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Boy's Own Stories

Explorer heroes

The contemporary theme park presents itself as uncharted territory, a land without boundaries, offering spaces that invite exploration. Each theme park provides the visitor with a map, positioning them as an adventurer and inviting them into a site that is explicitly coded as a landscape waiting to be explored. The language of theme park advertising constructs the carnival site as exotic and mysterious territory: 'You are going to explore a land full of mystery and obstacles where each step is a new feat' (Walt Disney Company 1992: 55). The Disney Magic Kingdom guidebook promises 'Adventures in Far Off Lands' and offers a Jungle Cruise. Alton Towers has the Congo River Rapids, while Chessington World of Adventures addresses its visitors as 'adventurers'. Even Cadbury World draws the adventure genre into the promotion of chocolate, with its Aztec Secrets attraction, in which you are invited to 'stroll through Central American Rainforests' (Cadbury World, brochure).

Figure 7.1 'How I found Livingstone'. Illustration for French edition: 'Comment j'ai retrouvé Livingstone', *Rencontre de Livingstone*. Paris: Hachette, 1876

Each theme park has a dedicated site for 'Adventure', a space for 'boy's own' stories of adventure and exploration. This is named Adventureland at all the Disneyland parks; in Britain, Alton Towers borrows its name from the Disney site, and asks the visitor to '[p]repare to travel to worlds you've only visited in your dreams'. Adventureland is the space that celebrates what Said has defined as 'colonialism': 'the implanting of settlements on distant territory' (Said 1993: 8). At the Disney Adventurelands, the attractions explicitly celebrate the building of settlements, most visibly in the Swiss Family Robinson Tree house.¹ The retail outlets at Adventureland offer the tourist commodities from all the corners of the globe. The Disneyland Adventureland Bazaar carries shop titles that connote an imperial past when products were 'Empire made'; their names evoke the shipping and trading companies of a Jules Verne novel: Zanzibar Shell Company, Traders of Timbuktu and Island Supply are some of the sales outlets at the site. Adventureland restaurants are similarly themed, with the invocation of colonial outposts in the Sunshine Tree Terrace and the Adventureland Veranda. In Britain, Chessington has the Raffles Gift Shop and Alton Towers boasts the Cargo Company Gift Shop.

The 'adventure' area of a theme park is invariably signalled by a map, suggesting that while the visitor may actually be within a carefully managed parkland in Florida, Paris, Tokyo or Britain, these are in fact uncharted areas that require courage and resourcefulness to enter. Pierre Macherey has described the map as an image of a journey of conquest: 'By means of a map the journey is a conquest of the same sort as a scientific adventure. It recreates nature, in so far as it imposes its own norms upon it' (Macherey 1978: 183).²

The 'norms' and the mapping imposed in the theme park are those of the masculine imperial explorer. The pith-helmeted adventurer is an unapologetically colonial figure who constantly reappears in the carnival site in a range of guises, most familiarly in the contemporary context as Indiana Jones. A parody of a parody, Indiana Jones traces his lineage back through Saturday morning cinema matinées, cartoon strips, radio and comic book serials, children's adventure stories and the novels of Kipling and Rider Haggard. Indiana Jones is a postmodern variant of the explorer hero; Fredric Jameson has cited the Indiana Jones film *Raiders of the Lost Ark* as an example of postmodern pastiche:

[O]n some level it is about the 1930s and 1940s, but in reality it too conveys that period metonymically through its own characteristic adventure stories (which are no longer ours). (Jameson 1998: 8)

If the Saturday matinée film narratives may no longer be 'ours', it nonetheless remains the case that the stories, novels, films and imagery of the explorer hero are very much with us. The stories of foreign territories in the theme park continue to promote what Said has termed an 'imperialist world view' – a version of the world that declares the white man's right to explore 'uncharted'

territories and to claim them as Adventurelands. The Adventurelands of the theme park are the spaces where the most elaborate attractions and the biggest white-knuckle rides are situated, and offer a world of adventure that is particularly addressed to boys.

Louis Marin has cited Adventureland as the space in which Disneyland most engages with narratives of geography:

Adventureland is the representation of scenes of wildlife in exotic countries, viewed during a boat trip on a tropical river. If Frontierland signifies the temporal distance of the past history of the American nation, Adventureland signifies the spatial distance of the outside geographical world, the world of natural savagery. It represents the next possible fields of action, because adventure is also a frontier; the primitive cannibals rising on the riverbanks seem to repeat the gestures that the Indians made in Frontierland. (Marin 1984: 250)

The geographical narratives of the theme park consistently construct Adventureland as 'a frontier' in which 'primitive' dangers lurk. The narratives of the boy's own stories of the Empire continue in this representation of a world of 'natural savagery'. The metonymic icons that connote stories of imperial adventure continue to circulate in the carnival site, as does an iconography of 'savage' races. Blackpool Pleasure Beach still has a smiling black 'native' waving the explorers' boats into the River Caves; at Thorpe Park, the 'Fungle Safari' carries visitors in jeeps, which pass panoramas of smiling black cannibals waving bones around a cauldron.

Joseph Bristow has characterised the Victorian 'boy's own' adventure story as one 'of fearless endeavour in a world populated by savage races, dangerous pirates and related manifestations of the "other" to be encountered on voyages towards dark and unexplored continents' (Bristow 1991: 1). Dark and unexplored continents are also central to the sites of the Wild West and space exploration; both Marin and Macherey have pointed to the close association of the 'geographical' narrative with the genres of the Western and science fiction. The adventure story can, however, be identified as a specific genre and a particularly British form, in which the territories to be explored are regularly mapped onto those of the British Empire.

Robert Louis Stevenson, writing of adventure stories, has said of their pleasures: 'Eloquence and thought, character and conversation, were but obstacles to brush aside as we dug blithely after a certain kind of incident, like a pig for truffles' (Stevenson, quoted in Turner 1976: 12). Adventure stories in the theme park are presented as already stripped of any such obstacles: their attractions offer synecdoches of adventure narratives. Any hermeneutic or character development is absent, the narratives signified by metonymic icons of adventure: the pith helmet, the jeep, the travelling trunk, the rope bridge. Theme park attractions are organised around a distillation of the exciting incidents, in which the visitor is positioned as the explorer hero, to become Indiana Jones entering the Temple of Peril, to follow Allan Quatermain entering King Solomon's

Mines. Disneyland Paris invites you 'to follow in the footsteps of our intrepid hero Indiana Jones' (Disneyland Paris guidebook: 7).

A Western popular fascination with intrepid heroes and unexplored territories has a long history; the illustrated book of travel and foreign adventures dates back to the Crusades and beyond. The fifteenth-century *Merveilles du Monde* was a compendium of illustrations of travel to 'exotic' lands, produced for the French nobility. The images of the 'foreign' found in such manuscripts were already based on a standard set of signifiers that connoted the exotic, and they were also marked by geographical and historical confusions. Similar conflations of territories and landscapes are to be found in contemporary theme park versions of 'foreign' peoples and places.

The exhibition of exotic cultures and images of 'native' peoples was, from the late eighteenth century, a spectacle for both education and titillation. Images of the exotic and the foreign regularly appeared in panoramas and travelogues, which offered displays of peoples and landscapes in which geographical instruction was coupled with imperial pride. Images of intrepid travel also regularly appeared in theatre sets: a Harlequinade production in London set Harlequin among the 'Seven Wonders of the World'³ in 1812. Theatrical images of exotic landscapes and architecture from successful productions were reproduced as prints for toy theatres: Pollock's toy theatre catalogue includes titles such as *The Cataract of the Ganges*, *The Elephant of Siam*, *Timour the Tartar* and *The Dervise of Baghdad*, productions that allowed for exoticism but were not particular about their historical and geographical accuracy. Toy theatres happily offered backdrops that could stand in for Egypt, South Africa, the Far East or India, in a generalised exotica of the 'foreign'.

As mercantile interests took European speculators to Africa, so they began to bring back artefacts and trophies to Europe. A Romantic construction of the 'Noble Savage' informed displays across Britain and Europe of ethnic practices,⁴ costumes and of people themselves. Among such displays in early nineteenth-century London, the exhibitions of 'materials relating to Africa' were the 'most numerous', according to Richard D. Altick (1978: 290). The most notorious of these exhibitions was that of the South African Saartje Barrtman, who was displayed (apparently with her concurrence⁵) as the 'Hottentot Venus' across pubs, fairgrounds and museum spaces in Britain and France from 1810. While the display claimed to be educational, there was clearly a fine line between voyeurism and anthropological interest. Public and journalistic interest in the African female body was clearly largely salacious, but the presence of lecturers and interpreters at the exhibition lent an instructional authority. This voyeuristic fascination with the racial body was to inform nineteenth-century educational accounts of Africa and its people; an entry on Africa in the *Popular Encyclopaedia* of 1874 is clearly framed by accounts of the 'Hottentot Venus':

HOTTENTOTS: a peculiar African race. ... They are when young of remarkable symmetry; but their faces are ugly, and this ugliness increases with age. ... The

women in early life are often models of proportion, and their gait by no means deficient in grace. Their bloom, however, is transient ... after the first child they lose their grace and proportion, and soon become hideous. (*Popular Encyclopaedia* 1874: 190)

The judgement on the African body here is coupled with a pride in Western and Aryan superiority; a similar pride in the conquests of the British Empire is evident in later displays of artefacts gathered by adventurers in the 'colonies'. As British trade in Africa developed, stuffed animals and birds were brought back from travels across Africa and displayed in museums, fairgrounds and popular exhibitions. Exhibitions of this kind, in which London's Egyptian Hall specialised (see Altick 1978), were later to be taken up by the American World's Fairs, which featured streetscapes populated by 'native' peoples with displays of cooking and staged 'tribal ceremonies'. Dioramas and displays of 'native cultures' continued on in the Commonwealth Institute and the Museum of Mankind in London well into the late twentieth century.

One of the most notorious of the nineteenth-century adventurers in South Africa was the professional big game hunter Roualeyn George Gordon-Cumming, the self-styled 'Lion Hunter', who published his account of encounters with the people and animals in South Africa in 1850 under the title *Five Years of a Hunter's Life in the Far Interior of South Africa. With Notices of the Native Tribes, and Anecdotes of the Chase of the Lion, Elephant, Hippopotamus, Giraffe, Rhinoceros, &c.* His anecdotes of 'Native Tribes' people are hardly distinguished from those of native animals. A reviewer wrote at the time of Cumming's approach to Africa in terms that could apply to a contemporary Safari park: 'The whole country figures in his narrative like an immense zoological garden, with all the dens broken up and all the menagerie set free' (quoted in Altick 1978: 290). To promote his narrative of Africa, Gordon-Cumming exhibited a display of his hunting spoils in Hyde Park in 1850, and his trophies were shown at the Great Exhibition a year later. His collections were finally sold to P.T. Barnum, who had himself begun his career as a showman with the exhibition of an African American slave woman.

Among Gordon-Cumming's admirers was the Welsh journalist and explorer H.M. Stanley. Stanley was a reporter for *The New York Herald* and achieved notoriety for his expedition to Zanzibar and Lake Tanganyika in search of the missing explorer David Livingstone in 1871. Livingstone, funded by the British government, was on the Zambezi Expedition, undertaken to investigate the resources of the region and to develop a commercial route into south-east Africa. Stanley's apparent feat of heroic exploration was in fact a publicity stunt, undertaken at the behest of the newspaper's proprietor, James Gordon Bennett, and funded by the newspaper. Stanley's own version of his exploits was published in news reports and in a book: *How I Found Livingstone* was published with over fifty engravings and maps and went on into several editions (De Vries 1973: 54). The famous meeting and Stanley's (probably invented)

pronouncement ‘Doctor Livingstone, I presume?’ came to embody Stanley’s sanguine heroism, and would circulate as a newspaper story and image across Europe and America. The story of the meeting and of both men’s expeditions was written up in *The Illustrated London News*, in a narrative of the daring colonial adventurer overcoming both the hazards of the African jungle and ‘the cowardice and treachery of his native servants’: ‘The route taken by Mr Stanley has hitherto been untravelled by white men, and lay among tribes of uncouth and barbarous names, which it is hardly possible to fix in the memory’ (De Vries 1973: 54). Such stories made both Stanley and Livingstone iconic ‘explorers’ and images of them were reproduced in illustrations and in cartoons throughout the nineteenth century and beyond. In 1872 *The Illustrated London News* carried a report of the expedition and published prints of ‘Mr. Stanley and His Retinue in Africa’. One image, ‘Supplies in Jeopardy’, featured a pith-helmeted Stanley pointing a gun at a frightened African carrying a trunk of supplies across a river.

These newspaper reports and particularly their illustrations provided a standard set of tropes for the explorer narrative – the ‘native’ retinue, perilous rivers and swamps, the ‘barbarous’ place names – that would go on to feature in fictional adventure stories throughout the nineteenth century. The images also constructed the style and accoutrements of the adventurer hero: the pith helmet, safari suit and boots became the signifiers of the white gentleman explorer.⁶ Stanley’s exploits embodied the narrative arc and the figure of the heroic explorer; his story appeared to confirm the principle of what Bristow has termed the ‘Empire Boys’ genre: ‘the adventure story which would take the boy into areas of history and geography that placed him at the top of the racial ladder and at the helm of all the world’ (Bristow 1991: 20).

While Stanley and Livingstone provided popular images of the white man in Africa, reports and illustrations of British royal visits to the territories of the East India Company were another means of promoting popular images of the Empire abroad. The Prince of Wales’s ‘Visit to India and Ceylon’ in 1876 was an opportunity for *The Illustrated London News* to illustrate the ‘zoology’ and jungles of Asia. The magazine featured a full engraving of the prince’s hunting party (all, like Stanley, sporting pith helmets and boots): shooting at tigers, surrounded by elephants and a retinue of turbaned ‘natives’. Such stories also served to promote an association of exotic sexuality with the dark continents of Empire, with illustrations of the prince surrounded by dusky maidens. With the expansion of British colonialism across the globe, and British trading supremacy apparently sealed with the 1875 strategic acquisition of a major shareholding in the Suez Canal, large portions of the world were now the stage for the adventuring of British heroes. Distinctions between different territories in Africa and Asia – or between Africa and India and South East Asia – were not significant in the popular imagination: they were all ‘colonies’, conflated into the British Empire.

The proliferation of illustrated magazines in Britain and America saw a number of new titles addressed specifically to boys, in which narratives of exploration were standard features and the adventurer a regular hero. The British Library's collection of Victorian popular literature counts eighteen separate titles of illustrated magazines for young boys, all with a clear patriotic agenda. Titles include *Boys of the Empire*, 'A journal in colours of fun, instruction and romance', and *Boys of the Nation*, 'The standard journal for all boys where the English language is spoken' (Barry Ono Collection, British Library). The most successful of them all, the *Boy's Own Paper* (whose title has become a metonym for the genre), was published from 1879 to 1967, weekly until 1914, after which it became a monthly magazine. Its advertising offered boy readers 'pure and entertaining reading ... full of rousing patriotic stories' (Warner 1977: 1).

The colonial adventure narrative was, as Bristow has explained,⁷ deeply imbricated in discourses of education and literacy in the nineteenth century: 'When imperialism came to be known by that name in the late 1880s, the Sunday schools had already contributed greatly to the formation of this type of adventure narrative' (Bristow 1991: 21). Christian organisations borrowed from and promoted the formation of the boys' adventure genre; in attempting to counter the spread of less respectable adventure they also produced their own versions. The *Boy's Own Paper* was funded by the Religious Tract Society in a mission to promote Christian values through the adventure genre. The paper was set up as a Christian alternative to what the Religious Tract Society had characterised as 'penny dreadfuls'; the *Boy's Own Paper* was similarly priced at a penny, and each copy contained vivid illustrations. Jules Verne was a regular contributor, as were novelists R.M. Ballantyne, Conan Doyle and G.A. Henty – all writers whose fiction celebrated imperial conquest and masculine prowess.

The stories and imagery in the Muscular Christian answer to the 'penny dreadful' were actually no less violent than their despised predecessors. The violence was nonetheless seen as justifiable because of the paper's Christian and colonial message, as Philip Warner points out:

[W]hen the B.O.P. arrived on the scene it too abounded in violence, but this time it was good men who were defeating bad men, the British defeating hostile foreigners, and, safest of all, besting the lion, tiger, alligator, cobra, swamp, Jungle, mountain, blizzard or drought. The lesson it preached, although unobtrusively, was that if you wished to improve your lot it was better to go to the colonies than to take to the road as a footpad. (Warner 1977: 13)

The boys of Britain as presented in these magazines could be relied upon to serve the patriotic cause in any geographical context. As George Orwell noted in 1939, boy's own adventures, still in the twentieth century, always took place in a generalised 'ends of the earth', far from England: 'in papers of this

type it is always taken for granted that adventures only happen at the ends of the earth, in tropical forests, in Arctic wastes, in African deserts, on Western prairies' (Orwell 1961a: 109). Two boy heroes who began life in magazine stories went on to be the protagonists of series that took them around the world. Jack Harkaway originally featured as a serial adventurer (after his public school and Oxford education) in *Boys of England* from 1871, and later in its American counterpart (published by Frank Leslie), *Boys of America*. His adventures were published in separate volumes and as part serials from 1873 to 1900; in his long career Jack contended with Malay pirates, buccaneers and brigands, and travelled to Australia, China and America. Ned Nimble was a later serial adventurer in *Boys of England*, from 1895 to 1900. Ned was educated at the English public school 'Pickleton Priory', and encountered and fought off bushrangers in Australia, Mormons, pirates, Tartars and the 'Chinese'; the common factor of the enemy was invariably that they were not British.

Among the enduring legacies of these periodicals are their illustrations in the form of engravings; a striking image of a boy bravely confronting a foreign threat regularly featured on the front cover. It is these images that have produced sets of conventions for the representation of adventure; the illustrations, later mediated through comic book images, were to cement the young male adventurer and the landscapes of the exotic in the popular imagination, and would go on to inform the *mise en scène* of adventure films. Such images circulated beyond the pages of the magazines, and *Boys of England* also produced plays and sheets of characters for use in the toy theatre. These sheets were also distributed in America, as 'Seltz's American Boy's theatre', although the plays and sets were identical to those issued in England. The boy's 'illustrated weekly' was just as successful a cultural phenomenon in late nineteenth-century American popular culture. The English-born American illustrator and publisher Frank Leslie (who had begun his career at *The Illustrated London News*) reproduced stories and illustrations wholesale from British papers for his *Boys of America* magazine. Stories from *Boy's Own Paper* authors, especially those by Rider Haggard, Kipling and Verne, were regularly reprinted in penny-issue novels with illustrated front covers that reproduced similar images of masculine adventure. In 1939, Orwell testified to the survival, in colour, of the 'boy's weekly' illustration and counted ten boys' 'vilely printed two penny papers, most of them with lurid cover-illustrations in three colours' (Orwell 1961a: 88).

While there were a number of enterprising women explorers in the Victorian period⁸ (among them Isabella Bird, the first woman elected to the Royal Geographical Society, whose travels included excursions across North Africa, the Far East, China and India), women are entirely absent as adventurers in these boy's own stories, present only as mothers and sisters to be returned to in the safe world of the English home. Graham Dawson has described

the 'flight from domesticity' in popular boys' stories of the late nineteenth century:

'Masculine romance' ... became exclusively concerned with adventure scenarios of 'male camaraderie, rivalry and contest' in an imagined world quite distinct from that of 'domestic femininity' constituted by feminine romance. (Dawson 1994: 63)

Women remain absent from the adventures in the contemporary theme park; while the Fairy Tale outlets at carnival sites sell ball gowns and tiaras to the aspirant young princess, the equivalent Adventureland shops sell safari suits tailored for boys. The adventure that is evoked in the theme park continues to be coded as a masculine colonial enterprise, a world in which, as Rider Haggard's Allan Quatermain put it, 'there is not a petticoat in the whole history' (Rider Haggard 1985: 51).

It is perhaps Rider Haggard who is most responsible for establishing the paradigm of the adventure hero in his invention of the 'great white hunter', Quatermain, the adult embodiment of the values of the boy's own young heroes. The *Boy's Own Paper* fictional adventures were often presented as purportedly true life experiences, in the tradition of *Robinson Crusoe*; Rider Haggard's *Allan Quatermain* is also written as if by a 'real' adventurer, and the novel was first published with a signed frontispiece portrait of the fictional hero. Quatermain first appeared in *King Solomon's Mines* in 1885 and went on to feature in *She* (1887), in *Allan Quatermain* (1887) and in a number of short stories published in illustrated periodicals, cheap editions and as collected short stories. He is an emblematic hero explorer who has all the characteristics that were to inform the hero of film versions of the novels, and later, the characterisation of Indiana Jones. Here he is described in the opening to a short story:

Most of you will have heard of Allan Quatermain, who was one of the party that discovered King Solomon's mines some little time ago, and who afterwards came to live in England near his friend Sir Henry Curtis. He went back to the wilderness again, as these old hunters almost invariably do, on one pretext or another. They cannot endure civilization for very long, its noise and racket and the omnipresence of clothed humanity proving more trying to their nerves than the dangers of the desert. (Rider Haggard 1951: 51)

Quatermain is thus presented as an exceptional man who transgresses boundaries, but simultaneously reconfirms them. He is a man of nature, and yet civilised; classless, but comfortable with the aristocracy; very English, yet familiar with the custom and languages of other ethnic groups; courageous, yet sensitive. He offered the perfect image of the English gentleman explorer, which would have a resonance beyond the years of British imperial expansion, and would survive beyond two World Wars. While Haggard had known Africa from his experiences in the Boer Wars, the complications of tribal difference and of the 'white man's' interaction with Africa and its peoples are in popular

renditions of his fiction reduced to a heroic Englishman confronted by 'restless natives'.

Illustrations of Quatermain in boy's magazines and cheap editions of the novels portrayed him in the already established conventions of the heroic adventurer. He is always attired in the pith helmet, boots and safari suit that Stanley had sported in the images in *The Illustrated London News* – this had now become the standard wardrobe for aspiring explorers, and was to be replicated in film versions of Haggard's work.

King Solomon's Mines was first filmed in a British version in 1937, but it was the Hollywood 1951 Technicolor version (Metro Goldwyn Mayer), starring the English leading actor Stewart Granger, that established Allan Quatermain as an international cinematic hero. The landscape of the novel's version of Africa is filmed as a wildlife safari; it was shot in Uganda, Tanganyika, Kenya and the Belgian Congo, which become in the film conflated into a generalised 'Africa'. The film introduces a white romantic heroine (who does not figure in the novel) and so neatly avoids the original's narrative potential for any interracial relationship. Quatermain becomes a romantic hero, his superior knowledge of the local culture highlighted by the heroine's (Deborah Kerr) ignorance of life on the adventure trail. The film was successful enough to inspire a souvenir book of the film, which provided a further condensation of the novel and promoted key images of Quatermain and of Africa. Haggard's hero Quatermain and Hollywood's safari version of Africa were to become central elements of a host of Saturday morning adventure films, and to feature as significant elements in the later composite pastiche of Indiana Jones.

Graham Greene, writing in 1951, remembered Haggard's purchase on the popular imagination, a hold that survived several generations after the heyday of British imperial pride:

Rider Haggard was perhaps the greatest of all the writers who enchanted us when we were young. Enchantment was just what he exercised; he fixed pictures in our minds that thirty years have been unable to wear away. (Greene 1951: 209)

Greene may have thought Haggard the greatest, but Kipling and Conan Doyle exercised a similar enchantment for several generations of young explorers, as the three most prominent of the many Victorian and Edwardian novelists who charted the excitement and 'adventure' of the white man's encounter with otherness. Rudyard Kipling is, for Said, the writer who most articulated and naturalised the style of a superior white masculinity:

[B]eing a White Man, for Kipling and for those whose perceptions and rhetoric he influenced, was a self-confirming business. One became a White Man because one *was* a White Man ... being a White Man, in short, was a very concrete manner of being-in-the world, a way of taking hold of reality, language, and thought. It made a specific style possible. (Said 1987: 227)

Kipling became part of boy's everyday lives not only through his fiction, but as a leading inspiration for the Boy Scout movement.⁹ Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouts, was an almost exact contemporary of Kipling's, and first approached him for permission to include games from *The Jungle Book* in Scouting activities. Animal characters from *The Jungle Book* became the names for figures in the Wolf Cub junior wing of the Boy Scouts. As Orwell noted, the moral universe of the Boy Scout movement was very closely allied to that of the boy's own papers: 'In their moral atmosphere the *Gem* and *Magnet* have a great deal in common with the Boy Scout movement, which started at about the same time' (Orwell 1961a: 94). Orwell identifies some of the many points at which Kipling's writings intersected with popular culture and indicates how far Kipling's influence extended, beyond those who had read him:

In his own lifetime some of his poems travelled far beyond the bounds of the reading public, beyond the world of school prize-days, Boy Scout songs, limp-leather editions, poker-work and calendars, and out into the yet vaster world of the music halls. (Orwell 1961b: 192)

Kipling's writings thus became part of the English popular view of itself; beyond popular reprints and imitations of his stories,¹⁰ Kipling's own work was widely taught in schools and he himself was the subject of numerous biographies. In 1965, Roger Lancelyn Green could write:

So many books have been written about the life and works of Rudyard Kipling, and in this the centenary year of his birth so many more are likely to appear, that some excuse is necessary for the present addition to the throng ... Kipling's stories for children retained their fame and popularity, continued to sell in vast numbers – literally in millions. (Green 1965b: 9)

If Kipling was the imperial writer of India, the inventor of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was also a writer of patriotic and historical romances who became a public figure through his support for the British army in the Boer Wars. Conan Doyle shared some knowledge of Africa with Haggard,¹¹ and was particularly involved in the Congo as a member of the Congo Reform Association. Conan Doyle was, like Kipling, no simple imperial writer,¹² although his faith in the British Empire was unwavering. His document of atrocities in the Belgian Congo, *The Crime of the Congo*, published in 1909, is a forceful expression of imperial anxiety, albeit at arm's length. It is a stern indictment of Belgian colonialists but will not venture into any critique of the British presence in Africa.

Conan Doyle was steeped in the novels of Sir Walter Scott and was clearly himself a reader of boy's own adventure stories. Professor Challenger, the hero of his 1912 novel *The Lost World*, owes something to Allan Quatermain, as a man of both nature and culture, a well-informed explorer. Doyle locates his hero in Brazil rather than Africa, where Challenger encounters dinosaurs

rather than any indigenous wildlife. Of Doyle's many writings, it is *The Lost World* that is most regularly referenced in the theme park, if only in its title and use of dinosaurs.¹³ While his Sherlock Holmes stories were published in *The Strand Magazine*, Conan Doyle regularly contributed stories of exploration and adventure to the *Boy's Own Paper*, their illustrations again confirming the iconography for the intrepid British explorer in Africa, India or South America. In America, *The Lost World* was serialised and issued with illustrations by Joseph Clement Coll, the illustrator for the Sax Rohmer series of stories.

Conan Doyle, Kipling and Haggard can be understood as embodiments of what Said has termed 'the authorized monuments of nineteenth-century European culture' (Said 1987: 30). These are the three most prominent novelists of the late nineteenth century who charted the excitement and 'adventure' of the British Empire. They may not have been straightforward imperial thinkers, but as Said points out, as men of their generation, they took the superiority of white Western men for granted:

[T]he inferiority of non-white races, the necessity for them to be ruled by a superior civilization, and the absolutely unchanging essence of Orientals, blacks, primitives, women, were more or less undebatable, unquestioned axioms of modern life. (Said 1987: 30).

All three novelists were respected establishment figures (all but Kipling were knighted, and he was offered a knighthood), and their work extended well beyond national classrooms and into popular culture. They represent 'authorities who embody the process of imperialism', which Said describes as working

by predisposition, by the authority of recognizable cultural formations, by continuing consolidation within education, literature and the visual and musical arts ... manifest at another very significant level ... that of the national culture. (Said 1987: 12)

Their novels may have addressed problems and anxieties of Empire, but the short stories published in the context of the *Boy's Own Paper* inevitably compressed any complexity into basic imperialist adventure, a condensation that would be further extended by the countless imitators of their work. The specificities of African and Indian regions that had so preoccupied Haggard and Kipling become conflated in boy's own stories into an exoticised landscape that has no geographical specificity – an othering and mystification that continues in contemporary carnival representations of adventuring abroad. By the late 1880s, the boy's own colonial adventure had become entirely conventionalised, and carried with it the reassurance of familiar generic conventions. As Bristow explains,

[T]his kind of writing assuredly belongs to an identifiable genre with fairly predictable features, it is also the case that for all the anticipated fights, massacres and incredible feats of courage that can and must ensue, the plots that keep

hurtling from one heart-stopping moment to another are, in structural terms, more than a little familiar. There is, then, nothing that is truly unnerving about even the most hazardous of adventures. For we know that, in these stories, our moral universe will ultimately remain intact. (Bristow 1995: xxi)

Western 'national cultures' continued to express their global superiority in the form of World's Fairs throughout the nineteenth century. In Britain, the early twentieth century saw national exhibitions that were even more determined celebrations of monarch and country, with the Coronation Exhibition of 1911, the British Empire Exhibition of 1924 and the Empire Exhibition (held in Glasgow) in 1938. Although every World's Fair since the Great Exhibition had been a direct celebration of Empire, the 1883 Amsterdam Exhibition was the first to be organised around a 'colonial' theme. The pavilions at this World's Fair moved beyond national architectural displays to the building of 'native' villages, complete with 'savage' inhabitants, displays that can be seen as a legacy of such exhibitions as those of the Egyptian Hall, offering visitors much the same combination of education and sensational excitement. The 1889 Paris Exposition featured a 'Colonial Exhibition', again with dwellings arranged in a picturesque village and inhabited by 'native peoples'.

Such displays of 'native tribes' were three-dimensional extensions of the travelogue landscapes of panoramas and dioramas, and were similarly used to celebrate imperial power. They were taken up as a form of visitor attraction for Blackpool and Coney Island; their combination of educative ethnography and ethnic voyeurism was not markedly different from shows of fairground freaks, but had an added edge of imperial pride. Cross and Walton describe

[e]nchantment with headhunters, wild men or geeks ... all reinforced the ideology of European superiority. Of course, the reassuring message of racial hierarchy was clothed in the language of science and discovery. (Cross and Walton 2005: 93)

'Ethnological' exhibits, similarly presented with 'the language of science and discovery', were intrinsic to the Centennial International Exhibition held in Philadelphia in 1876. As America's own imperial map extended, so did a popular fascination with foreign peoples and places, as David Nasaw explains:

In the long decade between the opening of the Chicago and St Louis world's fairs, the United States became an imperial power, augmenting its considerable overseas economic expansion with formal and informal colonies in the Caribbean, the Pacific, and the Philippine Islands, half a world away ...

The world's fairs provided Americans with the opportunity to celebrate in public their nation's recent accomplishments in the international arena. (Nasaw 1993: 74)

The American World's Fairs disseminated contemporary ideas in anthropology, geography and ethnography, both through populist displays of other cultures and also in conjunction with academics and museologists. The ethnographers and anthropologists of the Smithsonian Institute were involved in mounting

displays of Native American artefacts for the 1876 Philadelphia Fair; these 'educational' displays were supplemented by the more populist attractions of 'The Men of Borneo' and 'The Man Eating Feejees'. The 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exhibition made anthropology central to its attractions, appointing an ethnographic department and promising visitors 'living anthropological exhibits of other cultures'. The displays were curated by the anthropologists Frederic Ward Putnam and Franz Boas from Harvard University; their academic credentials validated the educational claims of 'living' ethnic exhibitions. The Columbian Exhibition was held in celebration of the discovery of America, and it offered its own version of 'colonial' themes, with displays affirming the conquest of territories and peoples in the United States. Significant attractions were an 'Esquimaux Village' and a Native American show.

At the Chicago Fair, the pavilion displays of 'native' households and villages were now expanded into 'Streets'. The World's Columbian Exposition was the first fair to sanction the Midway – a site of popular entertainments that had previously been separate from, and therefore could not be controlled by, the main exhibition area. The Midway entertainments were ostensibly managed by the exhibition's self-appointed Department of Ethnography and they continued the main exhibition's message of the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. Robert W. Rydell describes the Midway offerings as follows:

[A]n array of exotic shows from faraway places, including Algerian women doing the *danse du ventre*, or belly dance, and some native villages, where the mostly white fairgoers could take comfort in observing the so-called primitive and savage races work and play in a social Darwinian setting that was deemed to validate current ideas about racial hierarchies. ... On much of the Midway, visitors saw ethnic and racial diversity meant to entertain, titillate and educate. The distinctions often blurred however. (Rydell *et al.* 2000: 38)

Despite the educational pretensions, the Midway attractions were actually run by Sol Bloom, 'a 22 year old impresario' (Cross and Walton 2005: 38). The Midway exaggerated still further the alliance of prurience and instruction that marked the more official displays of ethnic groups, with less academic but rather more salacious shows (this was the first American appearance of Little Egypt). There was a dizzying variety of peoples and cultures on show; they were displayed in much the same way as the Egyptian Hall had offered its 'native' villages, and a range of geographical reference that outdoes the current Epcot World Showcase at Disney World. As Cross and Walton describe the Midway attractions,

The Midway of the Chicago Fair featured an Oriental village, an Irish village, Algerian and Tunisian villages ... and was where Little Egypt made its first appearance. ... In addition to romantic reproductions of a Square of Old Vienna and an Irish Village with a 'Blarney Castle' were exotic scenes of Algerian and Tunisian Villages complete with Bedouin tents. There were African mud-dabbed huts displayed with 'native warriors', a South Sea village featured supposedly cannibalistic Samoans, and the Streets of Cairo. (Cross and Walton 2005: 38)

The displays of the official fair and the Midway outlived the Columbian Exposition, and many transferred to the San Francisco Midwinter International Exposition; the attractions of the Midway were to reappear at later American and European World's Fairs, some to become fixtures at Coney Island, which inevitably took over the Little Egypt belly dancers.¹⁴ The Luna Park site of Coney Island, developed in 1903 by entrepreneurs with experience of World's Fairs, displayed Irish, Hindu and Eskimo Villages, and in 1904 offered a display of the 'most savage nation of our Western Island, the Igarotes'.

Images of exotic tribes and cultures were also familiar to American audiences through the images of the *National Geographic* magazine, which had been founded in 1888 to promote 'the diffusion of geographical knowledge'. This was a forum in which the combination of voyeurism and respectable knowledge was more clearly educational, but the magazine could (and still does) feature illustrations of naked 'tribal' peoples that would not be acceptable practice for images of white men and women.

Versions of the 'human zoos' and the exoticisation of cultures and places of the World's Fairs survive in the pavilions of the Epcot World Showcase at Disney World. As a number of commentators have noted, the Epcot World Showcase is in a direct line of tradition from the World's Fairs exhibitions, and particularly the 1893 Chicago Exhibition (see Bryman 1995: 149–51). The villages, pavilions and streets of the world found at Epcot World Showcase offer an unthreatening experience of foreign travel to those who may never venture beyond the boundaries of the United States, just as the World's Fairs, dioramas and panoramas did for visitors in the nineteenth century. The pride of the Disney guidebook in bringing the 'many countries of the world' together and the claim that the 'cast' members really are from the represented nation has the ring of the World's Fair ethos:

It would take a lifetime of vacations to explore the many countries of the world. For travelers to Epcot Center's World Showcase, however, the dream of world travel comes true. ...

Here, amid nations standing in friendship beside a broad lagoon, we meet gaily costumed young people who have actually come from the World Showcase country. (Walt Disney Company, 1986: 94)

Like the Great Exhibition and World's Fairs, Epcot World Showcase celebrates trading partnerships and shows off the products available from each featured nation. The foreign and exotic are presented in the form of commodities; the souvenir guidebook carefully itemises all the food and merchandise available for sale on site and their countries of origin. 'Industry', however, is less evident in the contemporary World Showcase than it was in the nineteenth century; countries are represented by craft and cuisine rather than industrial production: Mexican spices, Moroccan leather, Japanese lanterns, Waterford Crystal and Royal Doulton China. National and cultural

differences are here reduced to stylistic flourishes for the Western consumer: 'Each shop is stocked with its own pleasant surprises and every restaurant and lounge is flavored with distinctive design accents' (Walt Disney Company 1992: 135).

There are more shopping outlets at the Adventureland site (with the exception of Main Street) than at any other space at Walt Disney World and Disneyland Los Angeles. At Disneyland Paris, the entranceway to Adventureland takes the form of a souk, the Adventureland Bazaar: 'at this ancient marketplace, you'll be enthralled by the traders' frenzied activity' (Walt Disney Company 2002: 82). The commodities on sale invite the visitor to don the accoutrements and the attitudes of the imperial adventurer; Sam's Jungle Boutique presents an individualised narrative of colonial bartering, as if global trade remains still a matter of the enterprising traveller:

Sam is an explorer who has spent his life bartering in all corners of the globe, and his weird and wonderful collection is right here in this small shack. Everything from a stuffed alligator to an old canoe ... trinkets, seashells from the Pacific, explorer accessories and compasses. (Walt Disney Company 1998: 84)

Epcot World Showcase offers a world that has been rendered manageable and unthreatening, and which is unequivocally dominated by the American world view. 'The American Adventure' is foregrounded, literally, in the landscaping of the site and in its place as the first nation in the souvenir book, which claims America as the unifying principle of global difference: 'The American Adventure stands as the unification of World Showcase' (Walt Disney Company 1998: 96). This is a mapping of a colonial view of the globe that can be understood in terms of Anthony Giddens's concept of 'empty space', literally so, in that the Florida landscape on which World Showcase was built was originally an empty space of swampland; it is an entirely imagined world that makes no reference at all to its locale. The World Showcase also embodies the 'distinct vantage-point', which Giddens (among others) understands to be a product of an imperial history:

The development of 'empty space' is linked above all to two sets of factors: those allowing for the representation of space without reference to a privileged locale which forms a distinct vantage-point; and those making possible the substitutability of different spatial units. The 'discovery' of 'remote' regions of the world by Western travellers and explorers was the necessary basis of both of these. The progressive charting of the globe that led to the creation of universal maps, in which perspective played little part in the representation of geographical position and form, established space as 'independent' of any particular place or region. (Giddens 1990: 19)

If Epcot World Showcase celebrates the Empire of trade, the Adventureland sites of the Disney parks reference the 'discoveries of remote regions' by the imperial explorer. It is in these spaces that the potential dangers of the

foreign are suggested, an anxiety about the alien that is relatively lacking at the World Showcase. The guide book for Disneyland Paris proudly addresses the Adventureland visitor as an explorer with a host of exotic sites to explore. There is, however, no distinction made between nations or continents; Africa, the Orient, the Far East are conflated into a common foreign exotica:

Tropical sunshine attracts you into the center of the old Oriental town. ... You can discover the universe of 'the Arabian Nights'. ... Further on, there is the abandoned jeep of an explorer seeking hidden treasure in the sand of the Sahara desert. The insistent rhythm of African tam-tams, the shouts of pirates in battle on the Caribbean sea, the thought of finding lost civilizations in the heart of the Far Eastern jungle, all these are signs that you are about to set out on a long trip full of adventures and discoveries. (Walt Disney Company 2002: 53)

'Adventure' had been an integral part of the Disneyland project from its beginning, with the success of the *True Life Adventures* nature films for television. The Jungle Cruise was one of the first and most ambitious of the attractions in the original Los Angeles Disneyland, when the park opened in 1955. The boats of the attraction were based on those of the 1951 film *The African Queen*, and the ride was landscaped with an instant jungle:

No attraction that made it into the park was more ambitious than the Jungle Cruise. A River had to be built in the middle of Anaheim and populated with animals and exotic vegetation. Landscaper Bill Evans was faced with the task of building the jungle; there wasn't the time to grow one. He drove around the area, searching for 'character' trees that were particularly interesting. He even created whole new life forms, by turning trees upside down so that their roots were up in the air. (Greene and Greene 1991: 125)

The 'Jungle' at Disneyland is thus caught between the foliage of California, the India of Kipling and the Africa of C.S. Forester's 1935 novel (on which *The African Queen* was based). It thus constructs a geographically unspecific 'wilderness'. Adventureland, like the set designers of the nineteenth century, has little regard for any geographical accuracy or proximity, happily allowing the visitor to cross through continents with no transition between landscapes and cultures. As Stephen M. Fjellman points out,

[In the Disney Worlds] Geography is mixed up. The Jungle Cruise in Adventureland connects the Congo River to the Zambezi, the Amazon and the Irrawaddy without a break.

Adventureland itself is a pastiche of what visitors may take to be a reasonable evocation of tropical lands. (Fjellman 1992: 32)

While it may offer a 'reasonable evocation' of tropical lands, Adventureland can also give visitors the frisson of potential danger while reassuring them of their safety. 'Otherness' and danger are clearly connoted in the naming of attractions at Disneyland and other theme park sites, but if the names signify

threat, the experience of travel and adventure is rendered entirely safe. A Disney planner has described the menaces of Adventureland as follows:

[O]ld-fashioned. ... They're part of the safe past. Nobody worries about the past. ... What we do here is to throw a challenge at you – not a real menace, but a pseudo-menace, a theatricalized menace – and we allow you to win. (Quoted in Wallace 1985: 37)

The stories that those attractions draw upon are old-fashioned too, and very much part of an imperial past. These are 'pseudo-menaces' largely because they are nineteenth-century and quaint, rather than threatening: the 'you', the theme park visitor, is interpellated here and in the attractions as an American or European hero. The challenges of Adventureland have already been met – by Allan Quatermain; by British, French and American archaeologists and explorers; and by Indiana Jones.

The Jungle Cruise allows the tourist explorer instant and convenient global travel, without any discomfort. As Bristow noted of the conventionalised adventure romance, there is 'nothing that is truly unnerving' about the adventures in the theme park Adventureland. As the Disney World guidebook puts it,

The Jungle Cruise takes you through a Southeast Asian jungle, the Nile Valley, the African plains and the rain forests of the Amazon River. ... The Jungle Cruise is a favorite of armchair explorers because it compresses weeks of safari travel into ten minutes of fun, without mosquitoes, monsoons or misadventures. (Walt Disney Company 1998: 34)

The Disney Corporation is represented here as in control of the weather, and entirely in command of the jungle. There are no human dangers identified; the armchair explorer can be, as was the colonial explorer, convinced of his (and the explorer in both contexts is invariably addressed as male) invincibility. The Disney Adventureland 'threats', like those of Frontierland, are a compilation derived from boy's own annuals, as Mike Wallace explains:

At Frontiertown and Adventureland we go on rides that travel to the distant and benighted places which once threatened Civilization. In the Wild West, Darkest Africa and the Caribbean, we are in the domain of dangerous opponents – Indians, pygmy headhunters, pirates. But there is no real danger in these realms. (Wallace 1985: 37)

The realms of exotic exploration have become increasingly significant for tourism and have increased their presence in the Disney Empire from the late twentieth century. In 1995, the 'Indiana Jones Adventure' was established as a feature of Adventureland, and in 1998, the fourth theme park, Animal Kingdom, opened on the Florida site of Walt Disney World. In the contemporary theme park the white male explorer – concerned as he is with 'natural' unexplored wilderness – has been coded with an ecological tinge. While the nineteenth- or early twentieth-century adventurer was likely to find himself in the tropical

jungle or the Congo, a contemporary version is more likely to be lost in an Amazonian rain forest or similarly ecologically threatened landscape. The colonisation of wild native tribes and exotic cultures has become displaced onto the natural and animal kingdoms.

Pleasure gardens (both private and public) had long involved the displays of animals, and many theme parks such as Chessington in Britain and Busch Gardens in America had begun as zoos, but the Animal Kingdom was, on a 500-acre site, on a much grander scale. The theming of Animal Kingdom is dependent on the 1994 Disney animation *The Lion King* (and later musical¹⁵), which is itself (in its tale of a boy coming of age with the support of animals) much influenced by *The Jungle Book*. While *The Lion King* (unlike *The Jungle Book*'s Indian context) is firmly set in Africa, the Animal Kingdom redeploys nineteenth-century notions of the Western traveller in its representation of the wilds of the 'African Savannah' and 'Asian Jungle'. The exoticism and foreignness of the Africa and Asia found in Animal Kingdom may now be filtered through a language of conservation and ecology – but the metonymic icons of the jungle explorer and imperial adventure remain. Visitors travel through the jungle in safari trucks, and the themed village of 'Harambe' (apparently built by Zulu people from South Africa) harks back to the native villages of the World's Fairs.

A 'jungle' attraction has become a regular fixture of the contemporary theme park. The dominant narrative of these spaces and attractions is that of Western heroes conquering hostile environs and peoples; the exploration that the theme park can offer can only be bound by a colonial frame – a frame that shifts according to the imperial past of the host country. In the British context, adventure sites tend to be coded as 'Egyptian' or central African; Alton Towers offers Katanga Canyon and the Congo River Rapids, names that could have come from a Rider Haggard or Kipling novel. At Thorpe Park's Jungle Safari, Mr Rabbit may not physically resemble Allan Quatermain, but his outfit is much the same. Garbed in a pith helmet and safari suit, Mr Rabbit merrily colonises the animals of the jungle, removing them from their distant habitat and relocating them to Thorpe Park, where they appear in Thorpe Park uniforms.

In Disneyland Paris, great care was taken to reconfigure imperial adventure in the French context; the Paris Adventureland has an emphasis on the North African French colonial territories. A Disney imagineer explains the planning:

In France, Disney Imagineers went to great lengths to emphasize the special intrigue of this region. They swept back the thick canopies of other Adventurelands and replaced them with the arid landscapes of French North Africa; for safari-style huts made of bamboo they substituted the thick stone walls and onion domes of desert architecture; and they revamped the look of cast member costumes, trading khaki explorer outfits and pith helmets for brightly colored turbans, veils and the billowing fashions of not-too-faraway 'foreign' lands. We took our cue from Moroccan and North African styles ... but then we layered on pure Hollywood. (Quoted in Lainsbury 2000: 64)

The theme park Adventurelands are the lands of Western colonial territories and as such are represented by the spoils of imperial conquest. The foreign and faraway is located variously as the 'tropical', the 'mystic east', the 'jungle' or 'safari'; there is no differentiation between continents or landscapes, and no concern for historical or geographical accuracy (despite such claims from the Disney imagineers). The Tropical Travels boat ride at Britain's Thorpe Park takes the visitor past signifiers of an Orientalised Other, which are decontextualised and rendered simply as exotically different: North American totem poles, Latin American statues, Easter Island rock faces, African masks and spears are all thrown together into an exotic 'foreign' stew.

The metonymic icons that now connote adventure in the carnival site – the pith helmet, safari suit and cannibal pot – remain those of the nineteenth-century boy's own adventure tale. In a global culture, British and American versions of nineteenth-century imperial adventure and adventurers continue to dominate the theme park's construction of world geographies. Edward Said has discussed the importance of narrative in the maintaining of imperial ideologies:

[S]tories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world; they also become the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history. The main battle in imperialism is

Figure 7.2 Explorer, Legoland, 2010

over land, of course, but when it came to who owned the land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back and who now plans its future – these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time, decided in narrative ... nations themselves are narrations. The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism. (Said 1993: xiii)

The explorer stories that are told at the theme park continue to give the West, and America in particular, the power to narrate. The theme park stories of adventure remain, still, as unquestioning as were Kipling, Haggard and Conan Doyle of the West's cultural supremacy and of the Western man's right to exist in a world without petticoats.