

The Tin Woodman, Captain Fyter, and Chopfyt: L. Frank Baum's Portrayal of Body Image and Prostheses in the Wake of World War I

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ABSTRACT

Nineteenth and early twentieth-century children's literature frequently depicts characters with disabilities as flat stereotypes — villains or saintly invalids. L. Frank Baum's *The Tin Woodman of Oz* (1918) provides a sharp contrast to these typical portrayals, as well as contemporary "socio-cultural" beliefs on physical normalcy and sense of self. Written as the U.S. entered World War I and details of trench warfare reached the home-front, it presents an interesting exploration of society's response to physical disability and prostheses. In addition, it highlights the psychological devastation associated with body changes.

During Baum's formative years, disabled Civil War veterans returned to New York state in large numbers. Initially respected for their service and their subsequent loss, Civil War veterans gradually found themselves the subject of resentment across much of the United States. Many cities passed ordinances prohibiting the disabled from frequenting public areas to avoid "disturbing" the populace. Baum's portrayal of three characters contrasts with contemporary "socio-cultural" mores.

In *The Tin Woodman of Oz*, the Tin Woodman and Captain Fyter, who progressively dismembered themselves and replaced body parts with tin prostheses, are shown in a positive light. When these "tin twins" Captain Fyter and the Tin Woodman encounter Chopfyt — a man assembled from a combination of their flesh body parts — the three characters reflect on what constitutes physical normalcy, as well as the value and beauty of prostheses. Through Chopfyt, the psychological effects of limb loss and the concept of usefulness come to the fore.

This paper considers the influences the Civil War and World War I amputees may have played on Baum's writing of *The Tin Woodman of Oz* and what cultural lessons underlie his characterizations of prostheses, physical normalcy, and what constitutes a sense of self.

Keywords: disability, prostheses, amputee, Oz, World War I, physical normalcy

BODY

Nineteenth and early twentieth-century children's literature features many characters with disabilities, usually depicted as flat stereotypes — villains or saintly invalids (Dowker). L. Frank Baum's *The Tin Woodman of Oz* (1918) provides a much more nuanced portrayal with characters considering how body image and prostheses form a positive basis for their identities.

During Baum's formative years, disabled Civil War veterans returned to New York state in large numbers. As masculine independence was conflated with control and self-direction by working men (Williams-Searle), amputees struggled to present themselves as vital in an increasingly hostile social climate. In the mid-nineteenth century, American culture viewed "natural" as conformed to God's design and equated it with goodness. Equally, the opposite of normal was defective or monstrous (Baynton, 19). Several U.S. cities passed ordinances prohibiting the disabled frequenting from public areas to avoid such "disturbing" sights (Schweik, 3).

Baum provides a sharp contrast to these sociocultural beliefs in *The Tin Woodman of Oz*. Two characters who progressively dismembered themselves, replacing body parts with tin prostheses, are shown in a positive light. When these "tin twins" Captain Fyter and the Tin Woodman encounter Chopfyt — a man assembled from a combination of their flesh body parts — the three characters reflect on what constitutes physical normalcy, as well as the value and beauty of prostheses. Accepting their physical change leads to personal success for the tin men. However, Baum includes a caveat; while "otherness" is accepted in the fantastical land of Oz, it is the tin men's pride in their prostheses that leads to errors in judgment causing physical damage and prohibiting their ability to act in times of crisis. Baum wrote *The Tin Woodman of Oz* while U.S. involvement in World War I was at its peak, with the horrors of Western Front trench warfare being detailed in news dispatches (Loncraine). By the end of World War I, about 4,000 amputations were performed on U.S. soldiers (Schlich), much lower than the 60,000 during the American Civil War. However, these news reports possibly reawakened the author's childhood memories of Civil War amputees, bringing contemporary societal beliefs into focus, perhaps informing his writing *The Tin Woodman of Oz*.

A consideration of Baum's background as a part of contextual analysis of these three characters in *The Tin Woodman of Oz* provides an exploration of Baum's views on personal and societal responses to the concepts of physical normalcy, prostheses, and what constitutes a sense of self.

EXPOSURE TO CIVIL WAR AMPUTEES

Born in 1856 into a middle-class family, L. Frank Baum spent most of his childhood on a large estate in Onondaga County, outside Syracuse, New York. Although his father did not serve in the armed forces, Baum's formative years from five to nine were likely colored by the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865). His parents named another son after a Unionist general, and his uncle Adam Clarke Baum enlisted as a Union surgeon and sent detailed letters back home (Loncraine). New York state provided the largest number of Union soldiers, a total of more than 360,000 (Durr), with 12,265 coming from Onondaga County (Loncraine). The combination of new ammunition that caused devastating wounds and the resulting access to more effective pain relief resulted in large scale amputations (Loncraine). Three-quarters of all Civil War surgeries were amputations — approximately 60,000 in total ("Maimed Men"). At the time, American society viewed disability as a window into character (Garland Thomson). A missing limb could be interpreted as evidence of moral degradation and loss of virility (Carroll). In 1863 Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote: "Now, alas there are few of us who have not a cripple among our friends, if not our families" (Bellard). He strongly advocated for artificial limbs to make amputee vets feel "whole again" (Holmes). As a result, a prosthetics industry flourished during the war and for many years afterwards with nearly 150 patents issued for artificial limb designs between 1861 and 1873 (Bellard). In 1862, the federal government implemented the Great Civil War Benefaction that provided

Union vets with \$75 for an artificial leg and \$50 for an arm prosthesis (MacRae). By 1864, the Confederacy gave similar payments (quoted in Bellard). In addition, two Union battalions were formed in 1863 for disabled soldiers to continue war-related work. However, many disabled veterans did not want or were unable to return to serve. The homecoming of the disabled veterans in large numbers to the non-war society profoundly altered cultural attitudes (Blanck). Between 1862 and 1888 the Federal government granted 168,155 pensions to Union veterans that had undergone amputations or had sustained significant battlefield wounds (Blanck). In 1894, a New York statute provided street peddling privileges for disabled veterans on any commercial street or in any park within the state — an attempt to offer a possible pathway to income generation (Pace).

However, general public admiration for disabled Union veterans began to shift with newspapers voicing the opinion of an increasingly intolerant populace, portraying disabled veterans as a group of money-grabbing dependents (“Maimed Men”). Cities passed ordinances prohibiting the “unsightly or disgusting” from public view (Schweik, 1), known colloquially as “Ugly Laws”. In 1867 San Francisco implemented the first — a direct response to a former Union soldier living on the streets while awaiting an almshouse completion (Schweik). Against this shifting social backdrop, in 1868 Baum, aged twelve, was sent to Peekskill Military Academy. He found the regime cruel, frequently writing to his father with details of abusive staff. After eighteen months in the Academy, a weak heart diagnosis sent Baum home to complete his education (Rogers). Away from the rigors of the academy, his exposure to the military continued through the numerous Civil War veterans in Syracuse. It is likely Baum witnessed the growing cultural resentment these vets faced.

There is ample evidence L. Frank Baum drew upon this life experience for elements incorporated into the Oz series. One of the roads that lead away from Peekskill Military Academy was paved with Dutch yellow brick. Originally used as ballast in the 1700s, the bricks were repurposed for local roads (Loncraine). The character name Dorothy Gale is based upon a beloved infant niece of Baum’s wife who died as he was writing *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (Schwartz). Seventeen years before the publication of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Baum and his brother Benjamin founded a petroleum company. Covering the July 1883 company opening, the *Syracuse Daily Courier* reported their premier product was rust-resistant axle grease. L. Frank Baum served as the chief salesman for the next four years. Arranging a client window display that featured a metal man later inspired Baum to create the Tin Woodman character that needed regular oiling of his joints to prevent rust (“Oil in the Land of Oz”). Considering his tale of flesh Nick Chopper’s transformation into the Tin Woodman, Baum’s exposure to disabled Civil War veterans and their prostheses played a strong role in character creation. Baum’s residence in Chicago (1891-1909), a city synonymous with Ugly Laws’ aggressive enforcement (Schweik) also must have been an influence. Against dominant “socio-cultural” attitudes, he portrayed limb replacement as progressive and worthy of celebration, not derision.

FLESH INTO TIN – A BETTER MAN?

Introduced in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, the Tin Woodman plays an integral part across the series as a whole, appearing in thirteen of the fourteen Oz books written by Baum. His origin story is detailed in this initial book. As the flesh man Nick Chopper, he fell in love with a witch’s servant, Nimmie Amee, and proposed marriage to her. Unhappy with this development, the witch enchanted Chopper’s ax causing him to progressively cut off body parts. After each loss, he had them replaced with tin prosthetics. At each stage of replacement, Nimmie Amee found her fiancé even more attractive. When his transformation was complete, she highlighted the advantages such a tireless husband could offer. However, the Tin Woodman’s love for Nimmie Amee disappeared along with his flesh heart, and so, he abandoned her. Throughout the series, other characters observe that his metal body must be a disadvantage, to which he responds by listing the benefits of never requiring food or sleep, as well as the undeniable brightness of his appearance. It was his desire

to retain his social identity as a woodman that motivated his seeking prosthetic replacements. However, as Joshua R. Eyler explains, “Both the missing limbs and the tin serve to stigmatize him in their own ways: the former marginalizes him from other woodmen and the latter embodies his difference from the perceived norms of Oz.” (325). Yet the manner in which he lost his flesh body can be linked to his repeated claims of being a “better man.” The loss resulted from his desire to marry Nimmie Amee. The Tin Woodman craves heteronormativity and fears that as a metal man, his masculinity could be discounted (Eyler).

For the Tin Woodman his disability is not his metal form, but his lack of a loving heart. He justifies his abandonment of Nimmie Amee on this basis. Once he acquires a velvet and sawdust heart, the Tin Woodman is quick to note his belief that the replacement organ has limitations: providing kindness, but not romantic love. Eyler states that the Tin Woodman’s “disability comes from his awareness of the constructions of normality, constructions into which he believes he no longer fits” (325). Underlying the Tin Woodman’s boasting about the superiority of his tin form is a fear that he could be discounted as a woodman, that his prosthetic body impinges on his sense of manhood (Eyler). The Tin Woodman and his companion the Scarecrow represent two male identity extremes (Laurie). Too hard, the Tin Woodman can think, but cannot feel. Too soft, the Scarecrow feels, but cannot think. Outside physical normalcy, each can achieve qualified psychological success.

Although the Tin Woodman professes that he cannot feel romantic love, in *The Tin Woodman of Oz*, other characters convince him that based on a manly sense of duty, he should still marry Nimmie Amee, and the group sets off on a quest to find her. This plays to his fear that with his prosthetic body, he may fall short of being a true man. Baum relies on contemporary “socio-cultural” tropes of masculinity to amplify the impact of disability on the Tin Woodman’s sense of self-worth for early twentieth-century readers (Eyler). Rosemarie Garland Thomson observes, “Not only is the relationship between text and the world not exact, but [disabled] representation also relies upon cultural assumptions to fill in missing details” (11). Although gender roles in the United States began to shift with the Women’s Suffrage movement, in which Baum’s mother-in-law was a key figure, for most Americans in 1917, men continued to be viewed as having the responsibility of being a strong provider (Grayzel). Any physical disability would affect his fulfilling this responsibility, particularly for a job based on manual labor such as that of a woodman.

Several events on the journey force the Tin Woodman and his companions to reconsider aspects of their identity and body image. When the giantess Mrs. Yoop transforms him into an owl, the Tin Woodman discovers that the metal he considered superior to the flesh becomes ridiculous as an owl. His metal feathers clatter with the slightest movement. The saucer-like eyes reflect and intensify daylight making it difficult to see. “Consider *my* humiliation!” chirped the owl (Baum, 92). Later the Tin Woodman wonders, “What is a tin owl good for?” (Baum, 94) In his usual form as a metal man, he sees value and purpose. After this mishap is rectified and the characters return to their proper forms, the group continues their adventure. The Tin Woodman recognizes his old forest home but is shocked to find a second tin man in the woods, Captain Fyter. The Tin Woodman no longer is the unique figure that he has boasted to be throughout the earlier chapters. However, the “tin twins” soon bond over their shared opinion that metal bodies are superior to the flesh.

Baum reinforces the beauty of both tin men’s prosthetics over “natural” flesh through Captain Fyter’s parallel origin story. He, too, fell in love with Nimmie Amee, the witch enchanted his sword, and he progressively chopped himself to pieces, each limb fabricated and replaced by the same tinsmith that created the Tin Woodman’s prosthetics. Captain Fyter notes that Nimmie Amee was not attracted to him until he acquired his tin replacements:

“When I got my tin legs, Nimmie Amee began to take an interest in me; when I got my tin arms, she began to like me better than ever, and when I was all made of tin, she said I looked like her dear Nick Chopper and she would be willing to marry me.” (Baum, 197)

Nimmie Amee's reaction contrasts with the pervasive mindset of the time that abnormal equals subnormal (Baynton). Here, prostheses make both men more desirable.

The group continues their quest to find Nimmie Amee, stopping at the tinsmith's cottage. There, the Tin Woodman discovers his old flesh head in a cupboard, unconnected to any other body parts, but very much alive. Despite the severed head's claim that his brains and intellect are as "good as ever," the head has little memory of his past and has "no interest in happiness." Nick Chopper's head articulates the idea that created body parts are not equivalent to the flesh. In fact, they diminish an individual. Even as a disembodied head, Chopper believes that he is a higher caliber of person than a manufactured tin man. He says, "It would be unnatural for me to have any interest in a man made of tin" (Baum, 215). Ian Conrich and Laura Sedgwick note that severed heads are expository — that they display a range of messages which rely on the absence of the body (34). Nick Chopper's head lacks agency: he cannot move. Here, the severed head's response is to seek isolation from society. The Tin Woodman never wavers from believing his prostheses are an overall improvement.

"When [the tinsmith] had joined the arms and legs to the body, and set my head in the tin collar, I was a much better man than ever, for my body could not ache or pain me, and I was so beautiful and bright that I had no need of clothing." (Baum, 26)

This point is emphasized again when the group of travelers visits the tinsmith:

"It doesn't matter, however," said the Tin Woodman. "Our tin bodies are more brilliant and durable and quite satisfy us."

"Yes, the tin bodies are the best," agreed the Tin Soldier. "Nothing can hurt them."

"Unless they get dented or rusted," said Woot, but both the tin men frowned on him. (Baum, 207)

Baum disproves the tin men's notion of durability in a later scene where, as Woot foreshadowed, they become badly dented, necessitating fairy aid for repair.

"It was the collision," said the Tin Woodman regretfully. "I knew something was wrong with me, and now I see that my side is dented in so that I lean over to the left. It was the Soldier's fault; he shouldn't have been so careless."

"It is your fault that my right leg is bent, making it shorter than the other, so I limp badly," retorted the Soldier. "You shouldn't have stood where I was walking." (Baum, 239)

Although Baum provides this check on the boasting by the tin men, clearly, both have retained spiritual wholeness. They retain full memories of their flesh past and are integrated into Oz society, making active contributions to the success of the story's quest. In contrast, Nick Chopper's head is unpleasant, has few memories, and seeks isolation.

While the Tin Woodman conversing with his former flesh head is unsettling, the tinsmith's confession that he created an assistant by gluing together various parts from the two men's flesh bodies is a particularly strange revelation. Named Chopfyt — a portmanteau of Nick Chopper and Captain Fyter — this assembled man disappeared as soon as he heard his intended function. When the travelers eventually find Nimmie Amee, they learn that she has married Chopfyt. As with Nick Chopper's head, this motley constructed man treats the two tin men with disdain. He is "cold," "indifferent," and "insolent" (Baum). Nimmie Amee describes him as having a "mixed nature." Chopfyt is the very embodiment of a divided self (Loncraine, 273), has no past,

and refuses to converse with the guests. Like Nick Chopper's head, Chopfyt wants to live in isolation from the world beyond Nimmie Amee's cottage. When the tin twins object to Chopfyt's possession of their former body parts, Nimmie Amee scolds them:

“I see no reason why you should object to him. You two gentlemen threw him away when you became tin because you had no further use for him, so you cannot justify your claim to him now.” (Baum, 278)

Baum shows that the tin men must let go of ownership of their former flesh limbs and that acceptance of their prostheses is constructive. Sense of self and memories are not tied to body parts. The Tin Woodman and Captain Fyter contribute to society, have active roles, and are even more attractive post-transformation. Baum suggests that acceding to physical change, and to an extent disability, can lead to positive outcomes (Ness). In both cases, the tin men are more content in their manufactured bodies with the tinsmith confirming they are superior to the flesh:

“I am sure their tin bodies are a great improvement on their meat bodies.”

“Very true,” said the Tin Soldier.

“I quite agree with you,” said the Tin Woodman. “I happened to find my old head in your cupboard, a while ago, and certainly it is not as desirable a head as the tin one I now wear.” (Baum, 223)

In contrast to the tin men's positivity, Nick Chopper's flesh head and Chopfyt's haphazardly constructed body are unpleasant and resent their situations. The head wants to be left alone in the closed cupboard and happiness is of no value to him (Baum). Despite marrying Nimmie Amee, Chopfyt scowls and is rude to his visitors, anxious for them to leave (Baum,). After these two encounters, the tin men are ever more convinced of their prostheses' superiority. However, the author also provides the caution that overconfidence in prosthesis superiority can lead to a downfall – whether in seized joints or denting the body, resulting in an inability to act.

INFLUENCE OF WORLD WAR I ON THE TIN WOODMAN OF OZ

The First World War began on June 28, 1914. Baum's publisher approved the plot outline for *The Tin Woodman of Oz* on August 10, 1916 (Rogers). The United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, with two of Baum's sons immediately enlisting — both as officers. The eldest, Frank Jr., soon left for France. Baum wrote to him, “I continually pray for a speedy end to this terrible war and your safe return” (Loncraine, 275). As he wrote the draft, the horrors of trench warfare on the Western Front filled newspaper columns. While it was too soon for returning disabled U.S. soldiers, those on the home front received stories of what they encountered in Europe. “Off ship this A.M. Marched through part of Glasgow... people all seem glad to see us...saw lots of crippled soldiers here.” (Moyles, 3)

Rebecca Loncraine notes that World War I fed into Baum's preoccupation with body dismemberment and amputation forming an essential aspect of the work with the tin twin's detailed maiming, and their broken bodies reassembled as Chopfyt, but with evident psychological devastation (273).

The Tin Woodman and Captain Fyter origin stories, which detail their dismemberment and gradual body part replacements, reveal that World War I dominated Baum's thoughts while writing *The Tin Woodman of Oz*. Chopfyt, glued together from the two men's castoff body parts, illustrates emotional turmoil — a divided self who can never be complete or whole, uncertain of his persona he will remain forever troubled. Baum indicates that the sense of self is part of remembered experience. The two tin men retain their memories and personal identities, despite losing their flesh bodies. In contrast, Nick Chopper's head and Chopfyt have no

memory of any previous lives. They are left only with the material, not spiritual, and are immensely unhappy.

Two other characters in the traveling group observe this differentiation:

“But listen, Nimmie Amee!” said the astonished Woot. “He really is both of them, for he is made of their cast-off parts.”

“Oh, you’re quite wrong,” declared Polychrome, laughing, for she greatly enjoyed the confusion of others. “The tin men are still themselves, as they will tell you, and so Chopfyt must be someone else.” (Baum, 276-7)

However, the tin men view Chopfyt as inconsequential, a non-entity not worthy of existence, and offer Nimmie Amee a rather dark remedy.

“If you don’t like him,” suggested the Tin Woodman. “Captain Fyter and I can chop him up with our axe and sword, and each take such parts of the fellow as belong to him. Then we are willing for you to select one of us as your husband.”

“That is a good idea,” approved Captain Fyter, drawing his sword. (Baum, 277)

Despite the First World War being one of the deadliest conflicts in history (Nash), U.S. military deaths were relatively slight compared to other nations’ forces. Approximately 4,000 amputations were performed on U.S. soldiers (Schlich), a fraction of the 60,000 that occurred during the American Civil War. During the eighteen months that Baum wrote and edited the draft, it is unlikely that he encountered many of these amputees. Rather, it is more probable that his childhood memories of Civil War amputees were reawakened by news dispatches and his son Frank’s detailed letters from the Front. Sequestered in his Los Angeles home, the author’s health was in severe decline. He delivered the galley proofs for *The Tin Woodman of Oz* to his publisher on February 14, 1918, made a will, and entered the hospital for a gall bladder operation with the fear that his weak heart would not support him through the surgery. Baum lived another year and three months, essentially bedridden. He drafted and revised two additional Oz books, but *The Tin Woodman of Oz* was the final book published while alive. It proved to be one of his most popular releases and caused sales of the previous eleven Oz books to rebound after eight lackluster years.

CHALLENGING CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS

David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder propose the term “narrative prosthesis” to describe the use of disability as a literary device which is “a destabilizing sign of cultural prescriptions about the body and a deterministic vehicle of characterization for characters constructed as disabled” (50). Although Oz is a fantastical world, and therefore, not limited by realism and societal conventions, L. Frank Baum uses the two tin men’s disability to challenge early twentieth-century American readers’ cultural perceptions. In line with Mitchell and Snyder’s formula “Difference demands display. Display demands difference.” (55), Baum harnesses the idea of body replacement as a thematic agent that drives the narrative in *The Tin Woodman of Oz*. The story of how the Tin Woodman came into being provided an opportunity for a new story: rectifying his abandonment of Nimmie Amee. The Tin Woodman takes great pride in his replacement body, proposing that he is a “better man” because of it. Nimmie Amee finds both of the metal men more attractive after their transformations from flesh to tin. In contrast, Nick Chopper’s flesh head and Chopfyt believe this difference of the tin men makes them inferior — a pervasive cultural view at the time. In 1917, the stated goal of the Artificial Limb Laboratory at the U.S. Army’s flagship medical center, Walter Reed General Hospital, was to provide amputee veterans with prostheses that could enable them to pass as able-bodied (Schlich).

Baum upends readerly and societal preconceptions of amputees through the positive views that the tin men and Nimmie Amee have of their prostheses. They do not try to hide their transformations, rather their tin bodies are a source of pride for both men. In the majority of the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century children's literature featuring physical disability, a cure or some significant alteration to the disabled character provides the story's resolution (Keith). Johanna Spyri's *Heidi* (1881) presents Clara leaving her wheelchair after a course of alpine air, goat's milk, and the charms of Heidi altering her attitude to life. In Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911) Colin stands and walks with exposure to nature and gentle encouragement despite having been wheelchair-bound for years and medically assessed as having a "spinal deformity." Yet, again Baum goes against convention. The Tin Woodman resumes his place as Emperor of the Winkies, while Captain Fyter serves as a soldier in the Emerald City, the distance between their locations enabling each tin man to shine in his own universe. Neither character undergoes a physical change, and they continue to believe in the superiority of their metal bodies over the flesh.

Not only does Baum challenge societal conventions of body image and physical disability in *The Tin Woodman of Oz*, but he also explores the internal — what defines a sense of self. Although both the Tin Woodman and Captain Fyter are completely transformed into metal men, they retain memories of their past lives with flesh bodies and the positive aspects of their personalities. The flesh head of Nick Chopper recalls very little of his past and appears determined to be left in a dark cupboard undisturbed, so he does not have to think or interact with others. Chopfyt is surly and unpleasant with no memory of his past. In his critique of the book, Gore Vidal describes Chopfyt as, "a most divided and unsatisfactory man, and for the child reader a fascinating problem in the nature of identity" (Vidal). While it can be argued that physical disability is a "master trope of disqualification" from society (Mitchell and Snyder, 3) in most literature of the early twentieth-century, here Baum portrays the two tin men as being spiritually integrated with others in the group via their constructive personality traits. While the tin men receive their disabilities as punishments, they are in retaliation for loving Nimmie Amee, not for transgressions or bad deeds. Equally, their "cure" — receiving prosthetic tin bodies — is not through a change of attitude or temperament, but simply by having had the good fortune to be near an expert tinsmith. The Tin Woodman's ascendency as Emperor of the Winkies and Captain Fyter's return to active duty in the Emerald City are evidence of upward personal trajectories. Rather than being a societal disqualification, their physical disabilities are beneficial.

Baum indicates that by accepting physical change and their prosthetics, the Tin Woodman and Captain Fyter continue to succeed in life while retaining a core sense of self. Eyler notes that in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, L. Frank Baum uses the characters' disabilities and relationships with their prostheses to shift perceptions and "offers an opportunity to open up a dialogue about disabilities" (331). This is just as valid an assessment for *The Tin Woodman of Oz*, written and published during a period when the scourge of World War I produced a new group of amputee veterans, potentially influencing generations of readers in how they think about physical change, prostheses, and sense of self. More than one hundred years on, *The Tin Woodman of Oz* continues to provide a sympathetic view of prostheses as a new wave of disabled veterans return to the United States from Afghanistan and Iraq.

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