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Censoring allegorical texts: interpreting Orwell and Miller

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Sheffield Hallam University
Faculty of Development and Society

Censoring Allegorical Texts: Interpreting Orwell and Miller

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October 2016

Supervised by: Dr Ana Maria Sánchez-Arce and Dr Sam Browse

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Sheffield Hallam
University for the degree of Master of Arts in English by Research

Acknowledgements

I would firstly like to offer my heartfelt thanks to Sheffield Hallam University for their scholarship scheme which gave me the opportunity to undertake postgraduate study. I would also like to thank Dr Ana Maria Sánchez-Arce, for sparking what has since become a passionate interest in censorship, and for offering invaluable guidance and support throughout this project. Thank you for pushing me to become a better student. I would also like to thank Dr Sam Browse, whose friendly and knowledgeable advice helped me to understand seemingly impenetrable topics.

Thank you to Russell Marriott, for whom the topics of censorship, Miller, and Orwell have become conversation staples over the past twelve months – your belief in me made this thesis possible. To Rachel Boone and Samuel Hollis, for offering a much-needed sense of humour when I'd lost my own. And lastly to my parents, without whose support I would not have been able to see this project through to its completion. Thank you for your encouraging and honest words when I needed to hear them the most!

Abstract

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By Melissa Jayne Rendi

This thesis explores the relationship between censorship and allegory through an analysis of allegorical interpretations of censored texts. The allegorical texts *Animal Farm* by George Orwell and *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller are analysed with a view to understanding whether censors of allegory are correct to assume that their own interpretations are replicable for other readers, and censor accordingly.

Beginning with an exploration of the varieties of literary censorship affecting both primary texts, the thesis then moves on to a discussion of current literature concerning the fields of both allegory and censorship. With a methodological focus on reader-response criticism and the power and influence of a reader's own context over the allegorical text itself, the thesis hopes to fill the gap in current scholarship which approaches the issues of allegory and censorship from a perspective focused on cognitive linguistics. Each text's respective sections devote attention both to the censorship of the texts and their authors, and to critical responses and reviews which act as examples of literary interpretations. Close readings (selected on the basis of recurrence in discussions of the texts) are used to understand the elements of pre-existing knowledge required of readers to construct their allegorical interpretation. Finally, the allegorical parallels noted in the analysed interpretations are compared to those offered by the texts' censors, and with context and relevant theory in mind, the replicability of censors' interpretations is considered.

The conclusions reached in the thesis support the suggestion that censors' allegorical interpretations are replicable. However, the likelihood of readers producing such interpretations is largely influenced by their understanding of the allegorised scenario, and how closely this understanding matches that of the censors. In addition, the possibility for dominant readings of censored and controversial allegorical texts to alleviate interpretive pressures typically placed upon readers of allegorical literature may indicate that such censorship, if ultimately unsuccessful, may prove counterproductive.

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Introduction

At its core, censorship exists to prevent individuals from encountering materials deemed unacceptable by censors. With regards to literary censorship, the reasons for a text's classification as unacceptable are numerous, changeable, and largely context dependent. Over time, ideas of acceptability are likely to change, consequently affecting which texts are subject to censorship. Such changes in perspective can be attributed to the gradual shift of cultural norms and values, but also to influential forces such as religion, politics, and science. Changes in permissible literary themes and terms prompt censors to alter their reasons for opting to censor texts. An example of such a change can be found in the contemporary removal of racial terms which, while accepted as recently as the mid-twentieth century, are now understood to be pejorative and inappropriate (Kushner 1999, 76).

This changeable nature of taboo and appropriateness raises several questions about attempts to censor literature. If the reasons for a text's censorship can change over time, we must acknowledge that a single text has the potential to elicit multiple interpretations, perspectives, and reactions depending on the context of its reader. And, if all texts have the ability to produce numerous interpretations and reactions, what then gives censors' opinions credence over those of other readers? Is one party necessarily able to dictate what is appropriate for another, considering ideas of appropriateness and acceptability differ from person to person? Interpretations are undeniably subjective, and a censor's decision to limit what another individual is able to access presupposes the reactions, interpretations, and feelings of others.

Often, literary censorship stems from a desire to restrict texts which flout societal taboos. Although taboos are often based upon a common societal agreement about what is and is not acceptable (Allan and Burrige 2006, 1-11), there are variations

in the severity of taboos, as well as in the penalties of ignoring them. While disregarding certain taboos may be regarded as little more than impolite, flouting others can result in censorship or punishment. In subjecting a text to censorship on the grounds of taboo content, the censor demonstrates that their interpretation views the text as taboo. The decision to censor content found objectionable by the censorious party presupposes that others will share in this opinion of the text. Although taboos are generally regarded as shared within societies, this does not allow for personal difference of opinion or individual tolerance and sympathy towards potentially taboo topics. After all, “[n]othing is taboo for all people, under all circumstances, for all time” (Allan and Burridge, 2006 p9).

Despite this difference of perception, when a literary censor decides that a text is - for whatever reason - inappropriate and worthy of censorship, they demonstrate an assumption that other readers will share their view and thus produce a comparable interpretation of the text. It is this interpretation which censors seek to suppress. And while a text’s reception may alter over time, a censor’s concern with contemporary audiences’ likelihood of producing subversive interpretations of texts may still be well-founded. If all literary interpretations were entirely unique, there would be no agreement amongst readers on texts’ meaning, and this is certainly not the case. Although the depth and richness of readers’ interpretations of a text may vary considerably, comparable interpretations of texts (particularly those which are well-known or controversial) are common. Therefore, while all readers may have the potential to produce differing interpretations, it may still be possible to predict interpretations of a text to some extent. The aim of this thesis is to ascertain whether censors are correct in this prediction.

In both academic scholarship and popular media, the censorship of literature is discussed widely and in great detail, and deservedly so. Although sometimes thought of as a power most commonly wielded by governments and regulatory bodies over explicitly subversive and objectionable texts, there is substantial evidence to suggest that censorship is at times much more subtle. When censorship occurs behind closed doors, in correspondence between a publisher and would-be author, or amidst a cultural climate which actively discourages criticism of the establishment and thus prompts self-censorship, the resulting controversy and public disagreement is likely to be lessened. While the consequences of subtle and insidious censorship are undoubtedly much less physically severe than those faced by writers who receive legal or financial penalties for their work, the motivations for both manifestations of censorship are comparable. Preventative forms of censorship (such as self-censorship and market censorship) originate from the same desire to suppress objectionable content which motivates the censors that would see a writer imprisoned or otherwise punished for his work. However, despite the concerning nature of subtle censorship, the privacy in which such censors operate often allows them to escape many of the criticisms commonly levelled at more the public instances of censorship which draw controversy.

This thesis will focus on the British and American censorship of *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, and *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. The texts' implicit political criticisms, achieved through an allegorical reading of their narratives, led to the censorship of both the texts and their authors. Released in a time of allegiance between Great Britain and the USSR during World War II (Westwood 1980, 138), *Animal Farm* was perceived by censors to be an attack on Britain's Russian allies, and thus inopportune and unacceptable (Pearce 2005). The censorship faced by *The Crucible* occurred due to its implicit criticisms of the American government and Joseph McCarthy's hunt for communists during the 1940s and 50s (Warshow, 1953). In some

regards, the censorship faced by both texts is comparable. Firstly, in its comparatively subtle nature (neither text was banned in its country of origin). And secondly, in the presence of Russia as a point of controversy and panic for the texts' censors, despite their different perspectives and motivations.

However, in spite of these similarities, the reality of each author's experience with censorship does differ. Although *Animal Farm* "was first censored during WWII" and "*The Crucible* [was] essentially censored in times of peace" (Hamilton 2011, 26) that is not to say that *Animal Farm* was necessarily a more dangerous text for Orwell to produce than *The Crucible* was for Miller. Although Britain was at war, Orwell himself was under no threat while publishing his text, and feared only for the novel's reception and ability to get published (Orwell 2000b, 105). On the other hand, while America was not at war at the time of *The Crucible*'s first production, it was nonetheless a politically hostile environment which had already claimed the careers of numerous writers and creatives suspected of being sympathetic to the communist cause, making Miller's situation perhaps more dangerous.

In order to perceive *Animal Farm* or *The Crucible* as subversive or worthy of censorship or suppression, one must interpret the texts' narratives allegorically. A piece of allegorical literature comprises both a surface narrative and a discoverable parallel narrative (Tambling 2010, 174). Although comparable to metaphor in its ability to represent one concept in the terms of another, an important point to note is that allegories, unlike typical metaphors, do not refer to their parallel or source narrative in the available text. The onus is entirely on the reader to draw comparisons between the text before them, and the allegorised situation (Crisp 2005, 116). Allegorical texts have the ability to "say one thing and [mean] another" (Fletcher 1964, 2). In the context of this thesis, it is not what is said which is objectionable to censors, but what is allegorically implied. Were it possible to read both texts with the contexts of their

publication and release entirely disregarded, it seems likely that neither would receive a censorious response. However, following an allegorical reading of *Animal Farm* and *The Crucible*, with context and assumed authorial intent considered, it is possible to produce interpretations critical of the USSR and McCarthyism, respectively. It is my view that these inferred criticisms motivated the texts' censors to act, with a view to limiting the availability of similar critical interpretations for other readers. This thesis will aim to deduce whether such concerns about other readers' interpretations were, in fact, valid or unfounded.

The production of allegorical interpretations relies heavily on a reader's awareness of that which is being allegorically represented in the text. Without an awareness of the allegory's source material, it is unlikely a reader will have the ability to notice where the narrative bears a resemblance to another, separate scenario. It stands to reason that without a pre-existing knowledge and awareness of the USSR's political climate or McCarthyism and the fear of communists in America during the mid-twentieth century, a reader would be unable to form the same allegorical interpretation as those produced by censors who assumedly held such knowledge. However, while a reader lacking contextually significant information may not have the ability to produce an interpretation identical to that of a censor, that is not to say that their interpretation will diverge completely. Instead, two separate interpretations may be comparable only in their general understanding of the allegory, rather than in specific parallels and details. It is my view that by demonstrating the importance of a reader's pre-existing knowledge upon their interpretation of an allegorical text, I will be able to show how similar allegorical interpretations can only be produced when readers share at least some degree of contextual awareness.

In order to construct an answer to the questions posed by this thesis, it will be necessary to begin with a thorough understanding of the censorship faced by both *Animal Farm* and *The Crucible*, noting that this censorship is significantly dependent on the contemporary society of the texts' publication and performance. Where possible I will attempt to identify the allegorical interpretations produced by the texts' censors by analysing their given justifications for censorship. These interpretations will offer a point of comparison for analysis against further interpretations, which will be taken from examples of literary criticism and reviews. The interpretations have been compiled from a range of sources, spanning the years between each text's conception and the present day. The decision to include a variety of sources arose from a desire to highlight any change in interpretations of the texts across time and readers. Although contemporary literary criticism offers more in-depth analysis than the earlier sources included in this thesis, such examples commonly draw upon the ideas and interpretations of earlier critics. Therefore, while examples of contemporary scholarship have been included, by choosing to also analyse those critics and reviewers writing without the breadth of complementary material available to more contemporary writers, I hope to offer a diverse sampling which may even identify the chronology of the texts' interpretations¹.

While unpicking these secondary interpretations, my primary concern will be with the pre-existing knowledge and contextual awareness required of the reader in order to produce their allegorical interpretation. For each narrative feature or fictional character that the reader has inferred an alternate meaning from, thought will be given to what events or real-world figures they are required to be aware of in order to do so.

¹The nature of certain written interpretations (such as those featured on non-academic websites or in partially-scanned newspapers) removes the possibility of including page numbers within citations. In such instances, this is outlined in the bibliography and a full URL address is listed.

Analytical close readings of the primary texts will also be conducted in order to ascertain the specific narrative markers readers are using to inform their interpretations. Both similarities and differences between interpretations will be noted, with a view to explaining why such patterns have occurred while considering the personal contexts and perspectives of each reader. The effects of censorship itself upon readers' ability to produce an interpretation similar to that of censors will also be considered. The conclusions reached will hopefully be used to confirm or disprove censors' supposition that their own interpretations are likely to be produced by others.

1. Literature Review

The link between allegory and censorship appears to have received little scholarly attention, perhaps due to the interdisciplinary nature of the topic, or potentially owing to the considerably limited opportunities available to draw a link between the two. It is undoubtedly due to this limited nature that Craig Hamilton's (2011) essay "Allegory, Blending, and Censorship in Modern Literature" which discusses the censorship of allegories, focuses heavily on the allegorical texts that will be studied in this thesis. Despite this similarity, the differing approach to analysis in this project will hopefully yield complementary, yet new and worthwhile conclusions. Hamilton (2011) uses cognitive blending theory as a method of understanding the processes involved in creating an allegorical interpretation. This particular choice of theoretical approach to analysis, along with Hamilton's interest in the process of cognitive blending itself, marks a significant difference in the primary aims of the two projects. In addition, although Hamilton (2011, 32) discusses the fact that different readers have displayed differences of interpretation in their own blends, this evidence is used to support his argument about the presence of cognitive blending in understanding allegorical texts. Following this, Hamilton (2011, 30) appears to regard allegorical interpretations of *Animal Farm* and *The Crucible* as predominantly fixed despite occasional differences of opinion, demonstrated through his list-style description of the parallels present between the texts and their source material. This thesis will attempt to ascertain which contextual prompts and knowledge bases make such interpretations possible, which will hopefully complement Hamilton's work on the cognitive processes involved in creating the interpretation itself.

This project demands knowledge of the following fields: literary censorship, reader-response criticism including schema theory, and conceptual metaphor theory. An

understanding of conceptual metaphor theory will enable discussion and analysis of the aspects of language required to produce metaphorical interpretations, as well as offering the appropriate language with which to describe forms of metaphor which diverge from the norm, such as allegory. Where the two forms of metaphor differ, the application of schema theory will hopefully offer an insight into how metaphorical interpretations can still be produced when the metaphor in question does not operate in a traditional sense.

As this thesis will analyse literary criticism and reviews to assess readers' interpretations, an awareness of the important role played by a reader's understanding of literary forms and conventions will be valuable. For instance, without an awareness of the attributes of allegory, how might a reader know to analyse an allegorical text to a deeper level than its surface narrative? Within the field of reader-response criticism, it has been argued that texts hold no fixed meaning, instead suggesting that meaning is created upon a text's interaction with a reader (An 2013, Rosenblatt 1981, Iser 1972). If we are to accept that words are indeed void of an inherent meaning, then it can be assumed that texts have the ability to elicit any number of interpretations, given that no two readers are identical. Perspectives on this argument differ. For instance, while Miall (1990) suggests that there are certain narrative and linguistic markers which are likely to produce comparable interpretations in multiple readers, others (Anderson et al. 1977, Fish 1980, Rosenblatt 1981) offer that personal biases and areas of knowledge are unavoidably influential during the process of creating meaning and interpretations of texts. This thesis will attempt to illustrate how narrative markers are only able to elicit comparable reactions in multiple readers if they all possess a similar level of knowledge of the terms.

1.1 Theory

In *Is There a Text in This Class* Stanley Fish (1980) suggests that the existence of “interpretive communities” can explain why certain readers are more likely to produce a particular interpretation of a text, owing to the differing contextual prompts experienced when they interact with the text. These differences in approach can be attributed to readers’ expectations of the features present within a particular text. Knowledge of a text’s form, genre, and author will influence a reader’s interpretive process and affect the terms in which they understand the text before them (Fish 1980, 169-170). Were a reader familiar with an author’s other works and typical political perspectives, for instance, they may greet a new text of theirs with a set of expectations relating to the political or ideological perspective from which it will likely be written. From this, it follows that two readers with differing ideological beliefs may draw entirely different interpretations from the same text, implying that the text’s meaning is not necessarily fixed for every reader and that other factors may influence the resulting interpretation.

Fish (1980, 303-322) also suggests that outside of a given interpretive community, a text is no longer likely to elicit the same reactions that were previously produced, as other readers will approach the same text with differing views on the possible or likely meanings that it contains. To demonstrate this argument Fish (1980, 307) uses the example of a lecturer and student, who are able to understand the query “Is there a text in this class?” in the context of a classroom setting where literature is being studied, their shared understanding arising from knowledge they both possess on the conventions and expected terminology of their current situation. Were this question posed in an alternate context, the inferred meaning behind it may change, as the contextual prompts required to understand that the question refers to a set text for a

lesson are no longer present. Fish's theory suggests that although readers belonging to the same interpretive community may form comparable interpretations of a text, those reading from outside this community are likely to base their own on different textual prompts, and thus create a different final interpretation.

Louise Rosenblatt (1981) develops an argument similar to Fish on the importance of the reader in *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: Transactional Theory of the Literary Work*. Her transactional theory of literature describes how, while reading, a transaction takes place between the text and the reader in which the reader retrieves the text's language and deposits their own understanding and knowledge base in order to create the finished product of their interpretation (Rosenblatt 1981, 12). The process of understanding a text, Rosenblatt notes (1981, 12), "happens during a coming-together, a compenetration, of a reader and a text". This sentiment echoes that offered by Wolfgang Iser (1972, 279) who suggests that: "The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence". Both critics emphasise the importance of the reader as an individual, rather than a theoretical recipient of a complete text. This prioritisation of the reader over text gives credence to the argument that no one interpretation is necessarily correct for all readers, as in interacting with a text through reading, each reader is undoubtedly producing their own version and understanding.

Where Fish places significance on a reader's knowledge of texts and their properties, Rosenblatt (1981, 27) instead prioritises the reader's lived experiences and approach to the act of reading itself. She offers the terms "aesthetic" and "efferent" to describe two methods of reading, and notes how what the same reader extracts from any given text may be changeable depending on their particular reading style. She defines "aesthetic" reading as that which is done for pleasure and an appreciation of the form, whereas "efferent" reading is that which is performed when the reader intends to

retrieve information or knowledge from a text (Rosenblatt 1981, 27). This distinction between reading styles may offer an insight into the approaches taken by critics and reviewers, because it can be assumed that such a response would require an efferent reading style. The presence of multiple ways of reading, once again, provides evidence for the way a single text may produce multiple interpretations. Indeed, Rosenblatt (1981, 11, 24) comments on how a single reader may return to a text they are familiar with, and under the influence of a differing emotional state or reading style, produce an entirely new interpretation.

Schema theory can be viewed as an extension of reader-response criticism, in that it places a great significance upon the reader's contextual understanding in their creation of meaning from texts and their production of interpretations. Explained by Guy Cook (1995, 12) as a method of drawing from pre-existing knowledge to "fill in details not contained in the text but drawn from their relevant schema", schema theory provides an explanation for readers' ability to infer meaning where an incomplete narrative picture is provided. To exemplify this interpretive process, Cook (1995, 12-3) offers the example of a legal testimony. In such a text, despite the requirement of total honesty, certain details are omitted in order to not appear facetious and unnecessarily informative, owing to a reader's ability to understand the relayed events with only general reference. In Cook's view, it is possible to mention an action and expect the reader to infer the required elements of the action also took place, by drawing upon their necessary schema of such an event. For example, a literary application of this concept may see a protagonist having a shower. It is unnecessary for the writer to mention that the protagonist first removed their clothes, as a reader is able to infer that this took place by relating to their own understanding of the process of showering.

Reader-response theory suggests that a reader's own level of understanding and knowledge has the ability to shape the interpretations available to them. Cook's (1995, 24) argument aligns with this view - he notes that "it may be generalizing to the point of distortion to talk of different speakers' language competence as homogeneous. (Do a James Joyce and a six-year-old really have so much in common?)" Considering that the aim of this thesis is to determine whether a censor's interpretation of an allegorical text is likely to be shared by other readers, Cook's comments on the disparity between readers' reading abilities are of great relevance. A text easily accessible to a reader familiar with literature may be beyond comprehension to somebody entirely disinterested in reading. The interpretations produced by two such parties would likely be fairly different. This is testament to the importance of the reader upon their interpretation of the text, and evidence to suggest that a censor's allegorical interpretation, while potentially replicable, may not be unanimous.

Another useful element of Cook's text is the explanation offered as to what comprises a text's context. With such a keen focus on a theoretical perspective that prioritises contextual influence upon the reader in this thesis, an in-depth understanding of the features to consider when discussing context and its importance will help to produce a well-developed analysis. Cook (1995, 24-25) states that context consists of,

1 co-text 2 paralinguistic features 3 other texts (i.e. "intertext") 4 the physical situation 5 the social and cultural situation 6 interlocutors and their schemata (knowledge about other peoples' knowledge).

Shuying An (2013, 130) argues that "the fundamental tenet of schema theory assumes that a written text does not carry meaning by itself. Rather, a text only provides directions for readers as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge". As with the points noted by Rosenblatt (1981)

and Fish (1980), An suggests that texts are given their meaning through their contact with a reader. However, An's mention of "directions" provided by the text implies that although a text may be without inherent meaning, there are still elements which inform readers about where to begin their interpretation. This is, of course, similar to the argument posed by Cook (1995, 12-13), which suggests that although readers have the ability to fill in blanks left in narrative, they require such prompts nonetheless to know when and where to provide further information from their schema.

With this in mind, if we are to assume that as an entity a text has no fixed meaning, but that there are certain prompts or features of narrative which may cause readers to begin to interpret texts in a certain way, then it may be useful to consider studies which have offered multiple readers the same text and analysed their interpretations. Richard Anderson et al. (1977, 367-381) provided two groups of students with two different passages of text. The first passage could be understood in the terms of either a wrestling match or an attempted escape from prison, and the second could be understood as either a group of friends playing musical instruments together or a poker game. Importantly, the two groups of students comprised one group with an interest in and knowledge of wrestling, and one group with the same level of understanding of musical instruments. After giving the students the opportunity to read each text, Anderson et al. gave them multiple choice questions to answer regarding their interpretations of the two texts, in order to ascertain which of the two interpretations had been reached by each group. The results demonstrated that each group was much more likely to identify the scenario relating to their hobby in the texts before them. Perhaps more interestingly still, 62% of those involved had been unable to interpret the texts as relating to anything other than their respective hobbies, despite those in the alternate group readily making this interpretation themselves (1977, 376). Anderson et al. (1977, 377) state that their results, "support unequivocally the claim that high-level schemata

provide the interpretive framework for comprehending discourse”. In this instance, a reader’s specific schema has been able to dictate the way in which they interpret a text. In relation to this thesis, these findings demonstrate the possibility that an increased awareness and understanding of a topic, for instance, those topics allegorised in my primary texts, appears likely to increase the chances of a reader producing an interpretation based upon that knowledge.

David Miall’s (1990) study into readers’ responses to Virginia Woolf’s text *Summing Up* yielded comparable results. After reading the opening of the text, which had been broken down into small phrases, readers were required to comment on their progressing interpretations using “talk-aloud” reporting (1990, 339). The results of Miall’s (1990) study suggest that two readers may make similar interpretations up to a point, drawing on the same words for significance and meaning, however ultimately each reader’s own personality and biases will inform the way they perceive the narrative information they have taken from the text. Miall (1990, 338) notes that “it is quite possible for two readers to make evaluative responses to the same phrases, see the same network of relationships across phrases, and make anticipations at the same moments, yet emerge with opposite readings of a text”. The implication is that although readers may agree upon which elements of a narrative have significance, how they go on to perceive the significance and its influence upon their ultimate interpretation is changeable from reader to reader.

Importantly, despite the evidenced power of the reader upon their interpretation, it must be noted that as readers do not encounter texts within a contextual vacuum, it is possible for them to hold preconceived opinions on texts before they even begin the process of reading. Similar to Fish’s (1980, 303-322) concept of literary expectations produced by interpretive communities, a pre-existing contextual awareness of a text’s

narrative may influence a reader's interpretive process. This awareness may arise from the presence of a dominant or accepted reading of a text. Numerous sources can influence dominant readings, from literary scholarship and newspaper reviews, to the way in which a text is discussed in the media and taught in classrooms. These influential forces contribute to the general consensus regarding what any given text is "about" at a general level. Such readings may explain why texts often elicit comparable interpretations from a breadth of readers, despite the differing personalities, biases, and contexts of the individuals.

In "Encoding/Decoding", Stuart Hall (2006, 171) outlines the concept of dominant readings of mass media and communications, which require a viewer or receiver to achieve the exact interpretation hoped for by the writer or producer of the text. In this scenario, the recipient "decodes" that which has been "encoded" by the producer, and in doing so forms their own interpretation. This theory can be applicable to literary interpretations in that it speaks to the ability for a text to hold a "preferred" meaning which may be considered correct, which may ultimately receive the status of a "dominant reading" (Hall 2006, 169). Although a dominant reading may be largely agreed upon within the context of individual societies, it is not possible to regard it as correct to the exclusion of all other interpretations, "because it is always possible to order, classify, assign and decode an event within more than one 'mapping'" (Hall 2006, 169). However, it is still possible to consider a particular reading dominant because within that interpretation "there exists a pattern of "preferred readings"; and these both have the institutional/political/ideological order imprinted in them and have themselves become institutionalized" (Hall 2006, 169).

Such readings may also illustrate why years after an allegorical text's publication, readers are still able to create similar interpretations to those produced by

readers at the time of the text's publication. The recurrence and prevalence of particular interpretations, from those which at a general level suggest what a text is "about", to those which offer more detailed analysis and discussion, all combine to create a "preferred reading" (Hall 2006, 169). In time, this reading may become almost inseparable from the text itself. Therefore, while contemporary readers will approach *Animal Farm* and *The Crucible* from a different contextual position to the readers and playgoers of the 1940s and 50s, the wealth of discussion and intertextual prompts available to them may still influence their perspective upon the text.

The scholarship already discussed in this review focuses primarily on the production of interpretations of texts which can be read in a literal sense in order to extract meaning. However, the allegorical nature of the texts analysed in this project requires much more of a reader. This thesis will attempt to go some way towards bridging the gap in scholarship in this area, by using reader-response criticism to interpret allegorical texts. It has been noted that "the reader's involvement in allegory is perhaps more arduous than in any other genre" (Quilligan 1979, 225). While reading an allegorical text, a reader must interpret what is before them in the text's surface narrative, and then go on to consider this in terms of other possible situations which may offer a parallel. In his discussion of schema theory, Cook (1995, 13) suggests that the "mental ability to 'read in' details is particularly relevant to literary narrative, in which readers are given points of reference and left to fill in the gaps 'from imagination'". A key difference between a standard literary narrative and an allegorical narrative is the absence of such "points of reference" (Cook 1995, 13).

The processes involved in constructing an allegorical interpretation can be partially understood through conceptual metaphor theory. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (2003) discuss the prevalence of metaphorical thought in our everyday

consciousness, suggesting that metaphor goes beyond what many consider the typical sense, for instance, that used in poetry. Lakoff and Johnson (2003, 252-254) theorised that to be understood, a metaphor needs both a target domain and source domain, or put more simply, an easily understandable and familiar concept (source domain), and a more abstract concept which the metaphor will attempt to explain (target domain). There are similarities between Lakoff and Johnson's theory of understanding metaphor and the process of understanding allegory. However, an important distinction must be made. Explained by Peter Crisp (2005, 116), allegories "never refer directly to their metaphorical target. Direct reference is only to the metaphorical source constructed as a fictional situation". Where standard narratives enable a reader to infer details from their imagination (Cook 1995, 13), and metaphors present the prompts required to draw upon the appropriate knowledge base (Lakoff and Johnson 2003, 252-254), allegories require the reader to decide, based on the available narrative, which contextual prompts to use in order to create an interpretation. With this difference in mind, a context-based style of analysis appears the most appropriate. Such an approach will hopefully be able to shed light upon which schemas readers are drawing their knowledge from, and in response to which prompts.

The process of understanding an allegorical narrative requires the act of allegoresis. The term "allegoresis" refers to the dismantling of a potentially allegorical narrative in order to form an allegorical interpretation (Tambling 2010, 174). When a reader identifies characters or narrative events comparable to real-world individuals or scenarios within a text, they may begin the process of allegoresis. The reader may then view additional events and characters within the text as further potential allegorical representations. If sufficient similarities are noticeable within the text, the reader may conclude that the text is allegorical. A potentially problematic aspect of this process is knowing when to stop. It might be that certain narrative features of an allegorical text

bear no significance to the allegory itself. However, a reader may still attempt to identify a parallel for allegorical comparison if allegoresis has begun. If a parallel cannot be found, a reader could perceive the allegory to be incomplete or flawed. The likelihood of this may increase if a reader has an in-depth knowledge of an allegory's potential target reference, as they may anticipate a greater number of narrative parallels than the author has included. When analysing allegorical interpretations in the coming chapters, the reader's approach to allegoresis will be considered.

1.2 Varieties of Censorship

In *Censorship: The Knot That Binds Power and Knowledge*, Sue Curry Jansen (1988) suggests that censorship frequently takes forms which may be unrecognisable as censorship, as they are non-traditional and unexpected. On contemporary use of the word "censorship", she says:

Current Anglo-American usages of the term conceive of censorship narrowly as a monopoly power of the state which is exercised in Liberal societies only under extraordinary circumstances, e.g. in wartime and other temporary emergencies, to control extreme sexual lasciviousness, and to make possible prosecutions for libel and slander on behalf of private citizens (Jansen 1988, 15).

Jansen (1988, 15) suggests that such a narrow view of what constitutes censorship allows other forms to escape scrutiny by "discouraging inquiry" into what she believes to be the most worrying forms of censorship in current Liberal societies - "censorships routinely undertaken by state bureaucracies in the name of 'national security' and censorships routinely sanctioned by the 'profit principle'". Jansen's awareness and concern for varieties of censorship not typically considered can offer an example of the demand for enquiry into the effects and scenarios which prompt such instances of censorious activity.

Censorship driven by profit and financial success is often termed “corporate censorship” - it can also be referred to as “market censorship”. This form of censorship is often less overt than that imposed by the state or official bodies, due to the preventative rather than reactive approach to censoring texts, leaving the general public less likely to be aware the act is taking place. Despite the lack of public awareness of this censorship, “[market forces] can perfectly properly be regarded as censors” (Petley 2009, 142). Potential justifications for such censorship may include but are not limited to: a conflict of interests on the part of the censor, disapproval from advertisers and others with financial motivations, concerns over profitability (Petley 2009, 142), and a wish to control “what ideas gain entry into the ‘marketplace of ideas’” (Jansen 1988, 16).

Jansen’s (1988, 16-17) assertion that censors control which perspectives are permitted in the “marketplace of ideas” can be linked to her claims that certain demographics (those from the lower classes, women, people of colour and members of the LGBT community) within society are unable to access the freedoms granted by Liberalism due to their inability to “make the papers”. It is Jansen’s (1988, 15-17) view that because such demographics are expected to produce perspectives and opinions outside of what can be considered profitable and desirable for both the expected reader and publishing houses, they are likely to experience corporate censorship and be withheld opportunities afforded to those whose perspectives fit the accepted mainstream narrative and are viewed as more profitable. Despite not belonging to the demographics offered by Jansen, George Orwell’s political perspective at the time of writing *Animal Farm* (a socialist, critical of the Russian regime) was neither a typical nor popular view, thus rendering his perspective non-standard. In “The Freedom of the Press”, Orwell (2000b, 105) demonstrates an awareness of the difficulties faced by certain perspectives and says; “A genuinely unpopular opinion is almost never given a fair hearing, either in

the popular press or in the highbrow periodicals”. The situation is similar with regards to *The Crucible*, which, when interpreted allegorically, offers a perspective critical of the 1950s American government undoubtedly unpopular amongst those in power at the time of early performances of Miller’s text.

George Manz (1999), the editor of the journal *Briarpatch*, also discussed the effects of corporate censorship and the potential difficulties in publishing an unpopular perspective in his article “On the attack: corporate censorship is alive and well”. The article details an instance of corporate censorship against the British magazine, *The Ecologist*. Manz (1999) tells of the reluctance on the part of *The Ecologist*’s printer to print an issue of the magazine outlining the company Monsanto’s use of Bovine Growth Hormone. The printer required a letter to be written to Monsanto to ensure their legal immunity if the topics covered in the issue were found to be libellous. When Monsanto rejected this request, the printer disposed of all copies of the magazine, leaving *The Ecologist* tasked with finding a printer willing to work with the particular issue. Manz (1999, 32) closes his article by stating, “The truth is out there. We just have to be willing to take on the corporate giants that have made such a mess of the world”. These events are testament to how literary censorship has the potential to extend beyond the writers of the offending text, and influence those who, while not responsible for the text’s content, feel unable to associate with the subversive material.

Writers with an awareness of the forces acting against individuals with opinions differing from the mainstream may feel obliged to engage in self-censorship. In “Market Censorship: A Personal Account”, Kate Millett (1990, 59) tells of how many writers have confessed to her how they “ended up censoring themselves because of certain ‘invisible rules’”. It is her view that for women writers in particular, breaking such rules ensures the writer must “confront the accompanying resistance of social, political,

economic forces” (Millett 1990, 59). There may, of course, be instances where a writer feels unable to combat such forces and instead opts to not write at all. In such cases, although censorship has taken place, no trace is left whatsoever.

As previously mentioned, although preventative censorship may always not hold the same physical threats as extreme reactive censorship, that is not to say that the issue is without its dangers. While there are undeniably degrees of self-censorship, the motivations behind the act must be considered. For instance, the act of self-censoring oneself in conversation to maintain politeness is markedly different from the inability to produce a politically critical text through fears of punishment. Though self-censorship may not always be considered an extreme form of censorship, violent or punitive censorship cannot take place if the subversive material is never produced. Therefore, if the (real or perceived) threat of disciplinary measures prevents writers from expressing themselves freely, self-censorship can undoubtedly be regarded as damaging.

Throughout this thesis, the term “censorship” will be used to describe several varieties of literary suppression. The use of the same term is not to suggest that all manifestations of censorship are identical in their methods or severity, rather that they all stem from a common goal, to curtail expression. Where commercial or market censorship may hope to limit unpopular or unprofitable perspectives with a view to maximising profits and public approval, political censorship invariably seeks to limit any unacceptable criticism or dissent. There are vast differences in the realities of these two forms of censorship, which cannot be ignored. More different still, is the restriction of unpopular ideas through the presence of social norms and mores, which may result in unprompted self-censorship of unfavourable perspectives. It is for this reason that my use of the term “censorship” should be read flexibly, with an understanding that what is

being referred to is the presence of a restriction on expression, rather than the stereotypical notion of active censorship.

2. Some Interpretations Are More Equal Than Others: Interpreting *Animal Farm*

In 1944, T.S. Eliot penned a letter to George Orwell, detailing the reasons for his refusal to publish *Animal Farm* at Faber and Faber, the publishing house at which Eliot was a director. Despite the novel's reported artistic achievements, "several publishers duly rejected the work, but not because it was banal. The little squib was an attack on Britain's wartime ally, the Soviet Union, and thus likely to be political dynamite" (Pearce 2005). Eliot's letter offers an example of the kind of censorship faced by *Animal Farm* prior to its publication. Speaking on behalf of Faber and Faber's directors, Eliot (Lewislondon 1969) states, "we have no conviction that this is the right point of view from which to criticise the political situation at the present time". As the text's surface narrative contains no reference to any political situation, we must conclude that Eliot has generated an interpretation of the text reliant on a deeper understanding of the contextual implications of the narrative, assumedly through allegoresis. In a time of recent political allegiance between the United Kingdom and Russia against Germany during World War II, Eliot appears to have interpreted *Animal Farm* as a text critical of Russia, and thus inopportune and unpublishable. The remainder of Eliot's letter, printed in Alison Flood's (2016) article "It needs more public-spirited pigs': TS Eliot's rejection of Orwell's *Animal Farm*", comprises multiple references to various aspects of Russia and its political landscape, but does not explicitly state that *Animal Farm* has been interpreted as an allegory. However, such references demonstrate the construction of an allegorical interpretation, as they require the reader to consider the text in terms of another separate scenario. In rejecting *Animal Farm*, Eliot and those at Faber and Faber appear to presume that their own interpretations regarding the text's criticisms of "the political situation" are accessible to other readers.

By assigning the text a “point of view”, Eliot attaches the significance of perspective to *Animal Farm*, demonstrating his view that the text has the potential to be read as a particular view on a “political situation”; a view with which Faber and Faber evidently wished not to align themselves. In his use of the term “we” Eliot (Lewis 1969) shares responsibility for his decision amongst those in power at Faber and Faber. Indeed, his letter states that in order to pass judgement on a text, the opinions of two directors are required (Flood 2016). While this process does appear to allow for multiple interpretations to inform the final decision on whether to accept or reject a text, there are undoubtedly further factors influencing the verdict. Whether or not each director sympathises personally with the perspective they infer from *Animal Farm*, they are tasked with acting in the interests of Faber and Faber as a company, and are likely required to take into account financial considerations and political leanings. With this in mind, it is possible to regard the censorship of *Animal Farm* as corporate in nature, owing to its potential motivations and business-minded propagators.

That the interpretations of multiple parties were used in the decision to censor *Animal Farm* suggests that it is possible for more than one reader to create a similar interpretation of a text. If the directors at Faber and Faber possess the necessary schema to infer a perspective critical of Russia within *Animal Farm*, then their decision to censor may be based on the assumption that others hold such awareness. However, considering Stanley Fish’s (1980, 307) concept of interpretive communities, the fact that the readers in this case are in the same profession, with an expectedly comparable understanding of contemporaneous world politics and the politics of Orwell himself, it may be expected that their interpretations, though similar, are not necessarily representative of the general population, who may not expect, or look for, the same features in the text.

Eliot's (Lewis 1969) letter continues, stating "I can't see any reason of prudence or caution to prevent anyone from publishing this book – if he believed in what it stands for" and in doing so implicitly admits that he, and by assumed extension Faber and Faber, does not believe in what the text stands for. Thus, personal disagreement with the subject matter is presented as satisfactory reasoning to refuse to publish a text. We can infer from Eliot's words that were the text to present a point of view he did agree with, he would be willing to publish it. This shared agreement to reject *Animal Farm* based on its "point of view" can be linked to Sue Curry Jansen's (1988, 16) ideas of undesirable perspectives being prevented from entering the public domain. When Faber and Faber reject *Animal Farm* based on its point of view, they are complicit in preventing the text's inferred viewpoint from being made available to others, where it may potentially gain support and recognition as a viable and agreed-upon perspective. By doing so, they are furthering the disconnect between those views which are acceptable and those which are not. In this case, the unfavourable perspective is one critical of Russia and its politics or practices, owing to Great Britain's then-allegiance with Russia against Germany.

In his article "The Prevention of Literature", Orwell (2014, 333) himself noted that at the time of *Animal Farm*'s publication, "Soviet Russia [constituted] a sort of forbidden area in the British press". By declining to publish *Animal Farm*, Faber & Faber only evidence Orwell's claim. If Orwell's view that texts criticising Soviet Russia were in fact rarely published during this period is accurate, it could be argued a reader contemporary to the text's release, able to access only those texts which make it past censors, may have been less likely to view a text such as *Animal Farm* as containing a critical perspective, if such a text was an anomaly. This suggests a separation between those in the business of publishing and vetting texts, and the public which finally accesses them. However, while such a reader's exposure to literature critical of Russia

may have been limited by publishers unwilling to propagate the view, that is not to presume that they did not hold such beliefs themselves. After all, had *Animal Farm*'s censors not held suspicions about the text's ability to elicit sympathy with Orwell's perspective, they would not have felt compelled to deny its publication.

T.S. Eliot was not alone in his censorious approach towards *Animal Farm*. Lewislondon (1969) refers to an article written by John Wain for the magazine *Encounter*, in which Wain details the potential reasons for Orwell's difficulties in obtaining a publisher. Wain describes how a publisher, named by Lewislondon as Jonathan Cape, offered to publish *Animal Farm* "if only Orwell would 'choose some kind of animal other than pigs to represent the Russian rulers'" (Lewislondon 1969). By demanding this of Orwell, Cape is requesting self-censorship in light of his own personal allegorical interpretation of the text. Cape's interpretation of the text views the characters of the pigs as representations of Russian rulers. This is either an interpretation Cape disagrees with personally or one that he views as potentially unfavourable from the perspective of a publisher. In requesting Orwell change the characters to another animal, Cape expects other readers to create an allegorical interpretation of the text similar to his own, which he wishes to prevent. Regardless of his motivations, he would see the text altered to fit his preferred view. In both Eliot and Cape's accounts of their refusal to publish *Animal Farm*, there is substantial evidence to suggest that their allegorical interpretations formed the basis of their decision. Their supposed expectation that other readers would produce interpretations similar to their own undoubtedly fuelled their unwillingness to align themselves with the text, and provide the expected allegorical interpretation with the implicit support their publishing would have offered.

In both his 1946 essay “The Prevention of Literature”, and the preface to *Animal Farm*, titled “The Freedom of the Press” Orwell (2014, 2000b) discusses censorship, the forces he believes act against writers in this respect, and his own experience with censors whilst attempting to obtain a publisher for *Animal Farm*. He states, “any writer or journalist who wants to retain his integrity finds himself thwarted by the general drift of society rather than by active persecution” (Orwell 2014, 329). The phrase “general drift of society” can be related to the idea of a mainstream narrative, or that which is commonly expected and agreed upon (Jansen 1988, 16-17). Consideration must also be given to the fact that society and its leanings and views greatly influence market forces, and which texts are likely to sell and vice-versa. From a publisher’s perspective, this may further disadvantage a text and potentially prompt censorship (Petley 2009, 142). Orwell’s claim that going against this drift has the power to act against a writer demonstrates an awareness that narratives aside from the main are subject to potential discouragement and censorship. This is further evidenced in his claim that a primary force acting against writers is “the concentration of the press in the hands of a few rich men” (Orwell 2014, 329) - the mention of both gender and financial status suggesting the specific and limited demographic of those in charge is one of the principal causes for concern. Pearce’s (2005) reference to *Animal Farm*’s potential to be “political dynamite” suggests that the novel’s perspective would be exceptional enough to cause political conflict and undoubtedly go against the “general drift of society” (Orwell 1946, 329) strongly enough to cause opposition.

As noted above, by refusing to publish *Animal Farm*, the text’s censors aim to prevent the perspective from being made available to other readers, in order to maintain the political status quo. This suggests that Eliot, Faber and Faber, and Cape were concerned that despite potentially flouting the accepted rhetoric around Russia at the time, readers may interpret the text allegorically and either find sympathy with Orwell’s

perspective, thus altering their perception of a British ally, or perhaps believe that the text represented the publishers' own sentiments towards Russia.

Orwell (2000b, 103) claims that upon writing *Animal Farm* he was aware of the difficulties he would face in securing a publisher, and ultimately faced rejection from four. An excerpt from a letter written to Orwell by one of those publishers is included in "The Freedom of the Press" (2000b). Orwell does not reveal the name of the writer, but reference is made to the characters of the pigs being an unsuitable representation of the Russian leaders, an issue raised by the publisher Jonathan Cape (Lewislondon 1969). The letter states that publishing *Animal Farm* would be:

highly ill-advised... at the present time. If the fable were addressed generally to dictators and dictatorships at large then publication would be all right, but the fable does follow, as I see now, so completely the progress of the Russian Soviets and their two dictators, that it can apply only to Russia, to the exclusion of the other dictatorships (Orwell 2000b, 104).

Much like Eliot's implicit admission that he would publish *Animal Farm* were he in agreement with the novel's message, here the writer explicitly notes that "publication would be all right" were the criticism aimed towards a target other than Russia specifically. In stating this, the unnamed writer has taken their own allegorical interpretation and assumed no other can be reached. They appear to be of the belief that they have reached the correct opinion as they state "it can apply only to Russia". Following this conclusion, they have chosen to dismiss the novel due to an unwillingness to propagate and align themselves with the opinion they believe the text is attempting to portray.

By censoring *Animal Farm* in light of their own allegorical interpretations Eliot, Faber and Faber, and Cape appear to presume that other readers are likely to construct

similar interpretations. Were this not the case, and censors perceived their own interpretations to be specific to themselves, the need for censorship would be removed. However, by limiting potential access to the text, censors implicitly assume their interpretations are achievable and likely for other readers to generate. The following analysis will seek to ascertain whether or not this assumption is well-founded.

2.1 Critical Interpretations of *Animal Farm*

When considering a written interpretation of a text, an awareness of which interpretive community the reader belongs to is necessary (Fish 1980, 303-322). As is an understanding of the form which the interpretation takes, including the placement, genre conventions, and expected readership. For instance, a book review featured in a national newspaper which includes the reviewer's own interpretation of a text can be expected to, on the whole, align with the newspaper's general political and societal leanings. A reviewer with a contrary interpretation may be expected to modify their personal feelings in order to best fit with their newspaper, or publish their review in a more fitting publication. The placement of the written interpretation also has influence over the manner in which it is expressed. If, for example, an interpretation takes the form of literary criticism in an academic textbook, it is more likely that the critic will have attempted to adopt a more authoritative and informative tone, and will have certain expectations of the reader's level of understanding when approaching their text. A medium with a greater variety of potential readers, such as an easily-accessed online review, may have fewer expectations of its readers.

Thus, each interpretation analysed in this thesis has a multitude of contextual factors acting upon it, and will be shaped accordingly. While it may be that interpretations presented in literary criticism are not representative of all readers, book reviews, and literary criticism still have the ability to shape the general consensus of

what any material is truly “about” and a text’s ultimate dominant reading (Hall 2006, 169). It is possible and even likely that readers may have encountered reviews or critiques similar to those analysed in this thesis. Although a reader may not agree with the interpretation presented by a critic, their relevant schema is likely to be changed and informed by interpretations they encounter, which may inform their own interpretation (Cook 1995, 12). Thus, the following interpretations may be considered, to an extent, a precursor to the general ideas which may form around a text and its agreed-upon meaning. If a text’s blurb, product description, and reviews all reference the dominant reading, then it stands to reason that a reader may make their own interpretation with this in mind. This speaks to whether or not a censor is correct in assuming all readers will draw interpretations similar to their own. If those whose perspectives influence the dominant reading align their views with censors, it appears more likely for others to share in this interpretation also. Salman Rushdie (2012) offers a perspective on the ability for a text’s agreed-upon meaning to shape the perception a reader may have of it, when a text becomes known for the censorship it has experienced:

When censorship intrudes on art, it becomes the subject; the art becomes “censored art,” and that is how the world sees and understands it. The censor labels the work immoral, or blasphemous, or pornographic, or controversial, and those words are forever hung like albatrosses around the necks of those cursed mariners, the censored works”.

Multiple critics report the same interpretations of which fictional characters in *Animal Farm* are allegorical representations of historical figures. For instance, more than one made the connection between Old Major the pig, and Karl Marx. In 2013, *The New Republic* reprinted George Soule’s 1946 review of *Animal Farm* in their article titled “In 1946, The New Republic Panned George Orwell's '*Animal Farm*'”. Soule (2013)

states that, “Major, the aged pig who on his deathbed tells the animals of their oppression and prophesies revolution, must be Karl Marx”. Although Karl Marx died almost forty years after the release of *The Communist Manifesto* rather than dying shortly after telling of his vision for the future, there are still similarities between the character of Old Major and Karl Marx.

In the text, before offering the farm animals his perspective on their need for future revolution, Old Major (Orwell 2000a, 3) says, “I have had a long life, I have had much time for thought as I lay alone in my stall”. The semantic associations of a “long life” and “time for thought” may be those of knowledge and an authoritative perspective. Without an in-depth knowledge of Karl Marx, his writings and politics, it may still be possible to identify similarities between his reputation as a thinker and philosopher, and the character of Old Major. While delivering his speech, Old Major commands the attention of all of the other animals on the farm, even those who come to alter and subvert the message he delivers. Again, this presents his character as one with authority. This representation of Old Major’s character may ensure that specific knowledge of Karl Marx is potentially unnecessary in this instance to draw comparisons between the two figures, and an awareness of Marx’s historical influence may be sufficient context to do so. While addressing the animals, Old Major (Orwell 2000a, 3) begins his speech with the word “Comrade”. He continues to use this title throughout his entire speech, in which he details the injustices of the current system on the farm at the hand of humans (2000a, 3-7). The term “comrade” is inextricably linked to Communist and Socialist language and rhetoric (Rosenthal 1999, Stevenson 2010). If a reader’s existing schema already aligns the word “comrade” to the idea of communism, which is not unlikely, then from their first introduction to the character of Old Major, they are likely to notice this potential connection between the two

The speech delivered by Old Major offers further opportunities for a comparison to Karl Marx, particularly through its similarity to portions of the 1848 text *The Communist Manifesto* written by Marx and Friedrich Engels, instrumental figures in the field of communism (Marx and Engels 2015). Old Major's (2000a, 3-4) condemnation of the current system of human rule notes that "We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength; and the very instant that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty". The argument raised in *The Communist Manifesto* on the situation faced by the proletariat is incredibly similar. The proletariat is regarded as, "a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital" (Marx and Engels 2015, 11). The notion that both oppressed groups are relied upon only for their potential to create and work for their rulers is present in both texts. Where specific knowledge of the content of *The Communist Manifesto* may not be present in the mental schema of each reader of *Animal Farm*, an awareness of the concept of communism and its fundamental tenets may allow readers to note the similarities between Old Major's perception of the animals' situation and the social position of the proletariat in the eyes of communist theory.

A final note of comparison can be found in the conclusion Orwell gives to Old Major's speech. In its structure and tone, it is comparable to the well-known concluding lines of *The Communist Manifesto*. Old Major's (Orwell 2000a, 6) speech ends with the exhortation to,

remember, comrades, your resolution must never falter. No argument must lead you astray. Never listen when they tell you that Man and the animals have a common interest, that the prosperity of the one is the prosperity of the others. It

is all lies. Man serves the interests of no creature except himself. And among us animals let there be perfect unity, perfect comradeship in the struggle. All men are enemies. All animals are comrades.

Through his use of multiple declarative statements and repetition, Orwell constructs a rousing and insistent conclusion to Old Major's speech. *The Communist Manifesto* concludes similarly:

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution.

The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

Working Men of All Countries, Unite! (Marx and Engels 2015, 52)

Both texts employ emotive language in order to express the determination of their speakers. Where Marx and Engels use the term "revolution", Orwell instead uses "struggle". The statement, "Man serves no creature except himself" creates a divide between those engaging in the farm's revolutionary action and those at the mercy of it (Orwell 2000a, 6). This divide is also created through Marx and Engels' (2015, 52) note to "Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution". As noted above, it seems unreasonable to expect a reader unversed in communist literature to be able to instantaneously notice such similarities between the two texts and note that in Orwell's, an allegory has been constructed. However, Orwell's use of a writing style and tone which mirrors that used in political propaganda, including a vocabulary which relates to the struggle of the oppressed, may elicit a sense of familiarity in a reader. This may consequently enable them to begin the process of allegoresis under the understanding that Old Major bears a strong resemblance to Karl Marx, and continue to digest the text with this in mind. If, however, a scholar of communism read the same passages, their

allegorical understanding may be more prompt and clear. In this instance, while the richness and depth of two different readers' (one familiar with communist literature, and one not) interpretations may vary, they are both in essence making the same allegorical interpretation of the text, simply with varying levels of detail.

The need for a reader to only draw upon attributes they deem necessary in order to create an allegorical reading of a character is highlighted in Soule's confidence in his assertion that Old Major is an allegorised depiction of Karl Marx, despite the differences between the two. Soule does not state why Old Major "must be Karl Marx". Perhaps he is sure enough that if the similarities are obvious for him, they will be similarly obvious for his readers. Likewise, in Paul Kirschner's (2004, 761) article "The Dual Purpose of *Animal Farm*" Kirschner argues that Old Major "[parodies] Saint-Simon and Marx". Although Kirschner's view supports Soule's, Kirschner's is undeniably more tentative if only in that it offers multiple options for the reference of Old Major.

List-style accounts of specific allegorical interpretations of characters are utilised by several critics (Molyneux 1989, Pearce 2005, Lea 2001). Specific comparisons of this sort highlight exactly where the reader has taken their schematic knowledge from in order to create their allegorical interpretation. When a critic notes who they believe a character to be an allegorical representation of, they are implicitly noting that characteristics are shared between the historical figure and the character within the text. It can be assumed that the reader has used any similarities between the two as contextual evidence in their allegoresis. John Molyneux, David Pearce and Cyril Connolly all adopt list-style accounts of their interpretations, perhaps in the interest of succinctness. However, the confidence they display in their opinions and lack of evident justification demonstrates how comfortable they feel in the accuracy of their

interpretations. In “*Animal Farm* sixty years on” Pearce (2005) states, “Clearly Old Major represents Marx, Napoleon is Stalin, Snowball is Trotsky, Pilkington is Britain, Frederick Germany, the dogs are the OGPU/NKVD”. His choice of the term “clearly” implies that all other interpretations are incorrect, as his own is seemingly obvious. Although Molyneux (1981) provides additional interpretations (and omits certain characters included by Pearce), the characters present in both lists evidence the same allegorical interpretations. Molyneux (1981, 99) offers: “Old Major/Karl Marx”, “Snowball/Leon Trotsky”, “Moses/the priest, Squealer/the party propagandist, the dogs/the GPU”. In *George Orwell: Animal Farm, Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Daniel Lea (2001) compiles several reviews of *Animal Farm*. Included is Cyril Connolly’s 1945 review for *Horizon* magazine, in which Connolly (Lea 2001, 17) states “Napoleon-Stalin, Snowball-Trotsky – with the dogs as police, the sheep as yes-men, the two cart-horses, Boxer and Clover, as the noble hard-working proletariat”. Pearce, Molyneux and Connolly all present their interpretations as lists of recognisable facts. No textual analysis is offered, and no evidence is given for their decisions. Within the interpretive communities of reviewers and writers, familiar with widely known texts such as *Animal Farm*, it is possible that over time certain interpretations become accepted as correct. This is potentially evidence of a dominant reading of *Animal Farm*. While the above critics’ interpretations vary slightly, in a general sense they are largely alike. For instance, each critic views the characters of the pigs as allegorical representations of Russian figures from history. Therefore, despite their differences, the above interpretations align with the consensus on what the text is about.

In addition to offering their views on which characters can be interpreted allegorically, critics have noted that several narrative events in the text can also be viewed as allegorical accounts of genuine events from history. Paul Kirschner (2004, 761) argues that the Battle of Cowshed is comparable to “not only the failed Western

interventions against the Soviets in 1918-20, but also the defeat of Europe by the French republic in 1792-5". Pearce (2005) echoes Kirschner's take on the inspiration for the Battle of Cowshed, which he claims "represents the Allied invasion of 1918" adding that "the battle of the windmill is the Nazi invasion of 1941, while the windmill itself represents the Five Year Plans. Orwell had merely changed the chronological order of events, to meet the needs of symmetry of plot". The allied invasion of 1918 sought to offer assistance to the White Army against the Bolsheviks who had taken power in Russia. However, it has been noted that the invasion was unclear in its aims and realistically unlikely to affect any great change (Westwood 1980, 118). This is mirrored in Orwell's (2000a, 31) description of the Battle of Cowshed, during which he notes, "within five minutes of their invasion [the men] were in ignominious retreat by the same way as they had come, with a flock of geese hissing after them and pecking at their calves all the way". Where the Russian Civil War was a quest to reclaim Tsarist Russia from the Bolsheviks, The Battle of Cowshed was an attempt to retrieve Manor Farm from the animals. Upon noticing that men are arriving at the farm's entrance, Orwell (2000a, 29) writes, "Obviously they were going to attempt the recapture of the farm". The word "recapture" demonstrating the farm is now considered to be entirely under the rule of the animals, however not without contestation. This again mimics the situation in Russia during Bolshevik rule.

As suggested by Pearce, the Battle of Windmill can be viewed as an allegorised account of the 1941 Nazi invasion of Russia. Where the Nazis betrayed the Nazi-Soviet pact in their invasion (BBC 1941), the farmer Frederick, noted as being an allegorised depiction of Germany (Pearce 2005), also betrays the animals of *Animal Farm* by paying them for timber with forged bank notes (Orwell 2000a, 73). The victory achieved at the Battle of Windmill is portrayed as much more hard-won than that of the Battle of Cowshed. Orwell (2000a, 73-74) states, "Boldly enough the animals sallied

forth to meet them, but this time they did not have the easy victory that they had had in the Battle of Cowshed”. This depiction aligns with that given to the Russian’s approach to the Nazi invasion, which notes that the “Russian infantryman was brave, obedient and patriotic: qualities which were exploited by inferior officers” (Westwood 1980, 118). The representation of the animals’ increased struggle in comparison to the previous events at the Battle of Cowshed highlights that the two fictional events had notable differences in both their handling and their results.

As noted above, in the same way that portions of *Animal Farm*’s narrative echoing communist literature may be enough to engage readers’ mental schema of communism and Russia and thus begin their allegoresis and form the basis of their interpretation, a general understanding of the real wartime invasions may be sufficient schematic knowledge for a reader to understand what is being potentially allegorised through Orwell’s fictional battles. That the two are compared also offers further evidence to a reader. If a reader is aware that the 1918 allied invasion, for instance, was a less effective event than the Nazi invasion of 1941, they may be able to apply this knowledge in their comparison of the two battles of *Animal Farm*. However, this level of comparative analysis presupposes a knowledge of past military events, which a reader during the mid-twentieth century may possess, but a more contemporary reader may be more unfamiliar with. The latter reader’s interpretation may therefore result in a similar yet more general understanding. Again, this speaks more to the richness and depth of a reader’s allegorical interpretation than it does to the presence of it. Importantly, this suggests an increased likelihood of a reader replicating a censor’s allegorical interpretation of *Animal Farm*, with the understanding being that the detail of this interpretation is where any variation may lie.

The individual context of the respective reader will also have a great influence upon the interpretation they generate. As noted by Peter Crisp, because allegorical texts do not give their readers a metaphorical target domain on which to base their interpretation, it stands to reason that those readers with differing levels of understanding or opinions on the Russian Revolution and Twentieth Century history would choose different target domains when constructing their interpretations of the text (Crisp 2005, 117). For instance, as a historian, Pearce (2005) is likely to be familiar enough with the details of the aforementioned historical events to notice the similarities between them and those depicted in *Animal Farm* regardless of their adjusted chronology. Similarly, as a writer for an openly socialist journal, it can be expected that Molyneux (1981) may have an above-average understanding of the history of Socialism and Communism.

Despite many critics offering similar allegorical interpretations of *Animal Farm*, there are times when differing or conflicting interpretations are reached. However, while differences in individual perception of the text are offered, it is important to note that these disagreements, while an indication that at times the same text has the ability to elicit multiple interpretations, are often similar in their acknowledgement that *Animal Farm* is an allegorical representation of the political events in Russia in the early twentieth century. The differences of opinion lie in the specific parallels within the narrative. Soule (2013), for instance, takes issue with the fact that while some characters in *Animal Farm* can be understood as narrative allegories of real historical figures, other characters and events in the text are not so easily mapped on to reality. Specifically, Soule (2013) criticises Orwell's use of the character Boxer, and in particular the event of his death, which does not, in his opinion, relate to any specific event in Soviet history. However, in "*Animal Farm: Banned by the Soviets, Promoted by the CIA*" David Gerrard (2014) references Soule's criticism of this event, primarily Soule's

inquiry “Just what part of Soviet history corresponds to this?” (Soule 2013) to which Gerrard (2014) responds “Oh, pretty much all of it”.

Gerrard (2014) continues, stating that although he is in agreement with Soule that the allegory does not feature an accurate character to portray every historical figure necessary, and that the “allegorical matchup of *Animal Farm* to Soviet history is not quite one-to-one”, this does not detract from the text. Rather, this lack of complete allegorical accuracy allows the text to elicit multiple, yet still valid and appropriate, allegorical responses by readers because the novel is ultimately “paradoxically a human story” (Gerrard 2014). In calling the novel a “human story” Gerrard (2014) implies that the issues faced by the characters, whether an allegorical telling of a particular period in history or not, are universal primarily because they are human issues, rather than specific issues only understood in terms of the Russian Revolution. This implication can be strengthened by noting Orwell’s own discussion of *Animal Farm*. In the preface to the Ukrainian edition of the text, Orwell (2000a, 118) documents his motivation for writing the novel through the description of the power imbalance between animals and humans, suggesting that if only animals had the ability, they would be able to reverse the stakes and seize the power currently wielded over them. This corroborates Gerrard’s assumption that the allegory has multiple applications, not limited to the history of Russia.

A further example of opposing views on the correct allegorical interpretation of the text is that of the presence of an allegorical representation of Vladimir Lenin within the novel. Soule (2013) argues:

[Major’s] two followers who lead the revolution, Napoleon and Snowball, are then readily identified as Lenin and Trotsky. This identification turns out to be correct in the case of Snowball, but the reader soon begins to puzzle over the

fact that Napoleon disapproves the project of building a windmill—an obvious symbol for electrification and industrialization—whereas this was Lenin's program. The puzzlement is increased when Napoleon chases out Snowball as a traitor; it was Stalin who did this.

Although Soule says that Napoleon and Snowball are “readily” identified as Lenin and Trotsky, he does not offer any indication upon who identifies them this way, just that this is a commonly accepted notion. In this comment, Soule appears to suggest that this parallel is part of *Animal Farm*'s dominant reading. It becomes clear that Soule takes issue with this direct comparison as in his view there are real-world occurrences that do not match up to the narrative if we are to assume that Napoleon is an allegorised Lenin, and Snowball a fictional Trotsky. Pearce (2005) on the other hand, states “Some commentators have judged that Lenin was part of the Old Major character, some that he was part of Napoleon or Snowball, but in reality Lenin was omitted”. As above, despite the views of these two critics being in potential opposition, both state their interpretation with unwavering confidence, with Pearce going so far as to regard his view as “reality”. Molyneux (1981, 105) also offers his interpretation on the presence of a representation of Lenin, saying “It is clear that Napoleon represents Stalin” in itself, directly at odds with Soule's view that Napoleon's character is actually representative of Lenin. Molyneux (1981, 105) continues, arguing that because the rebellion is led by two pigs, and supposedly as we are required to allegorise three real-life figures onto these two characters, “one is forced to the conclusion that Napoleon also represents Lenin”.

It is Soule's argument that this lack of consistency in *Animal Farm* prevents it from being an enjoyable experience for the reader, who is forced to constantly decide whether each character and plot point is an allegorised version of Soviet history, or simply a purely narrative invention. Soule's criticism brings to light an important

question on the production of allegorical interpretations. How does a reader know when to stop? If we understand that an allegory exists without a metaphorical target (Crisp 2005, 116), thus leaving the reader in the position of responsibility when deciding which elements of the narrative to understand as allegory and which to view as merely narrative, then how might a reader know which is which? In deciding to censor the novel, the censors undoubtedly assumed that a reader would be able to recognise enough allegorical representations within the text to make interpretations similar to their own. However, in doing so they are assuming all readers have knowledge levels comparable to their own. Despite the undeniable similarities between the interpretations presented in this thesis, there remains a difference of opinion on certain specific allegorical parallels. Therefore, while censors may have been correct to assume that their interpretations were replicable, the interpretations of other readers may not have mimicked them entirely.

Beyond noting the many specific instances of allegorical references in the text, numerous critics present the belief that the text is working at a level beyond the immediate narrative. Although they may not all use the term allegory, their implication is that the text has a perspective and intent. Writing only one year after *Animal Farm*'s publication, Soule (2013) explains that "news that [Orwell] had written a satirical allegory, telling the story of a revolution by farm animals against their cruel and dissolute master, and of their subsequent fortunes, was like the smell of a roast from a kitchen ruled by a good cook". To comment on receiving the "news" of the text's allegorical nature implies that this shared understanding of the text's form was already established and forming the beginnings of the novel's dominant reading. Kingsley Martin (Lea 2001, 19), writing for the *New Statesman and Nation* in 1945, notes "How deftly the fairy story of the animals who, in anticipation of freedom and plenty, revolt against the tyrannical farmer, turns into a rollicking caricature of the Russian

Revolution!”, the term “caricature” implying an over-exaggerated and potentially negative depiction. Although Martin does not refer to the text as allegorical, it is evident that he believes it to represent more than a fictional farm-yard narrative. Molyneux (1989, 99) also views *Animal Farm* in similar terms, describing it as an “explicit political fable – an unmistakable allegory of the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalinism – in which the characters are transparent symbols”. As previously noted, Molyneux’s own expected understanding of the Russian Revolution and Stalinism undoubtedly enables his ability to make the in-depth allegorical interpretations he constructs. While Soule argued that the inaccuracies in Orwell’s allegory prevent the text from being an enjoyable experience for the reader, it is clear that Molyneux (1989, 99) does not identify such inaccuracies, instead viewing the allegory as “unmistakeable”, with “transparent” characters.

As reviewers and critics, these writers are likely taking part in what John Guillory (Garber, Hanssen & Walkowitz 2013, 31) termed “professional” reading, similar in many ways to Louise Rosenblatt’s (1981, 27) “efferent” reading style. This method of reading necessitates concentration and an approach to the text more suited to extract the optimum amount of information, rather than for simple enjoyment. Professional reading also often seeks to achieve a “communal reading”, or interpretation, of the text (Garber, Hanssen & Walkowitz 2013, 31). That is, one which will be shared amongst others. By being a member of an interpretive community of reviewers and those in the business of analysing literature, it is possible to offer an explanation as to why, so shortly after *Animal Farm*’s release, Soule (2013) was able to confidently state that the text was a “satirical allegory”. As previously mentioned, when reading “professionally” Guillory (Garber, Hanssen & Walkowitz 2013, 31-32) theorised that the reader digests information with a view to create a “communal” reading, or interpretation, of the text. Considering those who have spoken on their

interpretations with a high level of confidence are all professional reviewers or literary critics, it could be argued that throughout their entire interpretive process they read with a view to create a publishable opinion, and thus feel, or at least present, confidence in their perspective.

Thus far, each critic sampled has discussed *Animal Farm* in relation to the shared interpretation it produced upon first being released. That is, that the text is a criticism of Russia and the U.S.S.R specifically, or totalitarian regimes in more general terms. The following critics discuss the events which, particularly during the Cold War, saw the agreed interpretation of *Animal Farm* shift, in order to suit the social narrative of that period. When society's dominant narrative changes, through a change in politics or media perspective, then each reader is to some extent influenced by this. Thus, readers' interpretations will be influenced by the changing context around them. If a text is able to elicit new interpretations in light of changing contextual stimuli, this may suggest that a censor's concerns with readers' potentially subversive interpretations are also able to change, and may only apply within a specific context. Therefore, while censors at the time of *Animal Farm*'s publication were wary of the likely imminent interpretations, amidst a context which may render the allegorical similarities between Russia and *Animal Farm* all the more evident, this worry is largely context dependent. After all, as taboos change so then does the need to censor and limit access to them. In the case of *Animal Farm*, soon after the novel's publication in Britain, the war drew to a close, rendering criticism of Russia somewhat more permissible, as the need to maintain an alliance had passed. People may sometimes feel texts which faced censorship in the past need not have done so, if only because through a contemporary lens, the once-taboo content is no longer unacceptable. This suggests that while readers encountering a subversive text long after its censorship may still produce comparable interpretations to those of the texts' censors, the requirement for censorship will have likely diminished.

Indeed, as society and culture progresses, with new reference material for readers performing allegoresis upon *Animal Farm*, the original interpretation has the potential to be left behind. Arguably, the only reason this is not the case is the strength of the accepted dominant reading which once solidified, is passed down through generations through reading, teaching, and word of mouth. In such a scenario, it may be possible to consider aged interpretations of texts a historical product of the time, offering an insight into the schemas and perspectives of those readers encountering the text at the time of its publication.

Kirschner (2004, 759) quotes William Empson, whom he notes in 1945, “warned Orwell that, since allegory ‘inherently means more than the author means’, his book might mean ‘very different things to different readers’”. Empson’s (1963) own text *Seven Types of Ambiguity* discusses at length the opportunity for multiple meanings to be elicited from the same portion of text, which speaks to his concern with the multiplicity of Orwell’s novel. While Empson’s point focuses on the authorial intent of an allegorical novel, Angus Fletcher (1964, 2) suggests that “allegory says one thing and means another”. This only places further significance on the ability of the reader to construct their own meaning of the text, removing much of the author’s own power. If such a level of interpretive influence is given to the reader, at the expense of the author’s supposed intended meaning, then it stands to reason that interpretations of a text, particularly allegorical ones, have the ability to change dramatically depending on the context of the reader.

Lea (2001, 20) documents this potential for differing interpretations, along with the implications of such interpretations upon people’s perspective on Orwell’s personal politics, through his discussion of shared cultural views informing a common interpretation. Kirschner (2004, 760) also notes how in 1998, critics were still debating

what is actually being implied in *Animal Farm*, further emphasising the multiplicity and changeable nature of available interpretations. Additionally, Pearce (2005) offers a similar argument, saying “no authors have control over what others make of their work”. This is an essential point in the discussion of allegorical interpretations. Regardless of Orwell’s supposed intent in constructing an allegorical text, which has been discussed by many including several of the critics in my sample, the meaning produced by a reader cannot be controlled by an author, who can only offer the reader the signposts they feel necessary to reach their intended interpretation. This inability to control meaning enables new and differing interpretations.

Commenting on popular interpretations, Pearce (2005) says, “for many readers, [*Animal Farm*] made all revolutions seem doomed”, and “the overwhelming majority of readers carry away from *Animal Farm* the conviction that the animals, except the pigs, are innocent dupes. The corruption of the revolution is so gradual and insidious that it seems inevitable”. If this is indeed the case, this is a different general interpretation than the one expected by the novel’s censors. Rather than a criticism of Russia specifically, Pearce suggests that readers believe that the novel offers a bleak view of revolution itself. However, Pearce is able to note this with the privilege of retrospect, and once again, this may not be the interpretation likely generated by readers at the time of *Animal Farm*’s publication.

In order to understand how *Animal Farm* was able to be interpreted as a reactionary text, written as a criticism of Socialism and revolution as suggested by Pearce (2005), John Newsinger (1996, 1264) asks “Does *Animal Farm*, for example, argue that revolutions always fail, always end in betrayal? Does it show the working class as stupid, incapable of self-rule?” He goes on to clarify his own perspective, noting that he believes the text ought to be classified primarily as a direct attack on

Stalinism. However, the questions he asks of the text do offer the opportunity to examine Orwell's fictional farmyard and its occupants, as well as the implications of the characters' differing portrayals. Such an analysis may offer an insight into why certain readers produce an interpretation critical of all revolutions, rather than Stalinism and totalitarianism specifically

Throughout the novel, frequent references are made to the varying intellects of each species of animal. There is an implication that due to such variations, a natural order occurred on the farm following the animals' revolution, with roles delegated in accordance with the intelligence each different species. Orwell (2000a, 10) states that, "The work of teaching and organising the others fell naturally upon the pigs, who were generally recognised as being the cleverest of the animals". This allows the characters of the pigs the privilege of leadership and suggests that this role is their "natural" right, implicitly placing the other animals below them in the farm's hierarchy. While the pigs are described as clever, the horses for instance, are presented as loyal and committed, but ultimately blind to the realities surrounding them. The horses are shown to have "great difficulty in thinking anything out for themselves" (Orwell 2000a, 12). This does not necessarily align with a typical literary presentation of horses, which is often one of strength, intellect, and nobility. However, Orwell's representation of Boxer the horse's commitment to the farm's betterment at the expense of his own critical reasoning may imply a link within *Animal Farm's* narrative between an animal's good nature and his ability to be deceived. For example, when the pigs begin to manipulate the values of Animalism laid down by Old Major in the novel's opening, the horses are unable to recognise this and trust the pigs entirely. When Clover the horse is unable to remember the specific wording of one of the farm's Commandments and therefore misses the pigs' alterations, she comforts herself in the knowledge that "as it was there on the wall, it must have done so" (Orwell 2000a, 50). Although all of *Animal Farm's* animals begin

in the position of the oppressed, that the clever pigs are able to elevate themselves from this position through their cunning and critical thinking, while the horses resume their position as the oppressed once again, does allow for an interpretation of the novel which may view certain members of society as incapable of “self-rule” (Newsinger 1996, 1264) despite their noble intentions.

In addition to querying how the novel was able to elicit the interpretations considered above, Newsinger (1996) also questions how Republicans were able to take a text so readily considered a criticism of Stalinism specifically, and expand that understanding to the view that the text was in fact anti-Communist and anti-Socialist, despite this being contrary to Orwell’s self-confessed personal politics as a socialist. Newsinger (1996, 1264) claims that both *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *Animal Farm* were “confiscated by the right”, ultimately becoming “classic texts of the Cold War”. Newsinger blames this misrepresentation of Orwell’s original aims for the novel on the author’s early death, which prevented him from making his views on politics clearer, which consequently allowed readers to assume authorial intent without the possibility of clarification from Orwell. This implies that while authors may have “no control over what others make of their work” (Pearce 2005), a reader’s awareness (or lack thereof) of the author’s political perspectives and past works may still influence what they expect to encounter in their work and the meaning they infer.

The adoption of *Animal Farm* by right-wing communities is also discussed by Gerrard (2014), who highlights the difference between the reaction to the novel in America and in Britain, also noting how it has often been regarded as an act of “political bravery” to read *Animal Farm* in certain countries. This assumedly refers to countries in which the perspective inferred from the text is at odds with the dominant perspective of society. He makes clear however, that this is certainly not the case in the United States,

where the ideas produced by allegorical readings of the text have often been in line with the accepted politics of the nation. To emphasise this, Gerrard (2014) references the Book of the Month Club title achieved by the novel, as well as the CIA funded animated film, and notes that in the United States, *Animal Farm* is potentially “the opposite of a banned book” (2014). He attributes this popularity amongst American readers to the fact that the novel is a “direct allegorical attack on the Soviet Union” (2014), implying that such an attack would align with the political beliefs of Americans generally.

The reception of *Animal Farm* in America was largely at odds with that which the novel experienced in Britain, which may account for the differences in interpretations. While Britain’s political climate and allegiance with Russia during World War II prompted literary censorship in light of the novel’s inferred criticisms, a similar interpretation, when produced in America, garnered political support. Whereas criticising Russia in England was regarded as “inopportune” (Pearce 2005), doing so in America was at times much more acceptable, and in fact encouraged, due to America’s later opposition to Russia throughout the Cold War. Pearce (2005) states “*Animal Farm* has a pivotal place in a new era of Cold War literature. Politically incorrect in 1944 when the USSR was still an ally, it was soon eminently acceptable to the rightwing [sic] establishment, including the CIA”. This is testament to readers’ ability to “read in” (Cook 1995, 13) missing literary details by drawing on their relevant schema, schema which are highly subjective and dependent on the individual reader. Therefore, the American readers referred to by Gerrard (2014) were able to draw upon their understanding and schema of Russia, informed by their experiences and education as American citizens, and produce interpretations of *Animal Farm* entirely critical of Russia and its political practices throughout the twentieth century.

Lea (2001) also highlights the difference between the novel's reception in Britain and America through a discussion of the text's reviews from each country. He describes Kingsley Martin's review (discussed above) as "sensitive and perceptive" and comments that the evident level of political understanding shown within the review "typifies many of the British reviews" of *Animal Farm* (Lea 2001, 20). He also suggests that regardless of British reviewers' opinions on Orwell and his personal political views, they were commonly aware of the way in which the reputation of Russia in Britain was changeable and fraught, and so were open to Orwell's "condemnation of tyrannical despotism" thus suggesting that despite their personal differences of opinion, because of their exposure to a similar press and cultural influences in Britain, they shared a sympathy towards the text's allegorical aims (Lea 2001, 20).

Conversely, Lea (2001, 21) points out that Americans' typically-held "ideological preconceptions about the threat of Communism to individual freedom" resulted in a reception of *Animal Farm* that was perhaps less sympathetic than the one received in Britain. This threat of communism can be also linked to censorship of *The Crucible* which will be discussed in the following chapter, and is testament to the strength of feeling within American society that communism was indeed both a threat and deserving of vilification. Despite any difference of opinion, both nations were exposed to the very same text. On this, Lea (2001, 21) says, "whereas in Britain reviewers and critics tended to read the novel as the story of a justified revolution betrayed by the appeals to power and autocracy, American readers leaned towards an interpretation of the allegory as revealing the inherent weaknesses of socialist idealism". To contextualise the reception in the United States, Lea (2001, 21), like Gerrard (2014), notes how *Animal Farm* was selected as "Book-of-the-Month Club choice for September", and received a glowing and emotive recommendation from the president of the club, Harry Scherman, who hailed Orwell as a "fearless individual" who had spoken

for “the people of a troubled time”. It is Lea’s (2001, 21) view that such response from the book club’s president caused American readers to “contextualise *Animal Farm* within simplistic discourses of ideological binarism in which capitalism equates to freedom whilst Communism/socialism equates to repression”. The result of which being that any subtleties or thought to Orwell’s true intent based on his political and personal prior involvement with Socialism be forgotten and therefore not relevant in forming their interpretation of the piece. As noted above, this speaks to the climate of fear and negative thought towards communism in America throughout the twentieth century, following World War II. Indeed, this sets the scene for America’s treatment of Arthur Miller and *The Crucible* considering the text’s allegorical links to communism.

Interpretations of texts can also be influenced by the way in which they are explained and contextualised within an educational setting. Just as intertextual information (such as reviews) regarding an allegorical narrative can shape a reader’s interpretation of a text, so too can information offered by a teacher or tutor. In both cases, the reader encounters the text with some degree of understanding about the narrative, and an awareness of which mental schemas to call upon. However, this understanding and awareness is not objective, and is based upon the interpretations of another. If, for instance, the teacher imparts their own interpretation of a text on to a student, this may then influence the student’s own interpretation, thus setting into motion a cycle of interpretations which may help to continue and solidify a text’s dominant reading. Writing in the *English Journal* on the topic of teaching *Animal Farm* in a classroom setting, Robert Ritzer (1991) notes how he is often asked how children, particularly those with difficulties reading or trouble understanding complex texts, can be taught to understand *Animal Farm*. Ritzer (1991, 90) responds, stating that he looks forward to teaching the “satire about certain leadership styles”. In preparation for teaching the text, Ritzer (1991, 90) explains how he ensures each child has a general

understanding of “propaganda, tyranny and satire” with a view to making *Animal Farm* more understandable. While it is understandable for a teacher to offer a preliminary explanation of concepts relevant to a text’s narrative, doing so undeniably shapes the course of the child’s interpretive process and primes them for what they are about to read. When Ritzer teaches his students about propaganda, tyranny and satire alongside *Animal Farm* it can be expected that these are themes the students will therefore know to look for, and assumedly with or without the guidance from a teacher, find. Within their classroom, they have become, in a sense, an interpretive community. This prompts the question of whether or not these same children would find these themes (or something else altogether) in the text, if they had not been taught about them in the context of understanding the novel before them. It could be argued that the children would be able to identify the issues at play, but without sufficient understanding of the topic, could perhaps not articulate what it is that they are identifying. While the children would certainly not approach the text from an entirely objective position without Ritzer’s instruction, by actively interfering with the children’s interpretive processes, he influences the ultimate interpretations that they will make.

Despite the undeniable prevalence of comparable allegorical interpretations of *Animal Farm*, it may still be theoretically possible for some readers to reach an entirely unrelated interpretation. However, doing so may necessitate approaching the text from a contextually different position. For example, Ritzer (1991, 90) notes how advanced students in his classes will make connections between the characters in *Animal Farm* and people they know personally, thus taking from their pre-existing knowledge of their acquaintances’ characteristics and mapping these traits onto the fictional characters of the novel. Similarly, Kingsley Martin (Lea 2001, 19) discusses the way a reader may be enthused by their ability to recognise the traits displayed by the characters in *Animal Farm* in those they know personally - he states, “[w]e all know of the sheep, who drown

discussion by the bleating of slogans” again suggesting that readers may be able to map the traits of the novel’s characters onto personalities of people they know. In both examples, the theoretical readers are not making use of contextual information specific to Russian politics, or the assumed source material of Orwell’s allegory at all. Instead, they are looking to their own lives and experiences for the allegory’s target domain. Therefore, any resulting interpretations are unlikely to be comparable to those of the text’s censors at all, simply because the reference points being used by the respective readers are entirely different to those used by the censors.

When a reader interacts with *Animal Farm* while aware of Orwell’s personal politics, and the dominant reading of the text as a criticism of Russia’s political practices during the twentieth century, they may begin the process of allegoresis ahead of those who encounter the text with no contextual understanding of it. However, a child or reader entirely uninterested in Russian politics, encountering the text independently, may not be aware of this context, or any similarities between the text and reality. They, therefore, cannot be expected to rely on the same schema as a reader equipped with this knowledge. Thus, the interpretation such readers create is unlikely to be allegorical in the sense that many understand it, with reference to a political situation or unfair regime, as without sufficient knowledge of the supposed source material, there is no incentive to create such an interpretation, because similarities will not present themselves between the text and political events. However, these readers may create an allegorical interpretation based on other events familiar to them, relating to their lives personally or other narratives they understand, completely separate from the commonly accepted interpretation of *Animal Farm*. This demonstrates one instance of how an interpretation of *Animal Farm* can be created without the likelihood of it conforming to those interpretations generated by censors.

The above sampling of literary interpretations of *Animal Farm* evidence how interpretations of the text have been influenced, adapted, and changed over time, swayed by the interpretive communities of readers and changing mainstream narratives. Where the perspective of the text was once viewed as not “the right point of view” (Lewis 1969), it has since been adopted by those in power with a view to criticising changing political opponents. Jansen (1988, 16) theorised about the difficulties certain perspectives face upon attempting to join the “marketplace of ideas” and correspondence to Orwell evidences that he encountered this very issue. Evidence of the censorship within the publishing industry demonstrates the willingness of certain publishers to maintain the status-quo of accepted ideas and public rhetoric, rather than risk potential financial losses or public criticisms. However, such censorship presupposes and attempts to predict the interpretations of other readers, assuming that the interpretations of censors are replicable for others. The particular “idea” an allegorical text may be offering is demonstrably different depending on the individual reader. If every text is dependent on the reader for meaning, then an allegorical text which demands more of the reader than perhaps any other genre of literature, is dependent on the reader’s input to an even greater degree (Quilligan 1979, 226).

Interestingly, despite the power of a reader upon their interpretation of allegorical texts, the majority of the reviews and criticism sampled in this thesis are largely comparable. Although differences are present, these differences are at a specific level, rather than at a more general schematic level. These differences do not necessarily suggest that the majority of readers produce interpretations entirely unlike the text’s censors. Rather, the interpretations correspond with those of the censors, in that *Animal Farm* is a critical allegory of the political situation in Russia throughout the twentieth century. The differences arise when the critics begin to tighten this general schematic interpretation and offer further depth and detail. Or, in the case of the reported

American interpretations, when the reader in question begins to process this interpretation through their own political bias.

Aside from the children discussed by Ritzer, or the theoretical readers offered by Martin, none of the sampled readers suggest that *Animal Farm* is “about” anything other than Russia. Critics who discuss the novel’s varying reception in America, despite highlighting the difference of portrayal and opinion, do not suggest that American readers feel the text to be about something other than Russian politics. They merely suggest that American readers respond to this narrative differently than British readers. While some may take the novel to suggest that communism is flawed, or that revolutions are always destined for failure, others perceive the narrative as a criticism of socialism corrupted by power. However, these varying claims do not necessarily represent varying interpretations, rather, varying reactions to similar interpretations. As noted by Miall (1990, 338) earlier in this thesis, “it is quite possible for two readers to make evaluative responses to the same phrases, see the same network of relationships across phrases, and make anticipations at the same moments, yet emerge with opposite readings of a text”. Therefore, it is my belief that due to the prevalence of intertextual information available, the presence of the text’s dominant reading and its ability to shape discussion and reference to the narrative, and to the controversy and attention received by the text’s censorship, it is highly likely for both past and contemporary readers of *Animal Farm* to produce interpretations schematically comparable to those of the text’s censors.

4. A Modern-Day Witch Hunt: Interpreting *The Crucible*

Set against the backdrop of political hysteria and social unrest in 1950s America, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* can be regarded as a literary allegorical reaction to the similarities between the events of the period and those of the Salem witch trials (Biggsby 2009, 411). The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) was founded in 1938, with a view to investigating those American citizens sympathetic to communism or engaging in communist activities. When it began its legal trials against supposed communists in 1947, the hunt for subversion and supposed disloyalty in America became a direct influence on the lives and work of those in the arts (Morgan 2004, 516). Alarmed by the political situation and its potential parallels with the Salem witch trials of the 1690s, Arthur Miller (2012, 330) journeyed to the courthouse in Salem where the trials took place, hoping to extract further information from the written accounts of the events. And, after consequently reading Marion Starkey's book *The Devil in Massachusetts*, he began to realise that "the inner procedures of HUAC were remarkably close to those that had prevailed in Salem in 1692" (Biggsby 2009, 411).

In reaction to a number of figures in Hollywood facing criminal charges for refusing to cooperate with the HUAC, and pleading the Fifth Amendment as to not incriminate themselves, in 1947 the heads of several motion picture houses agreed not to hire either those who had been charged, or any individual "unless or until they declared that they were not communists", and so "[t]he blacklist was born" (Biggsby 2009, 540). With those in both film and theatre facing the threat of blacklisting, Miller's text, when interpreted as an allegorical critique, is largely subversive (Biggsby 2009, 413). While Miller may not have been prevented from performing *The Crucible* in the United States, the influence wielded by the prevailing atmosphere of fear and self-censorship at the time of his writing cannot be understated.

Recorded allegorical interpretations of *The Crucible* contemporary to the play's first performance are somewhat less prevalent than those of *Animal Farm* soon after its publication. The confidence of opinion and apparent ease with which critics reeled off their allegorical interpretations of *Animal Farm* is almost entirely absent from texts written on *The Crucible* from this period. There can be little doubt that the political climates into which *Animal Farm* and *The Crucible* were released differed immensely, with Orwell's chief concern after publication apparently being that his work was unlikely to get a "fair hearing" (Orwell 1972, 105). Conversely, *The Crucible*'s opening performance occurred in the midst of the hunt for communists and those sympathetic to the communist cause. Therefore, the spectre of censorship appears to have affected not only Miller but also those reviewing and critiquing his work. The fear of appearing to side with Miller or propagate his assumed views is very apparent in critical texts written on the play. Consequently, a discussion of the censorship faced by *The Crucible* necessitates the inclusion of the potential self-censorship exercised by the text's critics, as well as Miller himself.

Despite its release in 1953 towards the tail end of the HUAC's activities, the anti-communist climate was still strong in America as *The Crucible* was being first received, and "By 1954, [the HUAC] had removed 212 Hollywood workers from all levels of production" (Marlow 2008, 155). Where the censorship of *Animal Farm* in the United Kingdom was predominantly experienced pre-publication, with reviewers and critics seemingly comfortable in making explicit references to the allegorical nature of the text, censorship surrounding *The Crucible* appears to take place both pre and post-publication, in both Miller's own self-censorship, and the cautious and limited available interpretations of the play.

Animal Farm experienced corporate censorship, primarily through several publishers' refusal to take on the novel in light of their unfavourable allegorical interpretations of the text. While the novel's British censors regarded the text's inferred criticisms of Russia as "inopportune" (Pearce 2005) at a time of political allegiance, nobody stood to face legal penalties if publication went ahead. In this instance, the publishers sought to distance themselves from the novel because they did not believe in what it stood for (Lewislondon, 1969). However, *The Crucible* was performed in America largely without restrictions and does not appear to have faced difficulties in securing the opportunity to do so. Despite this, the risks faced by people involved with the text's production and reception were much greater than those surrounding *Animal Farm*, as the threat of legal intervention was more likely. Therefore, although the censorship of both texts stems from political motivations, there are important differences.

While an atmosphere of pro-Russian sentiment and an unwillingness to deviate from the political status-quo did undoubtedly prompt *Animal Farm's* censorship in Britain, the censorship itself predominantly took place between Orwell and his would-be publishers, and was therefore somewhat contained. Critics of the text were under no obvious political duress to offer certain perspectives or withhold their honest opinions. Furthermore, there is little evidence to suggest Orwell self-censored while writing *Animal Farm*. Despite requests to do so (Lewislondon 1969), the novel was published without the desired amendments. Conversely, had Miller freely admitted his assumed criticisms of America's government and shown sympathy towards their communist opposition through a medium more direct than allegory, it is highly likely that he would have faced political repercussions.

It is my belief that this likelihood may have extended to the play's critics, who appear to have withheld their full and honest analysis of the play in favour of overly vague and critical reactions. Therefore, both Miller and *The Crucible's* critics were potentially required to engage in self-censorship in order to maintain their political freedoms, rather than having to "confront the accompanying resistance of social, political, [and] economic forces" (Millett 1990, 59) of honest expression. It is for this reason that I will consider the censorship against *The Crucible* as not only that which affected the text itself but also its recipients.

Miller notes how anti-communist rhetoric was able to infiltrate the dominant narrative of society, to the exclusion of other issues. This lends credence to the expectation a censor may hold of readers and playgoers generating comparable interpretations of *The Crucible*. Miller (2002) states: "the politics of alien conspiracy soon dominated political discourse and bid fair to wipe out any other issue". With a shared preoccupation with the issue of communism and its proponents, members of society at the time of *The Crucible's* release are more likely to hold the knowledge necessary to identify the thematic similarities between the text's narrative and America's political landscape. This dominant social narrative may have even rendered audiences incapable of interpreting the play as anything but a political allegory (Anderson et al. 1977, 376). Miller (2002) emphasises the prevalence of the topic of communism, stating, "The Red hunt... was becoming the dominating fixation of the American psyche". Such a strength of feeling, as reported by Miller, indicates that while writing *The Crucible* the accepted orthodoxy within American society was one extremely critical of anything sympathetic to communism, or communists. Challenging this perspective through an allegorical text critical of the current regime would thus render the offending text subversive and taboo.

In addition to providing an aura of unacceptability around politically critical texts, the hunt for communists created an atmosphere of fear amongst writers and creatives, who no longer felt free to write honestly and fearlessly. As Salman Rushdie (2012) states, “The creative act requires not only freedom but also this assumption of freedom. If the creative artist worries if he will still be free tomorrow, then he will not be free today”. Miller portrays a situation that is entirely without freedom. Even without any state-imposed censorship of literature, such an atmosphere is one which undoubtedly prompts self-censorship and an explicit awareness of how subverting acceptable perspectives within literature may hold consequences for the writer. Miller (2002) notes how,

[he] was motivated in some great part by the paralysis that had set in among many liberals who, despite their discomfort with the inquisitors' violations of civil rights, were fearful, and with good reason, of being identified as covert Communists if they should protest too strongly.

The “paralysis” referred to by Miller suggests an inability to act against those wielding power, or in any way which deviates from what is viewed as acceptable and safe. He notes how people had “good reason” (2002) to be fearful of voicing criticisms of the establishment, suggesting any repercussions were likely and the fear which prompted inaction was reasonable and commonplace. This is exemplified in the case of the screenwriter Dalton Trumbo who, following the Hollywood blacklist, was suspended by his employer and forced to mortgage his home through loss of income (Morgan 2004, 520).

In addition to McCarthyism’s reach within Hollywood and the arts, “The anti-Communist drive touched thousands of lesser figures” (Fried 1991, 3-4) and those employed in seemingly innocuous professions were liable to lose their jobs if only they

were found to have, or have held, communist leanings. However, despite the prevalence of anti-communist behaviour, the justification for a person's incrimination appears to be insidious and subtle, rather than reliant on definite actions. Miller (2005, 4) states that the hunt for communists was: "a hunt not just for subversive people but for ideas and even a suspect language". This can be linked to Sue Curry Jansen's ideas on censorship. Jansen (1988, 16) suggests that censorship seeks to control "what ideas gain entry into the 'marketplace of ideas'", and Miller's comments portray a situation wherein censors wish to limit access to all sympathetic or positive portrayals of communism entirely, rather than necessarily explicitly taboo literature or actions.

When the parameters of censors' motivations are so broad and abstract, a writer is prevented from retaining creative freedom. This necessitates a subtle approach to political critical narratives. It also breeds self-censorship, as a writer may feel it necessary to play it safe rather than sorry. Noting this potential necessity for self-censorship, it is important to consider the significance of Miller's choice of allegory as a form of expression. When constructing an allegory, the writer retains the opportunity of what Jeff Smith (2014, 32) calls "plausible deniability". Thus, through his use of allegory, Miller allows himself the opportunity to evade accusations on *The Crucible's* contemporary relevance to the hunt for communists, while still creating an allegorical narrative hopefully accessible to the readers and playgoers of 1950s America. In times of political and literary repression, having the ability to create a critical narrative without the use of explicitly objectionable language may enable writers to exercise creative freedoms otherwise taken away. Smith (2014, 32) notes how "it has become a truism that allegory is commonly used by artists labouring under oppressive regimes". Without making direct reference to that which they are criticising, writers of allegory are able to let readers infer any criticisms for themselves by relying on their own preconceptions about the allegorised situation. Jansen (1988, 192) also comments on

writers' ability to use allegory in order to "tell deadly serious jokes, to say one thing to mean another".

With regards to the censorship which affected *The Crucible* aside from that which was self-imposed, Miller (2005, 14) speaks of a conversation he had with an ex-officer from the American army, in which it was revealed that "an order had come down that no other play written by Arthur Miller was to be produced by the army". This decision came after the army decided to withdraw Miller's *All My Son's* from their collection of plays owing to its potential to damage soldiers' morale (Miller 2005, 14). The actions of the army demonstrate an unwillingness to align themselves with Miller's literary perspectives, and a wish to prevent his narratives from reaching army audiences. This censorship speaks to the perception of Miller in America throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, and an awareness of the potential politics present within his works. Miller (2005, 14) states, "As far as the Army was concerned, I had simply disappeared as an American writer". Rather than an objection to a particularly objectionable work of fiction, it is clear that in this case, the issue was with Miller as a writer, with all of what he supposedly stood for. The army's action as censors prevents certain perspectives from being made freely available to all. The result conveniently creates the appearance that such perspectives may be unpopular, while in fact their suppression prevents their true popularity from becoming known.

Miller also documents the refusal on the part of the State Department to issue him with a renewal for his passport in order to travel to Brussels to see the premiere of *The Crucible*. He notes, "It had been decided that my presence abroad was not in the best interests of the United States, nothing more, nothing less, and no passport was to be issued to me" (Miller 2005, 19). He offers that, "the play was the first and practically the only artistic evidence Europe had seen of resistance to what was considered a

fascistic McCarthyism” (Miller 2005 p19). By this point, America had already exercised its abilities to prevent the free movement of dissidents when in 1952, the actor “Charlie Chaplin was refused re-entry to the United States for his supposed communism” (Biggsby 2009, 541). However, by preventing Miller from travelling to promote *The Crucible*, the State Department also curtailed his ability to offer his perspective on the text or answer any potential questions as to its allegorical possibilities. In denying him the chance to appear alongside his work, they ultimately censor the opportunity of his expression regarding the text, which may in itself stir support for *The Crucible*’s inferred political argument.

This political atmosphere acting upon *The Crucible*’s first performances may potentially offer an explanation as to why several critics shied away from making in-depth analysis or comments on the evident parallels between the narrative in *The Crucible* and the hunt for communists. Miller (2012, 236) himself notes how his play was unusual in its perspective at the time, stating *The Crucible* “would be the only Broadway play to take on the anti-Communist hysteria”. This scarcity of such texts, combined with a government keen to tackle communist sedition or sympathy, may have rendered critics unable to speak freely about the realities of the play before them. The fact that the play’s allegorical properties are commonly accepted and discussed in more recent criticism supports this assertion. If contemporary readers are able to notice the play’s allegorical properties, then the ideal primed audience of the time can be regarded as even more likely to do so. Miller’s (2005, 49) own perspective also supports this, as he notes how critics “were nervous about validating a work that was so unkind to the same sanctified procedural principles as underlay the then-current hunt for reds”.

In order for a reader to generate an allegorical interpretation, they are required to acknowledge that similarities exist between the allegorical narrative, and that which is

being allegorised. While readers may disagree with the similarities present in an allegory, or feel they are reliant on inaccuracies or biased opinions, without an awareness of such common features, an allegorical interpretation would not be possible. Because an allegorical text does not signpost where a reader ought to take their interpretive inspiration from in the form of a situation to compare the allegorical text to, they are tasked with making these connections themselves (Crisp 2005, 116). On several occasions, Miller notes the general similarities he identified between the hunt for communists in America during the 1940s and 50s and the Salem witch trials of 1692. In “Why I Wrote *The Crucible*”, he states “so many practices of the Salem trials were similar to those employed by the congressional committees” (Miller 2002), which echoes his views in his autobiography *Timebends*: “Over weeks, a living connection between myself and Salem, and between Salem and Washington, was made in my mind – for whatever else they might be, I saw that the hearings in Washington were profoundly and even avowedly ritualistic” (Miller 2012, 331). These acknowledgments evidence Miller’s own ability to understand *The Crucible*’s narrative allegorically. The prevalence of anti-communist rhetoric amongst American society at the time - experienced not only by Miller but by numerous citizens - suggests Miller is unlikely to be alone in his ability to notice *The Crucible*’s allegorical properties. With a similar level of knowledge and understanding, other readers within similar contextual scenarios are potentially just as likely to notice these similarities (Fish 1980, 307).

Where many critics of *Animal Farm* were able to note several explicit allegorical representations of historical figures and events within the text’s narrative, this is less apparent in the critical responses to *The Crucible*. In comparison to Orwell’s plainly drawn farmyard setting which lends itself to stereotypical representations of characters, in *The Crucible* Miller is tasked with creating an allegory around a pre-existing and fairly well-known period in American history. Miller (2000, 11, 2005, 3-55, 2002) also

admits to relying heavily on the factual accounts of those present during the witch trials, taken from court logs, in order to create a believable and representative narrative. This general parallel, rather than one with a more specific and easily identifiable reference points may offer Miller, as suggested by Smith (2014, 36), a degree of deniability. This deniability is only strengthened when one considers that by using genuine historical accounts, Miller is able to transfer a portion of the responsibility for the text's narrative on to the fact that he is merely fictionally portraying historical accuracies, rather than entirely inventing a narrative.

3.1 Critical Interpretations of *The Crucible*

It is interesting to note the differences between critical responses written in periods of societal unrest and fear, and those written when the consequences for speaking openly are close to non-existent. Where Orwell was able to utilise his text to comment on and criticise Stalinism as a relative outsider, Miller was very much writing from within the regime he was criticising. The allegorical interpretations of *Animal Farm* available are numerous, confident and in-depth. British and American critics offering their views on the text were doing so from a position of safety. Whereas those writing about *The Crucible* in 1953 were themselves living amongst the same “paralysing” (2005, 3) fear which Miller claimed to have swallowed much of society. Several early responses to *The Crucible* can be viewed as evidence of the suppressive nature of period, with those not criticising Miller's choice of parallel either ignoring it, or commenting on the lack of discussion it had elicited. Fear, an inability to be honest and critical, and an incentive to self-censor motivated Miller to create his allegorical play. It also motivated his choice of allegorical source material, which saw him draw from a well-known reference point to create a “work of art that might illuminate the tragic absurdities of an anterior work of art that was called reality, but was not” (Miller

2005, 9). Consequently, this can be easily extended to argue that many of these same potentially censoring factors were acting against critics also.

However, more recent texts offer much more confident analysis and discussion of the parallels between *The Crucible*'s Salem and 1950s America which are now commonly accepted. This suggests that although a dominant reading was not being openly discussed, it was still in production in the minds of those witnessing the play. This speaks to the ability of a censored text to achieve a wide-reaching understanding while still facing censorship. Writing over thirty years after the first performance of *The Crucible*, David Richards (1987) was able to find significance in the text, despite the difference of societal context when writing his review. Richards (1987) says, "In times of gathering hysteria, Arthur Miller's '*The Crucible*' is particularly apt". This suggests that the text has the ability to be understood in a variety of contexts. Richards' implication is that the "hysteria" of a situation is what makes the play relatable to each context, and so this is what must be present for the allegory to function. Richards (1987) continues: "A dramatization of the Salem witchcraft trials, the play was Miller's thinly masked response to the insanity of McCarthyism of the 1950s". Richards is comfortable enough to describe the play as "thinly masked", suggesting that an allegorical interpretation of the text is easy to construct. It could potentially be that by writing from a position of such retrospect and from within an entirely different political situation, Richards is unafraid of any repercussions of his review. Another explanation for his confidence could be the fact that as time passes and texts begin to gain a dominant reading, while they are able to elicit new interpretations based on their changing relevance to their readers based on the situation the reader may find themselves in at any given time, readers are still aware of the supposedly "correct" interpretation of a text. Reiterating a text's dominant reading in a review thirty years post-publication is undoubtedly less demanding than producing the first published interpretations of a text,

which are likely to be subject to not only scrutiny from peers, but also potentially more sinister consequences. This suggests that although interpretations of *The Crucible* similar to those anticipated by censors were not prevalent at the time of the play's first performances, such interpretations were still possible for later readers.

Whereas *Animal Farm's* dominant reading (as a criticism of Russian politics of the twentieth century, and Stalinism in particular) arose soon after the novel's publication, *The Crucible's* dominant reading (as a criticism of the HUAC's treatment of suspected communists in the 1950s) took somewhat longer to solidify. Interestingly, early cementing of *Animal Farm's* dominant reading allowed for new and changing interpretations to appear over time. While many later readers appear to have been aware that *Animal Farm* was "about" Russia, they were still able to impart their own biases onto this reading. However, because *The Crucible's* dominant reading was prevented from receiving thorough attention at the time of the play's first performances, subsequent criticism appears to focus on strengthening and analysing the one dominant reading, rather than offering further potential readings.

Neil Carson's text *Arthur Miller* (2008) offers an analysis of *The Crucible*, similar to Richards' (1987) in its confidence of interpretation. Carson (2008, 37) states, "Although Miller had long been fascinated with the Salem story, there can be little doubt that the immediate inspiration for the play was the fear inspired by the investigations of the Communist "conspiracy" in America in the late 1940s and 50s". This corresponds with Miller's (2005, 3) own admission that despite having a pre-existing interest in Salem, as well as a desire to comment on the more general elements of the witch trials, the primary motivation for the narrative choice remained the similarities between his surroundings and the events of 1692.

Carson also discusses some of the criticisms which have, over time, been levelled at Miller's allegory. In particular, he notes that a barrier for some readers' enjoyment of the text is an acute awareness of Miller's own bias present within the text, undoubtedly due to his personal proximity to and involvement with the situation he sought to allegorise:

It has been dismissed as a didactic melodrama, and praised as profound tragedy.

It would be easy to attribute the confusion relating to play to the political events surrounding its first production. But there are more fundamental reasons why the work continues to puzzle some readers and spectators. For most among us this is the author's lack of complete objectivity (Carson 2008, 450).

Christopher Bigsby (2009, 412-413) notes how Miller encountered "the difficulty of finding a convincing analogue that would give audiences a purchase on the mechanism of the process they had difficulty in seeing if only because they were so deeply involved in it". This suggests that Miller was not alone in his unavoidable involvement with the play's allegorical reference point, and through his use of the witch trials, he sought to find an accessible point of comparison for readers who would otherwise find difficulty in noticing political criticisms. Combined with the need for Miller to adopt an allegorical form in order to escape censorship, it can be argued that while the parallel with Salem may be perceived as subjective, there is little chance for Miller to ever hope to produce an objective text, given both the limitations placed upon him and the discussion of a topic he felt influenced by. With regards to the interpretations of *The Crucible*, if we acknowledge Carson's view that readers are on the whole, aware of Miller's own feelings and biases within the text, it suggests that a reader may consider the narrative within these terms. By judging *The Crucible* not only as a piece of literature, but as a text written by Arthur Miller, produced at a politically important

time, with an allegorical similarity to a past political event, readers are able to engage multiple relevant schemas, thus increasing the likelihood of their ability to generate comparable allegorical interpretations.

Other more recent critics were also comfortable to analyse *The Crucible* in definite terms. In doing so, they offer explicit examples of the narrative prompts they have used to begin their allegoresis. This provides an opportunity to analyse the parallels identified between *The Crucible* and 1950s America. In his essay “A ‘Social Play’” Leonard Moss (1967, 37) even goes so far as to utilise a list-style description of the allegorical elements of the text, reminiscent of those used by critics discussing *Animal Farm*. Moss (1967, 37) offers, “the government, a Puritan “theocracy”; the prosecutor, Deputy Governor Danforth; and the subversives, Satan’s agents disguised as ordinary townsfolk”. In Moss’ comparison between the American government of 1953 and those in charge in Salem, there are numerous similarities to note. For example, Bigsby (2009, 423) states how “In both 1692 and 1952 confession and betrayal were the necessary price for inclusion in the body politic. The purging of supposed private guilt was a required public gesture”. Where potential communists were called upon to incriminate themselves and admit their past allegiance to the party, numerous characters in *The Crucible* are required to do the very same.

The climactic implied execution of *The Crucible*’s protagonist John Proctor stems entirely from his unwillingness to sign a false confession to consorting with the devil, which will in turn be presented to the town of Salem. Although he begrudgingly offers a spoken confession, on principle, he refuses to sign his name to it. Bigsby’s (2009, 423) reference to the necessity for “public gesture” during the HUAC trials is mirrored in the requirement for John Proctor’s spoken statement to be committed to paper and hung on the church door (Miller 2000, 120-121). This performative

expression of supposed guilt outweighs Governor Danforth's desire for the truth, and thus places Danforth's character in Moss' (1967, 37) described position of an allegorised "prosecution". Danforth (Miller 2000, 123) states, "Them that will not confess will hang". Interestingly, Danforth does not say that those who are guilty "will hang", rather "them that will not confess", demonstrating how the admission of guilt matters more than any actual presence of guilt. Emily Budick (Bloom 2008, 23) views the false supposition of guilt as a parallel between the text and reality, suggesting that it "characterizes both Proctor and, by implication, many of the victims of McCarthyism". She furthers this analysis by noting that in both cases, guilt is nothing more than "an 'illusion' which people only mistake for 'real'" (Bloom 2008, 23). Brooks Atkinson's (1953) review of *The Crucible* states that Miller's narrative contained "certain similarities between the perversions of justice then and today". By prioritising a confession above proving guilt, Danforth's character actively perverts the justice of the court, and in doing so, goes some way towards evidencing the similarities Atkinson mentions.

However, despite Danforth's threats, Proctor maintains his refusal to permanently incriminate himself, citing the refusal of other equally innocent citizens in his justification. Proctor continues by noting how in his false admission he would betray those who faced execution for refusing to confess to crimes they did not commit (Miller 2000, 124). Proctor's ultimate empathy with those who maintained their innocence despite an awareness of the fatal consequences may be linked to Miller's own refusal to name names and implicate others in his HUAC trial, which ultimately led to his being charged with contempt of Congress (Biggsby 2009, 564). Both Proctor and Miller, undoubtedly aware of the implications of refusing to cooperate, chose to face the consequences regardless.

During the hunt for communists, the enemy of McCarthyism was not always a clearly marked criminal with an explicitly anti-American agenda, rather a potentially subversive individual unidentifiable within society - “An ideological war is like guerrilla war, since the enemy is first of all an idea whose proponents are not in uniform but are disguised as ordinary citizens, a situation that can scare a lot of people to death” (Miller 2005, 4). On this issue, Governor Danforth’s character offers a point of similarity within *The Crucible*. During the courtroom scene towards the text’s climax, he says, “No uncorrupted man may fear this court” (Miller 2000, 88). Yet this is demonstrably not the case, and throughout the text, although nobody is guilty of their supposed crime of witchcraft, they have every reason to fear the court. Indeed, those who are truly guilty (such as Abigail), are spared any punishment for their lies and slander because their particular crime is not that which is being investigated and feared. This aligns with Moss’ (1967, 37) views on the parallels within the text, and suggests that “Satan’s agents disguised as ordinary townsfolk” are allegorical representations of “the subversives” targeted by McCarthyism. Because none within Miller’s Salem can be sure of upon whom the next accusation will fall, they are unable to separate themselves from the guilty, despite their innocence. Rather than stating “no innocent man” need fear the court, Danforth uses the word “uncorrupted”. This implies that the lines between innocence and guilt are sufficiently blurred enough so a person not guilty of the crime of witchcraft may still be found guilty in light of their connection or proximity to the crime. This is comparable to the HUAC’s reliance on alleged communists’ past membership to the party, or sympathy with the aims of the cause. Bigsby (2009, 421) states that the committee had, “no real interest in history or fine distinctions. Whenever witnesses sought to reconstitute the historical circumstances that gave meaning to their actions they found themselves silenced”. Though those on trial may not have committed

communist espionage or indeed any crime at all, they remain “corrupted” by communism itself.

By linking the themes of fear and supposed guilt in *The Crucible*, the narrative becomes increasingly reminiscent of America’s anti-communist period, which saw people with the most remote sympathies for communist ideology become afraid of the establishment. Several passages from within *The Crucible* are reminiscent of the ideological war-like scenario described by Miller (2005, 4), in which there are two clearly marked parties at odds with one another. Carson’s (2008, 37) comments on the “Communist “conspiracy” in America in the late 1940s and 50s” which he believes to be represented in the text, only further evidences an atmosphere of suspicion and fear in America. These same feelings are portrayed in the text, through characters’ frantic and divisive attempts to separate innocent townsfolk from any potential wrong-doers.

In a courtroom scene towards the play’s climax, Danforth states, “a person is either with this court or he must be counted against it, there be no road between. This is a sharp time, now, a precise time – we live no longer in the dusky afternoon when evil mixed itself with good and befuddled the world” (Miller 2000, 85). This statement clearly marks the two opposing sides of Salem’s dilemma, the court and those who would act against it. Ambivalence or uncertainty are not offered as options, instead Danforth appears to suggest that any who would be unsure on their position must be counted as suspect and potential wrong-doers. On the link between fear and guilt, Miller states “Without guilt the 1950s Red-hunt could never have generated such power. Once it was conceded that absolutely any idea remotely similar to a Marxist position was not only politically but morally illicit, the liberal, with his customary adaptations of Marxist theory and attitudes, was effectively paralyzed” (Miller 2012, 341). By creating an extremely divided society in Salem, Miller is able to emulate this concept of being

either entirely with the government, or complicity against them. The connection between fear and supposed guilt is again demonstrated *The Crucible* when, after numerous accusations of witchcraft within Salem, Reverend Hale states, “There is a prodigious fear of this court in the country”, to be met with Governor Danforth’s rebuttal that, “Then there is a prodigious guilt in the country!” (Miller 2000, 88). In not only disputing Hale’s concern but mirroring his sentence structure and declarative done, Danforth’s statement is offered as an answer to an incorrect observation. The implication being that fear cannot be given sympathy, as fear is not to be considered as anything but an admission of guilt.

Writing for the *New York Times* five years after *The Crucible*’s first performance, Lewis Funke is also able to review the text from within a position of greater safety than those writing during the 1950s. Funke (1958, 36) notes that, “[*The Crucible*] had an immediacy that no one could miss. The nation was again in the grip of hysteria, this time political, and men of goodwill, fearing the consequences, in many instances spoke up against the course of events”. Funke’s mention of the potential “consequences” faced by those choosing to speak against the dominant narrative of the time only strengthens the argument that there was a palpable risk associated with producing literature which could be viewed as subversive or in disagreement with the accepted regime. Funke (1958, 36) appears to view *The Crucible* as a text which behaves in this way, evidenced when he states that the play’s “immediacy” was unmissable. To regard the play’s applicability to the political situation of the time as so commonly accepted suggests an allegorical interpretation was the norm, and easily recognisable to audiences. Funke’s (1958, 36) only personal potential allegorical interpretation of the text is offered in the phrase, “The nation was again in the grip of hysteria”. In using the word “again” Funke draws a comparison between that which he is reviewing, a fictional account of the Salem trials, and American society at the time of

The Crucible's production. To suggest that the hysteria is present again draws a parallel between the two scenarios and implies elements of the former were present in the 1950s and allegorically understandable in terms of the text.

Moss (1967, 37) notes how audiences were very aware of the type of playwright Miller was, and that they “decided that Arthur Miller was a topical dramatist who dealt with injustices in American society such as anti-Semitism and capitalistic exploitation of the ‘common man’”. In stating this, Moss is grouping the playgoers of 1953, viewing *The Crucible* amidst the very issues allegorised within the play, within an interpretive community. Many playgoers of the time, particularly those from America, undoubtedly approached the text with an awareness of Miller as a writer, an awareness of the issues within society at the time, and an understanding that at least some individuals had grievances with the situation. Moss suggests that because of Miller's previous works, many had certain expectations for *The Crucible* and a pre-conceived idea of what Miller stood for and his expected attitude towards certain topics. Moss (1967, 37) continues, “*The Crucible* confirmed their interpretation. This work, they assumed, addressed itself to that controversial subject of the early 1950's, Senator Joseph McCarthy's investigations of Communist subversion in the United States”. In light of this, it seems unlikely for a viewer of *The Crucible*, particularly in 1953, to form an interpretation which did not include some awareness of the parallels between the text and the society of the time. And so, although a lack of explicit references to McCarthyism or the “Red-hunt” within the text is a potential point of deniability for Miller, it is important to note that audiences were not viewing the play within a vacuum and their understanding of Miller and of the timing of such a play undoubtedly shaped their interpretation of the text.

In his introduction to *Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Crucible* (1972), John Ferres supports Moss' perspective and suggests that initial critics and playgoers were largely aware of the allegorical nature of *The Crucible*, regardless of whether or not they went on to publish their thoughts on this possible interpretation. Ferres (1972, 5) says "To many in the audience... *The Crucible* seemed to draw a parallel between the Salem witch trials of 1692 and the government investigations of alleged Communist subversion". Despite noting that these critics held an awareness of the parallels the text contained, Ferres (1972, 7) continues by saying "with the exception of Brooks Atkinson and Walter Kerr, the newspaper reviewers either denied or chose to ignore the contemporary parallels". Ferres' acknowledgement that people felt unable to offer their genuine interpretations of the play suggests they were aware of potential repercussions for admitting their awareness of the similarities between the obviously awful events in Salem and those in America at the time, which may have been an assumed sympathy with *The Crucible's* anti-government stance. Although Ferres does not note the number of reviewers in attendance, that he is able to identify which ones did in fact acknowledge the play's parallels suggests that the majority chose not to, or felt unable to discuss this connection in their reviews. An absence of discussion of the play's allegorical properties, in this case, may not necessarily point to a failure for viewers to notice them and interpret the text allegorically. Rather, it demonstrates the timeliness and power of the allegory's message, and its subversive perspective at the time.

Atkinson's (1953) review offers that, "Neither Mr. Miller nor his audiences are unaware of certain similarities between the perversions of justice then and today". Again, this suggests that regardless of the scarcity of reported allegorical interpretations of *The Crucible* contemporary to its release, those interacting with the play were able to note that the parallels did exist, yet evidently felt unable to reference them. Indeed, considering the time of his writing, despite Atkinson's reference to the similarities, he

offers no more detail on them than his admission that both 1950s America and Miller's Salem contained "perversions of justice" (1953). He goes on to note that in comparison with Miller's earlier work, *Death of a Salesman*, "Mr. Miller had had more trouble with this one, perhaps because he is too conscious of its implications" (Atkinson 1953). Reference to the "implications" of the text suggests that Atkinson himself is also aware of what these may be, and suspects Miller was restrained in his writing due to an awareness of the potential ramifications of creating a text which could be understood as a criticism of the then-powerful anti-communist establishment. This hints at a possible expectation of self-censorship, implying that Atkinson would expect Miller to produce a text in view of "its implications", which may shape the final product. Atkinson's review also evidences that he has made an allegorical interpretation of the text. Although his references to the allegorical parallels are limited, his ability to notice that the text can be interpreted at a level beyond its surface narrative and offer a perspective on current events through an entirely unrelated narrative demonstrates that he has been able to perform allegoresis and ascertain that *The Crucible*'s narrative shares enough characteristics with McCarthyism to be understood as an allegory. Perhaps through his mention of the text's "implications", Atkinson demonstrates an expectation that other readers will also notice these similarities and replicate his own interpretation of the text.

Just as George Soule believed that *Animal Farm* suffered as a piece of literature and became an unenjoyable reading experience because of the inaccuracies Soule perceived in Orwell's construction of his allegorical narrative (Soule 2013), *The Crucible* was criticised for the inaccurate representations of its reference point. A central element to this argument appears to be that while in Salem, none accused of witchcraft could have truly been witches, thus rendering the accusers and courts wholly mistaken and entirely to blame for all punishments and mistreatments, it is a fact that communists were living in America during McCarthyism and the red-hunts, and so

despite the aggressive nature of the proceedings, there was at least some chance that those accused may have been guilty. Herbert Blau (1964, 62) comments on this very criticism of the text, stating “Several critics have pointed out that the analogy between witches and Communists is a weak one, for while we believe in retrospect there were no witches, we know in fact there were some Communists, and a few of them were dangerous”. Miller (2002) was evidently aware of such criticisms, and notes “it was no sooner known that my new play was about Salem than I had to confront the charge that such an analogy was specious – that there never were any witches but there certainly are Communists”. However, as a rebuttal to this accusation of inaccuracy, Miller (2002) notes that, “In the seventeenth century, however, the existence of witches was never questioned by the loftiest minds in Europe and America”. A concern with whether or not an allegory is entirely accurate may be immaterial to the process of interpretation. In order to consider a text allegorical, one must acknowledge that similarities between two scenarios are present. That Miller’s choice of reference scenario did not perfectly align with that which he sought to criticise does not necessarily mean that the two do not share sufficient similar characteristics.

With allegations of allegorical inaccuracy in mind, Miller (2012, 341) states, “whether witches and Communists could be equated was no longer to the point. What was manifestly parallel was the guilt, two centuries apart, of holding illicit, suppressed feelings of alienation and hostility towards standard, daylight society as defined by its most orthodox proponents”. Implying that, to a point, the existence or inexistence of witches is irrelevant, as at the heart of *The Crucible*, the focus is on the power of a supposition of guilt, the desire for public self-implication and confession, and the arbitrary power granted to the establishment in times of fear. The witch hunts in 1692, it appears, were simply a vehicle for this narrative, rather than its focus. Budick (Bloom 2008, 23) offers a similar perspective, suggesting that Miller did not wish to present a

mirror image between Salem and McCarthyism, rather, he intended to demonstrate that “Senator McCarthy and judges Danforth and Hawthorne were not the major enemies of American liberty. Moral absolutism, pride, contempt, and a marked tendency to see outward signs as evidence of inner being – these McCarthy-like, Puritan-like qualities – were the opponents of liberty”. This suggests that Miller’s allegory can be understood at a more schematic and general level. After all, allegory does not always suppose that a fictional and real narrative are entirely the same, rather that there is a significance in their comparable features which may be noticed by people other than the author. There also need not be an assumption that every reader will necessarily notice these comparable features. Only that such an interpretation is at least accessible to others.

The argument that an allegorical text must be an accurate re-imagining of a particular event or time in history in order to be a successful example of the form may potentially disregard any similarities which do occur in both instances by placing greater importance on the inaccuracies of the text than on any accurate points made. By doing this, a critic negates the similarities identified by the writer by suggesting that any inaccuracies render these fair observations moot. In *Theatre in the Fifties*, George Jean Nathan (1953, 107) states that “what are unquestionably designed as parallels [in *The Crucible*] are not always parallels”. While Nathan uses the term “unquestionably” and in doing so demonstrates that he has generated an allegorical interpretation of the text – without which he would be unable to identify any parallels at all – he evidently regards the parallels as inaccurate. He does acknowledge that certain aspects of *The Crucible* are reminiscent of America’s hunt for communists, namely “mass hysteria” and “fear” (1953, 107). However, it is interesting to note that both points of similarity identified by Nathan place the responsibility and blame upon members of society rather than those in charge, perhaps implying that the emotions are misplaced, or even a product of guilt. He furthers this by stating, “there is a considerable difference between persecution based on

ignorant superstition and prosecution however extremely and at times eccentrically conducted, in time of national peril” (1953, 107), and in doing so creates a divide between the “ignorant” figures in Salem, and those acting in a time of “national peril” in America.

Nathan’s (1953) article continues by implying that Miller, in adopting an allegorical representation of the “present atmosphere” is actually able to “not say anything about that either, but only to suggest that a great deal might be said... if it were not that the “present atmosphere” itself makes such plain speaking impossible”. In doing so Nathan evidences that he is aware, to some extent, of the contextual influences and pressures upon Miller when writing *The Crucible*. Because both Miller and Nathan inhabit the same “present atmosphere”, despite potential personal differences they are undoubtedly both aware of the way in which the hunt for communists had the potential to shape what was said and by whom. Miller’s comments on his feeling of being unable to “speak simply and accurately of the very recent past when being left-wing in America” (2005, 15) can be linked to Nathan’s observations that *The Crucible* may have been one way in which to discuss an issue without falling prey to the limitations placed upon writers by the government of the time.

Robert Warshow also discusses the accuracy of Miller’s allegory, as well as commenting on the open-ended nature of interpretations and individuals’ understanding of texts. He states that “*The Crucible* was written to say something about Alger Hiss²

² Alger Hiss was found guilty “on two counts of perjury” for being found to have lied about his connections to the Communist party. There is still debate as to whether he was truly guilty (Fried 1991, 17). On several occasions it has been suggested that Hiss was in fact framed for his crimes (Rustin 2015, Pyle 2007, and Rosenbaum 2007).

and Owen Lattimore, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg³, Senator McCarthy, the actors who have lost their jobs on radio and television” (Warshow 1953). However, in noting the numerous possible inspirations for the text, Warshow also broaches the issue of whether or not the text is able to offer similar meaning to all readers, due to its unspecific reference material. He queries, “if I think of the Rosenbergs and somebody else thinks of Alger Hiss, and still another thinks of the Prague⁴ trial, doesn’t that simply prove all over again that the play has universal significance?” (Warshow 1953). When Warshow comments on the “universal significance” of *The Crucible*, he does so with a cynicism which implies that in adopting a narrative with such multiplicity and possible applicability, Miller has given himself the opportunity to deny that any potential parallels are intentional, and in doing so, said nothing of note. He comments on how “Mr. Miller is under no obligation to tell us whether he thinks the trial of Alger Hiss, let us say, was a “witch trial”; he is writing about the Salem trials” (Warshow 1953). It could be argued that this is a somewhat disingenuous criticism of Miller, which supposes that he ever had the genuine ability to offer an honest and explicit critique of the events Warshow describes. While Warshow is correct in his assertion that Miller need not relay his feelings on the Alger Hiss trial, if a reader’s allegorical interpretation of *The Crucible* calls upon their schema of the trial in relation to *The Crucible*’s Salem narrative, then Miller’s own feelings on the events are beside the point. Just as “no authors have control over what others make of their work” (Pearce 2005), nor do they have control over the depth and duration of a reader’s allegoresis.

³ Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were “charged with conspiracy to steal and pass atomic secrets to the Soviets. Amid protests they were both executed for their crimes. Many believe the two were “framed as Cold War scapegoats” (Fried 1991, 115).

⁴ The Prague Trial may refer to that of Rudolf Slánský in Czechoslovakia, during which Slánský was tortured in to confessing to crimes “invented for [him] by [his] prosecutors” before being executed (Service 2008, 307).

Critics' concern with the accuracy of Miller's allegory and the multiplicity of the allegorical narrative calls into question whether or not an allegorical text has to be interpreted as an allegory of the writer's intended reference point in order for it to work properly as an allegory. Provided a reader is able to draw similarities from something they are familiar with, and understand fictional characters and situations in terms of these understood characteristics, then the text in question is a workable allegory. Warshow's line of argument appears to centre around the issue of whether or not Miller was potentially dodging the act of writing honestly about McCarthyism by writing a play that could be easily regarded as allegorising any number of other situations. When Warshow asks whether the opportunity for different readers to reach different interpretations of a particular scene within *The Crucible* is testament to the play's universal significance, then it could be argued that what is changeable is not the play's inherent meaning, rather the priorities and understanding of each reader or playgoer who may be more or less likely to see certain similarities between the play and events they are aware of depending on their relevant schema, existing knowledge, and perspective on such events.

Also writing in 1953, Richard Hayes (1953, 33) argues that although Miller supposedly denied any intentions of including "contemporary reference" in *The Crucible*, it would be "fatuous of Mr. Miller to pretend that our present cultural climate had not always a place in the foreground of his mind". Before continuing to say, "Surely then, [Miller] can see that the Salem witch-hunts and our own virulent varieties are parallel only in their effects, not in their causes" (Hayes 1953, 33). As with both Nathan and Warshow's arguments that *The Crucible*'s allegory is flawed because it is not entirely accurate, Hayes criticises Miller's choice of allegorical reference as a parallel for 1950s America, because he believes that there are integral differences between the two scenarios. In suggesting this, Hayes potentially discounts Miller's entire

comparison by suggesting that at it is, at its centre, based on a flawed parallel. In addition, by offering this criticism of Miller's work, Hayes is able to position himself in disagreement with Miller on the potentially problematic and controversial nature of the text, whilst still acknowledging that he has noticed Miller's supposed intent.

It could be argued that interpretations critical of Miller's text were able to provide an appearance of limited support for the play's perspective. Where critics viewed *Animal Farm*'s potential to be read allegorically in differing societal contexts as a testament to the play's ability to act as a "human story" (Gerrard 2014), Warshow offers the opposing view, that a text which can be interpreted in many ways is potentially failing to mean what it ought to. Similarly, in Hayes' assumption that Miller can "surely" understand that the parallel between Salem's witch hunts and America's communist hunts is fundamentally inaccurate (Hayes 1953, 33), he is able to distance himself from Miller's perspective by offering his own interpretation of the two scenarios. Importantly, as with Nathan (1953), we are forced to consider such critics' motivations for such damning review of Miller's works. While it is feasible that these reviews represent genuine issues taken with the play, the dominance of the anti-communist rhetoric at the time of all three's reviews cannot be understated. It must also be noted that Warshow's 1953 essay was soon to be "distributed by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom as part of its anti-communist drive" (Biggsby 2009, 451), evidencing his success in creating an interpretation aware of Miller's assumed intent, yet entirely disapproving of it. By offering a resistant and critical interpretation of *The Crucible*, which vaguely acknowledges the allegorical properties of the text only to condemn any inaccuracies, critics potentially hold the ability to discredit a taboo perspective critical of the establishment.

In 1953, Warshow commented on the unwillingness of several critics to freely acknowledge the allegorical elements of the play: “A couple of the newspaper critics wrote about how timely the play was, and then took it back in the Sunday editions, putting a little more weight on the ‘universal significance’ [of the play]” (Warshow 1953). The implications of newspaper critics redacting their initial written interpretations of the text, which were already undoubtedly shaped by an awareness of the political climate and its power to condemn writers on the most fragile of allegations, gives an even greater significance to the power which society of the time had over which interpretations of *The Crucible* became available. This further evidences the point that certain interpretations of Miller’s text, be that those of critics or those simply afraid to voice opinions which may have been regarded as subversive, may have been either doctored and self-censored, or never written at all. Nobody knows for sure how many texts “never got written” out of fear of censorship (Hamilton, 26). However, despite attempts to censor Miller’s perspective, the climate of 1950s America is now largely inseparable from the popular discourse on the play, which in itself aids in the production of interpretations which feature an awareness of this parallel. In conclusion, although contemporary critics are able to comment upon *The Crucible*’s dominant reading with confidence and the benefit of retrospect, the road to this particular opportunity remains paved with the remnants of the play’s censorious history.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to consider whether literary censors are correct to assume that their own allegorical interpretations are replicable for all readers. Such a multifaceted aim produced predictably varied conclusions. When condensed, they generally suggest that one answer is not correct for all readers at all times. This largely reflects the issue of literary interpretations as a whole, particularly when one regards the act of interpreting narrative as a transactional process, relying on both the text itself, and the reader.

Theoretically, interpretations of fictional texts can be considered as varied and nuanced as their readers. With this in mind, it might appear that censors' interpretations cannot possibly be considered replicable in their entirety. However, a distinction must be made between literary interpretations in general, and those discussed in the previous chapters. This thesis comprises analysis, not of standard literary narratives, but allegorical ones, and importantly, allegorical narratives which have been subjected to censorship. Thus, consideration must be not only of the interpretive process for readers, but also the way in which this process adapts to an allegorical text and the important implications of censorship upon this process. When these factors are taken into account, as in the analysis conducted in the previous chapters, it appears that a censor's allegorical interpretation has a substantial opportunity to be replicated by a large percentage of readers.

In my earlier analysis, I indicated that while literary interpretations are reliant on a reader's own context and knowledge rather than a text's innate meaning, it is still possible for multiple readers to produce similar allegorical interpretations. However, it appeared that in order to do so, each reader must also possess an equally similar knowledge base and mental schema. A pragmatic application of this conclusion suggests that while similar interpretations are possible, individual subjectivity is likely

to prevent identical interpretations from being produced, as no two readers are entirely alike. The findings in this thesis do support the argument that subjectivity may lessen the likelihood of identical interpretations. However, although the majority of the allegorical interpretations analysed were slightly different, featuring varied depths of analysis, at a more general schematic level, each interpretation operates under the same understanding. Variation in the interpretations lies in critics' disagreement regarding specific character parallels, and the intent behind each allegory, not in what each allegory is necessarily "about".

In the context of censored or controversial texts, the prevalence of comparable schemas and understanding among readers does not necessarily occur by chance. Instead, dominant readings shape the respective text's agreed-upon narrative. Readers who may otherwise be unaware of a text's allegorical source material find themselves aided in their interpretation by the text's dominant reading. The more popular a text becomes, the more widespread its dominant reading. A dominant reading may even go some way towards influencing the way an allegorical text is taught in schools, with teachers priming their pupils in the necessary topics before they interact with the text. It also increases the likelihood of readers encountering another individual's interpretation of an allegorical text before generating their own. Somewhat ironically, the controversial nature of censorship itself aids in the production of dominant readings, and ultimately feeds the general perception of what a text may or may not be really "about". In essence, a dominant reading has the potential to alleviate some of the pressure put on readers to be fully knowledgeable in an allegory's source material.

An allegorical text's censorship, in its attempt to limit access to the respective narrative, may only prove successful for a limited period of time. It was found that the social context within which censorship takes place is of fundamental importance.

Because a censor operates within a brief snapshot in history, their actions reflect only transitory considerations and motives. The changeable nature of social taboos offers an opportunity for once-subversive literature to become acceptable when the society it inhabits no longer regards its content as objectionable. However, while the passage of time may eradicate a text's need for censorship, a text's history of suppression and controversy cannot be so easily escaped. In turn, censorship becomes an inseparable element of a text's dominant reading. When one notes the importance and influence of dominant readings of censored allegorical texts, it appears that interpretations produced by censors are likely to be replicated by other readers. Therefore, while in a general sense it may not be possible to regard all literary interpretations as replicable, the very nature of censored and controversial texts increases this likelihood by increasing potential readers' access to the text's dominant reading, which incidentally is often contributed to by the censors themselves.

This thesis' findings support the conclusions reached by David Miall (1990, 323-339) and Anderson et al. (1977, 367-381) who both conducted studies into different readers' interpretations of the same texts. Anderson et al.'s (1977, 376) reference to readers' potential inability to see beyond an interpretation which relates to their personal interests and areas of expertise aligns with the interpretations offered by the experts in this thesis' sampling. For example, the socialist writer John Molyneux and historian David Pearce were both able to offer a more intricate allegorical explanation of *Animal Farm*'s historical reference material than other critics, who may not have had sufficient knowledge or motivation to make such in-depth interpretations. Additionally, in relation to Craig Hamilton's (2011, 23-42) article "Allegory, Blending, and Censorship in Modern Literature", this thesis' findings are largely complementary. Despite a difference in methodological approach, Hamilton's concern with the cognitive processes involved in the production of allegorical interpretations opened up an area of further research which

this thesis hoped to fill. By attempting to ascertain what is required of a reader in order to reach the point where cognitive blending can take place, it became possible to research not only the censorship of allegorical texts but the theoretical requirements in interpreting censored literature, as well as the part played by censors' own interpretations. This offered an insight into the success of censoring allegorical texts when the censorship does not entirely prevent the text from being released.

A more wide-reaching implication of the findings from this thesis relates to when, during the publication process, literary censorship occurs. And, to how an understanding of this may enable more detailed and considered analysis. For instance, where *Animal Farm*'s censorship centred on the text's inability to secure publication, as well as Orwell's difficulties with writing what may have proven to be an unpopular perspective, much of the censorship against Miller's *The Crucible* took place both pre and post-publication. The latter example of censorship was potentially the most difficult to pin down and evidence. However, by researching the climate of self-censorship and fear influential over Miller's production of his allegory, it was possible to perceive and understand how the very same climate had a discernible influence on the first published reactions to his play. This led to the discovery of evidence of the redaction of interpretations, as well as a breadth of largely critical reactions to what was to become a critically acclaimed piece of drama. A tentative inference from this may be that critics felt just as unable as Miller himself to be honest about that which was in front of them - either the political climate *The Crucible* sought to criticise, or Miller's play itself. A comparison of contemporary criticism to the criticism from the 1950s only emphasises this palpable difference in approach to critiquing the text. Therefore, I believe that an analysis of written interpretations of censored texts, contemporary to their publication, may be able to offer further detail and understanding of the censorship faced by the text

itself. Such analysis could prove useful in situations where censorship has occurred, but evidence is sparse.

Word Count 28,010

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