"Ut Pictura Poesis": The Nineteenth-Century Perspective
Lawrence Starry

As I watched and wondered a yearning tried me to countrorse the painting: I searched out an exege of the icon and I carefully crafted four books.

Longus

Recent critical efforts to redefine the relationship between word and image in light of nineteenth-century aesthetic developments have reinforced the long-standing paragonean aspect of literary ekphrasis. The artifact resulting from the contest between the sister arts of poetry and painting attests to both a representational fiction—the "difficultie vanitie" occurring when particular artistic media are required to function beyond their inherent limitations (Hag- strum xxi, 53)—and an engendered hostility—the antagonism between word, defined as male, and image, identified as female. The long history of ekphrasis from Simónides's time to the present recounts the obstinate attempts of the verbal to deliver message from the muted visual. Acknowl- edging the understandable reluctance of the chauvinistic word to empower the subservient visual, recent criticism persistsin in analyzing ekphrasis disjunctively as a contest eventually dominated by one or the other of these sisteantly antagonists.

Such critical assessment derives primarily from the continued dominance of mimetic in discussions of ekphrasis in general and of individual manifestations of ekphrasis in particular. Superiority in the contest is accorded to whichever medium produces the closest resemblance to, correspondence with, or trace of the object depicited. But the shift in critical orientation resulting from Romanticism's emphasis on effi- cient as opposed to formal causality required the redefinition of all aspects of the world view grounded in the new assump- tion (Krieger 15). My intention here is not to re-examine the general aesthetic consequences of "the mirror turned on lamp," but to discuss how the Romantics' emphasis on expressivism in their poetic theory influenced the redefinition in the nine- teenth century of the long-standing assumptions informing the relationship of the sister arts of poetry and painting. I intend to argue that Romanticism's reorientation of aesthetic theory and the Victorians' subsequent incorporations of the resultant poetic principles reflect a revised understanding of ut pictura poesis that defines the relationship between word and image as countersigns of each other. The verbal and visual, in other words, come to be regarded not only as rivals but as duplicates.

The following pages attempt to examine the relationship between the sister arts of poetry and painting dialectically as the unresolved interplay in the nineteenth century between the contending forces of word and image. I am not suggest- ing that recent disjunctive or gendered analyses of nine- eteenth-century English ekphrastic literature, such as Hef- fernan's, fail to illuminate aspects of the tension between the visual and the verbal, but that a dialectical reading of repre- sentative nineteenth-century texts is more consistent with the prevailing critical assumptions of the Romantic aesthetic.

The notion of exegesis suggested by the epigraph from Daphnis and Chloe (second century, A.D.) involves an observer of a painting verbally "leading out" of the visual text a reading or interpretation. The nature of that exegesis—a counterscribing—indicates, however, that the artifact produced in the verbal rendition can be either a dupli- cate or a rival of the image. Renaissance and Romanticism both inherent possibilities of counterscription. What Mitchell calls the "relationship of subversion" (iconology 43) results from the artifact simultaneouly looking like what it represents while denying what it allegedly depicts. So many of René Magritte's paintings—his La Trahison des Images, for example—visually dramatize the ambivalence or equi- vocation central to representation of any kind. "Everything tends to make us think," Magritte contends in a premise cen- tral to his art, "that there is very little connection between an object and what represents it" (qtd. in Whitfield 158). It seems natural for human beings in general, and for poets especially, to begin the exegesis of icons assuming that the verbal rendition is a duplicate of the image, that a painted pipe is a faithful copy of that object, that a particular painting is my last locally. Lack of equivalency, however, gradually and invariably manifests itself, as it does in so many of Magritte's paintings, until what initially appeared to be com- parable forms discloses a troubling hostility.

Jean Hagstrum's pioneering study of ut pictura poesis persuasively argues that no matter how heated the battle for supremacy between poetry and painting from Simonides' time through the middle decades of the eighteenth century, the relationship remained essentially amicable because both art forms attempted, with varying degrees of success, to articulate the underlying immutable forms of which the verbal and the visual were imperfect representations. If conten- tion existed between verbal and visual representations of the same object or event, in other words, the contest betrayed only a superficial antagonism masking an essential unity. The relationship between the verbal representation of a visual visualization throughout much of the Western tradition, in

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For a recent, detailed account of the history of literary ekphrasis, see Klieger, pgs. 1-23. The definition of ekphrasis I use here emphasizes the verbal representation of visual representations.

"Mazeil, "Ekphrasis and the Other," underscores the gendered antagonism of word and image in literary ekphrasis. Other contemporary critics who similarly emphasize the gendered hostility between the verbal and the visual include Ruth Newman and James Hefernan.

The feminist critical bias informing recent ekphrastic studies and stressing the gendered antagonism between word and image perpetuates the long- standing notion of one of the paradigm elements residing superiority over its inferior antagonist. The value of such a bias is evident in Berger's study of the nude in European painting. "The spectator in front of the picture," according to Berger, "is required to be a man." The painted women are regarded as "offering up their femininity as the nursery." (54-55).
short, was merely political, and hegemony was accorded one or the other of the sister arts based on whether Leonardo, for instance, argued the incomparable vivaciousness of painting or Donatello, for example, the sculptural art. Both sisters represented what was essentially a shadowy reflection of the ineffable (Hagstrum 66-70).

Mimetic theory distinguished things by directing attention to the immediate; in doing so, mimesis preserved the amicalement of the relationship between poetry and painting even while permitting the paradoxical struggle between the two. This is why the idea of the artist as a natural genius grounded in the immediate mitigated the possible hostility of the sisterly contentious and attenuated whatever fear arose from the recognition of an ultimate form or trope. Duplication, whatever its flaws, only superficially attempted to overcome a lack of equivalency between the verbal or visual representation and its referent while essentially affirming the unity of both and of the media employed to render the object. So much of the aesthetic theory informing the classical notion of *ut pictura poesis* similarly argued for the unity of all artistic media and represented itself an idea even when, the struggle for bragging rights seemed to be of paramount concern in the relationship between the sister arts.

When M. H. Abrams in his classic study of the Romantic shift from mimetic to expressive considered the implications of this aesthetic reorientation for the theory of *ut pictura poesis*, he argues that the analogy between poetry and painting gives way to the analogy between poetry and music. Even in the Romantic period, the abstraction of which the sister arts vied for or achieved supremacy remained inconsequential since the classical notion of unity between visual and verbal remained. Abrams persuasively argued the limitations of Abrams' reinterpretation of the classical analogy in light of the Romantic poet. Park contends that the analogy between poetry and painting remained unaltered throughout the century, and that what was present throughout the nineteenth century as it had over two thousand years prior to the Romantic revolution. The issue that is not which art is more like the other (although this critical debate continued in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), but rather how the relationship between poetry and painting, hitherto considered transient, was transformed into an inescapable antinomy in which neither politics nor gender, but ongoing psychological tension, characterized contest and outcome.

Romanticism's interiorization, what Park calls the "invention of the self," was the recognition of a subjectivity in which a notion that a representation, whether verbal or visual, could be the duplicate or likeness of something on the other side of object, representation, and referent. If equivalency did in fact exist, it presumed that art was the likeness of expression, or not of the same immediate or transparent idea. Park's contention is not that the analogy of poetry and painting vanished, as although there can be no subjunctive "not" in a potential that is always, has always required readjustment in light of the revolution in poetic thinking advanced by Schlegel, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Carlyle, and Ruskin. And the essence of that thinking was grounded in the notion, as the mid-nineteenth century by James Ferrier, that every "objective, when confronted to the intellect, is found to have a subjective clinging to it, and forming one with it." (3: 275).

Ferrier's exploration of the "Critique of Modern Specula- tion" suggests a more pessimistic view of the relationship between subject and object and the sanguine perspective of most Romantic poets who in appropriating the objective to themselves communed, as Wordsworth observed, "with something not apart from, but inherent in, my immaterial nature." (4: 463). Acknowledging both the deleterious implications for science of this position and the idolatrous possibilities for art of such self-divinization, Ferrier recognized as well the inevitability in the nineteenth century of understanding the "objective" as an object with the addition of oneself—object plus subject—thing, or thought, *mecum* (1: 97). Mimesis becomes self-contained, understood only in a human intellectual iteration of the subjective and objective.7 If the early Romantic poets seemed to revel in the gladness attending the self-identification Romanticism appeared to foster, they and their Victorian successors felt that it meant that, in Wordsworth's words, "therefor come in the end despondency and madness." ("Resolution and Independence," 1: 49).

Ferrier's observation accurately reflects a significant philosophical concern of the nineteenth century, to read just their aesthetics to the implications of Romanticism's interiorization. If the immutable that grounds artistic representations in the mimetic theory vanishes, what alternative remains to save the appearances of things? Is the self- commuting self of the artist sufficient? Or must the conception of the self be radically displaced? According to Ruskin, of the "stability, definiteness, and luminousness" characteristic of classical and medival art "the least impossible to arrest, and difficult to comprehend" (5: 318-9).

It is precisely this instability and indefiniteness that characterize nineteenth-century painting as Turner's "sea- scapes," as Wordsworth's poetic expressionism of the crisis. Ferrier examines and are indicative of the aesthetic implications of the modern expressivist poet in general and of *ut pictura poesis* specifically. The Fighting "Temeraire," for example, vividly conveys the sense of a majestic, and one could readily attempt to define. In an era in which Jupiter is dethroned and the "coronation of the whirlwind" commences, perspective requires the witnessing of objects, the regard of the artist. If not the "effects of light on water," then endless reflections of reflections (5: 317). The inconclusive- ness of Turner's visual pyrming in a gyre suggests that neither beginning nor end exists to ground representations, that the visually seductive vortexes of his seascrapes invite chaos and destruction. Whatever likenesses emerge in representa- tions of any kind ultimately function to betray themselves and to the arts observer alike the spiritual exhaustion of uni- on of things. This radical shift from a grounded to an ungrounded universe is poignantly expressed by Ruskin who, in *The Queen of Airs*, writes of the pervasiveness of that "simply an empty sound" (Wordsworth's "language 361), but who, in "The Tears of Pansymient," painfully observes that "its echoes have forgot / The fiery steps that shone the shores." (2: 187-8).

This disquieting recognition of the absence of ground or immaterial idea to save the appearance of things encouraged Romantic poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge to predicate "the one Life within us and abroad!" (The English Hayp., 1: 26) as the ground of nature. If this philosophical principle temporarily addressed the threat of instability and indefiniteness—by existentially predicating the artistic soul as the source of stability and the determinate, the principle also had an important consequence for the Romantics' redefinition of *ut pictura poesis*. The prophetic role of the poet for someone like Shelley derives as much from the artist's awareness of this informing "Life" as it does from his verbal ability to articulate how reality is shaped by the word. Art is the expression in the finite of the Infinite witnessed in the artist's mind. Poetry, as Bounding remarks of the subjective artist, is the expression of the Divine to be found in the poet's "own self" to which it must be the displacement of things ("An Essay on Shelley"). Art is first and foremost expression.

Wordsworth's preoccupation with language in the Preface to *Coleridge*10 is a reflection of his deep but also his concern with simplicity of diction than it is by the idea that the word constructs reality, that in the creation of literature as well as of society "language and the human mind act and react on each other" (2: 20). Wordsworth's refers to "Sir Walter Scott, Racine, and Shakespeare," which point out and define the objects of the highest import to this point. Implicit in Hazlitt and Wordsworth's ideas of language the status of the word's superiority not only to painting but as music as well. Their comments, however, are not intended to continue the paradigmatic relationship between the sister arts—whether poetry and painting or poetry and music—but to argue the superiority of the word, as opposed to other artistic modes of expression, in transcending what Wordsworth called "the limits of human knowledge" (the "effects of light on water"). It seemed, according to Abrams, to enjoy the affiliation with poetry once guaranteed almost exclusively to painting, it was because the function of art was to express feeling, not to render transcriptions of external reality. The almost midle late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century attitude toward painting understood as primarily the picturesque derived from this art and almost directly from the spiritual exhaustion of things—"the one Life"—not life's materiality. And it was words, not colors, shapes, or sounds, that most adequately conveyed this essence. Nevertheless, painting's relation- ship to poetry and to language remained problemat- ically despite the seeming pejorative regard critics in the period had for this "materialistic" art form. Wordsworth's preoccupation with attempting to "paint" what then I was "(Wordsworth, 1: 20). Turner's fascination with the coin-
gepages of his own or others' composition to his can-
vases, the Royal Academy's insistence in 1798 that exhib-
tors attach epigrams to their submissions, underscored the continuing significance of *ut pictura poesis* and of the import of the verbal in representations of the visual.10

The ambivalence critics expressed regarding the rela-
ionship between poetry and painting in the nineteenth century, however, indicates the far more significant concern theorists continued to have with the notion of aesthetics or the unity of form and content.10 The concerns of a few earlier theorists more than any other, however, the speech and image offers a persuasive argument that shifts that epistemological necessary changes in the paradigm of either the verbal or the visual.

*Abrams conceives of the "use of painting to illustrate the essential character of poetry..." so widespread in the eighteenth century, almost disappear in the major criticism of the romantic period, the comparisons between poetry and painting that characterized the period, are "oh so inane..." (2: 297). The beauty mirror, the canvass reversed as image the inner substance of the poet. In place of painting, music becomes the art form pointed to as having a profound affinity with poetry." (50).

*Kraeger explores the intersect of visual and verbal art as a "fiddling" in "The Verical," and the presence of Verical in the music Influence in shifting "literary theory into the realm of temporality at the expense of visual forms." Kraeger's perception of Abrams' assertion is what Wendy Steiner calls a "histrionically in the scholarly examination of the relationship between the visual and the verbal: Criticism in the early nineteenth century, though echoes like John Barrell, Matthew Brennan, and Kathleen NabkoNICHOLSON examine various aspects of the visual in late eighteenth-sixteenth-century art and practice, serious attention is not paid to the integral and pervasive connection between the verbal and the visual. Moreover, much of the scholarship that has been done on the relationship between verbal and image offers a persuasive argument that shifts that epistemological necessary changes in the paradigm of either the verbal or the visual.*

*Addison and Burke are chiefly responsible in the eighteenth century for arguments about the verbal, but the visual also has come to be considered a separate art form, but has not yet become privileged as classical mimetic given way to expressive aesthetic. For a detailed discussion of the influence of Addison and Burke on the period, see Jameson's "The Verical," 1970.

*The "four ranged" for artifice (the word," according to Kierkegaard, "is literally the case, it is now beyond the reach of the artist: it is art, in fact, a "the mirror of outer events" consciousness for G. H. Lewes, written in 1842, a simple draught, "one of the pompous inelegances into which ignorance has led the critics." (33).*

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*The meaning of Turner's use of poetry to provide a narrative compo- nent to the visual, see Nicholson, 54. 79-80. See also Lisitsa, 49-71, for a discussion of how poetry shaped Turner's aesthetic theory and prac- tice, and for a discussion of the relationship of Turner's paintings with his submissions brief literary or descriptive statements cathartic of their work or, indeed, a "finale" or "postscript" designed to help readers overcome the ambiguities inherent in the visual and, 2) to what extent a common "language" of discourse between words and image offers a persuasive argument that shifts that epistemological necessary changes in the paradigm of either the verbal or the visual.*
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Wordsworth explains, "in contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquility actually appertains, paroxysm kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind" (1: 148). He argues that a complete state of feeling in the Romantic poet as opposed to the action central to classical mimesis. More importantly, however, Wordsworth's definition of poetry underscores the notion of kindredness or even the idea of the mimetic, art or poets present exist between artifact and its represented. Like Coleridge's universe predicated on the coexistence resulting from the pervasiveness of the "One Life," Wordsworth's world is one in which everything is "the spirit of motion or spirit that rolls through all things including the mind of man and that thus allifies the disparate elements of the universe into unity of kindredness. Art is a duplicate, not a rival; the poem is the expressed kindred of the kindred emotion resulting from the feeling contemplated in tranquility. And the word, because it articulates this kindredness, attains primacy status.11

Byron's understanding of the poetic process seems to sanction Wordsworth's implicit notion of art as a verbal deliverance from the artist's being of some other inarticulate idea. Poem is verbal incarnation, the deliverance from silence of the soul's muttering message. And it is, ironi-
cally, this verbal delivery of ideation that brings to light the word's unsalvageability and the long-standing unity of the arts.

"To create, and in creating live To bring the hidden to the light With from our fancy, gaging as we give The life we image, even as I do now. What am I talking of? I know not how to tell how one's soul of my thought! With whom I traverse earth, Invisible but gazing, as I go Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy breath, And feeling for a while my soul's of a death."
Child Harold's Pilgrimage 3: 64-65

The expressive nature of Romantic Poetry, which makes artifice the reflex of the poet's living soul, comes, in Byron's description, to acknowledge poem as projected, but not separated, from the soul that gives it birth. Artistic generation is an informing of the artifact with the poet's spirit. The poetic self in the process of artistic generation becomes "nothing," having exhausted itself in providing form to fancy and life to a gazing image. According to Byron in his account is acknowledgment that artifact is potentially less a duplicate than a rival antagonistic threatening the very being responsible for its independent existence. Also implicit, however, is the notion that the separate identities of parent and offspring depend upon the continued interrelationship suggested by the sanguine, paranoid gazing and being gazed at of the parties involved in artistic generation. Identity is predicated on being seen, and nothing is distinct from or can any longer exist independent of the other's regard.

The obtrusive metaphor informing Byron's account of the origin of art finds correlative expression in the Romantic idea of kindredness or even the idea of the mimetic, art or poets present exist between artifact and its represented. Like Coleridge's universe predicated on the coexistence resulting from the pervasiveness of the "One Life," Wordsworth's world is one in which everything is "the spirit of motion or spirit that rolls through all things including the mind of man and that thus allifies the disparate elements of the universe into unity of kindredness. Art is a duplicate, not a rival; the poem is the expressed kindred of the kindred emotion resulting from the feeling contemplated in tranquility. And the word, because it articulates this kindredness, attains primacy status.11

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The poetic prodigality resulting from such an understanding of the relationship between nature and art is rivalrous, and the product of nature's prodigality. When Ruskin in Modern Painters III remarks that the world Wordsworth created "would not be able to get on without Wordsworth" (5: 343), he underscores the inevitability in the Romantic aesthetic of the world's plenitude being dependent upon the solipsistic diegetic self. Ruskin's astounding DeQuincy regards as the essence of the self's relativity inherent in the world's multitudinous others attend to the life of things being dependent upon what Coleridge calls "the eddying of her living soul" (2: 84) in "The Heart of Asia." Ruskin's notion in these terms is not so much a duplicate or copy of its creator as a guarantor of the poetic anima's plurality: it respects in its mutely gazed the word first spoken by the poet, even if, in the end, it is "the world," the very essence of its being an affective, viscerally pain. The poetic face as the distinguishing feature of modern poetry.14

III

The most important ekphrastic poem of Romanticism, Wordsworth's "Elegiac Stanza," registers the pessimistic turn of events inherent in the early Romantic view of reality. The poet becomes paradigmatic of counterpoint—of how the visual echoes and then ultimately rivals or threatens the very poetic image. The critic Peale Carroll argues that the ekphrastic is a literal archetypal statement, as a form reflected on a glassy sea, as a putative picture in the poet's mind acknowledges the perdurance of image: "Whence 'er I looked, thy image still was there; / It travelled on, and fluttered in the air" (2: 212). Whatever distortion of the immutable Image is perceptible in artistic renditions becomes inconsequential if the resultant artifacts rhyme with each other and with their underlying informing idea. Initially, Romanticism's seeming reliance upon music rather than painting as the key analogical term in discussing poetry stems from the idea of harmony central to all. The importance of the aesthetic hær as metaphor of the poetic act reinforces this reliance for the Romantic poets as does Beethoven's musical liberation of the word in the 1824 final movement of the Ninth Symphony, and Matthew Arnold's call to his Victorian brothers in art that only music can release the "soul" of the message of "bounded worlds."15 But that seeming reliance on music as the key analogical term of the sister arts diversen attention from the central conflict between word and image.

11In an essay on "The Bühneschild Lied," Carlyle likens the poet's task to furnishing "pravew-truth" with new forms, similar to what results in "A Hall of Mirrors," a poem that, while reflective, conceals or even destroys. He likens the "pravew-truth" to the "shades of this in other mirrors," which are "the Visage, gorgeous, and the Mind." "From the Muses, Divine," only the immitated is filled with dimmer and dimmer shapes, and no film less rare makes out, but a delicately, dimmed chisel, fading away on all hands, in the designing, the artist of the "Mimesis, Divine." The "pravew-truth" is a "shaded," an expression of fulfartiveness, the guarantee of that "Truth" is no longer God, but man, and the consequence, as Ruskin puts it, a pathetic fiasco as "erroneously

12For a detailed discussion of the relationship between music and poetry in the Romantic period, see Wex, 228-70. In his "Elogium to Lawrence," Arnold might be said to have romanticized the depiction of the poet's voice not simply as a musical rendering—"True singing an" (9: 7), but and "all songs" (9: 7), but and "all songs" (9: 7). In his "Elogium to Lawrence," Arnold might be said to have romanticized the depiction of the poet's voice not simply as a musical rendering—"True singing an" (9: 7), but and "all songs" (9: 7). In his "Elogium to Lawrence," Arnold might be said to have romanticized the depiction of the poet's voice not simply as a musical rendering—"True singing an" (9: 7), but and "all songs" (9: 7). In his "Elogium to Lawrence," Arnold might be said to have romanticized the depiction of the poet's voice not simply as a musical rendering—"True singing an" (9: 7), but and "all songs" (9: 7). In his "Elogium to Lawrence," Arnold might be said to have romanticized the depiction of the poet's voice not simply as a musical rendering—"True singing an" (9: 7), but and "all songs" (9: 7).
This consciousness, Fox argues, is what Tennyson's art expresses. It is a "merciless" vision of the psychological terror and spiritual starvation informing the anima at the conclusion of its habituation of the Palace of Art. The terror results from the soul's recognition of its artistic identity as a "soul" that has "lost everything" and "the dimensions of its soul" (II. 59-60) peopling the palace constituted meditated images not of the divine, but of the soul divided. In this lorn condition, isolated from all and left to commune only with itself, the anima goes upon its idols only to discover that these mute images provide "no murmur of reply" (l. 286). The represented or masquerading selves inhabiting "other" becomes in the absence of the anima, even if they literally are something instead of God, but that while "they have mouths, they speak not" (Psalm 115).

What is instructive about Tennyson's poem for an understanding of its meaning is that it also produces the psychological terror and spiritual starvation informing the anima at the conclusion of its habituation of the Palace of Art. The terror results from the soul's recognition of its artistic identity as a "soul" that has "lost everything" and "the dimensions of its soul" (II. 59-60) peopling the palace constituted meditated images not of the divine, but of the soul divided. In this lorn condition, isolated from all and left to commune only with itself, the anima goes upon its idols only to discover that these mute images provide "no murmur of reply" (l. 286). The represented or masquerading selves inhabiting "other" becomes in the absence of the anima, even if they literally are something instead of God, but that while "they have mouths, they speak not" (Psalm 115).

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Flowers on the Dunghill in _The Nether World_

Constance Harsh

George Gissing's _The Nether World_ (1889) is one of the glories of nineteenth-century English novels. Its uncompromising depiction of the lives of the London poor reveals squalor and depravity in unflinching detail. Yet it is not alone the conditions of living for the working class that accounts for the novel's extraordinary achievement. Several influential readers have recognized, the extraordinary quality of _The Nether World_ is the absence of any hope for change. As David Grylls has observed, "in contrast with Gissing's earlier novels, no substantial initiatives for social reform are anywhere visible here" (51). Or, in the words of Stephen Gill, "What is so striking about _The Nether World_ is how little attention any of the characters lends to any novel's social 'solutability' (xx)." Hissing himself, when first planning this novel in 1887, wrote to Thomas Hardy that he did not plan to hold out much hope for social amelioration, but only a little "evening sunlight" to close. For them perhaps to be a triumph of individual strength; a different thing from hope for the masses of men (139). _The Nether World_ indeed leaves us with a world in which class boundaries seem unalterable and in which Clerkenwell will remain for its inhabitants, as the title implies, a kind of eternal Hell.

The undeniable power of this book should not obscure the extent of its success in its social criticism. Certainly it is possible to see the very starkness of _The Nether World_ as a powerful indictments of a corrupt social system. Gissing himself seems to have had a social purpose in mind as he began the novel but by the end of that year, eighteen days before he wrote its opening pages, he viewed the corpse of his alcoholic first wife in the comfortable room to which her troubles had relegated her. Shocked by her appearance and surroundings, he wrote an impassioned resolution in his diary: "Henceforth I never cease to bear testimony against the accursed social order that brings about things of this kind" (Diary 22). Yet testifying to abuse does not necessarily entail recognizing the weapons that might end abuse. Gissing's outrage can ignore legitimate grounds for optimism; for instance, as both Gill and Adrian Poole observe, the futility of John Hewett's class resentments belies the very real possibility of change that late-Victorian trade-unionism offered (Gill 87; Poole 96-97). Tellingly, Gissing followed his passionate view to bear witness with a more self-interested assessment of the artistic fuel that her example would provide: "I feel that she will help me more in her death than she barked during her life" (23). A later diary entry in July 1888, as he was completing the last three chapters, brings to light a similar tension. He wrote of his interest in "perhaps the best means of social generation". "In these [I] wish to emphasize that the idealistic social reformer is of far less use than the humble discharger of human duty" (Diary 36). Yet to reach the novel's end is to find hope minimized and the beauty of selflessness magnified.

The last paragraph establishes the nature of Sidney and Jane's future lives. "Unmarred, unconfirmed save by their own proper sort of existence. As most of their life was a labour, brought some comfort to hearts less courageous than their own. Where they abode it was not all dark. Sorrow certainly awaited them, per chance defeat in even the humble things that they set themselves; but at least their life would remain a protest . . ." (392). The final product of _The Nether World_ is a peculiar sort of aesthetic effect. Gissing uses characteristic ideas and narrative tools in an uncharacteristic fashion to foreground meaningful hope so that the "light of hope" can shine its wintry light over the narrative. The novel's emphasis on the novel's focus is to create a form of ash-can aestheticism, in which social class guarantees the beautiful effects created by the heroes' nobility. Examining the novel's treatment of systematic thought and the dissolutions of pessimism reveals how Gissing's form of aestheticism comes into play.

In most of his novels, Gissing shows a consistent interest in ideation, the process by which people form and hold ideas. In novels such as _The Unclassed, Thieves, The Old Women_, and _In the Year of Jubilee_, he devotes considerable attention to the ways in which the human propensity for systematic thinking leads both to admirable ideals and lamentable delusions. Sometimes a character will explicitly articulate a theory, as when Walter Egremont describes to Gilbert Grail his doomed plan to reform society by educating the better sort of workers (Thieves 92). Or, particularly in the later novels, free indirect discourse will represent characters' minds in flux, as they are drawing false provisional conclusions or making imperfect judgments. For instance, in _The Odd Women_, Gissing traces even the not-necessary errors of this version was essay delivered at the Modern Language Association Convention in December 2000.
particularly intellectual Monica Maiden's progress through a series of ideological positions. As I have argued elsewhere, Gissing's focus on the ethical and moral dilemmas of the reader's understanding of the text's ideological allegiances. But even when an interest in ideation does not significantly complicate the present text, another kind of intellectual conflict appears in the first sentence of the first chapter, as an eccentrically dressed old man with a noble mien, he is viewed almost exclusively from without. The advantages of such a point of view, at least in the present context, is that it reveals an unspoken mystery and untapped potential that surrounds this character. When we first learn of his plan for Jane, it is through the enchanting eyes of Sidney, who responds emotionally to the sudden recognition of a new form of romantic triangle. Indeed, it is in the contrast between Michael's prior opacity and his sudden full disclosure that impresses both Sidney and the reader with a new understanding of Jane's character. But there has always been something in Michael's character that longed for something in Jane that was not revealed to him, of a life-controlling purpose but vaguely indicated by the general tenor of Michael's opinions"(177). Like Hydra, the triple-headed serpent from Greek mythology, Michael is a formidable, multi-talented figure, and his self-disburdening achieves something of the quality of a glorious event foretold by prophecy. Gissing has witheld access to Michael's conscious ness, to powerful effect. But, interestingly, when he does finally provide this access in the passage quoted above, he does not make his typical use of free indirect discourse to re-create the character's mental life. Rather, he employs a more narrativ al motives and characters—as in The Unclashed, where the representation of Osmond Waymouth's consciousness suggests both his own and the reader's. Unlike the other Gissing novels, the representations of thought in other Gissing novels, the treatment of Snowdon's thinking does not complicate our attitude to his ideas; instead, it simplifies by presenting his more instrumental view of Jane and introducing a narrative judgment that clearly labels it as inadequate. The effect is to clarify the narrative's view of the proper role of ideals: they should always yield precedence to personal interests. By adding to Michael's character a more clearly defined capacity for expressing values, Gissing offers a fresh point for giving Michael's plan a reality independent of the success or failure of its implementation. If the narrative treatment of Michael Snowdon tends to undercut the potential power of ideas, so does the character ization of Jane. The Nether World has stipulated Jane's life by the conventions of Mervyn's novel, but not by her thought that might make her a suitable agent for her grand father. In her moment of greatest closeness to Sidney, her sensibility is more clearly defined. For example, her character is as simple as the language in which she was asked to express herself. She could as little have understood Sidney's mind at this moment as she could have given an analytical account of her own. As Barbara Leah Hamman has observed, "She has no instinct for generalization, no capacity to theorize"(187). Since Jane cannot conceivably manage the large distraction of the good Samaritan (158), her character underscores the unrealistic nature of the goals Michael has endorsed. But Jane's lack of intellectuality, which ensures her focus on small-scale benevolence, also seems to be one of the conditions of her goodness. By creating a discount
between systematic thought and simple goodness, Gissing implies that large-scale thinking is antithetical to localized acts of compassion.

While Gissing's fiction usually places considerable weight on a character's capacity for intellectual reflection, Fredric Jameson has noted Gissing's use of "Dickensian paradigms" in this novel—in particular, Dickensian sentimentality, the narrative paradigm of the Dickensian heroine" (186). In his 1898 study of Dickens, Gissing would identify, somewhat critically, several characteristic features of that writer's work: his "association of kindness of disposition with lack of brain" (101), his creation of individuals who are morally unuprooted by personal suffering (207), and his belief in "private benevolence" by individuals rather than systematic reform (209). Gissing sees each of these tendencies, and their underlying age or of Dickens's personal history. But in The Newer World he adopts these same anarchistic strategies without the palpable belief in their power that sustains Dickens's narratives. Again it is clear that Gissing's interest in modernism has required the alteration of his preferred modes of operation. If Michael Snowdon's ideas are shown to be unsatisfactory and humane almost from their initial appearance, they partly survive their apparent demise. At the novel's end, both Sidney and Jane are separately leading lives of compassionate service to others. Remaining within the working class, they give their lives to saving the world—or at least a part of it—from the darkness of the day on dark of the world in the poor. And, despite the evi- dence that Jane had begun a life of service independently of Michael, we are told that she and Michael are still "doing," while Snowdon's wealth had melted away; it was gone for ever of the realising his high projects. All passed into the world of memory, of dream—all save the spirit which had enlivened him, the gen- erous purpose bequeathed to those two hearts which had loved him best" (391). Ironically, that aspect of Michael's plan was that most inhuman—his anticipation of Jane's sacrifice of personal happiness—has been fully realized. Both Jane and Sidney have scrupulously taken up painful lives devoid of personal satisfaction. Jane has rejected the small allowance from her father that would make life com- fortable, and she has rejected Charles Swarthorne's proposal. Sidney has married Clara in an excess of self- martyrdom and has taken on responsibility for her entire fam- ily. The end of the story is achieved with great optimism, has, oddly enough, undermined the potential of systematic thought throughout The Newer World but has held on to many of Michael's thoughts, eliminating only those that offered the possibility of social change. To put it another way, Gissing's character shows that for at least the case of Hardy in particular, compassion is achieved by readers of the novel that are sympathetic. The society in this novel, however, is filled with concerns, and indeed the relationship of the readers to the reality of compassion by the example of his two heroes Jane and Sid- ney, and their compassion has been created by insertion in a social reality that is inadequate to this task. This has led Gissing to sometimes feel that his work does not escape Gissing's Dickensian equivocations.

William J. Scheick has offered an interesting analysis of how the Victorian Newsletter

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She felt in her inmost heart the tyranny of a world which takes away all joy from its children—worlds which lead a helpless child and then condemns it for being found astray. She could judge herself, yes, better than Sidney Kirkwood could judge her. . . . But she could not reconcile it to herself to be her. . . . The better she understood how difficult was every way of advancement, the more fiercely resolute she was to con- quer the world which seemed beyond the sphere of her destiny. (81-82)

Gissing takes some pains to give Clara her due. Sidney, excessively impressionable, is left with the burden of having to provide the most sympathetic read of her character that he can make: "Suppose she'd been the daughter of a rich man; then everything now would be different, but he would never have been of no account or actually a virtu" (102). At the beginning of Chapter IX, there is a passage of free indirect discourse in which Clara justifies her unwillingness to send her father money as she had promised. Her conclusion, starkly inconsistent with traditional femininity, is that "It would be unjust to herself to share her scanty earnings with those at home" (79). Here the narrator, anticipating the reader's revulsion, immediately intrudes with a rather awkward excuse for Clara: "Yes; but you must try to understand this girl of the people, with her unfortunate endowment of brains and defect of tenet." Yet the narrative places her beyond the pale by conflating the metaphysicial instinct with egoism, the attitude that Gissing finds antithetical to "human morality" (Hope) 91). Once Swarthorne opens his heart to Clara and offers his personal life to her, she declines to succeed regardless of the consequences. Her prin- ciple of action is a vigorous one: "Self-denial; to be no longer an unregarded atom in the mass of those who are born only to labour for others; to find play for the soul in the strength and desire—a passion which, by no choice of her own, distinguished her from the same slave" (86). There is obviously room to understand her feelings as heroic. But in context hers is not a positive role, mainly because she is told that the character of her suffering . . . became less womanly, it defied weakness and grew to a fever of fierce, uncursesible rebellion" (86). Similarly, narrative commentary identifies her aspirations to escape as proof of her contamination by the nether world.

"Be my origin what it may, I have the intelligence and the desires of one born to freedom. Nothing in me, nothing, is akin to that gross world from which I have escaped!" So she says—her heart's blood crying its source from that rod fountain of revolute where never yet did the upper daylight pierce! Brain and pulses such as hers belong not to the mild breed of mortals crowned in sunshine. (277)

Unlike other Gissing novels, The Newer World closes off all possibility of seeing revolt as a productive form of response to our condition. It is, to the take of Chapter IX, merely "Pathological." Perhaps the most curious aspect of Clara's story is the way in which her heart's blood does not escape the nether world; certainly she escapes the narrative:
Who is Heathcliff? The Shadow Knows

Marilyn Hume

Charlotte Brontë asks in the preface to the 1850 edition of **Wuthering Heights**, "Whether it is right or advisable to create things like Heathcliff," and goes on to say that she scarcely thinks it is. She also suggests that the author has the right to represent the second sex by the romantic ideal as it has been set in motion, claiming that it has a life of its own (xxxvi). What is it in Heathcliff that so concerns Charlotte Brontë that she feels a need to question the wisdom of his existence? Is it pure evil in some demonic form? Is it wild unbridled passion, part of the nature of the moors? Is he simply a tyrant, a cruel sadistic despot? Is he a romantic lover, slave to his own passions and the dictates of his heart? Does Heathcliff really love Catherine Earnshaw? Everything rejected by the conscious sensitivities of Lockwood, Nelly Dean and Catherine finds unlimited freedom of expression in Heathcliff, where it surfaces to taunt and confuse its creators. These unconscious projections of unacceptable traits take the form of "The Shadow" as described by Carl G. Jung.

C. G. Jung sees shadow as manifesting in his own dreams as a monstrous, dark figure that represents aspects of the unconscious mind. Aspects of the shadow are also projected on to others:

The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always

The shadow often appears to be a projection of the person’s own unconscious desires and fears.

For example, the shadow may appear as a character in a dream, or in a fantasy, or in a character’s imagination. The shadow can be seen as a symbol of the dark side of the personality, the part that is hidden from consciousness.

The shadow is often seen as a representation of the unconscious mind, the part of the psyche that is not accessible to conscious awareness.

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Lockwood wants to see in Heathcliff a man who is reserved, and more so than himself. He wants to see this level of self-control as admirable in Heathcliff and therefore fine in him too:  

I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling—to manifestations of manual kindness. He'll love and hate equally under cover, and esteem a species of imperiousness to be loved or hated above all else. No—Lockwood tells of an incident in which he met a young woman to whom he was attracted. He makes it plain to her that he is attracted to her but when she resists him she shuns him. She is so overwhelmed with confusion at her nameless maidens' things. He confesses that because of this he has gained the reputation of deliberate heartlessness, a reputation he cannot accept (6). He cannot see himself as heartless.  

Emily Brontë gives us another look at this true aspect of Lockwood's character in the episode when he sees Cathy's ghost:  

The intense horror of nightmare came over me; I tried to draw back my arm, but the hand clung to it, and a most melancholy voice sobbed—Let me let me go!  

"Who are you?" I asked, struggling, meanwhile, to disengage myself.  

"Catherine Linton," it replied, shrivelling—"I am home, I lost my way on the moors!"

As it spoke, I discerned, obscurely, a child's face looking through the window—Terror made me cruel; and I seized it, stifled it in Lockwood's arms.  

He finds it hard to let go. He cannot integrate cruelty as part of who he is, so he resists cruelty to his shadow side. He projects this shadow onto Heathcliff. He is attracted to Heathcliff not for the reasons of his conscious mind but because Heathcliff personifies his forbidden self. Heathcliff is cruel and deliberately heartless. Lockwood also has a strange Biblical dream which serves to illuminate his shadow. He dreams he is travelling with Joseph to face the famine in his clan, a dream that comes from the text "Seventy Times Seven" (22). He dreams that Joseph, the preacher or himself has committed the "First of the Seventy First," and is to be publicly exposed and excommunicated. This refers to Matthew as "The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant." The sin referred to is that of un Forgiveness: "Then Peter came and asked, 'Lord, how oft shall I forgive my brother who sins against me?' Seven times' " (No, not seven times, answered Jesus, "but seventy times seven." (Matt. 18: 21-22). In the dream Lock- wood fights with the whole assembly. He has no weapon to use in self defense. Joseph and the others all have staves. In the language of symbols, the stave used as a weapon has punitive meaning (Tresidder 194). In Jungian psychology it is generally believed that an image is a conflict with someone else in a dream that other person is a shadow figure representing qualities the dreamer refuses to admit as part of his personality (Robertson 130). Lockwood, not surprisingly, offers us no interpretation of this dream, other than to blame it on bad tea and bad temper. We are given no interpretation from any other source in the text and yet it seems to have some meaning. Using the Jungian model, one may reasonably propose that Lockwood is repressing his desire to punish others and his inability to forgive them. In the dream he is going to be exposed and punished by the whole assembly and Joseph is the accusing, fero-cious assailing, and by Branderham these figures all represent the repressed side of Lockwood in his dream. In his relationship with Heathcliff he would be the victor of Lockwood's repressed punitive side finds free expression in Heathcliff: Heathcliff is punitive, ferocious and unforgiving.  

The second narrator, Nelly Dean, has a different point to play in forming Heathcliff. We have no dreams to give us a glimpse of Nelly's unconscious mind. Nelly does, however, fantasize about Heathcliff, particularly about the circumstances of his birth:  

"You're fit for a prince in disguise. Who knows, but your father was Emperor of China, and your mother an Indian queen, each of them able to buy u with, one week's income, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange together! and you were kidnapped by wicked sailors, finding it useful to take you aboard. If I had held you in my arms I would frame high notions of my birth; and the thoughts of what I should give me courage and dignity to support the oppression of a little farmer."

Heathcliff as far as we can learn from the text does not fantasize about his parentage. Nelly fantasizes about Heath- cliff as far as he does about Nelly; it is her version of her own humble station in life, a station determined by parentage. Nelly is a servant, but she does not like to be treated as one. When she is treated as a servant she objects. When Catherine, for example, treats her as a servant she refers to Catherine as haughty and says, "she ceased to hold any consideration for me except as a meere servant" (87). Nelly finds this form of communication unacceptable. Nelly has no mysterious background to fantasize about herself. Indeed, such fantasies on her own behalf would be inconsistent with Nelly's view of herself as a, "steady, reasonable kind of body" (62). Romantic thoughts and fan- tases are not part of Nelly's conscious thinking. It would not be acceptable for a country girl to be so fanciful. She must find some other outlet for these desirable but forbidden fantasies. Nelly renegotiates these desires and fantasies to her unconscious mind where they manifest in the romantic per- sonality of Heathcliff.  

Cathy, though not a narrator, is clearly crucial to the development of Heathcliff. Emily Brontë uses Cathy as the one character who is the only one who knows his true character. She knows him so well because he is, indeed, part of her. He is her shadow side. Heathcliff comes into Cathy's life when they are chil- dren. They quickly become very close, recognizing in each other a common wildness, lack of convention and love of the moors:  

But it was one of their chief amusements to run away to the moors in the morning and remain there all day, and the after punishment grew a mere thing to laugh at. The current story was something of the sort: Catherine got by heart, and Joseph might teach Heathcliff till his arms ached; they forgot every thing they were together, at least the minute they had company."

Here Catherine is a very middle-class figure whose moral values are that of a moral, religious household. Cathy has a moral but less straitened morality. She is brought up in a house where she is told to be nice and to be a nice girl. She is brought up in a house where she is told to love Heathcliff but he is a prince from some foreign land. She tells him that all he needs is to be handsome as he wishes is to have a good heart. Heathcliff as a young boy wants to be fair and handsome and have a chance at being rich like Edgar Linton. In fact, he wants the same things Cathy wants, and at this point is will- ing to try to get them by following Cathy's lead and con- forming to the standards. An amiable Heathcliff and however, is not acceptable to anyone. The Lintons are per- fectly content to be amiable themselves. They don't need and won't accept that from Heathcliff. Hindley is deter- mined to make Heathcliff the pariah he is. Cathy finds Heathcliff's attempt to be "good."  

From Heathcliff's first appearance at Wuthering Heights as a "dirty, ragged, black-haired child" he is seen as one of those around him. Cathy and Hindley are upset because the gifts their father has for them are broken. The household is thrown into confusion by his arrival. They refer to him as "it" and they reject him:  

They entirely refused to have it in bed with them, or even in their room, and I had no sense, so I put it on the landing and then to my consternation it was picked up on the landing and then to my consternation it was picked up and carried away. It might be gone by the mor- row. By chance, or else by hearing his voice, it crept to Mr. Earnshaw's door and there he found it on the stairs. It was something as if he had got there; I was obliged to confess, and in recompense for my cowardice and inhumanity was sent out of the house.

Heathcliff has spent only one night at Wuthering Heights at this point and already there is confusion and conflict. Not only is there external conflict between the children and their father, Edgar, and his children, and the children and their father, and Mr. Earnshaw and Nelly, but there is also internal conflict in Nelly. Nelly refers to her actions as cowardly and inhuman. She could not be Heathcliff because, "Heathcliff's heart was not my heart, nor his little savage" (52) she can no longer allow herself to be. Cathy's savage nature is relegated to her unconscious shadow side where it immediately manifests in Heathcliff. Cathy, to confirm this, dramatically declares that she is Heathcliff:  

My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods. Time will change that. Linton's love is like the trees—my love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath—a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I am Heathcliff—he's always, always in my mind—not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself—but as my own being—so, don't talk of our separation again—it is impracticable. (82)
Arnold’s "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time": "Finally, there is the systematic judgment ... the most worthless of all." (‘A French Critic on Goethe’ CPW 8: 254)¹

Nils Dienstag

Matthew Arnold, to many cultural and certain post-structuralist critics, is the epitome of DWEM attitudes, and vilifying and attacking his views of culture and criticism have been a particular favorite fashion since the 1980s.² My intention is not to engage once again either in vilification or praise but to examine "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" in order to point to a method in Arnold’s discussion which has not been analyzed by critics of this essay. The use of method with reference to Arnold’s writing immediately runs into two difficulties. 1. Arnold’s own disavowal of systematic judgment:²

Finally, there is the systematic judgment, and this judgment is the most worthless of all ... . Its author has not really eye upon the professed object of his criticism at all, but upon something else which he wants to prove by means of that object. ... Ask it, he tells us in that he is no genuine critic, but a man with a system, an advocate. (p. 254-255)

² The criticism of his essays on similar grounds already by his contemporaries (see Dawson and Pfeiffer 5, 26-31) and certainly by modern critics (see Buckley, Holloway, Baldick, Levine, Buckler). However, as I hope to show, there is a method in his manner of writing which yet leaves it very unsystematic, but not incoherent or unintelligible. To begin with there is Arnold’s definition of the critical effort in "The Function": "The endeavour, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is" (258). After having discussed in the course of the essay the function of criticism close to the end Arnold summarizes his discussion and redefines criticism in the following manner (emphasis in the original): "a disinterested endeavour to understand and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world" (283). Even a cursory glance at the two definitions indicates that they are hardly identical. Things become even more perplexing since in the course of the essay (208, paragraph 5 lines 31-36) we get the following definition of criticism:

But criticism, real criticism is essentially the exercise of this quality [learning, i.e., "disinterested love of a free play of the mind on all objects, for its own sake"] (268). It obys an instant prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world, irrespective of practice, politics, and everything of the kind; and to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best, without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever.

If arranged in table form the three definitions seem to display lack of systematicity and logic (I number the clauses in each definition):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Clauses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>para. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endeavour</td>
<td>obeys an instinct</td>
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<tr>
<td>All branches of knowledge</td>
<td>to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world the best that is known and thought in the world</td>
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<tr>
<td>To see the object as in itself it really is</td>
<td>irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To value knowledge and thought as they approach this best</td>
<td>without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever</td>
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The difference between the initial and final definitions is evident: disinterested is added in the final definition. The second clause in the initial definition is totally missing from the final one. The third clause in the initial definition mentions "seeing the object etc., whereas the final definition mentions "propagating the best etc." The intermediate definition in relation to the other two is much longer: clauses 4 and 6 are added and have no counterparts in the other two definitions. Also, the word _endeavour_ which appears in the initial and final definitions is replaced with "obeying an instinct." The third clause in the intermediate definition has a partial overlap with the final definition ("the best that is known etc."). Clearly, the differences between the three definitions add force to Arnold’s detractors, who of course also point to his general tendency to fuzzy writing.⁴ What precisely does "seeing an object as in itself it really is" mean? Which object? Does it really is mean? How do you see it "as in itself it really is" ⁴ *Scientific* formulations which sound to simple, once looked at more closely, seem to be hermeneutically glib; they sound well but in the light of logic and systemic thinking leave much to be desired. Arnold seems to commit a double error in "The Function": inconsistent as well as unintelligible definitions of criticism. However I suggest that Arnold should not be read as one would read a Northrop Frye or an M. H. Abrams, but rather as one who turned his back on his poetic background influenced his expository writing.⁵

The poetic quality of Arnold’s criticism in "The Function" is manifest in the change that occurs in his definition of criticism: Frye, p. 15. The word "disinterested" in the final definition is a distillation of clauses 4 and 6 in the intermediate definition. Furthermore, Arnold opts finally for endeavor—a conscious effort—over a prompt in the intermediate definition: Frye, p. 15. If the initial definition he is satisfied with seeing the object, in the intermediate definition the verb is to know and in the final one to learn and propagate. In other words, there is an increasing activity: seeing is passively understanding; knowing is a greater or deeper, an assimilative or incorporative seeing; learning and propagating are actually taking charge, making an effort both to know, through learning, but also not keeping it to one’s self but disseminating this knowledge. This increasing activity merges with the idea of endeavor which appears in both the initial and final definitions.

Clause 2 of the initial definition—"all branches"—apparently has no counterparts in the two later definitions, but actually the formulation "best that is known and thought" is another distillation: all branches of knowledge which he enumerated in the initial definition are now described as the "best that is known and thought," not just all branches but the best in those branches (Arnold never specifies how one determines this best). But notice that clause 5 in the intermediate definition is a bit stricter: to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best (emphasis added, in other words, even things short of perfection but where an endeavor is involved should be valued.

We are now left with the "object as in itself it really is," one of Arnold’s favorite formulations again. But this time Arnoldians. Again, the intermediate definition in clauses 4 and 6 clarifies his terms: "in itself it really is" means "irrespective of practice ... without intrusion," i.e., without partisanship and political considerations and manipulations.

We need to read Arnold as we would a poem, even when he is supposedly writing an expository essay (often based on a lecture). His method is to state something, repeat it with modifications which keep accumulating in the process of reading and resonate when another statement is made. The reading is not entirely linear: it is rather synaptic, reading back and forth, adjusting meanings through the accumulating resonances until finally we have a definition that, though initially puzzling, fuzzy and elusive, is meaningful without being necessarily logical, accurate, consistently or logically. Scientific formulations which sound to simple, once looked at more closely, seem to be hermeneutically glib; they sound well but in the light of logic and systemic thinking leave much to be desired. Arnold seems to commit a double error in "The Function": inconsistent as well as unintelligible definitions of criticism. However I suggest that Arnold should not be read as one would read a Northrop Frye or an M. H. Abrams, but rather as one who turned his back on his poetic background influenced his expository writing.⁵
in the process annoying not only traditional moralists but also kindred workers in the field of psychiatry and psychotherapy. The names are usually associated with Darwinian theory, notably R. C. Lewontin and Stephen Jay Gould. Goad could be unamnified by Dennett's barbs, and Darwin himself would surely be embarrassed if he knew that Dennett's account of our concept of self-mischief that Darwin's ideas must produce if properly understood. Darwin's fear of confrontation is well known, as is the pain he suffered when he contemplated the offense that he felt under the attacks of his critics. For example, in his summary of what he takes to be the standard version of Darwin's impact on Victorian culture: "The Origin of Species came into the theological field primed with a Pepperian philosophy; those sullen-faced tourists who regarded themselves as barren of the old grafted to his." Darwin's political views are striking; the book is not the "The History of the Culture of the Mind," Critical Inquiry 9 (1983): 469-482. Mazzolo, Laurence W. Matthews: The Critical Legacy. New York: Camdon House, 1995. Merrin, Dorothy: Review of Nicholas Murray, A Life of Matthew Arnold: Clinton Mancham, Matthew Arnold: A Literary Life; Ian Hamilton, A Gift Impersonated: The Poetic Life of Matthew Arnold; Donald Stone, 'Communications with the Future: Matthew Arnold in Dialogue.' Nineteenth Century Literature 54 (1999): 110-113. Thesing, William B. "Afterword." Matthew Arnold in His Time and Ours: Centenary Essays. Ed. Clinton Mancham and Forrest D. Burt: Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1988. 197-205. The Open University of Israel

Monkeys, Microcephalid Idiots, and the Barbarous Races of Mankind: Darwin's Dangerous Victorianism

Lelia S. May

Daniel Dennett is a provocateur. In his best-selling book with the wicked title of Darwin's Dangerous Idea he glibly presents Darwin's theory as being like the universal acid of science fiction which dissolves all that attempts to contain it (63). This acid destroys not only the notion of any teleology in nature (intentions, plans and goals) as well as all remnants of Lamarckianism ("acquired characteristics can be inherited") but also the foundations and substance of religion and of traditional moral systems. It replaces them with "sociobiology or evolutionary ethics" (480), evolutionary psychology and, by extension, the comprehensive model of the brain—which just happens to be one of Dennett's favorite topics. (Dennett refers implicitly to "Artificial Intelligence and its evil twin, Darwinism" [400].) What is the "mindless" level of the level that best accounts for . . . the wonder in the work of nature? (59). An algorithm is in the "underlying mindlessness" (51)—a formula for a purely mechanical repetition.

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Because of Darwin's belief that sympathy is a native component of the human make-up passed along by natural selection, he is unable to explain how the lower animals, who lack Utilitarianism of his nineteenth-century companions Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, summarized in the "Principle of Utility." (84) It is the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong," (45). Darwin is willing to recognize a slightly corrected version of Utilitarianism as compatible with natural selection and even derivable from it as a possible example of upholding the Hobbesian conception of self-interest: "more recently the 'greatest happiness principle' has been brought prominently forward." (104) For Darwin, if we treat the desire for happiness as the motive for all human action, we are in the same bind as were the Hobbesians. There are clearly some facts that are not motivated by the desire for happiness–neither individual or social traditions in anything but a purely utilitarian way. For Darwin, Kant was on the side of the angels, not on the side of the primate. Darwin clearly saw that the rationality and autonomy, which, according to Kant, alone gave human beings the unique moral status in the context like principle which humans would need to transcend their animalism. For this reason it is clear that Darwin's assertion that evolution leads to the Categorical Imperative is not a carte blanche endorsement of the whole of the Kantian ethic. Kant's conception of human dignity is premised on the distinction between human and animal psychology (humans have a "categorical imperative" which Utilitarian animals do not, and Kant presupposing, Darwin dramatically informs his readers that it also leads directly to the Categorical Imperative. Two of the ethical codes that have competed for the allegiance of Western moralists are the Kantian and the utilitarian, and Kant's theory of the Categorical Imperative is the primary version of the Categorical Imperative ("Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law," and "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person, or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only") (9, 47).), and Bentham's/Mill Utilitarianism epitomized in the Principle of Utility. These two traditions have been regarded as being at odds with one another, the first deriving from reason and logic, the second from feeling and sentiment. Kant and Mill but both stand on the same footing: utilitarianism in the primary versions of the Categorical Imperative. Thus, not only does Darwin's version of moral instinct, the "categorical imperative"—the Kantian idea into his theory of evolution, and to derive the former from the latter. Darwin expresses an idea that is, perhaps, even broader than this one has yet taken. In addition to answering Kant's question, such an approach will also have "some independent interest, as it may help to answer the question of the lower animals throws light on one of the highest philosophical faculties of man" (84). After tracing primitive advancement through the development of social instincts, the heightening of the powers of memory and individuality, Darwin says that the "wishes of the community could be expressed [and] the common opinion how each member ought to act for the public good would naturally become in paramount degree the guide to action." (85). Speaking of "man in a very rude state," Darwin writes that such a man "might then declare—that not any barbarian or unchristian man could think of interfering with any of my own conduct, and in the words of Kant, I will not in my own person violate the dignity of humanity" (94-95). This is an amazing passage, for Darwin's "man"—neither individualist in the Kantian sense nor part of the general good the greatest-happiness principle is a nearly safe standard of right and wrong (320).

Natural selection, then, has provided us with a modicum of sympathy for the other. This is the material foundation both of sociality and morality; it leads slowly but directly to a modified version of the Benthamite Principle of Utility in the form of a "categorical imperative"—the Kantian idea into his theory of evolution, and to derive the former from the latter. There is yet another addition to Darwin's evolutionary ethics. He says, "[T]he social instincts—the principle of man's moral constitution—with the aid of active intellectual powers and the effects of habit, naturally lead to the golden rule. 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye to them likewise'; and this lies at the foundation of morality" (109-10).4 Thus, not only does Darwin's version of moral instinct, the "categorical imperative"—the Kantian idea—bear on the foundation of "one of the highest philosophical faculties of man."4) This question is answered not in terms of duty or of "the general good," but in terms of the concept of "virtue," as in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. Yet Darwin even goes on to be used toward this moral tradition, stating that "courage" is a universal virtue: "this quality has universally been placed in the highest rank" (102). He goes on to say, "It is not improbable that after long practice virtues tend to be inherited." (320). In fact, Darwin enters into an optimistic theme that, along with the concept of virtue: "Looking to future generations, there is no cause to fear that the social instincts will grow weaker, and we may expect that virtuous habits will grow stronger, becoming perhaps fixed by inheritance. In the same way, the higher and lower impulses will be less severe, and virtue will be triumphant." (108). Darwin proves equally sanguine about "intelligence" when he claims that "some intelligent actions, after being performed during several generations, become converted into instincts and are inherited, as when birds on oceanic islands learn to avoid man." (97).

The ideas set forth by Darwin in these last two passages may in fact be the unexpressed motives (due to embarrassment) for the abandonment by twentieth-century evolutionary ethics of Darwin's commitment to traditional morality. Darwin's ideas about intelligence and virtue are clearly Lamarckian in nature. That is to say, they are strongly committed to one of the great biological errors over which "Darwinism" has been fought, but the idea—a supposed to have triumphed, the doctrine that acquired characteristics can be inherited. (Jean-Baptiste Lamarck's most famous just-so story accounts for the giraffe's long neck by explaining that each proto-giraffe generation is forced to stretch its neck a bit more to reach the ever-decreasing leaves on the African savanna, and these stretched necks are then inherited by subsequent generations, producing the species of today.) That Darwin was on occasion a crypto-Lamarckian malgré lui cannot be denied. He explains not only human virtues in terms of Lamarckian principles of inheritance, but also many physical traits, such as the disappearance of the tail.

As we have now evidence that mutations occasionally produce an inherited effect, it is not very improbable that in short-tailed monkeys the projecting part of the tail, being functionally useless, should after many generations have become rudimentary and distorted, from being continuously rubbed and chafed. (49).

In this fashion he also explains the "girth of the neck and the depth of the instep" of sailors (25), the thickness "of the skin on the soles of the feet" (25), and the more sophisticated development of certain organs.

As all animals tend to multiply beyond their means of subsistence, so it must have been with the progenitors of man; and this would inevitably lead to a struggle for existence and to natural selection. The latter process would be greatly aided by the inherited effects of the increased use that which he himself also gives." (53).

The golden rule is itself a kind of compromise between the Categorical Imperative and the principle of utility. It recognizes the former; it recognizes the latter, but holds that no action can be moral unless it can be universalized (i.e., logically consistent with the categorical imperative, and just oneself), yet, like the latter, it is based on desire (one's own desire).
of parts, and these two processes would incessantly react on each other. (53)

As was the case with Galileo’s dangerous idea, Darwin’s was considered dangerous in his own time, and by some in ours, because anti-religious philosophy would undermine the possibility for moral action and would justify immorality. Yet, as we have seen, by showing (with a little help from his Lamarckian friends) that the doctrine of natural selection encompassed all of the most important features of the European-Christian moral tradition, Darwin attempted to alleviate that anxiety. Moreover, despite having admitted in personal correspondence that he found Christianity to be a “damnable doctrine,” (qtd. in Desmond and Moore 623) and in spite of being capable of publicly denouncing “foolish religious motives” (102) and “aburd religious belief” (105) and his own apologetic “agnosticism,” and being prepared to admit of The Descent of Man “that the conclusions arrived at in this work will be denounced by some as highly irreligious” (323)—despite all this, he went on to declare that saying that the individual and the species are the “results of blind chance” would be irreducible, but that saying they are the result of “the laws of variation and natural selection” (323) would not. Indeed, he perfectly prepared to amalgamate religion, Larmarkism, and natural selection:

For the moral qualities are advanced, either directly or indirectly, much more through the effects of habit, the refining powers, instruction, religion, etc., than through natural selection; though to this latter agency may be safely attributed the social instincts which afforded the basis for the development of the moral sense. (327-28)

In fact, because of these forces the human being can take pride in having risen “to the very summit of the organic scale” (325).

This last reference to a “summit of organic scale” pro- duces another difficulty for neo-Darwinism, because Darwin was supposed to have destroyed the concept of biological progress. Biologist Jonathan Howard observes in his con- tribution to the Oxford “Past Masters” series that “progression and progress had no place in Darwin’s pragmatic and relativistic scheme,” adding that “the crucial idea is the blindness of the evolutionary process, which responds only to contingency” (56, 35). Alexander Alland Jr., in his Evolution and Human Behavior, says that a science like Dar- win’s is not concerned with “value-loaded conceps such as progress or happiness” (323). Likewise, the late Stephen Jay Gould told us that Darwin did not like to use the word “evolution” because in his time it was associated with the idea of progress. Gould insisted that it was social Darwinism (basically Herbert Spencer’s creation) that made the unfortunate equation between “progress and evolution,

(Ever Since Darwin 36, 304). Yet, not only in the passage above, but in many others, it is clear that Charles Dar- win—the Victorian scholar as opposed to his purged and scientifically purified image—has a distinct concept of “evolutionary progress,” an idea that contradicts contemporary evolutionary theory and therefore one that, in his own day, would not in and of itself be shocking. He writes that “progress has been much more general than regression; that man has risen, though by slow and interrupted steps, from a low condition to the highest standard as yet attained by him in knowledge, morals and religion” (127).

“Progress” for Darwin means the transition from a “primiti- ve” state to a “civilized” one. (For instance, because of the harsh conditions in which they find themselves, the Eskimos, despite all their heroic efforts, have found that “their climate has been too severe for continued progress” [116].) However, even within civilization there are barriers to evolu- tionary advancement. For example, civilization allows for the accumulation of wealth, which “when very great tends to convert men into useless drones, but their number is never large; and some degree of elimination occurs here, for we daily see rich men, who happen to be fools or profligates, squandering away their wealth” (118). In addition, progress- retarding atavism is possible within civilization. Just as blackness in sheep is a throwback to an earlier period, “[w]ith mankind some of the worst dispositions, which occasionally without any assignable cause make their appearance in families, may perhaps be reversions to a savage state, from which we are not removed by very many generations” (120). Nevertheless, Darwin’s optimism about the inevitability of progress is indomitable. In a most astonishing passage, he declares:

At some future period, not very distant as measured by comers, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes... will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will inter- vene between man in a more civilized state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the Negro or Australian and the gorilla. (139)

Thus, even though Darwin’s gentlemanly amalgamation of the Christian, Kantian, Utilitarian and Aristotelian moral traditions caused him to abhor slavery, “it did not in his mind entail any concept of racism and militant imperialism.” In the passage just cited, Darwin does not condemn the inevitable “extermination of the savage races,” races that are closer to our simian “allies” than they are to civilized peoples. Currently (this passage tells us), hierarchical relations can be diagrammed as follows:

But because of the inexorable extermination of both savages and gorillas (#3 & #5), and the elimination of the current state of civilization through normal advances (#2), eventually the gap between civilization and nature will be wider.

Not surprisingly, Darwin’s racism is accompanied by an

It seems that if Darwin regresses anything in this passage, it is that in the future the truth of his theory of evolution will be less visible, for the connection between more highly civilized Caucasians (#1) and baboons (#6) will be less patent than that between today’s dark “savage races” and gorillas. Any doubt about Darwin’s support for peculiarly British colonialism in the name of progress is erased upon encountering the following observation: “The remarkable success of the English as colonists, compared to other European nations, has been ascribed to their daring and persistent energy; a result which is well illustrated by comparing the progress of the Canadians of English and French extraction” (124).

Darwin’s defense of colonialism, like, I suspect, most such defenses, presupposes the truth of racism. Throughout The Descent, as in so much of the anthropological literature of the day, there are references to “the higher or civilized races” (14) and to “the lower races of man” (33). In mentioning a certain Dr. Duncan, who criticizes Darwin’s theory of evolution by pointing out that the theory of natural selection, if true, would tend to favor the prolific but inferior Irish over the energetically controlled but superior Saxons, Dar- win corrects Dr. Duncan’s math, but not his racism (“the indiscriminate suffer a high rate of mortality, and the extremely profligate leave few offspring”) (121). Darwin apparently does not approve of interracial marriages, and claims to have demonstrated that such liaisons would lead to atavism: “crossed races of man would be eminently liable to revert to the primordial hairy character of their early ape-like progenitors” (311). While discussing human beings with arrested mental developments, he writes, “these idiots some- what resemble the lower types of mankind” (27), and he compares “monkeys, ... microcephalous idiots, and ... the barbarous races of mankind” (75). Indeed, Darwin’s allegiance to his own social class leads him to prefer animals to the “lower races of mankind.” In response to those who point out that, on his own theory, Darwin accuses himself of being descended from a simian, Darwin responds that he would as soon be descended from a “heretic little monkey.” As a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practices infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the greates superstitions” (328).

Gillian Beer also sees the issue of racism differently from the way I do. She says that Darwin’s “categoricity thesis” (i.e., all species are derived from one source) “had, and was known to have, political implications; it aligned Darwin where he had wished to stand, firstly against those who would

separate other races from the ‘Caucasians’” (506). It seems to me that the passage we have just inspected does not support Beer’s generous evaluation.

306 (It makes one’s blood boil” (qtd. in Desmond and Moore 329).
307 Gillian Beer’s estimation is more moderate than mine. She says, “Darwin was alert to some of the colouring impurities in its society and did not seek

rarely to naturalise or extramux them by likening them to events in nature. . . . [But] did take considerable pains—not always successfully—to avoid legitimising current social order by naturalising it.” (52-53).
almost equal dose of sexism. 20 Man," he observes, "is more courageous, pugnacious and energetic than woman, and has a more inventive genius." However, always the careful scientist, Darwin adds: "His brain is absolutely larger, but whether or not proportionately to his larger body, has not, I believe, been fully ascertained." (276) However, in a passage now notorious among Darwin's feminist critics, we are told:

"[T]he chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shown by man's attaining to a higher eminence, in whatever he takes up, than can woman—whether requiring deep thought, imagination, or the exercise of the sense and hands. If two lists were made of the most eminent men and women in poetry, painting, sculpture, music (inclusive both of composition and performance), history, science and philosophy, with half a dozen names under each subject, the two lists would not bear comparison. (276)"

"Thus," he concludes from all this, "man has ultimately become superior to woman." (276) Despite the pressures of natural selection weighing against the equality of women, Darwin, speaking optimistically of the "inherited effects" of education, suggests the following possibility: In order that woman should reach the same standard as man, she, too, should be trained to energy and perseverance and to have her reason and imagination exercised to the highest point; and then she would probably transmit these qualities chiefly to her adolescent daughters. (276-77)

But even this moment of Lamarckian optimism fades, as Darwin reminds us that this proposal would be successful only in the unlikely event that the highly cultivated men of modern society produce more offspring than their more ignorant sisters. Even then, natural selection might cause men to forge ahead beyond women, as men "generally undergo a severe struggle in order to maintain their position; this will tend to keep up or even increase their mental powers, and, as a consequence, the present inequality between the sexes." (277)"

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Robert Browning's "A Death in the Desert" is a poem that first appeared in the collection Dramatics Per- zone in May 1864, and is an extraordinary and critically prob- lematic poem in which Browning attempts to engage with distinguish- ing the spiritual and religious aspects of the human experience and the unbeliever. Most of the poem is taken up with the speech of St. John, the evangelist and last surviving apostle, now dying in extremis old age, in his hiraeth from Roman persecution with a small group of followers. St. John's spiritual last testament, much of it densely argumentative and characterized by an often almost elliptical concentration of expression, represents Browning's apologetic quest to answer what he considered the increasingly destructive arguments of modern unbelievers—as of course contemporary readers and reviewers recognized. St. John's speech incorporates numerous interlopers in different imaginary voices: two of these, the speech of the scep- tics in lines 370-421 and that of the representative 'man' in lines 534-39, are of considerable length, both representing the relentlessly questioning voices of modern religious scepticism. Much remains to be said about the contemporary context of Browning's St. John's arguments.2

This article is concerned with a short, difficult passage (ll. 625-9) which occurs in the later part of St. John's speech, at the end of the long verse paragraph (ll. 571-633) in which the apostle argues for man's collective capacity for spiritual progress. Behind the arguments of this paragraph lies the notion of the progressive realization of spiritual truth, which was gaining currency in the late 50s and early 60s. Browning would almost certainly know, at least in translation, G. E. Lessing's essay 'Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts' (1780), in which revelation is equated with the education of mankind; F. W. Robertson's paper 'The Educational Notions of the Christian Religion and Unbelief' (1835). Although Lessing's article was not Browning's immediate model, the essay may well have been available to him in the period of work on the "Death in the Desert." (Browning's "What is Revelation?" has been interpreted as a response to Lessing's essay.) In Lessing's view, the education of the human race, achieved slowly and progressively, would have a spiritual function. In this respect Browning's "What is Revelation?" is a reflection on the education of the human race and a later representation of "What is Revelation?" as "What is Might?". (55-7) Browning's St. John argues that the concept of truth is necessarily provisional: "God's gift was that man should conceive of truth / And years to gain it, catching at mistake, / As midway help till he reach fact indeed" (I. 605-7). Using the analogy of the sculptor gradually moulding his clay, the apostle observes, "Right in you, right in him, such way be man's / God only makes the live shape at a jet. / Will ye renounce this past of creatureship?" (I. 622-4). Only God can create the living form in a single spurt of activity: the "ye" of the last line, as throughout the apostle's speech, is not only the small group of followers whom he is addressing.
Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts" that the progressive revelation of truth will culminate in human perfection. In the four lines that follow, at the end of the verse paragraph, St. John continues to address the generalized "ye," the believers, and particularly the modern believers, whose duty it is to make the "newest vessels," to renew the vital relationship with God:

If ye tarry, this judgment on your head,
Never to reach the ultimate, angelic law,
Indulging every instinct of the soul
There where law, life, joy, impilate are one thing!

(6.30-3)

The apostle is, of course, describing the higher mode of being which will be enjoyed by the perfected humanity of the future: the old phrase "angels' law" (I. 631) may allude to Acts 7: 53, "Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." The severe, admonishing tone of the first line, typical of much of St. John's speech, seems strangely out of key with the evocation of perfected human nature, in which man's conflicting impulses will form a joyous, blended unity. The lines form the conclusion to what was obviously intended as a climactic statement, a final affirmation of man's collective spiritual destiny. To many modern readers, as perhaps to many of Browning's contemporaries, the optimism of this paragraph must seem impossibly shallow.

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Rossetti's Belated and Disturbed Walk Poems

Ernest Fontana

One does not immediately associate Dante Gabriel Rossetti and rural walking tours. Of the major male Victorian poets, he shares with Browning exclusively urban origins and, consequently, a broad range of cosmopolitan interests. Not surprisingly Rossetti's imagination feeds upon the stimuli provided by the London metropolis: museums, galleries, libraries and the relative freedom to develop intimate relationships with women of different social classes. Nevertheless in the summer of 1853, the twenty-four-year old Rossetti, beset by both bolts and a London cholera epidemic, undertook a rural walking tour. To his mother he wrote: "I wish to get into the country immediately, to go somewhere and walk a good deal" (Marsh 103). Although he had initially hoped to visit the Lake District with its Wordsworthian associations, he instead first travelled by train to Newcastle with William Bell Scott and then with Scott by train to Carlisle and Hexam (Marsh 103-104). In July Rossetti escaped "beautty Newcastle," travelling by rail to Coventry, and thence on foot to Warwick's magnificent castle and Kenilworth (Marsh 105). He wrote Woolner that "[h]is walk is going to form part of Warwickshire for a week or so, having great glory" (Marsh 105). Of this walking tour Marsh writes: "[This brief and solitary pilgrimage so uncharacteristic of Rossetti's physical self in later years, remained with him as a golden memory, and some kind of indefinite landmark in his life" (Marsh 106).

For us what is significant is that this 1853 walking tour inspired another walk poem in which Rossetti engages directly with Wordsworth as a precursor poet, specifically with Wordsworth the author of walk poems such as Tintern Abbey, "Resolution and Independence," "The Solitary Reaper," "The Lark at the Bar," "The Old Curlew," and Stepping Westward." What Rossetti does in his walk poems is to disturb and debunk this Wordsworthian genre. For example, in Rossetti's walk poems there are no accidental epiphanic encounters, no occasions for imaginative transport, no harvest of imperishable memories for the future repair of the imagination and spirit, "life and food / For future years." Rossetti's walk poems present instead situations ofcatching, belatedness, missed opportunity and imaginative inhibition.

Ann Wallace cites De Quincey, who estimated that Wordsworth walked in his lifetime "175 to 180,000 English miles" (127). His walk poems are therefore rooted in an actual social practice. For Wallace the Wordsworthian walk or walk poem is "an extension of the georgic mode into a previously unrecognized literary mode that [the names] peripecitric." For her "walking replaces [georgic] cultivation." This neo-georgic form emerges as "walkers" as "Wordsworth[ian] on a public footpath, were by means of walk songs, love songs, and personal reminiscences to reappropriate it for common use" and thereby partially reversing the land enclosures of the previous century (Wallace 10-11).

Although some of Wallace's argument is highly speculative, her overall idea wisdom poetic walk or walk poem the walker replaces the cultivator of traditional georgic is telling. The meditative and imaginative content of the walk poem thus replaces the harvest of the georgic. In her commentary on "The Solitary Reaper," Leivinson makes this analogy explicit: "here, the poet reaps his mind of a harvest grown from the seeds of random, unlooked for association" (139). For Rossetti, however, there is no harvest. In his walk poems sensorial perception does not lead as in Wordsworth to the recovery of a heightened spiritual awareness, but instead to an intensified sense of a rupture between landscape and consciousness and a greater awareness of the unredeable and aleatory nature of the world through which the walker walks.

Three weeks before his death in 1882 Rossetti attempted to finish his story "St. Agnes of Intercession." He contrasts here the experience of the urban walker with that of his rural counterpart, privileging the first over the second. The city is a familiar text, full of passages or loci that carry personal, intimate meanings for the urban walker whose entire life has been spent traversing them. Rural places, visited by an urban walker, perhaps once or twice a year during a vacation or walking tour, are less familiar and, therefore, less associated with the walker's personal history. The woods and fields have their own "proper spell" and need no "consecration from thought." The objective impression of the otherness of field and wood projects an aura or spell that, it is implied, resist, unlike more familiar urban sites, being read as a text even of the walker's own personal history.

Any artist or thoughtful man whatever, whose life has passed in a large city, can scarcely fail, in course of time, to have some association connecting each spot continually passed and repassed with the labours of his own mind. In the woods and fields every place has its proper spell and

McGann describes how Rossetti's "famous knowledge near the river at 16 Cheyne Walk," continued "the machinery of his mind. McGann stresses how "in this urban dwelling, 'intake so many nerves and reflexive forms, persons and objects would continually appear and reappear in different angles and perspectives, multiplying reflections of reflexions and avenues of focus.'" (20)

Gilbert describes his Romantic walking poem as characterized by "a fluid oscillation between external objects and inward ideas"; it requires "the sub-

In Numbers 8: 4 we are told that Aaron made the candlestand "according unto the pattern which the Lord had shown Moses."
mystery, and needs no consecration from thought; but wherever in the daily walk through the thronged and jarring city, the soul has read some knowledge from life, or劳ved towards some birth within its own silence, there abides the glory of that hour, and the cloud rests there before an unseen tabernacle. (Rossetti, *Works 425*)

A notable illustration of this is Rossetti's "Woodspurge" (written in 1856) in which the walker—"I had walked on at the wind's will"—fails to discover a metaphoric or personal significance in the three-capped woodspurge flower.

My eyes, wide open, had the run Of some ten weeds to fix upon; Among those few, out of the sun, The woodspurge flowerered, three cups in one.

From perfect grief there need not be Wisdom or even memory; One thing that learnt remains to me— The woodspurge has a cup of three.

The speaker's inner emotion cannot be projected upon the flower. The rural woodspurge is one of ten weeds; it has three cups. It is perceived through the lens of arithmetical fact that neither expresses the labour of the speaker's own mind nor an imminent spiritual pressure. Unlike Wordsworth's field of dancing daffodils, "a jocund company with whom ['A poet could not but be gay," the single woodspurge weed and flower evidence no correspondence with the speaker's "per

d grief." As Riche observes the poem 'embodies in a peculiarly bare form one kind of poetry that may result from a loss of faith in the visionary" (59).

In "The Honey-suckle," written during the 1853 walking tour (Rossetti, *Writings*) 488, a similar disjunction between the rural walker and the world of fields and woods is shown.

I plucked a honeysuckle where The hedge on high is quick with thorn, And climbing for the prize, was torn, And fooled my feet in quak-water, And by the thorns and by the wind The blossom that I took was thin'd, And yet I found it sweet and fair.

Thence to a richer growth I came. Where, nursed in mellow correance, Able to endure the billy-scrakes spung by scores, Not hurried like my single stem, All virgin limbs of scent and dew, So from my hand that first I drew, Yet plucked not any more of them.

The walker plucks the honeysuckle blossom on a whim. Although its petals are tinted by the wind and surrounding thorns, the speaker finds the blossom "sweet and fair." Yet on another random impulse he discards it when he comes upon a "richer growth," "All virgin limbs of scent and dew," and returns from it. The walker's relation to the honeysuckle is studiously casual and whimsical and, if one wishes to put a metaphoric reading, the poem can be seen to dramatize the waywardness and unpredictability of the male walker's sexual impulse. Yet the poem does not reflect or mediate on this connection; it instead records random sensorial impulses and acts without the walking poem's traditional reflective "harvest."

In both "The Church Porch" sonnets, also written in 1853 shortly after Rossetti and Scott's visit to Hexam Abbey (Marsch 104), the Rossettiian walker records the failure of the interior of the unnamed ancient church to evoke a sustained sense of appropriate reverence or spiritual transport. In the second of these sonnets, the speaker imagines himself in the company of a sister; neither she nor the walker, "It is so hid,

can abide for the service or prayer. They instead must again place their feet in the heat and dust of "the evil spirit," spiritually unnoticed by the church's interior, silence, "sudden
denimness, and deep prayer." These sonnets contrast with Rossetti's "Carillon," written during his 1849 trip to France and Belgium with Holman Hunt. In that earlier poem the setting of the belfry of the cathedral at Bruges brings the speaker to a momentary experience of intense and vividly sensorial excitement as he responds to the ringing of the carillon:

I climbed at Bruges all the flight The Belfy has of ancient stone For longs the air until it blown: The earth was grey, the sky was white. I stood up near upon the height That my flesh felt the Carillon. (31-36)

In the 1881 edition of *The House of Life* there are five walking poems, written between 1850 and 1873. All are placed in Part II of the work, entitled "Change and Fate." In order to trace Rossetti's developing execution of the walk poem I shall treat these sonnets in the order of their composition rather than that of their position in the 1881 edition of *The House of Life*.

In "#9, "Autumn Idleness," written in 1850, the vividly rendered sunset autumnal landscape of the octet and the purposeful passage of the sun on the determined times of day—dawn, noon, and—contrast with the walker's-own purposes and sense of his own time's waste. The energetic pedestrian derives neither comfort, purpose, nor meaning from his walk.

Here dawn to-dy unclouded her magic glass; Here noon now gives the threat and takes the dew; Till even bring rest when other good things pass. And here the lost hours the lost renew While I still lead my shadow o'er the grass, Not know, for longing, that which I should do.

In a poem full of color and sunlight, the speaker is bound to his colorless shadow, to a darkness, and, filled with a vague, undisclosed longing, he is unable to move forward into a new shadowless time or path.

If the walker of "Autumn Idleness" lacks a knowledge of a new path or future destination, the walker in "#70, "The Hill Summit," inspired and composed by Rossetti's Warwickshire walking tour (Marsch 105), has "lingered in the vale too long" and now gazes at the setting sun as a belated worshipper. He now remembers what he should have heeded earlier in his walk.

This feast-day of the sun, his altar There In the broad west heat he has heaved for verper-song; And I have loitered in the vale too long And gaze now a belated worshipper. Yet may I not forget that I was worn, So journeying, of Kit's face at intervals Transfigured where the fringed horizon falls,— A fiery bush with consummating fire.

If the epiphanic encounter with the sun as Moses' angelic "fiery bush" was possible earlier in the day, now at evening the walker can only regret that he then failed to respond to this vying revelation with full perceptual intensity. The consequence of this failure is that now the walker must "tread downward," "And travel the bewildered tracks till night." Rossetti here defines his relation to the walking poems of Wordsworth, his great Romantic precursor, whose first person poems walk characteristically present the walker as fully responsive and transformed by his chance pedestrian encounters, e.g., "The Daffodils" and "Resolution and Independence." Here the Rossettiian walker is "belated"; his pedestrian encounters and the memories of them do not inspire or inspire. "The Hill Summit" is a walk poem of "a walk poem," which can be said to dramatize the end of its genre. For a hour the walker beholds a sunset that will neither illuminate nor transform him as he slowly walks into "the last light."

Yet for this hour I still may here be stayed And see the gold air and the silver fade And that last flight by into the last light.

In "The Hill Summit" the "feast day" of the sun is observed by the walker with belated reverence; in "#67 The Landmark," written in 1855, the well, a source of vividly refreshing and a significant landmark on the walker's jour

The landmark. The walker is, initially treated with thoughtless irreverence. Now, as the walker in "The Hill Summit," the walker in "The Landmark" belatedly recognizes his careless error, not to retrieve his step and the well hoping both to ally his thirst and discover his missed path. Here the solitary Rossettiian walker has, at least, hope that he can correct his error and find the path he had earlier missed.

Was that the landmark? What,—the frivolous well Whose wave, low down, I did not stop to drink And left its bubbling, foaming pebbles from its break In sport to send its imagery pell-mell.

Rossetti's walker here seeks to retrieve his steps unlike the walker in Frost's "The Road Not Taken." For the influence of Rossetti on Frost, see Poitier, 35-37. Both poets are biased practitioners of the Romantic walk poem.

[From quote William Rossetti as attributing this imagery to the conclusion of Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838).]

(And mine own image, had I not fooled well)

Was that my point of view I had thought

The stations of my course should rise unshrouded,

As altar-stone or ensign caded.

But all the path is missed, I must go back.

And dust to drink while wind and sun reach the spring Which once I stained, which since may have grown

black.

Yet so no light he let no bird now sing As here I turn, I'll thank God, hastening.

That the same goal is still on the same track.

In "#84, "Farewell to the Glen" (1869), the Rossettiian walker bids farewell to the "stream-fed glen," which, unlike himself, "far at so well and find'st for ever smooth / The brow of Time where man may read no ruth." In contrast to the glen, the "walker now fare[s] forth in bitter fantasy," remembering previous walks beside other streams where he was able to indulge "the bitter bliss of being sad made melancholy." This sonnet, unlike shut in the glen, may be "read as an expression of hopeless rut, an emotion that is much more painful than the cited and contrasted melancholy of the traditional poetic *Penseroso.* Here Rossetti also emphasizes the ineptitude of the walker to read into the glen meanings that are vivifying and fresh and which also differ from what he "read" in his previous walks by other streams in other gles. In the severit of the sonnet, the walker, consequently, bespeaks the glen to future and able walkers.

And yet, farewell! For better shalt thou fare Than clad in my black shadow and sweet shadow there

In hours to come, when an hour ago Thine echoes but had one master's sight to bear And thy trees whispered what he feared to know.

Although not precisely a record of a return to a specific place, like Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey . . . . Rossetti's "Farewell to the Glen" represents a return to a generalized or typical place—a "stream fed glen"—that unlike Wordsworth's revised "Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798," does "provide for the poet-walker 'life and food / For future years.' By this placing of Rossetti's sonnet within the category of walk poem, complex intertextualities reveal themselves that, in turn, threaten the sonnet's narrative significance.

Sonnet #1, "Memorial Thresholds" (1873) is, unlike the four previous sonnets from *The House of Life,* an urban walking poem. Here, to quote the previously cited "St. Agents of Intercession," the walker-speaker revisits an urban place "where his soul read some knowledge, from life, or laboured towards some birth within its own silence" (Rossetti, Words 425). In this return to place walking poem, the solitary Rossettiian urban pedestrian stands before "a single simple door" that for him is stranger and more evocative of
the passion of surprise" than the geology inspired images of the earth's ancient beginnings and imagined end.

What place so strange,—though unevented snow
With unimaginable years.

At the earth's end,—what passion of surprise
Like frost-bound fire-girt scenes of long ago?
Lo! this is not but this: this hour; and lo!
This is the very place which tuine eyes
Those mortal hours in vain immortalise,
'Mid hurrying crowds, with what alone I know.

It is this very door that must be replicated in some future life:
"By some new Power reduplicate, must be / Even yet my life-porch in eternity, / Even with one presence filled, as once of yore." If this desired requirement, this must, this repudiated single door is a vain fancy, the speaker, his poems, and the city itself (the The of the sestet) are mere chaff to be blown about by the mocking winds: 'Or mocking winds whirl round a chaff-strown floor / Thee and thy years and these my words and me.'

Although not completely clear in its resolution, "Memorial Thresholds," leads the walker to the threshold, literally and figuratively, of a revelation that the last two lines of the sonnet cast into doubt. As in the previous four sonnet-walking poems from The House of Life, the speaker here fails to achieve or sustain an epiphanistic restorative encounter. The experience of walking only intensifies the walker's sense of loss, perplexity, isolation, and anguish. Of the last two lines of "Memorial Thresholds" Rossetti observes that "the clarified expression of despair...is all the more powerful following the display of tongue-tied twisted hope" (199).

Uncannily Rossetti anticipates the confusion and belatedness dramatized in his walking poems in his early narrative Hand and Soul, first published in The Germ in 1850. In this story Rossetti includes two similitudes of walking to figure the protagonist Chiara's emotional states at two key points in the narration. First, after the failure of Chiara's attempts to discover and express his soul through the artistic pursuit of fame, orthodox religious spirituality, and morality, Rossetti's narrator registers Chiara's thoughts.

I am as one who, through the whole night, holding his way diligently, hath smitten the steel unto the fist, to lead some whom he knew darling; who hath kept his eyes always on the sparks that himself made, lest they should fail; and who, towards dawn, turning to bid them that he had guided God speed, sees the wet grass untrampled except of his own feet. (Rossetti, Writings 53)

Here Chiara imagines himself as a walker who believes he is guiding others through a darkness with sparks of smitten flint—the light of his imagination—only to discover he is alone and without followers. He has led and led himself to a dark place unvisited by any previous walker.

"For a discussion of this genre see Fontana, "Victorian.""

"These phrases are from Wordworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (1807)."

In the second similitude, Chiaro, on the threshold of speaking to the woman who appears to embody his own soul, feels "like one who scaling a great steepness, hears his own voice echoed in some place much higher than he can see, and the name of which is not known to him." (Rossetti, Writings 53). Although this second similitude communicates the walker's confusion and disorientation, as in "Autumn Idleness" and "Hill Summit," it also presents a vivid threshold experience, one in which the boundaries imagined in "Memorial Thresholds" are permeable. Here Chiaro feels as a walker who hears his own echoed voice coming from an unnamed, uncharted place above him and that he is about to enter. In this similitude for the discovery of Chiaro's soul or ideal self, Rossetti devises an ultimate pedestrian experience which, in his walking poems, he subsequently sought but never fully realized.

Most often grounded, unlike those similes of Hand and Soul, in the quotidien, rural landscapes of his great predecessor Wordsworth, Rossetti reenacts, in his walk poems, the Wordsworthian pedestrian regimen only to fail to derive from it a Wordsworthian imaginative and consolatory harvest, "life and food / For future years." In a series of remarkably original poems, Rossetti impersonates, disturbs, and decenters what is found to be, for him, a no longer viable poetic inheritance. Thus Rossetti, whose unpublished verse letters to his brother, written during his 1848-49 journey with Holman Hunt to France and Belgium, constitute the first examples of an emerging alternative poetic form, the railroad poem, dramatizes in his walk poems the loss of meditative space, "the ruthless change," Wordsworth himself had foreseen in his 1844 sonnet "On the Projected Kendal and Windermere Railroad: "how can this blight endure? / And must he too the ruthless change bemoan / who scorns a false utilitarian lure." Whereas for the early pre-railroad Wordsworthian pedestrian memory of previous walks could "flash upon that inward eye" and generate "the bliss of solitude," for the belated Rossettian pedestrian past walks are remembered as a confused labyrinth, "the devious confusions of dismay" (H. L. #79, The Monochord), as devious as the often tangled syntax and diction of Rossetti's own self-consciously belated periapic sonnets from The House of Life.

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Fall 2002

Coming in

The Victorian Newsletter

Nathan Cervo, "The Max Nordeau Pre-Raphaelite Gallery"
Natalie Bell Cole, "Attached to life again: the 'Queer Beauty' of Convalescence in Bleak House"
with a historical moment in which changes in the understanding and practice of philanthropy coincided with and contributed to redefinitions of the appropriate roles women should play and of how relations among different social classes should be conducted. Although throughout the texts, most of them literary works, span a period of more than one hundred years, they all make use of the modern artistry of separate spheres... they all represent women’s charitable dealings with the poor and unfortunate as analogous to their role in the home as mothers and wives. At the same time, however, they employ the vocabulary of separate spheres... in the face of various historical conditions, then, all these works use the conjuncture of the terms of domestic and philanthropic discourse to project women into a space that can be structured as both private and public" (26-27).


Jensen, Margaret M. The Open Book: Creative Misreading in the Works of Selected Modern Writers. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. $23.50; $15.50 (paper). “Herewith my account of the variety of social, political, aesthetic, and (inter)personal influences that have contributed to informed, consummate, and/or enhanced the creation of certain literary texts. In the following chapters I will illustrate these various forces at play in the works of five writers who lived and composed, literally and figuratively, alongside one another: Sir Leslie Stephen, Thomas Hardy, George Gissing, Christine Mansfield, and John Middleton Murry. As I shall demonstrate, each of these figures had strong personal and professional associations with two or more of the others. This ‘cross pollination’ infused the great range of interpretive opportunities in the early stages of my research. As I soon discovered, however, it also dictated certain constraints—a constraint with so many writers and so many relationships to describe here, the tangle of connections at times becomes confusing. For the sake of clarity, therefore, the study follows these figures through a roughly chronological sequence” (3).

Kaye, Richard A. The Führer’s Tragedy: Desire without End in Victorian and Edwardian Literature. Charlottesville & London: UP of Virginia, 2001. pp. xxii + 320. $32.00. “In this study of coquettish females and fifty males, of artfully managed attractions and deliberately deferred desires, I consider flirtatious eros as a largely unexamined, distinct realm of experience in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century fiction. Flirtatious desire undermines the still-influential libidinal model of sexuality by its redefinition of the figure of desire. Desire is not necessarily the realization of desire but rather denial itself. Seductive behavior without seduction, attention without intention, flirtation in the Victorian and the Edwardian novel. Yet the flirtatious eros carries powerful emotional associations and unleashes perilous consequences. Containing its own distinct regime of attributes, relying on elusive and multifarious plots, flirtation has its flowering in Victorian fiction for reasons that I shall explore in depth throughout the following chapters” (3-4).

Law, Elizabeth. Indexes to Fiction in the Illustrated London News (1842-1901). The Graphic (1869-1901). Indexes to Fiction. Victorian Fiction Research Guides 29. Victorian Fiction Research Unit, School of English and Art History, James Cook University of Queensland, Australia 4072. Pp. x + 90. SA15. (See “Group News.”) “It is well known that most indices use a single letter or number for each serial form—whether within periodicals or as independent numbers. What seems less clearly understood is that, over the six decades of Victoria’s reign, the dominant mode of serialization shifted unmistakably from the monthly to the weekly instalment. The aesthetic implications are significant: the shift from ‘fat’ monthly to ‘thin’ weekly parts, in Cokere’s terms, clearly influenced the form of Victorian fiction in the long term, favouring frequent ‘incidents’, ‘climax and curtain’ part-endings, and the mechanics of enigma and suspense. Yet this shift also acted as the gradual development of a fully capitalist mode of production in the British fiction industry. In economic terms, therefore, the shift is from expensive, low-circulation
formats produced for middle-class readers by book publishers, towards cheap, high-circulation formats produced for a mass audience by newspaper proprietors. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century the most important outlets for serial fiction were no longer monthly literary magazines but weekly miscellaneous newspapers. This remains true whether we measure by the number of the audi ence of a single copy or by the level of remuneration received by the author, and even, arguably, by the literary value attached to the fiction itself. Rather than being a period of transition, our best current literary history of this territory, most notably the Wellesley Index, tends still to mark the literary months as the broad highways. The present volume in the Victorian Fiction Research Guide series is thus intended as a contribution to the upgrading of the status of the Victorian weekly press from that of mere literary byway. While they were far from being the only journals involved, melodramatic, pictorial weeklies like The Illustrated London News and The Graphic undoubtedly played a key role at most one stage in the growth of the importance of the weekly serial. In the inevitably brief comments that follow (in the ‘Introduction’), I will try to sketch in turn the history of the two journals, their characteristics both common and distinct, and the nature of the indexes provided here (1).

Lawson, Kate and Lynn Shakinsvsky, The Marked Body: Domestic Violence in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Literature, Alby: State University of New York P. 2002. Pp. viii + 204. $59.50 (cloth). $19.95 (paper). ‘This book is a study of discarded and violated bodies of middle-class women in selected texts of mid-nineteenth-century fiction and poetry. [M]ost of these texts do not urgently explore the violence visited upon these bodies as pressing social, political, or moral problems, and even in those that focus on these questions, the implications of these questions finally tend to be evaded, or set aside. . . . [W]hat makes the violence explored in these texts startling is that the violence does not take place in the space of a largely unrepresentable other. . . . rather, violence takes place in the home, in the privileged sphere of bourgeois women’s lives, and at the hands of their husbands and fathers’ (1-2).


The Victorian Novel. Ed. Francis O’Gorman. Blackwell Guides to Criticism. Oxford & Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002. Pp. viii + 344. $27.95 (paper). ‘The Victorian novel’ in my title is a limited category. As it is used in this book, it refers principally to the acknowledged great names of Victorian fiction—Charlotte and Emily Bronte, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, Thomas Hardy, Henry James, William Makepeace Thackeray, and Anthony Trollope—who have been and continue to be admired and read mainly to be the subject of academic criticism, the focus of university and school courses, and consistently present in new editions on publishers’ lists. It is with the critical history of this remarkable corpus of writing (and cognate, less well-known writers) that I am concerned in this survey of a hundred years of fertile critical investigation. That critical history is immense, and . . . it reveals the changing face of our understanding of the major works of Victorian fiction, our altering areas of interest, and shifting sense of the nineteenth century itself across one hundred years’ (2).