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"His terrible masterpiece" : a study of Peter Pan, its reception and its creator

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Master thesis

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Abstract

Peter Pan has come to be seen as a cultural icon. This thesis is an examination of the play Peter Pan or the Boy Who Would not Grow Up by James Matthew Barrie, which premiered at The Duke of York theatre in London on December 27th 1904. The aim is first to show the early reception of Peter Pan. A part of this is to consider how it might have been coloured by social and cultural currents existing in Britain at the time of the original production. It is also necessary to review the role played by Barrie in his time. Secondly, I am trying to portray how the further reception has been influenced by Disney's portrayal of the character, based on the general impact he has had on Western culture. The common factor here is the appropriation of text and the reinvention and continuation of canonised material. One part of this is to investigate what happens when author biography is brought into interpretation and how that approach can both enrich and limit reception. I hope to show how to lock oneself into one set of beliefs or to relate one's perceptions

to one set of interpretive principles limits the understanding of text. Appropriation and consequent change has in the case of Peter Pan been the very means for his continued existence.



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Chapter Four: Lost Girls, Underworld Queens in JM Barrie's Peter and Wendy (1911) and Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights (1847, unsweetened puff pastry, shifted salty cheese called "siren", illustrates konfrontalno quantum palimpsest.

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