

The Narrator Is(n't) Human: The Presence of the Human Body in the Nonhuman Narration of *Twin Peaks* and “The Metamorphosis”

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Abstract

This paper explores the cross contamination of human and non-human voices in absurdist science fiction. Primarily, I will interrogate the collaborative humanto- non-human relationship of Margaret Lanterman and her Log in *Twin Peaks* (1990-1, 2017), in comparison with Gregor's experience as newly “other” in Kafka's “Metamorphosis” (1915).

The Log Lady is representative of the collision between the human and nonhuman. In her ongoing role as carer for her log, the Log Lady literally carries the capability of communicating with supernatural realms. Whilst the Log is, arguably, more informed about the occurrences in *Twin Peaks* than any key character, it is reliant on its human collaborator to become part of the conversation. Comfort (2009: 63) recognises how “unelaborated” their collective identity is: the community do not feel the need to provide any justification or explanation to the Log Lady's behaviours. Without sound or gesture, the Log's input leads the narrative, providing knowledge to human investigators which opens the pathway towards conclusion.

In contrast, although Gregor internally retains his human sense of self and understanding of the world, his newly physical otherness provokes a need to rethink the nature of the narrator. While the non-human Log relies on an intimate relationship with a human vessel to communicate, Gregor is able to express himself as an individual to close family members, he loses validity based on the nonhuman vessel which he inhabits.

Critically drawing on patriarchal understandings of the able human body as capital, this discussion explores the value assigned to narrators by their peers, based upon the humanness of the body through which they communicate.