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Christian Manliness and Fatherhood in Charles Kingsley's Writings
Laura Fassick

The nineteenth-century Anglican clergyman and author Charles Kingsley encapsulates in his writings many of the concerns about fatherhood and manliness that vexed Victorian England and that remain with us today. Like many Victorians, Kingsley idealizes the selflessness and gentleness that supposedly comes naturally to women, especially in their maternal role. At the same time, he wishes to uphold an ideal of manliness that requires males to be combative, aggressive, even violent—yet good, moral Christians nonetheless. Where, however, can boys find a model for such Christian manliness? Their mothers may be paragons of goodness—in Kingsley's fiction they usually are—but because theirs is a feminine virtue of long-suffering and meekness it is ill-suited as a model for sons. Fathers are the obvious figures to whom to turn, and Kingsley writes extensively about both biological fatherhood and the spiritual fatherhood of priests. Yet throughout Kingsley's fiction fathers, both biological and priestly, fail their actual and spiritual sons, while maternal women assume the leadership in shaping men into what they ought to be. When forced to confront the implications of his own theory, it appears that Kingsley decides the best father is a mother after all.

Although credited with originating the cult of "Muscular Christianity," Kingsley himself vigorously rejected the term and the excessive emphasis on physical prowess that he believed it to connote. Yet he no less vigorously declared himself the advocate of manly virtues. In fact, he specifically warned his society that it needed to promote a "healthy and manful Christianity, one which does not exalt the feminine virtues to the exclusion of the masculine." (qtd. in Giroud 143). Scholars from Donald Hall to James Eli Adams to Herbert Stussman to John Tosh have established that definitions of masculinity within the Victorian period varied considerably but Allen John Hartley points out that for Kingsley, the "masculine" is found in a Biblical hero like King David includes a "vast capacity for sympathy, which enables him to share the sufferings of others" and a "passionately tender" nature (166). Tenderness and sympathy are thus defined as feminine—whether these qualities appear in women or in men—and a masculinity that is defined in opposition to this softness will necessarily emphasize toughness. Kingsley proclaimed himself the spokesman for the rougher specimens of masculinity: the Esau who live a "wild wandering life" rather than the "smooth" and "sleek" Jacob's of the world ("Preface" xv-xvii). The pugnacious heroes who populate his novels exemplify the rough-bewn maleness of which Kingsley approved.

Yet Kingsley struggles with various aspects of the very maleness he endorses and perhaps the most troubling aspect is that of fatherhood. After all, although the father might have been the ultimate authority in a patriarchal society, childcare was typically reserved for women. Not only was a woman assumed to have more direct contact with her children than a father but she was often credited with almost unparalleled importance in the children's moral development. Her influence could shape a child—either male or female—for life. As Claudia Nelson observes, the "caregiving parent was typically the mother, who was now cast... as the gentle moral influence molding her children's character in an almost imperceptible fashion." (15). John Tosh points out that this emphasis on the mother's importance meant that "fatherhood held a decidedly ambiguous position in the culture and practice of Victorian family life. Did [fathers] offer their children something distinctive and essential—or was their role to duplicate as closely as their natures permitted the services performed by the mother?" (79). At first glance, it would appear that Kingsley's answer would be a resounding "Yes!" to the first question and "No!" to the second. After all, if the ideal mother embodied typically feminine virtues, than how could she model the manliness into which male children should grow? Surely only a father or surrogate father could demonstrate for his sons what they themselves must aspire to be.

An Anglican priest as well as a writer, Kingsley also had theological reasons for stressing the importance of fatherhood. Kingsley taught what he regarded as Roman Catholic Mariolatry and effeminacy by insisting on the centrality of God's fatherhood and of Christ's manliness to a proper understanding of Christian religion and life. Kingsley's fierce opposition to what he saw as the "effeminacy" of the celibate Roman Catholic priesthood and his desire to express virtue in emphatically masculine terms led him to emphasize the fatherhood of God and the need for priests to be literally as well as spiritual fathers in order to fulfill their clerical duties. According to Kingsley, "Fully to understand the meaning of 'a Father in Heaven' we must be fathers ourselves" and thus "the theologe ideas which a celibate priesthood have been unable to realize in their teachings, are those of the Father in Heaven—the Husband in Heaven" (Letters 1: 166). By upholding the model of God as Father for Christian men everywhere (including priests), Kingsley could combat the Roman Catholic ideal of priestly celibacy and incidentally justify his own marriage. Kingsley's letters reveal that early in life he was attracted to the very Church and priesthood from which he later recoiled and his biographer Susan Chitty has documented the extent to which his powerful sexual urges made him eager for moral grounds on which to justify his sexuality and dismiss the sup-
posed morality of celibacy. An insistence on the moral and spiritual imperative toward fatherhood was certainly one way to idealize, if not sexualize it, what was then considered the most immediate and important consequence. Further, if the "femine-
life" virtues of the mother provided an insufficient model for boys, then the father's presence was vital as a model of moral masculinity.

Kingsley vividly sketches the dangers of insufficiently masculine father figures when he deals with the priestly "fathers" of the Roman Catholic Church. According to Kingsley, the priestly emphasis on the Virgin Mary combined to make Roman Catholicism not only an effeminizing religion but also a dangerous one for both men and women. Not that eminence has been celebrated for "pearls" (84). As a result, "he took instinctively the crooked and suspicious method" (84) and "his moral torture of Eustace only exacerbates Eustace's already tormented soul (84)." Misled by such inadequate father figures, Eustace loses not only his chance for homosexual fulfillment but even his masculine identity. Eustace becomes a Jesuit and therefore, Kingsley announces, vanishes from his book.

This is a history of men; of men's virtues and sins, victories and defeats; and Eustace is a man no longer; he is become a thing of the past, gone, and where it is set, and does good or evil indefinitely as it is set; which, by an act of moral suicide, has lost its soul, in the hope of saving it; without a will, a conscience, a responsibility (as it is to say) to God or man, but only to the Society." In a word, Eustace, as he says of himself, is "dead." Twice dead, I fear. Let the dead bury their dead. We have no more concern with Eustace Leighe (828).

Kingsley condemns Roman Catholicism, then, partially because its failure to meet men's sexual frustrations has created a false humility, deviousness, and a general renunciation of masculine virtues, which can only corrupt and destroy the young men who seek guid-
ance from them. Yet another danger of Roman Catholicism, however, is that fatherhood is emasculated and becomes something of the power of the ultimate mother: the Virgin Mary. In Yeast (1848), Luke, another Roman Catholic convert, describes the appeal of Roman Catholicism this way:

Would you have me try to be a Prometheus, while I am longing to be once more an infant on a mother's breast? Let me alone as a child, who knows nothing, can do nothing, except lose in its way arguments and reasons, and find 'no end, in wandering maze

it is significant that Brueghel's five enGRAVings in series "Virtuous Married Life"and "Virtuous Widow Life" show how strongly he was attracted to the overt virility of military men. In fact, one cartoonist, who was critical of Kingsley's attack on Catholicism, wrote that the letter "lived men and many persons and perhaps soldiers as being a class of violent men who would keep the ornamental virtues from attracting them as a sine for the considerable path that accompanies that masculine identity."

*Carolina Engelhardt's fascinating essay, "Virtuous Masculinity and the Virgin Mary," provides additional context for Kingsley's attitude toward the Madonna.

*For a more detailed discussion of fatherhood in The Water Babies, see my article, "The Failure of Fatherhood: Maleness and Its Discourse in Classics Literature," in the Journal of the History of Sexuality. For a discussion of how the dissonance with feminine qualities as a threat to masculine identity rather than simply as an object of desire is also found in other famous works, see "Edward's" and "William's" fathers who are awarded the title of a son as a "dreaded oxen" (271).
Jane Eyre, Eros and Evangelicalism

Lauga Haigwood

In Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë uses religious discourse to advance Jane's quest for both spiritual and sexual fulfillment in her marriage with Edward Rochester. Brontë's imaginative challenge is to define, in Victorian, Christian marriage a viable choice for her heroine by addressing the economic inequities and gender ideologies that support an imbalance of power and render the condition of married women, as Mary Anne C. Ward and others point out, metaphorically comparable to that of slaves (Ward 14, Meyer 91).

Brontë constructs a quest toward happy marriage, recognizing also the role that both societal values and original familial conflicts play in structuring her heroine's intimacy needs. Brontë is well aware of the threat that economic dependency posed to her heroine when she makes the marriage terms Jane to lose all delight in her lover's caresses during their post-nuptial toiletting: "... the more he bought me, the more I was degraded (338)." This flux of "annoyance and degradation" clearly diverts both mood and blood flow from sexual receptivity to the rigidly defensive withdrawal of affection. Understanding Jane's retreat markedly her family of origin in order to fortify her threatened sense of self:

As we re-enter the carriage, and I sat back frowning and fagged, I remembered the letter of my uncle, John Eyre, to Mrs. Reed: his intention to adopt me and make me his legatee: "It would, indeed, be a relief," I thought; "I had felt ever so small an independence...."

And somewhat relieved by this idea, I ventured once more to meet my master's and lover's eye; which must pertinaciously sought me long, though I averted both face and gaze. (338-39)

But the imaginative prospect of future independence is not in itself sufficient to remove the present threat; moreover, imaginative "relief" for Jane does not change Rochester himself:

He smiled; and I thought his smile was such a subtle might beestow on a slave... I crushed his hand, which was ever hunting mine, vigorously, and thrust it back to him with the passionate pressure. (339)

While anger seems the appropriate "passion" for a sense of "enlargement," it is clearly not the passion most conducive to intimacy. The self-protective "system" she adopts for the remainder of their courtship reflects her understanding that unresisting intimacy with an unformed Rochester threatens both her integrity and her psychological, as well as moral and spiritual— and her prospects for lasting marital happiness.

For a Victorian, Christian feminist like Charlotte Brontë, however, the context for good sex must be sacramental as well as egalitarian, and this requires bringing the Brynwyys into literature for two major reasons. First, the first is imperative—that is, his willful determination to be a law unto himself by, as Marianne Thomlaiden points out, "arrogant chivalry, with which the divine and perfect alone can be entrusted" (Bronte 169, Thomlaiden 209). The second is sexism—a sin against both God and women, represented theologically by Brontë's heroine in the definition of the seven deadly sins and sinfully by her own personal relationships with women. In all such relationships prior to Bertha's death he devotes his relational energies primarily to maintaining power, using money, manipulation, deception, incarneation... and... wrongs... his deficiency into contempt towards Bertha, Celine, Giacinta and Clara. Jane accurately discerns that she must break out of this pattern or repeat it: "I drew... the certain inference, that if I were... to become the successor of these poor girls, he would one day regard me with the same feeling which now in his mind desolated their memory" (398). For Brontë, sex outside her ideal of egalitarian, monogamous, Christian marriage possessed no value, and to be bad sex in itself degraded and degrading. Thus, saving Rochester as a viable lover for Jane requires conversion of his relationship to women, as well as to God. Jane's marriage a relationship marked by solidarity, honesty, mutual role and interdependence. If we wonder whether Rochester can actually change enough to meet Jane's expectations, we find Jane's answer in the concluding chapter:

I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine... I am determined to seek for a soul companion... to walk to each other is but a more animated and an audible thinking. All my confidence is bestowed on him; all his confidence is devoted to me; we are precisely suited in character—perfect cord the result. (576)

Brontë's novel, then, as a religious narrative with Edward Rochester also requires at least two additional things: first, she must resolve conflicts from her family of origin, particularly those concerned with connection or disconnection between touch and love. Second, she must re-create her family of origin, not by reviving her real family, but by creating a new family of origin that is loving and supportive. In short, Brontë's novel, a religious narrative, provides an imaginative way to fulfill the desires of her heroine-Mrs. Reed. Jane is free for the first time to live her life as she wishes: to marry, to have children, to live independent of her family, just as she desires. Eventually, she marries Rochester and lives a happy life with him, free from the constraints of her family of origin.
early childhood by her aunt (24). While inflexibly withholding her own acceptance, Mrs. Reed does let that reveal in the worst sense, a "sister," Jane to her family and to Jane’s social identity, represented by her Uncle John Eyre. At Moor House Jane will at least material achievement—traditionally the father’s property—depend upon their coming of age—to complement the adult emotional independence she has partially achieved in relation to her mother’s "side." By directing away from her Reed and toward her Eyre, Jane’s retreat leads physically to Moor House, where the conflict between her childhood long- ing for a secure place in the family “group” (3) and the complementary drive toward psychological self-preservation will be played out in the relationship with a male relative who attempts to claim ownership of her sexuality. The novel’s crisis must occur at Moor House because that is where Jane’s two quests—her quest for family love and her quest for sex—love—collide, in St. John’s insensate bullying.

1

Jane the Evangelist

To accomplish Rochester’s much-needed conversion, Brontë must cut a rhetorical path for her heroine through orthodoxy to happiness. As Robert Meil’s point is out in his thorough documentation of Brontë’s many references from orthodox theology, Brontë fails “to respect the traditional meaning of [Christian] emblems consistently” (15). Rochester’s ultimate illustration of Jane’s Evangelicalistic preaching, which insists on a direct and unmediated relationship between the individual soul and God. Rochester must have his own, immediate revelation, just as Jane insists on her own. All his efforts (again, illuminatingly detailed by Maria Lamonaca [249]) to co-opt even Jane’s religious faith for his own ends. Belatedly, but ultimately, Rochester turns directly to God, just as Jane has insisted that he do throughout their relation- ship, both in their early repartee in Chapter 14, and in her refusal to succumb to his later plea that she “be [his] comforter; [his] resou” (409). As Mary Ellis Gibson points out, Jane’s “reformation of Rochester” is “grounded in Evangelical assumptions about duty and the individual conscience or inner voice” (436). Resolutely, Jane leaves him, referring him to the “Comforter located in the living Anglican God: “What shall I do, Jane! Where turn for a companion, and for some hope?” Do as I do: Trust in God for yourself!” (403). Not surprisingly, forever does he: “I began to experience remorse, repentance, the wish for reconciliation to my Maker. I began sometimes to pray: very brief prayers they were, but very earnest: ‘God have mercy on me—how alone with God—the essential condition of each individual, from an Evangelical Christian perspective—can he ever grasp the point of Jane’s preaching. In a parallel manner, Helen Burns’s imminent death first forces Jane the questions that only Helen’s faith can answer.

No longer spiritually dependent on Jane, Rochester is finally ready to marry, a spiritually unanchored, manu- ally dependent on Rochester, Jane is at last his equal, as well. These changes are necessary, even though Jane and Rochester both affirm their essential equality when they are first betrothed:

“I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal truth. I am addressing you your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God’s feet, equal—as we are!”

“As we are!” repeated Mr. Rochester— (318)

Jane’s vision of Heaven is radically egalitarian. But, as long as Rochester and she are “of mortal flesh” then “custom and conventionalities” still have power to distort their essen- tial equality on earth. As Lorna Ellis reminds us, “the core of the whole Bildungsroman tradition is the protagonist’s search for a compromise between the desires of the self and the expectations of society” (167). Only by the end of the novel has Jane and Rochester’s equality—located in heaven and the afterlife in the quotation above—become socially, economically and spiritually real on earth. Thus, their relationship becomes a parable for celebrating the “pleasure” world at once for that “home” in “heaven.”

Jane’s eavisis of attachment to the divine has implications to her new life and to her marriage. She must live on earth, and she is not alone.

Jane’s ambivalence toward Heaven’s depiction is apparent:

“Hush, Jane! You think too much of the love of human beings. Why... Should we ever sink overwhelmed with the love of one, or two, or three, or many, or death is so certain an entrance to Happiness: to glory?”

I was silent: Helen had calmed me: but in the tranquility she imparted there was an air of insensible address. I felt the impression of wise as she spoke— (81)

Similarly, those “human tears” (578) that fill Jane’s eyes as she anticipates her cousin St. John Rivers’ imminent death reveal her own essential difference from the Christian martyrs she has known most intimately. Thus, which greatly enhances both her spiritual person and her subversively domestic and feminine interpretation, not merely a docile imitation, of Christ. Her answers to Jane’s theological questions emphasize God’s love for humankind as that which “benefits” (579) humanity. Having experienced a characteristically Evangelical, direct, individual revelation herself, Helen asserts a “creed; which no one ever taught me, and which I seldom mention; but in which I am very, very sincere” (57). As Helen understands, contrary to popular sentiment, by contrast, may actually be “monstrous,” as Jane reflects when St. John Rivers first proposes to her a loveless marriage of mis- sionsary work.

Appropriately, it is precisely his proposal of a monstrous martyrdom for Jane that cancels St. John’s spiritual authority in her eyes, an experience for which her initiation into the subversive feminine priesthood has prepared her. As Lamonaca puts it, “Helen models for Jane an independence of thought on matters of theology and doc- trine that is not just a reflection of her independent assessment of men within the Church hierarchy, as when Helen calmly attacks her late reverend Brocklehurst’s clerical mystique: ‘Mr. Brocklehurst is not a god; nor even a great and admired man’ (80). Brocklehurst’s sanctimonious upbringing had bad sex that characterizes even the best men in this novel at times, it is appropriate that Brocklehurst, one of its worst, is pointedly accused of spreading an ostentatious pack- ing of his female relations as both consummative persons, and objects for sexual consumption, intimately truthful mir- rors of the one badworld. Similarly, St. John’s sexualized aggression toward Jane expresses the “corrupt man” whose desires are “...unimportant and to unshared by, the pure Christian” (524). It is Helen who first alerts Jane to this new challenge: while “that is a vision: a figurative dream” (111), a dis- tinction that will ultimately help Jane to save herself, body and soul. Her proposal of marriage to Jane reveals everything that Jane now knows about St. John. In St. John, Rochester, he objectifies women, viewing them solely and selfishly in terms of his own “devices and desires” (BCP 3). Like John Reed, he assumes entitlement to dominate his female kin; an finally, his own peculiar lack of religion enables him to conceive of marriage solely as a means of fur- thering his own ambitions, while maintaining a hypocritical silence about the purely physical sexual drives he apparently fear, and which he seeks alone with Jane in India.” Therefore Jane is able to reflect:

I had silently feared St. John till now, because I had not understood him. He had held me in awe, because he had held me in doubt. How much of him was saint, how much mortal, I could not herefore tell; but revelations were being made in this conference— I understood that, sitting there wisely I did, on the bank of death, and with that handsome form before me, I sat at the feet of a man, earnest as I. The veil fell from his hardness and despotism. Having felt in him the presence of these qualities, I felt his imperfection, and took courage. I was with an equal—one with whom I might argue—one whom, if I saw good, I might resist— (519)

Like Helen—and most like the Evangelical Helen in no being precisely the same as Helen in her “revelations”—Jane also has her own (as St. John) which though she always understands conversion—particularly her two sisters who, among their other errors, seem entirely too willing to settle for bad sex. The word “sex” can with this understanding be read as a category with associations with “inferiors”—which all heterosexual sex must be under terms of entangled gender inequality (398). And if it is degrading to “live familiarly with inferiors,” it is sure that to “marry” (as St. John does) is inferior and disgraceful. Yet it is precisely what both Rochester and St. John seem particularly anxious to procure—until, that is, they are con- verted by Jane.

*In a clear projection of his own anxieties, scrutinizing Jane’s own feelings and character, St. John argues “...though you have a man’s generous traits, you have not a woman’s heart, and—would not find one” (521). The death of a consciousness which represents what St. John cannotname about himself, his own physical desire, Jane has no such doubts about herself, however, responding "I have a woman’s heart; but tell me where you are concerned.”

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Despite his impressive appearance of heroic virtue, St. John is no less in need of correction on this point than Rochester and Jane, for St. John is "Talys happy bent". In a different way (534) by him in the beginning of his First Proposal Jane must resist a different but equally compelling temptation that, if yielded to, will doom her quest. St. John demands the sacrifice of her own personal happiness and the acceptance of her fate in order to be a missionary and a devoted wife to which he feels no sexual attraction. Jane similarly resists her own sexual reality in place of her brother's (see "futuring" in Thornhill 204). But in speaking of St. John's "love for Rosamond Oliver," Lerner rejects the authority of St. John himself, who makes a sharp distinction between his feeling for her and what he feels, insisting that "When I colour, and when I shake before Miss Oliver, I do not play myself... I knew it is... a mere fever of the flesh: not, I declare, a convulsion of the soul" (478). Although Jane uses "love" as a metaphor for St. John's "fever of the flesh," she, too, makes a distinction: "I understand, as by inspiration, the nature of his love for Miss Oliver; I agreed with him that it was a love of the senses, and he who should mistrust its ever condescending to his happiness, or hers" (501-02, italics mine). Bronte takes care to distinguish love comprised of sexual attraction that also contains the desire of the soul (see Jane's rejection of Rochester's "love" from a "love" that is exclusively of the "senses," "a fever of the flesh," devoid of mutual esteem or respect. She also clearly distinguishes another kind of passion: the desire for sexual intimacy of "mating". Both desire will to dominance, control and possession. Close attention to these distinctions can help us understand Bronte's view of what mutually satisfactory sex requires. Although he repudiates the woman who most attracts him because she is inadequate to the demands of his ambition, it is clear that St. John, far from repressing his sexuality, is determined to take a sexual partner with him to India. As Jane reflects, "Can I receive him from the bridal ring, end all the forms of love (which I doubt not he would scrupulously observe)?" (517). It is clear that she is repulsed by the prospect of such forms and such a "sacrifice": again, "such a martyrdom would be monstrous." Finally, it is both clear and disturbing that St. John is uninterested, even "charmed," by her lack of reciprocal desire.

Before making his formal offer, he experiments sexually with the unwilling Jane: "...his was an experiment kiss...or that as if this kiss was a seal affixed to my fetters. He kissed her, furious at her refusal of the secret marriage and the certainty and acquiescence with which I undertook it to serve for him with a certain charm" (509). While both St. John may be "charmed," Jane is not, for when she begins to feel her fetters satisfies no malefashion craving for bondage in Jane herself. Moreover, the incestuous nature of this sexual "experiment" is underlined by its context: Diana...explained...St. John! You used to call Jane your third sister,...but you don't treat her as such: you should kiss her too" (509). Compelled by the sister she loves into the arms of the brother she loves, and on the grounds that this kiss will confirm his request for marriage, both Rochester and Jane are "futered" or entrapped to discover that St. John is appropriating her sexual reality by manipulating her desire for "kindness." Jane's craving for non-sexualized kinship is so intense that it eclipses her pleasure in inheriting a fortune. When St. John first informs Jane of her inheritance, he has not yet been repulsed by her "fever of the flesh" and has expressed his generosity and vulnerability toward the service of his own ambitions. Therefore, when she asks him to "Say again you will be my brother: when you uttered the words I was satisfied, happy; repeat them, if you can reply truly" she readily responds "I feel I can easily and naturally make room in my heart for you, as my third and youngest sister" (495, italics mine). St. John's subsequent willful distortion of this "natural" relationship leads not so much to a "repression" of sexuality as to its perversion. Jane's erotic acumen is shown throughout her many descriptions of St. John's touch, but particularly at the moment when she is most at risk of agreeing to marry him: "he pressed his hand firmer on my head, as if he claimed me: he surrounded me with his arm, as if he loved me (I esteem—I know the dear old man). I had Somewhere to be loved) . . . (535, italics Bronte's). Even under such pressure, however, Jane recognizes the master/slavesome component of the relationship, and knows what to expect if she succumbs: "I should not be made the less to repent of my former rebellion" (535). St. John's drive to dominate Jane is no more a "convulsion of the soul" than St. John's touch, but rather a sexual reality that Jane, much as for her own (Thornhill 208-209), for "I do wish to marry her: I do wish to make her feel our vital bodies, but you little think how you starve their immortal souls!" (72). Some hours after Bronte's public accusations, at the end of her almost euthanastic tea party with Jane and Helen, "Miss Temple embraced us both, saying, as she drew us to her heart:—God bless you, my children!" (86). Seed cake, hugs, intellectual stimulation and goodness, body, mind and soul are alike nurtured by this ideal mother-figure.

For all her etheality, Helen is similarly warm and tacit in relation to Jane. On her deathbed, Helen extends a loving hand to St. John's. She conveys the knowledge she has as spiritual conduction that "...your little feet are bare: lie down and cover yourself with my quilt." I did so: she put her arm over me, and I nestled close to her"

(96). Here Helen mirrors Jane's own longed-for accommodation of the body with a "worthless" body. Significantly, then, Helen's sermons on God as loving parent and heaven as home are delivered from within a warm, close, physical presence. Jane, whom the reader is encouraged to identify with the embodiment Christian love through healing touch. And Jane learns this ministry well: her love for her doll, and the desperately Jonely conditions in which it flourished, are mirroring the condition of Helen's sermons in which she was introduced to Jane, [58] before departing on the fateful way to Hay (134). When the maternal power is in her own hand, Jane ensures that even the person to whom she confides her feelings no specially profound affinity has a "worthier"—that is, a responsive and demonstrating—"object of affection." The walk to Hay, of course, brings Jane into physical contact with Rochester immediately, and her willingness to put her body into service for him, as a prop for his lameness, initiates their relationship.

In choosing Rochester's Christian name, with its connotations of healing touch, Bronte further develops this theme by encouraging her (or the reader) to respond to the traumatic and conditioned, yet deeply driven hermaphrodisism that characterizes such men as St. John Rivers. St. Edward the Confessor, King of England, learned through "[early] misfortune the folly of ambition..." His rigid, dry, cold body learns no words except to repel an intruder of the Welsh, and to assist Malcolm III of Scotland against Macbeth. Being devoid of physical passion, he is considered as "...the will of men" (2:69-70). Bronte would have known about St. Edward from many sources, including the references to him in Macbeth ("most pious Edward" and "holy King Edward") [180-81].

But St. Edward is most remarkable as "the first King of England to touch the 'king's evil,' and "many sufferers from the disease were cured by him" (Phillips 2). By referring to the healing touch of St. Edward, Bronte interrelates Jane and Edward Rochester's relationship with health and wholeness, as well as holiness. Their healing is mutual, moreover. Jane's ministrations contribute to Rochester's well-being, and Rochester's ministrations, though almost as soon as they meet, affect many levels of health. Already baking in the warmth of Rochester's regard in Chapter II, Jane is "...drawn into a new interest added to life, that I ceased to pace after kindred. My thin crescent-dream seemed to enslave: the blanks of existence were filled up; my bodily health improved; I gathered flesh and strength" (180-81).

For good reason, some readings of Jane Eyre have disregarded heterosexual desire as a positive motivating force, interpreting marriage as a tragic capitulation to patriarchy aborning. This is certainly not how Bronte sees it. She considers heterosexual desire positively, we may see reasons to argue that the novel's conclusion is also positive. It is relevant, then, to consider the key moments of readings that focus on Rochester's symbolic castration. But perhaps this emphasis on symbolic castration, as opposed to actual castration, may sometimes divert our gaze too much from the obvious, but crucial, loosening of Jane through all bodily sufferers, and which represents so many levels of fulfillment for both himself Jane and the sexual energy of the union is emphatically encouraged by the bride, and therefore her own "firstborn" by having its tiny warmth and softness "put into his arms" (577), a tacit gesture completing the circle of Jane and Rochester's sexual give and take. By such rhetorical pronouncements Jane encourages us to more actively revisit the idea of a woman's desire for heterosexual sex—on terms her mind and self-respect can accept—as a...
III

Closing the Family Circle

A number of critics thoughtfully doubt Jane's ultimate happiness1 often citing the opening pages of Chapter 12 as proof that her life at the end of the novel is a self-diminishing detour from her original ambitions. Susan Zottnick offers perhaps the most chilling assessment of Jane's married life with Rochester: "... the crippled Rochester's dependency on Jane ties her down as effectively as governing did Mr. Elton. Perhaps such doubts may be qualified somewhat by yet another reading of the opening pages of Chapter 12 in context with the novel's conclusion.

What Jane laments in Chapter 12 is that her "new serv- vitude" (101) at Thornfield has only helped her to clarify her desires, not to satisfy them. Identifying these desires with some precision is essential if we are accurately to assess her claims of happiness.

I longed for a power of vision . . . which might reach the busy world . . . I desired more of practical experience with my kind acquaintance with [more] variety of character, than was here within my reach. I valued what was good in Mrs. Fairfax, and what was good in Adele, but I believed in the existence of other good qualities of goodness, and what I believed in I wished to behold. (132)

The "power of vision which might reach the busy world" does not necessarily indicate that Jane wants to live in a "buzzy" urban setting, and therefore could never be happy in the rural retirement of Thornefield, Moor House or Ferriarden. Her emphasis on "power of vision" wants mainly to see imaginatively, to learn about the wider world. And she gets what she wants only three chapters later, when she describes her conversations with Rochester:

I heard him talk with relish. It was his nature to be communicative—he liked to open to a mind unconquainted with the world glimpses of its scenes and ways. . . . I had a keen delight in receiving the new ideas he offered, in imagining the new pictures he portrayed, and following him through in thought through the new regions he disclosed. (380)

The potential for a "more vivid kind of goodness," as well, is clearly present in the intelligent and articulate Rochester, the "just and liberal landlord" and "good master" mentioned above. After leaving Mr. Rochester, Jane has further experi- ence of highly intelligent, noble people who are perhaps even more "vivibly good." She thrives in the company of Diana and Mary. Adele and Mrs. Fairfax are "good" people but limited in the 'power of vision' they can impart. Perhaps not on the rural field is so appropriate, even the English countryside generally, or domesticity itself, are the problem. Jane can live happily in the country—her Brock's appreciation of natural beauty seems to make it preferable to her. And at Ferriarden she has companionship, sexual pleasure, and an intellectual equal with whom she can talk . . . all day long.

I imagine readers' concerns about the caregiving and domestic drudgery at Ferriarden that may be consuming Jane's life and thwarting her aspirations must be answered. In Chapter 12 Jane states that women need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation. . . . It is narrow-minded to say that they ought to confine them- selves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to play- ing on the piano and embroidering bags . . . to condemn them . . . if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex. (133)

The qualifiers "too" and "more" suggest that the human condition inevitably includes a degree of both restraint and stagnation, for "brothers" and "sisters" alike: but women should not be compelled to suffer much more of it than their "more privileged fellow-creatures" (133). Jane already has at least one wider field—her painting and drawing, which are serious, artistic work for her, not a conventional lady's accomplishment. Her "autobiography" proves her mastery of yet another "field"—authorship. With Diana and Mary she studies a foreign language—German—which is in no way "necessary for her sex," but which is essential to the life of her intellect and imagination. Could it be that Jane's desire is primarily for these and similar intellectual and imaginative "fields," plus more freedom (and leisure, which costs money) to explore them further?

Brock's use of "confine" is also significant. Jane states that women should not be limited to "making puddings and knitting stockings"; she does not say that such work should never be done. Thus, the "false restrictions" remain open for Jane to cook and do needlework as well as to draw, paint, read and discuss. Further complicating our picture of Jane's desires and aspirations is the fact that she apparently relishes an occasional fling with homemaking, particularly of the celebratory kind. With her first home of her own, she gleefully immerses herself in domestic work, alongside her ser- vice with little regard to the class (or the gender) stereotypes maintained by standing aloof from domestic work: "Happy at Moor House I was, and hard I worked; and so did Hannah it seemed to me. Good health, and bread, and dust, and clean and cook . . . it was delightful, by degrees, to make order from the chaos ourselves had made" (500). Diana and Mary accept Jane's domestic labor of love appreciatively: "I had a certain feeling that she did it far better. . . . I had a wish that I could have added some vivid charm to their joyous return home" (503).

If, as twenty-first century feminists, we are still dis- appointing that 200 years have passed, it is not in the least concerning to notice whose company we have joined. St. John, predictably, is both contemptuous and judgmental toward such matters, oblivious to their interpersonal func- tion, that is, the personal significance as gestures of love and hospitality: "... he feared, indeed, I must have bestowed too much thought on the matter than it was worth" (550). To know St. John and the domestic love of others informs us that it is alike worthless. But note how the "hero" suf- fers with comparison by the more domestic man of feeling, as Jane observes:

The humanities and amities of life had no attraction for him, his peaceful enjoyments no charm. Literally, he lived only to see Aurora whose ghost he was uncertain; but still he would never resist; nor approve of others restorring him. As I looked at his lofty fore- head, still and pale as a white stone—at his fine linea- mens fixed in study—I comprehended all at once that he would hardly make a good husband: that it would be a trying thing to be his wife. . . . I saw he was of the material from which none have her hopes—Christina and Pagan—her lawyers, her statesmen, her conquer- ors: a steadfast bulwark for great interests to rest upon; but, at the fireside, too often a cold dumb cumbrous column, gloomy and out of place. (500-02)

It can be tempting for those of us who want to liberate women from "confinement to menial drudgery to side with St. John against Jane when assessing the value and meaning of household work in this or other female bilinguldomian. But Jane, who can do other women can also mean to an end—when times end be sensibly gratification, artistic or scientific achieve- ment, imperial expansion, or religious imperialism. Such an ideal inevitably favors the more 'great,' traditionally mas- culine 'fields' of 'effort.' But this heroic ideal also finds the very imperialism that feminist readings of Jane Eyre also, often, strongly deprecate. If this model of the ever-ascending, autonomous self may be rooted in masculine Romanticism, then it is perhaps because of or in imitation of the example of "what Anne Mellow has helpfully termed 'feminine romanticism,'" exemplified by the following passage from Mary Shelley's Frankenstein:

... if on man allowed any pursuit whatsoever to interfere with the tranquility of his domestic affections. Grandfather had not been enslaved. Caesar would have spared his country. America would have been discovered more gradually, and the empires of Mexico and Peru had not been destroyed. (40)

Shelley's portrayal of domestic life—for men as well as women—as a necessary check to imperial aggression sug- gests that there may be political as well as personal validity to Jane's return to Rochester's "fate" for St. John, especially that her presence there is "more heroic," foreign "fields" of "effort." Susan Meyer thoroughly discusses Brock's indictment of St. John's com- placency with imperialism throughout the conclusion of the novel (87-90), also citing Carolyn Williams's important ar- ticle: "The novel's critique of St. John's dubious mediation is thus also intrinsically a critique of his missionary imperialisms and his desire for others' 'purifiers' of creed." (Williams 578, qtd. in Meyer 88).

It might be argued that the sheer amount of text devoted to St. John's "false conceptions" suggests an unresolved tension or desire, a crack in the golden bowl of her marriage to Rochester. But it is helpful to recall the power that feelings other than sexual, vocational or even religious can also have over Jane's heart and mind. For example, it isn't necessary to conclude that Jane is in love with St. John to explain his emotional importance to her. The fact that Jane doesn't desire St. John sexually doesn't diminish his psychological importance to her as a "brother." This importance—shrewdly manipulated by St. John himself—is illustrated, among other places, in Chapter 35, as she describes her grief at his punitive emotional withdrawal, so much like Mrs. Reed's, but so much more a "refined, lingering torture' for Jane because it is such an unexpected and crushing reversal of his recent promise to accept her as his "sister":

He experienced no suffering from estrangement—no yearning after reconciling, more than once, my fast falling tears blanched the page over which we both bent, they produced no more effect on him than if his heart had been really a matter of stone or metal.

But Jane, still 'caring too much for the love of human beings' cannot give up too easily on this relationship:

... happening to see him walking in the garden . . . and remembering, as I looked at him, that this man, alienated as he now was, had once saved my life, and that we were near relations, I was moved to make a last attempt to regain his friendship. (525)

This attempt does not succeed, but the feeling that inspires Jane to make it persists to the end of the novel.

Fundamental to her sense of self as Rochester's equal within the "customs and conventions" of the world (and equally as a seminary student), but also as a socially responsible family who will affectionately own her, admitting her fully into "the group" from which Mrs. Reed habitually excludes her (3). Jane's longing for such "kindred" is sufficient in itself to explain her desire to love that reconnected with St. John before her life story ends—if it were possible to be reconciled to him without sacrifice of herself. What a fantasy come true, if it were! But no more fantastic than Henry's return to Rochester, and Charlotte Bonté is fully equal to imagining it.

Ending her life story with St. John reveals more self- consciousness, but also a part because it also proves that Jane's return to Rochester was "right" for St. John, too, because she knew more precisely what God was
The Professional Adrift in the Victorian Novel (1) Agnes Grey

Robert D. Buttersworth

Agnes Brenton’s Agnes Grey, an unusual novel in that it puts work center stage, is a book that might be thought to be safer than that of the Victorian factory or mine, but is presented as a dangerous one in which work seriously damages health. Agnes is presented as a professional adrift in inimical circumstances and the novel analyzes what happens to the human personality caught up in such a predicament. Away from the immediate physical danger of the pit and the horror of the heroine is poisoned, to psychological, a drip-drip wearing down of her well-being and health.

What makes her susceptible to such a threat to mental and physical health is the very nature of professional work itself, a nature which makes the professional very vulnerable in a hostile environment. In industry, workers and management may or may not be working purely for money, they may or may not be totally emotionally uninvolved with the work and suffer Marxian alienation. Traditionally, none of this applies in the case of the professional. The heart of a profession is service, not profit; professionals do their work for its intrinsic value and meaning; no professional could make a more self-damning remark than to declare being “only in it for the money.” Good professionals work sincerely and communally, not just efficiently, and certainly not cynically; they believe in what they are doing. This, furthermore, involves that, for the professional, work is so intimate with the person that the drug, bored, tired,, should be able to produce this distinction; professionalism is continuous with the rest of the individual. When Mr. Weston gives such a kind, patient and attentive help to Nancy Brown, is he being a dedicated professional and not a mere religious man? To a large extent, the question poses a false distinction: his professional character springs out of, and is continuous with, his personal nature. Outside the clergy too, it is common for professionals to be inspired not even just by idealism and public spiritedness but by their deepest, often religious, beliefs. Florence Nightingale, for instance, wrote of how “to do that part of this world’s work which harmonizes, accords with the idiosyncrasy of each of us is the means by which we may render this world the habitation of the Divine Spirit in Man. . . . The Kingdom of Heaven is within us” and of her vocation, that it was “a calling in particular a sacred task in which people in particular a sacred task in which they could be trained to be the ‘handmaids of the Lord.’” Eventually manifested itself in the Nightingale School for training nurses at St. Thomas’s Hospital in London (1874).

Such characteristics of professionals may, in the circumstances, make them admired; the very same qualities, though, in less sympathetic conditions make them vulnerable. The higher ideals at the heart of the professions make them actually quite frail and fragile: being driven by ideals rather than the profit motive means professionals are susceptible to disillusionment and demoralization in workers who drudge merely for money are not. To rob professional work of its intrinsic value is to remove the meaning of that work; to frustrate the professional by giving an occupation even if the job is remunerative, knocks the heart out of the work being performed. Professionals can, then, be de-motivated in ways which are connected to the very nature of the professions. Furthermore, professionals are so dependent on the work in their case, professionals are potentially susceptible to the feeling that the rejection of their professional commitment, dedication and sincerity is tantamount to the rejection of the person.

Such are precisely the things that happen to Agnes Grey. In an environment in which her professional status is not acknowledged, she is left struggling to maintain her values in adverse conditions. Professional life degenerates into a losing battle between work and the human spirit, which costs her her well-being and health. The picture of professional work being de-motivated, meaning less and enjoyable is confounded and it emerges, in these circumstances, as poisonous.

Agnes Grey is set, and was written, at a time when professionalism was on the up-and-up. Not only were the older professions thriving—it was the period of the re-professionalization of the clergy (O’Day 185) for example—but new professions were being established, as professional bodies were set up by such groups as architects in 1837, pharmacists in 1841 and mechanical engineers in 1847 (Perkin 255). As Harold Perkin points out, selection to the professions was a significant indicator of officials—”able and diligent in the sense of being in one’s chosen field of expertise”—was to be measured by other professional experts in the same field, principally through exams (Perkin 238). At the period of the novel, though, the professional status of the governess was uncertain. The sort of professional training Perkin refers to had begun, if rather faltering. The first training school for governesses, St-Mary’s Hall, Brighton, was set up in 1847 and soon had a long waiting list for its hundred places (Renton 65); the Governesses’ Benevolent Institution, established in the early 1840s, was to begin running training courses for governesses at Queen’s College, London, in 1848 (Renton 92; Goreau 42). Traditionally, though, as Alice Renton says, the governess had no qualifications and had no job besides that of the status to her by her employers. In turn, the latter means that her attempts to operate professionally are frustrated, with a consequent lack of fulfilment, demoralization and then descent towards ill-health.

In The Victorian Governess: Status Incongruence in Family and Society,” M. Jeanne Peterson points out the many tensions and contradictions in the position of the governess in Victorian society, including that she would
claim to be a lady, yet one who worked, in an age when the mark of the lady was that she was a woman of leisure (Peter- son 11). Agnes was, of course, herself genteel and yet, owing to family fortunes, ventures out into the world of work, and criticizes the relevance of the inferences of her study Anne Bronet (6-33), have explored this aspect of her predicament. Yet what is striking is that Agnes shows neither of the typical reactions of such women to the situation that her position as a servant requires her to substitute for the decline in her fortunes nor an excess of tough pride (though she is justifiedly hurt by some of the treatment she receives). Agnes goes into the world of work in a manner that she wishes to retain the independence of her position: for she goes as a professional and is expecting to be accorded respect not just because she is genteel but in accordance with the "dignity and social standing" Herbert Blumer notes a job that has become a profession (xi). As Daniel Duman puts it, with reference to Victorian maids, "professional men were respectable and even gentlemanly, but they were really "superior"; they were "sub-altern" to other social classes for "the ideal of service allowed the professionals to recognize the concept of the gentle- man with the necessity for work to a living" (Duman 114). She is to be disapproved, though, and suffers, in incident after incident, a disheartening sense that she is not regarded as a professional; and in her work itself her attempts to maintain a professional status, and to distance herself from the attendant con- sequences. The cluster of qualities and attitudes already identified as belonging to professionals are largely summed up, and extended, in Rosemary O'Day's list of concepts associated with "professionalism", "service, "close relationship between professional and client, "code of practice" and "absence of the cash nexus" (186). The close relationship O'Day refers to might be said to involve her as well, a genuine wish to help, on the part of the professional, and trust and reliance on the part of the clientele. Ernest Greenwell also notes the "impulse to per- form against the grain" (15). Furthermore, professionals have autonomy—the free- dom to use professional judgment in the exercise of profes- sional skills. Though Agnes is untrained and belongs to no professional body, she has some of the characteristic of a professional, otherwise she is a thoroughly professional who displays the appropriate attributes and qualities of character. As she is not a gentleman, she replaces her emotions (mobs 69). One of these is certainly to buy money to assist the family in its financial difficulties, though this is not presented as any important part of the meaning of her working- life; significantly, Bronet makes sure that Agnes later tells us that by the time she returns home with what she has "so carefully saved" she finds that "our debts... we were nearly paid" and her father will take none of her money (100). The more used she has been, the less reliance she places on par- tial rescue from her profession by the setting up of the school she runs with her mother. All her other motives are spiritual: "to go out and not let you see me implied; to gain independence; to test herself and her "unknown powers"; to impress her parents and gain the self- respect of demonstrating that she is not a "helpless, thought- less being" (69). Above all, though, she is driven by profes- sional desires, to serve others. This is both the first motive she gives and the last: "I could not bear to be a servants, like it so much. I am no fond of children" (68)—and the one she dwells on at greatest length—to be entrusted with the care and protection of children which has made her work become the "planter ots and watch their buds unfolding day by day" (69). At bottom, she has deeply spiritual, religious motives for taking on the job: she is confident that she will know how to achieve this aim, that in "the work of helping others" she "will make Virtue practicable... and Religion lovely and com- prehensible" (69). Essentially, she becomes a govenor not with reluciance but with idealism, full of "bright hopes and ardent visions..." (70).

Once she takes up her posts, she shows all the qualities one might expect of a professional. There is much evidence of her dedication and commitment as she tells Tom Bloom- field she is "determined" to incubate the right moral atti- tudes into him, and employs "great labour and patience" in her attempts to educate Mary Ann (81). She displays a professional rights, her self-disciplined approach is clear from the outset: "I don't think you need worry for the Murrays, she remarks that she is the only person in the house who "endeavoured to make inclination bow to duty" (121). These qualities are seen in action when she sup- persites her distress at Tom's stories of his cruelty to birds, listening "as complacently as I could" in the hope of estab- lishing an educationally useful rapport with him (79) or avoids her "self-preserving" need to "quit the post" (94), or denies criticism made by the senior Mrs Bloomfield (96). Behav- ing with "unremitting firmness and integrity" (91), she declines to do her self by unscrupulous flattery of the accepted Butler's "fame of the house" (90). She is unconcerned with her own "self much secret injury" (97). Her sincere, uncynical approach to the job and to the children in her charge con- trasts starkly with that of the nurse who doesn't "vex myself or o'er as you do" (101). Despite her experiences with the Bloomfield's, she retains her altruism when she goes to work for the Murrays, looking forward to older children being "more temperate and more considerate" (90). Agnes is doomed, however, to have to exercise her professional skills in highly unpromising circumstances. Time after time, both the Bloomfields and the Murrays reveal that she is not fulfilling her professional role, that she is no more a servant than she is a professional, that she is as little more than a servant. Mr Bloomfield's pointed references in his conversation with Agnes to his children as "Master Bloomfield" and "Miss Bloomfield" (82) are intended to make Agnes understand that she does not belong to these young children, in a way a social superior such as a servant would. Hence too her offhand reception on arrival at both Wellwood and Horton Lodge. Agnes's professional status is, ironically, only confirmed when it is used as a stick to beat her with, when she can be accused of failing to live up to the impossible high standards her employers. Like expectation, she is a double failure. Agnes's relative lack of success with Matilda in very difficult circumstances, Mrs Murray takes it on herself to tell Agnes that a "governor" to "tissue her in her profession... must devote all our efforts..." and "protect her" (93). It will be her other trade or political; they wish that to prosper must devote themselves body and soul to their calling" (206-7).

Generally not thinking of her as a professional, they grant her neither respect nor professional autonomy; while she works with the family to struggle against her being seen as like it so much. I am no fond of children..." (68)—and the other深深地了解和能力，因为她的个性在她的专业生活中占据了主导地位。她认为自己有能力在困难的情况下为孩子提供服务，这是她的专业性。她不仅在情感上支持孩子们，而且在智力上也有很大的影响力。她对孩子们的关心和教育使他们受益匪浅。总的来说，Agnes的内心是在她的专业生活中得到了实现的，她为年轻人的未来做出了重要的贡献。
though when she does not, it leads only to reprimands from her employer and she is eventually forced to let her pets go on in the same pointless ways. She can only watch despondently as Marilda "slumps over" her work, in a way "least satisfactory to me" (123).

Robbed of all self-respect—"degraded" as she puts it (129)—in a household where she has no authority even over the hours of study, Agnes feels herself more and more cut off from all at Wellwood, quickly slips towards a professional and personal crisis. Her pets show no signs of respect or care for their governess: Rosalie "seldom lost sight of . . . my being a hindrance, and a poor creature" (122); "Edith comes to the times of meals and the hours of study, they treat Agnes very much as a hired hand: "my judgment or convenience was never considered" (129). Such inconsiderate behavior towards her, the lack of any reciprocity for her genuine concern for them, begins to undermine Agnes's will to care about her pets; her altruism and dedicated service even under difficult circumstances being unvalued, she begins to think herself "a precious fool for caring so much about them" (129). To make matters worse, at the same time that they are showing a derisory contempt for her as a professional and disrespect to her as a person, by yawning or looking out of the window during lessons, they expect her professional competence to be total, and she is "rebuked for inattention" at the slightest sign of lack of wholehearted focus on them (128). She begins to wonder whether her character is such that she is temperamentally unsuited to her job, lacking sufficient "Christian humility" (129). In reality she is suffering from a professional crisis. She is in a cleft: aware that she is a "fool for caring" she is nevertheless aware that cool detachment is not the simple option it seems, but that it involves a more businesslike attitude to her work would be a healthier option, but even if achievable by a truly committed professional, it would thus undermine her whole status as a professional, and deprive the work of all meaning. She is afraid, professional duty and a sense of vocation involve a commitment to her pupils which in turn, because they are so unresponsive and unappreciative, causes her much pain. There seems to be no way in which the professional can function without considerable personal cost in such inimical conditions.

Having brought her heroine to this crisis, the author now begins to rescue her. At some point quite early on, for the first time, to show some appreciation of her, however grudging—"some symptoms of esteem" such as saying that "her approval was sincere" and that she was "very obliging, quiet and peaceable in the main" (129)—more importantly, it is now that she encounters Mr. Weston.

In the short term, Weston provides her with vital moral support. He is the first person in Agnes's working life to show respect: for her work, for her values, for the very being of woman. This is a woman who knows that she would have been "invisible to Hatfield, or any other gentleman of those parts", Weston "acknowledged my presence by a slight bow", and that she "valued me, as equal, both as a human being and as a fellow professional (158). Equally, she recognizes in him a validation of her own professional values, noticing his dedication as a member of the newly re-professionalized liberal class. Early in the novel she is impressed by how "he read the lessons as if he were bent on giving full effect to every passage" (138) and says prayers "earnestly and sincerely" (138), and she likes the "earnest simplicity" of his preaching manner (139). Later she is to recall that "he always held his sermon . . . a firm purpose," and on the sincerity of his "firm faith," "ardent piety" and "true benevolence" (156). He is a man on the same wavelength as her, a kindred spirit who when she has been without a roof over her head, he "had freely shared his thoughts with any hope of sympathy or even comprehension" (154).

In the longer term Mr. Weston is to provide an escape route for Agnes from a professional life that has been an agony. By the time Agnes gets to know Weston, everything has gone wrong: the adventure has turned out to be a series of misadventures: the independence she has gained is grim and lonely; she has tested herself, but the process of proving herself to be dogged and to have strength of character has been a painful rather than an exhilarating one; far from impressing her parents, she is sacked from her first post; self-respect has been difficult to maintain, let alone bolster, when she is treated by no-one with respect and there is little visible result of all her efforts with her pets; and all her professional desires have been frustrated. Her life as a governess has turned out to be one of "toil, and trouble, and vexation" (219). By the time she is teaching at the school she and her mother have opened, her motives for working have been reduced to the core: there is the need for money and, the last remnants of her enthusiasm for service, the core religious values out of which her professional attitudes sprang, now no longer manifesting themselves as spontaneous dedication but simply as duty:

"Should I shrink from the work that God had set before me, because it was not altogether agreeable? Did not He know best what I should do, and where I ought to labour? . . . No; by His help I will arise and address myself diligently to my appointed duty. If happiness in this world is not for me, I will endeavor to promote the well-being of those around me." (225)

Professional life having turned out to be so unfulfilling, it seems for a time that a work must merely be tolerated as she begins to seek happiness and fulfillment instead in private; life as she says, "I could . . . be happy in a house full of entertainment; I should have had but one truly, deeply, and faithfully loved me"—"and if that friend were Weston, "though toil, and trouble, and vexation might surround me, still I would be too much happiness for me to dream of." (219). In her change of heart (The One (Langland 96-117), Elizabeth Langland has examined how the novel traces Agnes's journey to independence, even if harkened by "men and women who know that they are not being allowed to live the lives they deserve" (xii). The reasons for their vulnerability are similar to those lying behind Agnes Grey's predicament. For reasons expressed in the previously mentioned article, the professionals' very sincerity, earnest commitment, integrity, idealism, altruism, their uncynical approach, the frequent deep spiritual dimension to their work, the good faith involved in

The Professional Adrift in the Victorian Novel: (2) New Grub Street

Robert D. Butterworth

In "The Professional Adrift in the Victorian Novel: (1), Agnes Grey," I argued that Anne Brontë depicts her heroine as a professional who struggles in a society that does not recognize her as such, governing not having been totally established as a profession. In New Grub Street, the problem is the opposite one. Another novel focusing on work, "New Grub Street" also presents the world of the professions as a health- and even life-threatening one. Again adrift in an adverse environment, the professionals portrayed are, too, engaged in an unequal battle between work and the human spirit, and finds themselves preoccupied with how to cope with their predicaments as much as with the work itself. This brings forth, though, the view that a realistic fabric is reversed. As contrast, the professional is given a position of repute, that is, to the mutual advantage of its characters and society. In New Grub Street, the characters are given a position where the system is not overburdened and the society is not troubled by a "backlash against professional society" (II 472) in late-twentieth-century Britain, and in, for instance, education and the National Health Service "anachronistic" professionalism was superseded by the values and practices of the market, in the process putting professional and public service values under severe pressure, perhaps even destroying them.

It is in the very nature of the professions to be vulnerable in this way. Perkin points out that in the case of the first profession, clergymen were granted a living in a form of a guaranteed income set aside by the laity. The money was collected in the form of tithe, and only when the church had been installed, they were free to be diligent or otherwise. (Perkin I 253-4). With the indulgence of society, then, professionals by this model have had a great degree of


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professional autonomy. This, however, lasts only as long as society views a particular profession in this tolerant light. Perception seems to be the vital thing. A profession comes under threat when the public stop seeing themselves as the beneficiaries of its memory and values and start seeing themselves as the professionals' customers and paymasters; the relationship of trust and tolerance with the professionals is then broken. In a case of popular sayings, the change of perception is facilitated by deformation. "Fool me once, to 'The customer is always right.' At this point, society refuses to let the professionals operate in their own way and professional autonomy is threatened. Furthermore, to con- tinue to draw on the professionals' skills, the exercise of professional judgment is taken away or severely limited, and the professionals—if the term still applies—must follow the will of society. Professional judgment is thus encouraged to become conscious: the public may impose such an imperative without being barely aware that they are doing so. Nevertheless, the scale of the change in professional identity is one that Gissing's novel underlines by William Goode's comment here that the "service orientation" at the heart of a profession "means that the professional decision is... properly... based on the need of the client. The practitioner defines, of course, what the client 'needs'; it may not always be what the client wants" (36).

This is precisely what is happening in New Grub Street. Writing had not been a vocation for dezeen, and when Gissing wrote his novel. As Perkin points out, in an earlier age, writing had been the province of gentlemen, such as Charles Dickens or Pope, who was "past it" (125), and of low-paid hacks, such as Defoe or Orson Welles in the original Grub Street. In the nineteenth century, though, writing had become a profession, with writers such as Walter Scott or P. T. Barnum. Since then, writing has become a "vocation" in the sense that it has professional status, and, as Perkin emphasizes, it has "professional status" in the sense that it has professional implications for the autonomy and integrity of professional writers. Writers are no longer to produce what their creative autonomy decides, but what the market demands. They no longer need to decide what they like and expect their audience to rise to the chal- lenge of their work, however demanding. This would seem to be impossible for the new, modestly-educated readership. They will demand little more from them than the Daily Mail can impose on their imperative on writers. However indirect the process, the audience wants writers to exercise their profes- sional skills, but allow the readers to dictate what kind of products they will have. Perkin comments on the "in- creasing willingness of the readers to tell writers what they need it most": "so far from helping to support poverty, she perhaps would even refuse to share it with him" (189). Am well married for the of being the wife of a distinguished writer; she married him on the basis that "You will be a great man" (95); she wants to "shine with reflected light" as the wife of a man of "distinction" (163). To hold his marriage together, Reardon must continue to achieve such status and earn the large sums of money she was also expecting; when they part, that "pockets were empty" has been even more destructive of her love than his failure to write (366). The first of these factors preventing her seeing the urgency of leaving literary work and the second pressuring him into persisting in it, Reardon continues to allow himself to be pressurized by the need to make a living off him. The result is ultimately his destruction, worn down by poverty, his lack of success as a writer, the consequent compromises, the loss of his wife, not to mention the death of their son, all except the last the direct result of the deprofessionalization of the literary world. (And Willie's death is indirectly linked to it, for he falls fatally ill because, as Am well puts it, "he never went on living always away from you" (481), and in her misery, accepted an invitation to go to Brighton.) His health begins to fail, and in his demoralized state he exacerbates the problem by not looking after himself: he continues to work when ill because "To what purpose spurn himself? He was not as if he had any promise" (389), and travels to the seaside and "the Kings against his flesh, the sea against his blood" (355). He goes on living always away from you (481), and in her misery, accepted an invitation to go to Brighton.) His health begins to fail, and in his demoralized state he exacerbates the problem by not looking after himself: he continues to work when ill because "To what purpose spurn himself? He was not as if he had any promise" (389), and travels to the seaside and "the Kings against his flesh, the sea against his blood" (355). He goes on living always away from you (481), and in her misery, accepted an invitation to go to Brighton.) 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light-handedly” (167), its work is “heaped, curiously, occasionally mordant in style; but grace had been denied him” (111)—but the literary world as it now is certainly not more favorable to his qualities. His “pedicled individuality, in its awkwardness and his attempts to write a novel and a play have failed in essence because he had not “pliancy enough” to write for the market and achieve “mercantile success” (127); the works were marred by his profession and his attachments to his workmanship, and the integrity which makes him aim at “works of art” (127). “Tormented” (127) by his failure, he hopes that he might “at least taste the triumphs” (127) of success and clutches even more desperately at straw in the hope of “making himself a power in the world of letters” (127). In his clear-sighted moments, he knows that the tide of the times and of history is against him: in his heart of hearts, he knew in advance that he wasn’t going to get the editorship of The Study, being too poor, losing the social connections and being too old “in the face of energetic young men.” (135). And yet he persists in recognizing: “he was not in touch with the interests of the day” (350). Nevertheless, the importance to him of succeeding—“it is so vital to him to achieve that he will never stop trying to make some—unless he killed himself” (122) in the effort—that his lack of success, his “ever increasing sense of neglegted merit” (125) merely ups the ante, making him all the more desperate to achieve. And that up in a vicious spiral in which his frustration leads to his writing the “hostility” (126) of Polo, Fudge and other prominent men on the literary scene, ensuring his continuing lack of success. And if he takes out his ire on Marian’s writing over her, his transparent, humiliating and embarrassing attempts to ingratiate himself with her when he wants to use her inheritance to set up a new magazine with himself as editor is perhaps a striking example of how “an embittered man is beset by evil temptations” (127). Already, at times, troubled by his conscience that he has blighted Marian’s life and her marriage prospects, Katerina is willing to risk her money on such a magazine, for it would not only rescue him from "mere drudgery" (349), but would vindicate his life and give it meaning and justification: “If I could see myself as the editor, then surely all my misfortunes, all my goyne, boine soins and sufferings would be as nothing: I should rejoice in them as the steps to this triumph” (351).

Pathetically needless of praise and encouragement—be it immediate from Katerina, or later from Marian—he regards as his inferior (122): he is equally pathetically bogged down in petty squabbles which he cannot rise above, nor feel pretty, even if his intellect tells them he are: “from a philosophical view, such things are but trivially petty. But I am not much of a philospher...” Defeat in life is defeat, after all; and unmerited failure is a bitter curse.” (352). His bitterness is one that he becomes mired in these petty slights, which become magnified, when every new afflication bears him down more and seems to drag him back, even though, in truth, the battle is already lost. Wishing to achieve respectability, Yule is a man on his knees who feels keenly every new blow. Marston’s efforts to point out that he shouldn’t let “narrow-minded” enemies’ “triumph over you” and that it is “much better to ignore your enemies than to give them your grudges are harbored indefinitely: his quarrel with Fudge pre-dates the start of the novel and is never resolved, and he is still suffering from his overcoming his essentially unfounded animosity against Marian.” (123). But his resentment against his wife, Yule was bold in marrying a woman socially beneath him, at a time when he was supposedly self-confident (despite occasional self-doubt) and his professional status should be spoken among men” (121). If he had, as he expected, carried all before him, he would have been able to insist on her acceptance in social circles; as things have turned out, other shall be in judgment as the wife who he is an “embarrassment” (131) to be blamed for his lack of success, for without such a wife as Fudge had, “of good social position,” “he has found himself unable to go into society and establish contacts “among the people with whom I ought naturally to associate” (136); and this in turn has left him cut off from people who could have helped him to get on. And the result of the triumphs of people lives that are less deserving, he and his fellow failures console themselves by deriding other writers, though Yule is privately ashamed afterwards of the unworthiness of such behavior (133).

There is to be no redemption for Yule. In competition, like everyone else, with Anna Domin, to achieve what he wants in life, he is in the end emphatically defeated by a blinding light that brought on by age, an affliction that brings additional bitterness to his life; he is old, with no means of compensating for the years. It will now be impossible to gain the success he so craved—“His life was over—and wasted” (446). After a lifetime of years, he can see the damage that his writing had yielded success: “many long years of unremittent toil” have led only to “failure and destruction” (460) and he ends the novel prematurely.

A third response to the entry of market values into the literary world is that of Biften: defiance. Biften represents in extremis the rejection of the loss of the writer’s autonomy and the reduction of the professional to a mere functionary whose expertise is used to provide what the customer demands. At all times, he follows the dictates of his art. Biften’s writing is determined by creative and artistic con- sideration: he aims in his novel for “absolute realism” in a way that is a development of the tradition, a new twist on the approach of both Zola and Dickens (173). Faced with a choice between wealth and success on the one hand and art- istic integrity on the other hand, he is illustrative of the latter (173) that if that involves, as he is only too aware that it does, utter poverty and worldly failure, so be it. His writing is an art- istic exercise, not a marketing exercise: he is perfectly aware that many of his works are not for sale. He is the “ordinary reader” (174). His priorities are safely artis- tic—the work ends up “as good as he could make it”; the last judgment is the “final”, not the “public” (146).

The fourth response Gissing depicts to the taking over of the literary world by the market is adaptation: the response of Selphward and Milpave. Neither man has the outlook of the professional. Milpave despises the mannerisms of the world, Selphward is notable for his "insignificancy" (246) and lack of integrity, unscrupulously presenting himself as a "literary adviser" able to guide aspiring writers despite being "a man who can’t get anyone to publish his own books" (199). His reward for his efforts, which Gissing cleverly-Chir Chir, is entirely due to his adaptation to the new conditions of the literary world: it is shrewdly aimed at a specific and lucrative audience.

Milpave too signally lacks the qualities that are the mark of the professional. The opening of the novel quickly in- dicates that this is a persistently self-centred man, from whom we are never to expect much of a behavior by a man by hang- ing he simply sees in terms of "satisfaction ... that it is not oneself" (35). A facility for words has what is brought into the literary world, but has no belief in its values. He opens the book by commenting "the perambulation and writ- ing has an extrinsic, not an intrinsic, value to him: "I shall never ... write for writing's sake, only to make money" (50). No more than an "exercise" (214) and, as he openly says, composed with no eye on posterity, Milpave’s writing has no spiritual motivation or dimension, but is merely "a business," he scorres the idea of writing "at the dictation of the market" (290). The quality of the professional is there- professional: albeit benignly, he is able to reassure Reardon of "good notices" for Reardon’s as yet unwritten book (109) and, at least according to Yale, will write "anything that’s asked of him" (205). His lack of integrity and sincerity is soon after reflected in a laudatory review of he writes a book he really considers to be "pompous idiocy" (213). With regard to his writing, "good notices" are of little value to him: "I shall always despise the people I write for" (105) and referring even to his more educated readers as people who “can’t distinguish between stones and paste” (44); he scarcely notices the other well intended to the new conditions obtaining in the literary world. He is very market-oriented, opining that the "successful man of let- ters... the first and foremost of the market" (38). Blessed with an ability to spot the way the market is moving —"people will write shilling books" (84)—he is too a keen advocate of market research, telling his sister who will need to “hit the taste of the new generation of Board school chil- dren,” that he will “inquire into the state of the market” and “write a paper on the characteristics of that new generation” (65). Books are commodities; writing “is a business” (184).

Milpave’s modus operandi and qualities of character make him at home in this world. He has lots of “front” and is a shameless self-promoter, for “modesty helps a man in no way and makes you at your own valuation” (69); he understands well that not but the show of merit is what counts in this environment. He is a networking wheeler-dealer, a shrewd estimator of his "acquaintance" (65) and has the requisite exploitative attitude towards others. Having met Alfred Yule, he speculates on "whether he could be any use to me or not" (69). He is willing to do business with anyone, and he deals with book dealers. Concerned when he is not shocked. His honesty is apparently a tacit in his wooring of her, for he thinks the "unusual openness of his talk was attractive to her," and he immediately reassesses whether he should go to "deal with a man who is so frank" (359). His moral and emotional shallowness and superficiality are ultimately exposed in his affair with Marian; his attitude to his "cold temperament" (364) of a man who experiences "relief" (367) when he can stop talking passionately—something
Marian herself, despite her intense longing to be passionately loved, "could not but observe" (368). Once it emerges that Marian is not going to be the heiress he thought she would be, the suspicion only deepens that "the greatest amount of part, your love would be at once a thing of the past" (452); and despite conscience enough to feel that "to forsake her would be a baseness" (453), ultimately this is what he does. This psychological make-up and this emotional and moral character explain a great deal about Millian's success. Driven by ambition and the need to feel superior, and with a limited moral sense, he is a man capable of betraying anybody or anything, of making no allegiance to any higher or nobler cause than himself. He lives for the sake of the time with morality put aside for abeyance while he pursues his career. In any conflict between ambition and morality, morality will always lose in the face of a dominant ambition and the insistent psychological needs which drive it. That this makes him one of the "finest" in the new Darwinian literary world is no recommendation at all.

Works Consulted

Open University

Fairies and Feminism: Recurrent Patterns in Chaucer's "The Wife of Bath's Tale" and Brontë's Jane Eyre

Warren Edminster

I have received it and told it all a-were... I stand in the chain of narrators, a link between links; I tell once again the old stories, and if they sound new, it is because the new already lay dormant in them they were told for the first time.

Marin Buco, preface to Die Legende des Bald Schen, 1908 (Trans: Maurice Friedman)

Literature is in one sense an evolution, a series of voices co-opting and adapting what has been said and in turn being co-opted and adapted by those voices which follow. In our enthusiasm to study individual authors, we often forget the central role played by literary development. Literary development has had on their work—Dante's tendency to incorporate and use Virgil, for example, just as Virgil adapted the works of Homer. Victorian co-opting of medieval culture perfectly exemplifies this type of co-opting. From the literature of Scott and Tennyson to the aesthetic philosophies of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris, Victorian literature held up an ideal of ‘boundless protest’ in contrast to the soulless, rational industrialism of the nineteenth century. In Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, Jane engages in just such an idealization of the past, lamenting the passing of fairies and elves from the world. In fact, the passing of the fairies becomes symbolic of the flaws and corruption of Jane's world, and Jane is herself symbolically identified as a fairy, out of place in the cold, rational, patriarchal society of Victorian England. Jane's lament is not novel, however; it echoes a similar lament for the passing of fairies and elves in Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Wife of Bath's Tale." Yet the echo is far from a passing resemblance. Both narratives treat women struggling to gain control and independence in a masculine world, and both use fairies and fairy magic as symbolic representations of that struggle. The number of close structural and thematic parallels is intriguing. They suggest the possibility that Brontë consciously adapts the symbolic structure of Chaucer's "The Wife of Bath's Tale." For the present literary explication of the female perspective up to that time, to her own examination of gender oppression and conflict within Victorian society. If, on the other hand, the parallels are not the result of conscious adaptation, we are left with an equally intriguing possibility—that these two authors, separated by time, cultural development, and sexual difference, nonetheless employ the same narrative components to reach the same narrative end. This parallel raises questions about the boundaries of gender and power in Western culture.

Not that Chaucer was in any way foreign to the Victorians. In the late eighteenth century, several scholars finally mastered and explained his metrical manner, which had been previously disregarded as "quasii" and "rough." Their work brought a new breath of life to the original Chaucer, and their scholarship had devoured his works as they had not for 400 years. Many nineteenth-century writers were heavily influenced by Chaucer. Blake, Scott, Lamb, Southey, the Wordsworths, Coleridge, and many others, including Wycherly, Whateley, and among others, all read Chaucer and spoke glowingly of his work; Byron disliked him, but the number of times he mentioned Chaucer shows that he read him (Spurgeon 131). Scholarly criticism of Chaucer also exploded. Writing in 1908, Caroline Spurgeon, author of the landmark Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion, notes "that it would be impossible to mention all the Chaucer scholars of the Nineteenth Century, for the study of our first great poet has been taken up with enthusiasm, not only in England, but also in Germany and America" (xxix). Chaucer was everywhere and on everyone's mind.

Given the broad circulation of so many Chaucer's texts, and their great popularity at the time, Charlotte Brontë most likely read Chaucer somewhere. If he didn't grace her family's library, she might have seen him at the Heathen's library at Ponden House, to which Gerin says the Brontë sisters "had early access"; or she might have found him in the subscription volume of the Keighley Mechanics Institute Library or in the library at Roehead. Brontë never mentions Chaucer by name in her famous letter to Ellen Nussey, but the Nussey letter is clearly prescriptive with a young woman rather than descriptive of what she herself read. At any rate, Brown does mention Pope, many editions of which included Pope's "modernized" version of The Iliad and The Odyssey. The "modernized" stories had been published in the Brighton Public Library Institute Library or in the library at Roehead. Brontë's familiarity with the poems strongly suggests that she read them.

The importance of "The Wife of Bath's Tale" to a woman concerned with the treatment of women is clear. Chaucer's Wife was a common type in medieval literature, and the brilliance of her argument and the skill of her storytelli-

8The first in the Nussey letter is short, and in it Brown states a strong sense of Christianity. She did, however, become an agnostic after she was introduced to Chaucer. She goes on to say, for example, that "as to defend Shakespeare and Byron, for example, as if Nussey would have been the more right to these stories. And even though she defined them as 'great,' Brontë nonetheless tells Nussey to 'Oust the comedies of Shakespeare and the Don Juan, perhaps, the Cain, of Byron, too, though the latter is more tolerable' (Spurgeon 131). These worlds demonstrate her consciousness of some of the problems as the works on the 'p.1 library, she might have seen him at the Heathen's library at Ponden House, to which Gerin says the Brontë sisters "had early access"; or she might have found him in the subscription volume of the Keighley Mechanics Institute Library or in the library at Roehead. Brontë never mentions Chaucer by name in her famous letter to Ellen Nussey, but the Nussey letter is clearly prescriptive with a young woman rather than descriptive of what she herself read. At any rate, Brown does mention Pope, many editions of which included Pope's "modernized" version of The Iliad and The Odyssey. The "modernized" stories had been published in the Brighton Public Library Institute Library or in the library at Roehead. Brontë's familiarity with the poems strongly suggests that she read them.

9See Nussey's wife in the Waldock's life for another example of the medieval type of the story, a dominating and independent woman. Woman's wife is a sympathetic figure, especially next to the abiding and quarrelsome Noah. Such stories are often found in medieval Dutch plays. Brown does not mention, however, the work of Dr. John E. Fisher's translation of Dry doge herry, in the Fall 1997 edition of the Canadian Journal of Medical History. See "Biographical and Historical Contexts in The Wife of Bath, Part B" ed. W. Dehnel, (1993-97).

10It is interesting that a sexual role in which a woman named Cecilia Camponia, in the consideration of a payment of ten pounds, refuses Gloucester because of the very type of the charge and the circumstances surrounding it is sufficiently vague that various scholars have attempted to infer Chaucer's charge of sexual rape by pointing out that such a trope "has been used by modern authors like our own 'feminists' against ravishment." In fact, we know neither that he was guilty of raping, or attempting to rape, Cicely, nor that she was not guilty of rape."

Armstrong-Brown's Library for providing me with both cooperation and support during this research. Dr. Armstrong-Brown was always willing to offer assistance and advice whenever I needed it, and her encouragement helped me to complete this project.

Although this project has been completed, I hope to continue my research in the future. I am particularly interested in the ways in which literature and gender have been represented in the works of Brontë and Chaucer. I plan to explore these themes in more depth in future research, and I believe that this project has provided a solid foundation for further investigation.

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Later, when Rochester teasingly accuses her of being an elf, she repeats her conclusion that fairies have left England:

"The men in green all foresaw England a hundred years ago," said I, speaking as seriously as he had done. "And not even in Hay Lane, or in the fields about, could you find a trace of them now. I think either summer or harvest, or winter moon, will shine their revels on more than seven moons."

These lament are not simple, random expressions of nostalgia in either story. In Jane Eyre and "The Wife of Bath’s Tale," the loss of the fairy world is symbolic of a much larger problem, and the problems themselves are strikingly similar. In "The Wife of Bath’s Tale," the central dynamic of the story, masculine oppression of women, is directly related to the cause of the fairies’ departure. The current fairy shortage, as the Wife tells us, is caused by the prayers of thieving numbers of clerics and friars, "thibke as moles in the soime-been" (R.868). The intrusion of the friars, or "lymouytres," in "every land and streem" (R.867), in the "halls, chambrs, kitchens, bournes," (Cites, burgs, horteis, castis, holes, temples, shipes, diayeres" (R. 869-71), and in other places where "wont to walk was a elfen" (R. 873) has made fair magic scarce.

The replacement story, in which the religious practice of friars ("lymouytres") has caused a distinct change in the expectations of women, a change as the wife sarcastically points out, not completely beneficial:

Men now may go soe aft and up in Every busch or under every tree. There is nowe other incantacuo but he, he, he, soe he wol dene hem busch but dislouner. (R.878-81)

In other words, women are now "safe" from the enchantment and "safeguard" of male practice. This is, namely sexual dishonesty, which lymouytres will do to them if they catch them alone in the forest. This early hint of rape foreshadows the upcoming crime by the knight; it also confirms the allegorical point that religion takes keeping in the fairy; he does an excellent job of tracing the instances of crookedness and dishonesty associated with the legends of the lymouytres, and how they either banish or molest the women. The Wife of Bath’s choice to set her narrative back in the legendary times of fairy magic is an attempt to create an idealistic world where feminine expression and independence exist completely separated from the system of male oppression which are symbolized by the knight’s rape.

Jane Eyre explores a similar lack of feminine expression and independence in a patriarchal world. From the beginning of the novel, Rochester is a man who refuses to maintain space or autonomy against male intrusion or control. Jane’s brutal invasion of Jane’s window nook, for

example, which sets the tone for the entire novel, is at least symptomatically similar to the forced invasiveness of the physical rape in the Wife’s Tale. Like women in the Wife’s world, women in Jane Eyre’s world are patients in a space which is not subject to male intrusion and control.

Yet as in "The Wife of Bath’s Tale," male oppression is not merely random; it is enabled by a specific valuation system. Men justify their oppression of women through rationality and morality. For example, the Reverend Brocklehurst’s holier-than-thou damnation of long-haired girls at Lowood is a mixture of twisted rationalization and religiously inspired remembrance of the wife’s use of religious stories. Both use a patriarchal system to rationalize and justify oppressive and violent actions. While Jane Eyre’s self-righteousness or hypocrisy can hypnotically corroborate themselves for saving women from the threat of fairy enchantment in "The Wife of Bath’s Tale," Brocklehurst self-righteously saves the girls at Lowood from the self-indulgent sin of vanity and comfort by ordering that all their hair be cut off.

Similarly, just as the religious practice of friars has driven off fairies and elves, so too have the practical values of a patriarchal intellectual and moral system banished the possibility of fairy magic in Jane Eyre. Robert Martin notices this trend in the novel when he says that "In the world of 'Jane Eyre,' the spirit of religious fervor is largely a form of the religious practice; religion [i.e. the feminine world of fairy] must go underground, as Christianity prevails and suppresses nature" (R. 860). To the Brocklehursts and St. John’s of Jane’s world, the fairy world is a world of the irrational, for all their strange respect for the fairy tale.

Helene Moglen notes that (much like the Wife’s fifth husband) Brocklehurst "cloaks his greed, selfishness, and vanity in the hypocritical vestments of religious principles" (R.113). Brocklehurst sees no value in little girls feeling pretty or feminine; all such needs are unmeasurable, and he has rationally-determined proportions for all physical needs. Van Gogh’s famous phrase, "the food of the soul" is not necessary for sustenance; burnt food will meet the girls’ physical needs, so no deviation from the budget is necessary. By the same reasoning, St. John concludes that love is not as important as a marriage to a practical, sober, selfless person. Love is intangible and, therefore, irrelevant. He commands Jane to become his wife in work mission to serve himself and others even though he admits that the system is a failure. This is why, in a patriarchal world, morality and practicality repeatedly denies the existence of important intangibles such as beauty, love, imagination, and, of course, fairy magic.

What happens to the fairy world in Jane’s world. Jane is able to conceive of even such outlandish stuff as Gulliver’s Travels because it explains its fiction in terms which relate to the factual, scientific practicality of the male intellectual system. The Gulliver’s Travels is a system of extreme and fantastically. At the time he was writing the Gulliver’s Travels to be a "narrative of facts," and as a factual narrative, it becomes "eerie and dreary" to her (R. 17). Fairy tales, on the other hand, reject such pseudo-scientific pretensions. They speak of something ineffable that we can only dimly define a rational world view. Consequently, they are unbeli-

able within and banished from the patriarchal world in which Jane finds herself.

Thus, as in "The Wife of Bath’s Tale," the loss of fairy magic parallels and is symbolic of the loss of feminine expression and independence which is so central to the dilemma in Jane Eyre. And as Jane begins to cope with and overcome this dilemma, fairy magic returns in her own per- son. In identifying Jane Eyre with the fairy world, Bronte too evokes an idealistic view of a transcendent extra-rational world where female expression and independence can be used to address the problem of male oppression. Martin argues, the appeal of the world of fairy for Charlotte Bronte was the appeal of a poetic system which still believes in magic and which was still centered around the role of women. In the contemplation of the fairy tale that Charlotte Bronte was likely to find traces of a non-patriarchal world. The divided world of her fiction has yet one more division, that between women’s world of fairy tale, and the men’s world of Christianity. (R.94)

Like Chaucer’s Wife of Bath, Bronte uses this division to undermine patriarchal wisdom and establish a new set of feminine values.

1. The fairy stories in the tales go beyond general thematic and symbolic parallels. In the story of the relationship between Jane and the dominant male character, Edward Rochester, Jane Eyre develops many of the same specific plot elements that Chaucer’s Wife of Bath’s story contains. For example, in the Wife’s tale, male oppression is represented by the clearest example of such oppression, physical rape. The Koala (888) returns to a theme very often used by Brome (888) but the Wife phrased the deed in such a way as to imply far more than a physical crime. When she says, "let him come and wish me fairly," (l. 888) she insinuates that the knight’s actions, in addition to being a rape, also includes a sexual act. The Koala also deprive the "mayde" (or woman) of her self-identity, the very essence of what makes her what she is. The "clamour" caused by the knight’s actions attracts the attention of King Arthur, who condemns the knight to die, and finally, the punishment by the knight—and by extension men in general—will learn nothing. The knight is given a chance to escape his doom by the queen and her ladies, however, the queen agrees to pardon him if he can, within "well-month and a day," (l. 909) tell the court "what thing it is that women most dread and loathe." (l. 905). Despite months of searching for a solution among women everywhere, the Koala finds no acceptable answer, and he turns homeward towards his doom. Thus, the Wife presents us with a man guilty of a male crime against a woman, seeking to release himself from his guilt. In what literary and philosophical ways which has exhausted all of his own resources and turned towards home without hope of salvation. At this point, he runs smack into the direct agent of fate, the central dispenser of female justice, the elf queen herself.

Male oppression takes many forms in Jane Eyre, but the central male character, Edward Rochester, parodies the knight in every way. The Koala’s use of a fairy tale and words to hide his true intentions, his crafty use of facts and words to defy a rational world view. Consequently, they are unbeli-

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(112) that stands out most clearly in the novel. Rothcer pursues his own fulfillment without regard for the consequences to women. Like the knight, he is guilty of selfishly using women as pawns in a game he believes he can win, while Bertha without love to insure his wealth, and by carrying her away from her native land to keep her locked in an attic, Rochester has deprived her of her freedom.

Within an easily-outured Victorian value system, these actions come about as close to rape as Bronte is able to come. Bertha's madness is Rochester's; for his selfish actions, he is now the victim of an unloving wife, in his eyes a death itself. Like the knight, he has searched for an escape from this doom among women across the European continent. The search is feverish, restless, hungry for moving, long-fielded disappointment (275). Again like the knight, having exhausted all of his own resources trying to remove the curse on his head, Rochester turns homeward, along the very road during which he has been living his own life, another solution by which he will learn nothing. Like the knight, Rochester at this point runs right into the joint symbol of female expression and fantasy magic in the story, Jane Eyre.

"In "The Wife of Bath's Tale," we know the woman who meets the knight is the elf-queen because she matches the description given at the beginning of the tale: "The elf-queen, with white golden locks, and many a greme make" (II. 860-61). As the knight rides back towards the court, the Wife tells us,

And in his way he hopped him to ride,
In all this care, under a forest styre.
Whe as he saugh upon a daunce go
Of lade of fours and twenty, and not ye. (II. 989-92)

When the knight approaches the dance, the ladies disappear, and only an old hag is left in their place. When the knight tells her his quest, the disguised elf-queen assures him that she can answer the question and save him from his doom, but he must first agree to grant her whatever she asks whenever she asks it. The knight agrees, and they travel together to the court. The knight gives the hag's answer, that women most desire "sororitye / As wel over her housbund as her love, / And for to been in maistrie" (III. 1038-40). The queen and her courtiers agree and go with the knight. The knight believes he has escaped without significant consequence to himself, but, as we see, the elf queen ultimately binds him within an appropriate punishment and brings him to a reduced understanding of respecting women. Before the knight can leave, the hag leaps up and demands that the knight give himself to her in wedlock.

The knight is shocked; here is a fate as bad as the one he has just escaped. The hag is hideous and old, the antithesis of the pretty young "maistrie" he so impulsively desires. More importantly, however, the marriage represents a loss of choice or self-determination for the knight. He begs the hag to take all of his goods but to "lat my body go" (I. 1061). He is horrified by the proposed disgrace of being married to a hag, and by explicit comparison to the knight: "but that any of my nacion / Should ever so furiously disparaged be" (I. 1069). The hag / elf queen refuses to relent, stating the knight's journey to the hag's court is his condition for his release from his own self-imposed doom. He must submit to her request, regardless, as the Wife tells us, of what he wishes: "...the end is this, that he, aschaght was ned, he nedes meste hir weede" (I. 1070, 71).

The knight's submission is further emphasized by the final resolution of the story's underlying notion that women in all their forms of female expression are forced into a situation of "willing" their own oppression. Thus, the knight woefully bemoans his fate, the old hag points out that at least he need never fear being cuckolded, whereas if he were young and beautiful, he could never be sure of her faithfulness. The elf-queen assures him that her beauty is honest, free of the mixture of deceitful, evil, and selfish deceitfulness that the knight and his kind have known in their own lives.

The story ends with a question to the reader. If this is the case, why do men continue to ask for marriage, and why not for sex? It is a question that remains unanswered throughout the story. The elven woman's presence represents the voice of the woman, asking the man to reconsider his role in a relationship.

Chaucer's "The Wife of Bath's Tale" is a complex narrative that explores themes of gender, power, and control. The character of the woman, much like the knight, is a victim of societal expectations and limitations. The story raises important questions about the roles of men and women in society and the consequences of their actions.

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Against his hopes, however, Jane refuses to release him from his responsibilities. Like the knight, Rochester admits he is wrong but resists his obligations because he is horrified by the prospect of a mad, disgusting wife. His disjointed letter to Jane is a mixture of groveling apologies and an attempt to turn the situation to his advantage. "I am so sorry," he writes. "When [Chaucer] gave the Wife of Bath a tale of her own, he portrayed her dangers and her self-determination and her self-assertion." The story of the famous lady who demands supreme power over her own life is remarkably similar to the modern feminist struggle for women's rights. The woman's autonomy and her ability to control her own life are central themes in both stories.

The knight and the wife of Bath both have the same problem: they are trapped in a situation they cannot escape. The knight's situation is more dire, as he is stuck in a loveless marriage, while the wife of Bath has the ability to control her situation through her intelligence and assertiveness. However, both situations highlight the importance of self-determination and the need for women to assert their rights.

Rochester's dilemma echoes the choices given to the knight in other ways as well. He is forced to choose between a repenting Bertha, with whom a relationship would be legitimate, or an attractive Jane, with whom any relationship would be illegitimate. This is not so different, in Victorian terms, from a beautiful but unfaithful wife and an ugly but chaste one. Furthermore, much in the story suggests that, like the knight, he is not only possible wives between whom the knight must choose, Jane and Bertha are alter egos, merely different sides of the same coin. After noticing the inkeeper's parallel references to "witch" (Bertha) and "bewitching" (Jane), Maynard argues that the story can only suggest that both Jane and Bertha are witches, that they are two sides of the same self. Jane is the attractive young witch; Bertha is the hag . . . (10). As the Wife tells us, "It is the choice between enchantment and the end that brings resolution to the love affair. In both stories, men guilty of crimes against women wrestle with a dilemma posed to them by women, and in both tales, the men must abandon their independence and self-determination for the dilemma to be resolved."

Later, while trying to save Bertha in a fire, Rochester is crippled and blinded. This act signals both his acceptance of his wife's challenge and his loss. By trying to save Bertha, he accepts his duties as a husband. If he simply let her die, then he could remain. At the same time, he sacrifices his sight to save her, and in doing so, he loses self-control and independence. He thus symbolically and literally relinquishes self-determination at the same time that Bertha does and he is accordingly released from his doom. It is the knight's choice that Rochester becomes a candidate for redemption. Richard Chace argues correctly that reconciliation can be made in the novel only after "the spirit of the
masculine universe is controlled" (110). Like the knight, Rochester finds the answer to happiness only in his submission.

Rochester and Jane are reunited at Ferrieme, an environment that reeks of Faery. Jane tells us that it is "deep buried in a wood," and that "Even when within a short distance of one another you could see nothing of it: so thick and dark grew the timber of the gloomy wood about it" (378). As she approaches the house, she says, "The darkness of natural as well as sylvan dusk gathered over me" (379). It is in this darkly enclosed space a just resolution to the male crime takes place. Bronte emphasizes Rochester's loss of self-determination. When Jane sees him, she calls him a "caged eagle" and "sightless samson." She speaks of the subjugation of that vigorous spirit and calls him "a lamp quenched, waiting to be relit" (386). Like the knight, Rochester has given up self-control and independence. He is dependent upon the Jane's mastery, and Jane readily accepts the role. She says, "It was not himself that could now kindle the lustre of animated expression: he was now dependent on another for that office (386). And like the knight, Rochester too, regrets his loss of self-determination. He does not regret his loss of self-determination. He says to Jane, "Hitherto I have hated to be helped—to be led: henceforward, I feel, I shall hate it no more. . . . Jane's soft ministry will be a perpetual joy." (392). At the same time, Rochester significantly points out that the fairy-like Jane of nature's existence. As they are reconciled and, as he expresses his joy, he calls her a "mystic, changeling—fair-born and human bred" (386). This and other references reemphasize the notion that fairy-magic has prompted this resolution. Jane accepts his dependency (her mastery) and promises him the happiness which he desires. She tells him, "I love you better now. . . . than I did in your state of proud independence" (392), and she promises to marry him. Like Rochester, Jane gets the best half of each choice; he has benefited Jane and, by marriage, Rochester has benefited Jane.

With an attitude of sincere penitence which might just as easily be evinced by the knight in "The Wife of Bath's Tale," Rochester, in role with the following words and actions: "I humbly entreat my master to give me strength to lead henceforth a purer life than I have done hitherto!" Then he stretched out his hand to be led" (395). Thus, Bronte also uses the world of fairy to address male crime. Condemned by his crime against a woman, Rochester is tempered by what he thinks is a chance of escape. Initially, he sees the fairy-like Jane as a means of delivering himself from his doom without change to his life. He soon finds out, however, that he can escape the consequences of his crime only by giving up his choice, independence, and "mastery" to Jane, his effluse mistress. As with the knight in "The Wife of Bath's Tale," Bronte's submission alone allows him the best of all possible outcomes. Like Jane's husband, Rochester finds in the feminine world of fairy a powerful tool for undermining dominant patriarchal values. In Jane Eyre, she uses the same powerful symbolic structure as Chaucer's medieval rapt story to illumine her own experiences with the more subtle, yet equally damaging, gender oppression of the nineteenth century.

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Rhetorical Punctuation in Vancity Fair!*

In his edition of Vancity Fair, Peter L. Shillington insists that Thackeray "tended to punctuate rhythmically not with commas but with periods," most tellingly it seems, in order to "syntactically" (606), a point of major importance. The first purpose of Shillington's edition is "to present the text as Thackeray himself could have produced it, free of the unnecessary interference of the publishers and printers" (ii). This presentation is possible for only twelve chapters (1-8, 13): the manuscripts for these chapters survives and is used as Shillington's copy-text, thus allowing readers to experience, more or less, Thackeray's original punctuation. Shillington admits that rhetorical punctuation "often corresponds to our syntactically based form of punctuation" (ii) but "its 'primary functions' is to guide readers in 'oral presentation' (661)—more specifically, "to indicate pauses of varying length," a comma representing 'a short pause,' a semicolon as a pause comma, "a pause three times as long as a comma" (i), and a period the longest of all. Shillington is not specific about the period; he merely includes it in the four in a list of marks requiring pauses "of increasing length" (661). He also seems evasive when he adds that "dashes suspend interruptions and come closest to practicing the syntactical function of modern punctuation" (661)—a function which does not explain how the many dashes are to be treated in an "oral presentation." In its earliest form punctuation was in part a physiological device; marks signified places for breathing, and were also used to "suggest sentences" (631) by marking off the mists expected edicatory guides; they signified pauses for effect, not merely breath. After a complex evolution in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, by the end of the 1840's punctuation was generally explained in terms of grammar and sentence structure. As early as 1795, Lindley Murray in his well-known English Grammar still expressed a belief in pauses, but he had taken his rules with grammatical terminology—for example, Rule X for the use of the comma. "The case or nominative absolute, and the infinitive mood absolute, are separated by commas from the body of the sentence." (570). Samuel Goodrich's approach is indicated by his title: Punctuation: Or, An Attempt to Facilitate the Art of Pointing, on the Principles of Grammar and Reason (1813). However, he too acknowledged punctuation once could not be reduced to a mere matter of punctuation. By 1844, for the influential John Wilson pauses had become irrelevant; he declared unequivocally that "the art of Punctuation is of no consequence whatsoever in rhetoric" (15). Such notations prove nothing definite about Thackeray, but they do suggest that he was writing in a period when eloquent or rhetorical punctuation, the careful regulating of pauses for "oral presentation," was by no means the invariable rule.

It seems highly improbable that Thackeray read as much as Shillington determined minute pauses to which he expected his readers to respond as imprisoned as it seems that he had an "inner voice" finely attuned to pauses in hundreds and hundreds of pages of writing. Unlike poetry and drama, which are truly "realized" only when performed orally, novels are written for the eye, not the ear, and the eye does not measure duration. Of course, writing may be read aloud, and for one has tried to read portions of Vancity Fair aloud, as I am inclined to do. But I certainly was not inspired by Thal- lingsburg. The experiments have been unsuccessful: I was distracted as I tried to measure different pauses for different marks, and I found myself shifting to my normal reading voice and giving equal pauses for commas and semicolons and sometimes for commas, and slightly more measurable pauses for dashes and terminal marks.

In spite of the different emphases theorists and gramm-
sages may be translated into pauses which may be rhetori-
cally necessary or effective (much, punctuation, however,
may be rhythmically "neutral"). On the other hand, I must
renew that I am skeptical about the automatic generation
of an elaborate system of pausing in order to prepare his text,
a long novel, for "oral presentation," and equally skeptical that
oral interpreters of novels, few if any there may be, can work
with a system of computed or generated pauses.
Shillington's assertion that "Thackeray was a "bas-
cially rhetorical punctuation" (ii) is not explained through
illustration, though, admittedly, it is difficult to envision the
form convincing of the "take" (page 90, paragraph 3).
Shillington concentrates on a single sentence (described,
not quoted), containing four independent clauses, the first
two separated by a semicolon, the second by a comma,
the third and fourth by a colon. The manuscript
version, Shillington argues, achieves "balance," which
is lost in the first edition where the sentence is punctuated
with a series of semicolons. Without knowing the subject
matter of the sentence, I speculate that "balance" would have been
better achieved (at least visually) by the sequence of comma,
semicolon, comma. Moreover, could a listener actually per-
ceive "balance" in a sentence by hearing three pauses of
different length? By chance, the manuscript sentence is an
example of the "stop" system, a method of punctuation
explained, with variations, by several eighteenth- and
nineteenth-century grammarians. Thus, in Shillington's
example, marks of different ranks logically follow one
another. Generally, the lack of evidence makes one wonder
how Shillington has arrived at the degree of certainty that he
exhibits.

The Garland Edition is by no means an exact printed
version of manuscript punctuation. Shillington has "tempered
silently" routine inadequacies (732) in eight categories—for instance, regularizing quotation marks, as
well as adding commas for some appositives and some
series. According to my count, in at least two hundred and
fifty additional cases (chapter 8, 131) he has added or
omitted in the first edition rather than the manuscript, adding marks missing in the manuscript and changing others. As far as I
can determine, these corrections have no effect on meaning but do
illustrate a moderate degree of carelessness on Thack-
ery's part.

If there were no rules or customary procedures and if one punctuated only according to the rules of English, such
pauses definitely would be required following initial sub-
ordinate clauses, verbal phrases, long prepositional phrases,
and absolute constructions. In approximately thirty cases (a
noteworthy number, though not unusual), Thackeray does not
signal the necessary pauses. Please try, if possible, to read
the following aloud without pausing at my additions, the
bracketed marks:
—"This letter completed[,] Miss Pinkerton proceeded
to write . . . ." (37)
—"As the majestic Jos stopped out of the creaking vehicle[,] the
crowd gave a cheer . . . ." (86)

"If mere parsimony would have made a man rich[,] Sir
Pitt Crawley might have become very wealthy. . . ." (76).
—"Taking her accustomed drive one day[,] I thought fit to
repeat that 'little g-iveness' should accompany her to
Mulberry[;] before they had returned[,] Rebecca had made a
conquest . . . ." (93).

Of course, in many instances, Thackeray does punctuate
similar sentences with a system of commas and semicolons.
Shillington's assertion is that Thackeray's punctuation
strategy is intended to be indistinguishable.

In several other cases punctuation is omitted in the
Garland Edition. Shillington has allowed some series to stand
without punctuation because of their proximity to other
items, and he has sometimes left out commas between
phrases and clauses without realizing it:
—"If they are good and kindly, to love them and shake them
by the hand: if they are silly, to laugh at them confidently in
the reader's sleeve: if they are wicked and heartless, to
abuse them in the strongest terms which politeness admits of" (72).
—"All was her Europe: her Emperor: her allied Monarch
and august Prince Regent: he was her sun and moon . . . .
(102).
—"She never had seen a man so beautiful or so clever: such a
great showhorse: such a dancer: such a hero in general . . . .
(102).
—"Mrs. Bute who knew how many days the sirloin of beef
lasted at the Hall: how much linen was got ready at the great
wash: how many peaches were on the South Wall. How
does she Ladyship took when she was ill. . . ." (85).

The turkey carpet rolled itself up, and retired safely
under the sideboard: the picture have hidden their faces
behind old sheets of brown paper: the ceiling lamp
muffled up in a dismall sack of brown Holland: the
window-curtains have disappeared under all sorts of
shabby envelopes: the marble bust of Mr. Walpole
Crawley is looking from its black corner at the bare
boards and the oilied fire-irons, and the empty card-racks
over the mantel-piece: the closet has tucked away behind
the carpet: the chairs are turned up heads and tails along
the walls: and in the dark corner opposite the statue, is an
old-fashioned cradled knife-box, buckled and sitting on a
jump stool. (9)

The extraordinary "turkey carpet" sentence exemplifies what
Patterson calls "progressive" colon: the sentence presents
"a series of related acts," and achieves "a linked succession, a
chain of events" (59).

As I have concluded elsewhere, for "Thackeray, colons often
indicate an extension of the narrative, functional markers—that is, emphasis marks signifying equality" (113).

Today it seems to me that Thackeray's colonized sentences are
a distinctive feature of his prose style; some of these sentences
can be visually interesting (in part at least because
the punctuation is unexpected) and orally effective insomuch
as the punctuation determines tone and emphasis.

In all the chapters of Vanity Fair for which the manu-
script is not the copy-text, the punctuation seems as
acceptable as one could hope to expect. In the twelve chapters
focused on here, my guess is that 90% of the punctuation is
more or less conventional; that 5% is individualistic but
acceptable (including some colons); and that only 5% is
inappropriate—that is, excessively perfunctory or simply
missing. But a guess is obviously not convincing proof.

The same may be said about Shillington's assertion that
Thackeray's punctuation was "rhetorically rather than syntac-
ically." The unproved assertion may be an excuse for Thack-
ery, a way of trying to defend him against the charges of
punctuating carelessly and erratically: if the argument might
go, a writer does not care to follow conventions and wishes
to mark where he prefers pauses of different length in an
"oral presentation" of his work—a subjective procedure—no
one can object and say that he is wrong.

Although it may not be possible to reach very far bey-
ond assertions and guesses my title can be answered with
"doubtful," at least "doubt-
ful" if "rhetorical" means the consistent use of graduated
pauses.

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Thomas Meyrick, Jesuit Madness, and Hopkins

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During the period of his Professorship of Greek at University College in Dublin, 1884-1889, Hopkins feared he

was going mad; Martin writes that "[a]fter his arrival in Dublin [Hopkins] wrote to Bridges in a vain effort to
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under his own case, I think that my fits of sadness, and though they do not affect my judgment, resemble madness' (381). In 1886, he wrote to Baillie that "when I am at the worst, though my judgment is never affected, my state is much like madness" (Purser Letters 256). Martin reports that "at intervals of a few decades after Hopkins' death another member of the Jesuit, Dublin community said. . . that he was thought by most to be more or less crazy" (375). Indeed Hopkins feared he would cross over the edge mentally. After a fortnight vacation in 1888 to Scotland, he wrote to Bridges that "I can not always last like this: in mind or body I shall give way" (Letters 282).

Hopkins' fear, I believe, augmented by the fear of confinement to a mental asylum. In 1880, a former English Jesuit, Thomas Meyrick, had published a pamphlet entitled My Imprisonments: An Apology for Leaving the Jesuit Order and My Return on Silvano Nello's Le Migliorie.1 Meyrick records his commitment, against his will, by the Jesuits to a private asylum in Fullam in 1873 for four months and in 1879, for 10 months, to a private asylum in Drumconra near Dublin. In 1879, Meyrick had served as an instructor in Greek and Italian at Clongowes Wood College, which Hopkins visited for his New Year's holiday in 1885 and "his annual eight-day retreat" in August of 1885 (White 404). It was Fr. Thomas Keating, Fr. John Connell's immediate predecessor as Rector of Clongowes Wood, who had Meyrick committed to Drumconra.2 Connell became one of the few Jesuits with whom Hopkins established a close friendship (White 390).

Although there is no direct reference to Thomas Meyrick or Hopkins in Hoffmann's letters or in either White's or Martin's biographies, it is very probable Hopkins knew of Meyrick and his tribulations. Martin observes that the English province of the Jesuits was "a loose family, and most of its members knew of each other" (377). The older Meyrick often preceded Hopkins at various Jesuit institutions by durations that varied from twenty-five years at St. Bonaventure's in Wales to two years at Manresa House at Rochestown.3 Meyrick Hopkins St. Bonaventure 1848-49 1873-75 Stonyhurst 1850, 1853 1870-75 1866-62, 1867 Manresa House, Rochestown 1867, 1872-73, 1877-78 1868-70 Liverpool 1854-57 Clongowes Wood College 1879 1885

It is most probable that Hopkins had learned of the eccentricity of Meyrick at Rochestown in 1868 and during his visits to Clongowes Wood in 1885.

Hopkins was also interested in the trial of the Tichborne Claimant to the extent of attending the Lord Chief Justice's summation in 1873 (White 218). This wealthy Catholic fam-

ily with ties to the English Jesuits rejected the claimant to be its lost, putatively dead heir, Richard Tichborne, as an imposter. Meyrick, against the interest of the Jesuits, testified on behalf of the claimant who claimed to have attended Stonyhurst where Meyrick had taught him Latin in 1854. Meyrick testified that the young Lord Tichborne "had no chance of making any progress in Latin," thereby explaining why the claimant knew no Latin (Atlay 252-53). Meyrick writes in his My Imprisonments that among the Jesuits "[t]he appearance for the Claimant cost me dear" (11-12). Moreover, the subject of the Welsh Sain Winifred, virgin and martyr, interested both Meyrick and Hopkins. Hopkins had begun his incomplete drama St. Winifred's Well in 1879 and Meyrick had published his Life of St. Winifred in 1878, a work that gave the closeness of the English Jesuits, Hopkins probably consulted in preparing his dramatic history. Hopkins too, it is my further contention in this paper that Meyrick's My Imprisonments influenced the imagery and metaphors of two of Hopkins' dark Dublin Sonnets "I wake and feel the fell of dark" and "Comfort in Darkness," which are echoed in Hopkins' "Imprisonment for the Claimant cost me dear" (11-12).

Read as a confession of the temptation of suicide (Martin 366), "Carson Comfort," written in Dublin in 1885, is a poem whose central metaphor is a wrestling match between the speaker and a "terrible" overmastering opponent, "an animal force capable of cruelty" (Harris 100), who at the end of the evolving present tense sonnet, is discovered, upon reflection, to have been God: "That night, that year of / now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with (my God) my God" (366).

Although the obvious source of this metaphor is "Jacob's night-long wrestle with the man / angel who was somehow also God," (Works 457n), another probable immediate source that may have reinforced the Biblical source, appears to be derived from Meyrick's My Imprisonments. After his first unsuccessful attempt to escape from the Fullam asylum in 1873, Meyrick "quickly seized and collared" by the asylum keepers, the shortest of whom proceeded to subject the helpless Meyrick to what he later described as a "wrestling match" (13).

I return to my main argument—the influence of Meyrick's My Imprisonings on the imagery of "I wake and feel the fell of dark" and "Comfort in Darkness," at the asylum in Fullam, from which he eventually escaped, Meyrick likens "the horrors" of the asylum to the Ignatian 'Meditation on Hell,' which 'was very efficiently rehearsed for me fifteen days before my close confinement was insupportable, the blasphemy from the madman most

1. 'The following chart is adapted from White and Martin and also Meyrick's My Imprisonings"
2. 'This account of the claimant charged there was a "real Jesuit conspiracy" against him (Atlay 353).
3. 'See especially Harris 97-101. Note that Hopkins avoided the word madness in his poems "possibly because he considered poems more

horrific, and the hopelessness" (15). The analogy between the stench and hopelessness of the asylum and Ignatian's 'Meditation on Hell' from The Spiritual Exercises is echoed in the concluding lines of Hopkins' sonnet: "The lost are like this, and their scourge to be / I am mine, their sweeting / the hopelessness of..." Hopkins' "lost," Meyrick's "stench in 'close rooms'" and Hopkins' "swaying selves" are telling correspondences.

In the Drumconra asylum near Dublin, Meyrick was cut off from family and friends. "I asked to write letters, and I wrote several, none of which were sent" (24). When he discovers that "all his letters were stopped and no one came or intended to come to see me," to the "agony of mind I endured" were "beyond description" (25). These unsent letters may be the source of the powerful metaphor in "I wake and feel the fell of dark" for the speaker's loneliness, as 'cries countless, cries like dead letters sent / to dearest that lives also away.'

Works Cited


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Xavier University—Cincinnati

Fall 2003
Johnston, Anna. Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. Pp. xii + 267. $65.00. *British missionary literature falls into the category of chronicle and complacency. Suspense fiction was about teaching readers to suspend judgment. And I will argue, here, the nineteenth century was not wrong about suspense: the generic reader often wrote with unreasoning or inexplicable dread—or—dynamic, critical, questioning, and indeterminate—than Barthes ever tempts us to imagine* (2).

Lewis, M. G. Jerome and the Victorian Woman Artist. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2003. Pp. xii + 278. $24.95. *In this book I undertake an analysis of nineteenth-century literary figures who began seriously to question [male] assumptions by means of their fictional portraits of brilliant female artists. Germaine de Staël and George Sand and their English disciples Geraldine Jewsbury, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, George Eliot, and Mrs. Humphry (Mary) Ward. The French novelists Stendhal and Sand created the female myth that was to become the cornerstone of Romanticism. What they did not do is that their metaphors of art and artistic manhood. It is fair question to ask. Why these particular Victorian writers? My answer would be that all four were serious artists who consciously adapted the Corinne/Consuelo myth of Stendhal and Sand to embody English women's artistic endeavors—chiefly of course their own literary endeavors—and that they deployed it not just by choice but by necessity in creating these fictional portraits" (3).


Schechter, Jennifer. National Dreams: The Remaking of Fairy Tales in Nineteenth-Century England. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. Pp. 188. $39.95; $28.00. *A large readership still exists for what were once known as "popular" and "traditional" fairy tales. In the United States, they might today call fairy tales, folk tales, wonder tales, or Märchen. From the early Victorian period to the present, written versions of such tales have been based in part on oral traditions. Celebrated as imaginatively liberating, psychologically therapeutic, or as windows onto particular cultures, fairy tales are generally embraced as products of some thing larger than an individual consciousness, older than the medium—writing—in which we experience the stories. But we have inherited more than a title for 'fairy tales' from the mid-nineteenth century predecessors. We have also inherited a set of ideologically charged textual practices and interpretive frameworks.
that reveal as much about Victorian literary culture as they do about oral folk cultures" (11).

Silves, Anna Krugovoy. *Victorian Literature and the Anorexic Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002. Pp. x + 220. $55.00. "Anorexia nervosa, I argue, is deeply rooted in Victorian values, ideologies, and aesthetics, which together helped define femininity in the nineteenth century. Given the clear parallels which exist between the symptoms of this disease and Victorian gender ideology, I argue that the normative model of middle-class Victorian womanhood shares several qualities with the beliefs or behaviors of the anorexic girl or woman. One can thus 'read' Victorian gender ideology through an anorexic lens. Briefly the qualities that many (though, of course, not all) Victorians used to define the ideal woman—spiritual, non-sexual, self-disciplined—share what Leslie Heywood has called an 'aneoretic logic.' The anorexic woman's slender form attests to her discipline over her body and its hunger, despite the persistence of that hunger, and indicates her discomfort with or even hatred of her body and its appetites, which may or may not include her sexuality. If one reads the disease metaphorically, then, it becomes evident that the pathology of anorexia nervosa and predominant Victorian constructions of gender subscribe to many of the same characteristics" (3).

Slime, E. Warwick. *Victorian Poetry as Cultural Critique: The Politics of Performative Language*. Victorian Literature and Culture Series. Charlottesville & London: U of Virginia P, 2003. Pp. x + 217. $39.50. "This book analyzes the performance language of a series of Victorian poems. The project was conceived, however, in terms of a broader academic context where poetry has become something of a neglected genre in literary studies, where the intense use of language in poetry appears to have become marginalized amidst thematic approaches to the politics of social discourse. If, however, we are to understand fully the function of figurative language in cultural processes (of which poetry is the most sophisticated form), we need to restore attention to that language, no matter how specialized its use—without losing sight of its continuity with social and historical contexts. With this study I aim to redress the balance by analyzing poetic content and process in order to show how poetry may enact a cultural critique through its self-conscious formalism, its foregrounding of other language acts that many of the literary scholars most sympathetic to cultural critique have seemed least to take into account" (11).

Warwick, Andrew. *Masters of Theory: Cambridge and the Rise of Mathematical Physics*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2003. Pp. xiv + 572. $29.00, £20.50 (paper). "Taking Cambridge University as my example, I contend in this study that mathematical physics has a necessarily rich culture which is most effectively made visible through the history of training, the mechanism by which that culture has been reproduced and expanded for more than two hundred years. . . . My approach is naturalistic in that it explores theory not in terms of method or logic but through the experience of the student struggling to become its master. Nor do I treat theorizing as a uniquely cerebral process. . . . Cambridge undergraduates in the late eighteenth century found it very odd that they were being required to learn by sketching and writing rather than by reading and talking, and to display their knowledge by solving mathematical problems on paper instead of disputing in Latin. Their testimony highlights the peculiarity of mathematical knowledge made using hand, brain, paper, and pen. It is part of my task to understand how these new skills were taught and learned, and to explore the relationship between drawing, writing, and knowing. I also contend that how and by whom students were taught is as important as what they were taught. . . . The mathematician's body, gender, and sexuality were also implicated in the making of the modern theoretician. Those who would master celestial mechanics in Victorian Cambridge believed that competition on the playing field was as important as competition in the classroom, that irregular sexual activity sapped a man's strength, and that women's minds and bodies could not withstand these trials. I want to understand how these embodied values contributed to what contemporaries characterized as the industrialization of the learning process" (ix-x).


[3] Chapter 3 discusses Lee's relationship to feminism" (xxx). "Chapter 4 explores how she evokes a lesbian dimension through coining new and redefining classic forms of masculine homoeroticism" (xxx). "Chapter 5 presents Vernon Lee as a novelist in *Miss Brown* (1884), which attracted enough public attention to have been called a bestseller" (xxxx). "Chapter 6 covers three of Vernon Lee's better-known fantastic tales—'Dione,' 'Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady,' and 'Amor Duri'—whose narrative structures combine the traditional ghost story with aesthetic symbolism" (xxxx).

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