Experiments in Love: Longus' *Daphnis & Chloe* and Henry de Vere Stacpoole's *The Blue Lagoon* [1]

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Abstract:

Despite a chronological gulf of nearly two thousand years, the second century C.E. Greek romance writer Longus and the early twentieth century Irish novelist Henry de Vere Stacpoole were prompted to produce their best works by a similar motive: an urge to explore the world, and particularly the phenomenon of love and desire, from a standpoint of complete innocence. Although the resulting novels, *Daphnis & Chloe* and *The Blue Lagoon* respectively, have no evident direct connection, they exhibit surprising similarities not only in plot, setting, and characterization, but also in the values, perspectives, and worldviews they advance. The striking intersections between these two chronologically and geographically diverse works offer us a lens for examining persistent notions of "natural" versus learned masculinity and femininity, for exploring the dynamics behind patriarchal power structures, and for scrutinizing how these issues relate to ideas about the value and merits of civilization. Moreover, analysis of the features common to Longus' work and the *Blue Lagoon* narrative, particularly as it is manifested in Randal Kleiser's 1980 film adaptation of the novel, can serve as a useful pedagogical tool as well. By utilizing an accessible product of popular culture to bring a little-known ancient Greek novel to life, this comparison helps to drive home the persistence of ideologies and power structures that initially seem remote and thus suggests to today's students the continuing relevance of works from classical antiquity in our modern world in a way that looking at the ancient work in isolation – or even in conjunction with its more direct descendants – cannot.

I. Pastoral Experiments

In the first volume of his autobiography *Men and Mice*, Henry de Vere Stacpoole explained his impulse to write his best-known novel as follows:

> Early in 1907 one night, lying awake and pondering, not for the first time in my life, on the extraordinary world we live in, the idea came to me of what it must have been like to the cave men who had no language and for whom a sunset had no name tacked on to it, a storm no name, Life no name, death no name and birth no name, and the idea came to me of two children, knowing nothing about any of these things, finding themselves alone on a desert island facing these nameless wonders.
>
> Next morning I started writing a book, not for the sake of writing a book, but to try and find out for myself what it would feel like.
>
> I gave the children a tropical island, where the trees would feed them, and an old sailor innocent as themselves, in a lot of ways, to help things out; and there they lived and no one was more astonished than myself at the wonderment of it all…. (93)

The resulting novel was the enormously popular 1908 *The Blue Lagoon*, which focuses on cousins Dick and Emmeline Lestrange who, after a mishap at sea, are stranded on a deserted South Pacific island with a galley cook named Paddy Button. Paddy succeeds in teaching them basic survival skills before he drowns after a night of over-indulgence in rum. Despite this loss, the children not only survive, but also thrive in the lush island paradise. As they reach adolescence, they fall in love but struggle with their emotions, not understanding what their new feelings signify or how to express them physically. Eventually, they manage to consummate their relationship, and Emmeline soon becomes pregnant. Despite their ignorance of what is happening to her body, she manages to give birth to a son. Time passes, until one day, they decide to make an excursion to the far side of the island where they had first lived but abandoned after Paddy's death. Through a series of mishaps, they wind up in the lifeboat without oars and are swept out to sea. Later, a ship chartered by Dick's father Arthur Lestrange, who has been searching for them throughout the years, comes upon the little boat where the three lay unmoving. As the captain climbs in to assess the situation, Lestrange asks, "Are they dead?" "No, sir," the captain replies; "They are asleep."

With its focus on foundling children left more or less to their own devices, its Edenic setting, and its interest in the exploration of the phenomenon of love and desire from a position of complete naiveté, Stacpoole's story is reminiscent of the most highly regarded and literary of the ancient Greek novels of the so-called Second Sophistic, Longus' ca. second century *Daphnis & Chloe*. In this work, after Daphnis and Chloe are separated as babies, each is found and raised, Daphnis by a goatherd named Lamon, and Chloe by a shepherd named Dryas. As adolescents, they are sent out to tend the flocks, their parents having been directed by Eros in their dreams, and they revel in each other's companionship and in their simple, rustic existence. They soon fall in love but do not understand the emotional turmoil that has gripped them or how to satisfy their passion. Eventually, a city-woman named Lycaenion teaches Daphnis the secrets of lovemaking, but he refrains from sharing his newfound knowledge with Chloe, having been warned that since Chloe is a virgin, she will scream and bleed. After numerous misadventures, Daphnis and Chloe are each, in the end, recognized by their aristocratic birthparents and restored to their noble positions. They get married and have children of their own but retain ties to the idyllic pastoral setting where they came of age.

In addition to the affinities suggested by these brief summaries, both *Daphnis & Chloe* and *The Blue Lagoon* include the standard dangers and threats that add excitement to any romance novel. Like the other Greek novels of its era, *Daphnis & Chloe* includes pirate raids, armed conflict, and attempted rapes, while both young people, peerless in their beauty, repeatedly become the objects of others' desire. Stacpoole's novel, with its more isolated setting and limited cast of characters, omits many of these, but nonetheless, the youth encounter numerous obstacles, such as tropical storms, threats by sea creatures, the distant menace of a whaling ship, and the ominous danger of a mysterious idol apparently used at some point as an object of worship by natives.

What marks these novels as particularly close kindred spirits, however, is their anthropological concern with exploring the nature of love in a relatively "innocent" setting. Stacpoole's interest in the investigative purpose he drew explicit attention to in his later autobiography was hinted at in the novel itself when he wrote, "One might have fancied [nature] in an experimental mood, saying: 'Let me put these buds of civilisation back into my nursery and see what they will become – how they will blossom, and what will be the end of it all'" (69)[2]. John J. Winkler has identified a similar principle at play in Longus' *Daphnis & Chloe*:

> The playful and powerful god Erôs is conducting a pastoral experiment. What will happen when two adolescents are set apart from the enculturating influences not only of urban society in Mytilene but of the ambitious foster-parents who want to rear them to a higher station in life than that of rural peasantry? Their education in letters cut short, what will they learn in the open fields? (102)[3]

But while the motivation behind such experiments seems innocent enough, in the end these experiments produce serious commentaries not only on the relative value of civilization when compared to a more rustic existence, but also on the nature of gender and its relationship to power and violence.

The striking connections between these two novels make consideration of the modern narrative useful when teaching Longus' more remote work. Although more direct descendants of *Daphnis and Chloe* exist – including a Joseph Bodin de Boismortier three-act pastoral (1747), a one-act operetta by Jacques Offenbach (1860), an early 20th century ballet adaptation by Michel Fokine, a 1957 television series directed by Kurt Wilhelm, a 1961 series of lithographs by Marc Chagall, and three film adaptations[4] – I would argue that use of these sorts of direct re-workings in the classroom is often less productive than looking at intersections between narratives whose connections are less overt. Students often regard modern books or films that attempt fidelity to an ancient original as redundant exercises, while the instinct of those viewing looser adaptations is to criticize "inaccuracies." On the other hand, utilizing a work that has no discernible direct connection to an ancient original encourages students to approach the exercise with more open minds: they are less bothered by differences and more enthusiastic about ferreting out parallels. In this particular case, Stacpoole's work makes no direct claim on Longus', but the affinities between the two narratives are pervasive enough to provide a valuable comparison. While *The Blue Lagoon* novel is fairly obscure today, it has spawned at least one filmic version – Randal Kleiser's 1980 *The Blue Lagoon*, starring Brooke Shields and Christopher Atkins – that students today have likely heard of, though probably not seen themselves, and this movie is modern enough to be accessible, but dated – and campy – enough for students to view it from a useful distance and receive it with ironic delight.[5] Kleiser's film is, moreover, faithful enough to the novel that if they cannot be considered together, the movie may be introduced alone as representative of Stacpoole's work, as its short run-time – 105 minutes – makes it relatively easy to integrate into a course without sacrificing too much valuable in- or out-of-class time to this comparison. As such, *The Blue Lagoon* provides an optimal pedagogical platform for exploring intersections and analyzing the persistence and influence of classical themes in our world today.[6] It is my hope that this article will be useful in facilitating discussion along these lines and perhaps in bridging the gap in courses where time prevents Stacpoole's novel itself from being taken into consideration.

The parallels between Longus' work and Stacpoole's are striking enough that Gregory Woods perceives a fairly direct relationship, identifying Longus' story as "a precursor to…H. de Vere Stacpoole's *The Blue Lagoon*" (27). Richard Hardin, too, has argued for a direct relationship, seeing evidence that Stacpoole's novel was "probably" influenced by *Daphnis & Chloe* in "the dual foundlings, the time lapse, and the panic of the storms" (189).[7] While these similarities are far from decisive and perhaps stem more coincidentally from the narrative necessities inherent in conducting the sort of "experiment" in which each author was interested, Stacpoole's familiarity with classical antiquity more broadly is clear: he acknowledged in a 1921 interview that he received a "very considerable amount of classical learning" while at Malvern College (McQuilland 126)[8] including some Greek (Hardin 189), while among the many books he wrote in his long career were a 1920 translation of Sappho and a fictional work set in ancient Athens.[9] Moreover, classical allusions are scattered throughout the novel under consideration here. For instance, Stacpoole's descriptions often include metaphors from classical mythology and epic: "…the whole sea flashed like the harp of Apollo touched by the fingers of the god" (29); "Great ropes of wild vine twined like the snake of the laocöon [sic] from tree to tree…" (59); "The lagoon was wide, but in his present state of mind he would have swum the Hellespont" (88); "He got a spark on to a bit of punk, and then he blew at it, looking not unlike Aeolus…" (89); "She ran with the speed of Atalanta…" (112); and "The reiteration was tiresome enough, or would have been to an outside listener, but to Emmeline it was better than Homer" (114). One passage, in addition, includes what might arguably be identified as a consciously constructed epic simile: "You have seen a field of green barley ruffled over by the wind, just so from the hill-top you could see the wind in its passage over the sunlit foliage beneath" (62).

Moreover, it is possible that Stacpoole was at least familiar with *Daphnis and Chloe*: although Longus' novel itself was undervalued by classical scholars through the early 20th century "when depreciatory estimates of it were often expressed" (McCail xxviii), it was also highly praised by Goethe (Kestner 166-170), whose regard suggests that even if the novel was not particularly appreciated in the academy, it might have been popular literature. It was certainly available, at least, to English readers through Rev. Rowland Smith's translation from 1855 onward (Hardin 163).

Less tenuous than arguments for direct influence is the case for both authors' reliance on Longus' predecessors in the pastoral tradition,[10] in particular, as has been widely recognized, on Sappho and Theocritus. Longus, for instance, plays on a Sapphic poem in a scene where Daphnis fetches for Chloe an apple ripening at the top of a tree (3.33-34), and he takes the name "Daphnis" from Theocritus' first *Idyll*, to which Chloe's cricket-cage (1.10) and the image of Dorcon's cattle mourning for their dead master (1.31) are also indebted (noted in McCail xvii-xviii and xx).[11] For his part, not only are elements from the pastoral tradition evident in *The Blue Lagoon,* Stacpoole also invokes both Sappho and Theocritus more explicitly in his poetry as well (Hardin 189).

In both Longus' and Stacpoole's works, moreover, the pastoral setting serves a similar function. As Gavin has observed, Stacpoole's novel "offered escape from places like busy, technologized London to an island free from the stresses and time-pressures of modern life" (xii): like the increasingly urban world of the expanding Roman Empire in which Longus composed his work, Edwardian England was also "increasingly perceived to be negatively industrialized, commercialized, fast-paced, urban, anarchic, de-natured, and isolating despite its crowdedness" (xii). Stacpoole himself characterized the book as "about London – in a way" (*Men and Mice* 94), and as Hardin notes, this comment "suggests that behind the novel lie motives akin to those of ancient pastoralists in distancing themselves from the city's complexities" (189). But while Gavin argues that the offer of such an escape is an implicit attack on the values of civilization (xii), after a closer examination of these works, I would argue that although the choice of a pastoral setting certainly calls the values of civilization into question, it also serves, as we shall see, as a means of affirming them.

Because of their "experimental" natures, in both novels the main characters must be freed as young children from the influence not only of civilization, but of parents as well. In Longus' novel, Daphnis and Chloe are foundlings transplanted from the city to a pastoral landscape and then removed even from parental nurturing influence by the nymphs, who appear in a dream to their foster-fathers Lamon and Dryas and order them to send the children to tend flocks (1.7). In Stacpoole's work, cousins Dick and Emmeline are separated from Dick's father (Dick's mother and both of Emmeline's parents are dead [14]) and shipwrecked on a deserted island at the age of eight (11). Both works, however, provide the children with rustic mentors rather than leaving them alone to survive in the "wild." In *Daphnis and Chloe*, the children not only have their foster-parents, but older shepherds like Philetas also help teach them the ways of the world, however primitive. Likewise, in both *The Blue Lagoon* novel and film, a crusty old sea-salt named Paddy (in Kleiser's film played by Leo McKern) not only teaches them survival skills, but like Lamon and Dryas, who dance and pipe at a rustic celebration, also injects an element of *joie de vivre* into the narrative.

Yet the children themselves are not entirely uneducated: as Winkler (102) notes, Longus tells us that their foster-parents "raised [Daphnis and Chloe] with more delicate nourishment and trained them in letters, and whatever fine things were possible in the countryside" (1.8).[12] Stacpoole's Dick and Emmeline, too, know their letters (38, 70-71) and have elementary knowledge of other subjects such as geography and history (71-73). The children in Kleiser's film, however, pointedly lack such resources: Richard bemoans his ignorance of natural phenomena, saying, "I wish a big book with all the answers to every question in the world would drop out of the sky and land in my hand right now."[13] Yet despite their apparent lack of formal schooling, these children too receive an education of sorts, not just from Paddy in survival skills, but also in societal customs and interpersonal relationships through the narrative they examine in a stereoscopic viewer they have salvaged from the shipwreck.

In both stories, moreover, the subjects of the so-called experiments are not positioned as blank slates from a biological perspective: both Daphnis and Chloe are born to affluent urban elite, while the children both in Stacpoole's novel (11, 168) and in Kleiser's film come from a wealthy Boston family. In both works, their backgrounds are not incidental to their development but rather position the children as genetically predisposed towards betterment, a predilection outwardly manifested in their physical beauty. While in Stacpoole's work this class bias is merely suggested through contrasts between the children and the rough, crude sailors, Longus is more overt, proclaiming that "these children grew very quickly, and there appeared for them a beauty better than that of mere rustics" (1.7). In both narratives, therefore, both nature and nurture give the hero and heroine a leg up on their development. Yet despite these advantages, the children are utterly untutored in what we may call "the facts of life": we are told at the outset that Daphnis and Chloe have never even heard the name of Love (2.8), while the children in Stacpoole's novel have been sheltered from harsh realities such as "the terror of death" (14), as have both children in Kleiser's film, where their innocence on such matters is first implied when they approach Paddy's corpse on the assumption that he's sleeping and Emmeline faints when the true situation becomes apparent, and then again with both children's ignorance of female menstruation and in their later inability to comprehend Emmeline's condition even late in her pregnancy. The purpose of these so-called "experiments," then, is to trace development from innocence to experience apart from the enculturating influences of civilization.

In doing so, *Daphnis and Chloe* and both *Blue Lagoon* narratives offer an idealized pastoral landscape that is implicitly contrasted with the urban location from which the foundlings/castaways are initially removed. As Catherine Connors (167) notes, Longus' novel opens on the word πόλις (city),[14] but the scene immediately shifts to a pastoral setting, creating a stark juxtaposition. Once in this rustic remove, Longus emphasizes the fertility of spring and the joy and carefree nature of youth:

> It was the beginning of spring, and all the flowers were blooming, those in the woods, those in the meadows, and all those in the mountains. Now there was the humming of bees, the sound of melodious birds, and the leaping of newborn sheep. Lambs were gamboling on the mountains, bees were buzzing in the meadows, and birds took hold of the thickets. With this pleasantness of the season in evidence all around, such young, impressionable youth began to imitate the things they heard and saw: hearing the birds singing, they sang, and seeing the lambs frolicking, they too jumped nimbly about, and mimicking the bees, they gathered flowers; and some of these they tossed into each other's laps, and others, weaving them into garlands, they offered to the Nymphs. (I.9)

In *The Blue Lagoon* novel, similarly, once we reach the island setting, Stacpoole takes pains to emphasize lushness, beauty, and youth:

> On either side of the broad beach before them the cocoa-nut trees came down like two regiments, and bending gazed at their own reflections in the lagoon. Beyond lay waving chapparel, where cocoa-palms and breadfruit trees intermixed with the mammee apple and the tendrils of the wild vine… But the soul of it all, the indescribable thing about this picture of mirrored palm trees, blue lagoon, coral reef and sky, was the light…Here it made the air a crystal, through which the gazer saw the loveliness of the land and reef, the green of palm, the white of coral, the wheeling gulls, the blue lagoon, all sharply outlined– burning, coloured, arrogant, yet tender– heart-breakingly beautiful, for the spirit of eternal morning was here, eternal happiness, eternal youth. (54-55)

While the cinematic version, on the other hand, can (and does) primarily establish the idyllic nature of the setting visually, Kleiser's film too exhibits striking connections with Longus' work, both by way of and independent of Stacpoole's novel. For example, like the abrupt shift from city to countryside in *Daphnis and Chloe*, *The Blue Lagoon* film opens with engravings of a busy, overcrowded Boston before moving immediately to a more serene, removed location, marking a contrast between the urban and extra-urban environments. These engravings also provide an interesting parallel to the painting that serves as a jumping-off point for the narrative in Longus' work.[15] Interestingly, Theocritus' poems were known as *Idylls*, or "little pictures" (noted in Turner 118 and Hardin 12), which positions them, and the works of authors like Longus and Stacpoole who drew on them, as visual conceptions (for more on which see Hardin 12, 21), an appropriate characterization in light of the fact that both works were destined to be adapted more than once for cinema. The ecphrastic nature of Longus' work, in addition, prompts the reader to envision the narrative, as does the emphasis on visualization in the first line of the prologue: "While hunting in Lesbos in a grove of the Nymphs, I saw a sight, the most beautiful of any I have seen: a painting of an image, a story of love."[16]

The imagery used to suggest humans in harmony with nature in these works is also consonant: in the ancient novel and *The Blue Lagoon* film, Daphnis and the youth there called Richard make and play panpipes, while the praying mantis of the young Emmeline in the film is reminiscent of the crickets and grasshoppers for which Chloe plaits cages (1.10) or the cicada that lands in her bosom, waking her from sleep (1.26). In all three works under consideration here, the children make garlands of flowers (Longus 1.9; Stacpoole 77 and 79-80) and are cast as caretakers of animals – Daphnis and Chloe tend goats and sheep respectively, while in Stacpoole's novel, Dick and Emmeline save an abandoned, starving bird whom they adopt into their "family" (102), a feature that reappears in somewhat altered form in Kleiser's film.

All three works additionally draw on the image of a tutelary deity that oversees this natural landscape. In *Daphnis & Chloe*, the presence of Pan and the nymphs looms large: the children make as their base of operations the cave where Chloe was left as a foundling and which contains statues of the nymphs and of Pan, deities who act as the pair's protectors. And in *The Blue Lagoon* novel and film, a great stone icon the children find on the island acts as a protecting deity, which function Kleiser's film makes most explicit when a deathly-ill Emmeline asks to be taken "to God" and there is healed.[17] All three works, therefore, position the landscape as utopic, a characterization emphasized by the anchoring of both narratives in their respective cultures' mythological roots: Daphnis and Chloe's suckling by a goat and a ewe is reminiscent of foundational mythological and legendary figures such as Zeus and Romulus and Remus, while the children from *The Blue Lagoon* are innocents placed in a paradise reminiscent of the Biblical Garden of Eden. Threats to the children, in contrast, generally come from society: an attack by pirates (1.28-31) and the antagonism of the Methymnaeans (2.12-29) in Longus' tale are paralleled by the threat of the men in the whaling ship in Stacpoole's novel (78-79).[18]

Yet these works do not, in the end, evaluate the merits of existing at a remove from civilization equally. Stacpoole, for instance, elevates nature over civilization explicitly by drawing on the authority of the omniscient narrator:

> To forget the passage of time you must live in the open air, in a warm climate, with as few clothes as possible upon you. You must collect and cook your own food. Then, after a while, if you have no special ties to bind you to civilisation, Nature will begin to do for you what she does for the savage. You will recognise that it is possible to be happy without books or newspapers, letters or bills. You will recognise the part sleep plays in Nature. (69)

The novel continues to call the advantages of civilization into question right up to the end, when the ship captain whom Dick's father has hired to help him locate the children says, "I think that we civilised folk put on a lot of airs, and waste a lot of pity on savages…who is happier than a naked savage in a warm climate?…He lives the life a man was born to live – face to face with Nature. He doesn't see the sun through an office window or the moon through the smoke of factory chimneys…" (179). Dick's father, as a result, questions his own intentions: "[S]uppose those children had been brought up face to face with Nature….Living that free life…Waking up under the stars…going to sleep as the sun sets, feeling the air fresh, like this which blows upon us, all around them. Suppose they were like that, would it not be a cruelty to bring them to what we call civilisation?" (180).

Significantly, the children in the novel do not choose to be rescued: as noted earlier, after a mishap in the dingy deprives them of their oars, they drift out to sea where they are eventually picked up by Dick's father, presumably to be restored to society.[19] Kleiser's film retains this ending, so that the children here, too, do not choose to leave the island: indeed, although Richard had initially indicated a desire to leave, later he once and Emmeline twice decline to signal ships that approach the island, preferring to remain where they are. Thus *The Blue Lagoon* novel and film idealize a pastoral existence removed from the modern world and imply a reluctant, even if necessary, reintegration into human society.[20]

Daphnis & Chloe, in contrast, manages to strike a somewhat happier balance: in the end, both children are revealed to be the offspring of wealthy, noble, urban elite and are restored to their proper stations in life. Neither, however, had ever expressed anything but satisfaction with their pastoral existence up to this point,[21] which is generally presented, as Tim Whitmarsh points out, as "benign" in contrast to the "generally corrupt and oppressive nature" of urban affluence (*Narrative and Identity* 73), and not only do they have some difficulty adjusting to city life (4.37), they maintain connections with their pastoral roots throughout their lives and make a point of giving their children elements of their own rustic upbringing (4.39). The resulting implication is that although much of their value lies in their urban heritage – their wealth, their status, and even their beauty (1.7) – their happiness is firmly anchored in a more bucolic setting.[22] Thus, while for the creators of the *Blue Lagoon* works society and "paradise" are mutually exclusive, for Longus there is some room for interaction and cooperation between the two realms. But despite this ideological difference, in an important way, the result of the "experiment in love" that each author has initiated is the same: as we shall see, each work demonstrates that even apart from societal influence, the dominance of the male and subservience of the female will emerge, affirming the patriarchal condition and positioning it as "natural."

II. Learning About Love

As has frequently been noted, although Chloe is some two years younger than Daphnis in Longus' work (1.7), it is she who first feels the stirrings of sexual desire. As Chloe helps Daphnis wash off in a spring after a mishap, Longus tells us that "…it seemed to Chloe as she looked on that Daphnis was handsome," and at the end of the day, she can think of nothing else other than her desire to see him bathing again (1.13). Thereafter, she can't eat, she can't sleep, she is moody and changeable, and she ceases to care for her sheep, but because of her naiveté, Chloe does not understand what is wrong with her (1.13-14). Daphnis receives his sexual awakening soon thereafter: stung by a kiss Chloe has given him for winning a "beauty contest" of sorts, he too experiences physical and emotional turmoil, and like Chloe, he cannot put a name to it (1.17-18). Yet despite the fact that Chloe gets an earlier start on sexual maturation, it is Daphnis who receives sexual gratification first: Lycaenion, a neighboring woman who has taken a fancy to Daphnis, notices the unhappiness that results from the young couple's ignorance of how to satisfy their sexual urges. She therefore offers Daphnis a "lesson," but warns him that since Chloe is a virgin, the same activity will hurt her and cause her to bleed (3.15-19). Thus, Daphnis in some ways achieves "manhood" while Chloe remains innocent, creating an inequality that was not present in the initial stages of their relationship. As Whitmarsh notes, this imbalance persists to the end of the novel, where Daphnis becomes Chloe's teacher in love, which "marks Daphnis's final assumption of a position of dominance over Chloe" (*Narrative and Identity* 106).[23]

The young couple develops on a similar trajectory in *The Blue Lagoon*, although in the novel, the sexual aspect is presented more subtly due to Edwardian-era prudishness: Emmeline is naturally fearful of losing Dick, but at age fifteen or sixteen (102), the nature of her dread alters and deepens: "Dick had changed in her eyes," we are told, "and the fear was now for him. Her own personality had suddenly and strangely become merged in his. The idea of life without him was unthinkable…" (106). Although Dick is slightly older (11), we do not hear until some eleven pages later that for him as well, in the past few months Emmeline had changed: "A new person had come upon the island, it seemed to him, and taken the place of the Emmeline he had known from earliest childhood. This one looked different. He did not know that she had grown beautiful, he just knew that she looked different" (117). Dick soon develops feelings of discontent reminiscent of the turmoil felt by Daphnis and Chloe: "…lately a spirit of restlessness had come upon him; he did not know exactly what he wanted….It may have been simply the man in him crying out for Love, and not knowing yet that Love was at his elbow" (118).

In his film version of Stacpoole's novel, Kleiser makes this dynamic much more explicit: we are clued in that Emmeline's sexual awakening comes first when she admits to Richard that she is having "funny thoughts" about the two of them. Soon thereafter, she leers at him as he works; when Richard asks her what she is looking at and she responds lustily, "Your muscles," he gets upset and tells her that she's "really acting silly lately…always saying dumb things like that, always looking at me funny." That Richard's sexual awakening follows shortly thereafter is suggested by a scene where he lasciviously watches a sleeping Emmeline before proceeding to touch her skin and smell her hair, an interesting parallel to a passage in Longus where Daphnis watches a sleeping Chloe, although the two scenes play out quite differently. And like Daphnis, Richard achieves sexual gratification first, at least as far as is possible on an island with a population of two.

In "The Education of Chloe," Winkler argues that in *Daphnis & Chloe*, the description of the pair's sexual development is not about "innocent hormonal energy," but instead deals with "the painful confrontation of unsocialized youth with the hostilities of real life": thus Chloe must learn that "she can only relate to Daphnis on a permanent and adult basis within a framework that dictates for her an unnatural role as pursued, weaker, and vulnerable to assaults of many kinds" (117). Though both of the lovers in the course of the novel are threatened in serious ways – both are kidnapped and miraculously rescued and both are near-victims of sexual predators – as Lycaenion's warning to Daphnis suggests, only Chloe's initiation into a role of fully realized adult involves pain and bloodshed.

In addition, the three myths embedded in this narrative – Daphnis' story of a girl who lost a singing contest to a boy because of his naturally stronger voice (1.27), the story of Pan and Syrinx (2.34), and the story of Pan and Echo, who in this version is torn to bits (3.23) – all emphasize the suffering of women and their position as inferiors or as victims.[24] Moreover, the fact that Daphnis surpasses Chloe in regards to sexual development despite her head start and their initial fundamental equality signals a growing disparity of power between them, which is further demonstrated by his feelings of protectiveness towards her – he wants to shield her from the sexual act that he desires but knows will cause her pain. Lycaenion's lesson can therefore be seen, as Winkler puts it, as "a training exercise in phallocracy" (121). Daphnis learns that his desire is inextricable from Chloe's pain, that his desire is "*inter alia*, a desire to hurt her" (122). The growing power gap is further emphasized by an episode that significantly follows Lycaenion's lesson: here, Chloe is perplexed by the sound of an echo, while Daphnis laughs in amusement at her befuddlement before proceeding to instruct her in the phenomenon's origins (3.21-23), the effect of which is to characterize him as wiser and more experienced in contrast to her relative naiveté. Then, in another episode significantly placed soon after the couple's foster-parents agree to their marriage, Longus includes a scene where Daphnis, ignoring Chloe's attempts to restrain him, climbs a tree to pluck the last apple remaining on the topmost branch (3.33-34). With this allusion to a Sapphic *epithalamium* (or wedding-song), Longus metaphorically has Daphnis "pluck" Chloe's virginity against her wishes, thereby implying a fundamental inequality inherent in the marital relationship.[25] And despite the happy ending of the book, we are not allowed to forget these lessons: Longus tells us that the revelers at the couple's wedding "sang with harsh and rough voices, as if they were breaking up the earth with hoes, not singing a wedding song" (4.40), striking a note of general discord and implying sexual violence in the common association of women with earth to be plowed;[26] an allusion to Lycaenion further serves to remind us that consummation for Chloe entails suffering.[27]

In Stacpoole's novel, Emmeline is spared some of these painful lessons. Here, Stacpoole has embued her with inborn shortcomings and a natural attitude of deference, so that she does not need such schooling. Throughout the novel, Emmeline is depicted as "an absolute failure at everything practical" and depends on Dick for her very survival (90). Dick, therefore, is framed as the "Imperial master" of their little community: "she was his shadow and his slave," we are told. "He was her sun" (114). Even when Emmeline plays the key role in rescuing Dick from a giant octopus, she praises his heroism, and he takes all the credit and the glory for himself (113-114).[28] I would argue that it is not coincidental that emphasis on women's suffering here has therefore been mostly elided: even when Emmeline bears a child, the pain of labor and delivery is unrealistically minimized (despite the fact that Stacpoole studied and practiced medicine[29]). "I felt so bad," she tells Dick, "and then I went off to sit in the woods, and then I remembered nothing more, and when I woke up [the baby] was there" (139). Stacpoole does, however, insert at least one hint at the association between violence towards women, sexuality, and the patriarchal order: when a careless Emmeline accidentally strikes Dick with a cane, he turns and slaps her, eliciting a sob from the hurt Emmeline. It is at this point, significantly, that they fall into each other's arms and consummate their relationship.[30] For the most part, however, this girl knows her place and does not need to suffer to learn it.

Kleiser's film, however, like Longus' novel, emphasizes the association between women and wounding or suffering and the connection of these to her sexuality.[31] This is first suggested at the onset of menses in a memorable scene where Emmeline, alarmed at seeing blood in the pool where she is bathing, shouts to Richard for help; by the time he arrives, however, she has recognized that she is not injured but that this is instead something to do with her female condition, and she therefore manifests an appropriate attitude of shame. The association of the sexual act itself with pain for women is suggested as Richard becomes more and more interested in amorous embraces, while Emmeline regularly pushes him away with indications of pain or discomfort ("Ouch!" "Stop it!" and "Don't!"). Later, Emmeline steps on a fish, which injury sickens her to the point that her life is endangered: although they had earlier been arguing, Richard tends her anxiously until she recovers, soon after which they finally gratify their sexual desires. Thus, the couple only succeeds in completing the sexual act after Emmeline's vulnerability and Richard's role as a protector have been driven home.[32]

When Emmeline later gives birth, we are treated to a much more realistic version of labor and delivery than in Stacpoole's novel, but Kleiser's decision to depict it and the morning sickness that precedes it on camera once again highlights the association between women's sexuality and pain. Moreover, Emmeline is further connected in this film with wounding through the blood and gore she witnesses on the massive stone idol she finds on the far side of the island, an association intensified (with even more sinister implications) when the scenes of childbirth follow hard on those of a human sacrifice, while Richard's position as viewer of both scenes highlights Emmeline's function as spectacle and object of the male gaze. Thus, like in *Daphnis & Chloe*, the move towards sexual fulfillment in Kleiser's film corresponds with a movement towards the establishment of a "phallocentric" order.[33]

Despite their different evaluations of the merits of civilization, interestingly, both the ancient novel and the more recent *Blue Lagoon* narratives are concerned with societal sanction for sexual love even in an isolated, pastoral environment. In Longus, Daphnis and Chloe's relationship is not only "consecrated to Eros," god of love, but its consummation is delayed until a fairly conventional marriage is effected, an option not available to the castaways of *The Blue Lagoon* who are alone on an island with no one to officiate. Nonetheless, in Stacpoole's novel, the initial sexual consummation takes place before the stone idol, which Emmeline has more or less adopted as her "god" (129) so that their lovemaking receives religious sanction, a parallel with Eros' interest in Daphnis and Chloe's affair. Stacpoole reinforces this suggestion linguistically, telling us that, "It was a marriage according to Nature, without feast or guests, consummated with accidental cynicism under the shadow of a religion a thousand years dead" (129), and further underscores the notion by heading his next chapter, "An Island Honeymoon" (131 [Part II Ch. X]).

As with Stacpoole's original, in Kleiser's film the pair first make love in the shadow of the stone idol, which Emmeline has christened "God," suggesting that their coupling has received divine consent. In place of Stacpoole's linguistic reinforcement, the movie strengthens the idea of marriage visually with the display of a wedding scene in their stereoscopic viewer[34] and through the children's participation in a marriage dance of sorts in "wedding" attire salvaged from the shipwreck. And lest we forget, after their child is born, Richard and Emmeline again don their marriage clothes, subtly erasing any lingering notions of impropriety. As a result, regardless of the somewhat different attitudes these works exhibit towards the relative value of civilization versus a pastoral existence, all three remain anchored in societal rites and customs, the dynamics and power structures of which have been validated and reinforced by the very experiments which initially seemed to call the need for them into question.

III. Conclusion

Although I am not arguing here for direct influence, I do hope to have demonstrated an important kinship between these works, one that has significant implications for the societies that produced them. Despite a chronological gulf of nearly 2000 years, both Longus and Henry de Vere Stacpoole were inspired by a desire to explore the world from a standpoint of complete innocence, and the results of the "experiments" they conducted in doing so serve to reinforce patriarchal structures by positioning them as natural. Though the relative valuation of pastoral versus societal setting differs somewhat in each work, in both novels and in Randal Kleiser's film version of Stacpoole's work, it is only after the children learn these lessons of power and place that they are able to rejoin society as fully realized adults. Utilizing a comparison between these works can not only help students better appreciate the implications of Longus' original and the ideological structures at play in the second century Greco-Roman world, but it also offers them a lens for viewing some uncomfortable truths about the persistence of these dynamics in our own world.

Endnotes

[1] Preliminary versions of this paper were presented at the fall 2011 meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States in Hunt Valley, MD, and at the February 2012 meeting of the SWPACA in Albuquerque, NM. Thanks to attendees at both sessions, and to Ben Haller, anonymous reviewers, and students in my spring 2013 GREK 316 course for their helpful comments.

[2] This notion was clearly signaled in a 1949 film version of Stacpoole's novel directed by Frank Launder, where a visiting pair of adventurers encounter the young castaways, and upon learning their ages – nineteen and twenty – and that they've been on the island more than ten years, one of them comments reflectively, "Just think of that…mere children…the rude clay of humanity."

[3] On similar lines, James Romm later suggested that Longus "conceived the novel as a kind of literary experiment" (110).

[4] *Daphnis and Chloe* (1931, dir. Orestis Laskos); *Mikres Afrodites* (1963, dir. Nikos Koundouros); and *Dafnis i Khloya* (1993, dir. Yuri Kuzmenko). For an overview of the creative reception of *Daphnis and Chloe* in the twentieth century, see Fusillo 324-328.

[5] In addition to Kleiser's movie, Stacpoole's novel inspired two additional films of the same name, a currently unavailable 1923 silent version directed by William Bowden and Dick Cruikshanks (African Film Productions) and Frank Launder's difficult-to-obtain 1949 film. I have not taken sequels to either Stacpoole's novel (see FN 19) or Kleiser's film (William A. Graham's *Return to the Blue Lagoon*: Columbia Pictures 1991) or looser adaptations, such as Stuart Gillard's 1982 film *Paradise* (New World Pictures) and a 2012 Lifetime TV movie (*Blue Lagoon: The Awakening*), into consideration here.

[6] While outside the scope of this paper, another pedagogically useful comparison – long recognized by others – is with Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which has similar elements, including the social isolation of a remote island and the resulting questions about nature vs. nurture and the relative value of a pastoral existence when compared to a more civilized urban life. For more on this comparison (along with consideration of *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale*) and its history, see Hardin, esp. 45-53.

[7] Hardin provides an impressive overview of the imprint Longus' work has left on literature from the Renaissance when it was rediscovered (23) through the twentieth century; see pp. 181-191 for discussion of *The Blue Lagoon* and its sequels in particular.

[8] Also qtd. in Hardin 257 n. 9. In *Men and Mice*, however, Stacpoole made clear that Classics was not his primary emphasis at Malvern (30-31; also noted by Hardin 257 n. 9).

[9] Gavin ix, xxxvi; Hardin 189; McQuilland 126-127. Stacpoole comments on his appreciation for Sappho and discusses his translation of her fragments in *Men and Mice* (104-105).

[10] Indeed, the full title in the manuscript tradition is *A Pastoral Story of Daphnis and Chloe* (Gill 285. McCail xvii-xviii gives the title as *The Pastorals of Longus, about Daphnis and Chloe*).

[11] For a detailed exploration of Sapphic and Theocritean elements in *Daphnis and Chloe*, see Morgan and Harrison 221-224.

[12] All translations from the Greek are mine.

[13] Emmeline, in contrast, is depicted as considerably less curious: she not only exclaims in this interchange that she prefers not to understand such mysteries as what happened when Paddy died, but she also chastens Richard that he "can't know everything."

[14] I.1 following the prologue. Also noted in Whitmarsh *Narrative and Identity* 73.

[15] Despite this similarity, these engravings differ considerably in narrative function from the ecphrasis with which Longus frames his work: while, as Whitmarsh notes, Longus aims to "transform the local cultic painting into a panhellenic work of literature *and* to preserve the religious essence of the artwork" (*Narrative and Identity* 97), the introductory engravings merely provide context and are soon forgotten in favor of focus on character development.

[16] Ἐν Λέσβῳ θηρῶν ἐν ἄλσει Νυμφῶν θέαμα εἶδον κάλλιστον ὧν εἶδον· εἰκόνα γραπτήν, ἱστορίαν ἔρωτος.

[17] While these tutelary deities have a generally protective function for the children, their power is also demonstrated through the terror they provoke: in *Daphnis and Chloe*, Pan personifies natural forces, and as such, he is both "peaceful shepherd" and a violent inspirer of panic (Turner 122). In *The Blue Lagoon* films, the stone idol likewise is giver and taker of life: in the 1949 film, the idol plays a role in Paddy's death, but serves as a haven for the birth of Emmeline's child. In the 1980 film, the idol is the site of a gruesome human sacrifice, but also a central figure in Emmeline's recovery from her life-threatening injury. In both novels and in the 1980 film, these sacred spaces also serve as the locus where the love between the two young people blossoms.

[18] These sorts of indications of societal threats are generally absent from Kleiser's film.

[19] While the ending of the original novel seems to suggest this reading strongly, Stacpoole's 1923 sequel entitled *The Garden of God* balks at this reintegration: in this work, after discovering that Dick and Emmeline are in fact dead rather than asleep, Dick's father demands to be left on the island with the child. The foreword of the next installment, the 1925 *Gates of Morning*, which continues the young boy's story after the death of his grandfather, explicitly positions the white man's influence on "natives" as negative (vii; noted in Gavin xiv-xv).

[20] Interestingly, in the 1949 film, the situation is quite different: while the boy (there called Michael) at one point says he does not care if they are rescued, both children signal desperately whenever a ship is in sight. In the end, Emmeline convinces Michael that they must risk their lives to return to civilization for the sake of their son, whom she wants to grow up not like they did, but rather to go to school and become "a gentleman." Thus, they make a sail, stock the dingy, and sail off, choosing – and thereby elevating – civilization and society over isolation and solitude, no matter how idyllic.

[21] Although as Whitmarsh points out, Daphnis and Chloe's satisfaction with their lot may stem in part from their ignorance of the home they left (*Narrative and Identity* 148).

[22] For Whitmarsh ("Class" 77) and Connors (167), however, the presentation of Longus' story by an urban narrator and the revelation of Daphnis and Chloe's true parentage in the end make this a fundamentally urban narrative. Both do go on to examine the ways that Longus problematizes the relationship between urban elite and rural poor ("Class" 77-79; Connors 167-169), and Whitmarsh and Bartsch acknowledge the presence of "further voices" (*à la* Lyne) that allow the possibility of mutuality despite the predominantly urban perspective (238).

[23] On the essentially equal nature of Daphnis and Chloe's relationship at the outset, see Winkler 114-115. Konstan 79-90, in contrast, argues that their relationship maintains this sense of balance up until their wedding night, as is signified by the "undifferentiated" sexual practices in which they engage (89). Hardin 15 concurs with Konstan. For additional perspectives on the equality of couples in the Greek novel in general, see Konstan 7-9 and 14-59 and Massimo Fusillo *Il romanzo Greco: Polifona ed eros*. Venie: Marsilio, 1989, esp. 189 (noted in Konstan 12). Helen Morales, however, gives a sharp rejoinder to this view, noting that the "symmetry" Konstan and others observe in these relationships is not the same thing as mutuality or equality (48).

[24] See Whitmarsh and Bartsch 241 for more on the association of heterosexual sex with violence in *Daphnis and Chloe*.

[25] See Morgan and Harrison 223-224, *inter alios.*

[26] Goldhill further notes a disturbing voyeuristic quality to the wedding scene in *Daphnis and Chloe*, where Longus "takes us to the bedroom door and invites – but bars – our gaze within" (44).

[27] See Winkler 124-125. Goldhill questions Winkler's interpretation of Lycaenion's words as "a radical provocation of patriarchal cultural protocols" (40), noting that her warning replicates imagery linking penetration and violence common in Greek culture. At the same time, Goldhill's observation seems to support Winkler's less contentious demonstration, drawn on here, that "the novel's move towards marriage reveals the violence and constraints of the norms of social life" (Goldhill 31).

[28] This scene was retained in the 1949 *Blue Lagoon* film but is absent from the 1980 version.

[29] Stacpoole *Men and Mice* 31, 40-42, 46-50, and 94; see also Gavin viii, xxxiii-xxxiv and McQuilland 126. Stacpoole himself says he had witnessed "enough of midwifery cases to make Birth commonplace" (*Men and Mice* 93).

[30] While such violence between lovers is absent from *Daphnis and Chloe*, one reviewer suggests that Stacpoole may derive his model for this detail from the slightly earlier Greek novel *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, in which a jealous Chaereas kicks an innocent Callirhoe, resulting in her apparent death (1.4).

[31] In the 1949 film, as in Kleiser's 1980 version, Emmeline needs instruction in keeping her place: she seems at the outset to consider herself Michael's equal, but once they reach an age of maturity and she presumes to disagree with him, he slaps her. Director Frank Launder has significantly placed this scene before the octopus attack, implying a connection between the "lesson" Emmeline has received and the fact that she submissively lets Michael take credit for her own unambiguous defeat of the creature. In addition, Launder's film also includes an episode absent from the book, where Emmeline is kidnapped by a lecherous adventurer; although she manages to escape by jumping overboard and swimming to shore, her victim position and sexual vulnerability are driven home both to her and to the audience.

[32] I might note, however, some indication of inequality has been suggested from the beginning of Kleiser's film: for instance, the young Emmeline refers to Paddy as "Mr. Button," while Richard simply calls him "Paddy."

[33] A similar dynamic is present in the 1974 and 2002 *Swept Away* films, which might also make an interesting pedagogical comparison with Longus' novel. In these works, a snooty socialite who has treated a sailor on the yacht she and her friends have rented like a virtual slave is given a comeuppance when they are stranded on a deserted island together, suggesting once again that male dominance and female subservience are the "natural" human condition.

[34] Throughout the film, images viewed in this device parallel the various stages the lovers pass through as their relationship develops.

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