

J.D. SALINGER'S "HAPWORTH 16, 1924" REPUBLICATION
CONUNDRUM: THAT "SHIELDS-SALERNO" CRYPTORCHISM
SPECULATION

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Abstract. Announced as of 1996 was the obscure Orchises Press's impending republication in book-form of the 1965 novella "Hapworth 16, 1924". That novella's progenitor was America's reclusive yet renowned novelist and short story-author Jerome David Salinger (1919-2010). Debate erupted immediately concerning Salinger's impulse to republish. His aims, and Salinger's subsequent withdrawal from his republication project, plus the selection of so improbable an outlet, all have seemed baffling. The original "Hapworth" publication remained his final item published during Salinger's lifetime. His 2013 biography by David Shields and Shane Salerno disclosed Salinger's birth with an undescended testicle. This, they opine, poisoned his life psychologically. A fresh review of the republication misadventure in light of this Shields-Salerno congenital physiology-assertion tends toward a contingent vindication of their psychological speculation.

Keywords: cryptorchidism, J.D. Salinger, Hapworth, monorchid, Orchises

INTRODUCTION

During 2013, David Shields and Shane Salerno released their biography of the American novelist and short-story writer J. D. Salinger (1919-2010). Therein they declared that Jerome David "Sonny" Salinger had been born with only one descended testicle. They list this congenital anatomical-characteristic as foremost (Shields and Salerno 2013, 562), chronologically at least, among ten conditions (*Ibidem*, 562-571) rendering his life "a slow-motion suicide mission" (*Ibidem*, 562). These biographers' claim constitutes the background to the investigation, pursued in the following pages,

into a peculiar incident in the professional life of a personally eccentric artist.

For as of 1996, Salinger had agreed to republication in book-form of his last-published work, the novella “Hapworth 16, 1924”. The republication itself, as well as the unlikely outlet, were surprises sparking controversy. For the publisher was to be a modest literary press owned by an academic. But the endeavour soon sputtered. Its proposed resurrection, about a decade subsequently, openly was abandoned altogether. The once-promising (or twice-promising) effort’s rise-and-fall seemed a conundrum. At least one principal (not Salinger) stepped-up to assume blame for the fiasco.

However, thanks to the Shields-Salerno congenital affliction-reportage, a preliminary explanation of this frustrated- republication history emerges: J.D. Salinger well might never have aimed at republication at all. With a famed writer’s practised, icy cynicism, he callously could have exploited an ambitious, small press. *Ex hypothesi*, his motivation was spun from the impact of his secret congenital affliction. Its impact impelled Salinger to tantalize his readers with a grim inside-joke. A gulled globe could not guess the depth of its own (yet not the knowing Salinger’s) ignorance. Readers remained uncomprehending the message of facts arranged overtly by Salinger to stare the world in its face.

SALINGER’S “HAPWORTH” MYSTERY I: THAT WITHDRAWAL

In 1996, word arrived that the “eccentric author” (Vinciguerra 2016, 173), reclusive J.D. Salinger, would release his novella “Hapworth 16, 1924” in hardback (Alexander 1999, 295; Slawenski 2010: 395). It originally had run in *The New Yorker* of June 19, 1965 (Alexander 1999, 297-299). “Hapworth 16, 1924” was the last item Salinger ever published (Shields and Salerno 2013, 389). The short-lived - roughly half-year (Shapira 2010) - republication endeavour disintegrated (Alexander 1999, 297-299; Slawenski 2010, 394-395). A parallel hardcover-republication effort emergent during 2007 (Slawenski

2010, 395n.) regarding the identical work and prospective publisher likewise fizzled (Slawenski 2010, 396).

Questions arose about the impulse behind Salinger's withdrawal from his spontaneous (Shields and Salerno 2013, 517-518) undertaking. Hence, Salinger's "Hapworth" Mystery I. Supposedly, the aforementioned parallel project's twenty-first-century withdrawal-trigger was premature revelations in the media concerning the enterprise, infuriating Salinger (Slawenski 2010, 396). Premature exposure of his enterprise might mark, partially anyway, one resolution of withdrawal conundrum Mystery I.

Professor Roger Lathbury was the owner of Orchises Press (Slawenski 2010, 396), based in his home (Shapira 2010). The professor expressed his anguish over this republication disappointment (Shields and Salerno 2013, 520) and personally shouldered the blame (Slawenski 2010, 396). Opines Salinger biographer Kenneth Slawenski:

However, the extent of Lathbury's resulting self-recrimination may have been undeserved. It is possible that Salinger's interest in releasing "Hapworth" was rooted in a desire for control rather than a concern for literature. In 1997, Salinger legally owned complete rights to every story and book he had ever published, with the notable exception of "Hapworth 16, 1924," the rights to which he continued to share with *The New Yorker*. Had he published "Hapworth" in book form as intended, the work would have been considered new and benefited from stricter copyright laws than it did as a 1965 story (Slawenski 2010, 396).

Slawenski's musings might mark, in part at least, a second stab at the resolution of withdrawal mystery. Insofar as evidence substantiates wrestling over rights to Salinger's novella, said submerged struggle (distinguished from premature republication-revelations in the media) somehow could have caused the "Hapworth" republication project to falter.

Moreover, voices have been raised to the effect that the February 20, 1997, devastating review of "Hapworth 16, 1924" by Michiko Kakutani elicited Salinger's response (Slawenski 2010, 395;

Alexander 1999, 298-299): “In the end it was Kakutani’s article in the *New York Times* that made Salinger change his mind about publishing the book *Hapworth*, says Jonathan Schwartz, the radio personality who closely followed Salinger for many years” (*Ibidem*, 298). As late as 2014 Tulane University’s Professor Thomas Beller, the scholar of Salinger, posed a query which Beller fancied anyone reading “*Hapworth 16, 1924* might have spoken aloud to the page as they read: ‘What is this supposed to be?’” (Beller 2014, 9n.1). Schwartz’s interpretation of the evidence means an authorial reaction to Kakutani abortive of what (to reiterate) Kenneth Slawenski sees as a “Hapworth” publication in book format as intended by Salinger. Such a speculatively-supposed Salingerian recoil from Kakutani’s condemnation of this work affords, in any case in part, a third attempted resolution of the withdrawal mystery.

SALINGER’S “HAPWORTH” MYSTERY II: ORCHISES PRESS

Another prominent question emerged from this incident: “[T]he publishing event of the decade had apparently fallen to, as odd as it may have seemed, Orchises Press - a tiny press in Alexandria, Virginia, run by a fifty-one-year-old George Mason University professor named Roger Lathbury” (Alexander 1999, 296). Too, “in bestowing rights to the novella, he [Salinger] was said to have snubbed the major publishers by selecting an obscure publishing house in Alexandria, Virginia, named Orchises Press” (Slawenski 2010, 394). As recounted by major newspaper reporter David Streitfeld: “[I]n the literary coup of the decade, the book will be published by Orchises Press, a small press in Alexandria, Virginia, run by George Mason University professor Roger Lathbury” (Shields and Salerno 2013, 518). Ms Kakutani, a *Times* critic (Slawenski 2010, 395), marvelled in the *New York Times*: “[W]hy choose the obscure Orchises Press in Alexandria, Va., to publish it?” (Kakutani 1997). For according to the *Washington Post*’s Ian Shapira: “To his amazement, Lathbury’s tiny Orchises Press had itself a deal with the reclusive novelist” (Shapira 2010).

The instant question was pointed-up by John Blades in the *Chicago Tribune*: “Why Orchises? Salinger’s decision to let the Orchises Press reprint ‘Hapworth 16, 1924’, after 32 years in mothballs, seemed as much a surprise, and a puzzle, to Little, Brown, his venerable publisher, as it was to the rest of the publishing industry” (Blades 1997). Hence, Salinger’s “Hapworth” Mystery II.

Assuming that Orchises is as impoverished as most small presses, Salinger may have passed up the opportunity for a substantial cash advance from Little, Brown or almost any other commercial Manhattan publishing house.

If the manuscript had come into her hands, said Molly Friedrich, one of New York’s wiliest agents, she would have auctioned the book, although not necessarily to the highest bidder.

Somebody like Salinger wouldn’t just go for the money, obviously,” said Friedrich. “It would be a very careful presentation. (Blades 1997).

After Salinger’s death, in 2010, Professor Lathbury recalled his 1988 solicitation letter to J.D. to publish “Hapworth”. Salinger’s brief, improbable reply stated that he would mull the matter: “I had the idea that Salinger might find my company attractive for its smallness” (Lathbury 2010). Only in 1996 did Lathbury hear further, through Salinger’s representative Harold Ober Associates: “Why had he said yes? I think he chose me because I didn’t chase him. I had left him alone for eight years after receiving his letter; I wasn’t pushy in the commercial way he found offensive” (Lathbury 2010).

SALINGER MAKES MONKEYS OF HOMO SAPIENS: WHAT IS ORCHISES?

On the other hand, theories explanatory of Salinger’s outreach to the Orchises Press alternative to Lathbury’s conjoint attractive-smallness, and noncommercial-unpushiness theories, prove available. For the *Baltimore Sun*’s Arthur Hirsch reported on an interview with Professor Lathbury, and the unravelling Salinger-

Orchises republication partnership, on June 7, 1998: “Lathbury wasn’t and isn’t talking. On a recent unannounced visit by a reporter, he was cordial, happy to chat about books and Orchises (‘orchids’ in Greek) in his cinder-block cell of an office at George Mason” (Hirsch 1998). Hirsch’s language contains the key to the theory alternative to *e.g.* Lathbury’s two contributions. Now consider:

That most elegant of flowers, the orchid, is named not for its alluring blossom but for its twin bulbs that bear a rather unnerving resemblance to testicles. Its name derives from the ancient Greek word *orkitis*, which means “testicle.” Thus the name of the orchid is related to such words as *orchitis*, or “inflammation of a testicle,” as well as *cryptorchidism*, the condition of having an undescended or “hidden” testicle. (Barnette 2005, 134)

Professor of English at the University of Winnipeg, Mark Morton framed it thus:

The sensitivity of testicles to heat and cold is interesting considering that orchids, which derive their name from the Greek *orkhis*, meaning testicle, are also sensitive to temperature changes. That flower, however, takes its name not from the fact that it thrives or wilts as the mercury fluctuates, but from the resemblance of its tuberous roots to the human testis. The etymological connection between the plant and the gonad is evident in the medical term *monorchid*, used to describe a man with a single testicle. (Morton 2005, 186)

Neither has this etymological connection been only obscure, nor scholarly. Among the flowers of Shakespeare’s *Ophelia* are long purples. The long purple is Europe’s *Orchis mascula* (Lees 1860, 102; Vaughan 1907, 93): “Among the recorded names for the purple orchis are ‘priest-pintle’ (penis), ‘dog’s cullions’ (testicles), ‘goat’s cullions,’ and ‘fools’ ballochs’ [sic]” (Greenblatt 1997, 1740 n.1). Of course, the orchid boasts an entire cultural history of its own (Endersby 2016). The orchid’s testicles-resembling dual-bulbs were credited in the *Naturalis Historia* of Pliny the Elder (A.D. 23-79) with energizing sexual desire (Winkler 1990, 81).

Cryptorchidism “is also called cryptorchism, undescended testes, or undescended testicle”, a “disorder” (<http://www.britannica.com>

/science/cryptorchidism). To be sure, the tacit yet deliberate Salingerian association of cryptorchidism with Orchises (Salinger himself their incarnated link) might be impossible to prove. He, however, was seriously a student of, and an adherent of, homoeopathic medicine by 1973 (Shields and Salerno 2013, 440). He was involved with homoeopathy at least from the 1960s to 2000 (*Ibidem*, 532, 535); during his final two decades, the homoeopathic products-market sprouted robustly (Tozzi 2015, 30). In that discipline one can peruse the hefty text entitled *Orchids in Homeopathy* (Klein 2014).

In Salinger's time, that discipline encompassed treating cryptorchidism. In 1974, the *British Homeopathic Journal* published this case report, as included in 1989's *The Complete Book of Homeopathy*:

A boy, aged 12, had his left testis normally descended but his right testis was in the inguinal canal. Operation had been advised. Aurum met. 30, 3 doses, was prescribed; 9 days later his mother phoned to say that the testis was now in the scrotum all the time. Follow-up, 1 year later, showed that the descent was permanent. (Weiner and Goss 1989, 223, citing Pratt, N. "Homeopathic Case Review." *British Homeopathic Journal*, 63:1 (1974): 15)

SALINGER AND JOHN BOLETUS

When his in-house concubine of 1972-1973, Joyce Maynard, suffered sexual incapacity, he escorted her to a naturopathic practitioner: "Jerry has made the appointment under the name of John Boletus and his friend Joyce" (Maynard 2013, 203). That lady was to recall of those days: "Often, when we go places out in the world, Jerry uses the name 'John Boletus' - 'boletus' being a Latin word for 'mushroom'" (Maynard 2013, 184). His daughter, Margaret "Peggy" Salinger, witnessed how her father already had mulled the boletus mushroom for years before bedmate Joyce would be welcomed into his Cornish, New Hampshire, home (Salinger 2000, 45). Rumour has it that "the mushroom undoubtedly symbolizes the

penis, there are mushrooms which derive their name from their unmistakable resemblance to that organ (*Phallus impudicus*)” (Freud 1952: 445, 511). Sure enough, the Phallus falls within the Fungi (Kingdom), including the Phallus’s Division (*Basidiomycota*), Class (*Agaricomycetes*) and Order (*Phallales*) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phallus_\(fungus\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phallus_(fungus))). The Boletus mushroom so closely is related to the Phallus mushroom as to share the Phallus’s Kingdom/Division/Class systemizations (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boletus#cite_note-Liddell_1980-3).

Salinger might have exercised mastery in his native tongue. Nevertheless, only doubtfully would he dare to introduce himself as John Phallus. Instead, he introduced himself by the cryptic use of a phallic symbol: a mushroom, the Boletus. Simultaneously, J.D. (John Boletus) thereby self-denominated as a kind of ‘john’ - meaning, in some contexts, a prostitute’s customer. He already had invoked his alias-first name with inimical irony very much earlier. At Valley Forge Military Academy, the adolescent’s favoured phrase regarding someone Jerry disliked ran: “John, you really are a prince of a guy” (Hamilton 1988, 25).

To be sure, that first name he also assumed when travelling with his family generally, apparently as John (Salinger 2000, 188) Smith (*Ibidem*, 191). Every February there were family journeys to Florida (*Ibidem*, 188). Photographs shot approximately May 1953 display Jerry and his sister Doris at a beach resort in Florida (Slawenski 2010, 231n.). So perhaps adherence to that prostitution-coloured street-definition of his assumed first name too harshly hypothesizes that J.D. enjoyed implicitly emplacing a much younger woman who loved him (*e.g.*, his teenaged mistress of 1973, Joyce) into some covert prostitute-pictureframe (when abroad together to remedy naturopathically the teenager’s sexual malady).

On the other hand, anyone clutching anonymity (almost fanatically) seems, superficially, self-defeating in self-denominating as John Smith: “I’m using an alias”. If that were true, then underlying inclination toward the name ‘John’ grows credible. Said predispositions must prove potent enough to override practical

objections to that John Smith alias. If such tropisms were demonstrated, then perhaps deeper impetus underlying Salinger's propensity toward the (occasionally) prostitution-tied name could be sought.

Yet, surely, few scholars fix to fish Salinger's subconscious to net: (1) evidence - whether or not proof - both prominently sexual, and dark of his own ascription of prostitution to an undoubtable personal trauma, said trauma having evoked his undoubtable, manifest disgust; plus (2) nasty, bizarre, scatological, evidence clogged with sexual and dark overtones (not undertones), said evidence drawing a picture of the fantasy said trauma triggered.

Salinger's brother-in-law (Beller 2014, 151) Gavin Douglas was Claire Douglas Salinger's older brother (Salinger 2000, 5). Gavin asserted that Jerry once reluctantly visited his publisher and a representative of the firm in England handling the author, in New York City (Hamilton 1988, 159). Beller deems his tale as "one that stands out for being sexy and dark" (Beller 2014, 152):

[Salinger] told them he'd meet them at the Stork Club. When they got there, they sat down and started talking and then along came Claire and this friend of hers called Kay, slinking in acting like call girls. Jerry pointed them out to the publishers as examples of "that kind of woman" and asked if they would like a closer look. He asked the girls over to their table and for an hour or two they went on with it, talking tough and casting sly glances at the Englishman" (Hamilton 1988, 159, citing Gavin Douglas, "Interview with *Time* reporters" (1961) (*Time* archive))

Approximately a decade-and-a-half before, 22-year-old Salinger and playwright Eugene O'Neill's alluring daughter Oona O'Neill, over whom he was "crazy" (Slawenski 2010, 43 and 59, citing Salinger to Elizabeth Murray, October 31, 1941), had frolicked in New York City at the Stork Club (Slawenski 2010, 43). Oona, on June 16, 1943, married Charlie Chaplin (Alexander 1999, 86), her senior by 36 years (Slawenski 2010, 59). J.D. then acknowledged loathing her groom (*Ibidem*, 60, citing Salinger to Whit Burnett, ND (but July 1943)).

Of J.D.'s correspondence in the Library of Congress his sometime bedfellow Joyce Maynard records: "One of these letters

contains a bizarre passage in which Jerry describes his fantasy of a scene filled with dark sexual overtones between Oona, age eighteen, and the pathetically geriatric Charlie Chaplin, age fifty-three, whom she married, to Jerry’s obvious disgust” (Maynard 2010, 334). Salinger composed a letter in duplicate mocking the bride’s wedding-night (Slawenski 2010, 60n.). The Salinger investigator Ian Hamilton deemed it “nasty reading” (Hamilton 1988, 74). It was scatological (Scovell 1999: 124 and 322n.1, citing an interview with Arthur Gelb, January 19, 1998). Moreover, Harold Ober Associates, J.D.’s agent, holds a document with the date of April 10, 1945, listing Salinger stories; one plainly concerns Oona’s marriage, being identified as “Daughter of author gets [sic] Old Man” (Slawenski 2010, 127).

Gavin submits Salinger presenting (like a director presenting an actress) his masquerading spouse Claire to an Englishman in the Stork Club as a lady of easy virtue. Quere, whether Salinger’s parodic reenactment reified his prior Stork Club woman’s (Oona’s) status as harlot peddling herself to the famed, monied movie actor-director Englishman. Oona thereby denied her charms to her own Army’s mere enlisted-man, soldier Salinger. Hot-date Oona had been 16 when squired by Jerry at age 22; J.D. met Claire when he was 31 and Claire 16 (Slawenski 2010, 219; Salinger 2000, 7); each 16-year-old was still in her respective, tony high school (Salinger 2000, 7; Slawenski 2010, 43 and 256). Quere, whether Salinger subconsciously sensed them to be the same female, therefore equally to be symbolically (or worse than symbolically) denigrated in a sexual context.

In turn, Joyce Maynard tasted symbolic (or worse than symbolic) sexual context-degradation before a third-party. How degrading to Joyce was her Daytona Beach outing with John Boletus? After Joyce’s examination by the naturopath:

I felt exactly the same as before, only horribly humiliated.

Grim-faced, Jerry pays the bill. We hurry out the door. In the cab, I cry a little. I have never undergone a pelvic exam before. (Maynard 2010, 205)

Concededly, Gavin's recounting invites inquest. Exactly how did call girls act in the Eisenhower-era Stork Club? Would Stork Club-level call girls talk "tough" in the Stork Club? Could onetime Cambridge-Cliffie Claire credibly talk as tough as a New York City prostitute throughout a minimum of an hour? In true life, Kay exemplified "that kind of woman" who befriends former Radcliffe-senior wives of New Yorker-level authors generating trans-Atlantic attention. So could both Claire and Kay sustain pretence so long before a brace of publishers peculiarly-sensitive, professionally, to language? Could both perform for sixty minutes before breaking-up in laughter?

For how prim was Claire's biography? Claire had boarded at the Convent of the Holy Child in Suffern, New York, until the close of eighth grade (Salinger 2000, 6); it was in the eighth grade that the institution tried to woo her into taking the veil (*Ibidem*, 7). Claire thereafter entered the posh Shipley School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania (*Ibidem*, 7), thereafter to matriculate at Radcliffe College. Just four months short of graduation she departed to live in Cornish with her husband (*Ibidem*, 84). He had requested Claire carry no Radcliffe-student baggage with her; Claire burned plays and additional fictions she had penned as a collegian, along with all of her other papers (*Ibidem*, 93). *Slinking in like call girls*. Like a girl first called by a convent and later called from Radcliffe College.

How conservative was Claire's biography? Hers was a background wherein J.D. and she had synthesized a proper female hostess as an excuse for Claire's long weekend absences from Radcliffe (Slawenski 2010, 251):

This being the fifties, a young lady had to obtain written permission from a respectable person to be away from college for the weekend. Claire and Jerry made up a certain "Mrs Trowbridge" and composed some very funny letters to Claire's mother and to those in loco parentis at Radcliffe, with lots of silly, patrician news about Claire's lovely visits. (Salinger 2000, 83).

Moreover, even had the Stork Club gag transpired, would Kay or either Mr or Mrs Salinger tell Gavin how cynical impresario-Salinger exhibited Gavin's younger sister as a prostitute? In the atmosphere

of 1961, would Gavin tell *Time* reporters the tale about his own sister that (even in the atmosphere of 2014) Beller judged “stands out for being sexy and dark”? Was Claire’s friend “called Kay” inaccessible, even by *Time* reporters? Did Gavin not know Kay’s real, full name? Did Kay exist?

SALINGER, JOHN BOLETUS AND BINT

In all events, Salinger (“John”) was an artist who could feel words were passed with ulterior motives: Before their sexual malady trip, Salinger had announced to his aforementioned mistress that their someday-daughter should be named Bint (Maynard 2013, 177 and 210). Only afterwards was she told by a British scholar: “It’s a word that means ‘whore,’ worse than ‘wench’; it’s a very ugly word for a woman” (Shields and Salerno 2013, 439). Employed toward objectification of women sexually, bint initially was utilized as a collective noun, perjoratively, during 1855 (Morton 2005, 96). That kind of woman. Whore. John.

The University of London’s distinguished Professor Marina Warner was producing a book during 2016 about Cairo in the 1950s. Her father had been employed in Cairo from 1947, and there Marina (b. 1946) resided into the 1950s (Warner 2016, 32). Hence the Professor more than most might have to feel uncommonly conscious of British slang linked with any common Arabic noun. Warner recounts concerning her father’s 1945 reunion with her mother in Southampton post-World War II, how “A childhood friend recently reminded me that when he brought her into the mess, an officer shouted: ‘What’s that bint doing in here?’ To which my father replied: ‘I’ll have you know, sir, this bint is Mrs Warner.’” (Warner 2016, 30).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* definition rings less luridly than that of Maynard’s informant: “A girl or woman (usu. derog.); girl-friend”. It cites a 1941 *New Statesman* listing of war slang with: “Bint—Girlfriend”. And it gives the noun’s source as Arabic for ‘daughter’

(*Oxford English Dictionary* 1989, 205). Between his January 29, 1944, debarkation at Liverpool (Slawenski 2010, 79) and June 6, 1944, deposit upon Utah Beach (*Ibidem*, 90), U.S. soldier Sonny Salinger could have absorbed some such slang (lurid or otherwise). All this plausibly suggests Salinger as mindful of implications in a name, e.g. Orchises. *Orchids. Testicles.*

By 1972 the Cornish, New Hampshire's squire Salinger might have lost touch with wartime British slang's nuances. He wholly innocently might have framed 'bint' in terms only of his own *New Statesman* "Girl friend" (Joyce Maynard) someday bearing their Arabic-accented daughter: little baby Bint. Suppose Salinger chivalrously daydreamed about boasting of Joyce herself: "This bint is Mrs Salinger!"

Nor proves it inconceivable that in personal life a wordsmith so sophisticated can think in language as generic as girlfriend/daughter. Margaret's recollection during 2000 about her parents J.D. and Claire Salinger ran: "He told me on a visit during the summer of 1997 that if it were not for Claire, 'I'd have given you guys [my brother and me] no names at all and let you name yourselves at about twelve years of age'. At present, he has three cats whose names are Kitty 1, Kitty 2, and Kitty 3" (Salinger 2000, 107).

SALINGER TRADUCES THE WORLD: WHO WAS J.D. SALINGER?

Peggy Salinger would remember visits as a little girl with her father from Cornish to her paternal grandparents' apartment at 1133 Park Avenue in New York City: "There was also something embarrassing about Granny's prints of the *Life of the Orchid* that hung over the living room couch; I could tell by the way he mentioned them, but I didn't get that either" (Salinger 2000, 145-146). For certain, orchids are deemed somehow sexy (Crump and Crump 2009, 108).

Orchids are fancied "seductive" within scientific circles, as really the "sex symbols of the plant world" (Wong 2011, 88). Psychologist Charlotte Davis Kasl assisted women to displace negative fantasy-

images by envisioning sexual, life-positive pictures: “To help with the process, I sometimes suggest a book with sensuously photographed orchids, some with dewdrops on the petals. The orchids provide a wonderful image women learn to pair with their genitals” (Davis 1990, 204). Nonetheless, even were J.D. cryptorchidism-alert since boyhood, some might wonder why he might be male-genitalia, orchids-conscious in 1996. For Salinger telephoned Roger Lathbury about publishing with Orchises Press on July 26, 1996 (Shields and Salerno 2013, 517).

Any male peculiarly aware of his enfleshed manhood might care that testicular cancer develops at a rate from 500% to 1,000% more heavily in an undescended testis, although that disorder is surgically corrected (<http://www.britannica.com/science/cryptorchidism>). Meanwhile, Orchid is the United Kingdom’s foremost charity dedicated to work for anyone affected by male cancer: penile, prostate or testicular. Orchid was founded by testicular cancer survivor Colin Osborne and the oncologist who saved Osborne’s life, Professor Tim Oliver. Perhaps coincidentally, Orchid was established in 1996 (Orchid - www.orchid-cancer.org.uk/about-us). And how aware was J.D. of Britain? Following a seven weeks-long, 1951 holiday in England, Scotland, Ireland and the Scottish Hebrides (Slawenski 2010, 200-202), he could write about settling in Scotland (*Ibidem*, 202). Salinger long since had disclosed himself to his twelve-year-old Peggy, no less, as the kind of man to journey to Britain to meet a teenaged girl (Salinger 2000, 261-262; Maynard 2013, 339).

Recollect Slawenski’s proposition that Salinger intended an Orchises publication to extend Jerry’s control over his creation. Molly Friedrich pronounced: “Somebody like Salinger wouldn’t just go for the money, obviously”. In fact, Ian Shapira recorded: “Lathbury remembers that Salinger did not ask for an advance and that any money to be made would come from sales” (Shields and Salerno 2013, 518). A theory of the whole Orchises publication imbroglio alternative to Slawenski’s runs: The Orchises project unilaterally (if that term is tolerable) was conceived to miscarry. J.D.

was completely cognizant of its calculated outcome. Under that theory, there can be scant wonder why sly Salinger solicited no advance.

John Wenke, a scholar of Salingerian short fiction (Shields and Salerno 2013, 682), holds: “There’s no aesthetic reason that I can think of for why Salinger would want ‘Hapworth’ to be in print. The very fact that he’d had a deal with a small press in Virginia indicates that he was perfectly aware of the kinds of things likely to happen” (*Ibidem*, 520). No aesthetic rationale. Instead, J.D.’s betrayal of an unsuspecting Lathbury marked, maybe, a wiseguy’s one-sided (hypothesizing an author asymmetrical gonadally) joke upon the public, about orchids. For Salinger indeed “was perfectly aware of the kinds of things likely to happen”. He was perfectly aware of more things than are dreamed of in Wenke’s philosophy.

Salinger sealed-off from his guileless Alexandria, Virginia, victim a smug celebrity’s solitary, selfish, secret program. *Ex hypothesi*, his hidden agenda was simply to shout into the ears of all the planet his word ‘orchids’ over and over and over. An unsuspecting Orchises Press handed Salinger his bullhorn. For the widely-heeded conundrum concerning Orchises’ Salinger republication-program broadly heralded, simultaneously, a different noun (that was somehow the same noun) again and again and again: Testes. Testes. Testes. *Conundrum*. “1. A kind of riddle or puzzling question, of which the answer is a pun or involves a pun” (Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary 1948, 222).

Salinger’s biographer Kenneth Slawenski in 2010 thus discussed the 2007 assurance that Orchises would release “Hapworth” for Salinger’s birthday on January 1, 2009 (January 1, 1919, being the day, as Salinger knew, someone had counted his fingers and toes and suchlike): “Readers and critics justifiably met the announcement with scepticism. It did, however, generate renewed interest in Orchises Press (...)” (Slawenski 2010, 395n.). *Renewed interest in Orchises*. Quare, whether orchises/testes labelled something Salinger ceaselessly contemplated: That thing of which Jerry dare not speak the name, and that thing over which he failed to suppress

(or disdained to suppress) his fixation.

LATHBURY BETRAYING SALINGER

Professor Lathbury, on April 4, 2010, reviewed his history with Salinger, a retrospect entitled “Betraying Salinger” (Lathbury 2010). Lathbury says that after he met J.D.: “A series of letters followed. They were remarkably open, even garrulous, with notes on family life, social observations, gripes about train travel, little jokes about himself” (Lathbury 2010). *Remarkably open. Jokes about himself.* This clashes with the picture drawn by biographer Paul Alexander during 1999: “[H]e did not [in 1955] have, nor would he ever have, a keen sense of humour. Serious and aloof, Salinger was so wrapped up in his life, he was unusually unable to step back and laugh at himself, or at others” (Alexander 1999, 186). Can such seemingly inconsistent reports be reconciled?

In the year of Alexander’s biography of Salinger, the psychiatric literature declared that, among cryptorchids, some “subjects tend to sexualize their relationship with the external world in the form of an exhibited hypersexuality or seductiveness, or a sexual ambiguity” (Masi et al. 1999, 79). Consequently, consider how Professor Lathbury loyally concludes:

Some people, when they hear this story, blame Salinger for backing down after going this far, but I find this unfair. Such people want J.D. Salinger to be someone other than J.D. Salinger. Nor is the problem the *Washington Post*. I know where the blame lies. After thinking I could do right by a man I admired, I let him down.

In the end, I’m left with a box. It contains the buckram sample case and the die used to stamp the cockeyed spine printing. It also contains a stack of wonderful, kind letters from a man who has meant as much to readers as any writer ever can. I have not looked at those letters in years; to reread them would be too painful. Nor will I sell them. That, at least, I can do. (Lathbury 2010)

Exhibited seductiveness. Wonderful, kind letters. To reread them would be too painful. That year, Ian Shapira reported of Lathbury: “Though brief,

the relationship with Salinger still haunts and enchants the English professor, now 64” (Shapira 2010). *Haunts and enchants*.

SALINGER BEWITCHING BY POST

Oona O’Neill (17) and William Saroyan (33)

Oona O’Neill (at ages 16 and 17) was squired by Jerry Salinger (at ages 21 and 22) (Scovell 1998, 86-87). At the Dalton School, Oona was a dancing classmate of Carol Marcus (*Ibidem*, 88). No earlier than December 1941, the 17-year-old Carol met the 33-year-old playwright, William Saroyan (*Ibidem*, 98). Saroyan wrote Carol numerous letters, to which Carol supposed herself ill-equipped to reply (*Ibidem*, 100). In those “early days of the courtship” (*Ibidem*, 99), Carol

... confided her fears to Oona, who straightaway concocted a plan. Jerry, one of Oona’s many ardent beaux, wrote brilliant letters; why not lift pithy passages from his notes and incorporate them into Carol’s letters to Bill Saroyan? Carol liked the idea and proceeded to take from Jerry and send to Bill. Thanks to Oona O’Neill, William Saroyan received letters from Carol Marcus with additional dialogue by the young J.D. Salinger. (*Ibidem*, 100)

Not earlier than the summer of 1942, Saroyan told Carol that (avowedly with his eye toward their marriage) he wanted her to meet his family (*Ibidem*, 98). Consider whether the letters of J.D. Salinger at age 21 and 22 could seduce an adult male expertly commanding English.

Claire Douglas (16): Enchanted and Haunted

The day after J.D. Salinger at age 31 met the 16-year-old Claire Douglas in the fall of 1950, he obtained her Shipley School address. The week following, he had his letter in her hands (Salinger 2000, 10):

She wrote a letter to him in return, agonizing over it, afraid she might not sound clever enough to a real writer. [Compare Carol Marcus and William

Saroyan.] He telephoned her off and on throughout the 1950-51 school year. She knew from his letters that he was hard at work finishing a novel. She thinks he changed the school that Holden’s best friend Jane Gallagher attended to Shipley [School] for her. “It was the sort of thing he’d do, but I was too in awe and on my best behaviour to ask”. (Salinger 2000, 10-11)

By early 1953, Jerry asked Claire to drop out of Radcliffe and live with him in Cornish, New Hampshire (*Ibidem*, 83). When she declined, he cut off contact. Claire collapsed and subsequently would inform her daughter: “The whole world was your father—everything he said, wrote and thought. I read the things he told me to read, not the college stuff nearly as much, looked on the world through his eyes, lived my life as if he were watching me” (*Ibidem*).

Jean Miller (14): Enchanted and Haunted

Compare Claire’s experience with that of Jean Miller. She met J.D. Salinger in January or February 1949 (Shields and Salerno 2013, 221), when Jean was 14 and Jerry was 30 (*Ibidem*, 223). They were exchanging missives by March (*Ibidem*, 228-229). After about five years (*Ibidem*, 220 and 241), he broke up with her (*Ibidem*, 240).

Breaking her silence of some six decades, Jean relates:

All through my life, there’s a part of me that asked, “Would Jerry Salinger approve of this?” I can go five years without giving him a thought, but if there’s a moral dilemma and I’m trying to figure out what the next right step is, Jerry Salinger might pop into my head. I think, “Well, I’d better not do it that way”. (Shields and Salerno 2013, 241)

Looked upon the world through his eyes. Lived as though he were watching me.

Joyce Maynard (18): Enchanted and Haunted

Salinger’s live-in mistress from Yale over 1972 and 1973, of eighteen and nineteen years of age, was Joyce Maynard. She published a book in 1998 encompassing their affair. Salinger had initiated a correspondence with her upon encountering her *New York Times Magazine* cover story of April 23, 1972 (Shields and Salinger 2013, 409). Her memoirs relate:

One set of letters that make up a crucial piece of my history are the forty or so pages of my correspondence with J.D. Salinger, from April 1972 to August 1973. Long before I met the author of the letters, I fell in love with his voice on the page. Sometimes funny, other moments tender, and frequently wise, knowing and scarily prescient, Jerry Salinger's words formed the basis of my powerful and enduring attachment to him and haunted me for years after he left my life (Maynard 2013, 349-350).

Haunted me.

The adult Maynard, then herself a professional writer, recounted of their correspondence prior to their first meeting:

There's only one other time in my life when I experienced the phenomenon of letters having an equivalent [to Salinger's letters to her as an 18-year-old] power of seduction, seduction by words. It was a man serving life in prison for double murder. He had only words to pull in a woman, and he did it very well. Salinger was a master at that. Getting a letter from J.D. Salinger was like getting a letter from Holden Caulfield, but written just to me—Holden Caulfield telling me how wonderful, lovable and brilliant I was (Shields and Salerno 2013, 424).

After her 1998 memoir was published, Maynard asserts:

Not wholly surprising to me were the letters I received from three other women telling me they had engaged in correspondences with J.D. Salinger eerily like my own, one within weeks of his dismissal of me. I have no doubt these women's stories were true. They quoted lines from Salinger's letters to them nearly identical to ones in his letters to me, whose contents had never been made public. Like me, these women had been approached by Salinger when they were eighteen years old. Like me, they once believed him to be the wisest man, their soul mate, their destiny (Shields and Salerno 2013, 525).

By 1997, Salinger had been married for years to Colleen O'Neill Salinger (Shields and Salerno 2013, 511; Alexander 1999, 293). Colleen O'Neill is not to be confused with Oona O'Neill. Their common last name doubtless was coincidental, at least to the extent Salinger moved in circles heavily Irish or heavily Roman Catholic. (Exactly how great was that extent?) That year, Joyce visited the Salingers' home (Shields and Salerno 2013, 522).

For in 1984, at a New York City publication party Maynard had met a woman who told Maynard of her former au pair’s possession of letters the girl had received from J.D. (*Ibidem*, 515):

She was young. She was beautiful. She had met Salinger by chance and they had started writing to one other. The writer was fascinated, of course, since the girl had ended up with a cache of letters from Salinger—letters, Maynard realized that night in Manhattan, not unlike the ones he had written to her. Over time, Maynard became obsessed with the girl. She found people who knew her. She even got hold of a picture of her.... [On November 4, 1997], Maynard had finally met her. She had opened the door when she knocked—Colleen (Alexander 1999, 309).

Letters remarkably open. Wonderful. Kind.

Roger Lathbury during 2010 retained his box of letters: “I have not looked at those letters in years; to reread them would be too painful.” Compare the Professor with the Joyce Maynard of circa 1997:

I went to the back of my closet, where there was a shoebox, (...). I hadn’t looked at the letters from Jerry Salinger in twenty-some years.

I took them out, laid them on my bed, and began to read them. They were letters I’d known very well. I could have recited some of them, I’d read them so carefully when I was young. I was reading them now as a forty-three-year-old woman, and the voice that moved me and melted my heart when I was eighteen struck me in a very different way at forty-three (Shields and Salerno 2013, 515).

Marjorie Sheard (23): Enchanted and Haunted

In 2019, novelist D.J. Taylor mused of fan letters: “In these frank admissions of esteem, or something approaching it, there lurk the beginnings of a relationship. But what kind of relationship, and with what end in view?” (Taylor 2019, 19). Indeed, “On rare occasions, the relationship becomes actual rather than paper-bound” (*Ibidem*).

Furthermore, Taylor had learned that: “Curiously, with titans of the trade known for their unapproachability or reluctance to reveal much about their deepest feelings, a fan letter very often acts as a kind of emotional trigger” (*Ibidem*, 19). No youthful literary

phenomenon, in 1941 Jerry Salinger marked but tomorrow's titan among American fictionalists. He was destined both to become known for disinclination to disclose a great deal concerning, *e.g.* innermost Salingerian sensibilities, and to become the national legend of unapproachability.

Beller grasps something noteworthy in the 22-year-old Sonny Salinger's correspondence with Marjorie Sheard. Their correspondence was initiated in September 1941 by that 23-year-old (Itzkoff 2013, C1) fan from Toronto (Beller 2014, 117):

Unless Salinger slaved over his letters, typing multiple drafts, what jumps out at you is the neatness of the page and the typing. Not one typo. And the fluidity of the warmth that flows from the lines. The mixture of the informal and the profound, even in this artificial exchange of writing to a fan, is remarkable. The correspondence is the first appearance of a major theme: Salinger writing to a young woman with advice and encouragement, with a nod to the edge of the map where there be dragons, and Vassar girls. (Beller 2014, 118)

Moreover, Beller judges:

One of the fascinating things about Salinger's epistolary style is the confidence with which he conducted himself, his graciousness and good manners enhancing the sense of being genuine as opposed to impeding it, as forms sometimes do.

There was something about the distance implicit in a letter that allowed him to come forth with genuine warmth. (Beller 2014, 175)

Remarkable fluidity. Warmth.

Salinger and Marjorie (d. 2013) never met (Pyne 2013). But until about 2007 (Itzkoff 2013, C1), Marjorie secretly stored his typewritten letters inside a shoebox (Ptashnick 2013) in a closet, then to put them into the hands of a relative when Marjorie entered a nursing home (Itzkoff 2013, C1). Perhaps Marjorie's story sounded familiar to Maynard with her shoebox, and to Lathbury left at the close with a box of his own. Determine whether, among women saving (through more than 70 years) typed letters from foreign men they never met, must number the enchanted and

haunted. Scant wonder is Beller’s belief that: “As communication, as metaphor, as talisman, as literary calisthenics, letters were central to J.D. Salinger’s life and imagination” (Beller 2014, 10).

A theory about Professor Lathbury’s “Hapworth 16, 1924” evidence alternative to Lathbury’s own theory, runs: contrary to proving remarkably open, a devious trickster coldbloodedly manipulated the man of letters trusting him. Far from opening-up through jocularity over himself, Jerry beguiled Lathbury across sheets of stationary as J.D. had mesmerized female after female after female, for generation after generation. Quære, whether Salinger toiled over drafts of his private correspondence to infuse his leaves with warmth glowing from between their lines. Wonder whether only the distance inherent in correspondence empowered pyrotechnics of genuine charm (because letters betokened but literary callisthenics). *Sexualize relationship with the external world, in the form of exhibited seductiveness or sexual ambiguity.*

CONCLUSION

The preceding, speculative discussion has reviewed the controversy over the turn-of-the-century’s abortive republication of Salinger’s 1965 novella, “Hapworth 16, 1924.” This preliminary reappraisal has been informed by the report in the 2013 biography of Salinger by David Shields and Shane Salerno, indicating that the infant “Sonny” Salinger had been born with an undescended testicle, the medical condition denominated cryptorchidism. That affliction they style a serious emotional burden he endured through the decades. The previously little-known outlet the monorchid-Salinger ostensibly selected for his proposed republication, Orchises Press, bears a name meaning ‘orchids’ in Greek. In turn, the Greek noun ‘orkhis’ means ‘testicle.’

The owner of Orchises Press, Professor Roger Lathbury, gallantly shouldered the blame for the collapse of the engagement to republish the novella created years-earlier by his erstwhile

publication-associate. Yet evidence enveloping that business failure bears another reading. For Lathbury recounts that he received and saved Salingerian correspondence constituting a stack of kind and wonderful missives from the man Lathbury admired. However, his apotheosized, sometime business partner had made a practice, decade after decade, of corresponding with strangers or near-strangers seduced on paper. Those recipients embraced his teenaged, future wife (Claire Douglas). She, years later, would divorce him (Alexanderb1999, 236-237). They embraced his teenaged, future mistress (Joyce Maynard). She would flail him decades later in a stinging reminiscence.

In this interpretation, the comparatively openhearted Lathbury was seduced and traduced like young Douglas and youthful Maynard. Each was a trusting correspondent with a callous counterpart long-sophisticated in people-puppeteering. You easily ken what flower both Claire and Joyce held that Jerry desired, because it proves the desire of heterosexual males in general. Whereas, what held George Mason University Professor Lathbury that Salinger could covet?

Even the middle-aged Sonny somewhat had appeared embarrassed, a bit mystifyingly, by his mother's *Life of the Orchid* prints hung in her home. In 1996, Lathbury's Orchises Press unknowingly offered elderly Salinger a ruse to relish a laugh at an anthill of stooges incompetent to distinguish between a chaste wife from a convent by way of Radcliffe, and a Stork Club-call girl: *Homo sapiens*. Out in the open, he would knot the names Salinger and Orchises to make the world mull the two in tandem. Simultaneously, Salinger savoured solely proving, among all mankind, conscious of what his conjunction cunningly conveyed.

Something else Salingerian happened the year of unsuspecting Lathbury's first of two "Hapworth 16, 1924" endeavour-debacles. On November 4, 1997 (Maynard 2013, 338), Joyce Maynard - no more 1972's sub-age of majority, unsuspecting, cohabiting mistress (Maynard 2013, 158) - arrived unannounced at the 78-year-old Salinger's Cornish doorstep (*Ibidem*, 341) for their final five minutes

together (Maynard 2013, xi):

He stands there for a moment. Then, taking a step backwards, he raises his long thin finger so it’s pointing directly at my heart.

“You, Joyce -” he says, finger still pointing. “You. You. *You*.” His whole body is quaking, and his eyes stare out at me as if he were beholding a sight of unspeakable horror.

“The problem with you, Joyce, is... *you-love-the-world*”. (Maynard 2013, 343-344 (ellipsis and italics in Maynard))

Unbeknown by Joyce from that day to this, between 1996 and 1997 the recluse already might have played their entire world for fools. Maybe Jerome David Salinger judged his jest justified. For their world, which Joyce loves still (Maynard 2017, 71), abandoned a boy to a natal curse he never dared name aloud but delivered disguised.

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