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LENS 2 (Inter-textual)

Dr. Sherry

February 23, 2012

*Monster*

Throughout my reading of Walter Dean Myer’s *Monster,* I continuously found myself relating it to one of my all-time favorite television shows, Law and Order. Both *Monster* and Law and Order fall under the same crime fiction/non-fiction genre that explores the facets of a particular crime from the scene itself to the courts closing arguments. Many similarities occur between these two texts, for example the court room settings are very relatable and realistic as well as the evidence and cases presented. The way *Monster* is constructed into a script like manner also makes it much more demonstrative of a real court room setting. When scenes cut from the judge issuing a recess to Steve returning back to his holding cell at the detention center, it makes for a very believable illustration in the mind of a reader.

However, in comparing this text with another work similar to itself, it reveals a major difference not otherwise noticed. The difference being that *Monster* is being told from the point of view of the defendant, whereas Law and Order is mostly narrated from the side of the prosecutor and the people. This changes the reader’s interpretation of the text entirely. For example, when I watch an episode of Law and Order I know their prime suspect is almost always guilty and cannot wait to see justice be served. However, during the reading of *Monster,* told from the point of view of the presumed “guilty” party, a feeling of empathy is evoked. His journal entries specifically allow readers to relate and sympathize with him, leaving a question of doubt regarding his responsibility of the crime he is being accused of.