparent.

A property written down in a book is real insofar as the written text is real. Apart from that obvious material reality of the text, each fictional component relates to real components and these can be assembled by an agent, a reader, in the process of adaptation. The textual description is the formula for a fictional property that describes how it could be assembled with the elements afforded by the properties any actual being possesses. Character properties are assumed as an integral part of a character constructed by the author, and waiting to be assembled by a reader in action. As just a property of a fictional character described in a textual medium it is potent, but by analogy a reader can actualize it through adaptation. The initial state is one of actuality inasmuch as these states of affairs and fictional entities reside in the author's mind as potentials. Thus, the fictional property of the character need not be altered in order to allow for this moving abroad, since these character properties exercise a certain freedom due to their direct correspondence. The author, after all, uses an internal approach when writing fiction by filling in the details that readers are expected to take as the basis for the work of filling in further details. As a consequence, fictional character properties will never transmedially migrate into reality until someone reads the story.

A fictional character cannot be actualized because it will always have properties that cannot make this journey, while some of the properties can. Character properties that are associated with a possible being, like Sherlock Holmes, are not bound to them. They can for that reason be considered being-in-potency, because of their adaptability. The initial condition is one of potency in the text, and the potential is present because of the direct correspondence to reality inscribed by the author and inferred by readers. Transmedial migration is the process which actualizes the properties, that is, they become being-in-act, actual properties.

Transmedial Migration and the Demarcation Line

Since readers are credited with having moved character properties from the fictional narrative into reality, then it stands to reason that this class of events be thoroughly

examined. As mentioned above, Pavel highlights two different approaches to fiction in relation to ontological issues and the role of readers in interpreting fictional narrative: The external approach “that would relate fiction to a more general theory of being and truth” and the internal approach “which would not so much aim at comparing fictional entities and statements with their nonfictional counterparts...as at constructing a model that represents the *users*’ understanding of fiction once they step inside it and...lose touch with the nonfictional realm” (16). Both of these approaches are useful for understanding how the properties of a fictional character such as Sherlock Holmes depend on readers’ ability to effect transmedial migration. The external approach singularly applied would cast Sherlock Holmes as nonexistent, deny any ontological application in ascertaining his whereabouts, and nullify any properties accredited to him. By contrast, the internal approach accommodates a reader’s habit of insight and perception that provides coherence to what is otherwise merely an assembly of sentences. The text serves as catalyst for readers, who can be expected to bring experience of the actual world to bear when interpreting a text.

Although fiction does not cross over into the actual, the transmedial migration of character properties bridges the divide so the possible and actual share something through fiction. Rather than define the realms that fiction seems to refer to as having no real existence, it seems that some fictional worlds, as a particular form of the possible, participate in correspondence across the demarcation line with the actual world. Through readers, an intimate and communicative affiliation can exist between the two domains. It is a space where readers’ minds interact with the imaginary world through acts of recollection of the world of sense perception. This comprises an environment where both reflection of actual experience and introspection are equally valid modes of procedure when constructing an understanding of a fictional world. While the possible depends on the actual for verification, needing correspondence with reality as an affirmation of its possibility, the mind must have freedom from the constraints of reality in order to imagine, and fictionalization proposes the ontologically possible. There are particularities that invoke a certain familiarity with the actual world yet can, in their fictional state, be unprecedented in the real order of things while simultaneously possessing the potential to be actualized. For example, O’Brien documents a list of insightful Holmesian ratiocinations that later inspired actual forensic techniques, among them distinguishing between mud and soil particular to different regions and using a certain type of plaster for casting footprints

(87). Transmedially migrating through the reading experience into reality, these properties are present in actions performed by actual agents.

Applying these two approaches to a narrative as a whole is an important step in determining the compatibility between Sherlock Holmes' character properties, described by words in the text in the fictional world, and their adaptation into physical beings and actions. The external approach will certainly conclude that he is not real. He is merely found described in the sentences of the novel. One can describe him in essential terms, but he has no existence so whatever one can say about him, he is not real. With Charles Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers* in mind, Pavel had this to say regarding how we refer to different kinds of entities we encounter in fictional narrative: "unlike the sun, whose actual existence is beyond doubt, Mr. Pickwick and most of the human beings and states of affairs described in the novel do not and never did exist outside its pages" (11). Nevertheless, minimizing such characters to a mere collection of sentences is reductionistic. In fact, many individuals whose existence we take for granted, living or dead, are only accessible to us through textual or visual media. Whether a historical figure like Henry VIII or a man living in China we only see in a news broadcast, reducing them to mere depictions bound to these media is insufficient to explain their existence. Accordingly, Mr. Pickwick, like Sherlock Holmes, is a fictional character, but even when readers acknowledge this, the "happenings inside the novel are vividly felt as possessing some sort of reality of their own...the reader can fully sympathize with the adventures and reflections of the characters" (Pavel, 11). There is something real about readers' experiences of Sherlock Holmes, but it is not the presence of an actual person, for no matter how vivid the presentation, his character does not ultimately possess the principle by which a thing is or exists. The internal approach rightfully points out that the sentences describing Sherlock Holmes contain basic information that readers of fiction internally contemplate and conceptualize. The fictional character of Sherlock Holmes is then a product of readers, and so long as their concept does not contradict the text, the result is a consensus regarding his character properties and how they are trademarked when witnessed in actual behavior.

By following the prospective itinerary of Sherlock Holmes' character properties we can comprehend how it bypasses the rigid criteria the external approach demands while at the same time embracing ontological realism. Since certain things can be said of Sherlock Holmes that correspond to what can be said of a real man,

readers assume that he occupies a space in the storyworld analogous to the physical space a man would occupy in the actual world. He is spoken of by others, who notice things about him that are not just directly associated with his generic physical form. For example, when Watson says “I enumerated in my own mind all the various points upon which he had shown me that he was exceptionally well informed” his list includes Sherlock Holmes’ talents, such as playing the violin well, and an account of his level of knowledge in various academic subjects (*Scarlet*, 17-18). His compilation suggests that there is something specific about his colleague Sherlock Holmes as a man that is detectable to those in the fictional world. This results in text-based speculation in readers’ minds in order to form an impression of what kind of man he is. Readers form a coherent personality that pertains to Sherlock Holmes by processing the information in the text, which would include more than descriptions by Watson or other characters.

The more readers read the more they discover about Holmes, and sentences that help isolate certain properties with the ability to transmedially migrate do more than broader descriptions—such as being a middle-aged man, the brother of Mycroft Holmes, or a consulting detective—to bring Sherlock Holmes to life. Sentences containing mere physical descriptions of fictional characters could supply properties that transmedially migrate if it involves a certain fashion of dress, ideal of physical fitness, mannerisms, facial expressions, etc. In fact, there is a distinct Holmesian manner of dress. Inspired by specifications in the stories, and the original illustrations by Sidney Paget, there is a manner of dress that is thought typical of Sherlock Holmes. It is even possible to purchase Sherlock Holmes costumes, so convinced are buyers and sellers of a unique Holmesian look that can be captured by clothing in the real world. If one should choose to don such apparel, it might also be expected that one impersonate Sherlock Holmes in other ways. A sober, confident, and direct manner would suit anyone for such a task, because those are also character properties that transmedially migrate from his fictional being. Watson informs us that “in his tweed suit and cloth cap he looked like any other tourist upon the moor” so Sherlock Holmes is fashionable for his time, and dresses for the occasion, another property associated with attire (*Hound*, 404). Watson immediately continues with his description “he had contrived, with that *cat-like love of personal cleanliness which was one of his characteristics*, that his chin should be as smooth and his linen as perfect as if he were in Baker Street” [emphasis mine]. Here we are told explicitly that

Sherlock Holmes has the characteristic or property of meticulously maintaining personal cleanliness, and such a property can very well transmedially migrate into inspired readers. Cleanliness is not distinctive of Sherlock Holmes alone, but as mentioned earlier, any property of his is only fully understood and acceptable as part of the Holmesian package. Holmesian “cat-like” cleanliness is understood in particular reference to readers’ previous conceptions of cleanliness in their own experience and what they know to be truly characteristic of Sherlock Holmes himself. The Holmesian manner of cleanliness that transmedially migrates cannot do so without some inspiration that includes other factors of Sherlock Holmes’ persona. Any single property of his is recognizable only if specifically identified in some way by means of the Holmes gestalt as a whole.

The impression of a person occupying an individual space in the narrative is vital for the transmedial migration of character properties, since the impact felt by readers is what gives the character its shape. Character properties are necessary for creating this space, and the seemingly real form of the character allows them to be accepted as actually obtainable. When reading fiction, readers are able to gather the details from the fictional character’s actions and accompanying states of affairs to justify an adaptation. This is accomplished when readers experience a perspective from within the narrative. According to Geoff F. Kaufmann and Lisa K. Libby, this is referred to as experience-taking. In their study “Changing Beliefs and Behavior Through Experience-Taking” which focuses on the influence of fiction on reality, they state that “through experience-taking, readers lose themselves and assume the identity of the character, adopting the character’s thoughts, emotions, goals, traits, and actions and experiencing the narrative as though they were that character” (1). The effect of this experience-taking is the internalization of the knowledge and ethos of the fictional character or world which enable the conditions that allow for the character properties to acquire an ontological basis in the actual world. Bovarism, quixotism, and experience-taking are all a part of readers’ experience in fiction. They are extreme examples that highlight how this process takes place, but all readers to some extent are affected by this.

Real-life examples of bovarism are possible in the reading experience, and such cases of fictionalizing reality explain how the line between fiction and reality can be lost in our imagination. Influenced by novel reading, readers can blur the demarcation line between the actual world of perception and the imaginary world

inside the mind. Fantasies create a discursive unity between the imaginary and the actual. This type of fictionalizing engages both the internal, or experience-taking, and external approaches to fiction. These examples illuminate the difference between the two approaches and why this distinction is helpful in understanding fictional worlds and their influence on reality through bovarism and experience-taking. By assuming the identity of the character in experiencing a fictional world, readers may activate the character properties from their potent state in the narrative.

Once these properties are in a narrative, the state of the author's mind is no longer an important concern. The role of readers in responding to the text serves as a vehicle for the properties to transmedially migrate across the divide between fiction and reality. Once in the mind of readers, the condition of contingent possibility, that a cause provide it with an existence, is supplied; this is what affords them the privilege of potency. As expounded earlier, potency is the capacity to change and determines the limits to which something can change. While experience-taking precedes transmedial migration in certain individual cases, such as when Sherlock Holmes' was first introduced to readers, the fictional properties themselves can become ontologically bound to reality when discovered and integrated into readers' actions.

Transmedially migrating over the demarcation line is a question of ontology. The extension of fiction is a matter of reference: "extension is the meaning constituent of a linguistic sign that directs the sign toward the world" (Doležel 1998, 136). The extension of a text lies in the meaning expressed through this relation. A term such as "Sherlock Holmes' brother" has as an extension a particular person in the fictional world, and likewise the term "Mycroft" has an identical extension. The intensional aspect carries the full, textured meaning, and in this sense they are different since they convey certain exclusive information. While the latter term conveys an individual identity by a personal name, the former imparts knowledge of his relationship to Sherlock Holmes. Extensional semantics is engaged with questions of theme, plot, fictional characters and entities, along with how and what they signify. From a strictly extensional semantic viewpoint, Sherlock Holmes is an existent with the ontology of an imaginary entity. The extension of a concept or sign resides in the thing to which it refers. The extension of certain fictional character properties resides in the actual counterpart properties, and their meaning is derived from the text by the intensional function that links expressions to the fictional existent, hence the Holmesian trademark. This link is what attributes the properties to Sherlock Holmes. Intensional

semantics is concerned with how the narrative structures readers' conceptions of the fictional world, and will be more thoroughly addressed in a later section. For now, we move on to transmediality, transfictionality, and how transmedial migration is attested by a discussion of these concepts.

Transmediality, Transfictionality, and Transmedial Migration

The prefix trans- has the sense “across, through, over, to or on the other side of, beyond, outside of, from one place, person, thing, or state to another” and consequently occurs in many words associated with the subject of this paper (OED). Adapt, for example, is a *transitive* verb meaning “to make (a person or thing) suitable or fit for a purpose, or conformable to specified conditions, standards, or requirements...to make suitable for a new purpose or to a different context or environment” (OED). Transmedial migration of character properties as the adaptation of symbolic and physical models found in fiction into actual behavior are specific instances of what occurs across different media as new symbolic forms make the transition from the original media into another. These new symbolic forms include symbolic aspects of physical behavior of actual beings. The limitations of the adaptation will depend on the medium. Biological factors in the actual world exclude transmedial migration of some properties, while those same properties are easily adapted into other media, where the original object or form can conform to new circumstances. Transmediality and transfictionality describe this phenomenon of transition across different media.

According to Ryan, transmedial storytelling includes stories that are so popular and important culturally that they cause a number of offshoot productions such as prequels, sequels, fan fiction, and transmedial adaptations (399, 2008). To be classified as a transmedial story, there must be an initial single work by an author that expands into other media according to demand. Evidently, the Sherlock Holmes stories fit this category well. To begin with, there are numerous adaptations in film, including the prequel *Young Sherlock Holmes*, a film that presents Sherlock Holmes and Watson as boys meeting at a boarding school where they, characteristically, solve a crime together. Another adaptation, *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother*, expands the original storyline to include a younger brother who tries desperately to adapt his brother's character properties, but fails in comedic fashion.

Adaptations continue to be made and, subsequently, the visual presentations of Sherlock Holmes and Watson in particular are presented anew. In addition, websites dedicated to fan fiction have only continued the snowballing effect. The production of fan fiction is maintained by a vibrant community of fascinated admirers who have no wish to accept that Sherlock Holmes' exploits have reached a definitive end with Doyle's death.

It is important to observe that such adaptations require some consistency with the original fictional world if they are to convincingly lead people to believe this is actually the expansion of, or continuation in, the same fictional world. Doležel's examples of expansion and modification likewise assume the validity of transmedial migration since all rewrites construct new worlds based on relations to the original one. If the character properties could not transmedially migrate into the actual world, then the fictional worlds constructed would not be convincing as textual-possible worlds. Something about Mr. Rochester's first wife must be intelligible to those in the actual world, and accordingly her modification in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is believable as a prequalifier of *Jane Eyre*. Consequently, there must be character properties of Sherlock Holmes that transmedially migrate from the original stories into adaptations. If certain properties possessed by a fictional character, created in one era, are found in the same figure when recast in a later adaptation, then their transmedial migration across these different eras in fiction means that their transmedial migration into actual beings is at least conceptually possible. If the character properties of a late 19th-century—early 20th-century man could not transmedially migrate into a 21st-century man, then an adaptation of the character in the 21st century would not be possible. In the case of the 2010 BBC TV series *Sherlock*, Sherlock Holmes and Watson retain prominent character properties while their style of dress, use of technology, the nature of their crime cases and other features of their fictional world are true to present-day London. Their personalities show affinity with both eras, and because we recognize them by their idiosyncrasies; they are compatible with both worlds. Thus certain character properties can transmedially migrate into the present-day world since the fictional world the TV series presents is a realistic one. The adaptation of Sherlock Holmes and Watson as 21st-century, London men must be convincing in order for us to understand who they are. It is the adaptation of character properties from the circumstances in one world to those in the next that provides the consistency this requires.

Transmediality concerns special cases where the transfictional operates across different media. Transfictionality (Saint-Gelais 2005, Ryan 2008) is a term that refers to fictional entities migrating across various texts, usually within narrative fiction, and is of interest because the transmedial migration of character properties means that certain properties possess transworld capabilities. In order for such character properties to transmedially migrate, they must first be capable of transfictionality, since this presupposes the adaptability that defines this movement. Transmedial migration from fictional worlds to the actual world presupposes transposition, an important facet of transfictionality. This is because it entails an understanding of the original fictional world, and the character properties that are only discernible through the behavior of the fictional character, when readers confirm the fictional protoworld and imagine characters in a different one. If readers cannot imagine them existing somewhere else, then it is difficult to understand how they could have understood the character, and subsequently their properties, accurately enough to allow for their adaptation. While it would be odd to think of Prince Caspian relocated to Modern England, we can imagine such a scenario, and minding his character properties, how he would behave.

In Doležel's typology of postmodern rewrites, transposition "preserves the design and the main story of the protoworld but locates them in a different temporal or spatial setting, or both" (1998, 206). To illustrate this point, Doležel uses the example of Goethe's *The Sufferings of Young Werther* being rewritten by Ulrich Plenzdorf as *New Sufferings of Young W.* where the latter applies the original novel's plot to 1960's West Germany. Implicit in this rewrite is the assumption that certain character properties of Goethe's Werther can actually be present in the later temporal and spatial setting. If it were impossible for Werther's character properties to transmedially migrate into 1960's West Germany, then the novel would be unintelligible and not qualify as a rewrite at all. Moreover, if it were impossible for character properties to transmedially migrate into people in the 21st century, then it would be difficult to understand what is believable about Plenzdorf's project. Hence, transfictional adaptation implies transmedial adaptation.

It is worth noting that Doyle expanded the world of Sherlock Holmes on several occasions by publishing more stories. With each story, new information was added to the fictional world. Fan fiction cannot enter this same world, but as transfictional texts they can relate to it in certain respects, such as overlapping in

cases of modification and transposition, or inclusion when another author incorporates it into an expansion. The fans who write this fiction understand the compatibility of the character properties in different versions of the original fictional world, and that is why they feel inspired to rewrite it. They understand what it is that makes Sherlock Holmes unique, and implement the Holmesian trademark in modifications and expansions by not removing those character properties that define him. Those who adapt Holmesian properties into the actual world also recognize this compatibility, and indicate the fictional origin of the character properties by acknowledging the Holmesian trademark attached to this distinct influence.

Transmedial adaptation expands the world by adding features that were not present in the text. Sidney Paget's illustrations of Sherlock Holmes provide actual people with a mental image of Watson and Holmes, which influences the way the fictional world is perceived. Since they are the official and original illustrations, all other depictions of Sherlock Holmes, including actors, must at least attempt to adapt this form in order to be considered accurately Holmesian. Since these figures have a visual form in the actual world, readers infer things about the person of Sherlock Holmes when they can see how he should look. The original drawings by Sidney Paget accompanied the Sherlock Holmes stories, and are supposed to represent Sherlock Holmes. Consequently, these images have set a standard that has been copied in pictures and film since.

Nelson Goodman's theory of pictorial representation in his book *Languages of Art* focuses on what he calls fictive denotation, fictive representation and fictive exemplification. For Goodman, denotation is the way symbolism works with pictures: "Denotation is the core of representation and is independent of resemblance" (5). Therefore, a picture that represents a man is by analogy a label in the same way his name is. While some pictures have a generic subject, others have a purely fictional one, like the Paget drawings. Still other pictures represent a man, such as an actor, who is representing a fictional character. Whether an image of the actor Jeremy Brett, famous for his role as Sherlock Holmes, has individual denotation regarding an actor and/or null denotation regarding the fictional character Sherlock Holmes has consequences for how Sherlock Holmes and his properties transmedially migrate through transmedial representations. The form of Sherlock Holmes' appearance has been adapted across different media and transitioned into new forms. The adaptability of some properties, determined by potency, is limited by the physical nature of the

actual world. It is important to recall that potency is the principle of change and limitation, so although plastic surgery or future genetic engineering may expand possibilities, the limitation of the particular facial features of Paget's Sherlock Holmes does not permit an exact replication. What cannot be strictly imitated is adapted, and so the actors who portray Sherlock Holmes have similar, recognizable features. In order to establish what an image of Sherlock Holmes refers to and what kind of image it is, if it refers to anything, Goodman says we must ask what it represents and what kind of representation it is (31).

Concerning fiction, a picture of Brett as Sherlock Holmes can be explicated in three ways: as denotation, representation, and exemplification. Beginning with denotation, Goodman says that since Sherlock Holmes does not exist, he cannot be denoted by the picture. Jeremy Brett, however, does exist and is denoted by the picture. As regards the Sidney Paget illustrations of Sherlock Holmes, the man depicted in the drawing lacks a specific identity apart from the fictive Sherlock Holmes. It is of the kind Sherlock Holmes—picture and does not represent anything since there is no Sherlock Holmes, in Goodman's view. A picture of Sherlock Holmes is its own kind, a Sherlock Holmes—picture, and while it does not denote anything, it is still distinct from other kinds of pictures with null denotation, such as Watson—pictures. This illustrates the difference between the denotational sense (a picture of so-and-so) and non-denotational sense (is a so-and-so picture). In the denotational sense a picture of Jeremy Brett is of himself, in the non-denotational sense it is a Sherlock Holmes-picture. Thus, there is a distinction between what the picture represents/denotes and what kind of picture it is for "a picture must denote a man to represent him, but need not denote anything to be a man-representation" (Goodman, 25). The man-representation status of Paget's Sherlock Holmes is a flexible one, composed of properties with the potency to be adapted across various media. Accordingly, different actors can represent themselves as Sherlock Holmes by identifying with those trademark properties that make a Sherlock Holmes—picture. Furthermore, actors and their performances take place in the real world, so character properties associated with his image—facial expressions, manner of dress, habits, and speech patterns—transmedially migrate not just transfictionally, but transmedially, or more specifically, from the textual medium of his fictional world to the physical, social medium of the actual world. According to Goodman, a picture is only recognizable as a real man if the standard employed by its viewers associates it with a

depiction of reality. If a different standard is applied, one that associates it with the original drawing of a fictional character, than it represents that fiction. In this way, Goodman's pictorial representation accounts for both an actor or model and fictional character in a picture of Sherlock Holmes, which, according to Paget's own assertions, had no real-life model, thus does not denote or represent anyone apart from the Holmesian trademark.

In order to determine what is being represented in a picture of someone as Sherlock Holmes it must be determined what class of objects it belongs to. This allows one to employ a Sherlock Holmes trademark for the Jeremy Brett picture as a fictive exemplification. To predicate of the picture of Jeremy Brett that it is 'Sherlock Holmes' is not to predicate fictively. Rather, the predicate 'Sherlock Holmes' is an actual predicate, but without extension. Jeremy Brett does not exemplify 'Sherlock Holmes' because there is nothing of Sherlock Holmes to exemplify. Nevertheless, he may be fictively exemplified; hence Jeremy Brett is an actor in a film, fictively as Sherlock Holmes. Jeremy Brett fictively exemplifies the Sherlock Holmes trademark insofar as he adheres to or adapts the description of Sherlock Holmes from the original text and illustrations. What is suggested here is that Sherlock Holmes is referred to; although since he is fictive this is actually pretended for the sake of fiction. On the other hand, while he is fictive "...fictive description and fictive representation reduce to exemplification of a special kind" (66). He is referring something to Jeremy Brett who as an actor portrays him because a picture of Sherlock Holmes exemplifies a Sherlock Holmes—description or Sherlock Holmes—picture, or in a more basic sense, a Sherlock Holmes trademark.

As demonstrated above, the transmedial migration of character properties is inherent to transmediality and transfictionality. They make evident its validity by the diverse ways in which the contents of an original narrative, including illustrations, can be adapted to different media while retaining its essential identity. That Sherlock Holmes can be adapted to different time periods and medial presentations, and yet remain recognizable across them, testifies to the transmedial migratory freedom that certain character properties exercise. Next, the discussion will turn to the role of narrative, where readers encounter the original Sherlock Holmes.

The Role of Narrative

The place of readers in narrative is to accommodate the different perspectives in the narrative and fictional world in order to generate the reconstruction of a literary work, which includes fictional characters and their properties. It is in the narrative that readers encounter the character of Sherlock Holmes, and through the character properties that transmedially migrate via readers' capacity to identify with Sherlock Holmes, he can become a part of their personality when these properties are adapted into their behavior. The role of Watson as the narrator is extremely important for readers' understanding Sherlock Holmes. If they do not have the impression of Watson as a trustworthy and objective narrator, then it will be impossible to make any definite decisions about him. The more self-conscious readers are, the more difficult merging into the narrative perspective will be. This can make a fictional character like Sherlock Holmes less like a person and more like something described in an assembly of sentences. Ryan states:

when readers are caught up in a story, they turn the pages without paying too much attention to the letter of the text: what they want is the plot, the least language-dependent dimension of narrative communication. When they experience emotions for the characters, they do not relate to these characters as literary creations nor as 'semiotic constructs,' but as possible human beings (1999, 117)

According to her "illusionist conception" of reality "a text is realistic when it creates a credible, seemingly autonomous and language-independent reality" convincing readers that "there is more to this world than what the text displays of it: a backside to objects, a mind to characters, and time and space extending beyond the display" (2001, 158). The effect of an illusionist conception of reality on readers is called immersion. Kendall Walton's concept of immersion describes this procedure as a game of make-believe, where readers participate in the fictional world by projecting themselves into it, and this is done by imagining the world the way the text says it is. Not surprisingly then, Kaufman and Libby found in their experiment concerning the effect of narrative voice that "sharing a group membership with a character from a story told in first-person voice promoted an enhanced level of experience-taking" (10). On the other hand, the greater the distance felt by readers of a narrative, the less likely they were to adapt the properties. Thus, the way a narrative is structured plays a role in transmedial migration. When accounting for the role of narrative in the

transmedial migration of properties, identifying the perspective from which the story is told and how the plot is arranged are foundational activities.

The narrative voice of the Sherlock Holmes stories is, with four exceptions, Watson. This puts readers in the position of spectators when regarding Sherlock Holmes and his character properties, since he is always positioned as a separate entity from the narrative voice. It is Watson with whom readers share the most immediate experience of the fictional world. As an observer, Watson interacts with Sherlock Holmes, as well as witnesses and later recalls his exploits. This makes readers share a certain affinity with him. When Watson notices something, readers see it through his eyes, and since he is presented as a person like readers, there is a tendency to account for the occurrences in a first-hand manner. Watson writes, after all, in the first person, so readers believe that things are seen from his point of view. Watson's amiable and trustworthy manner accord readers a feeling of membership in the narrative perspective, and this immersion in the fictional world brings Sherlock Holmes and his character properties closer and makes them more easily adapted.

Subsequently, in order for Watson's role as narrator to be effective, readers must be capable of internalizing the structure of the narrative so that the illusionist conception of reality results in immersion. According to Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle, "[t]he simplest way to define narrative is as a series of events in a specific order—with a beginning, a middle and an end" (53). Narrative cannot be reduced simply to the temporal order of events, however. The causal connection between events is just as important as the events themselves in certain narratives. This connection between cause and effect is very prominent in the detective stories of Sherlock Holmes. His success in determining causes is one of the most prominent textual features about his character. In fact, Franco Moretti states that he "lives to serve this impersonal thing: detection" (142). Since the detective story narratives of Sherlock Holmes move from an initial state of stability into a disturbance that is resolved when the perpetrator of the crime is exposed by his efforts, then he is credited by readers for resolving the tension created by this disturbance. This narrative power is exercised to maintain a consistent picture of Holmesian prowess in intellectual matters of mystery-solving with almost invariable success. This is the way we account for his role in the series of actions in linear time.

Using *The Musgrave Ritual* as an example of classic detective fiction, Peter Brooks says that the interpretive thread of plot that winds through the Sherlock

Holmes stories is based on the fact that “separate enigmas must—as is ever the case in Holmes’s working hypothesis—be related as part of the same ‘chain of events’” (322). Thus, he concludes that the detective’s work of plotting out the same ground the criminal covered earlier displays the structure of narrative. Accordingly, the discussion of the internal approach above suggests that the focus should be oriented toward the intimate relation between authors and readers, which takes place through the narrative. Readers’ reconstructions of the text follow the repetition by Sherlock Holmes of what already took place in the criminal’s act, what Brooks calls “the function of plot as the active repetition and reworking of story in and by discourse” where story is the content and discourse its expression (324). Readers are forced by the narrative to question what had really happened, a question that is answered through the process of reconstructing the original sequence of events. This is what makes this kind of detective fiction, the kind found in the Sherlock Holmes stories, unique: readers reconstruct the narrative by first reconstructing the discourse, and thereby discover the content. By discerning the narrative as a metaphor, readers’ conceptions of the text expand both spatially and temporally into an illusionist concept of reality.

To quote Henry James, “What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?” (174). The narrative itself contains a plot that is inseparable from a reader’s understanding and absorption of Sherlock Holmes’ properties due to his commanding presence in a captivating plot. Readers’ perceptions of Holmesian character properties depend undoubtedly on what occurs in the plot. These character properties make Sherlock Holmes seem real by giving him a certain level of complexity. In order to create this effect, the narrative must keep readers uncertain about what he will do in advance, sustaining a sense of unpredictability. In *The Hound of the Baskervilles* Sherlock Holmes is at a late point in the narrative found to be living in a cave, and carrying out his characteristic observation of all the events related to the mystery he intends to solve. All the while, readers are following Watson as he maintains the focal point in the text. They are led to believe that Sherlock Holmes’ is detained in London by other cases, and Watson believes he is likely to apprehend the culprit by waiting in the cave, only to find along with readers that the alleged prime suspect is Sherlock Holmes’ himself. Unpredictability of this kind is predictably Holmesian, and just the sort of thing that intrigues readers and adds to his aura. Another example is found in *The Adventure of*

the Blue Carbuncle, where he allows the thief of the precious stone to go free, apparently out of compassion due to the man's pleading, an appearance he tries to dispel by saying "I am not retained by the police to supply their deficiencies" and "it is just possible that I am saving a soul" (Doyle, 169). The harshness by which Sherlock Holmes dismisses the thief suggests he is a hard man, but clearly there is a softer side to this character that readers may not so often see. These seemingly conflicting properties provide him with the complexity of a real person who determines his actions by a multiplicity of motives. This contributes to immersion and, accordingly, transmedial migration.

Since Sherlock Holmes is not a copy of an actual person, but has realistic properties, then his fictional person can be said to correspond indirectly to an actual person. The transmedial migration of character properties, however, means that one gives priority to properties that are directly corresponding, those with potency, so that a real person can affect a resemblance to the fictional character to which the character properties belong. A man can be said to be like Sherlock Holmes simply because he smokes a clay pipe or wears a deerstalker cap, even if the comparison goes no further. Nevertheless, if it is to be a characteristically Holmesian pipe or cap, then the relation cannot simply be a comparison based on similarity of the objects. A man can be said to be like Sherlock Holmes if he is in a particular way Holmesian in the way he smokes his pipe, or if he chooses a particular pipe for the specific reason that he read about Sherlock Holmes doing it. If a real man affected by his exposure to the Sherlock Holmes stories should in a Holmesian manner light his "long cherry-wood pipe which was wont to replace his [Holmes'] clay when he was in a disputatious rather than a meditative mood" as Watson records in *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches*, or endeavor to follow any other examples of Holmesian pipe smoking, then this specific character property has transmedially migrated through the fictional narrative by being adapted to the actual world in that action. When Watson informs us that Sherlock Holmes "was wont to" he means that this is a property of preference or habit. To such a preference a real man could accustom himself when the Holmesian influence extends through the narrative into reality and is identified by the Holmesian trademark.

According to Roland Barthes and Lionel Duisit, "narrative occurs in all periods, all places, all societies; narrative begins with the very history of humanity; there is not, there has never been, any people anywhere without narrative. . . Narrative

is international, transhistorical, transcultural” (237). The ubiquitous nature of narrative makes the transmedial migration of properties ongoing phenomena. Fictional beings like Sherlock Holmes are one way this can occur, because he is presented in a narrative that is structured to produce an illusionist conception of reality by immersing readers into it. Although the author of the original narrative, Arthur Conan Doyle, is no longer the master of the fictional persona of Sherlock Holmes, he persists in popularity to this day, long after Doyle’s death. As long as readers have access to the narrative, Sherlock Holmes’ potential to have an effect on actual behavior will continue. Moving on to the next section, reader-response theory points out that a readers’ conception of a text, and accordingly the fictional world wherein one finds Holmesian properties, is equally valid if not determinate in deciding its meaning.

Readers and Transmedial Migration

As actual beings, readers access fictional worlds by mentally crossing over the demarcation line between actual and possible worlds. As established earlier in the paper, the ontological primacy of the actual world means it can never be said that a reader physically enters or actually observes the events in a possible world, so it remains to be explained how a reader comes into contact with the fictional world. Within possible-worlds semantics, contact between possible worlds is called accessibility: “A world is possible in a system of reality if it is accessible from the world at the center of that system” (Ryan 1991, 557). In the example featured in this paper, the world at the center is the actual world, and the fictional world of Sherlock Holmes is possible due to its accessibility. Nevertheless, to understand the transmedial migration of character properties, we need to address specifically how an actual person makes contact with a fictional world. According to Doležel, “fictional worlds are accessed through semiotic channels and by means of information processing”, which allows for a dynamic and variable form of communication that puts readers in focus (Doležel 1998, 20).

As mentioned earlier, the author constructs a fictional world by deriving elements, structures and classifications from the actual world. Nevertheless, some transformation needs to take place before anything can cross the demarcation line between the two worlds. An example is an actual entity, such as a historical person

like Napoleon, to whom we gain access in the fictional world in the form of a flexible, possible counterpart. It is in the fictional world that readers encounter these entities when processing the text. There are many different types of readers, but it is invariably the author who constructs the world and readers who reconstruct it. This can be explained as the text containing instructions, put there by the author, that are later obeyed in the process of reconstruction by readers. This reconstruction takes the form of a mental image in readers' minds, which when contemplated becomes part of their awareness the way that real-life events are accommodated into their experience. Taking possession of knowledge or using the text as a model for reenactment, the fictional world can be integrated into their reality. The text as a semiotic medium is the bridge between the actual and the fictional insofar as readers read and reconstruct it.

In *Interaction between Text and Reader*, Wolfgang Iser discusses how the act of reading a text enlivens readers who produce a realization of it. He states that, "the literary work has two poles, which we might call the artistic and the aesthetic: the artistic pole is the author's text, and the aesthetic is the realization accomplished by the reader" (Iser, 1524). The literary work is to be understood as somewhere in between these two extremes, which forms through interaction. Identifying these roles and how they interact with each other is the task for the Iserian reader in narrative. The process of interpretation for readers is not necessarily straightforward, however. The act of reading uses a deontic system with the operators forbidden, permitted, and obligatory. When the fictional world is imagined in the mind of readers, textual details are only partially responsible for its formation, since their sense of the permissible allows for further expansion of the world beyond what is explicitly implied in the text. The practice of exploring what is permitted in a fictional world immerses them without contradicting the text's specifications. The question arises as to whether or not these informational gaps reside in reality or in the fictional world.

For Doležel, fictional worlds are incomplete worlds, so to fill in all the gaps would be to make the fictional world uniform with the actual world. He highlights as an example Goethe's *Elective Affinities*, where the author intentionally conceals the physical while emphasizing the mental or spiritual (1998, 184). These gaps are a necessary part of this and all fictional worlds, and if readers fill them in, then the particular features of this narrative are effectively erased. Here Doležel takes issue with Iser, claiming that an Iserian reading is not an act of imagination, but rather

reduces the diversity of fictional worlds “to the uniform structure of the complete, Carnapian world (1998, 171). This is the external approach Pavel, Gadamer and Ryan were reacting against, the submission of all things fictional to a strict, metaphysical line of questioning that always favors the actual world. Thus, one property of the extension of fictional worlds is their incompleteness. Nevertheless, the incompleteness of fictional worlds is only noticeable when contrasted with the actual world.

Despite the tensions discussed earlier, Iser’s account of interaction does bear some resemblance to Doležel’s concept of literary transduction, where the author produces a text, constructing a fictional world that readers can access through the text by reconstruction (204). Using literary transduction to reveal an intersection between predecessor and successor texts in the realm of fictional worlds, Doležel asserts that they both influence each other intertextually, challenging the assumption that intertextuality always moves in one, chronological direction. This concept was introduced by Julia Kristeva in her 1966 essay titled “Word, Dialogue and Novel” in opposition to the terms “allusion” and “influence” that suggested a chronological classification of literary works with features inherited from texts produced at an earlier point in time as an undeniable part of each work’s identity. Like Kristeva, Doležel observes that “intertextuality is bidirectional” (201). By bidirectionality he means that inherent to intertextuality is a bilateral relationship where the reading of the successor text affects the reading of the predecessor text, and vice versa. This is transfictionality, because they share in the same fictional world and provide linkages to others, and therefore involve transmedial migration of character properties as the elements of one text are adapted into another through readers.

Readers are a necessary condition for the transmedial migration of properties since they are the means of communication between different narratives. Doležel’s literary transduction intends to explain the transfer of information through the interaction of author and reader. The text serves as the material basis for a cooperative method of communication that allows for the readers’ reconstruction of the author’s constructed fictional world. Readers allow the author’s construction of the fictional world in the text to guide a reconstruction of it. Literary transduction then, “takes the literary work beyond the communicative act into an open, unlimited chain of transmission” by sending the information to readers who, through reconstruction, can potentially transform the fictional world through their own acts of authorship, since

every reader exercises liberty in reading according to their presuppositions and limits of understanding (Doležel, 2006).

By reconstructing the fictional world of Sherlock Holmes, readers also reconstruct the space that he occupies. In order to do this, they must account for his properties. Once these properties are identified in the context of Sherlock Holmes' literary space, the effect is a more complete and lifelike form of personal identity. This can result in what-if speculation by readers, who imagine a real-life Sherlock Holmes performing similar exploits in the real world, or themselves mentally entering the fictional world to perform them. If these are possible scenarios, then they could just as well take their imaginative exploits into the real world. Of course, it is not possible for a person to create a fictional template to overlay the actual world and thereby alter the actual fabric of reality. Nevertheless, imagining oneself as a Sherlock Holmes-like individual, applying the Holmesian trademark to oneself or one's actions, means that certain properties can become a real and lasting part of an actual person's character. The extent to which one might take such an effect would seem limitless and immeasurable, since such an addition to reality would have repercussions that are difficult to trace. Hence Doležel's claim of an "unlimited chain of transmission" started by readers' encounters with a fictional narrative.

Doležel's literary transduction permits readers to determine how to reconstruct the fictional world by gauging its trustworthiness when deciding what is true or false. Neither the author nor the readers can enter the fictional world except through the conceptual exercise that the construction and reconstruction implies; the fictional narrative resides in the fictional world between them. The author bears the responsibility of creating the narrative and constructing the fictional world, and readers in interpreting the narrative text so as to reconstruct the storyworld. According to Iser, "separate analysis would only be conclusive if the relationship were that of transmitter and receiver...In literary works, however, the message is transmitted in two ways, in that the reader 'receives' it by composing it" (Iser, 1524). They communicate via the narrative text, authors supplying substance for readers, for when an author writes a fictional narrative, a fictional world is constructed. The instructions for how to reconstruct this fictional world are in the narrative, and readers employ interpretation to accomplish this reconstruction much in the same way that a musician interprets sheet music to produce a musical arrangement (Doležel, 2005). Character properties are an integral part of this substance that authors provide. They are drawn

from an author's experience of reality, and part of the construction of a fictional world where readers can readily access them. Sherlock Holmes' investigative and intellectual prowess is a particular character property found in the Holmesian package of his fictional properties and the fictional states of affairs where he is said to exhibit it. The imagination of readers is catalyzed by the narrative, which initiates a reconstruction of the text, and this can lead to experience-taking, bovarism, adaptation, and thus transmedial migration. Even if readers take a more analytic approach to the text as opposed to experience-taking or bovarism, the character properties can still be extracted through the imaginative process by verifying the compatibility of these properties with real-life situations.

It is important to note here that all readers are not identical. While Iser focuses on the individual reader, for Stanley Fish, the reader's response to Sherlock Holmes is not an independent one. For Fish, how readers understand what is essentially Holmesian depends on their so-called interpretive community. This interpretive community supplies the reader with conventions of reading through their education and socio-historical background. This would mean that a reader who read the first Sherlock Holmes story *A Study in Scarlet* when it was published in 1887, and a reader who reads it today, will respond differently to the text and could adapt character properties in different ways. This situation is compounded by the cultural location of the reader, their socio-economic background, among other factors. Membership in a certain interpretive community would then have an influence on which character properties, if any, would or could transmedially migrate. If one were an amateur detective in 1887, and belonged to an interpretive community comprising well-educated people with a higher socio-economic status, and had idle time on your hands, then perhaps experience-taking would dramatically transform your life. It is considerably different than relating to Sherlock Holmes' lifestyle and character as a poor, inner-city dweller of modern-day St. Louis.

Familiarity with other literature, including potential knowledge of the work or its author prior to encountering the text, prevents the reader from understanding it apart from previously formed presuppositions. This is commonly the case today when readers encounter a text about Sherlock Holmes. He persists as a popular character, and many will have ideas about Holmes, and the nature of his properties, before reading any of the stories. Gadamer mentions prejudice as something that every reader takes with them to a text. In addition, there is the historical situation in which

one finds oneself and this determines the horizon from which interpretation occurs. Tradition also plays a significant role in the meaning the reader gleans from a text. Gadamer's use of prejudice, tradition, historicity and fusion of horizons means that if and why character properties transmedially migrate depends on the interpretive conditions supplied by every reader. Various factors including historical era, ideological biases, and social and educational backgrounds all interact in the individual reader's experience to determine what it is about a fictional narrative that is attractive, meaningful, and comprehensible.

Proceeding from a position outside of the narrative and fictional world, readers establish an interconnection between the perspectives entailed by each narrative role. This allows them to use the internal approach to fill in gaps and produce the "intended imaginary object" that Doyle had in mind when constructing Sherlock Holmes and his properties (Iser, 1528). Their interpretation delves deep into the fictional world of the narrative, which results in its reconstruction as an imaginary world, analogous to reality. This analogy includes the indirect correspondence of Sherlock Holmes to a real man through the direct correspondence of his being-in-potency properties to real, being-in-act properties. The implication of Sherlock Holmes and his properties is that there could be a corresponding person who has one or more of his properties and can perform actions in the actual world. Readers are able to enter the fictional world through reading, and since they are implied by the communicative act of constructing the fictional world, an image of a man is implied by what is communicated. Even if no one ever read about Sherlock Holmes, Doyle writing the fictional narrative began the process of interaction simply by creating the narrative. Thus, the narrative serves as intermediary conveying information through the fictional world, from authors to readers, and they must interact with this sophisticated system of communication in order to discover the aesthetic object of an author's text, and open a communicative channel through which character properties can transmedially migrate.

The Sherlock Holmes Effect

After considerable discussion on the nature of fictional worlds, fictional beings, narrative structure, and reading practice, there is more to say about Sherlock Holmes himself. According to the *Corpus of Historical American English*, an article in a 1931

issue of *Reader's Digest* contains an interview with Arthur Conan Doyle. In true Holmesian fashion, he is said to have put to practice some methods of crime solving in his own neighborhood. The author of the article recounts that Doyle was not helpful in apprehending the culprit and “he (Sir Arthur) had got no farther than the Holmesian conclusion that the man was left-handed and had nails in his shoes.” The interesting thing to note here is that the characteristic conclusion is called *Holmesian* in the article. Even when referring to the actions of his author, it says that he was “applying the methods of his fictive character” and not the other way around. Holmesian precepts and deductions characterize Sherlock Holmes’ fictional identity, and thus the adjective bears his name, not that of his author. This need not be surprising, however. It is after all in the fictional world that such properties are truly exhibited, and then communicated to readers, and whatever claims Doyle may have had for the status of an amateur detective, no one is imitating him; they are adapting the character properties of Sherlock Holmes.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “Holmesian” exists both as an adjective and as a noun and refers to the properties that distinguish the fictional character Sherlock Holmes. As an adjective it means “of, pertaining to, or in the manner of Sherlock Holmes” and as a noun “a devotee of Sherlock Holmes.” The existence of this word is evidence of the fictional detective’s influence on reality. Certain properties specific to Sherlock Holmes must be present in the actual world, or this word would not refer to anything outside of the typical properties he exhibits in the text; the use of “Holmesian” and “Sherlockian” in the actual world refer simultaneously to the properties in real people and Sherlock Holmes. The question is, are there any properties that are truly original to him, and thereby duly trademarked as Holmesian, or did he simply popularize certain properties, so that his name now serves as a trademark label referring to features that up to that point fell under the classification of another word. Evidence suggests that the former case can be supported. In his book *The Scientific Sherlock Holmes: Cracking the Case with Science and Forensics*, author Jim O’Brien argues that Sherlock Holmes preceded law enforcement in using innovative methods for solving crimes. One example of this is fingerprinting, which appeared for the first time in actual practice at Scotland Yard in 1901, and was not used to successfully solve a crime until 1905 (O’Brien, 55). In the fictional world of Sherlock Holmes, this means of identification was used to assist in solving fictional crimes already in 1903. O’Brien lists other compelling evidence to

this effect, suggesting that Sherlock Holmes predated actual forensic science in several areas, such as the use of dogs and a special plaster for making casts of footprints (87).

In order to answer the question about truly original Holmesian properties, we must return to the question of a distinction between the fictional and the actual. To begin with, there is the distinction between the ontology of fictional characters, and the properties they are said to possess. Sherlock Holmes has no physical form, and therefore cannot exhibit any of the talents or accomplish any of the feats to which the text testifies without readers, via the internal approach to fiction, imagining the existence of whatever material form is needed to make the actions seem real. His indirect correspondence to an actual ontology is constituted through those parts of his character that have potency or correspond directly to something in the actual world. A real person can be like a fictional character, which in turn is said to be intelligible based on a correspondence to a real person. However, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a person can be “a role or character assumed in real life, or in a play, etc.; a part, function, or office; a persona; a semblance or guise. Hence: any of the characters in a play or story.” The point here is that the idea of a person includes issues about identity and representation. In order to understand who a person is one needs answers to questions about character, the distinctive properties that comprise a person’s essential quality. Some of these properties can be predicated of fictional and real ‘persons’ and this demonstrates their status as fully entwined in the lives of actual beings. Properties are marks of distinction for both fictional and actual beings, and the name Sherlock Holmes is associated with certain character properties that bear his name, and so it can be said of an actual person who smokes a clay pipe in a certain fashion that he is characteristically Holmesian when doing so. Thus, a character property that can transmedially migrate is predicated analogously of fictional and actual beings: its meaning in both instances is not exactly the same, but nor is it entirely different. This is why adaptation is necessary, and why it succeeds in transmedial migration. The exact meaning is determined by the status of the being of which it is predicated.

The status of the being, however, does not necessarily reflect the status of the property. A realist portrayal of a fictional character, like Sherlock Holmes, should present a duality of mind/soul/unconscious with the physical. Clearly, Sherlock Holmes has no actual body, nor can his inner self be said to actually exist.

Nevertheless, the kind of properties that comprise a person, including those that distinguish their personality from other personalities, are real insofar as they are reflected in the actions of a real person. In Sherlock Holmes' case, his properties are what make sense of his actions in a fictional state of affairs, so they are not so different from those of a real person, because we identify properties in actual people in the same manner. For example, let us say that a man has the properties of courage and bravery, and this is reflected in his heroic actions in saving innocent people from a violent aggressor. After the event has transpired, the story of his exploits is communicated to people around the world, and inspires others who act bravely and courageously when an occasion arises. A famous example of this is Rosa Parks, a woman who courageously, and quietly, refused to give up her seat to a white passenger on a racially segregated bus. This act inspired many in the American civil rights movement, and has become iconic for peaceful resistance to oppression. Although most of the people who were affected by her story never witnessed the events themselves, her properties of bravery and courage can and have transmedially migrated through the narratives that communicated her actions. The actions described in the narrative are interpreted by the narrator in accordance with a direct correspondence to real actions which imply the character properties. Furthermore, although the account is a descriptive, fictional retelling of actual events, the actions and words the character displays allow readers to deduce properties apart from the narration.

Accordingly, fiction can be said to influence reality by means of its presentation of character properties belonging to a fictional character who exhibits them in fictional circumstances in a fictional world. The properties can become known apart from fiction by obtaining in reality. Returning to Plantinga's actualism, something is possible if it is an abstract object that could be exemplified. As concluded above, there is no coexemplification in the case of Holmes, but if a specific character property qualifies as an abstract object, then it can exemplify or obtain without being bound to the property of being Sherlock Holmes. The point here is that the properties themselves are not confined to the fictional circumstances or to the fictional character. If Sherlock Holmes solves a crime by cleverly devised methods, then those methods can just as easily be applied in any real situation, but this does not mean that his characteristic cleverness will be enacted along with it. Rather, it is the Holmesian innovation that produced the method and applied it aptly in certain

situations that can transmedially migrate into the behavior of a real individual. The properties do not belong to Sherlock Holmes exclusively because he, like any character fictional or actual, can be imitated if his properties are observed and thoroughly understood in their proper context when adapted.

It is the ontological primacy of the properties that makes transmedial migration possible. When readers encounter them, they are presented and packaged in the narrative, of which the fictional character is an integral part. With knowledge of reality, the author constructs the necessary fictional narrative world in which these properties can be demonstrated. By stimulating our capacity to conceive of the possible, it causes us to consider the circumstances in which features of reality would allow for the existence of these properties. If an original set of fictional circumstances is constructed for these properties, such that they were never considered by readers in such a situation before, then these properties could obtain in reality by virtue of the fictional precedent. If a detective in the 1890's was unaware of forensic methods such as fingerprint identification, then read in a Sherlock Holmes story of such a practice for solving crime, and acquired the skill himself and put it to use, then the property of being innovative and open-minded towards new methods in solving crime, and willing to take the initiative in utilizing fingerprint identification would have successfully transmedially migrated from fiction to reality. Even though fingerprinting was mentioned by Mark Twain before it appeared in the Sherlock Holmes stories, and the Argentine policeman Juan Vucetich is recorded as having successfully implemented it in 1892, the immense popularity of Sherlock Holmes made the property known to a larger number of people over a longer period of time (O'Brien, 50-55). Whether from Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* or Doyle's *The Norwood Builder*, the property of performing fingerprint identification certainly was and is real, but not before it was preserved in the state of fiction, later to be transformed into the state of living reality.

Pavel writes about the questions we may pose concerning the personal qualities of a character like Pickwick "one cannot answer [them] by simply inspecting the propositions printed on the pages of a book. An inference system is needed that would relate passages of the book to an extratextual cultural and factual framework" (17). Different kinds of propositions are made about Sherlock Holmes. Since Sherlock Holmes is not real, we cannot say that he actually has the property of being male in the same sense that the author of this paper does. On the other hand, there are many

character properties of Sherlock Holmes that pertain directly to his manner as a detective. Three characteristic properties of Sherlock Holmes' disposition as a detective are observation, deduction and knowledge. This is remarked in his evaluation of a French detective: "he possesses two out of the three qualities necessary for the ideal detective. He has the power of observation and that of deduction. He is only wanting in knowledge, and that may come in time" (*Sign*, 146). In observation, it is typical of him to use his senses to their utmost, and employ technical improvements on them to increase their efficiency, such as his use of the magnifying glass. In addition, he refrains from conjecture prior to gathering relevant evidence from the crime scene. Accordingly, there are many accounts of Sherlock Holmes riveted by a client's telling of events, focused intently on every word and yet quick to interrupt with pertinent questions. His power of observation goes beyond seeing and is not simply a characteristic talent. It is a property of Sherlock Holmes to be deliberate and attentive, which in turn strengthens and develops his perseverance in the matters he investigates.

In *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* he states, "it's a wicked world, and when a clever man turns his brain to crime, it is the worst of all" (188). This can cause readers to reflect on Sherlock Holmes' statement, and the effect of this contemplation can be potent in forming his character in the mind. A general impression of Sherlock Holmes' character plays a significant role in the inducement readers feel to accept certain character properties. When he solves crimes through his unyielding determination and tireless hard work, or when he shows compassion for the thief in *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*, a holistic image of him as an honest man who does well is heightened. Consequently, such a man who leaves readers with a positive feeling is worth imitating. The ability for character properties to strengthen one's own character is recognized in the wisdom he applies in certain situations. While the character properties do not transmedially migrate solely on admiration, they encourage adaptation to real life situations.

That being said, there is no need to assume that the character properties of Sherlock Holmes that transmedially migrate into the actual world invariably have a positive effect for those who accept them. Anyone might adapt Sherlock Holmes' characteristic art of deduction, as they perceive them, to solve any puzzle. In *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*, Watson examines a boxer for clues at Sherlock Holmes' request, only to find no detectable clues apart from the initials H.B. Sherlock

Holmes, of course, sees a great deal more in the signs of the hat, and shares details about its bearer that would seem impossible to interpret. Nevertheless, he is correct, and this effect might prove contagious for those eager to demonstrate their version of Holmesian prowess. What these readers might assume about themselves is that they possess knowledge of every minute distinction such a hat might display. Moreover, while Sherlock Holmes might seem to the inexperienced reader prone to conjecture, he is usually correct, as Watson might point out. It is also the fictional state of affairs that he should be right, because he must solve the case. Therefore, just because a specific character property has transmedially migrated into the actual world, does not mean that it will demonstrate the same measure of success.

As documented by O'Brien, the example of Sherlock Holmes has played an important role in creating a detective culture that began with Edgar Allan Poe's C. Auguste Dupin and extends into the present day (5-11). Every detective proceeds from a tradition that, though perhaps unknown to them, determines the properties they exhibit. This is perhaps expected of them, or they are trained in this manner. Certainly TV detectives follow a similar pattern, so within the presentation of detective work in fiction, he seems to have set a remarkable precedent. Hence, Sherlock Holmes' has had a unique effect, one that bears his trademark.

Conclusion

Certain character properties attributed to fictional characters are textually discerned by readers as having a direct relation to a character's proper name. While we mentally distinguish properties in an actual person without the need to express them with words, an adaptation of certain fictional character properties must occur in order for them to transfer from one medium into another. The textually constructed and restricted medium of a fictional narrative and the physical and social medium we reside in are the two media that concern the analysis found in this paper. For that reason, when a character property of Sherlock Holmes is adapted by a real person, we can say that it has transmedially migrated from his fictional world into the actual world.

This discussion on how a character property, such as an attitude, action, or distinct style attributed to a fictional character like Sherlock Holmes, can transmedially migrate outside of fiction into the actual world concludes that the

adjective *Holmesian* is a trademark that individuals learn to recognize as referring to a specific package of properties. We learn to use the term *Holmesian* to refer to these properties as familiarity with his properties is transmedially communicated. As an adjective, *Holmesian* modifies nouns and pronouns, such as people, hats, pipes, methods and manners. We grow accustomed to applying it in a way that communicates to other members of our linguistic community that we understand what it means and how it will be understood. The transmedial migration of character properties must occur in order for this term to function as a sign, and when it has been adapted from its fictional form to the actual world, the trademark or label refers to this new symbolic form.

The effect that fictional characters such as Sherlock Holmes have on the actual world contributes to how they are understood. The properties of fictional worlds and the actual world correspond insofar as the comprehension of the former in light of the latter depends upon principles of interpretation employed by readers. Since this comprehension takes place in the actual world of readers' minds, the ontological status of certain properties can be altered when they transmedially migrate into the actual behavior of readers. The demarcation line between the actual and fictional confronts all readers who use their imagination to make sense of fiction. The exact relation of fiction to reality remains elusive, but it involves such foundational questions about the nature of our existence that it should be the object of continuing study.

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