Article

Their Own Devices: Steampunk Airships as Heterotopias of Crisis and Deviance

Courtney Krentz [1], Mike Perschon [2],* and Amy St. Amand [2]

1   Department of English Language and Literatures, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4, Canada; krentzc@student.ubc.ca
2   Department of English, MacEwan University, Edmonton, AB T5J 4S2, Canada; stamanda2@macewan.ca
*   Correspondence: PerschonM@macewan.ca

Abstract: Michel Foucault uses a sailing vessel as the exemplar of his theory of heterotopia because of its mobility. The lateral and vertical mobility of the steampunk airship indicates the potential for an even greater exemplar of heterotopia, particularly of Foucault's defining principles of heterotopic crisis and deviance. These principles are explored onboard the steampunk airships of Scott Westerfeld's *Leviathan* trilogy and Gail Carriger's *Finishing School* series, resulting in travel towards progressive social frontiers of gender and race. The protagonists of the *Leviathan* trilogy move from a position of crisis to deviance, as mediated through the friendship and romance of two representatives of warring factions. In contrast, the heroine of the *Finishing School* series moves from deviance to crisis as she navigates the vagaries of gender and racial identity. These airship heterotopias of young adult fiction, which not only descend geographically but also socially, cross liminal crisis spaces of class, race, gender, and identity to craft literary cartographies for these social frontiers, providing readers with literary maps for their uncertain real worlds of crisis.

Keywords: airships; Foucault; heterotopia of crisis; heterotopia of deviance; Gail Carriger; neo-Victorian; Scott Westerfeld; steampunk; Young Adult (YA) fiction

1. Introduction

At the end of 'Different Spaces' (1998), Michel Foucault (Foucault 1998, p. 185) uses a sailing vessel as the perfect example of his theory of heterotopia and its defining principles or features, asserting that "the ship [...] lives by its own devices". This is a vision of the sailing vessel romanticized through a fictional past, a time when ships visited "brothels" and "colonies" (Foucault 1998, p. 185). Foucault reaches backwards "from the sixteenth century up to our time" (Foucault 1998, p. 185), conjuring a triple-masted merchant vessel or ship of the line from the eighteenth or nineteenth century, not the ocean-spanning passenger vessels and battleships contemporary to his writing 'Of Different Spaces' during the golden age of commercial air travel. By then, the ships he esteems as "heterotopia par excellence" (Foucault 1998, p. 185) no longer plied their trade across the globe, at least, not in the way he describes. Foucault's sailing vessel is not a real ship so much as the *idea* of one. Foucault's ideal heterotopic ocean-going vessel is a thing of nostalgic fantasy, of an idealized past where brothels and colonies were apparently repositories of "precious treasures that lie waiting in their garden" (Foucault 1998, p. 185) to be claimed by intrepid travelers and explorers.

Consequently, it seems only a small step from these ships of the ocean to steampunk's ships of the air, especially if we playfully take Foucault literally when he says that "the ship is a piece of floating space" (Foucault 1998, p. 184). For if Foucault is correct in claiming that the "sailing vessel is the heterotopia par excellence" (Foucault 1998, p. 185) because it travels upon oceans and rivers, then how much more so is the steampunk airship, unbound by tide and current to fly wherever one wishes? As the Julius Verne scholar Arthur B. Evans has said of the "hyperbolic vehicles" and "vehicular utopias", they represent "[a]n

important new paradigm in the history of utopian speculation" in nineteenth-century Europe, and thus "[t]he traditional utopian 'nowhere' was soon replaced by a potential 'anywhere'" (Evans 1999, p. 99). Consider the three spaces evoked in the title of Goga and Kümmerling-Meibauer (2017) anthology devoted to maps in children's literature, *Maps and Mapping in Children's Literature: Landscapes, Seascapes and Cityscapes*; the airship can travel to and above all these 'scapes yet flies within a space that is ostensibly unmappable (at least in the sense of fantasy book cartography). Of the maps included in our chosen case studies from young adult (YA) fiction, Scott Westerfeld's *Leviathan* trilogy and Gail Carriger's *Finishing School* series, one, Scott Westerfeld's (2009) *Leviathan*, is of the world the airship flies above, while the other, in Gail Carriger's (2015) *Manners and Mutiny*, is of the airship itself. In a sense, the airship manages to simultaneously be everywhere and "nowhere" in what Foucault terms a crisis "heterotopia without geographical markers" (Foucault 1998, p. 180).[1]

Next to brass goggles, the airship is possibly the image most evocative of the steampunk mode. At *Steam Powered*, a steampunk convention held in the San Francisco Bay Area in October 2008, one could purchase an official looking 'airship license,' or t-shirts from 'airship institutes in Germany, France, and the United States. Steampunk musical artists *Abney Park* performed and dressed as the crew of the airship *Ofelia*; their latest release that year, *Lost Horizons*, featured the single 'Airship Pirate' (Brown 2008). As Cynthia Miller (2013) argues in 'Airships East, Zeppelins West: Steampunk's Fantastic Frontiers', "[w]hile fantastic transportation of all sorts, from rockets to motorcars, is a hallmark of steampunk's mingling of the strange and the familiar, *it is the airship that truly serves as an icon of the genre's assault on the frontiers of time and space*" (Miller 2013, p. 145, added emphasis). Arguably, this assault is more about social times and spaces than it is about actual historical times and geographic spaces. It is interesting to consider the ubiquity of airships in steampunk art and narrative, given Steffen Hantke's conviction that the name "steampunk" esteems the "steam engine as the most appropriate icon of the past" when describing the genre's main focus on anachronistic Victorian technology (Hantke 1999, p. 247). Yet, as Mike Perschon observes in his article on steampunked *Star Wars* images, only one artist utilized a steam train as a retrofuturistic reinterpretation of the starships and speeders of that galaxy far, far away. The rest imagined ships such as *The Millennium Falcon* as airships of one kind or another (Perschon 2010, pp. 136–38). Clearly, the mode of steampunk encourages narratives and visions that run off the rails, rather than those that follow tracks laid down by someone else.[2]

Like Foucault's heterotopic sailing vessel, the steampunk airship is not the airship of real-world history. Consider how, despite the common (albeit problematic) assumption that steampunk is a form of neo-Victorianism,[3] almost all steampunk airships are rigid airships, modelled upon the *Graf Zeppelin* of the 'golden age' of airship travel in the 1920s and 1930s. Neither Victorian nor even Edwardian steampunk airships quite literally provided flights of fancy and fantasy. Britain feared the ancestor of the war machines less during World War I than the progeny of the fantastic flying machines of Jules Verne's *Voyages Extraordinaires* series (1863–1905), which Evans refers to as "vehicular utopias" that satisfied "nineteenth-century visions of transportational perfection" (Evans 1999, p. 100); steampunk airships rarely reference the history of flight. Rather, they tend to echo the history of cinema, when film adaptations and pastiches of Verne's, H. G. Wells's, and Edgar Rice Burroughs's works were released at a rate of nearly one per year between 1954 and 1977.[4] This fantastical cinematic pedigree results in steampunk flying machines with an ancestry derived not from the practical blueprints of French engineer Henri Giffard, the inventor of an actual steam-powered airship, the Giffard dirigible, but rather the fanciful art of French illustrator Albert Robida, who also authored a trilogy of futuristic novels. In the real world, the airship is immortalized in the immolation of the *Hindenburg*, one of the most famous disasters of the twentieth century. In steampunk, the airship is a romantic icon of adventure and boundless frontiers, one which only explodes when the plot demands it.

Foucault warns that "in civilizations without ships the dreams dry up", and offers his ships, these ideal heterotopias, as "the greatest reservoirs of our imagination" (Foucault 1998, p. 185). When conflated with the steampunk airship, these claims seem to anticipate the opening lines of Miller's aforementioned essay: like Foucault's heterotopic ship, steampunk "is a generative force that brings motion and vitality to the worlds in which it appears. It mobilizes and transforms–animates, reconstructs, and renews–bringing fantastic machines to life, and with them, the *dreams* and ambitions of their creators" (Miller 2013, p. 145, added emphasis). Steampunk, it would seem, is a mode saturated with dreams as much as dream-generating vessels. The latter include the mysterious ship piloted by a dead man in James Blaylock's *Homunculus* (Blaylock 1986), the fleets of the anti-traction league in Philip Reeve's *Mortal Engines* (Reeve 2001), the aerial-city of Swarm in Alastair Reynolds's *Terminal World* (Reynolds 2010), and the rigged sailing vessels of the sky in Jim Butcher's *The Aeronaut's Windlass* (Butcher 2016) or of space in David D. Levine's *Arabella of Mars* (Levine 2016). However, this essay focuses on two particular YA series and their airships: the windborne whale of Westerfeld's *Leviathan* trilogy and the flying academy of Carriger's *Finishing School* series.

Some might scoff at these choices, much like many graduate students and supervisors who have contacted Mike Perschon over the years to ask for recommended reading lists, only to repeatedly dismiss his recommendations of Carriger and Westerfeld in favour of more literary steampunk fare, such as Thomas Pynchon's *Against the Day* (Pynchon 2016) or Jean-Christophe Valtat's *Luminous Chaos* (Valtat 2013). Yet, studies in steampunk that reject Carriger or Westerfeld's work in preference for comparatively obscure stylistic superiority disregard some of the most popular writing in the genre, as indicated by review sites such as *Goodreads* lists. Carriger regularly dominates lists of steampunk fiction, and her works are always included in the top 10, with Westerfeld's texts rarely far behind. Some might see popularity as a biased barometer of the steampunk mode in prose fiction. However, it is our contention that popular texts only indicate the subjectivity of steampunk fans, but not steampunk scholars: subjective metrics such as *Goodreads* provide an objective indication of the current state of genres, which are always in flux.

Speaking of flux, while the *Leviathan* and *Finishing School* series feature geographic frontiers, their heterotopic airships provide a space of change for their protagonists, who in turn attempt to change the world beyond the heterotopia. Accordingly, our discussion moves away from Miller's discussion of airships and geographical frontiers towards the less tangible frontiers of gender, race, and class. Miller describes airships as "magical technology" (Miller 2013, p. 152), which evokes "an overwhelming sense of awe" for passengers and onlookers (Miller 2013, p. 154) and provides a source of "endless possibility" for steampunk writers (Miller 2013, p. 157). Miller views the steampunk airship through the same lens that frames Foucault's sailing vessels: that is, as spectacular conveyances which impart "a sense of wonder to travel [...] as they carry intrepid voyagers east and west, as far as their imaginations will go" (Miller 2013, p. 146). Yet, while Miller succinctly surveys real-world airships, proto-steampunk airships, and steampunk airships in Joe Lansdale's madcap *Zeppelins West* (2001), James Blaylock's short story 'Lord Kelvin's Machine' (Blaylock 1986) and the zeppelins and balloons of Philip Pullman's children's fantasy *The Golden Compass*, aka *His Dark Materials* (1995), she never actually discusses all the far-flung horizons to which these airships might travel. Although she speaks of airships as the embodiment of "the promise that frontiers still exist" (Miller 2013, p. 146), she focuses on geographical frontiers rather than social ones, only referencing the latter when describing "the role of the airship [....] as spectacle, symbol of progress, and vessel of exploration and independence" (Miller 2013, p. 146).

Miller identifies airships as fantastic conveyances to fantastic frontiers, but they are also motifs of a time when frontiers still existed. As objects of a vintage past, they indicate a time when humans had not yet gone to the moon, mapped the planet's surface, or traveled miles beneath the ocean to discover the wreck of the *Titanic*. Consequently, they not only permit travel to dreamlands but also signal the possibility of such lands. More than just

spatial motifs, airships move from explored worlds into unexplored ones and function as temporal motifs also, transporting audiences from a time when all our world has been explored to a time when frontiers still beckoned.

With this temporal shift comes another type of frontier, another space for exploration. For not only does the temporal aspect of steampunk afford opportunity to explore geographical frontiers, it also permits opportunity to explore social or behavioral frontiers. Miller states that the "exotic, otherworldly frontiers outside the world generally known to the Victorians provide the perfect setting for all manner of retrofuturism" (Miller 2013, p. 159), highlighting the idea that *technological* retrofuturism is not the only sort steampunk plays with. As Perschon (2013) argues in 'Useful Troublemakers: Social Retrofuturism in the Steampunk Novels of Gail Carriger and Cherie Priest', steampunk often explores a *social* retrofuturism, where the contemporary writer does not so much replicate the past imagining the future, but rather uses the past as a space to imagine the future of the reader's present. In other words, steampunk utilizes time periods when these social frontiers had yet to be as fully explored as they are today; for example, Sophronia and company explore gender and race in ways which arguably are normative today but are transgressive or deviant in Carriger's fantastic Victorian era. Both the *Leviathan* and *Finishing School* series feature several such transgressive behaviours: females cross-dressing as males, relationships between widely disparate social classes, acceptance and normalization of marginal or foreign cultures, and the refusal to simply toe the line of nationalism—all done while falling in love and ending or preempting wars. Such deviant behavior either leads to or emerges from moments of crisis, and it is these two nodes from Foucault's theory that this article focuses on. While Foucault only speaks in passing of the heterotopias of crisis and deviance, we wish to treat these as crucial conceptual lenses for our steampunk goggles, as a way of reading Westerfeld and Carriger's work in a new way. One more caveat before we proceed: given that Westerfeld's *Leviathan* series is set in the Edwardian rather than Victorian period, readers may wonder why we include it in a study for a Special Issue on neo-Victorian heterotopias. While *steampunk* and *neo-Victorianism* are often taken to be synonymous in non-specialist circles, we agree with Claire Nally when she says that, although "[s]teampunk has a number of affinities with the critical practice of Neo-Victorianism [...] it is important to acknowledge it has a very different literary lineage and they are not synonymous" (Nally 2019, p. 11). Certainly, the widespread tacit conflation of *Victorian* or even *neo-Victorian* with steampunk is problematic. Steampunk scholars and critics are divided upon the periods steampunk draws from, often going beyond the boundaries of the Victorian period; for example, Mike Ashley argues for the era of steampunk evoking a span between 1880 to 1914, when "[t]he wonderful visions and hopes of the Victorians became overtaken by the real world, especially by the First World War" (Ashley 2010, p. 12). Many steampunk works and art reference the Edwardian period, if only through their use of rigid airships, the focus of this article. As Perschon notes: "Every rigid airship pictured in steampunk draws from the Edwardian period or later, and more precisely from the Wilhemian or Weimar period, since those rigid airship designs are almost always based on German zeppelins, not British dirigibles" (Perschon 2018, p. 41). However, steampunk draws from earlier periods than the nineteenth-century as well, beginning with the seminal steampunk work *Anubis Gates* by Tim Powers (Powers 1983), playing on 'Victoriana', which Cora Kaplan defines as "a complementary miscellany of evocations and recyclings of the nineteenth century, a constellation of images which became markers for particular moments of contemporary style and culture" (Kaplan 2007, p. 3). This "miscellany" rarely coincides with the exact parameters of Queen Victoria's reign but tends to encompass the so-called long nineteenth century, including parts of the Georgian and Edwardian periods

Still other steampunk works take place in futures evocative of a neo-Victorian past, or in spaces that are not Victorian but simply vintage industrial, such as Meiji Japan. In contrast, Dru Pagliassotti argues that "[m]uch, though by no means all, steampunk fiction can be viewed as a form of neo-Victorian literature that evokes an Anglo-American nineteenth-century setting and typically critiques Victorian attitudes towards women and

their proper roles in society" ([Pagliassotti 2017](#), p. 226). Certainly, steampunk's typical gender critique, as well as contestations of Victorian class and race ideologies that extended well beyond the turn of the century, pervade both Westerfeld's and Carriger's series. Nonetheless, while steampunk continues to be popularly conflated with the Victorian period as mediated by *Masterpiece Theatre* or, more recently, Guy Ritchie's take the period in *Sherlock Holmes* ([Ritchie 2009](#)), it is not strictly always or exclusively neo-Victorian.

Accordingly, this article is not a study of Victorians or (neo-)Victorianism, but rather a study of steampunk's patchwork appropriation of elements from the Victorian, Edwardian, and any other periods deemed vintage. Whatever dates are drawn as demarcations, steampunk uses facets of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century society, culture, and technology as collage forms. Given Louisa Hadley's use of "pseudo-Victorian" to denote fictional "Victorian works" by neo-Victorian writers, which borrow and emulate Victorian precedents ([Hadley 2010](#), p. 157), we propose that it might be more practical to replace 'neo-Victorian' with 'hyper-Victorian' when describing the steampunk aesthetic, to acknowledge the hyperbolic nature of Victorian elements in steampunk. When Steffen Hantke declared that "the shaping force behind steampunk is not history but the will of its author to establish and then violate and modify a set of ontological ground rules" ([Hantke 1999](#), p. 248), he wrote not only an insightful observation about steampunk, but a prescient one, anticipating where steampunk would continue to go, not as historical fiction per se, but as speculative fiction—science fiction, fantasy, and horror, all mixed into one—that uses history as its playground, not classroom.

2. Westerfeld's Leviathan Series—From Crisis to Deviance

Scott Westerfeld's *Leviathan* series, comprising *Leviathan* ([Westerfeld 2009](#)), *Behemoth* ([Westerfeld 2010](#)), and *Goliath* ([Westerfeld 2011](#)), begins on the cusp of the First World War in a fictional Europe resembling the historical Europe of the early 1900s. The first novel commences shortly after the event that sets off the conflict, the assassination of Austrian-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and follows Ferdinand's fictional son Alek as he is dragged from his bed in the middle of the night and forced to flee Austria-Hungary to evade capture. As in our real-world history, the Austrian-Hungarians are aligned with the Germans and the Ottoman empire, but their military technology is quite different: Westerfeld's Central Powers, referred to as "Clankers" ([Westerfeld 2009](#), p. 115), have crafted large mechanical war machines called walkers, which bear aesthetic and structural similarity to war machines used during World War I. Conversely, the Allied Powers—still represented by Britain, France, and Russia (and later, the United States)—are "Darwinists" ([Westerfeld 2009](#), p. 1), who employ artificial selection to breed living creatures of war. Throughout the series, Westerfeld alternates between the perspective of Alek, the aristocratic Clanker, and that of a second, female protagonist, Deryn, the bourgeois Darwinist.

Both Alek and Deryn begin their relationship with the airship Leviathan much as Foucault describes those entering "crisis heterotopias"—that is, as "individuals in a state of crisis with respect to [the] society [...] in which they live" ([Foucault 1998](#), p. 179). Foucault's examples of heterotopias of crisis seem mainly to house individuals who are experiencing physical crises (e.g., women in labor, elderly people); however, in this article, we want also to consider the mental struggle that the term "crisis" denotes. Rather than heterotopias of crisis only housing those who are in physical peril, we will also address the term as referring to a mental moment of decision, as in a turning point or liminal state, and not necessarily in its connotation for bodily danger or difficulty. This latter definition of 'crisis' abounds in steampunk fiction, and *Manners and Mutiny*, the fourth book of [Carriger](#)'s ([2015](#)) *Finishing School* series, even employs it instead of 'chapter', i.e., 'Crisis 1', 'Crisis 2', etc. Both meanings speak to a sense of uncertainty and instability, and it is in this sense that we will use the term throughout this discussion. Foucault speaks of these crisis heterotopias as belonging to "so-called primitive societies" and lists "[a]dolescents" among his members of crisis heterotopias ([Foucault 1998](#), p. 179). He also states that "crisis heterotopias have

all but disappeared" in contemporary society, but lists "military service" as a possible "remnant" (Foucault 1998, p. 179). Consequently, the adolescent protagonists of *Leviathan* can certainly be read as inhabiting a space of crisis heterotopia. While Alek is forced to flee from his home in a state of uncertainty, Deryn is beginning her first lesson at flight school. Despite her father's untimely death in an airship crash, Deryn maintains a love of flying and hopes to follow in her father's footsteps by securing a position aboard a military airship. Deryn's crisis stems in part from her inability to work aboard an airship without hiding her true gender identity, since in Westerfeld's fictional Europe, women are not allowed to hold positions of military service. Consequently, Deryn can only pursue her dream by disguising her identity, crossdressing in boy's clothes, and referring to herself as Dylan (adding a moment of gender 'deviance' to this space of crisis). In spite of its post-Victorian setting, then, *Leviathan* supports Tara MacDonald and Joyce Goggin's contention that "[i]n part, the sustained interest in the Victorian era as a locus of continued contest and revision hinges on received notions concerning the period's strict sexual codes and restrictive female roles" (MacDonald and Goggin 2013, pp. 2–3); indeed, Westerfeld's novel proceeds to interrogate just such sexual codes and restrictions.

Deryn's crisis is intensified during her first flight lesson. As Dylan, she volunteers to be the first of her class to attempt flying in a huxley, a Darwinist "hydrogen breather" that is "made of the life chains [...] of jellyfish and other venomous sea creatures" (Westerfeld 2009, pp. 31–32). Not long into her ride, a storm rolls in, spooking the creature and making it difficult to operate. Before her instructors can reel her back to the ground, Deryn finds herself at the mercy of the storm. She is eventually rescued by the Leviathan, whose crew is so impressed by her flight skills that she is permitted to begin working alongside the other midshipmen (Westerfeld 2009, p. 99). Here, the Leviathan functions primarily as a heterotopia of crisis, which Foucault describes as a privileged, sacred, or forbidden place where those in a state of liminal uncertainty find (temporary) refuge.[5] As the YA scholar Maria Nikolajeva notes, "an adolescent exists in a marginal, unstable zone between childhood and adulthood", and as such, an adolescent's experience with heterotopia is "a reflection of the adolescent's chaotic worldview" (Nikolajeva 2002, pp. 26–27). Deryn's finding herself in physical peril (and then finding asylum aboard the crisis heterotopia of the airship Leviathan) thus becomes a physical manifestation of her internal peril and liminal uncertainty as she attempts to pursue her dreams in a world that does not allow her to realize them. Although Deryn has no professional experience flying, her lack of training does not end up disqualifying her from a position aboard the prestigious airship (as it typically would). The Leviathan should be impenetrable for someone with Deryn's level of experience, but her status as a person in crisis allows her to bypass these restrictions. Once aboard, Deryn is assumed to be a male and can initially disguise her identity with some ease; however, as Deryn begins working aboard the Leviathan, she describes the airship as being "the first place where no one had seen her in a skirt, or expected her to mince and curtsey" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 148). While still a space of crisis, the airship thus begins to resemble a heterotopia of deviance, which houses "individuals [...] whose behaviour is deviant with respect to the mean or required norm" (Foucault 1998, p. 180)—in this case, a discriminatory and oppressive gender norm. In providing Deryn a space where she can be herself (despite this self's incongruity with her society's typical expectations for women), the Leviathan becomes a hybrid of heterotopias: one of crisis *and* deviance.

For Alek, the Leviathan serves as a crisis heterotopia later than for Deryn, namely halfway through the first novel, when he and his men have taken refuge from their pursuers. Initially, Alek's men bring him to an abandoned castle in the Alps, which is deserted and frozen over, with "snow-drifts piled against its half-ruined walls, the windows dark and gaping", and "[i]ts battlements glisten[ing] with ice" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 214). Similar to how Deryn's initial boarding of the Leviathan shelters her from a storm that may have otherwise claimed her life, the castle provides a liminal place of refuge for Alek where he and his men are safe from their pursuers as well as the unforgiving weather. Much like Deryn, then, Alek's physical circumstances mirror the internal turmoil he faces as

the sole surviving member of his royal lineage, and thus both characters encounter the heterotopia of the Leviathan while "struggl[ing] with their sense of root-lessness and splitness" (Nikolajeva 2002, p. 27). While the setting of the castle scene alludes to the grim nature of Alek's situation, the true severity of his trouble is soon disclosed by his fencing instructor, Count Volger, the man in charge of Alek's rescue mission and escape. Volger informs Alek that prior to his father's death, the pope processed a dispensation to validate the Archduke's marriage to Alek's mother, who was a commoner. As a result of this transaction, Alek is now in line for the Austrian-Hungarian throne, and the Germans must kill him in order to end his family's right to rule. The scene thus reveals the acute peril of Alek's situation, and indicates that he, like Deryn, begins the series in a state of crisis. Yet, the same scene also points to what Edward Said termed the "geopolitical" dimension of Foucault's position in much of his work: his concern not with the signifier itself (here, 'the Habsburg heir apparent'), but rather with "the force by which the signifier occupies a place" and is "assign[ed] to" its place within "the structural, administrative, psychological, and moral economy" of a particular institution (Said 1978, p. 709)[6]—first the monarchy and later the airship in Westerfeld's novel. Alek's state of psychological crisis relates to his enforced choicelessness in his 'assignment' as replacement heir to the Habsburg dynasty, while his subsequent encounter with the Leviathan's crew successfully negotiates both crises—personal and political, mental and physical—by recouping his power to exercise choice.

Deryn and Alek's narrative timelines converge about halfway through the first novel, when Deryn and the airship Leviathan crash near Alek and his caretakers' place of refuge. Determined to help the Leviathan's crew, Alek ventures out of his hideout alone and runs into Deryn, who turns him over to her superiors. Alek is taken hostage by the Leviathan's crew, and the only way for his men to rescue him is to help the Darwinists repair their ship. In return, Alek and his men are granted safe passage aboard the airship. Once repaired, the Leviathan combines the Clankers' industrial engines with the Darwinists' biological technology, and subsequently, the Leviathan becomes a place where Clankers and Darwinists co-exist and begin to influence and alter each other's worldviews. The airship not only allows but encourages this intermingling; indeed, Alek and Deryn begin to embrace both the "technological and cultural hybridity" typical of steampunk (Bowser and Croxall 2016, p. xxviii), frequently deviating from their own group's rules and norms. Here, we engage in our own deviation from Foucault's examples of heterotopia of deviance, which include "rest homes, the psychiatric hospitals [...] prisons", and "old people's homes", focusing instead on the idea that these heterotopias accommodate those diverging from social norms (Foucault 1998, p. 180). Throughout *Leviathan* and its sequels, much of that deviation is manifested through hybridity. In shifting the heterotopic space from one that is fixedly located and landlocked (as in Foucault's just quoted examples) to one that is nomadic and airborne (like the Leviathan), Westerfeld creates a hospitable space for individuals who engage in deviant behaviour. However, rather than being a repressive and isolating space like the heterotopias of deviance Foucault describes, Westerfeld's heterotopia is independent of the rules of the ground and can thus bypass some of its more stifling and arbitrary rules.

Even before these moments of cultural intermingling related to heterotopia of deviance, though, the Leviathan is a motif of hybridity. A Darwinist invention, the Leviathan "is made from the life threads of a whale, but a hundred other species [are] tangled into its design, [so that] countless creatures [fit] together like gears in a stopwatch" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 17). The airship is equipped with fabricated birds and bats that find food, watch for enemies, and aid the ship in battle, along with small cilia along the airship's bottom that function as oars to assist in propelling the ship through the air. The airship's status as a floating ecosystem physically sets it apart from the otherwise-familiar Europe it flies over, to the extent that the Leviathan operates almost as a secondary world within the novel. Despite this separation, though, the airship is indeed localizable in the space of Westerfeld's world. Thus, the Leviathan is an example of Foucault's idea of the heterotopia as a "real" place

"designed into the very institution of society, which [is] actually a sort of realized utopia" (Foucault 1998, p. 178). As Arun Saldanha elaborates, "[un]like utopias, heterotopias are locatable in physical space-time; but like utopias, heterotopias also exist 'outside' society insofar as they work differently from the way society is used to" (Saldanha 2008, p. 2081). The airship that "work[s] differently" to groundside society thus affords its occupants an escape from enforced conformity and opportunities to enact and experiment with forms of difference.

Unlike Deryn, whose deviant desires are apparent immediately from the novel's beginning, Alek at first appears to uphold traditional Clanker values and is disgusted by the Leviathan when he first sees it outside the window of the castle. Alek remarks that "he'd seen monsters before [...] but nothing as gigantic as this" (Westerfeld 2009, pp. 225–26). His use of the term 'monster' indicates his discomfort with the Darwinist beasts, which he perceives as diverging from the natural order; however, as the airship descends, apparently out of control, he nonetheless expresses concern and asks Volger if the "godless thing" is going to crash (Westerfeld 2009, p. 227). Despite his initial disgust, Alek is adamant that he and Volger ensure that the crew are alright, insisting that they "can't leave shipwrecked men to die" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 227). Alek has heard horror stories of the Darwinist creations, including those of "mythological monsters brought to life, [and] animals that spoke and even reasoned like humans, but had no souls" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 230). However, Alek also acknowledges that he had once thought the German emperor—the man responsible for killing his family and exiling him and his men—to be "wise and kind", so when Volger refuses the rescue mission and forbids Alek from leaving the castle, Alek ultimately decides to sneak out and help the shipwrecked crew on his own (Westerfeld 2009, p. 231). While Clanker ideology clearly influences Alek's thoughts surrounding the Darwinists and their airships, he remains open-minded enough to investigate the situation for himself, and temporarily overcomes his disdain for the Darwinists in the interest of common humanity. Thus, while these scenes in the Alps mark Alek as an individual in a state of crisis, they also see him beginning to abandon a strict Clanker ideology and transition towards a state of deviance from his birth society's norms and worldview.

Nonetheless, once taken hostage aboard the airship, Alek frequently reiterates his disgust with the Darwinist creations, even going so far as to refer to the Leviathan as a "menagerie of abominations" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 271). However, throughout these scenes, Westerfeld implies that Alek is not as married to Clanker ideology as he might like to think. In doing so, Westerfeld suggests Alek's capability of deviating from a rigid Clanker outlook, even if initially, Alek refuses to accept any deviation from what he sees as normal. For instance, when Alek is introduced to Dr. Nora Barlow, Darwin's niece, he questions the presence of a woman aboard the airship, despite the high status accorded her as inventor of the Leviathan. In their analysis of the *Leviathan* series, YA literature scholars Tammy Mielke and Jeanne LaHaie suggest that Dr. Barlow—like Deryn—is deviant with respect to the norms of depicted European society and only "maintains a great deal of independence and agency by utilizing every possible advantage open to her without apology" (Mielke and LaHaie 2015, p. 225). Alek's response to Dr. Barlow highlights the deviance in her position as a female scientist, but crucially, it also underscores Deryn's deviance and reminds the reader of the anomaly that being a female member of a militant airship crew entails. Despite Alek's initial refusal to accept the Leviathan and its crew, he continues to vacillate between feelings of awe and disgust when faced with Darwinist beasts, as when, introduced by Deryn to the huxleys, Alek finds himself "fascinated by the alien grace of the beast's tendrils" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 267). Westerfeld's depiction of Alek's oscillating feelings also undermines any notions of social and ideological totality, and thus any individual's complete interpellation into one particular system of power. This calls to mind Saldanha's critique of Foucault's heterotopia as "an inadequate concept" on account of his reliance on the structuralist fallacy "of 'totality' of 'presence'" as regards society; this error, she claims, "hinders a geography of mobility, unevenness, and differ-

entials of power", resulting in "an insufficiently dynamic conception of space and time" (Saldanha 2008, p. 2081). Westerfeld's airship heterotopia in part corrects this structuralist problem by, quite literally, creating a much more "dynamic", mobile, fluctuating, floating "geography" and inducing a similarly more adjustable, psychological "geography" in its newest crew member, gradually 'untethering' Alek from inflexibly held positions.

While Alek is being held hostage, Alek's men make their way from the abandoned castle towards the crashed airship, and it is their arrival at the crash site that initiates the blending of the Clankers' and Darwinists' technologies. Ultimately, after much negotiation with Dr. Barlow and the ship's captain, the Clankers agree to support the airship's crew with provisions from their castle in exchange for Alek's safety. As they attempt to use Alek's walker to transfer these stocks to the crash site, the airship and the walker are attacked by a barrage of German airships, wrecking the walker and leaving the airship utterly crippled. Although they have already begun to cooperate, the attack forces the Clankers and Darwinists to combine their remaining resources or else die in the frozen wasteland. Once repaired, the Leviathan absorbs the working engines of the ruined walker, so that a "muddle of oversized Clanker machinery [sticks] out in all directions" (Westerfeld 2009, p. 387). The incorporation of the Clankers' engines makes Alek's men indispensable in the airship's escape, since they are the only ones who know how to operate this machinery. As such, while the Leviathan effectively provides Alek and his men with a space of asylum from potential further attacks from the Germans, it also becomes a space where Clankers and Darwinists are encouraged to accept—and respect—each other's cultures and technologies.

Once this new, hybridized Leviathan disembarks from the Alps, its function becomes purely one of deviance. However, as earlier stressed, it is not a typical heterotopia of deviance in Foucault's sense of the term. Foucault describes heterotopias of deviation as places "in which individuals *are put* whose behaviour is deviant from the norm" (Foucault 1998, p. 180, added emphasis), citing psychiatric hospitals and prisons as classic examples of their type. Such sites imply that individuals have little choice in being placed there; rather, they are incarcerated as a means of realigning their behaviour with societal norms and expectations. Once the Leviathan transforms into a heterotopia of deviation, it presents quite differently than the 'other' spaces Foucault describes. Where all of Foucault's examples of heterotopias of deviation are landlocked and integrated into the fabric of society, the Leviathan is physically set apart from Westerfeld's Europe, with its strict political hierarchies and rigid gender power differentials, and as such, the airship becomes a space where the rules and norms of the ground no longer apply. In this sense, the airship does not seek to contain or ameliorate individuals' deviance but encourages them to embrace it, crafting its own distinct, compensatory societal norms and subsequently erasing the "us" and "them" boundary that Evans's vehicular utopias insist upon (Evans 1999, p. 102).

Much of the second novel, *Behemoth*, takes place off the Leviathan in the city of Istanbul; however, Istanbul offers a similar hybridization to that of the airship, and thus allows Alek and Deryn to begin to embrace their deviance more openly. Throughout *Behemoth*, Deryn increasingly adopts some of the Clankers' mannerisms, occasionally referring to herself by the German term "*Dummkopf*" when she thinks she has made a foolish mistake (Westerfeld 2010, p. 97). Alek, on the other hand, spends much of *Behemoth* on the run, eventually meeting members of a group known as the Committee of Union and Progress who hope to overthrow the Sultan's rule. In joining and working with these revolutionaries, Alek overtly works against the Germans and thus actively works against his Clanker allies. Alek also continues to gain an appreciation for the Darwinist creations as he becomes the guardian of one of Dr. Barlow's fabricated creatures; moreover, he continues to develop romantic attraction to Deryn, whom he still believes to be male. Much like the Leviathan, Istanbul embraces both Clanker and Darwinist technologies, and although the people of Istanbul rely primarily on walkers, their walkers are often shaped like animals. Indeed, early on in *Behemoth*, Deryn and Dr. Barlow ride in a walker shaped like an elephant. Deryn and the other midshipmen are confused as to why the residents

of Istanbul would fashion walkers shaped like animals, being that they are Clankers. In response, Dr. Barlow suggests that the Ottomans "haven't forgotten the web of life around [them]" (Westerfeld 2010, p. 102), thus emphasizing Istanbul's acceptance of both types of technologies. As steampunk scholar Brett Carol Young suggests, the Ottoman Empire represents a "push toward modernity, both socially and technologically" (Young 2014, p. 76), which in turn situates the city as a space accepting of behaviour perceived as deviant elsewhere. Deryn's ride in the walker also provides her with another opportunity to act heroically (and thus, in gender terms, deviantly) when it is hijacked by disguised German soldiers who are attempting to pursue Alek, as she unhesitatingly jumps onto the elephant walker's trunk and fights to thwart the attackers.

Alek's deviant behaviour begins even before he has left the Leviathan, as he tells Deryn that he would stay aboard the airship if he had the choice and claims that he is "in love [...] with [the] ship" (Westerfeld 2010, p. 92). In one sense, Alek here deviates from his duties as a Clanker prince, in that he begins to favor the way of life aboard an airship to his former life as royalty. However, this scene also alludes to Alek's budding romantic feelings for Deryn, whom he believes to be a male, hence implying 'abberant' homosexual desire. Indeed, throughout this scene, Alek sits with his arm around Deryn and commends Deryn's bravery. Alek's deviation from Clanker expectations culminates in his taking one of Dr. Barlow's perspicacious lorises—small, shrewd primates that remember and repeat speech sounds with the exact accent and inflection of the original source—off of the airship with him when he and his men flee.

Once on the run in Istanbul, Alek becomes acquainted with Zaven, the leader of the Committee for Union and Progress, and quickly becomes involved in a plan that works against the Germans, his former allies. Fully invested in the committee's cause, Alek uses the remainder of the gold he inherited from his father to help the rebels gather supplies and upgrade their machines. Deryn and Alek soon reunite in the city, and Deryn reveals that the Leviathan will be guiding a giant fabricated sea creature called Behemoth into a nearby strait, a move which will allow them to attack the German ironclads. In order to assist the Leviathan, the revolutionaries destroy a tesla cannon, another Clanker war machine stationed in Istanbul, which can shoot rods of lightning at approaching airships. In aiding the revolutionaries, Alek and Deryn pave the way for the Leviathan to guide the *Behemoth* into the strait, and Alek effectively thwarts his former allies. Thus, although a large portion of *Behemoth* takes place off of the Leviathan, the effects of the protagonists' time aboard the airship is readily apparent. Both Alek and Deryn continue to embrace deviance and become more accepting of the enemy technology and way of life, a lasting heterotopic influence that is felt by the characters of Carriger's *Finishing School* series as well.

The final book of Westerfeld's series, *Goliath*, sees Alek and Deryn aboard the Leviathan once again, now more freely able to engage in deviant behaviour than before. As the airship leaves Istanbul and heads towards Russia, Alek repeatedly expresses his wish that he could be more helpful to the crew, lamenting how useless he feels and proclaiming himself "a waste of hydrogen" (Westerfeld 2011, p. 3). Similarly to Deryn's adoption of the German term '*Dummkopf*', Alek's use of a Darwinist term to refer to himself suggests that he has begun to internalize some of the Darwinist mannerisms. Pertinently, Saldanha (2008, p. 2083) notes that "an important characteristic of Foucault's heterotopia seems to be that it requires some significant travel—some expulsion from 'mainstream' society and its habits", which the airship as a means of transport and conveyance between places and to 'other' societies facilitates. Physical journeys thus also become psychological journeys of development. Deryn, although pleased to be back at her post aboard the ship, battles with her romantic feelings for Alek and wonders how she might overcome them. Deryn is desperate to tell Alek of her identity but worries that he might view her differently if she does. Eventually, Alek does indeed realize Deryn's actual gender and is initially repulsed by the depth of her deviance. When Alek confronts Deryn with his revelation, he belittles her, suggesting that she is not actually a soldier, but rather "a girl dressed up like one" (Westerfeld 2011, p. 141). In this scene, Alek expresses the gender discrimination that

women (both within Westerfeld's fictional world and without) encounter, and thus "draws attention to the difficulties these women face as they try to find a place of empowerment in their patriarchal society" (Mielke and LaHaie 2015, p. 251). Despite witnessing first-hand all of the amazing feats that his friend has accomplished, Alek still maintains these prejudices, thus communicating the depth and pervasiveness of these ideologies. However, Deryn is quick to fight back, and rather than reacting emotionally or in an otherwise 'typically' feminine manner, she shoves him and punches him in the stomach. Even when her secret is revealed and her efforts are minimized, Deryn continues to engage in assertive and aggressive behavior that deviates from her society's expectations of young women. As Mielke and LaHaie (2015, p. 252) suggest, though, Alek eventually "realizes that Deryn is still his friend, and more importantly, she is still impressive", and it is his eventual acceptance of her that allows their long-anticipated romance to finally bloom.

It is important to note, however, that while Deryn's behaviour is deviant with respect to traditional gender roles, her actions never land her in one of Foucault's typical heterotopias of deviance (e.g., a psychiatric hospital or prison). Instead, Deryn's deviance promotes progressive social change and female equality within the text. After all, Deryn is obviously "the best Midshipman aboard the Leviathan, and is continually rewarded with not just medals, but both secret and extra rescue missions, [and] extra duties" (Young 2014, p. 71). Nonetheless, it must be stressed that the Leviathan is the (only) space in which Deryn enforces this positive change. As an airborne heterotopia, the Leviathan truly "lives by its own devices" (Foucault 1998, p. 185) and thus becomes a society unto itself—one that can distance itself from the rules and restraints of the ground. Meanwhile the airborne heterotopia's emancipatory potential, of course, marks Alek's character as well. In his final acceptance of Deryn, Alek ultimately overcomes the rigidity of Clanker ideology and realizes that Deryn's ability and prowess is not contingent upon her gender. As Young (2014, p. 67) notes, Alek "acknowledges the need to break away from a dominance driven patriarchal society and the embracing of a structure that places value on one's ability and willingness rather than imposed gender roles". Thus, the *Leviathan* series suggests that the crisis heterotopias of YA literature, instead of being repressive, become liberatory, and conversely, that YA heterotopias of deviance facilitate and accentuate positive individual deviance.

3. Carriger's *Finishing School* Series: From Deviance to Crisis

Unlike the *Leviathan* series, the *Finishing School* series begins as a heterotopia of deviance and transforms into a crisis heterotopia by its end. From the beginning of the first novel, *Etiquette & Espionage* (Carriger 2013a), the airship housing Mademoiselle Geraldine's Finishing Academy for Young Ladies of Quality is set up as a heterotopia of deviance, where behaviours that would normally be shunned on the ground are celebrated in the air. The school is purposely hidden via the airship, its location and existence cloaked in mystery, recalling Foucault's earlier cited "place of [...] nowhere", allowing a reprieve from the norms and rules of 'groundside' society. Sophronia, the main character of the series, does not even know the school is an airship until she arrives; she believes she will be attending school in a physical building. When she enquires about the school's locale, she is told that "no one knows exactly, but to the south. Dartmoor, or somewhere around there" (Carriger 2013a, p. 21). YA scholar Roberta Trites argues that affiliation with the characteristics of a group, regardless of self-selection or imposition by the majority, results in limitation (Trites 2000, p. 27). However, in the sky, the students of the academy are removed from the majority that limits them, allowing a full exploration of the constructs of society: race, gender, sexuality, and whatever else. In this manner, the heterotopia of the airship enables a deviant movement away from the norm. In every way, the ship *is* the school; everything the academy does, be it intentional (i.e., creating so-called 'intelligencers') or not (i.e., allowing students to experiment with different constructs of identity) is facilitated by the physical distance the ship has from 'normal' society.

The school's very mission—to transform young women into espionage agents—is contrary to the norm, fitting within the criterion of deviant heterotopias described by Foucault and ultimately demonstrating the power of the ship's distance. In the pseudo-Victorian time period in which Carriger situates the novel, finishing school was expected to prepare young women to be dutiful wives and members of polite society, not agents of espionage. However, as Carriger states on the back matter of *Etiquette & Espionage*, in addition to "the fine arts of dance, dress, and etiquette [... students] also learn to deal out death, diversion, and espionage". The duality of learning lessons that both abide by and contradict societal norms mirrors Molly Brown's definition of heterotopia as "a shifting perspective of limitless possibilities that mirrors both the enormous potential and the terrifying insecurities of adolescence" (Brown 2010, p. 8). Sophronia's airborne departure from 'groundside' (a term cleverly used by Carriger to denote and emphasize the separation from the earthside society throughout the series) enables her journey of self-discovery.

As previously noted, for Foucault, a heterotopia of deviance is a place to put the 'bad' or recalcitrant members of society, those whose divergence from expected behaviours implicitly threatens the established order of society. His examples of this kind of heterotopia include prisons, rest homes, and psychiatric hospitals (Foucault 1998, p. 180), all of which attempt to change the deviant behaviour, or in the case of rest homes, hide it away from the rest of society. Fittingly, Sophronia is effectively forced aboard the floating school because of her tomboyish and unladylike 'bad' behaviour earthside, with her mother, Mrs Temminnick, expecting the institution to discipline and reeducate her daughter.

The school, however, is not a place that changes the deviant behaviour as per Foucault's examples. Instead, the academy embraces and accepts such behaviour, honing innate skills Sophronia possesses that her family find repugnant. After all, Sophronia is accepted into Mademoiselle Geraldine's Academy as an unknowing recruit—she does not know the finishing school's true mission when she first arrives. Her acceptance is on the merit of her ability and willingness to deviate from the norm, abilities that Carriger establishes very early on in the text. The novel starts with Sophronia hiding in a dumbwaiter to avoid the family maid, who has "decided opinions about reforming other women's daughters" (Carriger 2013a, p. 1). As the dumbwaiter plummets to the main floor, broken from Sophronia fiddling with its inner machinery, she falls into a trifle that explodes onto the maid's bonnet. Sophronia's skirt is ripped off in the kerfuffle, and she is left "in public with her underskirt on display" (Carriger 2013a, p. 3). Clearly, she cannot be considered a proper young lady, especially in the pseudo-Victorian times in which the series is set. Additionally, when the school's recruiting agent comes to collect Sophronia, she is intrigued by Sophronia's interest in machines and exploration, in contrast to Sophronia's mother's strict dislike of such unsuitable 'masculine' interests. The recruiter asks if climbing and exploration have made Sophronia strong, queries where Sophronia aquired the rubber on her shoes, and compliments her quick reflexes (Carriger 2013a, p. 13). Conversely, Sophronia's mother chastises her daughter's curiosity, asking "how often have I warned you against fraternizing with technology?" (Carriger 2013a, p. 8), in reference to the dumbwaiter Sophronia took apart earlier. Constrained by the prevailing Victorian value system (the first novel is set in 1851), Sophronia's mother feels she has no choice but to send her daughter to a boarding school that is "masterly with troublesome cases" (Carriger 2013a, p. 9), in order to protect her daughter's and the family's reputation. In effect, she views Sophronia as an adolescent in 'crisis' and hence confines her to a crisis heterotopia, where she can be hidden from society's view until suitably reformed. While Sophronia's mother believes her daughter is accepted to the school *despite* being a "cracking great bother" (Carriger 2013a, p. 8), the school will ultimately accept her *because* of this deviance. Instead of believing Sophronia behaves in a way "unfit for public consumption" (Carriger 2013a, p. 5), as does her family, the agent of Mademoiselle Geraldine's Finishing Academy, like the school itself, embraces Sophronia's deviance.

Upon seeing the airship for the first time, Sophronia describes it as "entirely unlike any of the finishing schools she had ever heard of" (Carriger 2013a, p. 45). It is not in a

grand castle as she expects, as would be typical of the time period, but is instead a "chubby floating majesty" (Carriger 2013a, p. 44). Instead of something elegant and refined to mirror the skills Sophronia will supposedly learn in this prestigious finishing school, the airship looks like "a caterpillar that has overeaten" (Carriger 2013a, p. 44). In other words, its outside appearance is contrary to the expected elegance of a finishing school, mimicking the institution's internal deviance. This is also reminiscent of Foucault's discussion surrounding entrances and exits. There are heterotopias, he points out, which "look like pure and simple openings, but which generally conceal curious exclusions" (Foucault 1998, p. 183). By way of example, Foucault describes "those famous rooms" of South American farms (Foucault 1998, p. 183), which permitted overnight sanctuary to travelers but segregated from the main residence. He also cites American motel rooms, "where unlawful sexuality is both absolutely sheltered and absolutely hidden" (Foucault 1998, pp. 183–84), much like the cloak-and-dagger coursework of students of Mademoiselle Geraldine's Finishing Academy. While it is known among the gentry that the school is an airship, its clandestine curriculum is kept secret—to repeat Foucault's words, "both absolutely sheltered and absolutely hidden."

Once Sophronia is inside the finishing school, Carriger constantly reframes the differences between traditional society and the heterotopic society of the airship. Her continual emphasis on how the school disobeys societal norms demonstrates the role of heterotopic airships; readers can begin to conceptualize their own identity and agency in tandem with Sophronia as she questions social, and later in the series, racial boundaries and hierarchies. In YA literature, Roberta S. Trites argues, "how an adolescent defines herself in terms of race, gender, and class often determines her access to power in her specific situation" (Trites 2000, p. 47). By creating a space of non-conformance, and using Sophronia's reactions to demonstrate that the deviance within the school's 'other' space is encouraged, Carriger enables a simultaneous exploration of intersectional aspects of identity for readers.

The world the airship inhabits within Carriger's series is a reimagining of our own, past as well as present. The issues Carriger discusses, such as unequal power differentials regarding race, class, and gender, are ones readers are familiar with and which continue to impact their own lives. However, the neo-Victorian setting is still unfamiliar enough to enable readers to "question habits and values they may previously have taken for granted" (Brown 2010, p. 5). Within moments of entering the airship, Sophronia notices the large amount of rouge on one of the teachers, remarking, "What kind of finishing school has a lady of the night on staff?" (Carriger 2013a, p. 56). Her response highlights the stark difference in values and norms aboard the airship, but also recalls Alek's struggle in *Leviathan* against internalized discriminatory values. Sophronia too has much to learn, not just in terms of physical skills but also mental readjustments. Ironically, therefore, Carriger's heterotopia of deviance still performs a quasi-disciplinary, (albeit perversely) re-educative function comparable to Foucault's typical heterotopia of this kind. At the academy a teacher can wear rouge, an action associated with prostitution, and still be accepted and respected as an authority figure. The school also has a vampire teacher, which is shocking even in Carriger's world. Despite being equal citizens and having as many rights as humans in the eyes of the government, supernatural creatures are still a subject of scandal among the humans. The school lessons prove equally deviant. Instead of learning traditional subjects aimed to mould her into a proper young lady, Sophronia is enrolled in classes such as "intelligence gathering" and "principles of deceit; fundamental espionage; and rudimentary seduction" (Carriger 2013a, p. 91). However, these deviances are not looked down upon within the text; Sophronia questions the strange professors but does not undermine their position within the school's hierarchy. The heterotopic airship and the education provided therein are tantamount to creating what might be termed 'a space of accepted deviance'.

These motifs of deviance contribute to a sort of puzzle box, whereby Carriger fashions the series into one of Foucault's "famous rooms" from his fifth principle (Foucault 1998, p. 185). Carriger is herself involved in clandestine creativity, writing a book that appears

to be a steampunk twist on the comedy of manners set inside a flying finishing school. Beneath the surface of comedy and romance, Carriger engages in social retrofuturism. Along with critiquing modern day perspectives on race and class, as discussed below, Carriger breaks down gender identity in a palatable way for YA readers. As Sophronia and the other characters in the novel deconstruct the rigid neo-Victorian conceptions of identity, Carriger "rewrite[s] progress as the acceptance of difference in all its forms" (Durgan 2018, p. 231). The series appears to offer light, escapist fun; beneath that veneer, however, it presents a more serious exploration of intersectional forms of agency and discrimination enabled through a deviant heterotopic distance.

The way students of Mademoiselle Geraldines are taught to harness (and exploit) their femininity is subversive and exemplifies the conversation surrounding identity within Carriger's series. Julie Ann Tadeo argues that steampunk, specifically steampunk romance, "uses the revisionist lens of contemporary feminism to create an alternative Victorian universe for women" (Tadeo 2012, p. 56). In *Etiquette*, Sophronia is impressed by the elegance of the woman who comes to recruit her as a potential student of Mademoiselle Geraldine, lamenting her own tomboy nature. Admiringly, Sophronia describes the recruiter as "every inch a lady", indicating that she had "never before considered how powerful that could be" (Carriger 2013a, p. 8), until she witnesses its persuasive impact on her mother. For Sophronia, being a lady is not about impressing men or finding a husband but about utilizing femininity to exercise agency and effectively manipulate others. Even curtsying, a traditionally subservient gesture rooted in submissive gender expectations, is reconceived by Sophronia as "a powerful weapon" (Carriger 2013a, p. 60), effectively repurposed from a gesture of submission to one of feminine strength and assertiveness. The students at Mademoiselle Geraldine's use their appearance, their fashion, and their feminine wiles to gather information for whomever they choose to work for after graduation; however, Sophronia only begins to become interested in such strategic gender performance once she realizes how it can benefit her. As Durgan puts it, Sophronia becomes "far more interested in feminine trappings and social decorum after her time at finishing school illuminates the 'usefulness' of at least appearing to be a lady" (Durgan 2018, p. 221). This anachronistic projection of twentieth- and twenty-first century gender concepts onto the Victorian period that saw the emergence of 'first-wave' feminism is, of course, typical of much neo-Victorian practice, which, as MacDonald and Goggin point out, engages in "rethinking Victorian gender roles and relations against the background of various feminisms" to imply "that engagements with the historical past can and do continue to inform feminist thought today" (MacDonald and Goggin 2013, p. 2). The critics proceed to cite *Postfemininities in Popular Culture* (2009) by Stéphanie Genz, who decries a prevailing "sense of intellectual fatigue and exhaustion as *we seem to have run out of steam* debating the state of women in twenty-first-century culture and society", raising a real possibility that we may be "doomed to repeat the patterns of the last century" or centuries (Genz qtd. in MacDonald and Goggin 2013, p. 2, added emphasis). By means of the heterotopic trope, the *Finishing School* series injects new impetus, revitalizing 'steam' into feminist debates. However, Sophronia's deviance is not limited to "appearing to be a lady", as she regularly adopts men's clothes and poses as a lad. While such behaviour hardly seems deviant to modern readers, Carriger (2013b) is careful to have Sophronia's classmates react in shock to her cross-dressing escapades in *Curtsies and Conspiracies*, with the exception of one Scottish student who remarks, "How sensible of you" (Carriger 2013b, p. 111). Given that the books take place in the mid-nineteenth century, this deviation is notable, for it was about this time that the rational dress reform movement began in England. Sophronia's dressing deviance does not remain her own, however—it also spreads to her close friends when they disguise themselves as young men to avoid notice in *Waistcoats and Weaponry* (Carriger 2014). Indeed, this spread does not originate with Sophronia, since she has learnt it from another deviant aboard Mademoiselle Geraldine's.

Vieve, the niece of one of the teachers employed at Mademoiselle Geraldine, offers another conceptualization of deviant gender presentation. Although she was born female,

she prefers to dress in masculine clothing and engage in activities unsuitable for her gender; she wants to attend a private boys' school for evil geniuses and invent mad steampunk technology. Vieve thus embodies what Pagliassotti terms the still comparatively rare "female mad scientist" figure, which critiques "the differential access to and control of science by men and women" and "posets a double threat to the status quo, not only staking her claim to traditionally masculine territory, but also exhibiting self-confidence, autonomy, authority, and scientific genius in defiance of normative gender roles" (Pagliassotti 2017, p. 214).[7] In traditional Victorian society, Vieve would be castigated and forced to dress like a young woman. However, in the deviant heterotopic space of the airship, Vieve is free to express herself however she wants, even if that means dressing like a boy and enjoying the freedom associated with the male gender. When Sophronia asks why Vieve prefers to dress as a man, Vieve answers that "boys have it far more jolly" (Carriger 2013a, p. 171), and the matter is left at that. Before Sophronia learns Vieve's secret, Carriger is careful to use masculine pronouns to describe Vieve, so that the readers are as unaware as Sophronia. When Vieve visits Sophronia's room, Sophronia's roommates remind her to "remember [her] reputation" (Carriger 2013a, p. 168), treating Vieve like the boy she appears to be. However, at the end of the chapter, Carriger reveals that the other students knew Vieve only dresses as a boy: "Sophronia, you never told *me* you had befriended Professor Lefoux's eccentric niece!" (Carriger 2013a, p. 170, added emphasis). Sophronia is mildly shocked when she learns that Vieve was born a girl, but her shock only lasts half a page. Carriger then switches to using feminine pronouns to describe Vieve, demonstrating the acceptance of gender fluidity aboard the airship, the heterotopic space of which rejects any shame or disgust in gender deviance. Vieve is free to present however she wants, and ultimately manages to secure a position at Bunson's, the all-male school for evil geniuses, because of the acceptance she finds within the airship and the confidence such tolerance builds. Hence, the airship's subversive politics also 'spread' beyond the academy to groundside: Vieve's friends assist in her plan to oust the current Bunson's headmaster, who knows she is a girl, so that she can remain disguised as a boy and enroll in a school that is "far more amenable to [her] personality" (Carriger 2013b, p. 168). Interestingly, the representation of such teamwork diverges from most neo-Victorian narratives for adult audiences: bar a few exceptions, MacDonald and Goggin point out, these "typically contain little in the way of feminist collectives and communities" (MacDonald and Goggin 2013, p. 7) such as the finishing school in Carriger's series.

Along with the acceptance shown towards Vieve's deviant gender presentation, other types of deviance are encouraged aboard the airship. Dimity, Sophronia's best friend, has a distinct lack of interest in becoming an intelligencer, despite her parent's insistence on following in the footsteps of their own intelligence background. She faints at the sight of blood, and her teachers criticize her "reluctance to pursue subterfuge", admonishing her to instead use her good humor for "information gathering and not simply gossip" (Carriger 2013b, p. 27). Instead, Dimity's interests align more with tradition; she wants a husband, pretty dresses, and to be a lady of society, not to manipulate men into doing her bidding for governmental patrons or industrial corporations. Ironically, in the space of the airship, which champions subverting conventional femininity, Dimity's traditional desires present as deviant. Carriger's series thus exemplifies how "the contradictory qualities of the Victorian era [...] seem strikingly similar to those that shape and inform our own moment", which MacDonald and Goggin describe as equally "fraught with conflicting versions of womanhood, feminism, and gender performance all of which add up to very complex and often perplexing (sexual) politics" (MacDonald and Goggin 2013, p. 3). Carriger promotes acceptance, even in spite of Dimity's 'normality', something that reinforces the supportive nature of the airship as a feminist community committed to individual self-realization. The resulting diversity further subverts Foucault's heterotopias of deviance, which, of course, seek to repress and eradicate difference or at least contain and neutralize difference's potential threat to the social order.

The school shifts from a heterotopia of deviance to a heterotopia of crisis in the last two books of the series, *Waistcoats & Weaponry* (Carriger 2014) and *Manners & Mutiny* (Carriger 2015). As in the *Leviathan* series, The *Finishing School* series also addresses the crisis of adolescence as one of liminality. In *Leviathan*, the airship initially provides a reprieve for Alek and Deryn from their own individual crises, before encouraging them to embrace their deviance. However, the *Finishing School* series describes an opposite trajectory. As Sophronia accepts the airship as a space of deviance, it transforms into one of crisis, ostensibly revolving around her potential love interests: Soap, a black boiler-room worker at Mademoiselle Geraldine's, and Felix Mersey, the son of a duke. Soap, who is of African descent, represents the deviant route for romance infused with exoticism. Sophronia is shocked to learn that he is "actually black" and not "simply dirty" as she originally thought (Carriger 2013a, p. 115). Both young men have appealing qualities to Sophronia, but only Felix is considered an appropriate suitor in society's eyes.

Much like the real world, Carriger's Victorian England includes segregation and racist beliefs about people of colour, with Sophronia representing the typical attitudes of conservative citizens. Like another steampunk ship, the Nautilus in Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill's graphic novel *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (1999–2009)—albeit a submarine rather than airship that harbours an assembly of "marginalised figures" and "social outsiders"—Carriger's finishing school as quasi-heterotopic mirror instigates "an investigation into the dominant political, social and sexual ideologies of [Victorian] time and their afterlife in our own" (Domsch 2012, p. 98).[8] Despite Victorian London being an ethnically diverse place, Sophronia is racially undereducated due to her upbringing. Therefore, when Sophronia is surprised to realize that Soap is "just like a normal boy" (Carriger 2013a, p. 115), the novel can once again utilize stereotypes to conversely further a narrative of acceptance. If Sophronia (who represents the perspective of Carriger's readers), someone with conservative parents and a limited knowledge of other races, can overcome her preconceived notions, then, as stated earlier, Carriger's readers too can "question habits and values they may previously have taken for granted" (Brown 2010, p. 5). Despite her friend's insistence that it is not "wise to encourage him" (Carriger 2014, p. 30), and that a relationship between Soap and Sophronia is "not possible" as Soap is "a sootie", a term used to describe the lower-class workers in the ship's engine deck (Carriger 2013a, p. 305), Sophronia finds herself unable to ignore her attraction to him. She tells him that she does not return his affections and "[doesn't] think of him that way" (Carriger 2014, p. 73), but finds his kiss very nice, despite being "both comforting and unsettling" (Carriger 2014, p. 43).

Simultaneously, Sophronia battles her feelings for Felix. Whereas Soap represents a poor match for Sophronia, Felix represents the ideal one. He is wealthy, handsome, and knowledgeable in the ways of proper behaviour, and above all, a societally acceptable match for Sophronia. She knows he is "publicly suitable, a duke's son, yet so very *politically* unsuitable" (Carriger 2014, p. 43, added emphasis), due to his traditionalist ideology. He is the son of a Pickleman, a group of rich aristocrats that vehemently opposes supernaturals, is bent on political domination of England and its colonies, and intent on suppressing any forms of dissent within the Empire. Nonetheless, Sophronia is very attracted to Felix, even thinking of him for inspiration during her class on seduction (see Carriger 2014, p. 43), and unlike in Soap's case, her friends approve the match, as Felix would represent a step up in the class hierarchy for the protagonist. Her best friend Dimity expresses shock when Sophronia claims that she is not ready to accept a suitor, demanding, "Not even Felix Mersey–rich and handsome?" (Carriger 2014, p. 28). Even the more conservative and popular girls at the academy, who normally look down on Sophronia, are jealous of her relationship with Felix, demonstrating Felix's 'appropriateness' in terms of both class and race. The school may train young women to be subversive secret agents, but they are still teenage girls, at the mercy of crushes and hormones, in the midst of the crisis of adolescence. Yet, despite her attraction, which is almost always phrased in physical terms, Sophronia cannot fully embrace the burgeoning romance, as Felix's beliefs are so opposite

to her own, going directly against the tolerance and acceptance Sophronia stands for. As such, Carriger's protagonist arguably resembles Cora Kaplan's "exceptional woman" (qtd. in MacDonald and Goggin 2013, p. 7), functioning "as a kind of time-travelling figure, an anachronistic modern woman thrown back into the nineteenth century, with hyper-awareness of gender codes and [...] feminist theory" (MacDonald and Goggin 2013, p. 7)—and, in Sophronia's case, an instinctive opposition to racial inequality also. Yet, as the critics go on to warn, "[i]t is here, where political advocacy meets sexual transgression, that the ethics and politics of [...] neo-Victorian narratives become truly murky" (MacDonald and Goggin 2013, p. 7), as when Carriger's heterotopia ends up recycling dubious gender and racial stereotypes and pejorative terminology (e.g., "sootie", which evokes the ethnic slur 'sooty') even as it contests them.

While the love triangle is central to Sophronia's crisis as a somewhat typical YA heroine, it is also emblematic of a larger and less typical ideological crisis, at least insofar as romance is concerned. Soap and Felix represent opposite sides of the novel's political and ideological spectrum, demonstrating the "state of crisis with respect to society" Foucault mentions (Foucault 1998, p. 179). Throughout the latter half of the series, Sophronia is pressured by her peers, her professors, and the two men to make a choice—not just about whom she wants to court her, but about her political allegiance and her future as an intelligencer. She must "face the infinite ramifications of choice for the first time" (Brown 2010, p. 9) and decide where she fits in, essentially determining what she believes to be right and wrong. As one of her professors puts it, Sophronia needs to decide between "Queen and country, supernatural, [or] Picklemen" (Carriger 2014, p. 46).

Sophronia's choices are primarily between supernatural or Picklemen, as the novel focuses primarily on the ideological orientations of these groups. The choice of the supernatural would be controversial but progressive in the diegesis of the *Finishing School* and would align Sophronia with Soap and other minorities of the novel. Carriger does a masterful job of painting a picture of Soap's reality as a young black man of low means in a world dominated by powerful and wealthy white males. In *Waistcoats & Weaponry*, Sophronia makes light of Soap's aspiration to join a werewolf pack, joking "Is there something worse than being Scottish?"—to which Soap replies, "Being a sootie, and having the wrong color skin to boot" (Carriger 2014, p. 57). Later in the same book, Carriger embeds this critique of racial inequality within a conversation between Soap and Sophronia about the impossibility of their love, when Soap confesses that he wants to "be worthy" of Sophronia; she tells him that he already is, to which he replies, "Not in the eyes of the world" (Carriger 2014, p. 254). Soap can only be worthy in the eyes of groundside society if he becomes a werewolf, a supernatural, which would elevate his social status. However, becoming a werewolf is terribly risky—many who try die in the attempt. When Sophronia challenges Soap's intention by asking, "And this is your best solution?", Soap responds that it is his *only* solution (Carriger 2014, p. 256).

Even once he becomes a werewolf, Soap remains the less suitable choice for Sophronia in groundside society, but she chooses him nonetheless. Durgan argues that Carriger needs Sophronia to choose Soap to "forward her larger and ultimate goal of promoting acceptance and empowerment for all members of her universe" (Durgan 2018, p. 218). Opting for the Picklemen and Felix would be the more conservative choice, despite their radical politics and interest in "maintaining social and political power for the white, upper-class English male" (Durgan 2018, p. 220). Sophronia stands for "evenhandedness" and "balancing power" (Carriger 2014, p. 186), and, as such, finally rejects the exclusionary and radical beliefs of the Picklemen. If Sophronia chose Felix over Soap, it would contradict the deviance that the heterotopia enables her to embody.

In a synthesis of Foucault and Miller, such a move would also "dry up" Carriger's "dreams and ambitions", or at least the ones embodied in the series. While Sophronia may struggle with the decision of choosing Felix or Soap, it is clear where Carriger's sympathies lie. Furthermore, Carriger only presents Sophronia with this crisis after establishing her heroine as belonging fully to the heterotopia of deviance. Throughout the series,

Sophronia repeatedly deviates from groundside society's norms, almost as practice for just this moment—her prior deviations prepare the reader for her final deviation. Like a good intelligencer, Carriger has seduced readers, made them love Soap and want Sophronia to choose him. Additionally, consequently, without being any the wiser, Carriger has moved us from that outer room Foucault (1998, p. 183) refers to in his discussion of "those famous rooms" to the inner room of her heterotopic vision of egalitarianism and equality.

4. Conclusions: Descending Groundward

At the writing of this conclusion, the shock waves of #blacklivesmatter emanating from the killing of George Floyd are reverberating throughout North America and, thanks to social media, beyond. Consequently, while Carriger's *Finishing School* series may be dismissed by scholars of Foucault or even steampunk, her treatment of Soap seems particularly relevant. Literary heterotopias of deviance where marginalized groups find love and position in society are fantasies worth pursuing. Perhaps airships are ridiculous, but in Carriger's and Westerfeld's series, they are the spaces of hope for a better world, where the obstacles of class, gender, and race finally prove incapable of resisting the flood of dreams that our dried-up world could so desperately use. Rather than considering the steampunk airship as a space of illusion which "denounces all real space, all real emplacements within which human life is partitioned off, as being even more illusory" (Foucault 1998, p. 184), we might see them as heterotopias of compensation, "as perfect, as meticulous, as well-arranged as ours is disorganized, badly arranged, and muddled" (Foucault 1998, p. 184). This is not to say that the heroes and heroines of Carriger and Westerfeld's series are as perfect as the Jesuit orders Foucault speaks of where "human perfection was effectively achieved" (Foucault 1998, p. 184) but rather that their adventures point us towards that horizon. In *Spatiality*, Tally (2013) argues that "the most fantastic literature may also have clear, 'real-world' effects" just as "the most realistic works can often mask the false or misleading truths behind everyday appearances" (Tally 2013, p. 85). Tally states plainly that, "[l]ooking at what we might call *otherworldly literature*, [...] we also gain a clearer sense of our own 'real' world" (Tally 2013, p. 85). Perhaps seemingly ridiculous, hyper-Victorian steampunk worlds might create other spaces for us to rethink our own often ridiculous world and imagine how it might be better.

As science fiction scholar Ivan Csicsery-Ronay suggests in his discussion of the novum, "readers make sense of" an alternate world "by constantly [...] comparing it with the familiar world", thus "establishing a distance from which reality can be seen with fresh eyes" (Csicsery-Ronay 2008, p. 50). With such fresh eyes, Westerfeld and Carriger's readers can reassess the way that they regard deviance and difference. In the *Leviathan* series, Westerfeld effectively asks readers to reconsider their prejudices surrounding women's abilities and roles in society, as he depicts a strong, intelligent, and brave young woman who surpasses her fellow males in terms of capability and dedication to her crew. Likewise, Carriger challenges traditional gender normativity by creating fluid characters that refuse to subscribe to traditional feminine abilities *or* appearances. Through Alek, Westerfeld questions notions of the importance of standing by tradition and even questions the validity of societal notions of heteronormativity—none of which would come through so strongly without the heterotopic space of the Leviathan. The character of Soap, a black engine worker of low social standing, allows Carriger to reshape the importance of class hierarchy and demonstrate acceptance for all people, regardless of race or societal position. Without the heterotopic space of Mademoiselle Geraldine's, Sophronia would not have had the strength, fostered by the school's encouragement regarding deviance, to accept her feelings for Soap. While these explorations could admittedly take place groundside, the airship provides a space which accommodates deviance and difference through its spatial removal from the rest of Carriger's neo-Victorian world.

In both cases, these airship heterotopias are offered up covertly in gleaming YA packages that seem, on the surface, to only be mashups of adventure and romance. Perhaps this is Carriger and Westerfeld's intent; how many readers, YA or otherwise, set out for the

bookshop to purchase a novel of ideas? However, if those ideas are packaged inside tales of airship adventures, then they fly past our defenses to deliver the dreams and ambitions of their writers.

Herein lies the tragedy of the students and supervisors of those steampunk theses who choose Pynchon over such 'lesser' choices as Carriger and Westerfeld. For the Chums of Chance, Pynchon's steampunk adolescent aeronauts, never change their world—they fly above it, fly towards grace, but never descend groundward in service of social change. Carriger and Westerfeld (and a host of other steampunk writers) present us with airship heterotopias that not only descend geographically, but descend socially, crossing liminal crisis spaces of classed, raced, gendered identities to craft literary cartographies for these social frontiers, providing YA readers with literary maps for their uncertain real worlds of crisis. These tales of otherworlds thereby teach us how to deviate from the norms of our real worlds, carving out spaces of heterotopia, and better worlds beyond.

Notes

1 Foucault cites "the 'honeymoon trip'" as an example, involving a young girl's transition to womanhood via her loss of virginity, perhaps aboard a train or in a hotel, "the place of this nowhere" (Foucault 1998, p. 180).

2 This is not to say that there are no steampunk narratives with trains. There are—but the airship is more common, and even when trains are featured, they are rarely Evans's "hyperbolic vehicles" (Evans 1999, p. 99). Notable exceptions include Cherie Priest's *Dreadnought* (Priest 2010), where the eponymous train is the setting of the latter half of the novel and Felix Gilman's *Half-made World* (Gilman 2010), which features the techno-theocracy of the Line, which worships 38 immortal Engines (trains) as gods.

3 Steampunk narratives, of course, can be set both in other historical periods than the long nineteenth century on planet Earth and in futuristic times on an alternative Earth or other worlds altogether.

4 A sampling of the Vernian adaptations alone include the following: *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (Fleischer 1954), *Around the World in 80 Days* (Anderson 1956), *Vynález zkázy* aka *Invention for Destruction* (Zeman 1958), which was re-released in the United States as *The Fabulous World of Jules Verne* in 1961, *From the Earth to the Moon* (Haskin 1958), *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (Levin 1959), *Master of the World* (Witney 1961), *Mysterious Island* (Endfield 1961), *Five Weeks in a Balloon* (Allen 1962), *The Three Stooges Go Around the World in a Daze* (Maurer 1963), *Those Fantastic Flying Fools* (Sharp 1967), and *Island At The Top of the World* (Stevenson 1974).

5 It is interesting to note that Deryn's boarding of the Leviathan corresponds with Foucault's fifth principle of heterotopias, wherein heterotopias "always presuppose a system of opening and closing that isolates them and makes them penetrable at the same time" (Foucault 1998, p. 183).

6 Note, though, that Said's essay does not explicitly reference the concept of heterotopia.

7 Vieve thus also recalls Madame Genevieve Lefoux from Carriger's series for adult audiences, the Parasol Protectorate, which predates the *Finishing School* series. Enacting the same subversive femininity as masquerade as taught at the academy, "Lefoux, whose surname suggests *le fou*, 'the fool' or 'the madman', is a cross-dressing lesbian Frenchwoman whose laboratory is hidden beneath her hat store in London" and who displays an aptitude for "creating unusual gadgets and weapons" employed by Queen Victoria's secret service agent Alexia Tarabotti (Pagliassotti 2017, p. 227).

8 The graphic novel may well have served as one source of inspiration for the series, since Carriger has publicly expressed "a real soft spot for Mina Murray in *The League of Extraordinary Gentleman* [sic] graphic novel series" (Carriger 2016, n.p.).

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