

Affairs of the Tell-Tale Heart: Sargeson's Poe and the Horrors of Love

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In 'An Affair of the Heart', Freddy Coleman describes his idyllic childhood summers spent at a bach, and his association with the Crawley family, who live in poverty. The story registers a division between the middle class emotional register of Freddy's family – he notes 'our family... never showed our feelings much'¹ – and the outré emotional life of Mrs Crawley. Thinking of Mrs Crawley's obsessive attachment to her son, Freddy says that

I felt a little bit frightened. It was perhaps the first time I understood what deep things there could be in life. It was easy to see how mad over Joe Mrs Crawley was... And perhaps I was frightened because there was a feeling in me that going mad over a person in that way could be quite a terrible thing.'²

Sargeson, famed for his masculine, laconic and thus seemingly emotionally circumscribed narrative mode, is, in truth, often interested in the depiction of unmanageable and only half-legible emotion. If the Colemans exhibit an emotional restraint that identifies them as respectably middle class, then one of the ways Mrs Crawley is marked as a figure on the margins is through the intensity of her love for her absent son. Mrs Crawley's feeling is 'mad', of a different order to the emotional life of the Colemans, and has developed into a persistent delusion that Joe's return is imminent. Love has nearly destroyed Mrs Crawley, leaving her a grotesque figure who has 'shrivelled up to nothing'.³

Sargeson has been read as putting forward a humane plea for, in Charles Brasch's words, 'people wronged by society or warped by narrow conventions or creeds... who are most in need of the concern that informs his picture of them'.⁴ We might agree with Brasch that there is a compassionate emotional appeal made by the story – but this appeal exists in tension with the otherworldly quality of the feelings being described. Feeling – especially love and various varieties of sexual desire – often has frightening power in Sargeson, shaping characters in ways that depart from realism's interest in the commonplace and the recognisable. 'An Affair of the Heart' closes with the narrator fleeing from Mrs Crawley's half-ruined shack, a site of poverty and emotional disturbance that perhaps edges into a kind of a beachside Usher, an instance of a New Zealand Gothic.

But what might this label mean? Critically, at least, the New Zealand Gothic seems to have taken on a ghostly quality. Does it even exist? A few years ago, it was perfectly reasonable for Lydia Wevers to suggest there had been, more-or-less, no Gothic tradition in New Zealand's literature.⁵ More recently, Jennifer Lawn, Misha Kavka and Mary Paul suggested there is an extremely wide-ranging New Zealand Gothic. Their edited collection *Gothic NZ* explores the Gothic dimensions of tattooing, home renovation, *The Lord of the Rings*, Misery (the Auckland-based illustrator and streetwear designer), glum modernist architecture, and the incursion of tree roots into plumbing.⁶ Ian Wedde's afterword has the genre including both genetic engineering and tourism.⁷ The Gothic floats at the fringes of New Zealand's cultural canon. In this account, once you've seen the ghost, you start seeing it everywhere.

Efforts to describe New Zealand prose have often emphasised a wide-ranging engagement with a notional realism; we have not yet fully described a history of popular prose genres in New Zealand. Where other nations look back to earlier texts (*Otranto*, Mrs Radcliffe's romances, Poe's tales) and read them as originating and contributing to national traditions of the Gothic, assembling a kind of genre-specific canon, the same manoeuvre is not readily available in New Zealand. Even if we recognise that, say, A.A. Grace produced a local form of the imperial ghost story in collections like *Tales of a Dying Race*, criticism has not yet traced or assembled these threads of influence. Discussions of the New Zealand Gothic instead tend to understand the Gothic as a cultural mode which simply emerges under certain pressures, something like the national 'sense of the perilous' put forward by Sam Neill in *Cinema of Unease*.⁸

Trope becomes a key identifier. The Gothic occurs whenever the repressed can no longer be held back, when the burial is premature, when the skin has been punctured, when a veil has fallen over the eyes.

Perhaps this tracing ought not be limited to borders of the nation; the Gothic, after all, is an international phenomenon.

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Another way of tracing a local Gothic would be to look to New Zealand writers' engagements with international cultural currents that are recognised as Gothic. This would follow international efforts to understand the relationships between national Gothics. The American Gothic, for instance, has been defined, at least in part, by its response to and departure from earlier British models. This would acknowledge the Gothic as an identifiable

and international tradition running through the arts and especially literature, rather than seeing it as something which emerges automatically from soil and history.

Sargeson is a salient figure here, because his work sits near the heart of 'New Zealand literature', but also tends to return to international Gothic traditions. Mark Williams noted the 'gothic, macabre, and bizarre touches throughout Sargeson's writing' some years ago.⁹ More recently, Alex Calder has unsettled the notion of Sargeson as a realist, describing melodramatic and even camp elements in the fiction.¹⁰ Sargeson's debt to the American grotesque of Sherwood Anderson has long been acknowledged. Edgar Allan Poe's American Gothic is another touchstone Sargeson returned to.

Sargeson signals this interest in 'Letter to a Friend', a story that has received little interest, perhaps because it seems slight. It describes a beachside holiday, where the narrator, an older man (who seems much like Sargeson himself) meets Paul, who is 'quite good-looking' but 'couldn't be more than seventeen',¹¹ at dinner. They have little to say to each other until they step outside and chat about a copy of Poe's *Tales* which has been left on the verandah. Paul surprises the narrator by enquiring whether he agreed that 'that it was because [Poe] was so very much interested in the problem of evil that he wrote horror stories?'¹² Poe's work provides an opportunity for the men to connect, and it is Poe's description of wickedness that interests them both. The narrator returns to Poe and the problem of evil the next day when he spies a young woman, made up and wearing a bikini, sitting with two American soldiers on the beach. The scene is a prelude to illicit lovemaking. The narrator jokes that the woman is done up like 'a corpse for an American funeral',¹³ but Paul is too much the good boy to follow. The joke is about the macabre garishness supposedly attendant on American tastes, but it also has the effect of recalling Poe's fixations with sex and death, of conflating the two within a desired body.

The narrator goes on to ask the friend to whom he addresses the letter, 'is it, maybe, that my notions about the problem of evil are far too much tainted by my puritan upbringing? I leave this question for you to decide.'¹⁴ A letter between friends infers shared knowledge and confidences that need not be written out on the page. If the narrator understands evil via a puritan frame, this connects it to the fallenness of flesh and to human sexuality. If Poe is a writer who examines evil, then he is addressing the wrongness of desire. But the narrator is reticent about his meaning here, leaving a space for his friend (and the story's readers) to fill in the blank. Sargeson, writing from the closet, has good reason not to be frank. Much is unsaid in the story – but there seems to be a frisson between Paul and the narrator. The pair walk along the shore together and feast on bread, onions and pipi. What are we to understand

when the narrator observes that Paul ‘ate heartily, but not, I thought, so heartily as I did – as you know my insatiable interest in concrete things has always included things you can eat.’¹⁵ The curiously unclear phrasing asks the letter’s readers to return to the phrase, to re-parse it, to find an *entendre* past its most immediate meaning. Is Sargeson depicting, if not quite describing, oral sex enjoyed between men in a story published in a 1944 number of the *New Zealand Listener*? It’s difficult to be sure, but that, of course, is the point. ‘Letter to a Friend’ seems unusually slight, even for a slice-of-life short – unless it is a story about a beach tryst which can barely be written down, a story which its sympathetic reader is expected to discover. Perhaps this is what is suggested in the cryptic introduction, where the narrator responds to his correspondent’s enquiry about whether his holiday has offered him anything to write about: ‘I can leave you to judge for yourself.’¹⁶ Poe seems to be placed at the centre of a story of forbidden and unspeakable desire.

This is an apt placement – while Poe is often read as offering psychological insight, just as often his fiction seems to suggest that the psyche is close to unreadable, offering perverse blanks that readers must struggle to interpret. (Why does Roderick Usher bury the living Madeline in ‘The Fall of the House of Usher’? Why must Montresor be revenged on Fortunato in ‘The Cask of Amontillado’? In ‘The Black Cat’, the narrator insists that he killed the unfortunate cat for no reason other than perverseness – although he weeps as he kills the animal. The narrator of ‘The Tell-Tale Heart’ is unable to offer a reason why he kills the older man beyond disliking his eye: ‘Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man.’)¹⁷ ‘Letter to a Friend’ is not a Gothic tale, but it does suggest a reading of Poe – a reading that emphasises a connection between death and hidden and uncontrollable desire – that Sargeson returns to in horror yarns such as ‘A Great Day’, ‘Sale Day’ and ‘I’ve Lost my Pal’.

‘A Great Day’ borrows substantially from Poe’s ‘The Cask of Amontillado’. Sargeson’s story describes how Fred murders Ken on a fishing trip, stranding him on a reef at low tide with the weather worsening. As in Poe’s tale, the exact reason for the murder is only obliquely raised, although in both there is a sense the victim has somehow slighted the murderer. In both stories, the victim is lured into danger with the promise of some degustatory reward offered by their killer; Fortunato seeks a taste of Amontillado, Ken would like some mussels. Both stories coolly recount the luring at length without spending much effort on describing the interior state of killer or victim. The nicely appalling detail at the end of the Sargeson, where Fred shuts his eyes and rows away, his ears stuffed with cotton wool so that he is unable to see or hear Ken, stranded and quite doomed,¹⁸ appears to simply

relocate the ending of Poe's story. Fortunato, walled up in the cellars, is finally silent and has been obscured from view. Both murders involve not only trapping their victims but obscuring their death, beneath walls or water; both are murders that fulfil Montresor's conditions that the revengeful killer must make his action known to his victim, but the murder must be otherwise undetectable.¹⁹

Why does Fred kill Ken? Fred provides no account of his action, and readers must assemble some sort of motive from the scant dialogue between the pair. Class seems to be a source of contention – Ken has an education, some money saved, and can stay with family, while Fred has to rent a bach and doesn't enjoy the same prospects.²⁰ The more substantial reason seems to be sexual envy. Mary, who Fred once fancied, has been spending more time with Ken who now lives in the house where she works in service.²¹ Desire – which potentially has both economic and sexual elements – emerges as the reason that Ken is killed. As with 'Letter to a Friend', Sargeson appears to refer to Poe in a story where desire is an issue that is not really remarked on in the diegesis.

Poe is also referred to in 'Sale Day'. The story describes a confrontation between Victor, a young farmer, and Elsie, a woman who chars for his family. Victor threatens to rape Elsie in a fortnight's time, when his family will next be out. The encounter culminates with Victor putting a cat into the stove, both a warning and a demonstration of his capacity for violence. The story closely recalls Poe's 'The Black Cat' – both are domestic horrors that hinge on a man killing a cat, which is connected to an attack or threatened attack on a woman. Sargeson transforms the house fire in the Poe story into the cat's death in the stove. It is possible to read this as a meaningful alteration. In Poe, the entirety of the household is jeopardised by the narrator's uncontrolled violence; whereas in Sargeson, that violence is connected to the stove, which sits at the centre of the household. For Poe, patriarchal violence threatens to demolish domesticity; for Sargeson, it is a constituent element of domestic life.

'Sale Day' unsettles the usual Sargesonian pattern drawn in stories like 'Conversation with my Uncle' and 'The Hole that Jack Dug', where liveliness is shown to be preferable to the reserved, respectable and prim.²² Victor caresses his own body while complaining that 'Living all your life on a farm you see too damn much of nature... It's no good if you've got a sensitive nature yourself'.²³ Victor's claim of sensitivity is grotesque. Too much animal rutting in the fields has turned his head, somehow becoming involved in his own experience of desire. He conflates lust with violence, understanding himself as entitled to rape. Like 'A Great Day', 'Sale Day' seems to be informed by Sargeson's reading of Poe in 'Letter to a

Friend'. Sexual feeling edges into criminal action. In this context, it is worth noting that Sargeson's lived experience of ardour might not have had much in common with the malicious feelings described in his fiction – but his own desire was held to be a criminal act and invoked punishment.

Sargeson's reception has been refigured with the 'discovery' that he was arrested for homosexual activity in 1929. The notion of 'outing' in our present day often seems to imply a definitive act of publication of one's sexual identity; yet reading through Sarah Shieff's rich selection of Sargeson's letters, it is apparent Sargeson's outing was a gradual one, begun by himself,²⁴ and completed by a number of publications in the eighties and particularly the nineties.²⁵ The recognition of Sargeson's sexual orientation brought about a reconsideration of his work. There were excited responses that painted him as a heroic figure labouring toward a sexually liberal vision in a pre-homosexual law reform milieu. Paul Millar notes that 'Sargeson's fiction was once appropriated by the cultural nationalists of the twentieth century to represent a type of New Zealand masculinism, and then reappropriated by the revisionists of the late twentieth century to represent something opposite.'²⁶ Kai Jensen celebrated the revelation's power to usefully expand what is meant by 'New Zealand literature', arguing that 'Sargeson's closeted sexuality... is a national literary treasure, the largest gem in the masculinist crown.'²⁷ Peter Wells sketched Sargeson as a martyr for the cause, standing alongside other gay writers who had been silenced.²⁸ Bruce Harding went further in his delight, framing Sargeson as a 'crusader for sexual-existential freedom'.²⁹

This is a fair reading of Sargeson in work like 'That Summer'. The cheerfully lewd elements of that story have been well enumerated, with John Newton describing how it confoundingly blurs hetero and homo codes of mateship.³⁰ Of course, Bill and Terry's relationship is in itself illegal – but it is striking just how often the story sees other forms of criminality, particularly stealing, being bound into affection. This can be seen when Ted pinches Bill's wallet, but contrarily, and sweetly, Bill's small caring gestures towards Terry often require petty thefts and deceptions. Meals and newspapers for his lover are financed out of pilfered milk money and stolen and resold newspapers. It almost seems appropriate, then, that the cells to which Bill is confined after his arrest appear as a sexual wonderland, where he requests Vaseline to help him through a night where creaking beds keep him up.³¹ In these moments, there is the kind of liberation that Jensen and Harding describe. Potentially, there is illicit joy where there should be punishment, and confinement yields a form of sexual freedom.

However, just as often, Sargeson describes homosexual life and feeling in frightening, Gothic terms. In 'I've Lost my Pal', the narrator and his friend Tom join a shearing gang, where they meet George. After work, the three sit on a woodpile, yarning in the moonlight. George, like Victor in 'Sale Day', complains of sensitivity; he 'could stand anything except things that got on his nerves. If anything got on his nerves, well, look out!'³² These are complaints that recall the untoward sensitivity of some of Poe's murderers. Roderick Usher is burdened by a 'morbid acuteness of the senses'³³ that becomes a crisis once Madeline re-emerges from the tomb. Likewise, the narrator of 'The Tell-Tale Heart' claims that 'what you mistake for madness is but over acuteness of the senses',³⁴ a problem which again leads to disaster. In Poe, this sensitivity distinguishes these figures from the others who surround them. They do not feel as others feel – and significantly, there are elements of sexual 'deviancy' in both of Poe's characters. The Ushers are often read (perhaps not always compellingly) as engaged in an incestuous relationship. 'The Tell-Tale Heart' begins with the narrator's nightly visits to the bedchamber of the older man he plans to murder. It is hard not to wonder what Sargeson, himself no stranger to impish *entendre* in his later works, might have made of the passage where the narrator secretly peeks in at the sleeping man, full of murderous intent, and boasts 'I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly – very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed.'³⁵ Perhaps this is too much of a stretch; but George *is* of a piece with Poe's killers. His sexual 'wrongness' bleeds into his criminality.

George's sexuality is provocative. When George washes himself in front of the rest of the gang, he 'was pleased at the things we used to say about the different parts of him. He had a corker body anyhow.'³⁶ There is a cheeky evasion in the narrator's reluctance to name the exact parts of George's body being praised, and in the use of idiom associated with the masculinist, heterosexual, New Zealand of the thirties – 'corker' – to describe a sexual admiration. The narrator does not comment on George's confrontational sexuality, and instead dwells on the shearer's pleasure in the public, male scrutiny of his body. George is an eye-ful and even charming, but it becomes apparent that he is also a sadist and a killer. He makes a performance of killing a lamb, then looks as if he is 'a bit pleased' with himself.³⁷ Still, how can we dislike a shearer who *dresses* to sit on the woodpile and croon Bing Crosby songs? As so often happens in the Gothic text, the villain holds a charismatic appeal that threatens to overcome the narrator's, and possibly our, objections to his moral dubiousness. We might call this the Vincent Price effect. The story makes a series of claims for George's

appeal – his cool and his charm – while disrupting that appeal with a series of demonstrations of his capacity for violence and cruelty. In ‘I’ve Lost my Pal’, this quickly becomes disorienting. George’s treatment of the sheep – because it is actually depicted, and the animal is defenceless – is likely to be more upsetting for readers than the revelation that George has killed the ‘goody-goody’³⁸ Tom. After all, who likes a goody-good? Reading is the occasion when we are allowed to indulge in a little *schadenfreude*. But the revelation of Tom’s death is accompanied by George’s strangulation of a dog; again, forcing readers to confront George’s violence. In the absence of a sustained depiction of George’s inner life, there is only this play of appeal and repulsion, an ongoing provocation.

This provocation becomes especially pronounced in the story’s treatment of George’s sexuality. His deadpan openness about his sexual history marks him as unlike the rest of the shearing gang. Tom resents the queer modes of affection suggested by George. Tom says,

Give me a girl who’s on for a cuddle and oh boy!

Right enough, George said, but when I was a kid a joker had me for a pet.

See?

Was he a scoutmaster? I asked.

Oh, near enough, George said. He was a Sunday school teacher.

That got Tom narked. He told George he ought to be ashamed of himself for telling things like that.³⁹

Where Tom possesses an uncomplicated heterosexual enthusiasm of an unofficially authorised sort, George is boasting of his own sexual grooming by an older man. What ought to be shameful (according to Tom) is revelled in. George’s appeal rests in his delinquency, and there’s a curious pressure to read him as a kind of closeted hero, his murders no more than a queer satirical snub to the straight environment he occupies; yet he resists this reading for he is delinquent in ways that place him outside a comfortable post-Homosexual Law Reform Act vision of homosexuality. Homosexuality, in Sargeson, tends to remain part of a wider array of transgressive characteristics and behaviours.

Chris Brickell, drawing on extant High Court records, has shown that an age differential was a commonplace in homosexual couplings – particularly in casual liaisons – in New Zealand from the twenties through until the fifties.⁴⁰ Yet this milieu necessarily complicates notions of consent and Brickell describes this as ‘highly ambiguous terrain’.⁴¹ Sargeson uses this ambiguity to depict George as a monster. Being ‘a pet’ suggests something

quite different from Tom's 'cuddling'. Pets are cuddled, but also owned and disciplined. The term is striking in a story that features the killing of a lamb and then a dog – both creatures which might be kept as pets. If George has himself been treated as a pet, then he takes the liberty of treating other bodies, animal and human, similarly. Like Victor, there is nothing to separate George's violence from his sexuality; like one of Poe's figures, he is insuperably different and incapable of repentance. Brickell has noted that the rhetoric surrounding homosexuality in the early and middle years of the twentieth century was characterised by a transition from a language of moral ruin and corruption to one of psychological damage and harm.⁴² The figure of George is formed from an admixture of these views, both damaged and wilfully wicked. At its close, 'I've Lost my Pal' returns to the issue of sensitivity. The narrator reflects: 'I'm sore at losing Tom. I am that. But I have to admit that he'd sometimes get on your nerves and make you feel tired by arguing silly. Haven't you ever felt like that with anyone? Own up. I bet you have.'⁴³ The irony of the title becomes apparent. The lost pal is George, not Tom, whose sympathies are with the killer. The narrator enters the state of tired Gothic sensitivity that George has described, before suggesting that readers have experienced this themselves.

Similarly delinquent models of queer desire emerge elsewhere in Sargeson. The novella *The Hangover* is half-in and half-out of the closet. Its protagonist Alan is as 'mad' as any of Poe's figures. It becomes apparent he is unable to manage his emergent homosexual identity and molests a six year old girl before embarking on a raincoat-clad massacre of those close to him. The later story 'Charity Begins at Home' is a similarly macabre burlesque. Lionel cheerfully embarks on a sexual relationship with Mrs Hinchhorn's new lodger, Major Barr-Major, who is messily dying in her detached room; but Lionel also keeps pictures of 'waif-like' little girls, 'somewhere about the tender age of eight or nine or ten' on his wall, where, ominously, they surround his treasured garden shears, with 'sharpened blades... bright and shining with oil'.⁴⁴

Figures like Victor, George, Lionel and Alan are difficult to assimilate into a view of Sargeson as liberal crusader. Violence and desire are interwoven in their sexual identities. These are elements that remain, quite rightly, beyond the pale for us today. In the case of Sargeson's queers, their preferences sometimes include pederasty and draw from phobic rhetorics of homosexuality from the early and mid-twentieth century, which Brickell has described as consisting of 'a rather eclectic mixture of ideas about youth, majority, sexual object choice, moral corruption, degeneracy, and congenital and acquired desires.'⁴⁵ Sargeson does not seek to contest these claims; rather the confused rhetoric attached to homosexuality

is read onto both queer and straight characters, so that desire and even love are figured as isolating and horrifying. In this, Sargeson's depiction of desire sits alongside two of the novels most often described as 'New Zealand Gothic', Ronald Hugh Morrieson's *The Scarecrow* and David Ballantyne's *Sydney Bridge Upside Down*, which both understand sexual desire in Gothic terms.

Poe wrote 'From childhood's hour I have not been / As others were – I have not seen / As others saw – I could not bring / My passions from a common spring... And all I lov'd – I loved alone'.⁴⁶ This could easily describe the emotional isolation experienced by many of Sargeson's characters. In 'A Good Boy', the titular figure, having just killed his girl, seems to share the same sense of aloneness, exclaiming 'Oh Christ, won't anybody ever understand? I'm all balled up I know, but I'm trying to explain.'⁴⁷ Feeling is something that can only with difficulty be communicated or shared, and love, in Sargeson's Gothic, is the thing that separates and destroys. In the case of Mrs Crawley, it is corrosive to the self. But for the men – often young men – of the other tales discussed, love (or lust, or desire) end in the destruction of others as well as the lover. Sargeson might be celebrated for his use of the language of the 'common man', but the emotions he describes are far from commonplace. These tales edge away from realism and into an exaggerated realm of feeling, populated by violent men and sexual gargoyles, a Gothic landscape that is emotional as much as physical.

¹ Frank Sargeson, 'An Affair of the Heart' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 53-60, p. 56.

² Sargeson, 'An Affair of the Heart', p. 56.

³ Sargeson, 'An Affair of the Heart', p. 57.

⁴ Charles Brasch, 'Notes', *Landfall*, 7:1 (1953): 3-4, p. 4.

⁵ Lydia Wevers, 'The Politics of Culture' in Mark Williams (ed.), *Writing at the Edge of the Universe: Essays from the 'Creative Writing in New Zealand' Conference, University of Canterbury, August 2003*, ed. (Christchurch: Canterbury UP, 2004), 109-22, p. 116.

⁶ David Craig, 'Gothic Inversions and Displacements: Ruins, Madness and Domesticated Modernism'; Misha Kavka, 'Out of the Kitchen Sink'; Ian Lochhead, 'Corrugated Iron Gothic'; Mark Jackson and Christopher

Braddock, 'Incised Skin and Other Spurs'; Sarah Shieff, 'Well-Laundered Elves: Purity and Degeneration in *The Lord of the Rings*'; Misha Kavka and Misery, 'Misery: Art and Fashion'; all in Misha Kavka, Jennifer Lawn and Mary Paul (eds.), *Gothic NZ: The Darker Side of Kiwi Culture*, (Dunedin: Otago UP, 2006).

⁷ Ian Wedde, 'Afterword: How Gothic Is It?' in Misha Kavka, Jennifer Lawn and Mary Paul (eds.), *Gothic NZ: The Darker Side of Kiwi Culture*, (Dunedin: Otago UP, 2006), 152-4, p. 159.

⁸ Sam Neill, *Cinema of Unease: A Personal Journey by Sam Neill*, British Film Institute and Top Shelf Productions, 1995.

⁹ Mark Williams, *Leaving the Highway: Six Contemporary New Zealand Novelists* (Auckland: University of Auckland P, 1990), p. 25.

¹⁰ Alex Calder, 'Defiance and Melodrama: Fiction in the Period of National "Invention", 1920-1950', in Mark Williams (ed.), *A History of New Zealand Literature* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2016), 98-111, p. 105

¹¹ Frank Sargeson, 'Letter to a Friend' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 215-9, p. 215.

¹² Sargeson, 'Letter to a Friend', p. 215.

¹³ Sargeson, 'Letter to a Friend', p. 217.

¹⁴ Sargeson, 'Letter to a Friend', p. 217.

¹⁵ Sargeson, 'Letter to a Friend', p. 217.

¹⁶ Sargeson, 'Letter to a Friend', p. 215.

¹⁷ Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Tell-Tale Heart' in Patrick F. Quinn (ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe: Poetry and Tales* (New York: Library of America, 1984), 555-9, p. 555.

¹⁸ Frank Sargeson, 'A Great Day' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 76-82, p.82.

¹⁹ Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Cask of Amontillado' in Patrick F. Quinn (ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe: Poetry and Tales* (New York: Library of America, 1984), 848-54, p. 848.

²⁰ Sargeson, 'A Great Day' p. 78.

²¹ Sargeson, 'A Great Day' p. 81.

²² See Joost Daalder, 'Violence in the Stories of Frank Sargeson', *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 4 (1986): 56-80, p. 59.

²³ Frank Sargeson, 'Sale Day' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 100-3, p. 102.

²⁴ See for instance 'To John Ower, 24 August 1980' in Sarah Shieff (ed.), *Letters of Frank Sargeson* (Auckland: Vintage, 2012), 599-601.

²⁵ See Simon During 'Towards a Revision of Local Critical Habits' *And* 1 (1983), 75-92; Kai Jensen, 'Frank at Last' in Michele Leggott and Mark Williams (eds.), *Opening the Book: New Essays on New Zealand Writing* (Auckland: Auckland UP, 1995), 62-82; Michael King, *Frank Sargeson: A Life* (Auckland: Viking, 1995).

²⁶ Paul Millar, 'All that inscribed paper' (rev. of *Letters of Frank Sargeson*), *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 31 (2013): 200-205, p. 205.

²⁷ Kai Jensen, *Whole Men: The Masculine Tradition in New Zealand Literature* (Auckland: Auckland UP, 1996), p. 126.

²⁸ Peter Wells, 'Introduction: Modest Achievements' in Peter Wells and Rex Pilgrim (eds.), *Best Mates: Gay Writing in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Auckland: Reed, 1997), 7-32.

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- ²⁹ Bruce Harding, 'The Oil on the Salad or, "Being Frank About Frank: The Conjunction of Religious and Judicial Legalisms and the 'Sodomite Rule' in Frank Sargeson's Life and in *The Hangover* (1967)"', *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 16 (1998): 58-71, p. 60.
- ³⁰ John Newton, 'Homophobia and the Social Pattern: *Sargeson's Queer Nation*', *Landfall* 199 (2000): 91-107, pp. 100-1.
- ³¹ Frank Sargeson, 'That Summer' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 142-208, pp. 185-6.
- ³² Frank Sargeson, 'I've Lost my Pal' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 41-4, p. 42.
- ³³ Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Fall of the House of Usher' in Patrick F. Quinn (ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe: Poetry and Tales* (New York: Library of America, 1984), 317-36, p. 322.
- ³⁴ Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Tell-Tale Heart' in Patrick F. Quinn (ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe: Poetry and Tales* (New York: Library of America, 1984), 555-9, p. 557.
- ³⁵ Poe, 'The Tell-Tale Heart', p. 555.
- ³⁶ Sargeson, 'I've Lost my Pal' p. 41.
- ³⁷ Sargeson, 'I've Lost my Pal' p. 44.
- ³⁸ Sargeson, 'I've Lost my Pal' p. 42.
- ³⁹ Sargeson, 'I've Lost my Pal' p. 43.
- ⁴⁰ Chris Brickell, "'Waiting for Uncle Ben": Age-Structured Homosexuality in New Zealand, 1920-1950', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 21:3 (2012): 467-495.
- ⁴¹ Brickell, "'Waiting for Uncle Ben'", p. 493.
- ⁴² Brickell, "'Waiting for Uncle Ben'", p. 470.
- ⁴³ Sargeson, 'I've Lost my Pal' p. 44.
- ⁴⁴ Frank Sargeson, 'Charity Begins at Home' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 270-5, pp. 272, 273.
- ⁴⁵ Brickell, "'Waiting for Uncle Ben'", p. 485.
- ⁴⁶ Edgar Allan Poe, "'Alone'" in Patrick F. Quinn (ed.), *Edgar Allan Poe: Poetry and Tales* (New York: Library of America, 1984), p. 60.
- ⁴⁷ Frank Sargeson, 'A Good Boy' in *Frank Sargeson's Stories* (Auckland: Cape Catley, 2010), 38-40, p. 40.