

# SECRET SHARERS

Melville, Conrad and Narratives of the Real

# SECRET SHARERS

Melville, Conrad and Narratives of the Real

edited by

PAWEŁ JĘDRZEJKO—MILTON M. REIGELMAN—ZUZANNA SZATANIK

University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland and Centre College, Danville, Kentucky, USA

M·Studio

Zabrze 2011

## MELVILLE STUDIES SERIES—VOL. 2

**SERIES EDITORS:** Paweł Jędrzejko and Milton M. Reigelman

**REFEREE:** Arthur Redding

**EDITOR:** Grzegorz Kuciera

**COVER DESIGN:** Karolina Wojdała

The collage by Karolina Wojdała is based on Tomasz Seidler's photographs of the Szczecin Tall Ships' Races Final 2007 (© by Tomasz Seidler).

**DTP:** Dariusz Pilszczyk

Fonts used: Computer Modern Roman Family  
(by Donald E. Knuth, adapted for the Polish language by Marek Ryćko and Bogusław Jackowski)  
and Adobe Myriad Pro (by Robert Slimbach and Carol Twombly)

**PRINTED BY:** CUD Druk

**PUBLISHER:**

www.mstudio.com.pl  
mstudio@mstudio.com.pl

M-Studio

The present publication has been financed by:  
The City of Szczecin, Poland  
The University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland  
Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, USA  
and the Melville Society, USA.



CENTRE  
COLLEGE



© Copyright by M-Studio and Authors, 2011

All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,  
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise,  
without the prior permission of M-Studio and Authors.

### CATALOGING DATA

**ISBN 978–83–62023–56–1**

Melville, Herman, 1819–1891—Criticism and interpretation.

Conrad, Joseph, 1857–1924—Criticism and interpretation.

Melville, Herman, 1819–1891—Philosophy.

Conrad, Joseph, 1857–1924—Philosophy.

Self (Philosophy) in literature.

Narration (Rhetoric).

Interpersonal relations in literature.

Jędrzejko, Paweł, 1970—

Reigelman M., Milton, 1942—

Szatanik, Zuzanna, 1976—

*To our Students,  
to whose feet the land seems to be scorching,  
so that they remember that the wonderfulest things  
are not always the unmentionable.*



# CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	xi
PREFACE.....	xv
INTRODUCTION.....	19
<b>PART ONE: Cosmoreality. Roving Between Texts.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Chapter One</b>	
<b>John Bryant</b>	
Melville Cosmopolite: The Future of the Melville Text.....	31
<b>Chapter Two</b>	
<b>Fiona Tomkinson</b>	
The Geopoetics of Wandering in Conrad and Melville.....	49
<b>Chapter Three</b>	
<b>James Weldon Long</b>	
Roving 'Twixt Land and Sea: Melville and Conrad in the World-System.....	61
<b>PART TWO: Masks and Icons. On “True Thoughts” and Confidence Games.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Chapter Four</b>	
<b>Sostene Massimo Zangari</b>	
<i>Typee</i> and <i>Almayer's Folly</i> : A Peep at Literary Beginnings.....	79
<b>Chapter Five</b>	
<b>Stephen Andrews</b>	
Melville's Spanish Prisoner: Piracy, Confidence, Copyright.....	93
<b>Chapter Six</b>	
<b>Scott Norsworthy</b>	
Identity Cruxes: Melville and Conrad as Plagiarists.....	125

<b>PART THREE: Autobiofictions. Simulation, Reality and the Making of Self</b> .....	<b>141</b>
<b>Chapter Seven</b>	
<b>Alex Calder</b>	
Wreckage and Writing: Problems of Pseudo–Autobiography in Melville’ <i>Omoo</i> and Conrad’s <i>The Mirror of the Sea</i> .....	143
<b>Chapter Eight</b>	
<b>Agnieszka Adamowicz-Pośpiech</b>	
“To follow the dream and again to follow the dream”: Don Quixote, Almayer and Conrad as Multiple Reflections of the Dreamer.....	159
<b>PART FOUR: Ungraspable Phantoms. <i>Vanitas</i>—Text—Reality</b> .....	<b>173</b>
<b>Chapter Nine</b>	
<b>Dennis Berthold</b>	
Narcissus/ <i>Narcissus</i> : Men, Myths, and Ships in Melville and Conrad .....	175
<b>Chapter Ten</b>	
<b>Joanna Mstowska</b>	
The Idea of <i>Vanitas</i> in <i>The Mirror of the Sea</i> .....	185
<b>PART FIVE: <i>Mise-en-Abyme</i>. Reality as a Mirror</b> .....	<b>207</b>
<b>Chapter Eleven</b>	
<b>Sarah Thwaites</b>	
Melville and the Magic Mirror.....	209
<b>Chapter Twelve</b>	
<b>Marek Paryż</b>	
The Tales of Survivors. <i>Moby–Dick</i> in the Mirror of Sam Peckinpah’s Western Movie <i>Major Dundee</i> .....	227
<b>PART SIX: Acts of Speech. Self-Implications and Realist Aesthetics</b> .....	<b>245</b>
<b>Chapter Thirteen</b>	
<b>Mary K. Bercaw Edwards</b>	
Sailor Talk in Melville and Conrad .....	247

<b>Chapter Fourteen</b>	
<b>Wendy Stallard Flory</b>	
Conrad's Realist Seriousness and Melville's Romance Extravagance: The Characterization of Kurtz in <i>Heart of Darkness</i> and Ahab in <i>Moby-Dick</i> .....	261
<b>Chapter Fifteen</b>	
<b>Susan Garbarini Fanning</b>	
Rowing the Man to Doom: Self-Implication and Narrative Irony in <i>Heart of Darkness</i> and <i>Moby-Dick</i> .....	283
<b>PART SEVEN: After Language. The Stutter of the Real</b> .....	295
<b>Chapter Sixteen</b>	
<b>Wyn Kelley</b>	
"Wreck Ho, a Wreck!": Melodrama and the Text of Muteness in Melville and Conrad .....	297
<b>Chapter Seventeen</b>	
<b>Ralph James Savarese</b>	
"Organic Hesitancy": On Speechlessness in <i>Billy Budd</i> .....	307
<b>Chapter Eighteen</b>	
<b>Christopher Sten</b>	
"Infernal Aforethought of Malignity": Melville's Whale, Autism and the Question of Animal Intelligence .....	319
<b>PART EIGHT: Epistemology and Liquidity. In Search of a Philosophy</b> .....	333
<b>Chapter Nineteen</b>	
<b>Yael Levin</b>	
"Water, Water, Everywhere": Vertiginous Intersubjectivity in Conrad and Melville .....	335
<b>Chapter Twenty</b>	
<b>Aubrey McPhail</b>	
Epistemological Vertigo: Knowledge and Skepticism in <i>Moby-Dick</i> .....	351
<b>Post Scriptum</b>	
<b>Paweł Jędrzejko</b>	
The Tranquility of the Ocean. On Melville's Philosophy of Participation .....	371
<b>INDEX</b> .....	387



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### “Organic Hesitancy”: On Speechlessness in *Billy Budd*

Ralph James Savarese

Grinnell College  
USA

It is all the rage, in autism circles, to diagnose a particular historical or literary figure as autistic. Some scholars have even diagnosed fictional characters—Bartleby, for example—as being on the spectrum. When I began writing this chapter, I had just finished a book on autism, and I was seeing it everywhere. I knew that I wanted to analyze disability in *Billy Budd*—both stuttering and cognitive difference—and I thought that Hans Asperger’s idea of “an intelligence scarcely touched by tradition or culture . . . strangely pure” (qtd. in Sacks, 252–253) might be a profitable lens through which to view Melville’s “upright barbarian” (110), that “child man . . . [whose] simplemindedness [had] remained unaffected” by experience or age (135). As Melville puts it, “Experience is a teacher indeed; yet did Billy’s years make his experience small” (136). I wanted to historicize the Handsome Sailor’s “essential innocence” (162), rescue it, for a time, from the brilliance of symbol and allegory by asking questions about how the nineteenth century understood stuttering and cognitive disability.

What would it mean to flesh out the medical foundation of Billy’s infamous inability to “deal in double meanings and insinuations” (108), “to take seriously the Dansker’s name for Billy—namely, “Baby” (124)? How to make sense of Melville’s consistent recourse to animal analogies as a way of capturing the sailor’s simple nature? Again and again, the narrator compares Billy to the animal world, first saying that like an animal he is “no philosopher” (108), then suggesting that Billy is “like a young horse fresh from the pasture suddenly inhaling a vile whiff from some chemical factory” (134). Later, after striking the fateful blow and receiving his sentence, Billy is said

to have “a look in its dumb expressiveness not unlike that which a dog of generous breed might turn upon his master, seeking in his face some elucidation of a previous gesture ambiguous to the canine intelligence” (151). The word “dumb” shows up repeatedly in relation to the Handsome Sailor, but not just to him—to nature in general, a point to which I will return.

Similarly, how are we to understand Billy’s “liability to vocal defect,” his tendency, “under sudden provocation of strong heart-feeling,” to “develop an organic hesitancy, in fact more or less of a stutter or even worse” (111)? At the moment of crisis, the narrator speaks of a “strange dumb gesturing and gurgling in Billy” (145). He almost seems to delight in describing the spectacle of impeded speech: “The intent head and entire form straining forward in an agony of ineffectual eagerness . . . gave an expression to the face like that of a condemned vestal priestess in the moment of being buried alive, and in the first struggle against suffocation” (145). Must we leap immediately to the narrator’s interpretation—that “Billy was a striking instance that the arch interferer, the envious marplot of Eden, has still more or less to do with every human consignment to this planet Earth” (111)? Must we, in other words, do what Melville always does with material facts: spin them metaphysically? Consider this description of stuttering from James Hunt’s popular 1861 book, *Stammering and Stuttering: Their Nature and Treatment*, and ask if it might not be worth recovering, at least for a few moments, the present day “science” of vocal defects, a science of which Melville seems to have been aware. “It is indeed a melancholy spectacle to behold such a stutterer,” Hunt writes; “not only are the speech and respiratory muscles thrown into spasmodic action, but the movements of the hands, arms, feet, legs, and even the whole body, join in the general commotion” (237).

All of this is to say that I will not be applying contemporary diagnostic categories to an earlier period and advancing a Billy-is-autistic argument. Rather, I will be exploring Melville’s use of his own period’s ideas about intellectual disability and stuttering. Part of the tension of the novel is precisely the deep anxiety about, and rejection of, emerging professional discourses that purported to explain, and thereby to master, human experience—in this case, the phenomenon of someone like the Handsome Sailor. Listen to how the narrator describes Billy’s antagonist; the simile

is telling: “With the measured step and calm collected air of an asylum physician approaching in the public hall some patient beginning to show indications of a coming paroxysm, Claggart deliberately advanced within short range of Billy, and mesmerically looking him in the eye, briefly recapitulated the accusation” (144). In a sense, *Billy Budd* dramatizes Foucault’s point in *Birth of the Clinic*—what James Trent, an historian of mental retardation in America, nicely summarizes as the way that “care bec[omes] an effective and integral part of control” (5). By “care,” Trent means the full range of disciplinary practices that must first produce difference as aberration, then insist on correcting, or at the very least on managing, it. Melville wants us to understand the malicious falsity of this new knowledge, and he wants us to understand it as a kind of specious progress: “a great improvement of the age,” as he puts it ironically in another work.

At a moment when Americans with cognitive disabilities were being subjected to ever more scientific study and institutionalized “care”—I am thinking of the work of people like Edward Seguin and William B. Fish—Melville nostalgically recuperated an older, more innocuous notion of the simpleton, which he then dressed in his customary metaphysical garb. Though admittedly about a person more disabled than Billy, William Wordsworth’s 1798 poem “Idiot Boy” provides a sense of the understanding Melville preferred. In the middle of the night, a mother sends her disabled son to get a doctor, and he becomes lost and then entirely distracted:

Who’s you, that, near the waterfall  
Which thunders down with headlong force  
Beneath the moon, yet shining fair  
As careless as if nothing were,  
Sits upright on a feeding horse? (qtd. in Trent 10)

When finally found, the boy seems free of the distress that would have consumed any other child:

And thus, to Betty’s question, he  
Made answer, like a traveler, bold,  
(His very words I give to you,  
“The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,  
And the sun did shine so cold!”  
—Thus answered Johnny in his glory,  
And that was all his travel’s story. (qtd. in Trent 10)

As Trent reads the poem, “Unconcerned even with sickness and death and the importance of his mission, the boy riding his pony was one with the sights, sounds and movements of the night. His innocence and unconcern bound him closer than most to nature” (10). We see this with Billy as he blithely faces death, the fear of which, the narrator tells us, is “more prevalent in highly civilized communities than those so-called barbarous ones which in all respects stand nearer to Unadulterate Nature” (161). Just after calling Billy a Barbarian, the narrator refers to him as a “superior savage . . . a Tahitian, say, of Captain Cook’s time” who had no need of “Christianity’s primer”—no need because, as the chaplain puts it, “innocence was even a better thing than religion” (161). The novel refuses to name Billy’s difference—an important point—settling instead for an analogy linking as of yet uncolonized “primitives” with the mentally impaired (and, by extension colonizers with medical experts). But clearly Melville relishes Billy Budd, and some part of him recommends, in Wordsworth’s phrasing, “stripping our hearts naked, and . . . looking out of ourselves to[ward] those who lead the simplest lives, and those most according to nature; men who have never known false refinement, wayward and artificial desires, false criticisms, effeminate habits of thinking and feeling” (10). What Trent concludes about Wordsworth, we might just as easily conclude about Melville: “For . . . critics of the ‘new order,’ . . . an idiot embodied ideals lost to people corrupted by an increasingly mechanized and commercial world” (10).

Melville’s comparison of Billy to a “young horse fresh from the pasture suddenly inhaling a vile whiff from some chemical factory” (134) nicely captures both the idiot’s nearness to nature and the general critique of capitalist progress. Indeed, it would be impossible to separate these two things in Melville’s romantic appeal to the simpleton. The threat that Claggart represents as the asylum doctor is one of “progress” in the field of cognitive disability: a discursive regime that manufactures the need for incarceration, sterilization, lobotomy—that long list of atrocious therapies that would be imposed on people with mental disabilities in the name of care. If that’s progress, Melville seems presciently to assert, then he’ll keep his notion of the village fool and the social practices it ensures, thank you very much. That Claggart’s interest in Billy is sexual inextricably links homosexuality and cognitive disability, and it suggests an obvious parallel in the creation of each

as an official pathology. It also cleverly presents the medical authority who manages this othering operation as engaging in a kind of aggressive, because closeted, self-loathing. Moreover, it implies that professional expertise is fundamentally depraved and sadistic. Queer readings of Melville's final work ought to acknowledge the contribution of cognitive disability to this conceit. Melville needs "Baby Budd" to secure Claggart's pederastic depravity (124). Beautiful as he may be, Billy is not sexual, a fundamental conviction of the period with respect to the intellectually impaired, though that conviction was just about to change. Here, Melville traps himself: sexual deviance only becomes sexual deviance once a certain kind of discourse has triumphed, yet he buys into a notion of deviance—indeed, depravity—all the same.

Having established an affinity between Wordsworth and Melville, it is now time to offer a qualification: namely, that in being less cognitively disabled than the "Idiot Boy," the Handsome Sailor represents a kind of compromise between nature and civilization. Said another way, Billy is a liminal figure: neither really savage nor civilized—a necessary corrective to either extreme. That he stutters at all seems significant. In *Stammering and Stuttering: Their Nature and Treatment*, James Hunt remarks, "The question, whether stuttering only affects civilized people, is one of very considerable interest. Most travelers, who have long resided among uncultivated nations, maintain they never met with any savages laboring under an impediment of speech" (349). Stuttering is thus a western phenomenon, and Billy must be civilized enough to fall prey to its clutches yet not so civilized as to be alienated from the natural world. In the end he constitutes an unworkable antidote to complete acculturation and the discursive power dynamics at its core.

Like cognitive disability, stuttering, too, was in a sense created by experts who devoted themselves to the twin goals of management and correction, as the many elocution pamphlets and medical textbooks from the period make clear. (Some of the surgical procedures, described in gory detail by Benson Bobrick in his book *Knotted Tongues: Stuttering in History and the Quest for a Cure*, rival in their cruelty those that would soon emerge for cognitive disability.) Hence, with stuttering we can see a similar romantic remobilization on Melville's part. As much an additional sign of intellectual impairment as a mark of discursive humility, Billy's stutter commends him over the arrogant caregivers who preached, in the words of 19<sup>th</sup>

century specialist G.F. Urling, the “duty of correcting all peculiarities of speech whatever they may be—which duty is simply enough when begun early; and I would even venture to step out of my province to press upon them the additional duty of discountenancing and checking all odd and eccentric ways” (71). Allow me to emphasize the kind of work that “duty” is doing here.

So, my first big point is Foucauldian. But I wish to make it in the broadest possible way, as the novel does not indict just medical “care.” It also indicts legal, religious, and scientific “care.” It makes each of these institutions stutter before the being (and predicament) of Billy Budd, even as it allows them all to exercise their oppressive control over him. The final part of the novel literally dramatizes the fumbling intervention of expert knowledge, as one by one, the captain, chaplain, and surgeon approach. Take, for example, what Vere, that great reader of books, calls the “clash of military duty with moral scruple” (153) as he ponders Billy’s fate or what the narrator refers to as innocence and guilt having, in the figures of Billy and Claggart, “changed places” (148). Nothing is stable; expertise offers no definitive advantage. In classic Melvillean fashion incommensurate principles duke it out in an unwinnable duel—with Billy as the most obvious victim. The word “hesitancy,” linked as it is to sailor’s vocal impediment, shows up in Vere’s legal deliberations, securing the stuttering discourse conceit. One might simply say that, unlike Billy’s, his stuttering is “inorganic.” At one point, Vere even proposes a new branch of knowledge—psychological theology—to clear up the mystery of Claggart’s and Billy’s encounter.

Though the chaplain acknowledges the uselessness of religion as a source of consolation for Billy, he nevertheless ministers to him, and Billy’s final words—“God Bless Captain Vere”—strangely reestablish Christianity’s authority. When the purser questions the surgeon about Billy’s failure to ejaculate upon being hanged and proposes a theory of will power, the surgeon retorts, “What you call will power [is] a term not yet included in the lexicon of science” (164). When the purser speaks of euthanasia, the surgeon rebukes him further: “Euthanasia . . . is something like your will power: I doubt its authenticity as a scientific term . . . It is at once imaginative and metaphysical—in short, Greek” (165). Though he insists the hanging was “scientifically conducted” (164) and concedes the “muscular spasm” “invariable”

in hangings, the surgeon has no explanation for its absence. Rather than concede his discipline's impotence in the face of mystery, he rushes off to see another patient. The text thus stages a discursive scrimmage, where each discourse preserves its pretensions but ends up in part humiliated.

As a counter to these haughty claims of interpretive mastery, Melville offers images of dumb and amorphous nature—from the “inarticulate” (166) seafowl that “scream” (166) and circle above the spot where Billy's body entered the water, to the air above, which Melville tells us was like “smooth white marble in the polished block not yet removed from the marble-dealer's yard” (167). Both images evoke something pre-communicative, the former obviously closer to a language act, the latter akin to signification's raw materials: the stuff of signifiers before they become signifiers. That Billy, whose voice is said at the beginning to be “singularly musical” (111), is compared directly to a “singing bird” (163) at the end when he delivers his famous last words accords the seafowl image special significance. We are meant, I believe, to understand the seafowl as grieving the death of one of their own. That Billy is analogized initially as an “illiterate nightingale” (110) and a “goldfinch popped into a cage” (105) as he is pressed into service aboard the H.M.S. *Bellipotent* further supports such a contention. Billy has left the prison house of civilization, which cognitive disability rendered somewhat alien, and rejoined a domain where language and cognition are utterly superfluous. What began for Melville as a fantasy of partial reconciliation with nature through limited cognitive ability and simple, faltering speech ends with a tragic return to what Lacan calls the imaginary order, typically figured, interestingly enough, as a vast, undifferentiated expanse of ocean. This order of infancy (and death) exists prior to language, prior to the desiring self's differentiation in words. “With mankind . . . forms, measured forms, are everything” (166), Vere proclaims, but not so with the sea in which Billy ultimately loses himself, dissolving into its unfathomable and unfathomable immensity.

But what to make of the fact that Billy does not stutter when he declares, “God Bless Captain Vere!”? What to make of the fact that language (or what Lacan calls the symbolic order) seems to prevail until the very end? What to make of the phrase “God Bless Captain Vere” itself, which the narrator deems “a conventional felon's benediction directed aft towards the quarters

of honor” (163)? Has religious discourse truly reasserted itself? Here, an appeal to the literature of stuttering makes all the difference. Earlier in the novel we’re told that strong emotion can elicit Billy’s vocal embarrassment, and we see him stumble when the mutinous stranger approaches him: “D—d—damme, I don’t know what you are d—d—driving at, or what you mean, but you had better g—g—go where you belong!” Billy cries. “If you d—don’t start, I’ll t—t—toss you back over the r—rail!” (133) he continues. Billy has a very difficult time producing the initial “g” in the word “go,” but later he has no problem saying the word “God,” which inaugurates the phrase for which he is famous. (Interestingly, he *does* struggle to say the word “God,” as in “God will bless you for that, your honor!” (150) when questioned by Vere after Claggart’s death—a fact that makes his final fluency only that much more mysterious). The text speaks, as I have already said, of “syllables delivered in the clear melody of a singing bird on the point of launching from the twig” (163). Even though the narrator reports that the prospect of imminent death did not disturb the Handsome Sailor, we know that witnessing his “first formal gangway-punishment” (122) had previously “horrified him” (122), and it is not unreasonable to imagine that Billy was in precisely the state of mind that should have caused him to stutter.

So, why didn’t he? And why would he invoke religion if he had earlier refused, as unnecessary, its consolation? Once again, James Hunt provides an answer. Could the phrase “God Bless” be an “‘outré’ expression, which [is] chosen in haste, and for no other reason than that [it is] easy of utterance” (109)? Could it, in short, be totally meaningless, just a phrase designed to ensure the speaker’s composure, to get him to the next moment? Hunt notes that such expressions, often completely absurd and out of context, can make the stutterer resemble an “idiot or an imbecile” (109), an irony, to be sure, in Billy’s case. The Harvard scholar Mark Shell, in his cultural examination of stuttering, discusses a range of “avoidance techniques” (20), particularly “word substitution” (20), which sometimes involves using “‘outré’ expressions.” Shell comments, “In the instant of substitution of one note for another . . . the human stutterer becomes bird-like: he disregards, almost completely, the longer term problems of ‘meaning’ (conceptualization) that his substitution will entail later in the sentence. To all intents and purposes, the stutterer becomes a singer of musical notes” (96). And what, according



to the novel, is Billy at the moment of his death but exactly that: a singer of musical notes?

Already well on his way to reuniting with nature, Billy Bird evacuates the phrase of its meaning, a meaning that does not really make sense in the context of what's happening to him. (Why ask God to bless the man who has condemned you, especially if religion is not a category to which you subscribe?) At this point in the text, stuttering, cognitive disability, the imaginary order and deconstructive insights about the arbitrary nature of language overlap. What, for instance, is "word substitution" but an extreme example of the problem with language generally? (Think of those interchangeable blocks of marble in the marble dealer's yard.) The contrived differentiation upon which the system of signifiers rests ends up being exposed and dismantled by the crisis of stuttering. Put simply, language always substitutes; it can't help but do so. The symbolic order assiduously conceals this fact, insisting on the meaning making that distinguishes human beings from the natural world. Of course, it is possible that Billy does not stutter because he literally sings the phrase "God bless Captain Vere!" As countless commentators have noted, stutterers do not stutter when humming or singing. But even if Billy did sing his final words, the problem of undermined signification would remain. As Shell writes, "As to why stutterers do not stutter when they sing or hum, there are many speculations, none definitive. One favorite notion is that singing tends to empty sounds of semantic meaning, to the point where they effectively become music" (144).

One final detail adds weight to the theory of an "outré" expression or empty signifier. Billy's failure to spasm upon being hanged—again, let me use the word "ejaculate," with its punning allusion to speech—evokes the spectacle of a stuttering phallus. Christological readings of the novel have had a field day with this detail, using Billy's asexuality to support his Christ-like status. Melville cannot help but turn everything he writes into a kind of urgent Christian allegory, so I understand the critics' temptation, but recovering the actual type upon which the allegory rests is instructive. Billy's asexuality is also of a piece with 19<sup>th</sup>-century theories of cognitive disability. Anxiety about sexual reproduction in this group finds its relief in sentimental notions of an eternal pre-pubescence. Thus, the contradiction between a well-articulated phrase that means nothing and a phallus that

will not ejaculate is not really a contradiction at all. In the end, the only thing that gets disseminated are the narratives about what happened on the H.M.S. *Bellipotent*, narratives arising from, and fulfilling the aims of, highly particular and aggressive discourses.

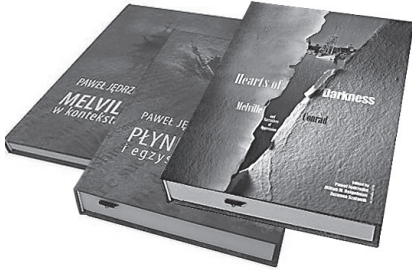
WORKS CITED

- Bobrick, Benson. *Knotted Tongues: Stuttering in History and the Quest for a Cure*. Tokyo: Kodansha Amer Inc., 1996.
- Foucault, Michel. *Birth of the Clinic*. New York: Vintage, 1994.
- Hunt, James. *Stammering and Stuttering: Their Nature and Treatment*. London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861.
- Melville, Herman. *Melville's Short Novels*. Edited by Dan McCall. New York: Norton, 2002.
- Sacks, Oliver. *An Anthropologist on Mars: Seven Paradoxical Tales*. New York: Vintage, 1996.
- Shell, Mark. *Stutter*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Trent, James. *Inventing the Feeble Mind: a History of Mental Retardation in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Urling, G. F. *Vocal Gymnastics; or a Guide for Stammerers, and for Public Speakers and Others*. London: Churchill, 1857.

M-Studio

## MELVILLE STUDIES SERIES

SERIES EDITORS: Paweł Jędrzejko and Milton M. Reigelman



The present series has been launched in order to foster and promote Melville Studies world-wide. Conceived in collaboration with the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland, its goal is to warrant the continuity of the scholarly effort which resulted in the organization of the Sixth International Melville Society Conference in Poland in 2007.

The Melville Studies Series publishes innovative monographs and works of more general scope offering original perspectives, both interdisciplinary and within the discipline of literary studies. In particular, the series solicits texts presenting new knowledge on Herman Melville and his oeuvre, revisions of existing positions, as well as results of comparative and contrastive research. The Melville Studies Series, financed with grants supplied by the Institutions represented by Authors, as well as subsidies applied for by the Publisher.

The series includes the following publications:

*Prequels (co-published by M-Studio):*

Jędrzejko, Paweł. *Melville w kontekstach, czyli prolegomena do studiów melvillistycznych.* (Kierunki badań-biografia-kultura). Sosnowiec-Katowice-Zabrze: BananaArt.PL—ExMachina—M-Studio, 2007.

Jędrzejko, Paweł. *Płynność i egzystencja. Doświadczenie lądu i morza a egzystencjalizm Hermana Melville'a.* Sosnowiec-Katowice-Zabrze: BananaArt.PL—ExMachina—M-Studio, (2007) 2008.

*Volumes published:*

Vol. 1. *Hearts of Darkness: Melville, Conrad and Narratives of Oppression*, edited by Paweł Jędrzejko, Milton M. Reigelman and Zuzanna Szatanik (the inaugural volume of the Melville Studies Series).

Vol. 2. *Secret Sharers: Melville, Conrad and Narratives of the Real*, edited by Paweł Jędrzejko, Milton M. Reigelman and Zuzanna Szatanik.

*Upcoming volumes:*

Vol. 3. Jędrzejko, Paweł. *Liquidity and Existence. The Experience of Land and Sea in Herman Melville's Thought.*

International Melvilleans interested in submitting their manuscripts are encouraged to send their inquiries to the Series Editors:

Paweł Jędrzejko  
Institute of English Cultures and Literatures  
University of Silesia in Katowice  
ul. Gen. Stefana Grotta-Roweckiego 5  
41-205 Sosnowiec  
Poland  
pawel.jedrzejko@us.edu.pl

Milton M. Reigelman  
J. Rice Cowan Professor of English  
Centre College  
600 West Walnut Street  
Danville, KY 40422  
USA  
milton.reigelman@centre.edu

Manuscripts preselected by the Melville Society-approved Editorial Board will be subsequently refereed, qualified for part- or full financing, and handsomely published.

Visit the Melville Society  
<http://melvillesociety.org>

Read *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies*  
<http://melvillesociety.org/en/publications/leviathan>

Visit M-Studio  
<http://www.mstudio.com.pl>