


Spring 5-1-2009

# From Villain to Superhero: Evolution of the Novel's Lawyer Stereotype from the Nineteenth through the Twenty-First Century

Carolyn A. Morway

*University of Connecticut - Storrs*, [carolyn.morway@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.morway@gmail.com)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/srhonors\\_theses](http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/srhonors_theses)

 Part of the [American Literature Commons](#), [American Popular Culture Commons](#), [French and Francophone Literature Commons](#), and the [Literature in English, British Isles Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Morway, Carolyn A., "From Villain to Superhero: Evolution of the Novel's Lawyer Stereotype from the Nineteenth through the Twenty-First Century" (2009). *Honors Scholar Theses*. 111.  
[http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/srhonors\\_theses/111](http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/srhonors_theses/111)

*From Villain to Superhero: Evolution of the Novel's Lawyer Stereotype from the  
Nineteenth through the Twenty-First Century*

A Thesis Presented to the University of Connecticut English Department and Honors  
Program in Fulfillment of the Undergraduate Honors Requirements

Carolyn A. Morway

May 2009

*Acknowledgements*

I would first like to thank the University of Connecticut Honors Program for providing this opportunity and ultimately challenging and developing my academic and scholastic career. Special thanks to Professors Jonathan Hufstader and Richard Reynolds of the UConn English Department for their invaluable advising and for allowing me to tap into their bottomless well of literary knowledge. Their guidance gave me a sense of direction and purpose, along with the much-needed encouragement to continue in my work. Finally, the inspiration for this project is attributed to Professor Mark DeAngelis of the UConn School of Business. I also owe him many thanks for introducing me to Ephraim London; I now personally own a copy of London's fantastic work.

Besides the help and support from academic resources, let there be no doubt that many other people contributed to the success of the final product as well. My wonderful friends, Ms. Emily Sulik and Ms. Katherine Singleton, encouraged my perseverance and gave me the energy to return to the library day after day. The unbridled faith of both Mr. Robin Neri and Ms. Ashley Campbell Foster helped me believe in my own abilities and pushed me through the end. Finally, the continuous support from my family, particularly from my mom and dad, was the fount of my willpower. Their trust in the power of education has manifested through this work. Thanks to everyone for their time, belief, and love. Truly, my sincerest appreciation can only be shown through the conviction that this is only the start of great things.

## Table of Contents

I. <i>Introduction: Fictional Lawyers and Their Evolution</i> .....	4
II. <i>Where the Law Meets the Lawyer</i> .....	7
III. <i>The Influence of the Lawyer’s Perceived Personality</i> .....	9
IV. <i>Attorneys Tom, Dick, and Harry: The Every-Man Protagonist</i> .....	15
V. <i>Infamous Caricatures and Society’s Outcry</i> .....	24
VI. <i>The Unimportance of Truth: Lawyers as Mechanical Parts</i> .....	32
VII. <i>Heroic, Yet Tragic: The Hopeless Fight for Justice</i> .....	38
VIII. <i>Up, Up, and Away: The Rise of Superheroes in Literature</i> .....	46
IX. <i>Once Imaginary, Now Legal: The Modern Day Superhero Battle in Fiction</i> .....	51
X. <i>Conclusion: How Fiction Affects Lawyer Stereotypes</i> .....	55
<i>References</i> .....	57

I. *Introduction: Fictional Lawyers and Their Evolution*

The scene that unfolds in the courtroom often mirrors the heroic quests of the medieval era. A talented lawyer acts either as your courageous white knight, gallantly defending you against the fray of injustice, or as the vicious dragon, spewing diatribes that sear through your shield of innocence. The magic in the lawyer's ability to assume either of these counteracting roles is created through the ideal of truth and the unattainable illusion of pure justice. In the utopian world, there are clear definitions between 'good' and 'evil'. Despite the present day's remoteness from the utopia ideal, people continue to believe in the existence of these clear definitions. Yet, in the present world, inevitable human error leads to equivocal ideas of right and wrong. Lawyers reflect the mutable and ambiguous nature of humanity through their professional duty to attribute right and reason to any human action. As a concentrate mirror of human nature, at one moment deeply scorned and then highly admired at the next, lawyers became functional characters in novels.

Starting in the mid-nineteenth century and continuing through the twentieth century, popular law-related fiction novels created lawyer characters who fit into one of four distinct categories: the protagonist, everyman lawyer; the unscrupulous, villainous lawyer; the mechanical, futile lawyer; and the tragic, idealist lawyer. Close readings of the lawyer characters in Anthony Trollope's The Eustace Diamonds, Charles Dickens's Bleak House, Great Expectations, and A Tale of Two Cities, Franz Kafka's The Trial, William Faulkner's Sanctuary, "Tomorrow", and "Knight's Gambit", and Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird portray a relatable, human character who follows the typical lawyer persona. The established lawyer stereotype serves as the basis for the fictional

character. While the differences between the character categories are shaped partially from the novel's historical context and partially from the individual views of the authors, each category reinforces elements of the lawyer stereotype. Whether through common human traits or recognition of the lawyer stereotype, each category ultimately allows people to relate to the lawyer figure and thus promotes the accepted stereotype.

In contrast, the most recent novels of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century create a revolutionary form of the fictional lawyer. These works challenge the underlying basis of the lawyer stereotype, which stipulates that to fulfill the obligations of the profession a lawyer must follow the Law. Instead of faithfully pledging to the constraints of the Law, the lawyer evolves from an outright defiance of the legal system. The mystical infallibility of the Law transfers to the lawyer figure, as he assumes an incredible superhero persona. This transcendence of the Law reflects the growing doubt and disconnection that Americans feel toward the creators and enforcers of the Law: government and institutions. As the desire to step further away from reality grows, the adoption of the superhero persona diminishes the emphasis on the traditional lawyer stereotype. The new lawyer-superhero emerges from a basic, established character found originally in comic books. However, it is the up-and-coming genre of literature, known as graphic novels, which created a platform for the emergence of the superhero persona in law-related novels.

The rise of the lawyer-superhero character creates a new stereotype based on the fantastic powers and persona of the comic book superhero. However, the superhero figure is a less relatable character than the negative lawyer stereotype, so the fictional lawyer figure becomes more difficult to relate to than in earlier literature. An

examination of how the lawyer has risen above the Law reveals how the superhero adaptation fashions a new positive image of the fictional lawyer character. The study of the superhero and the corresponding comic medium explain the evolution of the lawyer character in the recent novel The Firm, written by John Grisham. However, this evolution causes a deepening gulf of reality between the reader and the character, thus introducing the argument that the redefined superhero-lawyer, instead of reflecting actuality, represents a surfacing undercurrent of social discontent and hopelessness. The transformation of the literary character also implies a coming change in the stereotypical image of a lawyer, regardless of the loss of humanity. While the reader relates less to the new lawyer character on a realistic level, the increasingly troubling issues that persist in daily life demand the creation of a heroic, superhero persona for the popularized fictional lawyer.

## II. *Where the Law Meets the Lawyer*

The Law derives its power from the people it serves. To serve its purpose as the controlling mechanism that creates civilized order, the Law requires that the majority of society accept, fear, and follow its terms. Yet, because man creates and maintains the Law, the Law embodies the many flaws of man. In the years before telephone communication, worldwide newspapers, and the Internet, governments and their judicial systems found it much simpler to impose the glorified version of the Law on their smaller, secluded societies. Over centuries of civilization, the remarkable improvements in technology have made the Law, and all its bumbles and blemishes, increasingly transparent. The current global culture parades its imperfect model before a widespread and intelligent audience. This new transparency allows people to closely analyze the Law and personally discover its shortcomings and failures. Overall, the result proves beneficial to society; people gain a better understanding of the Law and work to expand their power to change poorly written or unpopular laws. However, one negative side effect of the recent transparency is the public's diminishing faith in the Law's ability to serve justice. Discerning the Law's weaknesses mars its otherwise honored and respected reputation, resulting in feelings of helplessness and disgust among the world of people who depend on the Law to provide structure to their daily lives and meaning to their individual morals.

The slow divorce between the people and the Law has led to a parallel trend in novels. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, novels' fictional lawyer characters began to reflect the unfortunate disconnection felt between Man and the Law. The increasing separation changed these lawyer characters from relatable personalities, to garish caricatures, to



failing illusions. Yet, the metamorphosis of the lawyer figure occurred without changing the nature of the Law. The inseparable connection between the Law and lawyers does not define lawyers as the creators, maintainers, nor destroyers of the Law, but as those who seek justice within the Law. In their quest for justice, lawyers cannot permanently change the Law. They can merely propose alternative interpretations and argue on behalf of their client. However, while not equivalent, there stands a fixed connection between the Law and lawyers. Because of this permanent relationship of the lawyers working within the Law, the societal rift and individual discontent with the Law equally transfers to the general perception of lawyers. Thus, society easily created a stereotype of lawyers that serves as the foundation for fictional lawyer characters.

### III. *The Influence of the Lawyer's Perceived Personality*

The word “lawyer” holds a predominately negative connotation within the scheme of human professions. Whether the connection is made through Hollywood films, popular media, or even unfortunate personal experience, lawyers are often thought of as “corrupters of discourse, economic predators, fomenters of strife, betrayers of trust, and enemies of justice” (Galanter 16). These traits are illustrated through the negative representations of lawyers and the numerous jokes and insults made at their expense. The negativity originates from the stereotypical image of the unjust, greedy lawyer, someone who is willing to represent any side of an issue simply to make money. One popular metaphor is the comparison of sharks, the fierce, meat-eating killers of the sea, to lawyers, emphasizing their sole intent of ruthlessly attacking their economic prey to satiate their own greed. The brutal, animalistic parallel implies that lawyers will go to any lengths to make money or attain victory, including sacrificing justice to win a case. Consequently, a lawyer who consciously benefits from his client’s case by evading or ignoring justice sanctions the opinion “that a lawyer is merely a specialized tool for effecting his client’s desires” (Kronman 123). A happy client, preferably one who simply believes in the lawyer’s efficiency and hard work, regardless of whether or not any productivity exists, can mean more business. This perceived one-track mind fosters the cynical stereotype that a lawyer’s monetary gain is more important than legal justice.

Lawyers’ supposed consuming love for money creates an apparent void in the lawyers’ love for their fellow men, thus creating the impression of the cold, impassionate, amoral lawyer. Under this broad generalization, lawyers can be categorized into one of two subgroups. One group depicts the rich, hotshot lawyers who work for large law

firms. These lawyers are seen as high-class snobs who are indifferent to or even snub working-class people. While they work long hours and are rewarded with hefty salaries and material bonuses, such as a company car or home mortgage paid for by the firm, these lawyers are instead usually having “meetings” with clients that involve drinking alcoholic beverages and eating at fancy restaurants. At the other end of the spectrum is the category of lawyers who are seen as cheap and sleazy. These lawyers are advertised on television, surrounded by fake legal volumes, and repeatedly urging watchers to dial a certain corny one eight hundred number. Their second-rate advertisements imply that the lawyers are not as successful and therefore not as good as their hotshot contemporaries. Rather than persuading you to be represented by them by showing a list of credentials or citing successful cases, these lawyers will be smooth-talkers and almost trick you into hiring them. The implication is that these lawyers will either be more prone to cheat or lie to make up for the absence of legal knowledge or they will simply do a poor job representing their client. Although each category specifies different lawyer behaviors, both reveal a highly negative general opinion that has proved nearly impervious over time.

The actual personalities of most lawyers are found to be much more positive than the stereotypical personalities, yet the two views are linked in many respects. Many of the derogatory views that the public holds actually “reveal that the qualities and actions for which lawyers are despised are closely related to the things for which they are esteemed” (Galanter 19). One example is the ability of lawyers to understand and argue for both sides of a case. One side may be favored by the majority, but nonetheless a lawyer steps up to argue, perhaps successfully, in support of the opposing view. Even

though the public can see this behavior as immoral, a lawyer's professional code upholds the right of the accused to the use of a lawyer to ensure a fair trial. "A courageous lawyer is prepared to take risks for what he or she believes is right – to risk anger, contempt, and a lower income for the sake of the law's own good – and nothing can be a substitute for the fortitude this requires", nor is there a substitute for honoring the ethics of the profession (Kronman 145). So, lawyers, like all humans, have moral limits that they defend. Only a staunch moral core will turn down money in exchange for one's values. An even stronger sign of moral certainty consists of maintaining one's personal beliefs while upholding professional ethics, a decision that may involve publicly supporting an unfavorable view.

Another trait that the public often skews as negative is a lawyer's unsympathetic attitude toward the client and emotional detachment from the case. A successful lawyer "is, in certain situations, one that also characterizes a good friend: [having] an ability to combine the opposing attitudes of sympathy and detachment and to employ them in deliberating on another person's behalf" (Kronman 132). Yet, instead of being viewed as a "good friend", a lawyer can be cool, indifferent, and unable to commiserate with other people. Lawyers must often leave their personal emotions out when fighting for a case so that they do not risk compromising their professional and practical point of view. The steps that lawyers take in order to attain the best results are often mistaken as evidence of their unfeeling nature towards other humans. Besides the public's misconstrued perception of lawyers as cold-hearted, there are other typical characteristics that are necessary to the profession, but are similarly misinterpreted. For instance, a lawyer's "showmanship, rhetoric, and, above all, an ability to move the jurors by playing on their

prejudices” (Kronman 150) can foster resentment among those who have little to no control in the court proceedings, such as the clients or the witnesses. The capacity to speak well and persuasively can be construed as manipulative smooth talking or even outright lying. In actuality, to be an influential speaker, lawyers must first create a credible persona so that the jury, the judge, and the opposing side are not suspicious of the arguments. However, a lawyer’s firm loyalty to, and best interest in, telling the truth can be lost in the stereotypical image.

The law-related novels use the lawyer stereotypes to provide a common, related base between the characters and the audience. Different authors employ different elements of the negative stereotype to describe the fictional lawyers. Some set up stereotypical lawyer figures to contrast with the principal lawyer character, such as in Trollope’s The Eustace Diamonds. Others, like Kafka in The Trial, further develop the negative lawyer image to suggest the profession’s coming annihilation. All of the character categories uncovered within this paper relate to at least one aspect of the lawyer stereotype, proving both the widespread recognition of and adherence to the negative image of lawyers in the real world. However, the shaping of the four categories also depends upon the authors’ individual experiences with lawyers, as well as the historical context of the novel. Therefore, to fully understand the formation of the lawyer character, it is necessary to investigate the various facets that influence a lawyer’s actual personality.

A number of different factors could potentially influence a lawyer’s actual personality, but there are some, such as a legal education and the professional environment, that are common for all lawyers. Although lawyers may come from

dissimilar backgrounds and admit vastly different experiences, “lawyers still share at least one thing in common: they have all been law students at one time or another, and it is as students that their professional habits first take shape” (Kronman 109). During their legal education, lawyers first acquire a sense of professionalism and the time and energy needed to dedicate to their career. Law schools have rigorous academic and social requirements that demand a strong commitment to the field of law. Along with this sense of professional dedication, law school teaches academic strategies that initiate “changes of attitude that many experience as personally transforming” (Kronman 115). When law students are first asked to defend hypothetical cases that go against their personal views, the moral shock can be traumatic and thus labeled as “losing one’s soul” (Kronman 115). By being forced to support positions innately viewed as wrong, law students develop the “capacity to see the point of positions that previously seemed thoughtless or unfair, [which] is often accompanied by a corresponding sense of more critical detachment from one’s earlier commitments, and this can lead to the feeling of being unmoored with no secure convictions and hence no identity at all” (Kronman 114, 115). After the initial shock, law students are taught to detach themselves from controversial cases and acquire “the tendency to look with suspicion on broad generalizations, to search for the qualifying exception to every abstraction, to insist on the importance of details” (Kronman 159). In other words, law school turns students into more acute, perceptive, and emotionally tough people able to enter the world with the potentially successful lawyer personality.

After finishing their legal education, the naïve lawyers join law firms, which will in turn affect their personalities. The law firm culture exhibits various characteristics

depending on the time period and the geographical location. Throughout the novels, an array of job environments, ranging from 19<sup>th</sup>-century socio-political hierarchies to 20<sup>th</sup>-century one-man agrarian legal posts, impact the setting of the lawyer novels, but do not significantly alter the lawyer stereotype. In contrast, the current bureaucratic job environment typical in the lawyer stereotype does play a role in the lawyer-as-superhero evolution. For this focus, it is worth noting that since the 1980s “firms have become more openly commercial and more profit-oriented, ‘more like a business’” (Galanter and Palay 32). The recent trend of law firms imitating big businesses and conglomerates helps produce an image of a high-powered, yet faceless, lawyer. As firms increase in size and take over more of the legal market, “the power of lawyers is measured less by their social and political ties in the community than by their positions in the technically sophisticated bureaucracy of the large law firm” (Nelson 37, 38). A concrete identity can be formed from one’s association with a job. This identity proves necessary for a superhero, and the current stereotype of large, efficient, industrious law firms fulfill that need. In a later chapter about the lawyer-superhero character, there will be discussion on how the stereotypical modern law firm contributes to the formation of the evolutionary character.

IV. *Attorneys Tom, Dick, and Harry: The Every-Man Protagonist*

The widespread, negative stereotype of lawyers opens a door of opportunity for authors to create a fictional lawyer protagonist without traveling far from reality. Since lawyer characters are typically known for being fundamentally bad, the simple act of demonstrating a moral conscience distinguishes the protagonist figure. Thus, the lawyer protagonist can exhibit human flaws, yet still be considered the novel's hero. Displaying the well-intentioned lawyer's faults creates a realistic connection between the character and the audience. People can relate their personal mixture of heroics and flaws to the protagonist's and thus bond with the lawyer character. Starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continuing through the 20<sup>th</sup>, the "everyman" lawyer establishes a popular presence in law-related fiction. Characters like Frank Greystock and Gavin Stevens represent the protagonists of noteworthy novels, and connect to readers through their characterization of the Fall of Man. Heroic yet flawed, both characters reveal a complexity comparable to the human form. Both Trollope and Faulkner draw on their personal relationships with lawyers to create the two lawyers, and the audience's familiarity with the characters concurrently reinforces the negative lawyer stereotype along with the realistic human connection.

The plots of his novels reflect Trollope's somewhat conventional persona, as they often revolve around societal legal scandals that avoid violent or fantastic events. Trollope gained popularity in the middle through the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but failed to retain it because "the long list of wise, tender, and unpretentious novels which he created" (Trollope, *An Autobiography* v) did not make a lasting impression on the literary public. While Trollope wrote his stories with a passion and determination for creating worthy



literature, he ultimately wrote out of economic necessity. He treated writing like any other normal job by starting work in the morning and not stopping until dinnertime. The ordinary events of his life have the most influence on his writing, particularly since he wrote on a daily basis, regardless of whether or not he had found a muse to arouse his imagination. Therefore, the lawyer character, Frank Greystock, also exhibits familiar, normal behavior within the British soap opera setting.

In Trollope's The Eustace Diamonds, the young attorney Frank Greystock plays the novel's protagonist and models various features of Trollope's father, Thomas, and his legal career. After graduating from New College, Thomas worked as a Chancery barrister in London. However, despite his intelligence and competence, his uncontrollable temper destroyed his law career. Other attorneys refused to work with him, and, eventually, his clients followed suit. In spite of their poverty, Thomas ensured that each of his sons received an education from the Harrow School in preparation for Winchester College. Trollope's prestigious education is a direct effect of his father's "certain aptitude to do things differently from others" (Trollope, An Autobiography 2). This "certain aptitude" reveals Thomas's willingness to break the traditional societal structure in order to obtain the best possible future. His desire to create the best situation, despite financial hardships, mirrors Frank Greystock's virtuous decision to marry Lucy Morris. Frank finally chooses to marry the woman who is guaranteed to make him poor and therefore ruin his current high ranking in society. However, despite the condemnations from his family and the warnings from his friends, Frank understands that their marriage will bring happiness because of its foundation of mutual love and respect.

However, Trollope accurately tempers Frank's virtuous sacrifice of class for money with his frivolous spending, a flaw also inspired by Thomas Trollope.

To fully create a lawyer character of relatable human tendencies, Trollope uses the familiar weakness of financial irresponsibility, revealed through his father, to plague Frank's character. During Trollope's childhood, Thomas made a series of ill-fated investments in property. Coming from a genteel background and beginning his young adult independence with a small personal fortune, Thomas ambitiously invested in various plots of farmland complete with country houses, but lost all of his assets as the farms fell into disrepair and eventual ruin. Part of his motivation to make these land purchases stemmed from his aspiration to provide his family with a solid standing in high society, as revealed in the reputable schooling of Trollope and his brothers. Trollope takes his father's money misfortunes and again applies them to Frank's character. Although the way in which Frank spends his money is vague, Trollope implies that Frank squanders it away, spending more than he can afford on food, drink, clothing, housing, and amusements. Even with his success as an entry-level barrister, "he owed a little money, and though he owed it, he went on spending his earnings" (Trollope, Eustace Diamonds 47; Vol. 1). Both Thomas Trollope and Frank Greystock wish to live comfortably in the high rungs of British society, but their inability to be fiscally responsible creates recurring difficulties, in real life and in the novel. The connections that Trollope creates between his novel's character and his father build a more realistic persona for the audience to empathize with and believe in, creating a realistic representation of a protagonist lawyer figure.

Besides relating to the reader through the adoption of Thomas Trollope's characteristics, Frank also embodies the ambition and money obsession typical of the lawyer stereotype. One of the main problems within the plot is that the more time Frank spends with his cousin, Lizzie, the more he thinks about marrying her to acquire her wealth. Lizzie, simple-minded and scheming, understands Frank's money problems and equally understands that he is too honorable to sink to outright money-grubbing. Lizzie instead seduces Frank into a potentially disastrous marriage, feeling that there is "No doubt they can pay a barrister to say anything" (Trollope, Eustace Diamonds 237; Vol. 1). As a rising young lawyer in London, Frank's dissipation is all the worse because of his desire to be considered high class. All of the items he deems necessary are also the most expensive of their kind. Feeling that he must exude a high-class aura in order to rise in his legal career, Frank lunches at the fashionable clubs and dines with the rich couples, but simultaneously tries to find ways out of his money troubles. His motivation to move up in government along with his addiction to the wealthy lifestyle impels him to ask Lizzie "to be his wife; - because she was rich; but even then he had not thought well of her, had hardly believed her to be honest, and had rejoiced when he found that circumstances rather than his own judgment had rescued him from that evil" (Trollope, Eustace Diamonds 162; Vol. 2). Frank indeed eventually brings himself to escape from the obsession with money long enough to realize his true love for Lucy, but with his marriage he also sacrifices his career and the stereotype of the greedy lawyer.

Like Trollope, Faulkner used the lawyer figure in his novels to mold an "authorial surrogate, a fictional alter ego on whom he could project, and through whom explore, numerous and often contradictory aspects of his personal experience, his family

background, and his cultural heritage” (Watson 5). Neither a lawyer himself nor the son of a lawyer, Faulkner applied his impressions of lawyers to create multiple realistic characters. As a young man and an eldest in the Falkner bloodline, Faulkner often felt a sort of resentment towards that stuffy, predictable profession that had been passed down through generations. Faulkner’s father was one of the few to chose an alternate career path, rather than be indoctrinated into the Falkner legal firm. However, at the same time, Faulkner saw rebellious success in his uncle, J.W.T. Falkner. J.W.T. studied to become a lawyer, but shortly after passing the bar, broke away from the family and opened his personal, and eventually, highly successful, practice. Faulkner gained admiration and respect for his “Uncle John” and his profession, but the ferocity and severity of his uncle’s personality (he was called the “Lion of the Courtroom” where he “never lost a killing case”, according to the Falkners [J. Faulkner 66]) pushed William away from ever following in his Uncle John’s footsteps. Faulkner’s life-long interactions with lawyers through familial and friendship circles, but particularly with his uncle, prompted the creation of the ordinary, yet inspiring lawyer.

Combining insight from J.W.T. Falkner’s personal and professional character with pieces of the negative lawyer stereotype, William Faulkner builds the everyman lawyer protagonist as the brilliant, yet all-too-human Yoknapatawpha County Attorney, Gavin Stevens. The man’s loyalty to justice coupled with the realistic flaws of his own proud human nature constructs a platform of realism. Faulkner “made his greatest lawyer character, Gavin Stevens, a decidedly avuncular figure, wielder of a gentler, less problematical brand of authority”, thus creating a primary lawyer character with the prominent, forceful nature of his uncle balanced by the mellow, cool temperament

required of the county's head legal authority (Watson 9). Thus, Stevens represents a realistic lawyer character. Basing Stevens on a real person whom he knew intimately, Faulkner allows the audience to become familiar with Stevens in the way that Faulkner was familiar with his uncle. The application of this relationship is particularly apparent in the short stories "Tomorrow" and "The Knight's Gambit" where Stevens' nephew, Charles, narrates in the third person. Most of Stevens' physical characteristics, behaviors, and emotions are perceived and described by Charles. A bright young teenager with a keen sense of observation and a fairly quick wit, Charles clearly admires his ambitious and intelligent uncle, but also finds him to be mysterious and oftentimes difficult to understand. Stevens' complex personality reflects general human complexity and encourages the recognition of oneself in Stevens' character.

Apart from the connection formed through Faulkner's usage of realistic character development, recognition of Stevens' character stems from Faulkner's usage of certain elements of the negative lawyer stereotype. While Stevens feels unconcerned about making money, he does exhibit an overambitious desire to be the sole commander and enforcer of the Law in Yoknapatawpha County. One example occurs when Stevens decides not to call the local authorities to subdue the armed teenager who, enraged, reveals to Stevens his intention to kill the foreign boarder, Gaudres. Stevens eventually saves Gaudres' life at the last moment by goading the unsuspecting boarder into making a daring bet. Stevens sets up the gamble with the knowledge that Gaudres' life is at risk if he loses. However, Stevens invents the bet in order to prove that only he knows the true outcome of the bet. While Gaudres recognizes that he owes Stevens his life, he is wary of the county attorney "...because nothing is beyond a man of your capacity and

attainments, not to mention imagination... I think you are a very dangerous man and I do not like you" (Faulkner, "Knight's Gambit" 227-228). Gaudres realizes Stevens' greed for and control over the judicial power in the county, and in the final pages escapes both the foiled teen's spite and Stevens' legal control. Not stopping with Gaudres' recognition of his power, Stevens takes justice into his own hands by punishing the perpetrating teen and forcing him to enlist in the military. With little to spend money on in a poor Southern county, the lawyer's stereotypical greed manifests itself in the form of Stevens' thirst for and unrestricted use of legal power.

Stevens' character is also reminiscent of the negative stereotype of a lawyer because of his ability to manipulate language, constantly twisting words in a calculated way to make a point. This characteristic surfaces when Charles describes how Stevens builds his case by extracting information from the county folk. Assuming the role of the smooth-talking schemer, Stevens commands "the voice which talked constantly not because its owner loved talking but because he knew that while it was talking, nobody else could tell what he was not saying" (Faulkner, "Knight's Gambit" 148). Faulkner focuses on language as representing a lawyer's most powerful and valuable tool. Language constantly takes on a prominent role in Stevens' handling of cases, frequently following the lawyer stereotype of talking much, but revealing very little in hopes of finding out more information or confusing the opposing side in a devious manner. Charles tries to reconcile the imposing, proud figure of his Uncle Gavin with the seemingly pointless talk that Stevens uses to persuade others to reveal important gossip that could somehow relate to a legal case:

What surprised him was his uncle: that glib and talkative man who talked so much and so glibly, particularly about things which had absolutely no concern with him, that his was indeed a split personality: the one, the lawyer, county attorney who walked and breathed and displaced air; the other, the garrulous facile voice so garrulous and facile that it seemed to have no connection with reality at all and presently hearing it was like listening not even to fiction but to literature.

(Faulkner, "Knight's Gambit" 141)

Stevens' voice fashions words into imaginary ideas, but his message does not translate as "fiction", or a made-up story. Instead, Stevens creates a form more elevated than fiction. His words qualify as literature: elegant, sophisticated, and, most importantly, true. His ability to convince others of his view through crafting language places Stevens in a much-coveted position of legal power.

This passage shows how Stevens internalizes a double personality, with one side reflecting the negative lawyer stereotype. The other side, however, reveals a normal county attorney who is familiar to everyone and easily connects to people through language. The use of language as a mechanism for relating to others is appreciated as a way for the lawyer to make himself understood and in communication with all the people around him, regardless of race or class. Connecting through language produces the desirable effect of placing the Law on the same level as the people. To effectively interact with the county members, "Uncle Gavin's voice was quiet, almost monotonous, not ranting as criminal-court trials had taught us to expect... he could talk so that all people in our county – the Negroes, the hill people, the rich flatland plantation owners – understood what he said" (Faulkner, "Tomorrow" 87). Easily understood by the county

he represents, Stevens creates a realistic lawyer image that could potentially fit into any legal environment. Even though Stevens exhibits some unfavorable traits stemming from the negative stereotype, he is easy to understand and relate to on the level of human communication.



V. *Infamous Caricatures and Society's Outcry*

As in any profession, there are those who are disreputable, and embody all the filth of their environment. Emerging from these loathsome depths are multiple fictional lawyer characters who relate to the reader through their close following of the negative lawyer stereotype. Because the characters imitate the broad stereotype, their traits are often exaggerated to the point of absurdity. Thus, the characters become more like caricatures of the lawyer figure, an absolute or nearly absolute stereotype with no human softness to invite understanding or commiseration. While the caricature might be impossible to envision as existing in the real world, the recognition of the stereotype prompts a sense of familiarity with the fictional lawyer figure. Authors such as Trollope and Dickens use the negative lawyer stereotype as a strict characterization of some of their fictional lawyer characters, including Mowbray and Mopus, Mr. Jaggers, and Mr. Stryver. Often extensions of their own unpleasant experiences with attorneys, the vulgar caricatures provide a means to connect to readers through the established stereotype, which also may aptly represent other people's unfortunate legal experiences.

In The Eustace Diamonds, many of the male characters are either lawyers or barristers of London. The personalities of Anthony Trollope's lawyer characters range across a broad spectrum of social, moral, and behavioral strengths and weaknesses. While Mowbray and Mopus mirror the deceitful lawyers of Dickens' plots, Trollope also presents the reader with the righteous, determined Mr. Camperdown, the brilliant, serious Mr. Dove, and the sympathetic hero of the story, Frank Greystock. Trollope paints his men of law in a wide variety of qualitative hues, thus demonstrating that attorneys do not all fit one single stereotype but instead live in the same realistic and human manner as his

other fully developed characters. Moreover, the majority of Trollope's lawyer characters are more likeable in comparison to other characters in the book. One comes away from reading The Eustace Diamonds with a predominantly positive opinion of men with law careers; however, Trollope often portrays the three admired law men in ambivalent and, at times, contradicting perspective. Moreover, Trollope includes a brutal condemnation of the pair of unctuous attorneys who work alongside their other three colleagues in the same profession.

The lawyers Mowbray and Mopus appropriately work for Lizzie Eustace in ensuring that the Eustace diamonds, which she greedily and dishonestly claimed after her husband's untimely death, remain in her possession. None of the characters in the novel has a favorable opinion of the pair. Even their fellow London attorneys, like Mr. Camperdown, publicly express that Mowbray and Mopus are "... horrible people; sharks, that make one blush for one's profession" (Trollope, Eustace Diamonds 100; Vol. 1). Lizzie, who employed Mowbray and Mopus from the start, knows that she cannot trust their firm to represent her well during her trial, and looks instead to her cousin, Frank Greystock, for legal help. Ultimately, Mowbray and Mopus are given the most abominable reputations out of all of Trollope's characters; even the thieves can be at least admired because of their pride in their job's precision and success. Likewise, the greedy Jewish jeweler, Mr. Benjamin, can be admired for outsmarting Lizzie and Scotland Yard in the theft of the diamonds. The purely negative image of Mowbray and Mopus separates them from all the characters in the novel, supporting and even overemphasizing the negative lawyer stereotype. Yet the significance lies in the cause of the separation.

Mowbray and Mopus, unlike all the other characters in Trollope's novel, never actually make an appearance. Instead, Mowbray and Mopus represent disembodied symbols of the underhanded, mean-spirited, shrewd lawyers typically found in Dickens' writings. If Trollope had decided to introduce their characters directly to the audience, his talent and wish for establishing full character development would have kept him from illustrating the two lawyers as completely bad or evil. Rather, Trollope would realistically show that, like everyone else, both men suffer from the human condition and are prone to the virtues and vices of the world. Perhaps Trollope decided against having Mowbray and Mopus appear to follow the contemporary literary trend of portraying lawyers as absolutely unscrupulous. Possibly he felt that the upstanding characters of Frank Greystock, Mr. Camperdown, and Mr. Dove needed an absolute converse for character balance. Most likely, Trollope closeted these two characters from the reader to further support the popular opinion of lawyers as scum first and men second.

Charles Dickens takes the negative stereotype of lawyers a step further than Trollope by creating detestable caricatures out of his novels' main lawyer characters. The literary choice of representing most of his prominent lawyer figures as almost exact stereotypes parallels his various traumatic experiences with the British law system and its lawyers. Starting from an early age when his parents and siblings were imprisoned for his father's debt, Dickens performed a terrible dance with the Law; at one moment, he rancorously blamed it for all his life's miseries, and then at another, he found himself abashedly dependent upon it to continue his livelihood:

At the age of twelve he visited his father who had been imprisoned for debt in the Marshalsea prison; and, as his works show, this left an indelible impression on his

mind. At the age of fifteen he was in the office of Charles Molloy, an attorney... and afterwards in the office of Ellis and Blackmore, attorneys... He had been a reporter in the Doctor's Commons and in Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst's Court at the age of eighteen; and in 1844 he had been the victorious<sup>1</sup> plaintiff in five Chancery suits against certain publishers who had pirated *The Christmas Carol*. (Holdsworth 9)

Dickens describes his lawyer characters in vituperative detail, expecting readers to realize the well-known stereotype in the physical form of the fictional figures. Dickens was certain that most of the contemporary British population believed in the negative image of lawyers through their own unhappy legal situations. His caricatures remain popular because many people can still agree with his opinion that "My feeling is the feeling common, I suppose, to three-fourths of the reflecting part of the community in our happiest of all possible countries, and that is, that it is better to suffer a great wrong than to have recourse to the much greater wrong of the law" (Holdsworth 80). Many of Dickens' timeless classics include lawyer caricatures, which continually endorse the stereotypical image of the lawyer.

One of the most popular of Dickens's lawyer caricatures comes from Great Expectations in the form of Mr. Jaggers, as he represents the brutish, calculating, money-driven aspects of the negative lawyer stereotype. Like the metaphorical lawyer shark, Mr. Jaggers is given more beastly than human characteristics. Clients, counsel, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Note: Despite the winning outcome of the court cases, a direct quote from Dickens reveals a less-than glorious account of the Chancery legal proceedings: "I shall not easily forget the expense and anxiety, and horrible injustice of the *Carol* case, wherein, in asserting the plainest right on earth, I was really treated as if I were the robber, instead of the robbed. I know of nothing that *could* come, even of a successful action, which would be worth the mental trouble and disturbance it would cost" (Holdsworth 80).

magistrates shrink away from “his large head, his dark complexion, his deep-set eyes, his bushy black eyebrows... his strong black dots of beard and whisker” (Dickens, Great Expectations 129). Naturally, Mr. Jaggers treats people, both those whom he obeys and those who bow to him, in a beastly way. The people he obeys, he does so like a pet dog. When an order is commanded, he carries it out without the slightest notion of doing otherwise. The simplicity in his obedience boils down to pure, warranted action: “What I have to do as the confidential agent of another, I do. No less, no more” (Dickens, Great Expectations 129). In a similar simplistic and bestial manner, he shows no compassion to anyone he holds in his power. Mr. Jaggers seems to resort to bullying and the biting of his forefinger to prevent him from gnawing on an actual person who is failing to follow his orders.

Yet, Mr. Jaggers’ greed and ambition is hardly coarse or undeveloped. He constantly reminds his clients that his job is to think for them, and the money resulting from outsmarting others drives his dominating persona. Each time Mr. Jaggers addresses a client at his office the discourse routinely ends with the question of whether or not the client has paid for his legal services. His obsession with success echoes the stereotypical lawyer who is more concerned with money than justice. His desire to achieve fame rather than justly represent the Law explains why Pip, while observing Mr. Jaggers in the courtroom, admits “which side he was on, I couldn’t make out, for he seemed to me to be grinding the whole place in a mill” (Dickens, Great Expectations 191). Mr. Jaggers’ aim to promote his own self-image causes havoc for the Law’s ideals of truth and justice. In his calculating way, Mr. Jaggers brutishly ruins all ideal forms of Law and reverts into his original beastly character.

Mr. Jaggers is not the only bestial lawyer found in Dickens, nor the only example asserting the lawyer stereotype's all-consuming ambition and greed. *A Tale of Two Cities* introduces Mr. Stryver, a less intelligent form of the stereotype but all the more manipulative. The animalistic caricature of Mr. Stryver depicts him as a lion, in both physical form and mindset. "Stout, loud, red, bluff, and free from any drawback of delicacy" (Dickens, *Tale of Two Cities* 86), Mr. Stryver asserts himself as the metaphorical "King of the Jungle" by pushing his presence into others' lives and then claiming ownership over them. His sole objective is to climb to the top of the legal ladder, and then stay there for life. Therefore, he preys upon the talent of Sydney Carton because he is not bright enough to practice the Law successfully. Mr. Stryver essentially uses Carton to "hew away the lower staves of the ladder on which he mounted," all the while recognizing that his unreasonable demands worsen Carton's already deteriorating health (Dickens, *Tale of Two Cities* 91). Mr. Stryver shows no regard for the welfare of anyone whom he cannot manipulate, and presents barely enough concern to keep people tied to him. His engagement to Lucie Manette proves that he is incapable of loving anyone other than himself. Mr. Stryver reasons that "she is a charming creature, and I have made up my mind to please myself; on the whole I think I can afford to please myself. She will have in me a man already pretty well off, and a rapidly rising man, and a man of some distinction: it is a piece of good fortune for her" (Dickens, *Tale of Two Cities* 144), but more importantly a favorable outcome for him. Mr. Stryver's greedy ambition represents his one true passion, and he constantly focuses on getting a step ahead by whatever means necessary.

While Mr. Jaggers and Mr. Stryver rely on their cruel ambition to misuse the Law and satisfy their greedy ambitions, Mr. Tulkinghorn chooses a different approach to accumulate wealth and stature while forsaking the Law. A continuation in a long line of lawyers, Mr. Tulkinghorn recognizes that in order to make money off of the Jarndyce & Jarndyce case, he must complicate it and thus prolong it as long as humanly possible. Thwarting truth and justice at every turn, his livelihood becomes the prolongation of the legal case:

The lawyers have twisted it into such a state of bedevilment that the original merits of the case have long disappeared from the face of the earth. It's about a Will, and the trusts under a Will — or it was, once. It's about nothing but Costs, now. We are always appearing, and disappearing, and swearing, and interrogating, and filing, and cross-filing, and arguing, and sealing, and motioning, and referring, and reporting, and revolving about the Lord Chancellor and all his satellites, and equitably waltzing ourselves off to dusty death, about costs. (Dickens, Bleak House 95)

As long as there is money to be gained from the case, Mr. Tulkinghorn's unjust prolongation of a verdict represents a small part of the dark greed that warps the legal system of Chancery Court.

Chancery Court represents the social evil of the delay of legal justice. The source of inspiration for this critique most certainly comes from Dickens' own drawn-out Chancery case over the legal rights of his novel The Christmas Carol. In Bleak House, he describes the Court as a room encased in a thick fog, thus suffocating any type of legal progression. The best interests of the lawyers lie in the extension of the case, so Mr.

Tulkinghorn fills his role by becoming a permanent piece of the oppressive fog. “One peculiarity of his black clothes and of his black stockings, be they silk or worsted, is that they never shine. Mute, close, irresponsible to any glancing light, his dress is like himself. He never converses, when not professionally consulted” and the continuation of his role becomes his only life (Dickens, Bleak House 11). The fog that hovers over the court in the first chapter does not lift in the last, a parallel of Mr. Tulkinghorn illustrating that “There is no change in him, of course. Rustily drest, with his spectacles in his hand, and their very case worn threadbare” (Dickens, Bleak House 376). Equipped with the insatiable greed typical of the lawyer stereotype, Mr. Tulkinghorn’s image reflects the tried and tired state of the Law’s perpetual immobilization. The quotation’s double meaning of “case” ties the lawyer to the Law’s judicial failure. Dickens offers no hope for change in this unjust environment where the lawyers purposefully circumvent the justice of the Law in pursuit of personal gain. Indeed, Dickens leaves the fog, and Mr. Tulkinghorn’s presence, lying across the proceedings as thick and stifling as when the case began.

As mentioned before, the idea of meeting one of these lawyer caricatures in the everyday courtroom seems indubitably ridiculous. Yet the simplistic, unchanging nature of the characters aptly demonstrates the set traits of the lawyer stereotype. The characters and the stereotype appear realistic because of the way that the somewhat silly and outlandish lawyer caricatures circle back to the belief that lawyers have taken primary roles in the courtroom circus. The lawyers’ grappling for money, greed, and ambition distorts the Law’s clear purpose of achieving truth and justice.



VI. *The Unimportance of Truth: Lawyers as Mechanical Parts*

The best of the legal profession consists in this; - that when you get fairly good at work you may give over working... He may examine a witness with judgment, see through a case with precision, address a jury with eloquence, - and yet be altogether ignorant of the law. (Trollope, Eustace Diamonds 207-208; Vol. 1)

Trollope implies that a lawyer's job is inherently mechanical and futile. The realistic notion that the solitary truth makes each legal situation unique does not apply to the real world of legality. Lawyers' work does not entail seeking the truth within the Law, but instead categorizing a person's wrongdoings under traditional law proceedings so that a legal path could be followed. In the sense that the lawyer plays a useless role in deciding the actions of the Law, the lawyer is easily replaceable by any person or even eradicated completely. Out of the desire to follow the path of least resistance, the chance to use the reasoning from a similar case to end a current one will make the lawyer's job easier and quicker. Therefore, it is not altogether unrealistic to imagine a lawyer acting as a cog within the legal machine. Neither the lawyer's character nor role is relevant to the outcome of the Law as the lawyer simply continues the motion of an established system.

Far from asserting themselves as either protagonists or antagonists, the lawyers in Franz Kafka's novel The Trial are defined by their inability to act. The overwhelming weakness of the lawyer is absurdly coupled with an arrogance that endorses his popular reputation, but far exceeds his actual abilities. The ambiguous, yet brutal, authoritarian government that prosecutes citizens indiscriminately exhibits an equal amount of control over the attorneys. Thus, the lawyer characters do not strive to achieve either truth or

justice in a case. Instead, their focus is on working as small cogs in the governmental machine, a function that appears to be on the edge of annihilation. Not only are court cases kept private and never released to the public at any time, but the defense counsel remains equally unaware of the charges against which he defends his client. To gain total control over its individual citizens, the ubiquitous government “wanted to eliminate defending counsel as much as possible; the whole onus of the Defense must be laid on the accused himself” (Kafka 114). The few lawyers struggling to work within the corrupted system find themselves reduced to creating long, futile petitions and other superficial procedures to imitate the gathering of a comprehensive defense. They instead rely on their social connections with court officials to ask for favors in regard to the defendant’s case.

A court of law in this oppressive state reserves no place for a lawyer to stand up for his client, and even less so for himself. Like mindless slaves “it never occurred to the lawyers that they should suggest or insist on any improvements in the system... The only sensible thing was to adapt oneself to existing conditions” (Kafka 121). K., feeling disadvantaged by the powerlessness of the lawyers, is tempted to fire the supposedly remarkable Dr. Huld from his case before the trial ends. Yet, K. does not ultimately follow through with firing Dr. Huld until he fully discovers the incongruity between the lawyer’s futility and his arrogant attitude. In a world where the characters stake their livelihoods on appearances – the embellished judges’ portraits, the noxious court offices, K.’s fastidious dress – Dr. Huld’s appearance of efficacy and talent proves insupportable to K. when juxtaposed with the truth of his legal inefficacy and lack of professional talent.

The disconcerting subjection of the main characters to an ambiguous, all-powerful system results in a plot without a clear protagonist or antagonist. The only free-willed character in the story is the system itself, while all the other characters, particularly Dr. Huld, work as mechanical parts. Kafka first introduces Dr. Huld as an infirm, weak old man confined to his sickbed. Yet, with the wheels of the system continuing to turn, the enfeebled lawyer is reminded that “it’s one of your heart attacks and it’ll pass over like all the others”, and he obediently forces a recovery to take up K.’s case (Kafka 100). By resuming his place within the objectifying system, Dr. Huld accepts the meaningless position that will inevitably kill him. Noting his physical weakness, K. sneers at Dr. Huld’s “considerable reputation as a defending counsel and a poorman’s lawyer”, mocking the label that he feels does not apply to his situation (Kafka 98). However, K does not grasp the inherent two meanings of the word ‘poorman’: the first, in reference to Dr. Huld continuing to eek out his existence, impoverished by his inevitable failure in Court so that he barely stays alive from case to case, and the second, implying that Dr. Huld’s clients represent, not the poorest in any monetary respect, but the most wretched, paranoid, and pitiable human beings.

Block epitomizes this degraded, helpless shell of a person, reduced to sleeping in the corner of Dr. Huld’s house and treated as a nuisance by the servant girl. Thus, K. unknowingly mocks his own unfortunate role in the system while attempting to place Dr. Huld in a position of inferiority. Yet, despite K.’s ignorance of his foreshadowed fall, his clarity and simplicity of thought recognizes the hyped-up confidence in lawyers as the desperate and damning last act of those who are already, if unknowingly, convicted and imprisoned. Dr. Huld’s clients, targeted by the justice system, eventually find themselves

in a state of societal disgrace and constant paranoia. Fear keeps them shackled to the confines of the system, to the point where “the client ceased to be a client and became the lawyer’s dog” (Kafka 193). When K. tries to challenge the system by firing Dr. Huld and naming himself as the leader of his case, the government orders K.’s murder.

Regardless of whether or not K. could possibly prove his innocence, his attempt to disrupt the power hierarchy threatens the entire legal system. For the ominous system to continue functioning, the Court must maintain control over the lawyers, who in turn must maintain control over their clients. The selection of the accused clients appears less arbitrary as the plot unfolds, implying that those like K. are singled out by the government because of their quick, successful rises in business and wealth, thus gaining too much power too fast for the system to handle. Therefore, no mission for justice exists; the only legal purpose of the courts is to maintain their status in the invisible power pyramid. The confusion and ambiguity surrounding K.’s case implies that the uncovering of truth and justice is not the law’s main purpose. Thus, it is impossible for a lawyer who simply functions within the system ever to assume a position of heroism or even of criminality. The uncertainty surrounding K.’s innocence, the court’s charges, even the goon’s final orders to kill K., blur the division between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, between ‘just’ and ‘unjust’. The world is then left with an ominous authority and various grades of futility to create a structure and order of absolute rigidity. Without a sense of justice to direct them, the lawyers lose their power within the court system. Their most desired result is inaction, a seemingly cowardly design if there is a chance of fighting for the client’s justice. However, in the controlled world “the Court never forgets anything” and so removes that precious opportunity for argument and dissent (Kafka 159).

By changing the purpose of the legal system from defining and supporting justice to maintaining a set hierarchy of authority, the lawyer loses his power of purpose and is reduced, like his clients, to a functioning, yet empty, shell, a superficial marker of his original duty: achieving justice. Regardless of the situational factors that contribute to the uncovering of justice for a defendant's case - his innocence or guilt, his motives, his state of mind – the lawyer treats every case in the same methodical, futile, mechanical manner. Block describes the ridiculous and repetitive act of Dr. Huld writing legal petitions for the court cases, all of which “turned out later to be quite worthless”:

... [The lawyer offers] whole pages of general appeals to the Court, then flattering references to particular officials, who weren't actually named but were easy enough to recognize, then self-praise of the lawyer himself, in the course of which he addressed the Court with crawling humility, ending up with an analysis of various cases from ancient times that were supposed to resemble mine. (Kafka 176-177)

The lawyer's role does not contribute to the uncovering of truth or to a fair understanding of accountability. He simply plays a small part within a much larger mechanism that uses the façade of legal justice to control the lives of others. The lawyer's oratory, once necessary for elegant probing and rhetorical arguments, is now used to convince society of his own false importance. The minimal role of the lawyer in the system requires that he keep his clients obedient to his demands and in fear of the Court. Therefore, the sole use of persuasive speech, a lawyer's most powerful tool, is to engage the client in circuitous, demeaning conversation. K. receives the full effect of this futile strategy as he discovers that in “such and similar harangues K.'s lawyer was inexhaustible... though his

attempts to magnify his own importance were transparent enough” (Kafka 124-125). All that remains of the lawyer’s existence is the belief, and not the actuality, of his importance to the legal system.

Dr. Huld’s inflated pride and his ambitious desire to assert power over others demonstrates aspects of the negative lawyer stereotype, but the idea of a lawyer’s position as completely unnecessary marks a new change in how people view lawyers, the Law, and the world around them. The feelings of disconnection from the system that controls societal behavior question the significance of the lawyer stereotype. What is the use of a stereotype for a profession that no longer exists? Yet, before literature revolutionized the lawyer stereotype, 20<sup>th</sup> century authors developed some final challenges for the fictional lawyer character to fight. Unfortunately, the concurrent events in the real world spread a thick layer of cynicism over the public’s legal perspective, causing an even greater hopelessness attached to the lawyer and his job than in Kafka’s depressing representation.

VII. *Heroic, Yet Tragic: The Hopeless Fight for Justice*

Of all the lawyer characters, the most popular category consists of the heroic, yet tragic, figures. These lawyers are present in multiple noteworthy novels from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including Mr. Camperdown in Trollope's The Eustace Diamonds, Horace Benbow in Faulkner's Sanctuary, and Atticus Finch in Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird. The popularity of the category, however, symbolizes a disconcerting, widespread assumption among people that the heroic lawyer cannot exist without encountering severe tragedy. Apparently, the Law and its system convey a perversion of right that is impossible to fully counter with one ideal, moralistic individual. Even those lawyers who, by profession, have the power to fight an unjust law are consistently beaten down in one way or another. Whether it is the simple failure of attaining justice in a legal case, or the more complex self-sacrifice of a lawyer in the name of truth, fictional literature revolves around the belief that the Law cannot grant absolute truth and justice. Historical and environmental factors help explain why the public easily relates to the lawyer character's heroic-tragic antithesis, and personal experiences with the Law and certain lawyers support the unfortunate characterization.

Mr. Camperdown, though a side character, proves to be the heroic lawyer who fails in the end through no fault of his own, but due instead to the flaws within the legal system. His character represents all of the heroic ideals that a person could hope to find in a lawyer. Intelligent, diligent, compassionate, in short "A better attorney, for the purposes to which his life was devoted, did not exist in London than Mr. Camperdown... The interests of his clients were of his own interests, and the legal rights of the properties of which he had the legal charge, were as dear to him as his own blood" (Trollope,

Eustace Diamonds 253; Vol. 1). One of Mr. Camperdown's few possible flaws could be his blind ambition to pursue a verdict that he knows to be unjust. Like the true flawless hero, he expels any doubt of his first loyalty to the Law. In uncovering all aspects of the increasingly complicated Eustace Diamonds case, "Mr. Camperdown would only say that he had a duty to do, and that he must do it" and so indiscriminately consults all the involved parties and seeks final moral and legal advice from the unbiased librarian, Mr. Dove (Trollope, Eustace Diamonds 90; Vol. 2).

While the reader may find difficulty relating to Mr. Camperdown's spotless character, the unfair and clearly unwarranted outcome of his case does resonate. Knowing that Lizzie is guilty of stealing the diamond necklace, the just expectation of the reader, and of Mr. Camperdown, is that Lizzie should be found guilty and pay retribution to the wronged Eustace family. However, the complicated legal proceedings within the court, which includes ethnic prejudice and class judgment, leave Lizzie unscathed despite all of Mr. Camperdown's work and her actual guilt. The defeat is troubling to both the reader and to the heroic lawyer, as it "cut him to the heart that everybody should take the part of the wicked, fraudulent woman" (Trollope, Eustace Diamonds 300; Vol. 2). The tragic failure of Mr. Camperdown evokes sentiments of pity and indignation for a virtuous lawyer whose compelling effort to achieve justice is thwarted by the Law he serves.

From the 1930s through the 1950s, the lawyer character takes a prominent role in fictional novels as the idealist mind trapped in the degraded man, as evidenced in William Faulkner's novels and short stories. The protagonist trusts in the law to produce a just outcome in return for his hard work and adherence to the rules of the legal system.



Yet, this admirable mindset chokes under the twisted standards of society and the garroting flaws found in all fallen human beings. Starting with a seemingly indelible hope in the righteousness of the legal system, the novels nevertheless end in disaster. Immorality succeeds in overcoming justice, despite the lawyers' best efforts. The shortcomings of the lawyers' characters, as well as other characters, render justice impossible. The overarching message insists that a society comprised of imperfect, ambivalent people will inevitably and fittingly produce an unjust, imperfect verdict in the courts. Blind justice cannot spring from a perverse culture, a culture indicative of all humanity. Yet, even though the theme of hopelessness pervades within the plot, the lawyer figure unequivocally remains the story's hero. The lawyer sets himself apart from and above his fellow characters with his solid belief in justice, and the prevailing force of morality. While all other characters wallow in the debased society created by their own wretched acts, either provoking injustice or indifferent to its effects, the lawyer rises from the societal cesspool and forms the bulwark that other weaker characters cling to with the small hope of finding legal justice.

Faulkner wrote during an era when life was far from perfect; he surveyed his fellow Americans struggling through a major economic crisis and balancing on the tense precipice of the Second World War. While *Benbow* connects well to the reader through the desperate cultural situation, Faulkner creates a stronger link between his characters and his readers than simply through the Marxist socio-economic parallel. The humanity of the heroic lawyer is created through more than an understanding and compassion for their impossible struggle for justice in an unjust world. Faulkner defines his lawyer characters through their unavoidable experiences and encounters with wrong and despair,

balanced with their hope and optimism in striving to create a better world. With many struggling through their daily lives, fighting and failing to find jobs, buy food, and keep a roof over their families' heads, the hopeful yet beaten lawyer character would resonate deeply within the mind and heart of the contemporary reader.

To hundreds of thousands of American men and women, the lawyer would stand as a highly relatable and human character. What's more, despite the acknowledgment of unrelenting defeat, the heroic mind of the lawyer can be transmitted to the mind of the reader. People who read, understood, and related to the heroic lawyer character also value the idea that they could easily be thought of as heroes, if they kept an idealist mind and a hopeful heart. The stock market, like the legal system, failed because of the flawed human beings who created its unstable, corruptible system. *Sanctuary*, however, shows the reader that hope still has a place among the knowledge that a man-made system will fail because of the ambivalent human complex. Heroism shines through the muddled intricacies of an unjust society because of the lawyer's pure, trusting confidence in the morality of the system. The story seems to encourage the continuation of this blind trust, if only to be considered a romantic hero trapped in their hopeless reality.

*Sanctuary* mirrors some of the few beliefs that people still held during times of dire need and seemingly unending darkness: hope and trust in humanity. Faulkner's truly heroic characters meet tragic finales, caused by both their own flaws and the general defects of surrounding society. The ambivalence that Faulkner felt towards lawyers during his life are mirrored and actualized through his novels. Like Trollope, he relies upon his interactive experiences with lawyers to formulate the human character of his literature. Living among an uncle, a cousin, two grandfathers, multiple acquaintances,

and some enemies who professed to be lawyers at some point, the lawyer character establishes “a conspicuous and complicated presence in Faulkner’s personal history, at once a figure to admire and to emulate, a figure to avoid and to resent, a figure to compete with, and above all a figure to cope with” (Watson 6). Faulkner compels similar contradictory feelings towards his lawyer characters that produce a realistic human relationship. These contradictory sentiments, sometimes proud and deferential, at other times critical and disappointed, are created through the character’s thoughts and actions as well as from the feelings of other characters toward the lawyer figure. For example, the two middle-aged mother characters in *Sanctuary* express polar opposite opinions in Horace’s lawyer abilities to ultimately attain justice. The accused man’s wife, Mrs. Goodwin, admires Horace and his professional stature, confiding in him and putting herself and her ailing infant at his mercy. At the other end of the spectrum, Horace’s sister, Narcissa, has a total lack of faith in her brother and his trial, insisting that Horace “hire a lawyer, if he [Mr. Goodwin] still insists he’s innocent. I’ll pay for it. You can get a much better criminal lawyer than you are” (Faulkner 145). The ambivalence towards Horace’s professional talents creates an aura of suspense around the outcome of the case.

Horace’s unrefined legal abilities serve as a screen to hide the actual perversion of the Law. Although truth and justice should guarantee Horace’s victory at trial, it is the twisted views of society and their direct effect on the Law that leads to the unexpected conviction of the innocent Goodwin. Temple Drake lies in court to cover up her own misdeeds and uphold her family’s reputation. The shocking dishonesty shatters Horace’s defense of clearing his client’s name by condemning the true perpetrator. Horace, who had up until Temple’s testimony believed in the justice of the legal system, watches the

wrongful conviction of his client and the escape of Popeye, Temple's actual rapist. The perversion of the people whom the Law represents defeats Horace's best efforts to achieve justice. Instead of recognizing the integrity of the lawyer who does not fit the negative stereotype, the novel's characters find a culpable scapegoat in Horace's legal ineptitude to explain the twisted, unjust result. The failure of legal justice in a corrupted society, even with the help of a heroic lawyer, creates a hopeless and tragic story that reflects the reader's cynical outlook living in a downtrodden world.

The theme of wronged convictions as a perversion of society and its legal system reappears in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird. Written in 1936 and based on an actual event, Lee illustrates the vice of racism that grips the American South during the end of the Depression. The Maycomb County is unable to let go of the slavery concept that constructed its economic and social backbone for over a century. The tough economic times create an even thinner transparency of how crucial the black slave industry was to the economic power of the South. Filled with resentment and desperation, the majority of the community continues to believe in the traditional racist views of the past. These backward beliefs create a twisted, unjust society that uses race as the basis of the Law. Atticus emerges as the only character to truly represent social and legal justice. While he recognizes the impossibility of changing a society ingrained in racism, he does fight and hope for legal justice to overcome the unnatural discrimination rampant in a flawed society:

Our courts have their faults as does any human institution, but in this country our courts are the great levelers, and in our courts all men are created equal. I'm no

idealist to believe firmly in the integrity of our courts and in the jury system – that is no ideal to me, it's a living, working reality. (Lee 205)

Of course, Atticus could not be defined as a tragic heroic lawyer figure if the society he seeks to help through legal justice did not defeat him and pervert the Law's attempt at justice. The analysis of Atticus' character demonstrates that a lawyer who does not fit the negative stereotype will inevitably fail in the legal realm.

Lee establishes Atticus Finch as the heroic lawyer figure, a character who is arguably the least flawed of all literary protagonists. Kind, honest, intelligent, and understanding, Atticus lacks any of the stereotypical aspects of the negative lawyer figure. Consequently, he garners a "profound distaste for the practice of criminal law" (Lee 5); nonetheless, he continues to work as a Maycomb district attorney. While the lawyer's dirty work conflicts with his pure internal character, he views the Law as an avenue for dispensing true justice. Acting on the possibility that the elevated reasoning and sentiment that he symbolizes could prevail through the legal system, Atticus accepts the assignment to defend Tom Robinson and works to bring racial justice to the town through legal victory. His defense of Tom, a hard-working, humble black man accused of raping a white girl, "is something that goes to the essence of a man's conscience... I couldn't go to church and worship God if I didn't try to help that man" (Lee 104). While Atticus' tolerant ideology severely contrasts with his constituency's racist tenets, the irony manifests in the fact that Tom is innocent. The white townsfolk sneer that Atticus is "no better than the niggers and trash he works for" (Lee 102), yet his defendant represents a more compassionate, truthful, and righteous human being than the accusatory bigots, the foremost of whom is the victim's father and rapist, Bob Ewell.

Ultimately, the racist perversions in society seep through to the legal system. Atticus, a lawyer as far removed from the negative lawyer image as possible, fails at working within the Law to administer the justice that he seeks. Tom's guilty verdict supports the idea that even a heroic human lawyer cannot rectify humanity's legal injustice.

Mr. Camperdown, Horace Benbow, and Atticus Finch prove that the perversion of the Law and the society it serves prevents even a hero from achieving legal justice. Yet, eventually a sense of just retribution does manifest - outside of the legal bounds. Each lawyer's enemy meets just consequences: Lizzie Eustace loses all of her lovers and is banished to a distant country; Popeye is lynched after committing another murder; Bob Ewell is stabbed to death. While the antagonists eventually punishment, the element of the Law still lacks in the balancing of right and wrong. While there is a sense of relief and satisfaction at finding that Bob Ewell will no longer be violating his daughter, who can forget that innocent Tom Robinson has been found guilty? The simplistic answer of "correcting" the antagonist does not eliminate the bitter failure of the Law or the tragic defeat of the lawyer. The problems in society that help to form the negative lawyer stereotype are not solved. On the contrary, societal ills compound over time and today the public is more aware of the Law's and lawyers' failures. The irreparable hopelessness built by the tragic-hero category edges the lawyer stereotype to the brink of an evolutionary transformation.

### VIII. *Up, Up, and Away: The Rise of Superheroes in Literature*

While the hero figure has been a prominent part of literature since the classic myths written centuries ago, the superhero joined the literary sphere much more recently through the comic book. Up until now, the medium of choice for the lawyer character analysis has been fictional novels. However, it is important to examine the origins of superheroes in comic books to understand how the characters function and why their stereotype has jumped into the fictional genre and recently attached to the lawyer figure. “Comic books have been extremely popular since their inception in the 1930s, and while comic book sales may have decreased in their absolute numbers, the popularity of superheroes is on the rise”, a trend that can be explained by the connection between comic book superheroes and current events (C. Peterson 6). The driving idea behind a superhero revolves around creating a solution to a seemingly irrevocable problem. Therefore, the publication of superheroes has increased during times of social or economic hardship (B. Peterson 889). People in dire conditions yearned for some source of hope as well as entertainment. Comic book superheroes provided an answer to both of these wants. However, the comic book genre continues to be labeled as cheap or inferior in comparison to more classic literary genres, like the fictional novel. In spite of their growing popularity, “the comics remained for most of their history the point at which ‘Art’ turned her eyes with horror, the point of no return beyond which lies the realm of hopelessly and irredeemably ‘popular’ culture” (Somigli 280). Since their inception, comics have been stained with this hands-off reputation, so that many readers either missed out on or dismissed the superhero character.

The advancement of the superhero's literary status came when the comic book morphed into the graphic novel. After decades of printing comic book superheroes who became famous worldwide, *Maus*, an allegorical story about the Holocaust, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1992 under the genre of "graphic novel". "The term 'graphic novel' had a twofold aura of acceptability that tried to ameliorate the unacceptable (comic and cartoon) with the acceptable (novel, literature, art)" and the re-identification worked (Russell 222). The contents of the graphic novel had changed very little from that of the comic book, but it was recognized as a higher form of writing. Considered a new type of novel, the graphic novel opened the door for its characters to enter into other elevated mediums, such as films and literary fiction. The acceptance of the superhero character in literature led to the next step in the creation of the lawyer-superhero, which was the identification of lawyers as the target fictional characters.

The Law and the lawyer are not one in the same, but are meant to function together as a fluid unit, at some times in control of and at other times under the control of the people. However, the rupture between the Law and lawyers stems from the Law being a composite collection, representative of all society, while lawyers can be thought of as individuals, possessing the ability to break away from overarching stereotypes. While lawyers may be irrevocably attached to the Law, their individualized personas allow the possibility of a human link to be forged between themselves and others over discontent with the man-made legal system. In modern novels, the phenomena of people feeling increasingly disconnected from the Law manifests reflects the increasingly powerful reach of the Law and the equally deteriorating status of the human world.



As a product of the government, the legal realm cannot help being tied to the public sentiment towards politics. Within the past half-century, a corrosive chain of events eaten away at people's faith in their government and the Law it promotes. One example shows how the atrocities and confusion attributed to the Vietnam War caused many Americans to lose trust in the United States government and its leaders. The majority of lawyers have close ties to political activities, and often behave like politicians by using "personal influence, and the trading or buying of favors become an almost indispensable part of the individual lawyer's job, especially for those lawyers with more than occasional contact with the courts and administrative agencies" (Carlin 157). As the American public became increasingly suspicious and openly critical of the government, the well established negative lawyer stereotype transformed into the status quo. Adding to the unflattering connotation that was now securely attached to the lawyer's profession, the scientific world was making huge leaps in the nineteen eighties in terms of technology. Telephones and computers were becoming increasingly available and efficient and the media soon found that "the legal world became more accessible to their scrutiny" (Galanter and Palay 73). With greater scrutiny came greater suspicion of the Law and its lawyers. Now, those who worked within the confines of the Law could not deliver justice, and may even be committing crimes under the screen of the Law. The cynical opinion that lawyers need to thwart the Law in order to attain justice provided the literary opportunity of combining the common lawyer with the incredible superhero.

With the transformation of lawyers into characters who act above and beyond the Law, the characters lose their realistic nature; these men and women of the law now embody the forces of either pure good or pure evil, equivalent to the typical comic book's

superheroes and super villains. To achieve justice, the superhero lawyer must rise above and beyond the Law by performing feats of unnatural human capacity. The unrealistic lawyer characters reflect a growing belief that true justice is increasingly unrealistic.

After years of society embracing, honoring, and practicing law, the general feeling of distrust in the legal system triggered the superhero integration into novels in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and has become a typical theme in the current law-related fiction novels.

Although readers are no longer able to identify with fictional lawyer characters on a realistic level, these characters are the products of the public's desire for the existence of powerful, heroic forces. This desire stems from the wealth of information sources and the increasing capacity for people to process the information. While the current state of affairs in the world may not be as hopelessly terrible as they were in centuries past, the widespread stories of every corrupt politician, nuclear rocket launch, and ongoing genocide causes people to believe that the world will soon welcome its apocalyptic end.

Even before the superhero combined with the lawyer character, suggestions of the revolutionized figure appeared in novels that featured the negative stereotype of lawyers. For instance, out of the mockery of the self-important lawyer figure in Kafka's *The Trial* emerges the fanciful, fleeting image of the lawyer as a superhero. Keeping clients in a position of subservience and inferiority allows lawyers, like Dr. Huld, to create an impression of unique power and extraordinary ability. With this impressive screen, society perceives that "one becomes very dependent on one's lawyer" (Kafka 181) and thus assumes that hiring a lawyer will guarantee is necessary when involved in a legal case. There are also whispers of the mysterious high lawyers, half-myth and half-legend, who are superhero-like in their powerful and unbelievable nature. Block describes the

“great” lawyers as some kind of imaginary, almighty beings, capable of anything, yet loyal to no one:

There’s hardly an accused man who doesn’t spend time dreaming of them after hearing about them. Don’t you give way to that temptation. I have no idea who the great lawyers are and I don’t believe they can be got at. I know of no single instance in which it could be definitely asserted that they had intervened. They do defend certain cases, but one cannot achieve that oneself. They only defend those whom they wish to defend... (Kafka 178).

The dense ambiguity surrounding the existence of the great lawyers emphasizes Block’s desperate hope rather than the actual existence of a superhero-lawyer. This larger-than-life character never physically appears, thus the reader is left to believe that the perversion of society and the Law’s inherent human error ultimately wins over truth and justice.

Finally, law-related novels transcend reality and thus satisfy the readers’ desires.

IX. *Once Imaginary, Now Legal: The New Superhero Battle in Fiction*

The literary image of lawyers has revolutionized through the changing of its character platform. Instead of characterizing the traditional negative lawyer stereotype, which fits in with the realistic analysis of lawyers, the comic book superhero has become the model for the new fictional lawyer characters. This transformation reflects the recent feelings of overwhelming cynicism towards the Law and the growing crises apparent worldwide. While currently there is greater demand for a superhero-type lawyer, the dream character retreats further into the fictional realm. The character shift creates a new dimension of escapism for readers, as well as an opportunity for the lawyer stereotype to change. While the retreat from reality may alienate some readers, the simple and natural writing style of author John Grisham makes the lawyer character easy to follow into the imagination world, an alternate universe of the Law.

The appeal of the superhero-lawyer is due in part to the easy writing style of John Grisham's novels. Although the new character seems less realistic than the most vulgar caricatures of the negative lawyer stereotype, the straight-forward description and plot development makes the Grisham novels easy to understand. Grisham uses his simplistic language to connect to readers, popularizing the superhero-lawyer who could otherwise be considered an unreasonable fantasy. Even though "Highbrow critics may shudder... Mr. Grisham's primary appeal, the booksellers say, is that his plots, while suspenseful, are so easy to follow that a reader can return to the plot even after a substantial break and quickly find the place" (Tabor 11) and quickly immerse themselves in the fictional world. Grisham's engaging storytelling connects people to the imaginary, yet desirable, lawyer-superhero character.

Another appealing aspect of Grisham's novel and lawyer-superhero character is the easy recognition of right and wrong, similar to the comic book plot. In The Firm, the Italian mafia and their subsidiary, secret law firm of Bendini, Lambert & Locke are the obvious villains. Mitch McDeere, the superhero-lawyer figure, embodies the protagonist force that will stop the evil side. Grisham also adopts a twist in the moral ideas of "right" and "wrong" that the comic book has been working off of for decades. The role of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the typical authorities of the Law, becomes entangled in both Mitch's justice resolution and the legal system's fallible judgments. Playing off of the possible multiplicity of corporate lawyers and federal cops, Grisham illustrates the ignorance of true justice from each side. Watching a world steeped in disaster and corruption, the lone hero to take on the evil and the moral obscurity is the lawyer-superhero. The acceptance of the evolved character prompts the imagining, and hope, that perhaps there truly exists the lawyer that Block had once whispered about to K. in the dark moments before the final judgment.

While many of Grisham's popular novels focus on a lawyer who exhibits superhero characteristics, The Firm's protagonist, Mitch McDeere, will be the exemplary model in the analysis of the lawyer-superhero image. The definition of a superhero helps to describe Mitch's character, signifying one way that Grisham shapes the fictional lawyer:

A superhero is a man or woman with powers that are either massive extensions of human strengths and capabilities, or fundamentally different in kind, which she or he uses to fight for truth, justice and the protection of the innocent. A substantial minority of people without powers as such share a commitment to the superhero

mission, so they are generally regarded as superheroes in spite of absence of such powers... The mission is an important defining characteristic, as much so as the powers... (Kaveney 4).

Mitch displays powers that push the bounds of normal human strength and willpower. As a new associate in the firm, he starts off like all the other lawyers did during their first years, planning “to be the world’s greatest lawyer and make a million dollars overnight. Sometimes they worked around the clock, slept at their desks... But they couldn’t last. The human body was not meant for such abuse” (Grisham 81-82). Mitch, however, turns out to be different. He works more hours than any other lawyer at the firm, and his unwavering determination to become the youngest partner drives his workaholic behavior. At the beginning of the novel, Mitch is unaware that he is using his powers for the unlawful side. But after discovering the direct criminal connections between the firm and the mob, he devotes his super-human ambition, resolve, and energy to exposing his colleagues and finding justice.

Mitch proves his dedication to the superhero mission when he transcends both the false traitors of the Law and the actual representatives of the Law in search of true justice. He at first works with the Law, agreeing to cooperate with the officers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in exposing the truth and bringing the firm and the mob to justice. However, Mitch’s lawyer-superhero persona is faithful to all three parts of the mission. When the tension between the FBI and the law firm escalates, Mitch turns away from the lawful police to pursue his own form of justice that protects the innocent people set up in the cross-fire from danger. Thus, he takes the exact role of the superhero in terms of his interaction with the authorities, since “Almost all superheroes

are to some degree vigilantes: they do not work for the authorities, though at times they work alongside them... Some of them, and many of them some of the time, are at odds with the authorities” (Kaveney 6). However, the telling component of a superhero is the overwhelming success of Mitch’s single-handed efforts at securing justice while saving those in danger. Not only does he outsmart the corrupted firm and initiate their arrests, he also uses and then outwits the FBI to protect his identity and the safety of his family and friends.

The lawyer-superhero figure, presented by Grisham in the Mitch McDeere character, embodies all the principles of the comic book superhero as well as some of the unrealistic characteristics without overstepping the bounds of absurdity. The lawyer-superhero does not soar from rooftops with cape fluttering in the wind, or jump into telephone booths and emerge wearing a skin-tight ensemble. Instead, the incredible hero is masked in ordinary, trial suits and works at the same job as the typical criminal lawyer. However, although the exterior appearance may not have changed, the mindset and capabilities of the typical lawyer has morphed. Starting in the 19<sup>th</sup> and continuing to shift through the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the novel illustrates lawyers as either mirroring the negative flaws of the legal system or hopelessly failing trying to change the corrupted Law fueled by a perverted society. The new lawyer emerging in the most recent law-related novels comes close on the heels of various atrocities world-wide and the population’s call for a dramatic change in the overarching legal system.

X. *Conclusion: How Fiction Affects Lawyer Stereotypes*

In literature, the demand for legal change has been answered with the lawyer-superhero character. However, the novel's influence could potentially supersede the established negative lawyer stereotype and replace the societal stereotype with the lawyer-superhero image. This shift will cause the word 'lawyer' to adopt a singular connotation, completely different from the profession's current implications. The lawyer-superhero stereotype will alter the expectations that people will demand of lawyers, requiring that these professionals transcend flawed legality to attain truth and justice. The public opinion that the legal system is riddled with human error could eventually encourage lawyers to override the Law on a consistent basis. The model for this assertive, just, and heroic lawyer is the superhero found in comic books. During the past half-century, the superhero character has been deemed as a cartoon fantasy found only in the lowest of literary art forms. However, its own evolution into the graphic novel presents the superhero as a viable mold to exist in actual human society. Not only could the lawyer-superhero transform the legal realm into a more upstanding and just institution, but the new image also introduces the possibility of a superhero figure entering into other areas of degeneration or discontent.

Before investigating the other possible professions that superhero figures could penetrate and transform, further analysis of the lawyer-superhero character should be conducted in other art mediums. Poems, plays, and films represent a few of the other major art forms that involve a lawyer-superhero character. These genres can offer further insight on the developing lawyer stereotype, especially if research focuses on specific traits common across the mediums. With a clearer idea of the desired personality or



possible emerging stereotype of a lawyer, people can either choose to conform to the outlines of the profession or to defy the new connotations. In either case, the renaissance of the novel's lawyer character as the lawyer-superhero has established a steady popular interest and is a role that many people wish to see emulated in real life. The recent transformation of the novel's lawyer character shows the potential to be the stimulating precursor to a revolutionary social change in the lawyer stereotype, evolving from the negative image confined to a cynical world to a heroic figure capable of achieving true justice.

*References*

- Dickens, Charles. A Tale of Two Cities. New York: The Heritage Press, 1938.
- Dickens, Charles. Bleak House. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1853.
- Dickens, Charles. Great Expectations. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1862.
- Faulkner, Jim. Across the Creek: Faulkner Family Stories. Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1986.
- Faulkner, William. Knight's Gambit. "Knight's Gambit." New York: Random House, 1932.
- Faulkner, William. Knight's Gambit. "Tomorrow." New York: Random House, 1932.
- Faulkner, William. Sanctuary. New York: Random House, 1931.
- Grisham, John. The Firm. New York: Island Books, 1991.
- Kafka, Franz. The Trial. New York: Schocken Books, 1937.
- Kaveney, Roz. Superheroes! Capes and Crusaders in Comics and Films. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2008.
- Lee, Harper. To Kill A Mockingbird. New York: Warner Books, 1960.
- Levine, Lynn Gartrell. Faulkner's Heroic Design: The Yoknapatawpha Novels. Athens: Univ. of Georgia, 1976.
- Löwy, Michael. "Franz Kafka and Libertarian Socialism." New Politics. 1997. William Paterson University. 01 May 2009  
<<http://www.wpunj.edu/~newpol/issue23/lowy23.htm>>.
- Peterson, Bill E. and Emily D. Gerstein. "Fighting and Flying: Archival Analysis of Threat, Authoritarianism, and the North American Comic Book." 2005.  
International Society of Political Psychology. JSTOR. Homer Babbidge Library,

Storrs. 1 Apr. 2009.

<<http://http://www.jstor.org/stable/3792469?seq=3&Search=yes&term=books&term=comic&list=hide&searchUri=%2Faction%2FdoBasicSearch%3FQuery%3Dcomic%2Bbooks%26wc%3Don%26dc%3DAll%2BDisciplines&item=1&t1=36814&returnArticleService=showArticle&resultsServiceName=doBasicResultsFromArticle>>.

Peterson, Christopher and Nansook Park. "The Positive Psychology of Superheroes." The Psychology of Superheroes: An Unauthorized Exploration. Dallas: Banbella, 2008. 5-18.

Russell, Vanessa. "The Mild-Mannered Reporter: How Clark Kent Surpassed Superman." The Contemporary Comic Book Superhero. New York: Routledge, 2009. 216-232.

Somigli, Luca. "Play It Again, Sam: The Superhero With a Thousand Faces: Visual Narratives on Film and Paper." JSTOR. Univ. of CT Homer Babbidge, Storrs. 22 Apr. 2009.  
<<http://www.escholarship.org/editions/view?docId=ft1j49n6d3&chunk.id=d0e10293&toc.depth=1&toc.id=d0e10293&brand=ucpress;query=PLay%20it%20again,%20Sam#1>>.

Tabor, Mary B.W. "Nobody Can Keep Pace With John Grisham." Book Notes. 19 Apr. 1995. The New York Times. 07 May 2009.  
<<http://www.nytimes.com/1995/04/19/books/book-notes-nobody-can-keep-pace-with-john-grisham.html?pagewanted=all>>.

Trollope, Anthony. An Autobiography. David Skilton, ed. London: Penguin, 1996.

Trollope, Anthony. The Eustace Diamonds. London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1873.

Watson, Jay. Forensic Fictions: The Lawyer Figure in Faulkner. Athens: Univ. of Georgia, 1993.