Calamity Jane: Ain’t No Buckin’ Around, the Woman Who Wore Buckskin. A Thesis on the Adaptations that Mythologized and Developed a Character’s Queerness

Senior Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences
Brandeis University

Undergraduate Program in English
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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts

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January 2020

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With fame there are always two sides to the coin, the reality and the myth. Whether the subjects’ own personal stories, or publicity gossip creates belief, the mythos of a figure often leaves a greater impact upon their legacy than the facts of their life. Calamity Jane, a figure from the Western United States was more known through the tall tales she and others promoted about her life than the accurate facts. From her iterations in dime novels to her depictions on the golden and silver screen, Calamity Jane has evolved into representing a persona rather than an actual figure. Known for wearing buckskins primarily from the 1870s to 1890s, Martha Canary, the woman behind the moniker, became widely associated with her ostensibly masculine choice in clothing. At this time, a woman wearing male fashion struck the general public’s interest, due to women frequently facing restrictions, or even being banned from dressing in masculine attire. For readers in the Eastern U.S., stories that focused on the sensational, such as cross-dressers (a term I define below) in the West caused intrigue, and women such as Martha Canary and her buckskins fascinated an Eastern audience as they became more and more interested in Western culture. Easterners would learn about the Western United States through newspapers, dime novels, and by the late 19th century performance acts. These tales often exaggerated and mythologized the West, with an emphasis on miners, the “untamed” frontier, and often a racialized world view, with the hero being the white miner or cowboy, and the villain frequently the indigenous people occupying the land. The West could also represent an unusual space when it came to gender and presentation. In this paper I will explore two primary sources from the Calamity Jane adaptation canon: the first adaptation that allowed Calamity Jane to achieve nationwide fame, Edward L Wheeler’s Deadwood Dick Dime Novel series (1877-1885), and the classic 1953 film Calamity Jane, directed by David Butler. Despite these two works seeming entirely distinct from one another, both in century and medium, they allow a deeper
understanding of the evolution of the Calamity Jane character and at times do overlap in agreement of how to depict Calamity Jane. For this essay I intend to analyze the vast Calamity Jane archive objectively, while also examining how these adaptations incorporate either fact or fiction in these portrayals of Calamity Jane. I shall also explore these works through a queer lens and how the definition and variation of queer occurs throughout the work albeit dime novel, television, film, or other representations. Finally, I shall examine the historical Martha Canary the woman, and critically ask why the Calamity Jane persona has held such an importance to the LGBT+ community.

In his book, *Re-Dressing America’s Frontier Past*, Peter Boag examines how before the 1800s, the Western world had held a one-sex model, which believed that females and males contained the same sex organs, with an externally appearing phallus identifying the male, and an internally held organ indicating the female gender. During the 1800s, this belief switched to a two-sex model, otherwise known as a binary system. This binary system also applied to gender, and female and male bodies now were thought to contain separate associated actions, feelings and behaviors (Boag 5). There were different types of cross-dressers, including those who dressed as the opposite sex, went by a different name and thus virtually created an entire new identity for themselves. Although the term did not exist during this period, many of these people would be considered transgendered women or men today due to the effort to distance themselves from their biological gender. Because genital reconstructive surgery was not an option, people however, eventually “discovered” their biological gender when the person became imprisoned, hospitalized, or dead, and this public outing served as sensationalized reading for the general public. A subtype of the female cross-dresser were women who wore clothing of the opposite sex but went by their biological pronouns. These women typically dressed this way either because
the environments they worked in required practical men’s attire, or they preferred dressing in this manner in their day to day life. Calamity Jane, fits into this latter category and demonstrates how this type of sensationalized writing can create an entirely new persona.

Calamity Jane quickly rose to fame due to her inclusion as a recognizable character in dime novels. Despite Calamity Jane only cross-dressing while on the road, regional and national newspapers began to write about her between 1876-1878 which quickly caused her to gain public attention. In 1877, Edward L Wheeler’s Deadwood Dick dime novel series cemented Calamity Jane in history. Dime novels, a cheap form of literature costing ten cents, were quite formulaic, often filled with repeating themes, tropes, and elements. Despite their repetition in storytelling, the stories were incredibly popular. In his book Calamity Jane, James D. McLaird explains that the working class was the main demographic targeted for dime novel readership, but that all classes enjoyed these tales, and publishing houses were able to generate thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars from one title alone (McLaird 85). Named after the fictional title character, Wheeler’s dime novels achieved great success in America and internationally, particularly in the United Kingdom and Australia. Within these texts, Calamity Jane represents a type of “other” woman; she dresses and acts like a man, but most of the time identifies and/or presents herself as female. In her first appearance in Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, or, The Black Rider of the Black Hills (1877), she wears a "carefully tanned costume of buck-skin, the vest being fringed with the fur of the mink; wearing a jaunty Spanish sombrero; boots on the dainty feet of patent leather, with tops reaching to the knees; a face slightly sun-burned, yet showing the traces of beauty that even excessive dissipation could not obliterate; eyes black and piercing; mouth film, resolute, and devoid of sensual expression; hair of raven color and of
remarkable length” (Wheeler 4). This description of Calamity Jane remains consistent throughout the series with a focus not only on her body but her clothing as well.

Due to Calamity presenting herself as a mix of male and female elements, characters often describe her as queer. The word “queer” has evolved frequently throughout history, and while it is now mostly associated today with an LGBT+ identity, that was not often the case. It became associated with the homosexual community—though often negatively—by the late 1890s to early 1900s, but the context for the word changes depending on region and whether its usage is as a noun or adjective.¹ During Wheeler’s time, “queer” described someone considered odd or eccentric—such as road agents like Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick; the term “queer” identified—an outsider from society due to their behavior and actions rather than being targeted towards a homosexual individual. Any reader looking at the dime novels through this historical lens, then, must ask whether it is appropriate to attribute any modern, binary gender or sexual identity to characters designated “queer.” Reading characters like Calamity Jane as queer, in the modern sense, might appeal to a person who in modern vernacular may have been part of an LGBT+ community. Whether Wheeler ever intentionally “queer-coded” his characters, he used the word “queer” enough times that a reader both then and now could identify and project an LGBT+ identity onto these characters. In other words, the sheer number of times that Wheeler used the term, especially when gender conformity or nonconformity is at stake is his plots, suggests that he was asking the term to carry more significance than the OED’s definition of “odd” or “eccentric” allows. As an outsider, Calamity Jane can develop an independence, and thus depict different facets of what is associated with the female identity. Calamity Jane’s queer

identity in many of the works studied in this paper allows her to perform in ways often
discouraged in woman, from the theatrical—and debatably campy—behavior of the dandy, to her
choice in attire and how her pieces evolve or remain consistent throughout the work. And to how
she socializes (in particular the way she interacts with men and women), and finally the
conclusion of the Calamity Jane figure; in both the closure of the work itself, and her
development onwards into the contemporary.

This essay will be split into several sections, with the main topics examining Calamity Jane
and her relationship with camp, particularly the usage of the dandy character in both works, with
a focus on Sontag’s “Notes on Camp” as a guideline in camp understanding. Afterwards I shall
examine Calamity and her relationship with clothing. This includes her choice in both cross-
dressing and wearing female attire, in particular, the motive for why Calamity chose to cross-
dress and when does she allow herself to become feminized. These examinations allow an
examination of the psychology of Calamity Jane and how gender relates to cross-dressing. Next
there will be Calamity and her interactions among society. This will examine how Calamity
reacted in relation to those closest to her, and because she chose to express her queerness in
heteronormative spaces, how they react and treat her. This section shall also examine her
interpersonal relations and provide an analysis of how Calamity acts and regarded and treated by
either gender. Finally, the essay shall conclude with an exploration of the current Calamity and
how she has evolved for a contemporary audience and how people interpret her previous
iterations. This allows an insight into the legacy of Calamity and how queer audiences have
continued to identify with this figure. Before I discuss these topics and points, I shall provide a
historical context for Martha Canary, dime novels (which shall include Wheeler and the Beadle
and Adams publishing house), and her film adaptations.
Contextualizing the Woman and the Myth of Calamity Jane

Although this essay primarily focuses on Calamity Jane the figure rather than Martha Canary the woman, the latter still represents a type of women who used whatever resources necessary to survive in the tough environment of the West. Accordingly, examining the similarities and differences of the character versus the reality allows a deeper understanding of how the public and media consumed these stories. Born in Missouri in 1856, Martha Canary was the oldest child in her family. After her parents experienced lawsuits by other members of the Canary clan concerning farming equipment and other goods, the family sold their farm and moved out of Missouri. They travelled and eventually arrived in Montana in 1864. Although scholars do not know the family’s motive for relocating there, during this period in the Alder Gulch area, an influx of reported goldmines occurred in in the early 1860s. While they had community, land, and assets when living in Missouri, in Montana the family lived in poverty and struggled to survive. Tragedy occurred frequently for Martha during this period, and by the time she reached eleven or twelve, both her parents had died, and Martha became tasked with the responsibly of caring for her younger siblings. Although there isn’t much known about what happened to her siblings (or even Martha) for several years, in 1875 at the age of nineteen, she acquired her famous nickname, Calamity Jane. The origin for this nickname is not known, although scholars have theorized that it relates to often causing a ruckus or her difficult past. While traveling to the Black Hills with the Newton- Jenney Expedition of that year, A. Guerin took the earliest extant photo of a nineteen-year old Martha Canary (see Appendix 2, Image A). Dressed in simple pants, shirt, hat, and a light handkerchief wrapped around her neck, she had not yet achieved the

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recognition and fame as the girl who wore buckskins. As later photos show, Calamity Jane arguably has an androgynous face, as evidenced by one photo of her taken in the early 1880s (see Appendix 2, Image B). She often wore her hair pinned back, and her lack or subtle appliance of makeup demonstrates that she preferred to present herself in a more simplistic and minimal manner. Due to her not looking as conventionally feminine as most women, this androgyny further adds to the mystique of the Calamity Jane persona.³

When not going along on expeditions, Calamity Jane, continued to find work wherever possible. Although no current evidence confirms this claim, scholar James D. McLaird believes she would occasionally take a job as a sex worker, as she frequently occupied spaces where prostitutes worked, and multiple secondhand reports claimed she worked in the profession. If this is true, it demonstrates that Calamity took whatever job was necessary for her survival, and that she was a sexually active woman rather than a chaste virgin too distanced from sex. The fictional adaptations do not acknowledge that she may have worked as a prostitute. Instead, writers examine her gender presentation and social interactions. Calamity Jane often interacts more with men than with woman, and often paired with another known figure of the West, Wild Bill Hickok. They first met in 1876, as Wild Bill, interested in trying to mine in the Black Hills, stopped by Fort Laramie in mid-June. An officer asked his group if they would take along several prostitutes to separate them from the soldiers, with Calamity Jane possibly considered among these prostitutes (Etulain 8). They later supplied her a suit of buckskins during the trip, demonstrating that while roughing it she not only preferred to dress in the attire not selected for her gender, but that others allowed this preference in clothing attire and supported her in this

³I have chosen the word “androgynous” to describe Calamity Jane’s looks as it places a neutral stance on her appearance. Describing her in either masculine or feminine terms can create a biased, gendered label that dictates over what Calamity Jane may have considered herself during these periods in her life.
decision. Although historically Calamity Jane and Wild Bill rarely interacted, his abrupt murder in Deadwood while playing poker caused gossips to quickly conjure tall tales that a love affair between the two—despite Wild Bill recently marrying Agnes Lake earlier that year—occurred. Nevertheless, this gossip persisted and Calamity Jane herself took advantage of these rumors, as she mentions him in her autobiographical pamphlet she would eventually distribute, and when she posed for several photos she took besides his gravesite in 1903. Taken a month before she died, it is evident she is in poor health, as she leans on the gate for support, she wears a dress rather than her classic buckskin outfit (see Appendix 2, Image C).

A notable example of this fictional romance between the two figures occurs in James O’Hanlon’s script for the 1953 Calamity Jane film. This fictionalized portrayal depicts Wild Bill as a bachelor with no prior relationships. He and Calamity bicker on and off throughout the film until the two reveal their mutual attraction and marry at the end of the film. This not only erases Agnes Lake from history, but it hints that Wild Bill would continue to have a long-lasting future in this new chapter of his life. It is not new for Hollywood to dramatize and fictionalize real events, yet this selective pick, choose, and erase method demonstrates what aspects of Calamity Jane’s life a writer found appealing and useful for the general public. The inclusion of Wild Bill rather than another man demonstrates how much people believed the sensationalized relationship between Calamity Jane and Wild Bill.

After Wild Bill’s unexpected death at Deadwood, photos of Calamity Jane in buckskins began to circulate in newspapers which caused her to quickly become a national name. First profiled in The Black Hills and American Wonderland by Horatio Maguire in 1877, that same year she appeared in Wheeler’s first Deadwood Dick dime novel, Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, or, The Black Rider of the Black Hills. The next year she appeared in two more of
Maguire’s biographies about the West, *The Coming Empire: A Complete and Reliable Treatise on the Black Hill, Yellowstone and Blue Horn Regions*, and in T. M. Newson’s play *Drama of Life in the Black Hills* (Etulain 10). No evidence confirms that Wheeler, or the publishing house of the Deadwood Dick series, Beadle and Adams contacted Martha Canary to gain an insight into her life or even ask permission to use her in their stories. Whatever her views were on the matter, she never filed a lawsuit against either groups, or commented on the impact from her usage in the dime novels.

Most Western characters will face a crossroads in the conclusion of their narratives, settle down or continue their rebel lifestyle and thus an outcast from society. For the real Calamity Jane, settling down and departing from her wild lifestyle does contain some truth, as in an 1879 interview she stated, “I am married to George [Cosgrove] now and am living straight and don’t do business on the outside” (Etulain 11). Despite Calamity Jane insisting the two married, no legal documentation proves this declaration. By 1881 she began living with a different man and in 1882 she gave birth to a child, a boy whom she nicknamed “little Calamity” (Etulain 11) but he soon died. She gave birth to a daughter, Jessie Elizabeth, in 1885 and legally married the father in 1888. In an 1895–1996 interview, Calamity Jane mentioned to an interviewer that “Jessie, was the reason for living, that she wanted to make sure Jessie got the education she herself had missed” (Etulain 16). Although for Martha Canary motherhood and supportive parenting were important, the stories created around her focus on her unmarried years. In Wheeler’s adaptation, Calamity Jane does settle down and give birth to a child (and later adopts another) with the term “mother” very loosely applied. The children function more as a plot device than as their own characters and both are eventually written out of the Deadwood Dick series canon. Other adaptions such as the television series *Deadwood* (2004-2006, 2019)
incorporate her motherly aspect to give her more depth as a character but chose to depict her as a figurative mother rather than a literal one.

By 1901, Calamity Jane was unwell, and temporarily lived in a poor house until her health improved. The news became a note of interest soon after and several national newspapers published the story of Calamity’s poor state. A journalist, Josephine Winifred Brake, visited Calamity Jane and offered her the opportunity to visit Buffalo, New York and join the Pan-American Exposition. Calamity Jane accepted the offer, but due to her addiction to alcohol it was difficult for her to remain sober. She soon left the group and joined the Frederic Cummin’s Indian Congress, where a photo taken of her demonstrates she switched back to buckskins for the performances. This was not the first time that Calamity Jane had profited off her image as a girl scout. Previously in the late 1890s, Calamity Jane obtained a permit to sell a (likely) ghostwritten autobiography about her life. She would sell these pamphlets in the Yellowstone Park region to tourists. Although known for her choice of male attire, Calamity Jane did wear feminine attire later in life, and a photo taken of her at the Yellowstone Park shows her handing out her autobiography in a dress. Although these pamphlets misrepresent aspects of her biography (with her even lying about her age), they demonstrate her desire to tell her story her own way, while also claiming a profit from others. Interesting tidbits include her focus on how as a child she spent most of her time around men hunting and shooting, when she became known as Calamity Jane, the reason for her nickname, her friendship with Wild Bill Hickok, becoming a married mother, and recalling the first time she wore men's clothes in 1870: “Up to this time I had always worn the costume of my sex…. It was a bit awkward at first but I soon got to be perfectly at home in men's clothes.”

wearing female articles of clothing over masculine ones. When hired to perform, such as in Buffalo, she does return to wearing buckskins for an audience. This demonstrates that Calamity Jane may have preferred to separate herself from her younger years, and her decision to wear skirts and dresses demonstrates to the public that she has moved past her more adventurous, younger self, and seeks instead to be regarded as any other settled frontier woman. Within a month Calamity Jane regretted ever traveling East. When Buffalo Bill Cody visited the area with his arena show, she convinced him to buy her a ticket back to Montana and soon returned to the West. During this period Calamity’s health steadily declined, and by 1903 she had moved back to Deadwood. She died that same year on August 1st, at the age of forty-seven. In her mortuary photos, she wears a dress rather than one of her buckskins and after she died the community decided to bury her near Bill Hickok’s grave.

In the existing archive, there are two facets to Martha Canary: the rough and tough woman who wore buckskins, had an active sex life, was violent, drank heavily and would often bend the law to suit her own needs; and the caregiving Calamity Jane who wore dresses and wanted to settle, was motherly, brave, and would nurse sick men back to health. These drastically different selves display the difficulty of realistically placing Calamity Jane in a neat box when depicting her for a general audience. The general decision by adapters when depicting the personality of Calamity is to pick one or two of her negative traits—often her hot-tempered behavior and willingness to bend the rules—and include her positive trait of bravery and (depending on the story) her role as a caregiver. Further, Calamity Jane often wears buckskins during her “wild” phase, but when she shows a greater interest in settling down, she allows herself to become feminized. This allows writers to create a neat arc, in the written and visual texts produced by Canary and her popularizers of Calamity Jane’s frontier lifestyle and her pursuit for domesticity,
while separating her from many of her morally questionable experiences. While the frontier allows more opportunities to permit Calamity’s queerness, the earlier adaptations will often send the message that the home will require traditionality, and thus, for her to succeed in a heterosexual relationship she must compromise and begin to change her lifestyle.

**The Adapters of Calamity Jane**

The figure who popularized the Calamity Jane mythos was dime novelist Edward L Wheeler. Wheeler led just as mysterious a life as Martha Canary did, if not even more so; there are very few records and information known about his life, including even the circumstances of when and how he died. Born in Avoca, New York in either 1854 or 1855, Wheeler’s family eventually moved to Pennsylvania and settled in Philadelphia in 1875. By the mid-1870s Wheeler, already a published author and had several short sketches and story papers published in the *Saturday Journal* in 1877. These publications did not focus on the mythos of the West but rather autobiographical tales about his childhood. That same year, he began his novelette career, and wrote the opening number for Beadle and Adams *Half-Dime Library*. This publication launched his most famous series and character, Deadwood Dick. The series ran from 1877 to 1885 and Wheeled included Calamity Jane in some form (either mention or appearance) in 23 of the 33 published texts. After Deadwood Dick, she is the most frequent character to appear in his fiction. Wheeler likely referenced a previous account by journalist Horatio Maguire, written earlier that year. In his pamphlet “The Black Hills and American Wonderland” Maguire presents a fictionalized account of Calamity Jane. Wheeler’s version shares many similarities to Maguire’s description, including a similar inaccurate backstory that she was from Virginia City

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5 For Wheeler and the Beadle and Adam’s biographies I am sourcing from Albert Johannsen’s *The House of Beadle & Adams and its Dime and Nickel Novels: The Story of a Vanished Literature* unless otherwise specified.
Nevada, had long raven colored hair, and wore buckskins and a sombrero (McLaird 91). Unlike other authors who experienced the West first-hand and thus wrote from personal experience, like contemporary writer Mark Twain, Wheeler wrote these stories from an Easterner’s perspective. Wheeler rarely travelled outside of the East Coast, and no released records survive of what research he did when writing about the frontier and its culture. His published work, however, does demonstrate that he researched very little of the actual geography he was writing about with areas often described inaccurately. Despite this, by 1878 he was achieving success as a writer, and he states in one letter he was making $950 a year; and that same year he married Alice Fager. In 1880 he managed a theatrical company in Philadelphia and featured a play he had written, “Deadwood Dick, a Road Agent. A Drama of the Gold Mines”. Although the production was unsuccessful, it did show in New York within that decade. That same year he began to write some more stories for Beadle publications and in 1883 he had a son. In 1885 the last confirmed information about his whereabouts occurs, but around this time information about him becomes inconsistent and difficult to locate. No reported living record of him occurs past 1885, and by 1887 his wife became the sole owner of a property previously listed under his name. By 1891 the Directory listed her as “widow of Edward L” thus officially confirming his death. Despite his absence and later death, Beadle and Adams credited Wheeler as the sole author of the Deadwood Dick Jr. novels from 1885 to 1897 in the Beadle and Adams’ Half- Dime Library series. Due to this, there are debates of the full authorship for Wheeler’s work, especially in relation to the last few novels in the Deadwood Dick Series. Interestingly, in a letter from June 29, 1884 to his childhood friend R.D. Locke, Wheeler mentions having written 122 stories for the Deadwood Dick novels. While this may seem like an extreme number, when one combines both the Deadwood Dick and the Deadwood Dick Jr series it amounts to 130 stories total, indicating that
writers who took over the series may have had access to his original outlines. Even after both Deadwood Dick series finished, Beadle and Adams never released a statement regarding the author’s death (possibly to keep sales going), therefore adding to the mystery of authorship of the Deadwood Dick canon.

The Beadle and Adams publishing house became in the late nineteenth century the nation’s largest dime novel publishing house, and contains a long and complex history, but the first usage of the Beadle and Adams name (albeit loosely) occurred in 1856 when the publishing house resided in Buffalo, New York; the founding members were brothers Erastus and Irwin Beadle and Robert Adams. Eventually, they relocated the publishing house to New York City in 1858. Although the dime novel itself was not a new type of literature, Irwin became the first person to issue the books as a continuous series and distribute them at ten cents. They became popular enough that they opened a second publishing branch in London where they reprinted and distributed earlier dime novel texts. Beadle and Adams primarily published male authors but did occasionally publish female writers as well. The publishing house successfully appealed to most audiences because the company advertised itself as selling “clean” literature, and thus it could appeal to both adults and children. They targeted every demographic and did not limit themselves to one type of publication and genre, and they also published song books and journals. Eventually, as the original founders of the publishing house died, and the quality of the works began to decease, another company bought the Beadle and Adams before changing it in 1899, thus marking the end of the publishing house’s reign.

New forms of entertainment appeared, and adaptations of the Calamity Jane character appeared in films. Her earliest surviving appearance was as a character in the 1915 silent film, In the Days of ‘75 and ‘76 produced by a studio in Nebraska. Considered one of Nebraska’s earliest motion
pictures, the movie used local talent (the only “non locals” were the filmmakers who came from Omaha) in a short YouTube documentary about the film, Paul Eissloeffel, a curator from the Nebraska State Historical Society mentions that *In the Days of ’75 and ’76* is, “not really an attempt to, portray history but, rather as a representation of popular, Western lore at the time” (NETNebraska 1:42-1:49). This quote connects neatly to the Calamity Jane mythos, as the plot of the film is greatly fictionalized. The filmmakers paired her and Bill Hickok together, and in this production, Calamity Jane frequently wears skirts rather than buckskins while roughing it on the Nebraska frontier. This film still retains historical value, however, as the filmmakers took advantage of local resources and the cast includes Sioux Native Americans from the Pine Ridge Reservation, soldiers from Fort Robinson. The camera frequently captures the majesty of the untouched Nebraska environment. With this mix of authenticity and artificiality it demonstrates what American filmmakers outside of Hollywood associated and how they portrayed the West and Calamity Jane.

Other talkie and color films predated the more famous movie musical version of 1953. As early as 1948, Warner Brothers had announced Doris Day in the title role.\(^6\) For whatever reason, the studio put the film on hold for several years and revisited the project after the success of *Annie Get Your Gun*, starring Betty Hutton and Howard Keel as the title leads. Due to an eagerness to cash in on the Western trend, the film producers cast Howard Keel as Wild Bill Hickok to play the love interest for Calamity. The differences between the released film and the original draft for the 1948 project are currently not known, but the finalized version does reflect other aspects of *Annie Get Your Gun* besides casting. Both works focus on women who are

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unafraid of following the conventions put upon them, repeatedly engage in comedic conflict with Howard Keel, and sing throughout the story. The *Calamity Jane* trailer emphasizes the comedic and musical moments of the film as well as the relationship between Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok and even shows footage from the ending of the film to solidify that these two characters will end up together. This demonstrates to a prospective viewer the core elements of the film, and that despite it containing some unconventional elements (such as cross-dressing) it still intends to follow a heteronormative ending. Having established the historical background of the dime novels and Hollywood film adaptation, I will now return to my larger discussion of the possibility of reading the character Calamity Jane through a queer lens. I will begin by exploring the camp potential of the texts.

**Let’s go Camping! Calamity Jane and the Concept of Camp**

Camp, while notoriously resistant to definition, serves as another tool to view these works from a different perspective. Although people often associate queerness and camp, there is no neat correlation for the two words; something does not have to be considered camp to be queer and vice versa, finding a connection between these two concepts, however, further strengthens the argument that queer theory might be relevant to a study of Calamity Jane. “Camp,” like the word queer, is a broad term. It has an ever-changing definition and meaning when regarded in either a personal and/or scholarly perspective. One of the first published essays to examine camp was “Notes on Camp,” written by Susan Sontag and published in 1964. I chose this essay because it was published a little over a decade after the release of Butler’s *Calamity Jane* film. Typically used as a springboard for contemporary essays examining camp culture, “Notes on Camp” will help confirm whether *Calamity Jane* and Wheeler’s dime novels fall into the camp
media category. In her essay, Sontag avoids giving a clear definition of the word camp. She instead creates a list of what objects, practices, and styles she perceives as qualifying as camp. Due to this decision of supplying a general definition of points rather than a precise specific argument, contemporary authors—as instanced in the book *Making Camp* by Helene A. Shugart and Catherine Egley Waggoner—take Sontag’s points and categorize them into groups, thus specifying various aspects of camp and then analyzing these specific groupings, rather than treating camp as a single unified concept.

In Sontag’s essay, one concept mentioned is dandyism. As she states in point forty-five “Detachment is the prerogative of an elite; and as the dandy is the nineteenth century’s surrogate for the aristocrat in matters of culture, so Camp is the modern dandyism. Camp is the answer to the problem; how to be a dandy in the age of mass culture” (Sontag 63). Dandyism—which Shugart and Waggoner categorized within “gay male sensibility” and aesthetic, aspects of which I shall examine in this argument—is a shared element in both the dime novel and the film, and thus joins the old to the new for the ever-changing mainstream viewership. The incorporation of the dandy in these works thus shows how this type of character has evolved, and what it represents in its respective time period; or at minimum, the writer’s personal viewpoints on what a dandy looks and acts like within the frontier environment.

Wheeler frequently incorporates the dandy aesthetic into his writing, with the heroes of the text frequently falling into dandy personas. In the fourteenth story, *Blonde Bill, or, Deadwood Dick's Home Base: A Romance of the "Silent Tongues."* (1880), there are two dandy heroes. The first is Deadwood Dick, who disguises himself as Blonde Bill and is “attired in a stylish suit of light cloth, with a shirt front of spotless white, ornamented by a blazing diamond pin, while he has a jaunty white slouch sombreretro upon his head, alligator top-boots upon his feet, the legs of
which reach above his knees…. His white complexion harmonizing with his long blonde hair, and sweeping mustache of the same hue…. his eyes are hidden behind a pair of green goggles that give him a strange appearance” (Wheeler 2). Deadwood Dick’s disguise, though not explicitly labelled as a dandy—perhaps because of the inclusion of the green goggles—his attire is similar (if not more so) in extravagance when compared to that of his friend (and a character from another one of Wheeler’s Western dime novel series) Rosebud Rob. Despite Wheeler’s typical attention to clothing, he gives very little information about Rosebud Rob’s appearance. Rosebud Rob is described as “a dandyish fellow, of handsome face and form, whose dress is a model of elegance” (Wheeler 2) and later identified again as “dandyish” (5) thus detailing that Rosebud Rob no longer neatly fits into Wheeler’s definition of a dandy, and now only reflects aspects rather than the entirety of the identity. Wheeler has now started to transition away from identifying Rosebud Rob as dressing as a dandy and instead describes him as “dandyish”. There are several reasons as to why Wheeler did this. The first could simply be because he did not want to write a detailed description of his outfit, which does occur depending on the story, the second could be because he assumed readers knew what Rosebud Rob looked like from his respective series and thus did not need a full introduction, and third, Wheeler wanted to distance his characters from being associated with dandies. Before 1880, Wheeler incorporated the word dandy much more in his writing, but by 1881, he decreased its usage particularly in the Deadwood Dick series, and shifted its focus from the white male protagonists to minorities, women, and even villainous woman.7 Regarding Rosebud Rob, Wheeler does offer a more

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7As I did not focus my paper solely on the rise and fall of the Wheeler dandy (but instead select appearances of this type of character) there is still much to explore in the dating and the official “death” of the dandy in his dime novel serials. I therefore do not feel I can supply a decisive theory as to why he made in this shift, but as noted in Appendix 1, which details Calamity Jane’s various outfits in the novels, she still dresses in an elaborate, dandy aesthetic, despite no longer having that label.
detailed description in his own story series. Written about a year earlier in 1879, *Rosebud Rob, or, Nugget Ned, the Knight of the Gulch*, Wheeler describes Rosebud Rob as a dandy on four separate occasions (Wheeler 2, 4, 5, 7) and initially described “…with a form that, though erect and slim, was closely knit and compact… the skin being pure, and the features quite perfect. He was dressed in neatly fitting pants of some grayish stuff, and these were in turn met at the waist by a blue miner’s shirt, with a broad collar, and a belt around the waist, bearing upon it in large gold letters… ‘Rosebud Rob.’ A jauntily slouched black hat was upon his head and patent-leather boots… the leathern leggings reaching above his knees” (Wheeler 2). The cover of the story features an illustration of Rosebud Rob among miners (see Appendix 2, Image F), thus encouraging a potential reader to read more about this mysterious man while also contrasting Rosebud Rob’s look to the miners standing around him and how he incorporated various elements of the miner’s attire into his own, like the miner shirt, slouch hat, and belt.\(^8\) Wheeler tweaks each of these details to fit the dandy aesthetic. The miner shirt is slightly open by the neck, allowing him to reveal his light skin (thus demonstrating how he does not need to work outdoors and has an even and fair complexion), while his jauntily placed slouch hat indicates his inner confidence, and his belt bears his name in gold, demonstrating a type of self-vanity and external display of his wealth.

Wheeler creates a more subdued dandy in the role of Augustus, a character that reflects the author and his personal experiences. In *The Double Daggers, or, Deadwood Dick's Defiance: A Tale of the Regulators and Road-Agents of the Black Hills* (1877) Augustus, mentioned in only

\(^8\)Another note of interest is the inclusion of a woman on the cover, the cross-dressing Baltimore Bess smoking a cigar. She is described as resembling Calamity Jane (Wheeler 2) and at the end of the story she does not marry and settle down. Rather she is described as “‘still a man of the people’” (Wheeler 15). With her hair either cut short or tucked into her hat (women rarely have visibly short hair in Wheeler’s writing), she can arguably be considered one of the butchest characters in Wheeler’s canon.
this story in the Deadwood Dick canon, is described as “a wise-looking young gentleman from the East, and a combination of the city dandy and crushed actor” (Wheeler 2). Although little definitive evidence confirms this, I believe that this is Wheeler inserting himself (or an aspect of his personality) within the Deadwood Dick canon. Both are writers from the East who lived in a city, and although there is little evidence that Wheeler performed as an actor, he had enough interest in the theater that he ran a playhouse which showcased his own play, which initially failed during its run. Further, when the miner interrupts Augustus, the dialogue between them becomes metatextual. After the miner asks who wrote about Deadwood Dick, we read: “‘I am proud to say I penned that sensational paragraph,’ announced Augustus, drawing himself up to his fullest height, ‘and if you have come to remunerate me for my interest in Mr. Dick I shall be most happy and grateful….‘ ‘So you writ it, did you?’ [the miner] asked. ‘Assuredly, I did!’” (Wheeler 2) There are very few writers within Wheeler’s Deadwood universe, with the additional coincidence that this writer has written specifically about Deadwood Dick. This experience exchange between the two men is camp, as Shugart and Waggoner write within the aesthetic selection of their categorization for camp, “an important component of camp’s style is the presence of self-love rather than contempt, such that camp’s performances are presented with an attitude of tenderness within the parody” (Shugart and Waggoner 34). Augustus is written as a dandy parody. This parody, however, comes from a place self-love rather than malice because of Wheeler’s personal identity to the dandy persona. Through Augustus, Wheeler therefore expects a knowing reader to recognize the subtle connection between this character and the author. As Wheeler incorporates in his narrative a third person, omnipotent narration, by writing in this style, the narrator can either explore minor characters like Augustus, or recurring major ones such as Deadwood Dick. This type of writing style organically allows a metatextual reading, as
the narrator will break the fourth wall and acknowledge there are people reading the text -as instanced in *Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, or, The Black Rider of the Black Hills* which acknowledges the reader (Wheeler 7). In other instances, Wheeler refers to previously published dime novels either in the footnotes within the main text, as in *Deadwood Dick in Dead City* (1885) (Wheeler 9). In these instances, intertextuality indicates not only an acknowledgement of the audience, and thus the idea of readership loyalty, but encourages new readers to collect previously published dime novels for a greater understanding of the Deadwood Dick universe (while also allowing the publishing house to receive a profit). Augustus—who represents a version of Wheeler—depicts his overt pride of the success of his own work, as he even straightens his posture when addressing this published piece. Further, he does not hesitate when asked again (rather exclaiming even louder than before) and Augustus presents no critical or self-conscious view of his published piece, only the confirmation that he viewed this writing as profitable and deserving of any additional payment. Augustus thus signifies a proud parody of Wheeler’s own enjoyment of his success from the previously published Deadwood Dick novel, and he feels optimistic he will continue experiencing this type of attention, with even the implication of deserving a possible pay raise.

Soon after this declaration, the miner demands Augustus publish an ad for him in the upcoming paper. Although the miner intends to pay Augustus, conflict occurs between the two characters. The miner wants to publish a selection of writing, but only the dandy has the privilege to publish, and clearly indicates an instance of tension that Wheeler likes to include between his miners and dandy characters. The dandy usual distinguishes himself from the other-particularly lower-classes in Wheeler’s text. As most miners often frequent the Deadwood world as background characters, the rough and ragged lower working class allow a bold distinction
from the dandy occupants. As camp is often viewed as an expensive form of expression, “so much of it predicated on abundant excess” (Shugart and Waggoner 34), these visual descriptive differences demonstrate the class distinction between the dandy and the miner. Dandies can not only afford the wealth that the miners dream of achieving, but they visually flaunt it. They are unafraid to flaunt their identity towards others. Due to this socioeconomic and thus lifestyle difference, the dandy is not welcome within the predominantly occupied miner spaces. The two groups will often fight, as neither can either afford, or would want to conform to the other’s look, unless the dandy chooses to disguise themselves as a miner when trying to gather information. This separate identity allows them to go about undisturbed, unless they make their original identity known either by accident or on purpose. In Wheeler’s stories, the ability to disguise oneself is a vital skill—especially for the dandy—and both the male and even female dandies repeatedly test this ability throughout the series.

While male dandies often occupy the frontier, Wheeler also allows the female dandy to exist in this same space. Female dandies dress in masculine articles like their male counterparts rather than elaborate, feminine articles. Calamity Jane fits into this role, and on numerous occasions, Wheeler describes not only her general outfit, but also focuses on specific details such as fabric, and her accessories to the reader. Calamity is a wealthy individual, and due to her owning multiple pieces of property, she can afford an extravagant wardrobe and live a type of dandy lifestyle.⁹ In *Deadwood Dick on Deck, or, Calamity Jane, the Heroine of Whoop-Up: A Story of Dakota* (1878), Wheeler provides a detailed description of her wardrobe, “Her dress was buckskin trowsers met at the knee by fancifully-beaded leggings, with slippers of dainty pattern upon the feet; a velvet vest, and one of those luxuries of the mines, a boiled shirt, open at the throat,

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⁹It is never mentioned who she goes to that provides her with her well-tailored clothing.
partially revealing a breast of alabaster purity; a short velvet jacket, and Spanish broad-brimmed hat, slouched upon one side of a regally beautiful head. There were diamond rings upon her hands, a diamond pin in her shirt bosom, a massive gold chain strung across her vest front" (Wheeler 2). Calamity flaunts her wealth visibly in front of others, and like Rosebud Rob in his respective story, she incorporates elements of a miner’s outfit into her look. Even her broad-brimmed hat has the association of a crown due to it slouching on her “regal” head. Wheeler selectively chooses not to gender what type of royalty Calamity Jane looks like (is she presenting herself more as a king or a queen?) and this vagueness allows the audience to decide which one she resembles more. The female dandy is not exclusive to Calamity Jane, however, as another character, Sure-Pop, appears in *Sugar-Coated Sam, or, The Black Gowns of Grim Gulch: A Deadwood Dick Episode* (1881). Mentioned as both a “female dandy” (Wheeler 3) and a “female fop” (Wheeler 5), Sure-Pop is described as a:

“girl of some sixteen or seventeen years, rigged out in a stylish fitting gray plaid suit consisting of coat, pants and vest, with a shiny plug hat set jauntily upon a head-crowning of tight little yellow curls, while patent-leather slippers graced a dainty pair of feet. Then there was a glossy white shirt front, with collar, tie and genuine diamond cluster pin, white kids upon the hands, a heavy gold chain strung across the vest, with a miniature gold revolver for a charm, and a slender gold-headed cane that she could twirl quite dextrously. And added to the flashy attractiveness of her dress was the fact that she was in both face and form a decidedly bewitching beauty” (Wheeler 2).

Although Sure-Pop originally tells people she is a detective, this is eventually revealed to be a lie and she is actually a Mormon’s wife. When Calamity Jane, disguised as Bumblebee Bob learns about this deception, she shoots and kills Sure-Pop. There is a vagueness about whether
Sure-Pop’s dandyism is how she typically dressed, or if was in relation to her disguise. Regardless, it still applies to Sontag’s definition of a dandy, as Sure-Pop’s pretend occupation allowed her to live a fantasy and thus detach her from the other, lower classes. The previously, examined examples did not associate the dandy aesthetic with wearing a disguise but rather depicted part of the visual lifestyle for the wearer and allowed a contrast from the miners in the community. Sure-Pop’s disguise helped her stand out and separate from the lower classes, and she presents herself as more elite than those around her. Yet once the townspeople learn Sure-Pop’s taken on an inauthentic persona she faces punishment in the form of death by the hand of the more heroic dandy figure, Calamity Jane. A dandy in Wheeler’s universe therefore must be of that class, whether they present this aesthetic as a more simplistic dandy such as Augustus, or take on a more outrageous persona like Rosebud Rob, for a dandy to survive in Wheeler’s universe their claim as a dandy must be authentic to their identity.

Moving forward to the 1950s, Doris Day’s films are known for their camp appeal, with some of her most famous involving her co-star Rock Hudson, and in particular, the film Pillow Talk. Although Calamity Jane predates that film’s release, it still follows the similar formula of a lighthearted, romantic comedy with an unconventional love story, and is filled with music and slapstick; and thus even though the formula isn’t a complete match to her later Rock Hudson features, film critics should regard Calamity Jane as part of her camp filmography. Calamity Jane, which focuses on Calamity Jane and her adventures while in Deadwood, opens the film by showing the viewer how much she loves Deadwood and her frontier lifestyle. One day, the owner of the Golden Garter—a multipurposed establishment which primarily serves as a bar and theater center for the Deadwood citizens—accidently hires a male performer, Francis Fryer (Dick Wesson) instead of a female one as promised. To settle the issue, Calamity Jane promises
to go to Chicago and return with Adelaide Adams. While there, she meets Katie Brown (Allyn Ann McLerie) and mistakenly brings her to Deadwood. Despite the mix up, Katie is a success, and the two women become fast friends. Trouble soon occurs though, when Lieutenant Daniel “Danny” Gilmartin (Philip Carey)—and Calamity’s current crush—develops feelings for Katie. Eventually, everything resolves and Danny and Katie and Calamity and Bill marry in a combined wedding. This film is unique in Doris Day’s filmography because she typically played characters who represented the very model of femininity. Even in the film script, the character description for Calamity Jane focuses on her masculine preferences and describes her as someone “who dresses, rides, shoots and speaks like a man” (O’Hanlon IV). In the film, instead of an elegant suit with jeweled accessories, Calamity Jane wears a fitted, dusty buckskin; thus in this adaption Calamity Jane is no longer a female dandy. Instead of standing out and separating herself socially and economically from the average townsperson of Deadwood, she now blends in with the working class with her neutral brown outfit, a similar shade to their vests and pants.

The role of the dandy now shifts to the character of Francis Fryer who is described in the script as a “flashily-dressed eastern actor” (O’Hanlon 1), and his costumes certainly reflect this. His everyday outfit is a fitted dark blue suit in a bold pattern, with accessories that match his suit’s colors, or theatrical clothing for performing, one of which includes a dress. Another costume he owns includes a satin pink and white suit, with pink accents detailed on the front of the chest, and at the end of the film when attending the joint wedding he wears a formal jacket detailed with velvet accents. All these looks cause him to stand out and display his background in both performance and in a separate class tier than the other miners. Francis’ acting background fits Sontag’s belief that a Dandy is a privilege for the elite, especially in regard to the Deadwood citizens who have purposely departed or never interacted with the developed city lifestyle.
Francis’ cultural past comes into play when he first sees Katie. He looks her over and mentions that last year he had seen her in Saint Louis when they performed in different theaters (Butler 38:12-38:19). This demonstrates he knows what the real Adelaide Adams looks like, and because of this professional experience, he knows Katie’s secret. He reveals this knowledge before she goes on stage and he wishes Katie good luck rather than Adelaide Adams (Butler 45:20-43:23). Despite this accident, the two later combine acts and perform together at the Golden Garter demonstrating how Katie has now achieved her dance hall dream and performs to an enthusiastic audience.

With the bulk of the musical songs performed at the Golden Garter, this presents most of the songs as diegetic, such as “Keep it Under Your Hat” and “Hive Full of Honey.” This later musical number displays one of the campier scenes in the movie due to Millie, the owner of the Golden Garter, accidently assuming Francis is a female actress. Millie cannot cancel the show or let the miners know about the gender mix-up because previously he advertised Francis as a female performer. Rather than admit the truth, he decides to trick them by obtaining a dress and wig for Francis. Francis, initially reluctant to perform in the attire, eventually becomes persuaded by Millie to sing “Hive Full of Honey” in front of the predominantly male-occupied space. The men fall for the ruse, despite the garish makeup and attire Francis wears, and as the song continues, he becomes increasingly comfortable and confident in his routine. It is not until his wig is accidently removed, thus “revealing” his true gender, that the song ends. This entire sequence is camp and falls into Shugart’s and Waggoner’s categorization of the “gay male sensibility.” In their argument they examine how gay men have become closely identified with camp, particularly men who dress in drag. They refer to theorist Esther Newton who wrote in *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* that “the artifice and contrived performance
that drag, in general, entails lays the foundation for camp” (Shugart and Waggoner 23). While in this situation the miners are initially unaware the performer is a man in drag, this definition reflects how Francis has become a jumbled mix of a female impersonator due to Millie accidently advertising Francis as a woman to the townspeople of Deadwood, and a drag performer once he begins to enjoy singing his number to the audience. This blurred identity represents Hollywood’s appropriation of gay male camp and an inability at clearly defining how Francis should be read by an audience, as they want him to represent two different types of entertainers. This musical sequence reveals how camp becomes exploited for comedic effect, as Francis is unable to even complete his song. His inability to finish “Hive Full of Honey” demonstrates how there is more importance set on the suspense of how Francis will be revealed as a man than an interest in him successfully completing his performance. The efforts to pass

When Francis first appears on stage, he enters foot first, and the camera follows Francis the way the men’s eyes would. The camera starts at the foot and moves upward as Francis pulls back his dress to reveal a garter belt. It continues tilting upward until the reveal of his made-up face. Dramatic irony ensues as Francis endures flirtatious passes from the male audience members, all of which he rejects, demonstrating that by rejecting their passes he does not lead them on, and thus subtly emphasizing that Francis, though in drag, is not gay. Although near the end of the performance he begins to enjoy performing, the reveal of the wig and thus the rejection of the audience causes him to unsuccessfully attempt to escape off the stage. 10 The humiliation and rejection by the audience that Francis endures after he loses his wig signals that a man impersonating a woman is not an approved alternative to a biological woman, and thus Francis experience the consequence of public shame. Only Calamity Jane—the other cross-dresser in the

10 O’Hanlon describes Francis during this scene as “gaily continues number” (O’Hanlon 15-A). Whether this mention is intentional coding for Francis’ performance is unknown.
room—comes to Millie’s and Francis’ defense and successfully thinks of a plan to calm the mob. Calamity Jane, in contrast, can cross-dress because she does not try to deceive others by hiding her gender from them. Interestingly, Calamity Jane was also the only one who can perceive Francis’ true gender, as she tells Bill Hickok “that ain’t all she aint” (Butler 16:20-16:21). In this moment, Calamity Jane is the only one to realize Francis’ gender, and due to her own unique style of dress she recognizes a fellow cross-dresser. While as a viewer her response displays dramatic irony, to one of the miners her answer can be interpreted as vague, and thus not explicitly “outing” Francis. After the incident, Francis decides—despite his dismal performance and reception—to stay in Deadwood, and later he performs with Katie. He even becomes such a close member of the community that he attends the military ball. His attendance at the ball is the film’s only overt instance of attempting to heteronormalize Francis; in a quick shot during the song “The Black Hills of Dakota,” he sits next to a woman as everyone sings along. Despite this date, by the end of the film he attends the wedding alone, coding him once again as the eternal bachelor.

**Do Clothes make a Role? Calamity Jane and an Examination of her Attire**

Do the clothes make a woman or does a woman make the clothes? Wheeler and Butler both examine this question throughout their respected works, as due to Martha Canary’s choice of clothing she gained a celebrity status. In Wheeler’s series, there is considerable development with Calamity Jane and her relationship with clothing. These two separate mediums of text and film, however, present her attire in entirely different ways to the audience. Dime novels either present the information within the text or visually on the cover. In film, the costume and makeup departments design Calamity Jane’s various looks. While the fictional Calamity Jane rarely
experiences negative consequences from her choice in clothing, actual cross-dressers during the mid-19th century were not as safe. Sometimes there were local laws prohibiting cross-dressing (Boag 51) and punishment could include arrests or outing of the cross-dresser’s biological gender through mass circulated newspaper coverage (Boag 36, 37, 43).\footnote{I am choosing to use the term cross-dresser as that was the term used during this period; however, this should not ignore how these people may have identified as transgender or gender non-conforming but did not have access to modern day language and identities.} Wheeler thus creates a fictional world that allows Calamity and other women to cross-dress attire, whether they are heroes or villains. Even in the last story, *Deadwood Dick's Dust, or, The Chained Hand: A Strange Story of the Mines, Being the 35th and Ending Number of the Great "Deadwood Dick" Series* (1885) when Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick fail their mission and land in jail, the mob that plans on lynching the two road agents for all the illegal activity they have committed does not force Calamity to wear female clothing. During their period of captive limbo, Calamity does not experience any type of harassment by the angry townspeople for her choice in attire, and as the cover indicates (see Appendix 2, Image J) even when she and Deadwood Dick are walking to their death, Calamity still wears her masculine attire. demonstrating that despite the townspeople seeing them as corrupt road agents they still respect her personal choices and let her die in her preferred look as a cross-dressing woman.

Martha Canary cross-dressed when necessary, but preferred female articles, thus demonstrating that adaptations that have Calamity Jane wear feminine attire are not historically inaccurate. During the mid-19th century, there were a multitude of reasons as to why women chose to wear male attire. Sometimes it was for personal aesthetic and comfort, other times it was because the person needed to disguise themselves for personal safety when travelling, or they wanted to work in jobs reserved exclusively for men, such as in the army. Other times
masculine clothing helped hide their identity, such as if they committed an illegal act needed to hide from the police. Another group lived as men, with the community often not knowing until the person became either arrested, hospitalized or died.\textsuperscript{12} Martha Canary wore buckskin for two main reasons, the first because of the convenience and possibly safety. Since her early teens she lived and worked amid harsher environments, and thus needed clothing to accommodate her lifestyle. Afterwards, once she had settled and became a mother and wife, she switched into female clothing, and only wore buckskin when paid to entertain a crowd. As photographic evidence shows, there are more recorded pictures of her wearing dresses and other female articles as she lived her day to day life. This demonstrates that when Wheeler and \textit{Calamity Jane} connect domesticity with femininity, it accurately reflects Martha Canary’s personal decisions.

The main creative adaption from these authors occurs when developing Calamity Jane’s backstory.

Although Wheeler’s fictionalized backstory for Calamity Jane is formulaic, he does try to create a queer identity to motivate her choice to cross-dress. Recognizing that dime novels possessing a formulaic style, the website “Women and the World of Dime Novels” neatly lists several main tropes that heroines fall into. Calamity Jane is absent from the selection, but Wheeler’s writing is distinct enough to place her as belonging in two of these tropes, a ruined woman and an independent woman. Her first reason for wearing buckskins relates to trauma as a ruined woman, which Wheeler reveals in \textit{Deadwood Dick on Deck, or, Calamity Jane, the Heroine of Whoop-Up: A Story of Dakota}. Before becoming Calamity Jane, she went by Jennie Forrest and lived in Denver Colorado. Jennie was the ideal lady, until she experienced pre-marital sexual assault. Reflecting on the incident she declares, “‘no man’s defiling touch has

reached me since. That villain still lives who foully robbed Jane Forest of her maiden name, but never of her honor”” (Wheeler 13). Due to this occurrence, she decides to recreate herself and develop a new identity, thus transforming into the second identity, an independent woman. For a recovering Jennie, the road agent lifestyle allows a departure from femininity, and economic independence. By earning her own funds, she does not need to rely on marriage for support. Despite Wheeler’s frontier being a predominantly masculine territory, Calamity achieves her independence, both socially and financially. Further, while living in this wild environment, Calamity begins to explore her queer identity. She elaborates on this self-discovery when she meets Charley Davis, a friend from her past. Within moments of their exchange, Calamity Jane comes out to Charley after he asks her if she is a woman. She tells him “Well, yes, I reckon I am in flesh, but not in spirit o’ late years. Ye see, they kind o’ got matters discomfuddled w’en I was created, an’ I turned out to be a gal instead of a man, which I ought to hev been” (Wheeler 11). Calamity Jane’s direct explanation is that while physically she is female, internally she identifies as a man. Calamity also connects this identity to religion, as it was a higher power who made this mistake when she they created her spirit. Her identification as feeling like a man therefore extends beyond external presentation to an internal identity. Despite feeling that she should be a man, Calamity’s identity is rarely explored by Wheeler, although she does occasionally disguise herself as one and goes by male pronouns until discovered to be a biological she. It is through her clothing and personality that Calamity predominantly presents as masculine, demonstrating how clothing allows her to visually show her queer identity to an onlooker.

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13Although Calamity mentions how she identifies with the male gender, Wheeler still uses female pronouns for her before and after this statement. I shall therefore remain addressing Calamity with she/her pronouns unless the text states otherwise.
Calamity’s mix of masculine and feminine elements through her personality, attire, and physique is what causes her to be considered queer in the dime novels. While Calamity often engages in “masculine” activities, such as gambling and smoking, choices which interestingly other cross-dressing women also engaged in during this period (Boag 46), Wheeler often focuses on how her body fits and is flattered by her clothing. In several instances in his writing he mentions her “contoured” form. Other stories emphasize other feminine features that Calamity possesses, such as the “dainty” aspect of feet. These visual supplements allow a reader to learn that although she dresses and acts masculine, her body reveals her as feminine to an onlooker. This combination of a feminine physique but a masculine personality and attire, causes others to regard Calamity as queer. In *Deadwood Dick's Divide, or, The Spirit of Swamp Lake* (1882) Deadwood Dick, in disguise, directly confronts Calamity Jane about her attire. He tells her “‘ain’t you a queer ‘un!’” (Wheeler 7), but Calamity Jane does not shy away at this confrontation and tells him, “‘What’s it your business… I’m running my own affairs; you run yours, and be off with you!’” (Wheeler 7). Calamity Jane’s reaction demonstrates her ability to hold her own when confronted. In this instance, she does not try to defend her lifestyle, but instead tells the speaker to mind his own business and to let her alone. This reaction lets the reader know that Calamity is not afraid to speak her thoughts about her choice in clothing. Her response reflects a fantasy that even a modern-day reader would desire to say when harassed by others over their clothing. Thus, in this moment, Calamity Jane fulfills a power fantasy as not only does she speak her mind, but afterwards she is left alone without consequence.

14 As instanced in *Blonde Bill, or, Deadwood Dick's Home Base: A Romance of the "Silent Tongues"* and *Deadwood Dick's Diamonds, or, The Mystery of Joan Porter: A Story of the Latest Detective Triumph of Deadwood Dick and Calamity Jane* (1885)

15 These include but not limited to, *Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, or, The Black Rider of the Black Hills* and, *Buffalo Ben, the Prince of the Pistol, or, Deadwood Dick in Disguise: A Sequel to the "Double-Daggers."* (1878)
In the instances where Calamity Jane does disguise herself as a man, it is not her mannerisms that reveal her biological gender, but rather the onlooker’s belief they have an insight into her body beyond visual presentation, thus creating a contradiction in how Calamity previously defined her identity. In A Game of Gold, or, Deadwood Dick's Big Strike (1880) Calamity Jane disguises herself as a man known as Little Toothpick. Initially, her disguise even fools Deadwood Dick, but as the story continues, Deadwood Dick begins to suspect that Little Toothpick is a woman. The text begins to shift to reflect this theory when it describes Little Toothpick, as “a man, evidently, but the possessor of a girlish figure in male attire” (Wheeler 11). When Deadwood Dick speaks to Little Toothpick, he tells him “Yes, a girl… attempting to pass yourself off for a boy. It won’t work” (Wheeler 11), thus indicating that Calamity Jane, despite initially passing as a man, cannot succeed long-term. This reveal, however, occurs in stages, including physical description and pronoun changes. Deadwood Dick’s continuing pressure and demand for Little Toothpick to admit their “real” identity relates to even contemporary issues about how the reveal relates to queer media. While some reveals are on the person’s own terms, this type of plot is typically associated with force and/or deception. Whether it be that the person who is in disguise is “fooling” the other characters, the viewer, or both, there is an expectation that the result will be a reaction of shock and at worst disgust by this deceit. With the reveal there is usually a fascination to at worst a fetishization with the person’s body, and in particular the genitalia this person possesses, as it serves as a way of validating or invalidating their identity. Once this is revealed, it often serves as a plot twist and more often than not is supposed to let the audience know that one cannot trust the offender, because if they cannot trust the person’s gender how can they trust anything else about them. In this dime novel, and others before and after it, Deadwood Dick’s constant pressuring upon Little Toothpick to
reveal themselves demonstrates the suspicious paranoia that is typically occurs when a person has not revealed themselves to someone. By Deadwood Dick preventing Little Toothpick from presenting himself in a way he prefers, it also depicts an unbalanced power dynamic as Deadwood Dick has a leader position and pressures Little Toothpick repeatedly to reveal his identity. This tension first starts when Deadwood Dick believes Little Toothpick is a woman due to a dream he had while asleep, and he later bases his belief Little Toothpick is lying because of this dream it raises a few questions for the reader. Did he suspect all along or was this dream from a higher power and thus it was through divine intervention he learns that Little Toothpick was in disguise? A few stories later, in Sugar-Coated Sam, or, The Black Gowns of Grim Gulch: A Deadwood Dick Episode Calamity disguises herself as a man known as Bumblebee Bob. She passes until a woman Bessie Burt discovers Calamity’s identity. At one point, when Bessie believes Bumblebee Bob is dead, she inspects him. When he opens his eyes Bessie notices “for the first time that they were not a man’s orbs, but those of a woman” (Wheeler 7). Eyes are often regarded as the window to the soul, so while externally Calamity projects herself as a man, internally she is female, implying that Calamity Jane is now a woman biologically and spiritually. Both instances indicate a shift in how Wheeler defines Calamity Jane’s perspective on her gender. Rather than defining Calamity Jane as having been born with a man’s soul in the body of a woman, Wheeler now shifts to presenting her as a woman who cross-dresses. Calamity Jane, despite repeated attempts, fails to pass while disguised as a man, and Wheeler stresses to the reader that no matter how convincing she initially appears, someone will out Calamity rather than letting her choose when she wants to reveal herself. All this demonstrates that by the fifteenth and twenty-first dime novel, Wheeler has shifted his viewpoints on how he initially defined Calamity and wants readers to regard her as a woman in all regards. While this
does negate the original identity that Wheeler offered in the earlier stories, the reader can still view Calamity through a queer lens. All her other characteristics, such as cross-dressing and engaging in masculine activities, continue to occur throughout these later dime novels, demonstrating that while the definition of her gender identity has changed, she does not shirk away from her masculine preferences.

While Wheeler writes detailed descriptions of Calamity Jane’s cross-dressing attire, he rarely focuses on the female attire she sometimes wears. This indicates how female clothing is often connected to Calamity when she is in a passive state within her environment. Situations wherein she wears a dress, or Wheeler simply does not describe her outfits in any detail, include periods of mental and physical illness, kidnapping, or staying at home while Deadwood Dick goes on a solo adventure. Looking back to *Deadwood Dick's Big Deal, or, The Gold Brick of Oregon* (1883), the use of the veil plays an intriguing aspect in her ensemble. With this decision to keep Calamity’s identity hidden, the characters and reader are kept in suspense. This accessory, however, also dehumanizes the woman underneath, and Calamity becomes a figure gazed at by the gamblers. One man during this period even tries to marry her, despite knowing virtually nothing about her beyond the superficial, further indicating the appeal of the body over the individual.

When Wheeler places Calamity in these states of incapacitation he often adds a new minor character to take the role of the independent woman that Calamity would have filled. These women also cross-dress, and although they typically assist Deadwood Dick on his journey, sometimes they are the antagonist. As instanced in *Captain Crack-Shot, the Girl Brigand, or, Gipsy Jack from Jimtown: A Story of Durango* (1881), Captain Crack-Shot, the female and “gayly-attired” (Wheeler 4) antagonist, captured Calamity Jane and several other people. While
there is a brief mention that Captain Crack-Shot’s wears male clothing, Wheeler supplies no details about Calamity’s look. He instead briefly mentions that Calamity is difficult to distinguish from the other women. I believe that because Wheeler does not specify what these women are wearing they must be wearing nothing unique and are therefore dressed in female clothing. For Calamity Jane, her loss of independence connects to her attire. As she is barely recognizable among a group of women, it neatly represents the loss of Calamity Jane’s individuality and empowerment.

In *Calamity Jane*, while Calamity never needs to wear a disguise, she is accidently mistaken as a man when she visits Chicago. When walking to the theater house, she accidently bumps into a woman, who winks and flirtatiously waves at Calamity. Calamity gives no reaction to this flirtation, and instead simply shrugs and continues walking to her destination. The script for the film specifies that the “Young lady, assuming Calamity is a man, winks flirtatiously” (O’Hanlon 21). Due to this being a silent sequence, it makes the misconception unclear, and can be easily interpreted as a lesbian exchange between the two women. It is not until Katie and Calamity interact that the audience learns that people in Chicago are mistaking Calamity Jane as a man. Once Calamity learns this, she finds the mistake funny, and laughs; but then she abruptly stops and states, “Come to think of it that ain’t so funny” (Butler 32:35-32:37). Calamity then goes to look at herself in a mirror. Katie, dressed in a highly feminized costume stands behind her, allowing the audience to view the contrast between the two women (see Appendix 2, Image D) This marks the first instance of Calamity externalizing an insecurity about how others perceive her and it is a turning point. In this moment she is literally and metaphorically looking at herself and how she views her femininity. Katie meanwhile tries to apologize and attributes her mistake to Calamity’s outfit, telling her “Those clothes, the gun and everything” (Butler 32:42-32:43). In
response, Calamity mentions her various skills and abilities at masculine activities, such as riding and shooting, but then falls short on how she views herself physically, mentioning “everybody can’t have a figure like Adelaide Adams” (32:57-32:59). This scene marks Calamity’s decision to begin changing her appearance and become more feminine, while also indicating to the audience that Katie will be the one to help Calamity on this journey.

While Wheeler fictionalizes and thus rationalizes why Calamity Jane cross-dresses for his story’s canon, *Calamity Jane* offers no detailed backstory to why she dresses in buckskin. Throughout the film, Bill Hickok repeatedly mentions that Calamity should try to act and look more like a lady. Calamity’s appearance and attitude only bothers Bill though, and no one else in town pesters her to change or defend her clothing choices. Interestingly, there is no specific reason for why Calamity acts and dresses like a mannish woman in the story. By not having this tragic backstory, it depicts a different type of Calamity Jane, one who does not associate any trauma with her past. Calamity thus becomes a woman who naturally enjoys dressing in an untraditional manner, rather than a traumatized woman who feels that cross-dressing provides her with the only alternative to continue living. While this version of Calamity Jane only applies to women who identify as women—rather than say, a non-binary individual—the film still presents her as living in a space that lets her dress however she prefers around Deadwood. It therefore sends the message that a person can dress as they please that having a preference to cross-dressing does not correlate with trauma. By not providing a direct biographical reason for her cross-dressing, the film allows Calamity Jane to make her motives independently placed, rather than her decision to dress in male clothing originating from either necessity, trauma, and/or safety. By taking this stance, it does not define the “why” of Calamity Jane’s clothing
presentation, and thus makes the possibility of analyzing and pathologizing her, such as from a
Freudian perspective impossible.¹⁶

While the audience becomes intrigued by Calamity Jane’s masculine appearance, the film
shows Calamity herself as fascinated with female clothing; she often wonders how the
mechanics exaggerate and support the female body, as nearly all aspects of femininity are aliena
to Calamity. This is in part due to Calamity living in a small town and not having access to or
knowledge of the latest female fashion styles, and how the clothing functions. When she visits
Chicago, she notices a woman’s bustle and stares at it in shock (Butler 25:51-25:59).
Additionally, the score supplies an exaggerated booming sound as the woman’s hips sway,
further emphasizing her behind and Calamity’s confusion at how she can look this way.
Afterwards, she spots wig pieces in a store window and declares “Scalps. A Mass-a-cre!” It is
only as she walks past the store that it revealed to the audience that the pieces are “hair goods”
(Butler 26:13-26:23) thus displaying that Calamity’s violent assumption is incorrect. To further
mark how out of place Calamity is in this world, she mistakes a wooden Native American figure
as the culprit, and onlookers laugh at the spectacle. These moments emphasize the construct of
the contrast of femininity and modernity in Deadwood. Artifice is in abundance in Chicago, from
the female form to replica Native Americans, and Calamity does not understand this type of
presentation, as there is little demand and resources for her town to create or possess these types
of items. For Calamity Jane, all of this is new to her, especially the clothing. When Calamity
Jane enters the boudoir of Adelaide Adams, she sees Katie wearing a pink corset. Calamity stares
at Katie’s chest in awe, and asks her “How do yah hol’ that dress up there?” (Butler 32:02-

¹⁶Compare Calamity Jane’s cross-dressing to how Norman Bates, another cross-dressing figure, is analyzed at the
end of Psycho (1960). Granted, he is villain and thus there is a need to find the motivation for why he murders, but
there is still a desire to provide an insight in the need to clinically and psychological identify non-normative
behaviors.
32:03). Calamity’s gaze of wonderment and confusion at women’s clothing now becomes blurred with an ambiguous gaze. Is she admiring the clothing, or the body underneath it? This moment of hyper femininity pushes the distinction of Calamity’s attire from the majority of costumes worn by women and men throughout the film. In Deadwood, Calamity blends in and dresses in a similar style to the miners, wearing various dull, earthy colors and if there is a bright element it is the form of bandana. In Chicago, the men are not working outside and thus dress in dark suits of blue and grey tones, while the women wear brightly or richly colored patterned dresses to contrast with Calamity Jane’s neutral colored buckskin. The only other character that follows in Calamity Jane’s neutral color scheme is Katie. In her first appearance in the film, she wears a dark brown dress while assisting Adelaide Adams. This indicates that like Calamity, she does not belong in Chicago, as she dreams of wearing the colorful pink costumes that Adelaide Adams wears when she performs. Deadwood allows Katie to fulfill this dream, and for the rest of the film she wears brightly colored clothing unless cleaning. This distinguishing attire makes her distinct from the Deadwood citizens, whereas in Chicago she was an unknown face in the crowd. Deadwood thus gives her a place where she can stand out and present herself boldly to the others.

It is only when Calamity and Katie begin living together, that Katie teaches Calamity the art of female clothing. Calamity begins to try on female fashion during the song “A Woman’s Touch” and this sequence is important as it represents the metamorphosis of Calamity Jane as she becomes a feminine presenting woman. In the lead in cue of the song, Katie declares that Calamity’s home only “needs a woman’s touch,” (Butler 59:46-59:48), after which Calamity Jane repeats the phrase questioningly, indicating she does not understand what Katie is implying, and it is only through the song that Calamity finally understands Katie’s declaration. During the
beginning of the cleaning process, Calamity wears her usual buckskin outfit and often fills the “male role” during the cleaning process, such as sawing the bed posts to create a second bed for Katie to sleep in. As the song progresses, Katie, however, begins to assign Calamity “female chores” like watering the flowers. Calamity Jane goes through several costume changes throughout this song, the first occurring after the two women finish painting and dusting the home, and Calamity switches into a button up men’s shirt with pants. Katie, however, decides that now that the cabin has had a literal fresh coat of paint, Calamity should reflect this as well. As Katie rummages through her suitcase, Calamity picks up a pair of oversized, frilly, pink bloomers accented with red bows. She begins to put it over her arms like a jacket until Katie notices and makes her take off the undergarment. In the next shot, the frame dissolves onto a closeup of one of the red bows on the bloomers. When the camera dollies back and tilts up, it reveals Calamity is correctly wearing the bloomers, and she pushes her skirt down to reveal her newly feminine outfit, including even a neat bow in her ponytail to complete the look. The cabin now reflects this feminine transformation, with the decorations including flowers and floral patterns, bright colors, and bows. This demonstrates that through Katie’s help, Calamity has successfully learned how to dress and present herself as a feminine. From a conservative, 1950s lens it also sends that message that mannish women like Calamity Jane have only been experiencing a phase and it is possible to teach them how to become traditionally feminine if they are given a female role model to teach them the ways of proper presentation.

Even with her new education from Katie, Calamity Jane still has a difficult time adjusting to proper femininity, as men have difficulty considering her as a woman. Due to her previously only wearing buckskin, Bill and Lieutenant Gilmartin are unable to even imagine the possibility that Calamity Jane can achieve femininity. When the two visit Calamity’s and Katie’s cabin with
the intention of inviting Katie to an upcoming ball, she declares that she will only go if one of them escorts Calamity. The two men debate with each other about who should take Calamity, to which an annoyed Katie declares, “Oh I know what you are thinking, both of you. Calamity’s fine on top of a stagecoach or behind an ox team, but she just isn’t lady enough to make social appearances” (Butler 1:10:01-1:00:07), to which Bill responds, “Well she ain’t beautiful” (Butler 1:10:09-1:10:10). Katie focuses on the men’s shallowness, and how they consider Calamity as a damage to their social status because of her lack of traditional femininity. Bill’s response to contradict Katie, however, only confirms her opinion, as he considers Calamity’s lack of looks as a fact rather than subjective. When Calamity does return, she looks like a mess due to falling in the creek and mud, thus ruining her dress, hair and makeup. The non-diegetic orchestral music which was building up this moment with an uplifting instrumental, abruptly switches to a lower comedic sound to reflect the audience’s reaction of surprise and dismay. When Calamity does arrive, because of how unkempt she looks, neither acknowledge that she is even wearing a dress. Calamity thus must not only wear a dress but also successfully follow feminine standards expected while she is wearing the clothing, otherwise whatever she wears will go unacknowledged and be considered “beautiful”. Femininity in Calamity Jane relates not only to one’s clothing, but additionally a woman’s attitude and presentation.

The ball represents society and status; by following the etiquette expected for this environment, Calamity has finally achieved approval as a feminine woman. Due to Calamity previously rejecting how a woman should look and act, Bill Hickok and Lieutenant Gilmartin hesitate to escort her to the ball because by association they will become part of the spectacle among the community. Even before she arrives, Bill, her escort, asks her “Do yah have tah wear that old army coat…. We’re goin’ to a ball” (Butler 1:12:31-1:12:33 and 1:12:45-1:12:46). While
narratively the coat serves as the reason why Bill has not yet seen a femininized Calamity, it also proves how Bill does not believe that Calamity Jane can make herself presentable for the ball. When they all arrive, Calamity removes her coat to reveal her clean dress and neatly coiffed hair, and once Bill realizes it is her, he looks at Calamity in shock, mouth agape. The other men stare at her in disbelief when she enters, and comment on her new look as they dance with their female partners, demonstrating how she has caught the eye of even men who had brought dates to this event. Now that Calamity has successfully presented herself as a “proper” woman, she receives the male gaze, a type of attention she had not received earlier but does not reject. Later, a group of men surround her, eager to dance with her, and she quickly fills up her entire dance card. Leslie, observing this from afar with Bill, mentions to him, “Looks like Calamity’s been holding out on us, carrying concealed weapons” (Butler 1:18:06-1:18:09). Further indicating to the audience how Calamity’s body has become objectified for others to admire now that her female form is no longer hidden by buckskin. Despite never receiving this type of treatment from men before, Calamity is happy with the attention. Interestingly, all this approval is from men while none of the women comment on Calamity’s appearance. This indicates how their opinion does not matter, and how in this heteronormative environment it is more important that a woman’s success within following the expected etiquette gains approval from a possible spouse than a female friend.

Wheeler follows the same philosophy for a woman that even if one looks feminine, they must follow the conventions set upon for them. In Deadwood Dick's Big Deal, or, The Gold Brick of Oregon when forced to go under the disguise of Gold Brick and work at a gambling table, Calamity Jane wears a dress and hides her face with a veil. Although she frequently receives attention from men due to her clothing, she resists acting completely feminine, and gambles and
even engages in a gunfight. While the men are perfectly fine with admiring her body, the only other woman in the town, Ruth Raymond, does not view the disguised Calamity as feminine, as she tells a visiting man, “for there are but two ladies in the camp. I am one; the enigma, who calls herself the Gold Brick, is the other. She runs a gambling-place, however, and of course hardly deserves the name of a lady” (Wheeler 3). This sentiment further emphasizes the idea that just because a woman wears a dress, it does not equate her to being a woman. If she acts with mannish tendencies, then others will regard and judge her as a lesser female; therefore, even if a woman is wearing a dress, she cannot become truly feminine unless she successfully follows the expectations set for a woman. Despite this pressure put upon Calamity to dress and act feminine, she predominantly cross-dresses in both works.

Despite people repeatedly pressuring Calamity to wear female attire in both works, when she cross-dresses, she is more successful romantically. In both adaptations when she kisses’ her respective love interest, she wears buckskin. This reciprocation when it comes to love demonstrates that Calamity’s queerness is not an off-putting aspect for these men. In Wheeler’s text particularly the cross-dressing is not an issue. After their first adventure together in Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, or, The Black Rider of the Black Hills, Deadwood Dick proposes to her (which she turns down) and after he proposes again and they do marry, she continues to wear buckskins as a wife. This sends a positive, and empowering message to a female reader and viewership, that even if one dresses in a non-normative manner, they can still have a heterosexual relationship with a man who follows traditional gender conventions. Despite both partners wearing male clothing, Wheeler never includes a scene where the couple discusses this, further demonstrating that Deadwood Dick does not mind having a wife who cross-dresses.
Even with the feminization of Calamity Jane, in *Calamity Jane* she does not view her transformation as permanent and easily switches back to male clothing later in the film. When Lieutenant Gilmartin rejects Calamity Jane, she returns to her cabin devastated and full of anger. She places all the blame on Katie for her failed relationship with the Lieutenant and curses her friend’s femininity as she takes off her dress. She describes Katie’s type of clothing as “man traps” (Butler 1:21:45-1:21:46) and throws all of the items Katie had given her, dress, nylons, and shoes back into the suitcase and has it removed from her cabin, therefore sending the message that Katie and her beliefs are no longer welcome in her home. While initially Calamity viewed female activities and clothing as necessary to successfully gain the attention of the man, now she considers it as damaging, as she only experienced rejection, despite her best attempts at visually becoming the ideal woman for the male gaze. During the period that she remains angry at Katie, Calamity returns to the comforts of her buckskins, and after she and Bill confirm their feelings toward one another she wears makeup. This demonstrates that once she is in love, she continues to follow Katie’s advice although on a smaller scale. Before Calamity can apologize to Katie, though, she learns Katie has left Deadwood and is heading to Chicago. The townspeople, now depressed and bitter, shun Calamity. When she asks why Katie did not stay, a broken-hearted Lieutenant Gilmartin confronts her and says “Because she’s a lady, Calamity! She’s not mean and selfish” (Butler 1:35:04-1:35:). Femininity is thus not solely defined by external presentation, and due to Calamity’s recent hostile personality, the townspeople disregard any progress she made and once again no longer regard her as a woman. Calamity decides she will find Katie and successfully reaches her stagecoach. The two women apologize to one another, and Katie agrees to return to Deadwood. With their issues resolved, in the film’s ending Calamity Jane wears one of the most female articles a woman can wear, a wedding dress, thereby
confirming that she how much she has grown from the beginning of the film and that she now fully embraces a feminine, and heteronormative, future.

In both adaptions, Calamity Jane’s chooses to follow conventional expectations by wearing a wedding dress. In the dime novel *Deadwood Dick of Deadwood, or, The Picked Party: A Romance of Skeleton Bend* (1880) Calamity Jane reflects upon what she would wear when she marries and decides “‘Still, if I ever marry, I shall do so as a woman- not as a tomboy’” (Wheeler 13). This distinction of the apparel demonstrates how Calamity choses to display her feminine rather than her masculine and thus, queerer side when she marries. This choice to wear a dress, however, is more of a confirmation of her existing femininity and decision to stick to conventional expectations. In this, and another story where Calamity Jane marries Deadwood Dick, Wheeler does not describe the wedding dress. The absence of this description takes away the previous significance of Calamity’s choice to wear a dress. As examined previously, when Wheeler does include a description of Calamity’s clothing, she is in a passive state. The lack of description thus represents how Calamity is facing a new type of restriction though a marital union. In *Calamity Jane*, the film also ends with her wearing a wedding dress and in full makeup. This represents her success at achieving a heteronormative life and eventual intention of settling down and shifting away from the frontier lifestyle. It implies in the future she will continue to present herself in a feminine manner and has moved past her wild self from the beginning of the film. Finally, the dress not only displays her martial union but promises a consummation afterwards, thus defining that Calamity has separated herself from her queer past.
Playing Nice with Others, Calamity Jane and her Various Relationships

Calamity Jane and her interactions among society vary depending on the adaptation. Within Wheeler’s texts, she and Deadwood Dick travel to different –sometimes even several– towns in each story, allowing a predominantly different cast to appear in each new adventure. By choosing this writing method, Wheeler prevents Calamity from developing any long-term friendships, male or female. Even if the relationship ends in a positive experience, the characters she does get along with often marry at the end, thus allowing a neat conclusion for their arc. These temporary friendships demonstrate how little Calamity Jane can maintain long-term relationships with other people. Even when she settles down and “retires” from the frontier lifestyle, she does not try to reconnect with previous friends or interact with others in her community. Instead, she lives privately at home and -when the dime novel includes it- is a mother to her child. The decision to have her live as a recluse reflects her dangerous past; she is unable to live in a traditional manner due to previously leading a morally grey lifestyle as a road agent. Personal reflections about needing to isolate oneself from society are not an aspect Wheeler explores in his work, but the reoccurring reasons for Calamity Jane to come out of retirement indicates she cannot live a traditional, settled lifestyle for long periods. Other possibilities could be less of an internal reflection upon the character: that Wheeler liked including Calamity Jane in the plotlines, or that fans of the series wanted to know more about Calamity Jane, that reader demand caused her to re-appear and continue going on adventures.

Despite Calamity Jane depicted as an outsider among society, Wheeler uses the character as a vehicle of his own racism, ethnocentrism, and ableism. This aspect of the Deadwood Dick stories is often a distracting and uncomfortable element within his writing, as Calamity is repeatedly cruel to minorities, including Jewish immigrants and people with Dwarfism (both are often the
villains in the stories as well). Characters repeatedly African Americans with the N-word. African Americans are morally placed as neutral within Wheeler’s universe, and they often serve as comic relief or servants to their (former) white owners. By having these roles, they become disposable characters and are often killed off before the story ends. Wheeler depicts other minority groups such as Mormons and Native Americans as savages, who kidnap white babies (particularly daughters) that they then raise as their own. Despite growing up in a minority community, by the end of the story these women face no difficulty in finding a white man to marry and are successful at assimilating back into society. Their kidnappers, meanwhile, face punishment and either live in isolation or killed by the protagonists. Calamity Jane’s lack of reflection or personal growth regarding racial, ethnic, religious, and other outsiders as the series progresses demonstrates and encourages the mythos that not only was the frontier a predominantly white and Protestant dominated space, but that the ideal West for the future should be such. These racist aspects are a major issue within these dime novels and for a modern-day reader, Wheeler’s Calamity Jane has morphed from a role model to a hypocritical figure. Despite facing stress and discrimination from her peers because of her decision to cross-dress and favor masculine behaviors, the fictional Calamity Jane dehumanizes other minority groups and sees their position as beneath her. Though Calamity, as portrayed by Wheeler, is often a morally grey character, the stories offer admiration and justification for her violence toward minorities. Further, a modern-day reader must remember Deadwood Dick and Calamity Jane represented the frontier fantasy for a younger audience. This racism in Wheeler’s writing and how he often found ways of justifying these aggressive and violent acts towards minorities for a child readership, further indicates a blemish in the stories.
Due to the environments and relationships Wheeler creates in his stories, Calamity Jane is unable to obtain a long-term female friendship. Women often take a competitive role in Calamity Jane’s life, and Calamity Jane will often end up competing with them to gain Deadwood Dick’s attention. Despite this, there are some rare instances where Calamity does maintain healthy female friendships. In *The Double Daggers, or, Deadwood Dick's Defiance: A Tale of the Regulators and Road-Agents of the Black Hills* Calamity Jane meets Leone, and the two quickly become friends. When Calamity first introduces Leone to one of her other friends, she mentions Leone’s appearance: “Isn’t she pretty though?” (Wheeler 6). Other moments of their closeness include sleeping near each other, and, in a rare instance within Wheeler’s writing, the two are physically and emotionally affectionate with each other throughout the story. They hold hands, touch one another’s shoulders, and Leone repeatedly reflects how Calamity makes her feel safe. By the end of the dime novel, however, Leone marries Deadwood Dick. Although she appears in several other stories before dying as a drunken adulteror in *Corduroy Charlie, the Boy Bravo, or, Deadwood Dick's Last Act* (1879), Calamity is either absent, or, if she does appear, the two women do not interact. Another moment of female interaction occurs in *Deadwood Dick of Deadwood, or, The Picked Party: A Romance of Skeleton Bend*, when a widow, Fanny Flash, expresses physical affection with both Deadwood Dick and Calamity Jane. Fanny, whom Calamity is jealous of after seeing Fanny kiss Deadwood Dick, confronts the woman. After they talk, Fanny ends their conversation by kissing Calamity Jane and leaving. Wheeler interestingly omits to indicate where she placed the kiss on Calamity, but the female road agent gives no reaction to this display of affection; soon afterwards, however, she thinks about how much she loves Deadwood Dick and fantasizes about their eventual marriage. Finally, *Deadwood Dick on Deck, or, Calamity Jane, the Heroine of Whoop-Up: A Story of Dakota* includes the character of
Dusty Dick, a woman who disguises herself as a man for safety throughout most of the story. As Calamity understands the art of dressing and disguising in male attire, she quickly sees through Dusty Dick’s disguise, and Calamity decides to become her ally and friend. Once Dusty is no longer in danger, she goes by her given name, Edna, stops trying to pass as a man, and marries. As instanced in all these stories, whatever relationship these women have, the development stops after one of the ladies marries. Heteronormatively thus allows a disregard of any previous queer interactions, as a marriage offers a simple way to dismiss viewing these relationships as anything further than platonic.

Calamity Jane possesses the flaw of jealousy; both adaptations incorporate this trait to show her as weak because she possesses an emotional, womanly side. When Calamity Jane believes Deadwood Dick is being unfaithful to her, she blames the other women for their behavior and actions rather than acknowledge that Deadwood Dick is an active participant in the flirtations. In *Sugar-Coated Sam, or, The Black Gowns of Grim Gulch: A Deadwood Dick Episode*, Calamity learns Deadwood Dick has died, and soon after she becomes ill and experiences intense delusions. During this period, she reacts violently to Bessie Burt, her caretaker. Despite Bessie being the only one who helps Calamity Jane during this low point, Calamity believes Bessie was flirting with her husband. This causes Bessie to fear for her life, but when she tries to escape, Calamity threatens her with a revolver. Even while she experiences one of her weakest and most vulnerable states in the series, jealously still fuels her decision making, demonstrating how easily Calamity’s emotions impact her, and how quickly she will turn against another woman, even those innocent from accusation.

This jealous streak also occurs in Doris Day’s portrayal of Calamity Jane. After she sees Katie kissing Lieutenant Gilmartin, she places all the blame on her friend. The audience,
however, knows it was Lieutenant Gilmartin who pursued Katie, while she resisted and tried to keep their friendship from turning into a romance. Later, a fuming Calamity fires a shot at Katie, before promptly heading home. In her cabin as she packs up Katie’s things, Bill, who is with Calamity, mentions, “if yah have to blame somebody, blame that pretty boy lieutenant of yours! Seems tah me he was one the other end of that kissin’ business” (Butler 1:22:02-1:22:08). Despite acknowledging to Calamity how she is setting a double standard, she ignores this comment and continues blaming Katie. Like in Wheeler’s version, this Calamity also places all the responsibility onto the other woman and refuses to view the situation from another perspective, and falls into the stereotypical belief of how women will compete with each other at any cost to snag their object of desire. Afterwards, Calamity, now alone in her cabin, bursts into tears, displaying to the audience her emotional vulnerability, and that while she can hold her own on the frontier, she is unable to control her feelings. Later, Calamity unsuccessfully confronts Katie and ends up publicly humiliating herself in front of the citizens of Deadwood. When she tries to return to her cabin, Bill intercepts and takes her to a quiet location. He tells her, “You’re a fake, Calam! Yah dress, talk, e ride an’ shoot like a man, but yah think like a female! A green-eyed, snarlin’, spittin’ female!” (Butler 1:26:34-1:26:43). Calamity begins to cry again, further indicating how her emotional side is a sign of weakness rather than strength. As Bill stated, while externally people view her as a “man,” once she becomes emotional, she exposes her “female” side. By describing Calamity animalistically, the film dehumanizes her. Despite her queerness, she cannot follow the model of masculinity which discourages showing any type of intense emotion whatsoever and indicates a binary in how men and women operate within the frontier. By revealing Calamity’s true nature, the film confirms to the audience that she was, and always shall be, a woman.
The person who Calamity Jane interacts with the most in Wheeler’s work is Deadwood Dick. Throughout the course of the series there are several stages to in their relationship:

- Meeting and friendship, 1 to 13 (1877 to 1880)
- Pining, 14 to 18 (1880 to 1881)
- Marriage, 19 and 20 (1881)
- Separation, 21 to 29 (1881 to 1885)
- Reconciliation and eventual death of both, 30 to 33 (1885)

In the meeting stage of their relationship, after their first adventure together in Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, or, The Black Rider of the Black Hills, Deadwood Dick proposes to Calamity Jane, but she turns him down stating “I have had all the man I care for” (Wheeler 13). Afterwards, the reader learns she continues to live in the isolated Hills, then reside in the populated mining town communities, sending the message that Calamity prefers her independence rather than experience any social or romantic involvement. Calamity and Deadwood Dick’s friendship is the longest phase in the series, although Calamity does not appear in over half of these early stories. During the entire series run, the queerness of Calamity Jane evolves and changes, with her most overt experiences occurring during this friendship period, as Wheeler explores her personal identity, friendships and romantic relationships. By story fourteen, however, she admits privately (and thus to the reader) her feelings for Deadwood Dick. Once Calamity’s romantic emotions and eventual marriage come into play, she becomes much more passive and reliant on Deadwood Dick her assistance. As the title of the story indicates, Deadwood Dick’s Doom, or, Calamity Jane’s Last Adventure: A Tale of Death Notch (1881), Calamity will retire from the frontier life to enjoy a future of domesticity. Wheeler quickly disregards this decision, however, and soon the second longest phase, separation, occurs
in the series canon. Calamity Jane returns to her buckskins and adventurous life, but the independence she possessed at the beginning of the dime novels is barely present, as she predominantly focuses her attention on figuring out a plan to reconcile with her separated husband. Eventually the two resolve their differences and live together again. This period of peace is short though, as the series concludes quite soon after they resolve their conflicts.

Deadwood Dick and Calamity Jane’s relationship, no matter how dysfunctional, provides a security blanket for Calamity Jane’s sexuality. By having her attention devoted to a man, it presents her as heterosexual, and indicates that her queerness is only a visible externalization, rather than reflecting any type of internal identity. As the stories continue, they increasingly focus on her heteronormative identity, even though she initially rejected this possible relationship. Despite an effort to have Calamity Jane regarded as a heterosexual character, she continues to cross-dress and display masculine traits and attitude. These conflicting views on how to present Calamity thus display that if one entirely removes the queerness, one takes away the defining aspects of the character that separated her from other the female characters. As even when she does settle, she does not permanently live the idolized domestic lifestyle. Her quick return to her queer identity thus indicates how an attempt to heteronormalize Calamity Jane is not a permanent arc for her character, and eventually she would revert to some form of her first introduction to the reader.

As Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick become closer, a power imbalance begins to form. While earlier novels featured Calamity Jane as independent, and owning several pieces of property, she is often given the responsibility of helping Deadwood Dick when he needs assistance. Overtime, once Calamity Jane expresses her affections for Deadwood Dick, there is a power shift between the two characters, and her independence increasingly lessens until she
becomes almost entirely dependent on Deadwood Dick’s help when she faces a predicament. In
*Deadwood Dick’s Doom, or, Calamity Jane's Last Adventure: A Tale of Death Notch*, Calamity
Jane’s agency is significantly less than in her previous dime novel appearances. Despite this
being her last journey, she first appears in chapter six on page eight, a little past halfway in the
dime novel, thus indicating that this supposed last journey does not even set aside time to focus
on her. At this point in Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick’s relationship, she has admitted her
feelings. This revelation creates a dramatic shift in her character as with this acknowledgement
comes emotional weakness. At one point, Calamity, worried about his whereabouts, breaks down
into tears (Wheeler 8), demonstrating how emotions such as love, which she has difficulty
controlling, make her vulnerable and emotionally reliant on others. As she waits for Deadwood
Dick to return to her, she experiences a series of incidents that leave her in life-threatening
situations. Helpless, only one person can save her, who goes by the name, Unknown. Calamity
and the reader do not learn that the vigilante is Deadwood Dick until after the third rescue, but
the act and allowance of disguise also indicates an imbalance between this couple. When
Deadwood Dick hides his identity, presenting as either a man or a woman, he passes. It is not
until the final pages of the story that, on his own terms, he reveals to the reader the different
identities he had taken throughout the story. In contrast, when Calamity Jane takes on a female
disguise she succeeds, but struggles when presenting as a man. As examined earlier in this essay,
when she tries a masculine disguise, she eventually becomes discovered and forcefully outed
against her wishes. While Deadwood Dick has a privilege to pass in whichever way he tries to
display himself, regardless of gender, Calamity struggles to maintain her deception, especially
when she must face constant harassment throughout this entire period, thus demonstrating how
even when the two go in disguise, Calamity will always face a greater difficulty than her male companion.

Deadwood Dick’s shift from viewing Calamity as an equal to a prize demonstrates another shift in their relationship. Keeping in mind Deadwood Dick’s anonymity in Deadwood Dick’s Doom, or, Calamity Jane’s Last Adventure: A Tale of Death Notch, the first time he saves her disguised as Unknown is when a maniac traps Calamity. Despite her shooting at the assailant, she eventually runs out of ammunition and is helpless until the Unknown suddenly arrives and saves her. Despite the dime novels previously praising Calamity for her marksmanship ability, here she repeatedly misses her target. This demonstrates how Wheeler makes Calamity Jane weaker and in need of help for the convenience of the story rather than keeping consistent with her character. In the second incident, Calamity Jane becomes framed for a murder. A mob quickly forms with the intention of lynching her, until Unknown arrives once again and wagers a contest. Whoever wins claims Calamity as their prize, thus transforming her into a symbolic object. Helpless, she can only watch as others gamble for ownership. Predictably, Unknown wins the contest, and although he does let her go, he declares aloud, “Girl I have won you fairly and now you are doubly mine” (Wheeler 11). The mention of being doubly his is a bit vague, as it is either in relation to rescuing her previously or foreshadowing that this is Deadwood Dick and he is acknowledging that once they marry, Calamity will become his property. Either way, Calamity is no longer Deadwood Dick’s equal but instead a prize he can obtain. Later, Unknown rescues Calamity from the Apache tribe, and afterwards he reveals his identity, telling her, “I am Deadwood Dick, who holds a mortgage of betrothal against you!” (Wheeler 15), once again, the objectification of Calamity Jane occurs, and her debt is to be paid by their upcoming marriage. In Deadwood Dick’s original proposal, there was more balance in
their relationship, as he asks if her if she wants to “become my queen” (Wheeler 13). While there is still the theme of monetary worth, Calamity can rule beside him, indicating a better balance between the two characters. As the stories progressed though, Deadwood Dick changed his views on their relationship, and now considers Calamity as indebted and obligated to fill his needs. These two separate moments demonstrate how the equality between the two characters has shifted. Calamity Jane is now beneath him, transformed into a trophy that Deadwood Dick can display as another one of his winnings he obtained during his travels, and while there is plenty of focus on Deadwood Dick and his opinion of their relationship, Wheeler offers no opinion of how Calamity views this deception. She gives no reaction besides soon marrying him after these incidents, and Wheeler even gives Deadwood Dick the honor of having the final word in her last adventure. Despite there being a passing mention that this is both heroes’ last adventure (Wheeler 8), Deadwood Dick continues exploring the frontier while Calamity remains at home. This shows the double standard set upon male and female couples, and that while she must settle and keep the home neat, he can still experience the wilderness of the frontier and unburdened by domestic responsibility.

Although Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick struggle to find a balance in the later texts, there are periods when Calamity Jane and Deadwood’s relationship allows Calamity equality and independence. In the friendship era of the series, Deadwood Dick often seeks out Calamity Jane for help. In Deadwood Dick in Leadville, or, A Strange Stroke for Liberty: A Wild, Exciting Story of the Leadville Region--of Regulators and Adjusters; of Road-Agents and Bandits--of the Latest Events in the Strange Career of Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road (1879), when he realizes that he cannot escape the lynch mob, he visits Calamity Jane. He tasks her with the responsibility to declare ownership of his body and revive him after the mob declares him dead. This task
demonstrates how Deadwood Dick trusts Calamity over anyone else he knows regarding the outcome of his life. In this instance he places Calamity in high regard, even more so than his own gang who repeatedly risk their lives when they go on a quest with him. In other stories, he listens to her plans and will often follow her ideas. Deadwood Dick does not try to take ownership of Calamity’s idea, and often lets her take control. By having her take change and lead his gang while on a mission, this indicates to the reader how Deadwood Dick trusts Calamity’s plan to succeed, in not only in regards to the mission itself, but that she will keep his men alive. Other times, there are incidents where Deadwood Dick is in danger—such as during a bar fight—and he cannot escape; during these times of peril, Calamity will often save his life. This reversal of who is in distress and who valiantly saves the one in need creates a refreshing take on the damsel and knight trope. Deadwood never expresses embarrassment or humiliation when rescued by a woman and is thankful that Calamity Jane was there to save his life. In the later part of their relationship, one of the rare instances of Calamity keeping her independence is regarding her surname. Whether together or apart, Calamity Jane rarely takes her husband’s name while on adventures. Although there are instances where people address her as Mrs. Deadwood Dick, most dime novels simply call her Calamity Jane. Women during this period typically took on their husband’s name once married, but Calamity does not follow this marital standard. Interestingly, despite being addressed in this manner, she faces no repercussions or judgement from any of the characters in the dime novel despite this being an unusual decision. Wheeler deciding Calamity will continue going predominantly by her own name is radical for its time and demonstrates how she retains her independence and individualism while married, but also demonstrates Calamity’s ability to have this type of privilege due to being a white heterosexual woman.
Although *Calamity Jane* pairs Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane as a couple, the healthiest relationship Calamity Jane experiences is with her friend Katie. Throughout the film, the two women help each other grow and achieve their dreams. Calamity is responsible for bringing Katie to Deadwood, but Katie is nervous performing under a different identity and gives an abysmal performance. After she reveals her actual name, another mob begins to form at the Golden Garter, but once again, Calamity quickly defends the performer on stage. She encourages Katie to perform it in her own style, resulting in a successful show. This causes Katie to trust Calamity and she decides to stay with her rather than in Deadwood. Now roommates, Katie teaches Calamity about femininity and domesticity to attract a future husband. As Calamity previously had an entirely male friend group, she finally learns the ways one appeals and attracts a suitor, rather than just remaining their friend.

Before Calamity Jane switches into dresses, the two women depict a stereotypical butch-femme relationship. Calamity Jane takes on the butch role, while Katie portrays the femme. In one scene, Calamity even takes on a responsibility typically attributed to the man in a relationship. When the two women arrive at Calamity’s cabin, she helps Katie descend the carriage and carries all her luggage. When Katie helps transform the home, she even adds a painted sign that reads “Calam and Katie” (see Appendix 2, Image E) indicating how this is becoming their shared space. While in *Calamity Jane* the film indicates the women sleep in separate beds, in a 1963 filmed stage adaptation staring Carol Burnett, the two women share a bed together. In *Calamity Jane* both women display physical affection with one another, and

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17 The final version of the script mentions that Katie carries one piece while Calamity carries the other (O’Hanlon 47); it is not known who decided to change this direction.
18 The first two thirds of the filmed stage adaptation of *Calamity Jane* remain overall fairly faithful to the film, with certain sequences only having different lines and reactions. In the last act though, Calamity Jane remains in a dress longer, and Calamity’s and Katie’s relationship and the musical’s ending are different. I do encourage those interested to watch this portrayal of Calamity, as it provides an insight on how certain numbers transfer onto the stage and how the Calamity role can change when an actress known predominantly for her comedy portrays the
they repeatedly hug each other throughout the film. They also frequently compliment and defend the other woman. Calamity Jane repeatedly comments on Katie’s beauty, and one of the first things she tells Katie when she initially meets her is “Goshamighty, you’re the prettiest thing I ever seen. Never knowed a woman could look like that” (Butler 31:50-31:58). For Calamity, Katie represents the ideal feminine woman who can help her look and act like that as well, while Katie always sees the potential for Calamity’s external beauty and helps make her over. As examined earlier in this paper, she defended Calamity’s looks when trying to convince Bill or Lieutenant Gilmartin to escort Calamity to the ball and awaited eagerly for Calamity’s return to prove them wrong.

Later, when Calamity learns Katie had left Deadwood Lieutenant Gilmartin reads a letter Katie wrote to him. In it, Katie expresses how she loves both Lieutenant Gilmartin and Calamity; but she believes that by returning to Chicago, she will make them happy. While Lieutenant Gilmartin does nothing but sulk, Calamity takes responsibility and finds Katie’s carriage to apologize and convince her to return to Deadwood. This rescue and return parallels an earlier instance in the film when Calamity Jane took it upon herself to save Lieutenant Gilmartin- her then love interest- after she learned Native Americans had captured him. For Katie, once again Calamity becomes the heroic knight, rescuing her loved one and safely bringing them back to Deadwood. Even though Calamity saved Lieutenant Gilmartin from capture and deeply cares about him, he rarely cares about Calamity. In contrast, Katie is incredibly loyal to her friend and constantly thinks about her well-being. After the Lieutenant and Katie kiss at the ball, Katie tries to find Calamity. An unconcerned Lieutenant Gilmartin tells her, “You’re the only person in the world who would ever worry about Calamity” (Butler 1:20:43-1:20:45). This offhand remark

character. To avoid any confusion between these filmed adaptations, this will be my only mention of the stage adaptation in this essay.
further indicates how Katie, above everyone else, cares for Calamity and publicly expresses her concern about her friend’s emotional state.

Even people like Bill, the one who is supposed to care the most about Calamity, continuously humiliates and belittles her.\(^1\) He is the most vocal in town about how Calamity dresses and believes she should look more feminine. Bill also puts his own reputation first, as indicated by his reluctance to invite her to the ball, and repeatedly judges Calamity’s fashion choices. Earlier in the film, right before Calamity heads to Chicago he tells her, “notice the women. How they act, an’ what they wear. Git self some female clothes…. If you ever crawled outta that deer-hide an’ dolled up a bit, I got a hunch y’d be a passable pretty gal” (Butler 24:28-24:33, 24:43-24:48). Calamity gets defensive and shrugs off Bill’s suggestion. While in Chicago, although Calamity does absorb the sights and people of the town, she does not listen to Bill’s advice and never expresses an interest in how any of the women look that walk on the street or go into any of the stores. This shows that even privately, Calamity does not follow Bill’s suggestions about her looks. Her success at feminizing herself while living with Katie demonstrates that her friend’s technique of giving positive encouragement is ultimately more effective and successful than Bill’s method of insults and belittlement, thus proving that Calamity can change her look, but only if she has the right type of guidance.

19In a deleted line from the script, when Katie asks Calamity about her and Bill’s relationship, Calamity mentions, “he’s proposed t’me a coupla times. Usta think I was in love with him” (O’Hanlon 47) This follows the same pattern of Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick’s relationship of rejecting a proposal but eventually marrying the suitor. Despite this being a cut line, it does provide an insight into the complexity of Calamity and Bill relationship, and why they quickly decide to wed at the end of the film.
Happy Trails, the Epilogue of Calamity Jane’s Impact

In the works examined within this essay, Calamity Jane experiences two distinct endings, which conveys two different messages to the reader regarding her future. The Hollywood film offers the expected, “happy ever after” for Calamity Jane. It ends in a dual wedding and features a reprise of several songs to neatly conclude the character arcs in the film. The townspeople attend the wedding and cheer off the happy couples as they all ride off together toward a future that promises a life full of prosperity and domesticity. Although the film ends with Calamity in a wedding dress, the audience soon learns she has a revolver hidden in her gown. When Bill finds it and asks her what it is for, she responds, “That’s in case any more actresses roll in from Chicag-e” (Butler 1:40:03–1:40:05). While this portrays a humorous side to Calamity’s jealous streak, it lets the audience learn that despite her wearing a dress she has not completely settled into a conventional way of living. Bill Hickock swiftly takes the gun away from her and hands it to Francis. Bill’s removal of Calamity’s gun, while retaining his own indicates that -like Wheeler’s double standard for settled couples- Bill can continue to engage in dangerous situations, while Calamity must distance herself from a wild way of living. As they all ride off together, Bill and Calamity sing about Deadwood, thus romanticizing the escapist, frontier life that Deadwood offers its heroes.

In contrast, Wheeler’s ending is the exact opposite of the Hollywood treatment. Despite the majority of Wheeler stories ending in a wedding, Deadwood Dick's Dust, or, The Chained Hand: A Strange Story of the Mines, Being the 35th and Ending Number of the Great "Deadwood Dick" Series concludes with the death of both Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick. Calamity Jane’s final mention in the story is her epitaph, which reads “Calamity Jane. Frank with friends, fearless of foes (Wheeler 14). This focuses on her important traits, honesty and bravery above everything
else. The inscription also erases any information that Calamity Jane experienced a heteronormative lifestyle and indicates that her status as a wife and a mother is not important. They bury Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick near each other, signifying that while they cannot be unified in life, they will be together eternally in death. As mentioned previously in this essay, there are some concerns regarding how much or how little Wheeler wrote for the series. Regardless if Wheeler originally planned that the conclusion of the serial would involve killing his two protagonists, there is a glaring error in the title for this last tale. While it mentions this is the 35th installment, it is the 33rd in the series. This mistake may be proof of how Beadle and Adams focused more on making a profit with the Deadwood Dick franchise than how the stories worked as a whole. Only a few months later in 1886, the publishing house released the first installment in Deadwood Dick Jr., a sequel to the popular franchise but without the responsibility of involving the original protagonist. The decision to have such a bleak ending, however, could also relate to the shifting views of how American culture viewed the West during this time. In his 1893 essay, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” Fredrick Jackson Turner classifies the death of the West as occurring at around 1890. He cites a census report which mentions a change in the settlement of the frontier as early as 1880 (Turner 31). As the Deadwood Dick series finished in 1885, the tragic ending of the two protagonists signifies how the “wildness” of the West has changed into a more urban lifestyle, and road agents like Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick can no longer survive in their new, modernizing environment.

A dime novel’s eye-catching cover provides an insight for what demographics these stories wanted to attract. Despite having a female protagonist, Beadle and Adams ultimately advertised their novels to boys. While it is often Deadwood Dick who occupies the front of the stories,
Calamity Jane became popular enough to appear on the cover of four of the thirty-three dime novels, *Deadwood Dick on Deck, or, Calamity Jane, the Heroine of Whoop-Up: A Story of Dakota; Deadwood Dick in Leadville, or, A Strange Stroke for Liberty: A Wild, Exciting Story of the Leadville Region--of Regulators and Adjusters; of Road-Agents and Bandits--of the Latest Events in the Strange Career of Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road; Deadwood Dick's Divide, or, The Spirit of Swamp Lake; and Deadwood Dick's Dust, or, The Chained Hand: A Strange Story of the Mines, Being the 35th and Ending Number of the Great "Deadwood Dick" Series* (see Appendix 2, Image G-J). The cover for *Deadwood Dick's Divide, or, The Spirit of Swamp Lake* features a scene between Bum and Calamity Jane. Reissued a few years later in 1889 and 1900 (the 1900 is the same version as the 1889 edition but with the cover now in color), the story has a title change, *Deadwood Dick's Disguise, or, Wild Walt, the Sport*, and the front illustration depicts an entirely different scene. The reissue focuses on Deadwood Dick, now out of disguise, confronting another man, rather than him in disguise talking to Calamity Jane. A reason for this erasure is because the publishing house wanted to market more towards boys than girls. As a review included in the 1900 color reissue mentions, “[the series is] so firmly engrafted on the tree of popular literature for boys and young men” (35); as this was in a much later reprint of the story, it indicates how advertisements for these texts wanted to target male youths buying this literature. Other dime novels also advertised their stories in a similar fashion, as *The Weekly Advertiser* wrote in 1901 how a decade or so earlier “boys of that period read with breathless interest” (8). Books like Edmund Pearson’s *Dime Novels; or, Following an Old Trail in Popular Literature* included personal testimonies and reflections on how dime novels impacted their childhood. Sadly, there are far and few writings that examine how woman from this period viewed the opportunity of being able to read stories with characters like Calamity Jane as either a
child or an adult, demonstrating how a consequence of targeting primarily toward a male readership.

The conflicted reception for *Calamity Jane* demonstrates how certain 1950s audiences were still unaccustomed to queer representations on screen. When released to the public, *Calamity Jane* received mixed reviews, particularly about Doris Day’s portrayal as the title character. Gene for *Variety* described her performance as “[working] very, very hard at being ‘Calamity’ and is hardly realistic at all. She’d register fine as a country girl in calico or a cutie from the chorus line but strain shows through in her essaying of the hard and dynamic Calamity character” (Gene 6). This review indicates the continued fascination with the body and its relation to clothing. With a focus now on the actress, rather than Calamity herself, Gene considers Doris Day as unable to realistically portray this type of mannish woman. In their suggestions for whom she is more suited to play, they list two different types of girly roles, demonstrating that they believe Doris Day should stick with more feminine parts and not branch out creatively. Despite their complaint that she does not have the range, this was not the first time the actress had portrayed a tomboy type character. She appears as one in *On Moonlight Bay* in 1951, and the film was popular enough to merit a sequel. This indicates that despite Gene’s instance on her inability to play these type of characters, there was a clear interest and approval from an audience when she did these roles. The majority of reviews I found in America leaned more on the negative side, particularly because critics felt it was too similar to *Annie Get Your Gun* while others, like Gene, did not enjoy Doris Day’s portrayal of Calamity. When I did find positive reviews, many of them were from the United Kingdom, indicating how different cultures viewed the film. Reviewer, Freda Bruce Lockhart applauded Doris Day’s acting ability, writing in *The Tatler and Bystander*, “[Doris Day’s] performance is a tour de force and proves
Miss Day a star of quality in truth” (Lockhart 318). European and American criticism of the film, however, rarely mentioned or included a photo displaying any queer elements found in *Calamity Jane* such as the multiple drag sequences.

Regardless of the film’s reception, the song “Secret Love,” released prior to the film’s release, quickly became a hit, and at the 26th Academy Awards, it won for Best Original Song. Calamity Jane sings the number twice in the film. The first time it is the next day after her kiss with Bill. She wears an entirely new buckskin outfit and sings in a peaceful nature setting, with only the audience privy to this private moment. In this scene there is an ambiguity about whom Calamity is singing, as her love is nowhere in sight. In the reprise, Calamity sings the song briefly at her wedding. Now wearing a wedding dress, she sings in front of Bill and the townspeople of Deadwood. While originally there is an allowance of queerness in the first version, by the reprise this intention has changed and can only be viewed from a heteronormative perspective. Across these performances, the film achieves a balance of masculine and feminine, private and public, queer and heteronormative, past and future, all which indicate how the song serves a dual purpose. The song itself, however, favors a more ambiguous interpretation. In the lyrics of “Secret Love”, the subject has no specific gender, thus allowing the song to have either a queer or straight interpretation. Due to this ambiguity, the song has gained a strong following within the LGBT+ community. Several gay singers such as K. D. Lang, Lesley Gore, Johnny Mathis and George Michael have recorded it for their albums, and in popular media, the television show *The L Word* (2004-2009) which revolves around a queer group of women used the song in an explicitly gay context. During the 2007 episode “Lassoed,” a cover of “Secret Love” briefly plays during a Western themed bar night. Woman dressed in scanty cowgirl outfits dance close to one another, while others kiss passionately against a wall. This demonstrates how
the song has evolved from being sung in a heteronormative setting to mood music in an explicitly queer space.

After *Calamity Jane*, the character made several other appearances in various media, each portraying a unique version of the Calamity Jane persona. A looser adaptation of Calamity Jane appears in *Legend of Calamity Jane* (1997-1998), a short-lived animated television series. Calamity Jane and her queerness occurs not only in her attire, but in the decision to make her bi-racial with Native American ancestry. This fabricated idea is quite odd considering that the original Calamity Jane—who had a complex and often negative relationship with Native Americans—publicly prided herself on her ability to kill indigenous people when given the opportunity. In this adaptation, she still cross-dresses, but now she has a distinct, pale skin tone that separates her from the other characters. This character design now visibly separates her and displays how her racial queerness permanently makes her an outsider in Deadwood. This is different from previous adaptations because Calamity only needed to feminize herself to fit back into the norm. The lack of historical accuracy also shows how they wanted a character with a recognizable name to draw in the audience, as by creating her in this way Calamity Jane transforms into a literal symbol for the other. The majority of the cast are people of color, while white foreigners (with obvious accents) are often placed in villainous roles. Calamity Jane is not the only cross-dresser in the show as in the eleventh episode, “Protégé” a white female cross-dresser who goes by the nickname Ellie appears and follows Calamity for the entire episode before returning home to the East. The show, despite targeted to children, was gritty, violent, and dark. It received very little airtime on The WB in America, and due to its short run, it is difficult to know what the intended resolution was for Calamity’s arc as the last aired episode simply ends.
with her riding towards a sunrise with friends. Whether the creators intended for her to settle and eventually start a family is unknown.

A few years later, her most recent portrayal occurs in *Deadwood*, which changed her queerness from interpretive to canonical. This adult HBO show shifts away from portraying Calamity Jane as hoping to settle and follow a heteronormative lifestyle, when in the third and final season she starts a relationship with Joanie Stubbs. While earlier adaptions have Calamity changing into a different look to attract a partner in Deadwood she does not try to change and make herself more feminine for Joanie. Calamity continues to wear her buckskin throughout their relationship, and when she is with Joanie, who has long hair and dresses femininely, the two resemble a butch-femme relationship. The real Calamity Jane had several marriages and would frequently discuss her interest in men and being a wife publicly. While this does not necessarily mean that Calamity Jane identified as straight, there is currently no primary evidence confirming that the original Calamity Jane expressed an interest or became involved in a lesbian relationship. *Deadwood* thus marks the first-time mainstream media depicts Calamity Jane as not only canonically queer, but in a relationship with -rather than coded- a woman.

While Wheeler’s work has drifted into obscurity, *Calamity Jane* has had a recognizable impact upon the modern LGBT+ community. Now shown at LGBT+ film festivals, the film also stays present for a contemporary public due to social media sites such as *Tumblr* and *Archive of Our Own* producing fan content. Many of these groups focus on the film’s queerness, such as Calamity’s relationship with Katie or her fashion. One user, hanyeri, creates multiple fan content for the film, including a playlist, movie stills, and GIFs. One of her GIF collections, which features Calamity in her cross-dressing attire, received over 4,000 notes -a combination of comments, likes and reblogs- on the site. There is a short description, “soft butch calamity jane”
written underneath, indicating that due to these masculine clothes, fans label Calamity with a lesbian identity. Another post is a video clip from the scene when Calamity and Katie first meet. Posted by fatallyblonde, despite the video length being only thirty-five seconds in length, the post has reached nearly 280,000 notes. Whether or not people reblogging this content have seen *Calamity Jane*, the popularity demonstrates how a modern queer community responds, identifies, interprets and relates to the film. Other sites such as *Archive of Our Own*, known for its fanfiction, contains several stories inspired by the events from Calamity Jane, with the authors romantically pairing Calamity with Bill or Katie. In “Not Stupid” by bigblueboxat221b, the author rewrites certain events from *Calamity Jane* but keeps the film’s original ending. Their “epilogue” however is of their own speculation. After Katie reveals to her husband her attraction and love for Calamity, he agrees to let the two women pursue an open relationship together. This acknowledgement of the *Calamity Jane* canon, while also adding a queer fan interpretation, demonstrates one perspective of how the story could have continued after the heteronormative happily ever after. Another *Archive of Our Own* publication examines Calamity Jane queer elements in a short essay “Calamity Jane - Notes” and analyzes the use of cross-dressing and drag from the opening number to the final reprise. While not written in a traditional academic setting, this type of writing works well as free, springboard resource for people and invite them to pursue other people’s work on this topic. All this various fan content, from shipping playlists to essays, demonstrates how the queerness of Calamity Jane has transitioned successfully for a modern-day viewer, and it can provide a fan with a variety of content to suit their needs.

The Calamity Jane character demonstrates that fact and fiction morph and change, eventually developing into its own separate entity. This difference between the fantasy and reality demonstrates how malleable this queer, Calamity persona has become for an audience. A woman
dressing in masculine attire is not a unique tale in Western history, but due to the positive attention from the press, and continued fictionalization in various forms of media, Calamity Jane has a legacy. The continuing fascination with Calamity’s queerness demonstrates that what was striking in 19th century still fascinates the public even today. No matter the conclusion for Calamity, at one point or another some form of queerness occurs. Personally, I view her as an empowered figure, who identifies and owns her queerness with pride. It is the struggle to find a personal balance between the unconventional and the traditional that makes the Calamity story intriguing. Although the conclusion may not be what the audience wants, Calamity ends her tale with dignity in all these works. Despite the story coming from the perspective of a women figuring out her femininity and her relationship to the term, all her mainstream releases are primary done by a male creative force. Due to this, Calamity Jane’s push and pull relationship with her feminine identity comes from a man’s perspective and how he perceives a woman would feel about this relationship. I hope that the next piece that adapts the Calamity Jane story hires writers with different backgrounds and perspectives to tell this hypothetical adaption, and I look forward to seeing how they shall interpret, adapt and develop her queerness for the current and future generations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadwood Dick Dime Novel</th>
<th>Is Calamity Jane in This Story?</th>
<th>Is Calamity Jane Dressed and/or in a Disguise of Male Presenting Attire?</th>
<th>Her Outfit(s) and/or Disguise in Detail</th>
<th>Calamity Jane's Relationship with Others in the Dime Novel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91: Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, or, The Black Rider of the Black Hills, 1877 no. 1</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;carefully tamed costume of buck-skin, the vest being fringed with the fur of the mink; wearing a jazzy Spanish sombrero; boots on the dainty feet of patent leather, with tops reaching to the knees; a face slightly sun-burned, yet showing the traces of beauty that even excessive dissipation could not obliterate; eyes black and piercing; mouth firm, resolute, and devoid of unusual expression; hair of raven color and of remarkable length...&quot; (Wheeler 4) is later mentioned as a &quot;shrew-devil gal dressed up in men's baggery.&quot; (21)</td>
<td>Helps rescue Deadwood Dick, takes charge as well when conducting the rescue mission. Deadwood Dick later proposes to her, but Calamity Jane declines. Despite this rejection, the two remain friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92: The Double Daggers, or, Deadwood Dick's Defense: A Tale of the Regulators and Road Agents of the Black Hills, 1877 no. 20</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;The speaker was clad in male attire—a natty-fitting suit of tanned buck-skin, fringed and ornamented with Indian beadedwork; leggings and moccasins likewise, and a hat of the jockey order perched upon the head.&quot; (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93: Buffalo Ben, the Prince of the Pile, or, Deadwood Dick in Disguise: A Sequel to the &quot;Double-Daggers&quot;, 1878 no. 23</td>
<td>Y (appears near the end)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;A dashing-looking person... and attired in a faultless suit of buck-skin, with dainty moccasins, and a slouch-sombrero, cocked upon one side of the head... this wonderful girl in men's garb...&quot; (21)</td>
<td>Helps rescue a woman, but Calamity Jane is not very present in the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94: Wild Ivan, the Boy Claude Duval, or, The Brotherhood of Death, 1878 no. 39</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>95: The Phantom Miner, or, Deadwood Dick's Homuncle: A Tale of the Great Silver-Land of Idaho, 1878 no. 42</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>96: Omaha Joe, the Masked Terror, or, Deadwood Dick in Danger, 1878 no. 9</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>97: Deadwood Dick's Eagles, or, The Puns of Flood Bar, 1878 no. 37</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadwood Dick Dime Novel</td>
<td>In Calamity Jane in This Story</td>
<td>In Calamity Jane Dressed and/or in a Disguise of Male Presenting Attraction</td>
<td>Her Outfit(s) and/or Disguise in Detail</td>
<td>Calamity Jane's Relationship with Others in the Dime Novel</td>
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<tr>
<td>#8: Deadwood Dick on Deck, or, Calamity Jane, the Heroine of Whoop-Up: A Story of Dakota, 1878 no. 73</td>
<td>Y (and on the cover)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;Her dress was back skin brown; most of the lines by finely beaded leggings, with slippers of dainty pattern upon the feet; a velvet vest, and one of those lances of the mines, a boiled shirt, open at the throat, partially revealing a breast of infinitude purity; a short velvet jacket, and Spanish broad-brimmed hat, slouched upon one side of a regally beautiful head. There were diamond rings upon her hands, a diamond pin in her shirt bosom, a massive gold chain strung across her vest front.&quot; (2)</td>
<td>Calamity has a friendship with Dusty Dike (a woman who disguises herself as a man for the majority of the story). There is also occasional tension between Madame Minnie regarding whether she is trustworthy. Calamity Jane and her twin with a man is mentioned, as well as a hinted possibility that she will ever find a future relationship. There is also frequent discussion about Calamity Jane and her gender with her own thoughts, and mentions from others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9: Corduroy Charlie, the Boy Bravo, or, Deadwood Dick's Last Act, 1879 no. 77</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>#10: Deadwood Dick in Leadville, or, A Strange Stroke for Liberty: A Wild, Exciting Story of the Leadville Region—of Regulators and Adversaries, of Street Agents and Bandits—of the Latest Events in the Strange Career of Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road, 1879 no. 100</td>
<td>Y (and on the cover, despite being a more minor character within the text)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;She was attired in a costume consisting of fancifully ornamented buckskin breeches, and a hunting-stock reaching nearly to the tops of a pair of patent leather knee boots. A jaunty duchess hat bearing a wild eagle's feather... a belt upon her waist contained a pair of handsome revolvers.&quot; (3)</td>
<td>Calamity Jane is tasked with reviving Deadwood Dick from the dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11: Deadwood Dick's Device, or, The Sign of the Double Cross: A Wild, Strange Tale of the Leadville Mines—of Men of Steel—of Touggs and Tigers—of Road Agents, Regulators, Avenging Adventurers—and of the Thrilling Life in the New Eldorado, 1879 no. 104</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Although not given a detailed description, the character Alf Bowdler declares at one point, &quot;Why, sir, I live, it's a girl in breeches.&quot; (7)</td>
<td>Calamity has tension with Fanny Fornum, and in general is suspicious of most of the people within the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12: Deadwood Dick as Detective: A Story of the Great Carbonate Region, 1879 no. 109</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#13: Deadwood Dick's Double, or, The Ghost of Oregon's Outlaw: A Tale of Wild Cat City 1880 no. 129</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>#14: Blonde Bill, or, Deadwood Dick's Home Base: A Romance of the &quot;Silent Tongue&quot;, 1881 no. 138</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;attired in male garb throughout: a wildly handsome creature... Her attire was of serviceable white cotton, the neatly-fitting, and showing to good advantage her finely-combined form; a duchess hat; jauntily turned up; ornamented with turf, and the lace boots she wore were of the daintiest pattern.&quot; (4)</td>
<td>Calamity admits having feelings for Deadwood Dick. She also receives an innocent man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15: A Game of Gold, or, Deadwood Dick's Big Strike, 1880 no. 149</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>While disguised as the man, going by the name Little Toothpick, &quot;a fair-skinned, brawny youth, and of fine form, while his attire consisted of rep-bouts, buckskin breeches and hunting-shirt, with a duchess hat upon his head... A mask was worn over the upper portion of his face, including the eye...&quot; (5)</td>
<td>As the story continues, Deadwood Dick wonders about Little Toothpick's &quot;true gender.&quot; Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick bicker. There is a discussion of beauty between Calamity Jane and Lobo, a female-attired woman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadwood Dick Dime Novel</td>
<td>Is Calamity Jane in This Story?</td>
<td>In Calamity Jane Dressed and/or in a Disguise of Male Pronouncing Attire?</td>
<td>Her Outfit(s) and/or Disguise in Detail</td>
<td>Calamity Jane's Relationship with Others in the Dime Novel</td>
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<tr>
<td>#16: Deadwood Dick of Deadwood, or, The Picked Party: A Romance of Skeleton Bend, 1880 no. 156</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N and Y</td>
<td>Calamity is initially wearing a dress in the story, as she mentions, &quot;I will assume my old-time costume, and take a hand. These dresses seem odd enough to me, and I would rather go back to my old style.&quot; (13). In Chapter 8, &quot;Calamity Jane Her Self Again!&quot; she switches back into male attire which includes wearing a coat... and sporting a small cigarette between her teeth. She was attired in her famous sporting attire, and her belt a pair of six-shooters.&quot; (14)</td>
<td>At one point, Calamity Jane reflects upon what she would wear if she were a man, and she concludes she would &quot;do so as a woman—and as a lady!&quot; (13). Throughout the story she helps to Deadwood Dick cheat on her with another woman, Fanny. The woman later goes to confront Calamity Jane and fix the situation. Fanny knows Calamity Jane (where she knows her is not detailed). Calamity Jane resurfaces Fred Flash and rescues Deadwood Dick. The two kiss and marry, although the hypothetical dress is not described.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17: Deadwood Dick's Dream, or, The Rivals of the Road: A Mining Tale of &quot;Tomahawks&quot;, 1881 no. 193</td>
<td>Y (in mention only)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>No mention of her clothing in this dime novel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18: The Black Hills Jezebel, or, Deadwood Dick's Ward 1881 no. 201</td>
<td>Y (in mention only)</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>No mention of her clothing in this dime novel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19: Deadwood Dick's Doom, or, Calamity Jane's Last Adventure: A Tale of Death Notch 1881 no. 205</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;That day a horseman, or rather a girl, dressed in male attire...&quot; (7) an hour, she was the same graceful, pretty girl-in-roustache... (8)</td>
<td>Calamity Jane declares she's Deadwood Dick's trusty pard. Despite #16 stating the two had wed, Calamity Jane prone over Deadwood Dick and hopes the two of them shall marry. Deadwood Dick rescues Calamity Jane repeatedly throughout the novel, the two &quot;officially&quot; marry at the end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20: Captain Crack-Shot, the Girl Bandit, or, Chippie Jack from Tomahawk: A Story of Durango, 1881 no. 217</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Although there is no mention of her clothing when she is captured, she is indistinguishable from the other captured woman, and thus may be wearing a dress (7).</td>
<td>Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick are trying to keep their marriage a secret. Calamity Jane is kidnapped and is eventually rescued by Deadwood Dick (and partially by a dog). Calamity isn't entirely privacy while trying to become free but is overall helpful. After she is freed, she later rescues Deadwood Dick, and the two work together as a team. The conclusion of the story states the two will be going on more adventures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21: Sugar-Coated Sun, or, The Black Crowns of Grim Outlaw: A Deadwood Dick Episode, 1881 no. 221</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Calamity Jane in disguise as Bumblebee Bob. &quot;He was a burly whitened... and hairy individual, of medium size, little of whose countenance aside from the piercing eyes could be seen... His hair was bad, and he had a hat. His garments were coarse and dirty stained... and his belt filled with weapons, and upon his heads he constantly wore a pair of gloves.&quot; (5)</td>
<td>Calamity Jane while disguised is discovered by another woman, Bessie. After learning that Deadwood Dick is dead, Calamity Jane becomes severely ill. She is cared for by Bessie, and Calamity Jane later aways her despite being ill. Calamity, however, is threatened by Bessie. Their friendship is thus predominantly centered around Deadwood Dick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22: Gold-Dust Dick: A Romance of Roughs and Toughe, 1882 no. 232</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>No mention of her clothing in this dime novel.</td>
<td>Calamity Jane identifies herself as Deadwood Dick's wife. She is a prisoner in this dime novel, and is repeatedly bound and tortured by her captors. Eventually she is rescued, but not until the very end of the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23: Deadwood Dick's Divide, or, The Spirit of Swamp Lake 1882 no. 263</td>
<td>Y (also appears on the cover)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;A young woman clad in male attire... her hands nowhere in her hand...&quot; (5). Later, Calamity Jane is described as a &quot;wild type of beauty... Her hair, so it flowed beneath her snow white, jaunty rambler... Her dress consisted of top boots of a flinty pattern, not by high colored trousers, and a sort of trimmed gray hunting-shirt, that reached nearly to the knees. In a belt, around her waist, was a pair of handsome revolvers, and a sheath knapsack, while at her feet lay a repeating rifle of a handsome pattern, the sights being set with top, glittering diamonds.&quot; (6)</td>
<td>Calamity Jane spends most of the story trying to get Deadwood Dick's attention. The two, though still married, are experiencing a separation in name only. Calamity Jane feels she must compete with Kate over Deadwood Dick's affections. This causes Kate to be scared of Calamity Jane. At one point, Calamity Jane encounters a man (Deadwood Dick in disguise) and Calamity Jane asserts her individuality. At the end of the story Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick get back together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadwood Dick Dime Novel</td>
<td>Is Calamity Jane in This Story?</td>
<td>Is Calamity Jane Dressed and/or in a Disguise of Male Pretending Attire?</td>
<td>Her Outfit(s) and/or Disguise in Detail</td>
<td>Calamity Jane’s Relationship with Others in the Dime Novel</td>
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<tr>
<td>#24: Deadwood Dick’s Death Trail, or, From Ocean to Ocean, 1882 no. 268</td>
<td>Y (in mention)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>No mention of her clothing in this dime novel.</td>
<td>When Calamity Jane is mentioned it is in relation to Deadwood Dick and his future of settling down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#25: Deadwood Dick’s Big Deal, or, The Gold Brick of Oregon 1883 no. 369</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>&quot;her figure being clad in a quiet but rich costume of combined lace, silk, and satin... A becoming gold-colored turban of silk crowning her head. It was also noticeable that all her costume was light or dark gold color, and she wore some rough diamonds... the upper part [of her face] being covered by a half-mask, black in color.&quot; (4) There is another reference to her clothing when Old Avalanche declares to Calamity Jane that her brother should not be &quot;hung on yer ditty.&quot; (23)</td>
<td>Calamity protects a woman named Ruth. Despite Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick having a child, their relationship is once again strained, and they are separated because Deadwood Dick thought that Calamity Jane cheated on him. Deadwood Dick dehumanizes Calamity Jane in the story, and it is revealed that Calamity Jane has a brother. When Calamity Jane’s son is held hostage, Calamity Jane is forced to work in a gambling hall. At one point Calamity Jane steals her and Deadwood Dick will remain enemies and challenge him to a duel. They instead gamble through cards with Deadwood Dick winning sole custody of their child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26: Deadwood Dick’s Dozen, or, Two Fists of Phantom Flats, 1883 no. 321</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>#27: Deadwood Dick’s Duds, or, Rainy Days in Oregon, 1884 no. 347</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>#28: Deadwood Dick Sentenced, or, The Terrible Vendetta, 1884 no. 351</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>#29: Deadwood Dick’s Claim, or, The Fairy Face of Pico Flats, 1884 no. 362</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N and Y</td>
<td>In regards to Calamity crying and in a room, &quot;She was certainly not present in the room, in the garb of her own sex...&quot; (6) Calamity Jane later is, &quot;clad in black, and wore a thick veil tied closely over her face.&quot; (10) Since there are no other details about this outfit, it is ambiguous what other type of clothing she is wearing with it, though it is mostly a dress or other female articles. She eventually switches back into men’s clothing and wears, &quot;top-boots, breeches, a hunting-shirt belted at the waist, and a closely-prairie hat with the wide brim of which blew up to the breeze.&quot; (13)</td>
<td>Mentions about how her and Deadwood Dick’s relationship has deteriorated, but despite this she is still married. When Deadwood Dick believes Calamity Jane has died, he weeps for her, and horse the body although no marker is mentioned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#30: Deadwood Dick in Dead City, 1885 no. 405</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>&quot;a woman of medium height and possessed of a charming figure, that was both suggestive of girlishness and womanliness, and showed off to advantage in a most-fitting dress of some dark material... she wore a thick veil, through which spectacles had been made to enable her to see and breathe... She wore no ornaments except a little bunch of wild flowers.&quot; (6)</td>
<td>It is revealed Calamity Jane is actually alive. She goes by the name Shasta Kate until page 9. She rescues Deadwood Dick and Dog Juice Rob from a cave. Calamity Jane has found a new child to mother and care. At the end of the story, Deadwood Dick and Calamity Jane get back together and kiss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadwood Dick Dime Novel</td>
<td>Is Calamity Jane in This Story?</td>
<td>Is Calamity Jane Dressed and/or in a Disguise of Male Presenting Alien?</td>
<td>Her Outfit(s) and/or Disguise in Detail</td>
<td>Calamity Jane's Relationship with Others in the Dime Novel</td>
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<tr>
<td>#31: Deadwood Dick's Diamonds, or, The Mystery of Joan Porter: A Story of the Latest Detective Triumph of Deadwood Dick and Calamity Jane, 1885 no. 410</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;dashing handsome... her head was ornamented with a jaunty sombrero, and her well-toned figure, was clad in a full suit of spotless gray cloth, including patina-leather top-boots on her feet, all serving to give her a dashing appearance. Jewels glittered upon her fingers, and at her throat, a long pearls coat had protected her from the rain... Weapons she wore none, to outward view.&quot; (4) Later, when Calamity Jane disguises herself as a man, &quot;he beheld a sprucey-dressed person, with fair skin, short curly hair and a black mustache. It was Calamity, although he would not have recognized her but for her beaming eyes...&quot; (5) Later, &quot;Calamity Jane [looked] the same as [Deadwood Dick] had seen her in Goldbug, except that she was covered with dirt... I was a member of the gang that pursued you.&quot; (11) Calamity Jane has another passing disguise change as a miner (11) and she stays in this outfit for the rest of the story.</td>
<td>Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick are affectionate with one another. There are acknowledgements of their marriage. Her and Deadwood Dick work in separate areas and rely information to one another. Calamity Jane rescues Deadwood Dick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#32: Deadwood Dick in New York, or, &quot;A Civic Case&quot;; A Romance of To-day, to Which the Attention of Metropolitan Police, and All Detectives, is Respectfully Called, 1885 no. 421</td>
<td>Y (in mention only)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>In mention only, no description of her attire is detailed.</td>
<td>Mentioned as Deadwood Dick’s wife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#33: Deadwood Dick’s Dust, or, The Claim-Hand: A Strange Story of the Mines, Being the 35th and Ending Number of the Great &quot;Deadwood Dick&quot; Series; 1885 no. 430</td>
<td>Y (as also on the cover)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>&quot;Always odd and independent as to her manner of dress, she still maintained her right to male attire. And such a suit! The pants and vest of spotless white duck; the jacket of brown silk velvet, with satin lining, and buttons made of new-dollar gold pieces; a &quot;filled shirt and collar; jaunty white cloak sombrero, rolled-up at the left side, and handsome patina-leather top boots upon the small shapely feet. Besides, she wore a belt, into which were thrust a handsome pair of old-cooking five-shotors.&quot; (2) After she is captured she is allowed to remain in her own clothes, and is described as a &quot;male-attired young woman.&quot; (11)</td>
<td>Calamity Jane, identified as his wife, follows Deadwood Dick’s plans and cooks for him. Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick are buried together. Her tombstone reads, &quot;Frank with Friends, fearless of foes&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix 2

Images

Image A

Image B

Image C

Images D to E screen capped from Calamity Jane.
Image F

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22 Images F to J courtesy of Nickels and Dimes From the Collections of Johannsen and LeBlanc.
Citations

Primary Sources

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