

The concept of
distinctively visual
explored through
henry lawsons 'in a
dry seas...



Distinctively visual refers to the understanding of how our perceptions and relationships with others and the world are shaped through unique written and visual texts. This concept and the conveyance of isolation and its impacts can clearly be explored through the short stories *The Drovers Wife* (1892) and ' *In a Dry Season* (1896) by Henry Lawson and alternately through the visual text " *The Rabbits*" (1998) by John Marsden and Sean Tan. These texts utilize a plethora of literary and visual techniques which effectively help convey the impact of isolation and segregation through the hardships they depict. *The Drover's Wife* by Henry Lawson incorporates a colloquial and relatable narrative style which effectively helps shape the readers understandings of the hardships and difficult impact of isolation on the wife of a sheep herder. This can be reflected through the technique of descriptive language " bush all round, bush with no horizon". This describes the place as featureless and lonely, thus isolating the woman from others. This effect is augmented by the use of alliteration " no undergrowth, nothing to relieve the eye, nineteen miles to the nearest civilisation'. This effectively allows the reader to envision the isolated landscape and the alienation the woman must feel, procuring a sympathetic response to the reader. The recurring referral to an absence of defining features further depicts the sensory deprivation the inhabitants must feel. Alternatively, there is also a constant referral to the absence of her husband and the despondency she endures from it. This can be seen through a metaphor " She thinks how her husband would feel when he... sees the result of labor swept away. She cries then". This impacts the reader as it allows them to visualize the landscape and the sufferances it has endured, as well as invoking feelings of sympathy

to her loneliness and admiration for her lone care and protection of the children. These feelings can be reproduced in the reader through Lawson's use of omniscient narration "She rode nineteen miles, carrying the dead child". This reflects the traumatic experiences the woman endured yet she is able to continue with other aspects of life, admitting commiserative and respectful emotions in the reader. Subsequently, Sean Tan and John Marsden utilize an amalgamation of rich images and sporadic word choice in "The Rabbits" to present a dim picture of the white man's invasion, producing feelings of sympathy for the indigenous inhabitants. This can be seen through the visual salience in regard to the large central placement of a boat in the image. This allows the reader to discern the negative environmental effects that occurred following the invasion, and the impending doom of mechanical ascendancy over the natural world. This is augmented through the technique of color, a variety of monochrome, dark, black and white images are portrayed throughout the narrative. This delineates a bleak existence following the invasion and produces a sense of immense loss in the reader to the way life permutated from nature to industry. These feelings are also shown through Tan positioning a lone marsupial at the edge of the frame. This is reflective of the sense of isolation and segregation the indigenous inhabitants suffered following the invasion, and the colonial invaders neglect to their traditional values. This is furthered through the use of exclusive language, there is a constant referral to the invaders as 'they and them'. This is indicative of the inhabitants sense of alienation and powerless feelings to the mechanical dominance. This also allows the reader to differentiate the complete opposite values held, as the invaders viewed

their colonization as development whereas the indigenous viewed it as destructive and calamitous. Comparatively, Henry Lawsons *In A Dry Season* encapsulates the harsh living conditions of the inhospitable Australian outback and the impact it has on its inhabitants through homodiegetic narration, which in turn invokes a sympathetic response in readers. Lawson uses clothing to symbolize the harsh conditions of the outback “slop sac suits, red faces and old fashioned wide brimmed hats”. This is indicative of the occupants low monetary and political status, procuring a sense of sympathy in the reader to their situation. This can be furthered through the use of a sarcastic paradox “death I about the only cheerful thing in the bush”. This authorial comment reflects the danger that is posed in the bush, but also the boredom and monotony of the stoic inhabitants, describing their living conditions as uncheerful. The characters of the story are not personalized; however, Lawson employs the use of laconic wit to reflect the behaviors of the men. “I don’t wanner, I’ve been there. This colloquial language indicates the low level of education and intelligence that the inhabitants obtain, attaining a sympathetic response from the reader. Lawson also utilises an exclamatory comment to ironically mock the poor living conditions suffered by the inhabitants. “They talk of settling people in the land! Better settle in it.” This sarcastic authorial comment reflects the harsh inhospitable living state suffered by the stoic inhabitants which in turn produces a commiserative response in the reader. Therefore, the concept of distinctively visual texts and the notion they convey the impact of isolation and segregation is clearly explored and reflected in Henry Lawson’s short stories “The Drovers Wife” and “In a Dry Season” and alternately through

the visual language text “ The Rabbits” by John Marsden and Sean Tan. The authors of these texts utilise separate idiosyncratic narrative styles which effectively procure feelings such as sympathy, empathy and admiration in the reader.