

Diversifying the children in Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*: From Page to Screen

by Adrian Schober

The plot details of Roald Dahl's most celebrated children's tale scarcely need reminding: poor boy Charlie Bucket wins a coveted golden ticket to tour Willy Wonka's world-famous chocolate factory. He is accompanied by four other children: Augustus Gloop from West Germany, Veruca Salt from England, Violet Beauregarde and Mike Teavee, both from the US. Each of the children is approached by one of Wonka's competitors, Slugworth, to smuggle a gobstopper out of the factory. But, one by one, the undeserving brats meets with a sticky end, until Charlie is the only one left standing. Wonka tells him he has forfeited his prize (a lifetime supply of chocolate) because he and Grandpa stole fizzy lifting drinks, which means that this part of the factory will need to be washed and sterilised. By returning the gobstopper which Slugworth so desires, however, Charlie proves himself an honest child to Wonka and therefore fit to inherit his factory and be entrusted with his candy-making secrets. Slugworth turns out to be Wonka's confederate, and Charlie and his family live happily ever after.

Of course, I'm not playing fair. Like L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964) is a classic example of a text whose recollection of it has been "contaminated" by the movie. I am referring to the 1971 adaptation, by far "the most influential and famous" of the two movies made of Dahl's book (Mangan 41). Despite its lacklustre commercial and critical reception, *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (1971) has come to be a family favourite, shown regularly at Christmastime and Thanksgiving in the US. Dahl would receive sole credit for the screenplay. But, for the record, there is no gobstopper test in the novel; Slugworth isn't Wonka's confederate (although he's mentioned as one of his competitors); and Charlie and Grandpa Joe *do not* steal fizzy-lifting drinks. A version of the fizzy-lifting drinks scene appears in the earliest surviving draft of the screenplay by Dahl, marked "First Draft Screenplay."¹ However, other elements and complications were added by director Mel Stuart, producer David L. Wolper and uncredited screenwriter David Seltzer (who would go on to write a very different kind of "kiddie" picture, 1976's *The Omen*). Seltzer was brought in to "enhance" the script after Dahl's treatment was deemed unworkable (Stuart & Young 14). Furthermore, Charlie and the other children are *not* nationalised in Dahl's novel, at least not explicitly.

Indeed, it is because of the 1971 film that we've come to unproblematically accept that Augustus Gloop is German, Veruca Salt is British, Violet Beauregarde is American and Mike Teavee is American. Carolyn Daniels argues that these nationalities are implied rather than stated in Dahl's novel: "[Charlie] is an idealistic representation of the British working class. Veruca Salt belongs decidedly within the despised nouveau riche category and is presumably American, since her father is 'in the peanut business' [...] Violet Beauregarde and Mike Teavee are also affiliated with America; Violet by her incessant gum-chewing and Mike by his penchant for American Westerns and gangster movies. Augustus's last name suggests he might be German" (191). But if Veruca is "presumably American" then why is she depicted as British in both the 1971 film and Tim Burton's 2005 remake? And why is there an important point of divergence in the designation of Charlie's nationality in the two screen treatments? In this paper, I argue that the national designations of the children were not inevitable and arose out of a variety of decisions and factors. In unpacking how these stereotypes and

discourses of national identity intersect with childhood, as well as notions of class and gender, I'll also touch on other possibilities in the children's representations, particularly in light of politically correct movements in children's literature, film and popular culture.

Elsewhere, I've singled out the 1971 film's clever use of satire, low versus highbrow forms of humour and intertextuality, which marks it out as a "proto-contemporary, multivalent, dual-addressed family film' (Schober, "Why Can't They Make Kids' Flicks?" 66). In many ways, it is a forerunner to the dual address of contemporary family films made by the likes of Disney/Pixar and DreamWorks animated features (Schober, "Why Can't They Make Kids Flicks?" 60). And as a landmark film made for both adults and children alike it is also a forerunner to the type of "family film" made by the likes of Tim Burton (Schober, "Wonka, Freud" 72). When Burton decided to remake the film he got the blessing from Dahl's widow, 'Liccy,' who manages the Dahl estate. While his film alienated audiences reared on the 1971 film, Burton's version was a critical and commercial success. Rather disingenuously, the auteur filmmaker has sought to distance himself from the 1971 film: "I wasn't really a fan of the first film, it didn't capture me the way it's captured a lot of people ... It's a strange movie, it has the oddest tone. I found it to be quite disturbing. With that weird acid flashback when they're on the boat. And Willy Wonka turns nice, out of the blue" (Burton 224). And yet it's hard to take seriously Burton's objections to the odd and disturbing shifts in tone, as well as the surreal elements of the film, which are not altogether out of keeping with Burton's sensibilities. For as much as Burton tries to dissociate himself from the 1971 film he is indebted to it. Most notably, he follows the earlier film's designations of the nationalities of the children, with the exception of Charlie. Coincidence? I think not.²

But were the national designations of the children part of Dahl's original plan? Or Stuart's doing? Or maybe Seltzer's? According to a personal email from Stuart (who passed away in 2012):

The mix of nationalities came about through a variety of circumstances. We started casting the major actors in the United States. However, it turned out that we would produce the picture in Munich because Bavaria studios offered the best (and cheapest) location. It made sense to cast the remaining actors overseas. In addition, it would add to the world wide [sic] appeal of the film. (The Oompa-Loompas were all cast in Europe). (Stuart)

Stuart's making-of account, *Pure Imagination*, almost a manual on how to make a movie, helps fill in some of the details. Stuart and Wolper worked with casting directors in New York, London and Munich, thus drawing a wide net over possible child actors to fill the roles of the children. "Most of the casting was done in New York" (Stuart & Young 33), which befits the American origins of the film. Peter Ostrum as Charlie was discovered in the children's branch of the Cleveland Playhouse, Ohio. He was cast because he "looked" right for the part and had the requisite qualities: many years later, Ostrum said he was basically playing himself. Denise Nickerson as Violet was something of a veteran of the industry, having done Broadway and TV. Paris Themmen as Mike Teavee was also experienced, having done commercials and Broadway. And so three of the child actors cast were American.

As for the casting of Veruca, the director states: "I saw Veruca Salt as the embodiment of every spoiled child I had run into in Beverly Hills. However, she had to be English, so we went to what is called a stage school in England. We started by lining up all

the girls in the school, eliminating those who weren't the right physical type, and then had the remaining young actresses read from the book" (Stuart & Young 34). Julia Dawn Cole got the part because she came across as the nastiest and Stuart could visualise her singing "I Want it Now" with total conviction (Stuart & Young 34). Yet Stuart never explains why Veruca *had* to be English. Lucy Mangan has a possible answer: "where else would you look for a raging imperialist-to-be?" (43). (This is a legitimate point, perhaps, given the British colonialist foundations of the story).³ While Stuart, Wolper and fellow producer Stan Margulies scouted European locations for the film, it was in Munich they made an inspired discovery: Michael Bollner, who was cast as Augustus Gloop in the movie. As Stuart explains, "he needed a husky German boy" and "one of the keys to the casting was the image of what Gloop would be like stuck in the suction tube after he falls into the comic river" (Stuart & Young 35). As he didn't speak English he was assisted by a dialogue coach. In sum, according to Stuart, these casting choices partly arose of expediency, which influenced the cross-section of the children's nationalities in the film. But the fact these nationalities are present in Dahl's first draft of the screenplay suggests this was part of the plan all along. Or at the least the writing of the screenplay and the casting of the movie occurred around the same time.

Based on his colourful name, Augustus' nationality seems obvious, but here we'd be filling in textual gaps.⁴ In the novel, the "town where Augustus Gloop lived ... had gone wild with excitement over our hero. Flags were flying from all the windows, children had been given a holiday from school, and a parade was being organized in honour of the famous youth" (Dahl 36). The name of the town, needless to say, is never given. But in the 1971 film, he is from the made-up town of Dusselheim (in Dahl's first draft of the screenplay it's Dusseldorf). In the 1971 film, Augustus eagerly devours German cuisine in a restaurant as a broadcaster announces: "Proud we are, for the attention of the entire world focuses today right here in Dusselheim, a community suddenly thrust into prominence by the unexpected discovery of the first Wonka Golden ticket. Its lucky finder is the son of our most prominent parve butcher."⁵ When the reporter asks Augustus how he feels, he says, "Hungry". And when the reporter points the microphone to Mr Gloop he bites the end off! An early version of this scene appears in Dahl's screenplay draft, where the Gloop family is "seated around a table piled with food – pigs' knuckles, sauerkraut, knockwurst, the lot" (Dahl, *Willy Wonka* unpag.).

In the post-war era, Germans and German culture were fair game for satire and parody. One thinks of the bumbling German officers – Colonel Klink and Sergeant Schultz – in the prisoner-of-war camp sitcom *Hogan's Heroes* (1965-1971) or the infantile Baron and Baroness Bomburst from the Roald Dahl-co-scripted *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (1968). "Baron Bomburst, with his pointed helmet, appears to be a rather tasteless parody of Kaiser Wilhelm, and the Germans bear the brunt of the jokes about [the mythical land of] Vulgaria and Vulgarians" (McMorran 771). Culturally, then, Augustus's depiction seems nearer to the Hollywood depiction of Germans and Nazis as the "enemy" in World War II films, particularly fat ones like Herman Göring (*der dicke Hermann* – "fat Herman") seen as "gross." In 1971 there was no guilt in fat-shaming, and it was unproblematic to see Augustus as a funny caricature of a gross German child, whose greed is expressed through his gluttony. With the added variable of nationality, Augustus's fatness carries anti-German connotations.⁶ Taking the more politically correct line, we may ask: should we be laughing? Authorized biographer Donald Sturrock chronicles how Dahl's critical, "fat-detecting eye" manifested itself in childhood – not even his beloved mother was spared (58-59). Hence, children's author David Rees worries about the implications of Augustus' obese

representation, in so far as “we’re being asked to dislike this child because he is fat, and therefore sanction a prejudice that exists in every school background” (145). Rees notes that in other Dahl books such as *James and the Giant Peach* (1961) and *Fantastic Mr Fox* (1970) fatness is also seen as a “symptom of nastiness” (145), whereby Dahl appeals to the darker, spiteful side of a child’s nature.

In Burton’s film, Augustus (Philip Wiegratz) hails from the real-life city of Düsseldorf and is also the son of a German butcher, which is especially noteworthy since in Dahl’s novel Mr Gloop’s occupation is not given. Again, this is irrefutable evidence that Burton is riffing on the 1971 film. As before, Augustus’ fatness is grafted onto a portly German stereotype – the type of German who eats too many schnitzels, sausages, sauerkraut and sweets. Burton’s take on the character, though, is more Dahlian in its “nastiness” – when Augustus proffers his Wonka bar to Charlie he takes it back and tells him to get his own. He is also much larger (Wiegratz wore a fatsuit for the part) than in the first film – and more grotesque, disgusting and abject. Inside his father’s butcher shop, the chocolate-soiled boy recounts to reporters how he almost digested a fragment of the Golden Ticket, before gorging on a Wonka bar. And when he gives free rein to his appetite in the Chocolate Room, his falling into the chocolate river is like falling into a muddy sewer, connoting excremental visions.⁷

Violet Beauregarde in the 1971 film conforms to the loud-mouthed, brash, rude, gum-chewing American stereotype. In Dahl’s first draft of the screenplay, she hails from Miles City, Montana, and her father is a hamster farm owner (*Willy Wonka* unpag.). In the finished film, she still hails from Miles, Montana but Mr Beauregarde (Leonard Stone) is a fast-talking used car salesman who’s introduced by the reporter as a “prominent local politician, a great civic leader, a philosopher.” In front of the cameras, he attempts to steal the limelight from his daughter and engage in a bit of PR for his car dealership: “Hi folks, Sam Beauregarde here, Square Deal Sam to you, with all of today’s great giveaway bargains. The finest values you’ll get anywhere in the entire country ...” before he is cut off by his upstart daughter. In short, he’s a funny caricature of an American car salesman. In Burton’s film, the gum-chewing Violet (AnnaSophia Robb) is from Atlanta, Georgia. She is the product of an over-ambitious, competitive mother (Missi Pyle) – a “stage mother” who insists her child comes out tops (“Eyes on the prize,” is her mantra for success). In using her child to realize her own ambitions and dreams, one could easily imagine Mrs Beauregarde as one of the super-competitive mothers on reality TV shows like *I Know my Kid’s a Star* and *Toddlers and Tiaras*. In a case of mother like daughter, they sport matching outfits and hairstyles. And as befits her competitive streak, Violet is also highly athletic and has won numerous trophies and medals. With a knowing smile Mom boasts to reporters, “She’s a driven young woman – I don’t know where she gets it.” Burton here is of course satirising the so-called link between parental ambition, children’s competitive behaviour and socioeconomic background.

Mike Teavee in the 1971 film is also a highly satirical portrait of an American child. He’s a little smart-ass, know it all. He hails from Marble Falls, Arizona (in the first draft of the script, it is Marble City, Texas) and, as signalled by his name, is addicted to the “idiot box.” His father proudly tells reporters that he serves his son TV dinners in front of the TV – he’s never eaten dinner at the table. In Dahl’s original conception he is specifically obsessed with gangster pictures, and this is how Dahl writes him into the first draft of the screenplay. In the finished film he is obsessed with Westerns, which makes for a thinly veiled critique of America’s obsession with firearms and violent television (Schober, “Roald Dahl’s Reception” 32). In front of reporters, he asks his proud father why he can’t have a Colt 45, who casually

replies: “Not till you’re twelve, son.” In his updating of the character, Burton has Mike (Jordan Fry) obsessed with violent video games as well as television. He is also something of a child prodigy, able to figure out the algorithm to locate the next Golden Ticket or grasp the revolutionary nature of Wonka’s teleporting technology when Wonka cannot. His father (Adam Godley), a geography teacher, laments the destruction of childhood innocence by cutting-edge technology: “Most of the time I don’t know what he’s talking about. You know, kids these days, what with all the technology ...’ [Mike on game console: Die! Die! Die!] ‘...it doesn’t seem like they stay kids very long.” The boisterousness of the earlier characterization has been replaced here with unwelcome intensity and aggression – the way Mike stomps on a candy pumpkin in the Chocolate Room suggests that he has acting out something he’s seen on the screen, recalling Albert Bandura’s famous bobo doll experiments.⁸ When his father admonishes him, Mike retorts, “Dad, he [Wonka] said, ‘Enjoy.’” In the ultimate of affronts to Dahl and childhood, this Mike doesn’t even like chocolate!

It’s instructive to contrast Veruca Salt’s *Englishness* in the two film versions, particularly how this intersects with notions of class. In the novel, we’re told that the lucky winner of the golden ticket was a “small girl called Veruca Salt who lived with her rich parents in a great city far away” (Dahl 39). And we’re told that the Salts made their fortune in the peanut business. In Dahl’s first draft of screenplay, Mr Salt is described as “nouveau riche with a broad north-of-England accent (not necessarily indicated here)” (Dahl unpag.) This is brilliantly implied in the 1971 film. British peanut tycoon Mr Salt is played by tubby British character comic Roy Kinnear, who indeed has a Northern working-class accent as well as gauche manners, which suggests social mobility for the family. One can readily imagine Veruca going to an expensive private girls’ school, if her upper class accent is anything to go by. In the draft of the screenplay, a TV announcer also informs us that she is a “young lady from Ashby-de-la-Zouch”, often shortened to Ashby, a small market town and civil parish in North West Leicestershire. In Burton’s rendition, the curtsying Veruca (Julia Winter) smacks less of nouveau riche and more of genteel English stock, that is, “good breeding.” She resides in a stately mansion and rides ponies on the estate. Her father, played by quintessentially British actor James Fox, is again in the peanut business, ready and willing to satisfy his daughter’s unending demands. But if Veruca in the 1971 film is a picture of unbridled femininity – hardly a “lady” – then in Burton’s film she has a mock English reserve that is always about to erupt into a tantrum: “Where’s my Golden Ticket? I want my Golden Ticket!”

The mix of classes in the book (and films) is interesting: Mike, Violet and Augustus belong to the middle class while Veruca is much more well-to-do. Charlie is of the impoverished class, *really* impoverished; when Mr Bucket loses his job at the toothpaste factory, Dahl tells us he and his family live on a diet of mostly cabbage soup through a harsh winter. At one point, it seems like Charlie might not make it – he’s skin and bones, literally: “His face became frighteningly white and pinched. The skin was drawn so tightly over the cheeks that you could see the shapes of the bones underneath. It seemed doubtful whether he could go on much longer like this without becoming dangerously ill” (Dahl 58). As Daniels argues, the novel’s intersections of class and race have important implications for the depiction of childish excess and monstrosity in so far as British austerity is seen as character-building for a child like Charlie, while the infiltration of American methods of child-rearing in British society is seen as “vulgar and overindulgent and associated with the nouveau riche” (191). In any case, the novel functions as a middleclass critique of permissive parenting, showing the ill-effects of overconsumption – food, TV and materialism – on children.

Apropos of the 1971 film, James R. Kincaid implies that Charlie passes the gobstopper test because he is British – “the other kids failing because they are greedy, vulgar, untidy, German, and American (it’s a film full of British bigotries)” (134). The problem with such a reading is that this Charlie (as played by the angelic-looking Peter Ostrum) is an all-American child with an American accent. What’s more, Veruca in the film is depicted as British not American. To cynics, Charlie is a child that needs to be humanely put down; too good to be true. As a child born in abject poverty, Benjamin DeMott saw Charlie as an anachronism:

Is it not also possible, they [the filmmakers] hint, that Charlie isn’t fully ‘of this world’, isn’t present on this contemporary scene in the same terms as others his age? (Charlie Bucket’s world in tone, décor, and detail, pre-National Health Service and Dickensian : home is a 19th century hovel; mother works in a one-woman, scrub-tub, pre-Zola laundry; Charlie’s job [as a newspaper boy] is presented in a manner that evokes child labour in ‘bygone years.’ Yet the lives of the other kids who find Golden Tickets and win admission to the magical chocolate factory are packed with the appurtenances of contemporary civilization – electronic gadgetry, used car salesmen, fat West Germans, rich permissive parents and the like.) (DeMott 10)

This “dislocated” representation of Charlie, if you like, is very Romantic, and also very consistent with Dahl’s Dickensian Romantic vision (Schober, “Wonka, Freud” 74).

As played by English child actor Freddie Highmore, fresh from playing one of the Llewelyn Davies boys in the inaccurate biopic *Finding Neverland* (2004), Charlie in Burton’s film is English. In casting the children in the film, Burton seriously weighed up whether to make Charlie American or English:

We worked with different kids and actually tested them with an Americanised accent, and what became very clear to me – even though some of them did it very well, Freddie did it very well – was that the American accent was just lacking simplicity. And because of the mix of elements, the way we were doing it, I just felt English was better, it was more pure, it kept it consistent and more real, it had more emotional resonance. (Burton 235)

This decision to make Charlie English of course resonates more with the Dickensian overtones of the character and the story. This is reflected in the iconography of Burton’s film: Charlie’s house is both very expressionistic and very Victorian. And when Charlie shines Wonka’s shoes this connotes Victorian images of street children (Schober, “Wonka, Freud” 75).

While many assume that Wonka’s factory is situated in some version of England, it is only in the British edition that Charlie pays for his Wonka bar in pound sterling; in the US edition it is in American dollars. In the 1971 film, too, Charlie finds an American dollar bill; in the 2005 remake it is an American ten-dollar bill. In short, currency here is a problematic marker of national context, as Dahl himself apparently realised when he made the following annotation to the screenplay draft: “Mention of dollars presents a small problem here. But the offers [from onlookers to buy Charlie’s ticket] lose their impact if we do not use a well-known currency” (Dahl, *Willy Wonka*, unpag.). However, it does fit in with the idea that the setting of Wonka’s factory is of no particular place or time, a utopia or “no place” (to invoke

the Greek derivation of the word). For the 1971 film, Stuart decided the Munich location had the requisite storybook quality without being overly familiar: “I didn’t want Wonka’s Chocolate Factory to seem to be located in any particular country or the film to take place at any discernible time. That way, the film would assume a timeless, universal quality” (Stuart & Young 39). It also turned out to be more cost-effective to make the film in Europe instead of Hollywood. But, while efforts were made to disguise the location (many viewers assume it’s a version of England), eagle-eyed viewers can still spot German advertising in the background. The interiors of the film were shot at Bavaria Film Studios. Ironically, when the film came out Howard Thompson was dismissive: “Most of the picture looks exactly like what it is, a fairly elaborate project shot by an American company inside a Bavarian studio” (61). As for the indeterminate nature of the backdrop in the remake, Burton has done this sort of thing before in the art direction of his films. For example, *Edward Scissorhands* (1990) seems to be set in the 1980s, but with cars and fashions from the 1970s and ranch-style houses that evoke 1950s suburbia.

Interestingly, Burton did consider making the children more racially diverse in the film, but ultimately decided against it. Just before the movie was released, he told *Newsweek* that, while he gave the issue serious thought, “if you start to do it, it’s like what they would do at the end of certain sitcoms they would suddenly try to make them interracial, and it was, I found, more offensive ... It was the politically correct thing to do and it rang false” (Silver-Greenberg 12). Is there any merit to this? There is, of course, a long tradition of white characters populating children’s books, and when *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was first published in the United States in 1964 there were few children’s books that featured an African-American character in the text or illustrations. When a character did appear this was usually negative or comical (Sims 477). According to African-American professor, Rudine Sims:

This situation damages Black and white children alike, since literature is one of the most important vehicles through which we socialize children and transmit our cultural values to them. White children, finding in the pages of books only others like themselves, come to believe in an inherent ‘rightness of whiteness’ that grants to other races no important place or function in society. (Sims 477)

To be clear, Dahl doesn’t specify the colour of Charlie or, for that matter, the other children. However, the illustrations for the various editions of the book (most notably, Quentin Blake’s) visualise them as Caucasian. One suspects Burton has passively internalised this “rightness of whiteness” vis-à-vis the construct of the “universal child”. As Stephen Gennaro highlights, “one of the largest problems with the construct of the universal child is who is left voiceless or absent from representation within such a totalizing discourse and how are issues such as gender, sexuality, race, or class obfuscated by a discourse that privileges white, male and middle-class as normal” (32). Feature films have always lagged behind television sitcoms and commercials in the depiction of cultural diversity and, unless otherwise stated, readers assume characters in books are white, European, Anglo-Saxon. Neil Gaiman’s fantasy *Anansi Boys* (2005) thought-provokingly overturns these biases: the colour of the black characters is taken for granted while the colour of the white characters is identified as such.

Fascinatingly, it has emerged that Dahl originally intended Charlie to be a “small NEGRO boy” (Sturrock 397), before his literary agent Sheila Saint Lawrence objected to the idea, believing that a black hero would have no appeal to young readers. As Catherine Keyser

relates, the Charlie of his early version entitled “Charlie’s Chocolate Boy” goes into the Easter Room and almost drowns in molten chocolate – not unlike how Augustus Gloop falls into the chocolate river in the published version – which hardens and encases him (414). According to Keyser, this Charlie becomes the site of the commodification of the vulnerable black body, which “recapitulates familiar racist tropes, including the motif of the edible black child” (414). However, before he made Charlie white and introduced the arc of the Oompa-Loompas as pygmies from Africa whom Wonka recruits as cheap labour for his factory, thereby exposing himself to other charges of racism, Dahl in this version of the story was at least working through issues of imperialism, racialization and the exploitation of childhood (Keyser 419). As a lost opportunity, Keyser argues that this version emerges as a “powerful racial allegory” whereby the “mold in the shape of a chocolate boy is a metaphor for racial stereotype” (Russosept). The recent musical production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* has notably cast an African-American child in the role of Violet. But re-imagining Charlie as a black child living in abject poverty comes with its own set of racist preconceptions!

I wonder if Burton had included a black child in the film, would this have seemed like a token black child? Here, I am reminded of the token black child in Steven Spielberg’s *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* (1997). As the teenage daughter of (white) chaos theorist Ian Malcom, “Kelly’s” African-Americanness goes unaddressed in the film. Spielberg was both praised and criticised for this portrayal; some critics wanted more of backstory for the character. But who even remembers Kelly today? Fast forward to 2018 and Disney’s production of Ava DuVernay’s *A Wrinkle in Time*, adapted from the 1962 Newbery-winning novel by Madeleine L’Engle, was criticized for its concessions to political correctness, including the depiction of a biracial Meg Murry. One critic saw the film as “the latest victim of diversity-deranged stunt casting in which no respect is paid to the race or sex of existing literary characters.” (Dawson). And yet, despite the challenges of representation, Burton’s decision to “whitewash” the children in his film hardly seems progressive and doesn’t reflect changes in the makeup of contemporary society. Future adaptors of Dahl’s work should take note.

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End notes

¹ This manuscript of this early draft of the screenplay, held in the Roald Dahl Archive at the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre, Great Missenden, UK, is described thus: “Marked, ‘First Draft Screenplay’ at the top of the first page. The bundle contains several pages of carbon-copy typescript throughout, which suggest that an earlier draft has not survived.” I cite this draft of the screenplay throughout.

² One scene is particularly suggestive of how Burton is playing with allusions to the 1971 original. When Johnny Depp’s Willy Wonka leads parents and children down the corridor, the corridor gets smaller and smaller; Wonka then inserts a key into a tiny door which opens into the Chocolate Room. A version of this scene appears in the 1971 film, with Gene Wilder’s Wonka playing a sequence of notes on a miniature organ to open the door. In the novel, the entry into the Chocolate Room is rendered more straightforwardly: passages slope downward before Wonka inserts a key into a shiny metal door.

³ See, for example, the post-colonial reading of the novel offered by Clare Bradford, “The End of Empire? Colonia and Postcolonial Children’s Books,” *Children’s Literature* 29 (2001): 196-218.

⁴ In an early draft, Augustus Gloop had the more Anglo-Saxon-sounding name Augustus Pottle (Sturrock 298).

⁵ On a side note, Dahl’s Norwegian paternal grandfather, Olaus Dahl, was also a butcher.

⁶ In a sly reference from the 1971 film, the picture shown by the Latino TV presenter of fraudulent Golden Ticket winner Alberto Minoleta from Paraguay is actually of Nazi war criminal, Martin Bormann.

⁷ I am of course invoking Hamida Bosmajian’s well-known Freudian interpretation, “*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and other Excremental Visions.” As for Augustus Gloop’s fate, she writes that this “infantile incorporator falls appropriately into the chocolate river whence he is sucked up, swallowed and digested by the pipe system that through, an anal birth, metamorphoses him into a boy ‘thin as straw’” (43).

⁸ In a series of influential learning experiments conducted in the early 1960s, psychologist Albert Bandura had children watch an adult behave aggressively towards a “Bobo” doll. Bandura found that children imitated the behaviour of the model, punching and kicking the doll, even when this model appeared on film.