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GLEND A. HUDSON
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SOLOMON IYASERE
Chair, English and Communications Department

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CONTENTS

JOY UTTERBERG

To You Your Father Should Be As A God: Patriarchal Rituals in
A Midsummer Night's Dream

7

KEVIN CAMPBELL

Tone in *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult*

21

TIM KELLY

The Doppelganger in Baudelaire and Poe

27

JACOB LITTLETON

Moral Ambiguity in *Wuthering Heights* and *Great Expectations*

41

TIESE QUINN

Weaving as a Recurrent Theme in *Moby Dick*

51

BRYAN JETTER

Bleak House's East Wind

59

LOIS EASTER

Suspensions of Society in Melville, Hawthorne, and Thoreau

73

STEVEN MAYER

Poetic Tension in Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach"

77

Writers' Guidelines and Submissions

Calliope is published annually. Contributions in all areas of literary history and criticism are welcome, but manuscripts will only be considered if they have been recommended by a professor.

Submissions must be typed or word-processed and should not exceed 25 double-spaced pages. The first page of the manuscript should contain the author's name and essay title. All subsequent pages should be numbered. Submission of a paper to this journal will be taken to imply that it represents original work. Essays should conform to the current MLA citation system. Authors should use notes and appendices sparingly. The editor reserves the right to edit manuscripts as needed for publication.

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Dr. Glenda A. Hudson, Editor

Calliope

Department of English and Communications

California State University, Bakersfield

Bakersfield, California 93311

Telephone: (805) 664-3085

Introduction

This volume is the second number of an annual publication entitled *Calliope*. It highlights some of the best work in literary history and criticism by undergraduates and graduates at CSUB.

This publication contains eight essays covering a wide range of literature from Shakespeare to Charles Dickens. The essays deal with poetry, drama, and fiction and represent a diversity of critical approaches. All eight articles in this distinguished collection were written by undergraduates. One of the authors, Bryan Jetter, was named the Outstanding Graduating Senior in English for 1994.

The cover design incorporates a sketch by the seventeenth-century French artist Claude Lorrain. The drawing depicts the figure of Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry from Greek mythology.

Glenda A. Hudson, Ph.D.

Editor

**To You Your Father Should Be As A God:
Patriarchal Rituals in *A Midsummer Night's Dream***

JOY UTTERBERG

In the beginning dialogue of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare reveals that this comedy will focus on the festivities of marriage, holiday, and love. However, when one closely examines Shakespeare's treatment of marriage, law, and love, a one-sided, patriarchal¹ view takes form. Both marriage and love become extensions of patriarchal society, enabling the men to control and manipulate their daughters, lovers, and subjects. In this, the marriage festivities take on a somber note, and the passions of love seem little more than methods of control. Patriarchal dominance pervades almost every aspect of the play. Theseus, Oberon, and Egeus are all extensions of the same patriarchal power. Whether or not this male dominance represents Shakespeare's views is not important. Shakespeare certainly did not create the patriarchal law or dominance of Athens. Yet, he exposes the rituals and customs through which patriarchal society controls the female, and he expands upon this patriarchal ideal by interweaving patterns of male dominance into the text.

I believe the simplest and clearest way to explore the patriarchal structures of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is to progress chronologically through the play. From the outset, Shakespeare focuses on patriarchal society. In the first lines,

Theseus reveals his impatient desire to consummate his marriage to Hippolyta:

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
 Draws on apace. Four happy days bring in
 Another moon; but, O, methinks, how slow
 This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires
 Like to a stepdame or a dowager
 Long withering out a young man's revenue.

(I.i.1-6)

Conversely, to Hippolyta, "four nights will quickly dream away the time," and "a silver bow, / New bent in heaven, shall behold the night / Of our solemnities" (I.i.7-10). Hippolyta's and Theseus' view of the same event is significantly different. Theseus awaits their "nuptial hour," while Hippolyta views their wedding as a solemnity. The two words have strikingly dissimilar and almost opposite connotations. "Nuptial hour" expresses joy and happiness, while "solemnities" seems to suggest seriousness or a somber attitude. Shakespeare scholar C. L. Barber notes that "Theseus looks forward to the hour with masculine impatience, Hippolyta with a woman's willingness to dream away the time" (125). Moreover, she does not pledge or swear her love (Marshall 548). Hippolyta, like Hermia, Helena, and Titania, is a pawn in the patriarchal game Athenian society plays. Theseus goes on to insist:

Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword
 And won thy love by doing thee injuries;
 But I will wed thee in another key,
 With pomp, with triumph, and with reveling.

(I.i.16-19)

David Marshal views Theseus' courtship as "ravishment disguised in an oblique courtesy" (549). Furthermore, Hippolyta may suffer a "death" of culture and identity when she is forced to leave her Amazonian life (Calderwood 10). As Egeus later will impose his decision on Hermia, Theseus has simply imposed his "love" on Hippolyta. A wedding filled "with pomp, with triumph, and with reveling" seems little more than a battle celebration. David Young goes on to conclude that "[i]t is appropriate that Theseus, as a representation of daylight and right reason, should have subdued his bride-to-be to the rule of his masculine will" (110). This observation reflects the patriarchal structure of the play. Theseus, as the male, should repress and overtake his female love, with marriage as the ultimate conquest. Because Hippolyta rebels against the traditional duties of the female and societal laws regarding marriage, her conquest, and that of her Amazonian tribe, is critical to patriarchal rule; it solidifies the supreme power of males (Brown 25 and Roberts 125-127).

Patriarchy in the traditional sense is represented by Egeus. His opening lines establish his dilemma and his demand for power. Egeus contends, "Full of vexation come I, with complaint / Against my child, my daughter Hermia" (I.i.22-23). Egeus appeals, in desperation, to the most powerful ally he has against his daughter:

the law. James L. Calderwood suggests that "Hermia's desire is not just her business or her family's business but state business as well" (7). Theseus, Egeus, and the state of Athens have a say in Hermia's marriage, although she has little choice in the matter. Since Egeus appeals to the hierarchical structure of society, Hermia's marriage takes on great importance as an extension of the laws which hold society together. Shakespeare seems to suggest that the ruler-subject relationship (enforced by Theseus) is similar to the child-father relationship (established by Egeus); therefore, Hermia has an obligation to obey both men (Williamson 149).

To continue, Egeus petitions:

Stand forth, Demetrius. My noble lord,
 This man hath my consent to marry her.
 Stand forth, Lysander. And, my gracious Duke,
 This man hath bewitched the bosom of my child.
 (I.i.24-27)

Egeus' immediate complaint is not with the actions of his daughter but with the actions of Lysander. Egeus' grievance is similar to that of Brabantio in *Othello* or Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet* (Cook 100). With "gauds, conceits, / Knacks, trifles, nose-gays, and sweetmeats" (I.i.33-34), Lysander has taken away Egeus' power to control the destiny of his daughter. Lysander and Egeus struggle over Hermia's dreams and imagination, the forces which create love and desire. This is similar to Oberon's desire to control Titania's fantasies (Marshall 557). Furthermore, with

"cunning," Lysander has "turned" Hermia's obedience to her father into "stubborn harshness" (I.i.36-38). Hermia "owes" her father obedience; this right is only forfeited when she marries, and this obedience then belongs to another man. Egeus claims that Hermia is simply his property, his possession, his creation. He believes he may do with her as he wishes: "As she is mine, I may dispose of her" (I.i.42). Egeus' rash and arbitrary actions are sanctioned by law, just as Theseus' overthrow of the Amazonian Hippolyta is sanctioned by natural law and order.

Egeus claims Hermia's life because he believed he formed her being. Patriarchy has enabled men to entirely create and control women (Calderwood 7). Theseus explains this concept to Hermia:

To you your father should be as a god—
 One that compos'd your beauties, yea, and one
 To whom you are but a form in wax
 By him imprinted, and within his power
 To leave the figure or disfigure it.

(I.i.47-51)

Theseus conveniently forgets the mother in his account, and Shakespeare does not supply one. Theseus describes maidens as creations of only their fathers, as property to be passed from fathers to husbands in a male-dominated society (Montrose 73). Calderwood observes that as a "form in wax," "Hermia is a sign imprinted by her godlike father in the passively receptive material of their mother . . . Hermia is both biologically and symbolically created by the father" (7). Man can now create life without

woman; Theseus has brought to life the patriarchal ideal of male parthenogenesis (Montrose 73). Calderwood eloquently concludes:

At this point in Hermia's experience, the name-of-the-father embraces the family father (Egeus), the state father (Theseus) and, in its awesome form, the patriarchal law of Athens. The symbolic [power of man] has petrified into dictatorship of the signifier, endowed with the power to give life and therefore impose death (8).

Confronted with the stern Athenian law, Hermia asks to know "The worst that may befall me in this case / If I refuse to wed Demetrius" (I.i.63-63). Theseus responds that she has three choices: to die, to live as a nun, or to marry Demetrius. Theseus warns Hermia of the life of a virgin:

Thrice blessed they that master so their blood
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier happy is the rose distilled
Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness."

(I.i.74-78)

The virginity and chastity of women are crucial elements in patriarchal society. Marshal notes that the play centers around the conflict between masculine rationality and female sexuality (557). Theseus threatens Hermia with a fate worse than death, perpetual

virginity. Female sexuality is a means by which patriarchal society may control women, but it is also one of the few ways by which women can gain control. Louis Montrose notes that Hermia “wishes to have the limited privilege of giving herself” (73). Her power in society results from her ability to deny men access to her body. However, patriarchal society does not ultimately give this control to the female, for Theseus and Egeus choose her lover (Montrose 73). Virginity gives the female power in society and limits patriarchal rejuvenation. Montrose goes on to mention that the “self-possession of single blessedness is a form of power against which are opposed the marriage doctrines of Shakespeare’s culture and the very form of this comedy” (73).

A Midsummer Night’s Dream celebrates women at the start with fertility rights and images of the moon, only to later suppress women in favor of Athenian patriarchal society (Roberts 179). Moreover, with references both to the bow of Cupid and the bow of Diana and the goddesses Diana and Venus, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* attempts to create a world in which both aspects of sexuality can exist (Brown 21). But, patriarchal society can not continue in this world, and by the play’s end, all the females will be resigned to the control of marital chastity (Roberts 179). Moreover, the natural patriarchal order which emerges at the close is one of subordination of the female to the male (Marshal 555).

Although patriarchy controls feminine sexuality, it does not rigidly dictate actions or feelings in the male. In this, Shakespeare creates an Oedipal complex in the play. The love triangle is not established between father, child, and mother but between father, daughter, and lover. In choosing Demetrius, Egeus is forcing his

ideas on Hermia and partly joining in the bond of matrimony between them (Calderwood 13). Egeus responds to Lysander's cries of loving Demetrius by admitting Demetrius has his love, and Egeus also acknowledges that "all my right of her / I do estate unto Demetrius" (I.i.97-98). Mark Taylor proposes that Egeus' insistence on Demetrius is an incestuous choice (132). By forcing Hermia to marry Demetrius, Egeus may be forcing Hermia to marry her father's image or ideal. For her, the marriage may subconsciously be a marriage to Egeus and Theseus (Taylor 132 and Calderwood 13). Taylor suggests that as Hermia approaches maturity, Egeus is unable to adjust; she becomes "what he covets and cannot have" (133). In insisting upon Demetrius, Egeus is continuing his control of Hermia. All in all, incest is a way for Egeus and Theseus to further paternal dominance (Taylor 102).

As James Calderwood argues, "with this gift [of marriage to his daughter] he again endorses the incest taboo . . . acquiescing to the demands of the law that he himself represents by placing his daughter forever beyond his reach" (13). In addition, Egeus may simply be picking a son-in-law for himself. As mentioned earlier, Egeus admits Demetrius has his love. Demetrius fits into the triangle of desire and would allow Egeus to still "love" his daughter. Egeus may believe Hermia is worth less than a son, for none of her progeny will carry his family name. In his mind's eye, her marriage may be the death of his family name and his legacy (Calderwood 14). Hermia can also be seen as a simple unit of exchange that allows Demetrius to symbolically marry her father. In reality, Demetrius and Egeus are deceived by patriarchal law

and blinded by the desire for power; they do not recognize Hermia's significance (Brown 25).

Since Hermia and Lysander may not marry in Athens, they are forced to flee from patriarchal society; their escape into the forest can be seen as an escape into matriarchal society. They are leaving the laws of patriarchy to unite in a paradise of matriarchal love. Lysander makes a promise to Hermia:

I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child.
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee.
(I.i.157-161)

Theseus' reference to "stepdame" and "dowager" now has greater importance. This "mother," as are all the other motherly figures in the play, is missing. The absence of any motherly figure in the play strengthens the power of the father over his children or the man over his lover. Shakespeare removes any matriarchal figure who might have been a threat to patriarchal power (Calderwood 3). In the extreme case, Oberon actually takes the child from its surrogate mother, thereby breaking the bond between mother and child. Marilyn Williamson points out that the mother's "invisibility eliminates the necessity of dealing with the obedience to the mother to which the Bible also enjoins [children]" (147). The absence of the motherly figures—Titania's votress, Lysander's mother, Thisbe's mother, and Hermia's mother—is probably not

a mistake on Shakespeare's part. Shakespeare is not required to portray these matriarchal characters. However, his omission of mothers is crucial to the development of the patriarchal structures in the play (Calderwood 3).

The only biological mother mentioned in the play is Titania's votress. And, at first glance, she would seem of little importance. However, Titania's friendship with the mother and her love for the changeling baby prompt the actions of Oberon. He seeks to humiliate Titania, to "do her injuries," in the same way Theseus won Hippolyta's submission (Brown 27). As Oberon warns the absent Titania, "Thou shalt not from this grove / Till I torment thee for this injury" (II.i.146-147). Louis Montrose notes, "Oberon's paternal power must be directed against Titania's possessiveness" (73). Oberon's "little changeling boy" must pass from the female-dominated world, represented by the boy's mother and Titania, into patriarchal society. Oberon wishes to have the boy so he may possess a child and bring him into manhood. In addition, Oberon's insistence on having the child may center around a fantasy of motherhood (Montrose 74-75). Montrose also suggests that "in order to be freed and enfranchised from the prison of the womb, the male child must kill his mother" (75). In this case, the line "she, being mortal, of that boy did die" (II.i.135) takes on a shocking, literal meaning.

Furthermore, Oberon's "Wake when some vile thing is near" (II.i.20) is distressing, revengeful, and hateful. Oberon's power to destroy or humiliate the female illustrates patriarchal power. Part of Oberon's power stems from his use of magic, which also becomes an extension of masculine power for other males in the

play (Roberts 45). His use of trickery in forcing Titania to fall in love with Bottom is supported by patriarchal natural law because it allows Oberon to control Titania. Shakespeare does not present Titania as angry over the ordeal Oberon has put her through; her maternal love is simply replaced by a sexual love for Oberon. Jeanne A. Roberts views Titania as “strong-willed, maternal, and sensuously alive” (179). Therefore, Titania’s submission and Oberon’s victory is very important. As the most powerful female in the play, second only to Oberon in greatness, Titania’s compliance with patriarchal rule represents an usurpation of maternal and female power.

Besides breaking the bond between mother and child, patriarchal influence in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* breaks the bonds in female friendships. According to Roberts, females are “made the objects of a considerable amount of Old Boy humor” (179). For instance, the fight between Helena and Hermia is funny because it fits into societal and cultural ideals about female behavior (Roberts 180). In addition, Helena and Hermia’s marriages can be seen as the next step in their maturity; however, they must first break the bonds of female friendship (Roberts 179). Helena recalls her youth with Hermia:

So we grew together
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted
 But yet an union in partition,
 Two lovely berries molded on one stem.

(III.ii.209-211)

Helena's cries are echoes of Hippolyta's desperate situation. Similarly, Titania has lost her close female friend. Hermia and Helena are now victims of patriarchal society, just as Titania and Hippolyta are. Helena may be innocently longing for a togetherness or wholeness, and she may see herself and Hermia as halves to a whole. This concept relates to the Greek myth of split hermaphrodites (Calderwood 16-17). This would explain Helena and Hermia's similar identities and mutual fondness. Yet, Shakespeare does not fully explore this possibility (Calderwood 16). Although Bassanio and Antonio of *The Merchant of Venice* are able to share a deep platonic love, Helena and Hermia are prevented from doing so.

Female friendships are destroyed by patriarchal influences, and the females are forced to form new and all-encompassing bonds with the males. A strong friendship between females is a threat to patriarchal dominance. James Calderwood proposes that the "feminine community is suppressed by masculine conquest under the cultural auspices of love and marriage" (16). When closely examined, the play develops a pattern: Theseus conquers Hippolyta, Oberon tortures Titania, and Helena and Hermia are split apart by men. Female spirits are constantly lost to male domination and control.

On the whole, Shakespeare explores the underlying disorder which results from a patriarchal society in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Theseus and Oberon strive to reestablish the order that results from female oppression. Louis A. Montrose sums up the play's finale articulately:

[t]he festive conclusion of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, its celebration of romantic and generative heterosexual union, depends upon the success of a process whereby the female pride and power manifested in misanthropic warriors, possessive mothers, unruly wives, and willful daughters are brought under the control of husbands and lords. (76)

The order which is attained through Oberon and Theseus' power is not accomplished without destruction. However, the play is a comedy, and Shakespeare probably did not intend for the patriarchal influences to transform the play into a tragedy from the female point of view. Yet, modern audiences must recognize the patriarchal language, images, and culture behind *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Roberts 182). Moreover, the patriarchal structures in the play are often disguised in joyous concepts of order, marriage, love, and family (Calderwood 16); yet, Shakespeare exposes this distorted mask. The play ultimately reveals that the lust for power and control creates patriarchal authority and perpetuates the rituals of female repression.

Notes

- ¹The term "patriarch," in the traditional sense, is employed to refer to father-daughter relationships. However, for the purposes of clarity and brevity, I shall use the term to refer to any male dominance in society.

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**Tone in *The Romance of
Tristan and Iseult***
KEVIN CAMPBELL

In *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult*, there are a series of binary oppositions that dramatize the conflicts that exist between marital love, characterized by laws of suzerain fealty, and the psychology of courtly love. Through the author's use of the third-person intrusive narrator, the setting, and religious symbolism in the poem, a tone is created that affirms the psychology of courtly love. Moreover, the poem is representative of a paradigm shift in which courtly love becomes and replaces the traditional transcendent ideals found in marriage. Thus, the narrator, setting, and symbols of the poem serve to expel any of the binary intrusions made by "the Laws of Rome."

The intrusive narrator in *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult* conveys tone by explicitly favoring courtly love over marriage and the laws of suzerain fealty. Moreover, the narrator is constantly attempting throughout the poem to debunk any other versions of the poem that try to blur the oppositions between courtly love and marriage. The narrator refuses "the romancers['']" version of the poem which suggests King Mark's love for Iseult is derived from the magic philtre:

But know, my lords, that these romancers have tampered
with the tale and falsified it . . . In truth, as you shall see,

never, despite anguish, torment and terrible reprisals, could Mark expel either Iseult or Tristan from his heart; yet know that he had not drunk the spiced wine. Neither poison nor sorcery, only the tender nobility of his heart, moved him to love. (p. 37)

King Mark's love, his "tender nobility," is grounded in the laws of suzerain fealty which make women, in part, nothing more than property. Conversely, courtly love, where "being in love casts out love," operates outside of the laws of suzerain fealty and marriage. The narrator denies that passion in marriage and passion in courtly love are equivalents. Likewise, the narrator is saying in essence, "Of [courtly love], he knows truly nothing who wants fully to possess his lady. Whatever turns into a reality is no longer love." Thus, King Mark can not "truly" love Iseult because he, through marriage, possesses her. Further, the narrator dramatized those associated with the laws of suzerain fealty as being villainous, while Tristan and Iseult are seen as angelic protagonists. The barons are referred to as "felons," and the dwarf Frocin is named the "hunchback from Hell," while Tristan is described in chivalric language even though he betrays King Mark.

The setting throughout the poem also creates tone through the subtle way of dramatizing action rather than specifically "telling" a story. Two constant images found in the setting of the poem are of the ocean or stream and the sky. Iseult says, "Ah, all that I know torments me, and all that I see. This sky and this sea torments me, and my body and my life" (p. 34). The reason that Iseult is tormented by nature stems from the fact that nature's "signs" seem

to justify the relationship of Tristan and Iseult, a relationship built upon torment and anguish. In the opening of the poem, the sea becomes a force that guards innocence against tyranny. When Tristan gets kidnapped, the sea becomes his protector, rising up against the “felon ship” that captured him (p. 6). Consequently, the sea directs Tristan to come into contact with King Mark at Tintagel as he is left ashore by his captors. Likewise, after Tristan has been poisoned by the Morholt and awaits his subsequent death on the sea, his life is saved when his boat is directed by “a sea as white as milk” to the port of Whitehaven and Iseult the Fair (p. 17). Moreover, Tristan and Iseult use the “clear stream,” in the orchard behind Tintagel, to float “twigs and bark” to signal meetings for their secret relationship (p. 46). Whereas the sea had seemingly brought Tristan and Iseult together, the stream is symbolic of nature’s continuing affirmation of their relationship by figuratively approving of their covert meetings. Likewise, the sea affirms their relationship by eradicating its possible barriers. When Iseult receives Pticro, the magic fairy dog, from Tristan, its bells, which soothe suffering, threaten to destroy Tristan’s and Iseult’s passion for one another, since their passion is inextricably bound to suffering. The narrator says that Iseult “took the magic bell and shook it just a little, and then by the open window she threw it into the sea” (p. 106). Thus, the sea sustains and rejuvenates the passion of the two lovers.

Like the ocean, the sky serves to symbolically approve of Tristan’s and Iseult’s love affair, creating a tone that again upholds the mandates of courtly love. While Tristan and Iseult sleep together in the woods of Morois, the narrator says that “through a

crevice in the branches a sunbeam fell upon the face of Iseult, and it shone white like ice" (p. 74). It is as if Iseult becomes elevated through the judgments of nature to an angelic stature. Moreover, the narrator continues,

And still the sunbeam fell upon the white face of Iseult, and the King took his ermined gloves: 'It was she,' thought he, 'who lately brought them to me from Ireland,' and put them up against the crevice whence it shone. (p. 76)

The ermined gloves are representative of the commodities that are produced from suzerain fealty; King Mark possesses the gloves just as the narrator would have us believe that he possesses Iseult. Consequently, when the gloves are placed against the crevice that allows the sunbeam to fall on Iseult's face, the author is dramatizing the encroachment of suzerain fealty on courtly love.

Tone is also created effectively through the author's use of religious symbolism in the poem. Tristan's and Iseult's love affair is the embodiment of a new secular religion, replacing the religious ideals of marriage. Thus, when Tristan and Iseult disappear "beyond the curtain of the leaves" into the woods of Morois, they are operating symbolically outside "the laws of Rome." Likewise, they deny their "sin" to Ogrin: "And of what should I repent, Ogrin, my lord? Or of what crime?" (p. 68). The woods of Morois become a place that "comforts and wards [Tristan and Iseult] all round about" (p. 69). Moreover, it is a place where the lovers, in "the strength of their love," do not feel "mortal things" (p. 71).

The author also parallels Tristan symbolically with Christ: "But you, Tristan, you fought for us, the men of Cornwall, and you slew the Morholt; and he struck you a wound with his spear of which you almost died for us" (p. 59). Tristan symbolically represents the Christ of the new religion of courtly love, a religion that he too must ultimately give his life for.

The tone that is created from third-person intrusive narration, setting, and symbolism in *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult* is one which rejects "the laws of Rome" for those of courtly love. Yet, the tone's affirmation of the two lovers is paradoxical. There are two similes in the opening of the chapter titled "The Tall Pine-Tree" that show this paradox: "Love pressed [Tristan and Iseult] hard, as thirst presses the dying stag to the stream; love dropped upon them from high heaven, as a hawk slipped after long hunger falls right upon the bird" (p. 42). In both similes, the imagery suggests that passion is inextricably bound to pain, suffering, and death. Thus, when the author produces a tone that affirms courtly love through the various literary techniques previously described, these affirmations are ironically also forms of condemnation. To support the lovers is not only to support the passion that exudes from courtly love, but also to indirectly support the pain and suffering which are bound to such passion.

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The Doppelganger in Baudelaire and Poe

TIM KELLY

The doppelganger, or "ghostly double," is a common figure in literature. Many readers have encountered it in various works, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* being some well-known examples. The works of Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Baudelaire share, among many similarities, an almost identical use of the doppelganger. These two authors use the doppelganger as a tool to examine man's relationship with himself. Not satisfied with merely giving the reader the results of their examinations, these authors too have developed the doppelganger into a device with which they can draw the reader into the world of the narrator. In putting the reader upon the same footing as the narrator, Baudelaire and Poe make it clear that the actions they portray do not occur in some specialized universe, but are within the grasp of the reader (often to his horror). Coming as these authors do some half a century before Sigmund Freud published his first work in 1888, their use of the doppelganger to explore the psychology behind man's behavior is a mark of considerable sophistication.

For the purpose of this paper, the doppelganger, or double, refers to the virtual duplication of a character. This duplicate can either be internal in the form of an alter ego or external in the manifestation of another character. Eric Gans speaks of two kinds of doubles. Gans draws the distinction between the double as a rival and the double as a copy (76). This distinction can also be

seen as the rivalry between Self and Otherness, with the double as rival taking on the form of the Other. The love-hate relationship portrayed in Baudelaire's "Eyes of the Poor" illustrates the dichotomy between Gans's doubles. The poem is an explanation of why the narrator hates his lover on a particular day. The narrator has been stirred by the admiring eyes of a poor family and is somewhat ashamed by his relative wealth (45). He claims that his heart had been softened by pleasure that day, and as such the admiring eyes of the poor family send him into a somewhat ashamed reverie in which he considers his over-indulgence in luxuries (45). Turning to look into his lover's eyes, "to read my thoughts in them," the narrator's reverie is shattered by her request that he have the poor family shooed away (45). His hatred of her is the result of his failure to find himself mirrored in her eyes. This is especially galling to him after a day in which they had promised "that henceforth our souls would be as one" (45). His relationship with her is one of either love or hatred; he loves her when she is his double in the form of a copy in whom he can see himself and hates her when she becomes his double as a rival who challenges his supremacy with thoughts of her own. Like Narcissus of Greek legend falling in love with what he believes is another (really his own reflection), the narrator of this poem loves and hates only the person in whom he sees himself reflected.

In Baudelaire's "Heautontimoroumenos," the reader is presented with another narrator who is dissatisfied with his love object's (presumably his mistress) failure to be the person he wishes her to be. He speaks of dispassionately striking her "without rage or hate / The way a butcher strikes his block" to

almost surgically start tears to flow (156). The narrator hopes that in opening the floodgates of her emotions "Desire, that hope embellishes / Will swim along the overflow" (157). In other words, he hopes that with emotion will come the desire which he has fantasized about in her. His attempt to make her into his idealized image of her is, however, doomed by "voracious Irony" (157). The blows he delivers to release his love's emotions become blows directed against himself. He complains, "I am the wound, and rapier! / I am the cheek, I am the slap! / I am the limbs, I am the rack, / The prisoner, the torturer" (157). The narrator is the victim of his own blows, for his actions are in "false accord / Within the holy symphony (nature)" and lead not into infusing his mistress with "Desire," but instead into his own suffering (157). The narrator doesn't see the cause of his failures in himself, but in his double: Irony. Of her doubling of him he says, "She's in my voice, in all I do! / Her poison flows in all my veins! / I am the looking-glass of pain / Where she regards herself, the shrew" (157). This sort of doubling resembles a split personality, though with the twist that in placing the blame on another personality, one sheds any responsibility for one's failures. Baudelaire himself knew the suffering one's nature could inflict upon one's self. In his second lecture in Belgium, he virtually emptied the house with his opening words "I am all the more touched by the kind reception you have given me, since it is with you that I lost my virginity—virginity which is no more to be regretted than the other" (Starkie, 471). Psychologists have only in the last few decades begun to examine the self-handicapping, self-destructive actions people perform. Brehm and Kassim suggest that self-handicapping (the

things people do to sabotage themselves in order to provide an excuse for foreseen failure) is a means of insulating the self against failure (77-78). Baudelaire clearly recognized that often one's worst enemy is oneself. In addition, the narrator's affliction is a device by which the reader is drawn closer to the world of the poem. The graphic descriptions of the narrator's torment are calculated to make the reader empathize with him. In this manner, the reader becomes uncomfortably aware of how close to home the narrator's actions are.

Deborah Harter claims that the figure of the narrator at the end of "Heautontimoroumenos" fits Paul de Man's vision of "ultimate irony" (33). De Man suggests that "ultimate irony" would be a consciousness of (one's) madness" (33). According to de Man, the double is the necessary agent of the awareness of madness: "the ironist invents a form of himself that is 'mad' but does not know its own madness; he then proceeds to reflect upon his own madness thus objectified" (33). The narrator of the poem is aware of his own plight for he claims, "I am one of those thoroughly abandoned, thoroughly condemned to eternal laughter, and yet, can never smile again" (34). Baudelaire considered laughter to be akin to madness. He once wrote, "(laughter is) one of those expressions of madness that occurs most frequently and in greatest number" (36-37).

Edgar Allan Poe too mastered the device of empathy. His story "William Wilson" portrays a narrator similar in many respects to the one in Baudelaire's poem. William Wilson, the narrator of this story, encounters at his school a virtual, though unrelated, twin of himself. This twin has the same name, the same

birth date, a similar figure, and an apparent desire to exactly ape William Wilson himself (1402). This emulation is abhorrent to the narrator and early in the story he leaves his school to escape his double (1405). Throughout the rest of the story, the narrator is thwarted from virtually any action by the fairy godmother-like appearances of his double at the worst possible times (1410). Like Baudelaire's narrator, Wilson finds external causes for his failures, hanging them on "my admonisher at Eton, in the destroyer of my honor at Oxford, in him who thwarted my ambition in Rome, my revenge in Paris, my passionate love at Naples . . . William Wilson of my schoolboy days . . . the hated and dreaded rival" (1411). The narrator finally gets to confront his antagonist when he again interrupts a liaison (1411). A brief duel follows in which the narrator repeatedly runs his sword through his enemy (1412). Turning his attention briefly towards the door, Wilson turns back to his fallen antagonist only to see himself somehow reflected in a hitherto unnoticed mirror (1412). To his horror he discovers that in repeatedly running through his antagonist, he himself had received the wounds (1412). Wilson too has become "the wound and rapier." His figure in the mirror tells Wilson in his own voice, "You have conquered, and I yield. Yet henceforward, art thou also dead - dead to the world and its hopes. In me didst thou exist - and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine, how utterly thou has murdered thyself" (1412). Like Baudelaire, Poe uses his narrator's description of his suffering to draw the reader's sympathy. The reader can almost feel Wilson's frustration with his double. In becoming sympathetic to the sufferings of a character, one shares feelings with him. Both Poe and Baudelaire use this act

of sharing to make the reader conscious of how little removed the narrator's actions are from his own.

In the figure of Fortunato in "A Cask of Amontillado," Poe uses the double as a device to further explore self-destructive behavior. Poe gives several clues that Fortunato is in fact Montressor's double. Early in the story, Montressor claims that he and Fortunato are both wine connoisseurs, and that in this matter "I did not differ from him materially" (1442). His use of the word "materially" is ambiguous; it could mean that he and Fortunato share a similar taste in wines, or it could imply that he and Fortunato are cut from the same cloth. Furthermore, in an ironic instance of foreshadowing in the story, Fortunato performs a Masonic gesture to see if Montressor is a member of the Masonic order (1444). Montressor replies by showing him his trowel (1444). Though Montressor does not belong to the brotherhood, his later actions prove that he too is a mason of sorts. When Fortunato has been walled up, he calls out "For the love of God Montressor," to which Montressor echoes "Yes for the love of God" (1446). The death of Fortunato is like the death of a part of Montressor, for it leaves him with a sick heart (1446).

Poe makes Fortunato the double of Montressor to better illustrate the psychology of self-destructive behavior. The name "Fortunato" means "lucky" in Italian. Poe implies that Montressor, surviving Fortunato's death by fifty years with a sick heart, is the less fortunate of the two (1446). The Montressor family coat of arms is the image of a foot on a blue background which crushes the head of a serpent whose fangs are imbedded in the heel (1444). Though the serpent is killed by the crushing foot,

the possessor of the foot has already been poisoned by the serpent. In this light, it is possible that "Fortunato" can have a double meaning. The Italian word for fortune (as in luck or destiny) is "Fortuna." To give the word a masculine ending, appropriate for a masculine personification of the word, one would add "o" to the end. Nearly all masculine Italian nouns have a consonant before the "o" ending, thus making "Fortunao" into "Fortunato." Though, of course, any consonant could be inserted, the choice of "t" gives the word its double meaning (appropriate in a story full of doubles). Montessor's murder of Fortunato becomes the slaughter of his own fortunes or destiny. He too is a "looking glass of pain" in which the punishment he inflicted upon another becomes reflected back upon himself. No wonder then that fifty years later, a suffering Montessor looks back upon his victim and wishes him "In pace requiescat!" (1446).

In William Wilson, Poe is content to merely portray the act of self-destructiveness to the reader using the reader's sympathy for the narrator to bring the two closer together. In "A Cask of Amontillado," however, Poe is no longer satisfied with merely narrowing the gap between the reader and narrator. Instead, Poe uses his narrator's voice to close the gap between reader and narrator. Montessor makes the connection between himself and the reader with his words, "You, who so well know the nature of my soul" (1442). Just as Fortunato is Montessor's double, Montessor, with the act of addressing the reader, makes himself the reader's double. By showing the reader the deliberateness with which Montessor plans Fortunato's demise, the reader cannot ascribe Montessor's actions to passion, or criminal insanity. Thus

in making the connection between reader and narrator, Poe warns the reader that he too is capable of the macabre acts portrayed in the story. Indeed, Montessoro warns the reader that they share the same "nature" (1442).

Baudelaire too uses the technique of making the reader the double of the narrator. In "To the Reader," the narrator lists for the reader the vices of man and the perpetrators of those vices (7). There is, however, one vice paramount over all the rest—"One creature only is most foul and false!" (7). This vice is Ennui, one which Baudelaire himself knew well. Not content with merely warning the reader of the hazards of Ennui, Baudelaire's narrator actually ascribes this vice to the reader claiming "Reader, you know this dainty monster too; /—Hypocrite reader, fellowman,—my twin!" (7). Throughout Baudelaire's poem, the connection between reader and narrator is taken for granted. In the third line of the poem, the narrator claims "And like a pet we feed our tame remorse" and in the fifth stanza he adds, "As a poor libertine will suck and kiss / The sad, tormented tit of some old whore, / We steal a furtive pleasure as we pass" (6). Long before the final address of the reader, the narrator has already made the reader his compatriot. Gans claims that the melding of "I" and "we" is unique to Baudelaire and unknown to either his predecessors or his successors (32). In addressing the reader in this fashion, he is swept into the universe of the poem. Unlike Montessoro, Baudelaire's narrator addresses the reader at the end of the poem giving the reader no chance to defend himself from the accusation and thus forcing him to accept his inclusion into the poem's world (Chambers, 104).

It is perhaps not accidental that these works share a similar use of the double, for these two authors were virtual doubles themselves, though it is unlikely that either was aware of it. Baudelaire first became infatuated with Poe's works in 1852 and became one of Poe's first translators into the French language.¹ Baudelaire's translations of Poe are reputedly better than the English versions of Poe's works. In a letter, Baudelaire says, "The first time I ever opened a book by him [Poe] I discovered with rapture and awe, not only subjects which I'd dreamt, but whole phrases which I'd conceived, written by him twenty years before" (Starkie, 218). Both writers have a deserved reputation for their criticisms: Baudelaire for art and Poe for American literature of his time. Baudelaire was not the only member of the French literary circle to be impressed with Poe's writings. Jacques Barzun claims that after the translations of Poe appeared in France, he became a "great force in French poetics and literature" (525). Much of his popularity stemmed from his essays on composition which gave post-romantic French authors the tools necessary to step out from under the shadows of such literary giants as Victor Hugo (Barzun, 526). It is perhaps ironic that Poe, who spent so much time discussing Longfellow's "plagiarisms," would himself be borrowed from. Deborah Harter notes that the last two lines of "Heautontimoroumenos," "thoroughly condemned to eternal

¹ Biographical details not cited may be found in: Starkie, Enid. *Baudelaire*. Norfolk: New Directions, 1958. Or: "Edgar Allen Poe" in *Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. G. McMichael et al. New York: Macmillan, 1989. 944-946.

laughter, / and yet who can never smile again," are very similar to the last line of Poe's "The Haunted Palace," "And laugh—but smile no more" (31-34). Harter suggests that it is possible that the similarities of these works, (which she claims are also very similar thematically) are merely the result of Baudelaire borrowing from Poe. However, she adds that they were "kindred spirits," and that it is also possible that the madness they portrayed "has been separately and equally reached in the two poems" (36).

Baudelaire and Poe do indeed share very similar backgrounds, and it is possible that the similarities in their works stems from a similar world view. Both authors lost their respective fathers early in life. Neither was regarded as an excellent student in school, yet both were praised for their versification and their grasp of Latin. As young adults, both cultivated the image of being a dandy, and both wallowed in indebtedness as result. Both men could have received a comfortable position had either wished—Poe's adopted father managed to get him an appointment to West Point, and Baudelaire's step father was an ambassador and had many connections. Neither author achieved any great rewards for writing, though Poe did receive more work than Baudelaire. Both men suffered character assassination by readers who mistook narrators for authors. Poe was an alcoholic, and Baudelaire, if not a drug addict, was at least an occasional drug user. Both men died as result of excesses—Poe from alcohol poisoning, and Baudelaire from syphilis contracted during his extravagant youth. Both were concerned that death would take them before they had finished their work. Thus it is possible that though an ocean and

half a generation separated the two men, their similar backgrounds resulted in similar ideas and paradigms.

In the hands of Baudelaire and Poe, the doppelganger becomes a finely honed instrument with which these authors may dissect man's relation with himself. David Myers claims that people often ascribe external motivations to their own actions and internal motivations for the actions of others, often blaming those actions on a bad disposition or character (551-552). In these works, the double becomes the manifestation of the desire to find external causes for one's failures and blunders. Not only does the double provide a scapegoat for one's blame, but in being external to oneself, the double can be assigned internal motivations for its actions. The double thus takes on an evil countenance even as it accepts the blame for one's own failings. In making the reader the double of the narrator, Poe and Baudelaire gain a new tool to draw the reader into the world of their fiction. Whereas the narrators of works such as "William Wilson," "The Eyes of the Poor," and "Heautontimoroumenos" rely upon making the reader sympathetic to their viewpoint to make their message stronger, the narrators of "A Cask of Amontillado" and "To the Reader" can reach out and claim affinity with the reader, thereby sucking the reader into the realm of the work. Gans claims that the reader of "To the Reader" has his "illusions of moral superiority to the damned poet . . . exploded, but so at the same time are the latter's" (83). He adds that "Poet and reader are morally identical, yet their symmetry only contributes to the self definition of each" (83). Gans's view fits with Myers's concept of external and internal motivations. The act of understanding where one's motivation comes from is

one of self definition, without which one wouldn't know why he behaves in the manner he does. The reader of these two works must, in order to accept the world that is thrust upon them, acknowledge their ties to their doubles, and accept as well the new self definitions imposed upon them. Though these authors have come to be accepted as literary artists, they should also be recognized for their understanding of human psychology. Long before Freud, they were giving their public a textbook of human behavior and warning the reader that the actions they portray in their works are little removed from his own world, or indeed from himself.

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Moral Ambiguity in *Wuthering Heights* and *Great Expectations*

JACOB LITTLETON

In very different ways, both *Wuthering Heights* and *Great Expectations* present moral visions in which a superficial moral clarity dissolves, upon closer scrutiny, into a complicated and uncertain moral jumble. Bronte and Dickens use complicated techniques to undercut the explicit morality of their own texts, creating an implicit message that corrodes the very idea of morality. *Wuthering Heights* accomplishes this by delineating a moral quandary with neither beginning or end, while *Great Expectations* presents the paradox of a moral wisdom that can only be attained through transgression.

Nelly Dean becomes the central character in an analysis of the moral world of *Wuthering Heights*. The all-purpose servant, she directs the flow of the plot in a way that is out of all proportion to her official role in the microcosm of the moors. She holds all types of keys. As narrator, she has access to the widest array of information; moreover, circumstances quite often give her the power to make decisions that transform the direction of the novel.

Dean possesses such power precisely because she is much more than a simple servant. The servant of great-tradition Victorian fiction is most often invisible; she or he might warrant two mentions in 500 pages. Dean is not only visible as narrator,

she is a principal in the story. She has altered those attributes stereotypically servile: "I have undergone sharp discipline, which has taught me wisdom; and then . . . You could not open a book in this library that I have not looked into" (65). Thus she is capable of powerful moments such as her sudden sorrow for the dead Hindley: "I confess this blow was greater to me than the shock of Mrs. Linton's death; ancient associations lingered round my heart; I sat down in the porch and wept as for a blood relation" (180).

In a sense, of course, Dean might as well be a family member. She shares with every other character in the novel a floating social position, as if the rules established in the metropolis hold only limited sway in so isolated a place. Joseph, a field hand of sorts, advances past Nelly's obstruction, presenting himself in person to the master of the Grange, who does not demur; this would be unthinkable in the work, say, of Henry James. Nelly herself does not so much gain employment with the Earnshaws as she attaches herself to their family; once there, she becomes a co-equal playmate with the children. Later, she assumes the role of quasi-mother to young Cathy after Catherine dies; Bronte repeatedly links Edgar and Nelly in their parental functions.

Wuthering Heights seems to depend on a strict opposition of the Heights from Thrushcross Grange; the plot hinges on the disorders that follow from the inevitable conflict between the states of mind embodied in these buildings: in the first-generation clashes of Edgar, Isabella, Cathy, and Heathcliff; and in the second generation difficulties of Cathy, Linton and Hareton. But closer examination reveals that to posit any universal misunderstanding between the passionate Heights and sedate Grange is to

oversimplify. Dean's role demonstrates this. In the period of her stewardship over Cathy, her decisions either cut off or allow communication between Cathy and Linton. Her work in this way began years earlier, when she facilitated Edgar and Catherine's courtship, and continued when she monitored Heathcliff's visits to the Grange.

The nature of her guardianship is the important fact. For Nelly Dean's decisions bear no relation to the pressures of a system of division between Heights and Grange; in fact, they seem almost wholly arbitrary. Nothing occurs to make Nelly Dean change her mind and warn Edgar of Heathcliff's presence; she simply does. There isn't any more reason for her at first to conceal, then reveal Cathy's correspondence with Linton; she just changes her mind without giving an explanation. As often as not it is chance that drives her, but it never appears to be something inevitable, fated or universal.

Bronte has replaced the element of moral realism—the levers and weights by which the good are rewarded and the evil punished—with a morass of coincidence and happenstance characterized by the sentimental decisions of a character with a sentimental, but not a compelling, interest in the themes of the novel. In her connecting role, Dean transcends the novel's veneer of moral realism. Signifying the essential unity of this microcosm, its lack of clear distinctions, she encapsulates the novel's vision of social and moral suspension. In a way, one might argue that the tragedy of *Wuthering Heights* arises from Heathcliff's lack of a firm social place. The elder Earnshaw introduces him into the Heights, but does not explicitly endow him as a son, if indeed it is

in his power to do so. His youth is spent in turmoil; he disrupts this home, and receives a contradictory education from it. Under Earnshaw he is either resented or spoiled; under Hindley he is relegated to the role of servant even as he grows into an adult love for Catherine. Even after he has gained his fortune, he has no place; his stay at Wuthering Heights inspires in Nelly a well-justified sense of dread. The cloudiness of his role is reflected in his name. As a youth, "Heathcliff" is a Christian name, as his powerlessness would dictate. When he returns in the outward posture of a gentleman, Nelly shifts her nomenclature: "Heathcliff—Mr. Heathcliff, I should say in future" (101). His wealth transforms "Heathcliff" into a patronym, but one which refers not to a lineage, but only to the personal power that the man has acquired in his own person. At last Heathcliff inscribes his own experience on the life of Hareton Earnshaw, whose title he steals and whose qualities he stunts. By the time of Heathcliff's ascendancy after Linton's death, the social order is so confused that Lockwood must make a series of wildly mistaken guesses at the interrelationship of the home's inhabitants; in fact, before Heathcliff's death they do not have any roles for which society has provided names.

But to read the novel as purely a tragedy of social disorder is as incomplete as the purely metaphysical reading. Accident plays no small role in the work's unfolding, and peripheral actions exert great power over central ones. Hindley's marriage practically determines the frustration of Heathcliff and Cathy's love, yet his wife disappears soon and has no thematic weight whatsoever. There is no denying that the metaphysical difference between

Heights and Grange is essential to the novel; so also is the theme of social disorder. But these two elements do not in the least form a system for explaining the events of the work. In combination with myriad other elements, chance not least of all, these two create an atmosphere of desperate amorality. Judgment is not a practical issue in *Wuthering Heights*. Every character commits both right and wrong actions, sometimes without cause or extenuating circumstance. Every action follows another and precedes others; Bronte carefully undercuts all "first causes" and pat sympathies. Heathcliff suffers as a child, but he also inflicts pain, even on the man who shows him unflagging kindness. Catherine's profound love for Heathcliff is prefaced by her initial rejection. The quandaries of their adulthood are even more complex for these characters, and for the reader; the love triangle is so emotionally tangled that only Catherine's death resolves it. The reader is beset with fondness and dislike of every one of the novel's characters. But the apotheosis of Bronte's talent for evoking mixed emotions is Linton Heathcliff, whose situation calls for total pity even as his every action stirs up the most profound disgust.

Wuthering Heights lacks an authorial hand in the very labelling of good and evil. Bronte only interferes to the extent that she balances every positive impression with a negative one. When one scratches the veneer of moral realism, one sees a hopeless tangle of cause and effect. Judgment? No one totters closer to the bathetic than Joseph, the moralist; as Nelly points out, he remains at the Heights only out of a desire to judge. Bronte utilizes a mechanism of rejected judgment to further undercut the sorting of cause and

effect. Catherine complains of her husband and his sister, "They are spoiled children, and fancy the world was made for their accommodation; and though I humour both, I think a smart chastisement might improve them all the same" (99). Her statement fits the dominant images of the domesticated Lintons as against the feral Catherine; she seems completely plausible. But Nelly rebuts her, "They humour you; I know what there would be to do if they did not. You can well afford to indulge their passing whims as long as their business is to anticipate all your desires" (99). This sort of exchange is common in the novel, each time with different characters; these exchanges layer the moral tangle with plausible but false interpretations which remove the reader even further from the truth.

There is no set cosmology in which every character's worth is fixed. In fact, most of Brontë's characters contradict what seem to be their bases for living. A large degree of looseness accompanies the author's view of character. Isabella's bold flight contradicts a novel full of timidity and irresolution. Heathcliff's revenge, for which his whole life has been preparation, fails as he inexplicably loses the will which was his whole being: "I get levers and mattocks to demolish the two houses, and train myself to work like Hercules, and when everything is ready, and in my power, I find the will to slate off either roof has vanished" (306). Nor does the novel assign values to any of the personality traits, showing each to have its advantages and its drawbacks. The tranquillity of feeling associated with the Lintons is perhaps uninspiring, but not false; Catherine's wildness can find sustenance in Edgar's love, and Thrushcross Grange is not so petty, despite what Heathcliff claims,

that it cannot produce a pearl in Cathy. The passionate feeling associated with *Wuthering Heights* cannot buffet the goodness out of Hareton; it provides the hardy soil in which his strength could grow. It must be noted that when Hareton and Cathy unite, ending the cycle of harm and despair, they do so not as strangers, but as inhabitants; for better rather than for worse, they contain the same attributes as their forebears, both spiritual and actual. The microcosm of the moors has simply entered a peaceful and harmonious stage of its metaphysical existence. In short, cause and effect are so continuously intermingled that all appearance of poetic justice must be purely superficial.

The case would seem to be drastically different with *Great Expectations*. Dickens is quite correctly famous for sentimentality, caricature, and carefully constructed foils. These characteristics work on moral and emotional certitude and could not be further removed from Bronte's steely mechanisms. It is undeniable that the works are constructed of very different moral stuff. Nevertheless, Dickens too concerns himself, in a much less conscious way it seems, with the dissolution of simple pieties.

Jaggers, for instance, functions in many ways as the Nelly Dean of *Great Expectations*. As much as Pip is at the center of the novel's moral and thematic concerns, Jaggers directs the flow of the plot. Pip notices how he, "put the other [hand] in his trouser-pocket as if the pocket were full of secrets" (224). As Pip eventually learns, these secrets attach as if by threads the two divergent poles of Pip's life: Estella and Magwitch, Satis House and the marshes. In fact, Pip's fantasies have only one material basis: the coincidence that Jaggers represents both Miss Havisham

and Magwitch. Just as Nelly Dean mediates between the two spheres of *Wuthering Heights*, Jaggers unifies the disparate strands of Pip's life, alleviating the great differences between them. The lawyer also unifies the marshes and the mansion as he holds the key to Estella's origin. And just as Dean's ambiguous morality serves as a touchstone for Bronte's work, the lawyer's epic close-mouthedness signals the essential contradiction between illusion and reality. "Take nothing on its looks," Jaggers advises Pip, "Take everything on evidence. There's no better rule" (224). But Jaggers's adherence to "the strict line of fact" is not only spiritually barren. It is also mendacious.

It is infertile because, from the material point-of-view espoused by Jaggers, the emotions that invest life with all its interest for someone like Pip have no worth whatsoever. When Pip renounces any benefit from Miss Havisham, the lawyer is less aghast than simply cold; he has not enough of a bond with Pip even to feel sorry for the boy's mistake. Wemmick, even in his professional capacity, is more sympathetic if not more understanding: "I saw Wemmick's lips form the words 'personal property'" (381). In one of the most hilarious scenes in the novel, Jaggers and Wemmick reassert their common purpose by browbeating one of their most anxious clients.

The emotional difference of Pip from all this cannot be overestimated. Dickens posits a true divergence here between Pip's illusions and the reality Jaggers pursues. But what Pip loses by the "false coin" of his vain hopes he more than regains in a view of the world brilliantly colored by those very flaws in his perception. Even the wisdom he acquires as he sheds those

expectations has a deeper feel to it than the worldly wisdom Jaggers utilizes for his material success. Both Estella and Miss Havisham are forced to a similar reassessment of their own illusions: Estella's, that she has no heart; and Miss Havisham's, in her course of revenge. In this way the simple moral picture of the novel is considerably complicated. What such characters as Herbert and Joe have in innocence, they lose in complexity and experience. What guilty characters, Pip most particularly, lose in innocence they gain in complexity, in wisdom—even if it is guilty wisdom. To have a felt rather than instinctive knowledge of morality, it seems, requires transgression.

In light of this complexity, Pip's central role in the novel acquires a different character. Pip's own complicity in the wickedness of the world radiates outward, implicating not only himself but humanity in general. Pip is a test case for humanity. This is emphasized in the mature Pip's narration: "In a word, I was too cowardly to do what I knew to be right, as I had been too cowardly to avoid doing what I knew to be wrong. I had had no intercourse with the world at that time, and I imitated none of its many inhabitants who act in this manner" (37). Dickens subjects Pip to abuse which other writers of the *Bildungsroman* might relegate to characters on the level of Pumblechook. One can imagine the humiliation visited on Pip by Trabb's boy as just retribution on a minor humbug in a novel such as *Remembrance of Things Past*; Dickens chooses to inflict this embarrassment on his central character. Throughout the novel the reader is torn about Pip; his "gallons of condescension" and smugness towards Biddy are practical demonstrations of the author's assertion that Pip is no

better at all than anyone, not even the hated Pumblechook. Thus the novel is enveloped with a sense of malaise. Pip, who is a sort of every person, cannot judge anyone, for another's sin is always part of him. And the only way to maintain moral purity is to remain innocent and ineffectual, as Joe and Biddy do. Therefore the only course is one of impurity, of striving to maintain goodness when one's own self contrives against it.

The end of each of these novels reveals a concern with the ambiguity of morality. At the end of *Wuthering Heights* Lockwood cannot "imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth" (320). The work ends not with morality triumphant at the Heights, but in a somber memory of deaths which are, in fact, notably unquiet. And *Great Expectations* ends with Pip and Estella meeting years later, facing the fact of their education and maturity.

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Weaving As A Recurrent Theme in *MOBY DICK*

TIESE QUINN

Herman Melville begins *Moby Dick* with the ambiguous first chapter title of "Loomings". *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary* lists several definitions that may be applicable and aid in understanding the meaning of this title. As a noun, looming is "the indistinct and magnified appearance of objects seen under certain atmospheric conditions." Melville may have used this word to warn the reader that the novel does not represent reality but rather reality as seen through "certain atmospheric conditions" or as distorted. Throughout *Moby Dick* Melville has invented his own verbs, such as when Ahab says that the whale "heaps" him. Thus the word "looming" may be Melville's own invention and may foreshadow the events to come. When used as a verb, loom is "to appear, take shape, or come in sight indistinctly as through a mist, especially in a large, portentous, or threatening form" (1067). This meaning would seem to caution the reader that the tale will "come in sight" ambiguously, and that there may be some danger along the way. The noun, loom, has two separate meanings, "a looming appearance, as of land or a ship in the fog", and "a frame or machine for weaving thread or yarn into cloth". Both of these two definitions would seem to fit Melville's design. *Moby Dick*, himself, has a "looming appearance" when he is sighted "through the horizontal vacancy between the main-top-sail and the

top-gallant-sail" (552). But Melville is also weaving a web of uncertainty and ambiguity from the first sentence of the chapter: "Call me Ishmael" (1). The reader cannot know if Ishmael is the narrator's name or if he has assumed a name for some unknown purpose.

While the title of the chapter may incorporate all of the above meanings into the one word, "Loomings", in addition, Melville is creating the loom on which he will weave his story. He is establishing the loom or frame on which predestination will create the "cloth" of destiny for Ahab, the Pequod, and its crew. In this chapter, Ishmael says, "And, doubtless, my going on this whaling voyage, formed part of the grand programme of Providence that was drawn up a long time ago" (5). The loom is prepared, and the reader must read on to see what will be woven.

In Chapter 9, "The Sermon", Father Mapple refers to the story of Jonah as "one of the smallest strands in the mighty cable of the Scriptures"; he calls it "a two-stranded lesson" (42). With these words, the sin of Jonah becomes the yarn of destiny and foreshadows the sin of Ahab.

Chapter 16, "The Ship," is another voyage onto the sea of predestination. In this chapter, Ishmael is told by Queequeg that Yojo "purposed befriending us; and, in order to do so, had already pitched upon a vessel, which, if left to myself, I, Ishmael, should infallibly light upon" (69). Although Ishmael has some misgivings as to the suitability of this method of choosing a ship, he agrees to the plan, thereby forfeiting any chance contribution of his free will. As he inquires about available ships, he finds the Pequod. Ishmael understands that the name of the ship portends death and disaster:

“Pequod, you will no doubt remember, was the name of a celebrated tribe of Massachusetts Indians, now extinct as the ancient Medes. I peered and pryed about the Devil-Dam; from her, hopped over to the Tit-bit; and, finally, going on board the Pequod, looked around her for a moment, and then decided that this was the very ship for us” (70). In spite of his doubts and his Christian upbringing, Ishmael is swept along by Queequeg and his pagan God. He and Queequeg sign on with the Pequod.

In Chapter 47, “The Mat-Maker”, Ishmael and Queequeg weave a sword-mat:

As I kept passing and repassing the filling or woof of marline between the long yarns of the warp, using my own hand for the shuttle, and as Queequeg, standing sideways, ever and anon slid his heavy oaken sword between the threads, and idly looking off upon the water, carelessly and unthinkingly drove home every yarn . . . it seemed as if this were the Loom of Time, and I myself were a shuttle mechanically weaving and weaving away at the Fates. There lay the fixed threads of the warp subject to but one single, ever returning, unchanging vibration, and that vibration merely enough to admit of the crosswise interblending of these threads with its own. This warp seemed necessity; and here, thought I, with my own hand I ply my own shuttle and weave my own destiny into these unalterable threads. Meantime, Queequeg’s impulsive, indifferent sword, sometimes hitting the woof slantingly, or crookedly, or strongly, or weakly, as the case might be; and by this difference in the concluding blow producing a

corresponding contrast in the final aspect of the completed fabric; this savage's sword, thought I, which thus finally shapes and fashions both warp and woof; this easy, indifferent sword must be chance—aye, chance, free will, and necessity—no wise incompatible—all interweavingly working together. The straight warp of necessity, not to be swerved from its ultimate course—its every alternating vibration, indeed, only tending to that; free will still free to ply her shuttle between given threads; and chance, though restrained in its play within the right lines of necessity, and sideways in its motions directed by free will, though thus prescribed to by both, chance by turns rules either, and has the last featuring blow at events. (219-220)

This long passage presents one of the key ideas in *Moby Dick*. Here Melville, through Ishmael, states his views on predestination. The yarns of the warp represent necessity or destiny and are fixed and unalterable; however, the woof threads in the shuttle represent free will and are woven in an alternating pattern with the warp of destiny, thereby altering the unalterable. The sword of chance is limited in the influence it can exert by the constraints of the alternating pattern of the woof as it weaves its way through the warp, but the influence of chance is the last and, as such, sometimes is the factor that determines the quality of the cloth. In weaving, one may carefully choose the yarn for the warp, carefully choose another and, perhaps, contrasting yarn for the woof, to create the fabric the weaver has planned. Sometimes, however, the two yarns take on a will of their own, and the creation becomes a fabric the weaver would not have even dreamed. Chance will have

entered into the equation in some manner, perhaps, in the slipperiness of one yarn when crossed over the other. When Tashtego announces the sighting of the whales, Ishmael is so startled that "the ball of free will dropped" from his hand (220), thus giving over his control of the fabric of destiny to necessity and chance.

In Chapter 93, "The Castaway", Pip, the cabin-boy jumps from the whaling boat as it is in pursuit of a whale. Stubbs, Tashtego, and the crew strongly admonish Pip to always stay with the boat: "But we are all in the hands of the Gods; and Pip jumped again" (424). It is shown that Pip is not in control of his destiny; instead, fate controls his actions. The boat continues after a whale leaving Pip to be picked up by some other vessel. Pip is eventually picked up by the Pequod itself, but Pip spends a long time in the sea before his rescue. By the time the ship rescues Pip, he has been transformed. He saw "God's foot upon the treadle of the loom, and spoke it; and therefore his shipmates called him mad. So man's insanity is heaven's sense; and wandering from all mortal reason, man comes at last to that celestial thought, which, to reason, is absurd and frantic; and weal or woe, feels then uncompromised, indifferent as his God" (426). Because heaven cannot be communicated, and there are no words for the wondrous sight of the secret loom of creation, his shipmates presumed him mad. He had become as indifferent as God to the everyday concerns of man. After Pip's transformation, Ahab befriends him. Perhaps Ahab, alone, understands that Pip had viewed the Fates, and perhaps he too desires the same experience, if only vicariously.

In Chapter 102, "A Bower In The Arsacides", Nature provides earth as the loom, tendrils form the warp and woof, flowers become the woven figures, and the sun seems a shuttle as the "unseen weaver" weaves the growing greenness. Melville further contrasts the mechanics of a weaving factory with the celestial weaver: "For even so it is in all material factories. The spoken words that are inaudible among the flying spindles; those same words are plainly heard without the walls, bursting from the opened casements. Thereby have villanies been detected. Ah, mortal! then, be heedful; for so, in all this din of the great world's loom, thy subtlest thinkings may be overheard afar" (460). Melville seems to be saying that God, as the weaver, though involved in his task and unable to directly respond to man, is still omnipotent, and even one's thoughts are subject to God's judgments.

In Chapter 114, "The Gilder", Melville-Ishmael states, "Would to God these blessed calms would last. But the mingled, mingling threads of life are woven by warp and woof; calms crossed by storms, a storm for every calm" (501). Here, calm is seen to be the woof, and the storm is the opposing force of the warp. Calm and storm are equal in influence because they are equal to the strength of the woven fabric. In cloth, the warp thread's supremacy alternates with that of the woof thread; however, it is not always on a one-to-one basis as Melville hints, with a storm for every calm. In some patterns the woof may create a "float" and cross several warp threads before disappearing under the warp again. So, too, the woof may stay hidden behind the warp for several threads before reappearing.

Joseph France says in his 1814 manual on weaving, *Weaver's Complete Guide Or The Web Analysed*, "Tho' the generality of mankind may look on the labors of the loom, and indeed, of all other kind of handicraft work, as destitute of contrivance and ingenuity, and as things which require no degree of skill to attain to a perfect knowledge of the same, my design (in part) therefore, by writing this little Treatise, was to show the fallacy of such an opinion, and to convince the world, that both skill and ingenuity are alike requisite to attain to a knowledge of the simplest kind of web" (XVII). The labors of Melville on the loom of literature have created an insight into the loom of creation. The web he created leaves many questions for the reader's "skill and ingenuity" to answer. One such question is whether Starbuck's decision not to kill Ahab might have been the deciding factor in the fate of the Pequod. Other questions might be directed to the roles of chance and free will in Ahab's preternatural determination and Moby Dick's encounter with the Pequod. These and other questions are not answered by Melville, but are left to the reader's ingenuity.

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Bleak House's East Wind

BRYAN JETTER

In Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*, the problem of philanthropy is examined from a variety of viewpoints as the author wrestles with the possibility of reform for a society plagued by poverty, illegitimacy, irresponsibility, and social stratification. The conditions which perpetuate this underclass are perhaps best illustrated by the description of the slum, Tom-All-Alone's, in which

tumbling tenements contain, by night, a swarm of human misery. As on the ruined human wretch vermin parasites appear, so these ruined shelters have bred a crowd of foul existence that crawls in and out of gaps in walls and boards. (232-233)

The suffering which the inhabitants of this area experience, the migrant workers and their wives, the sick and the crippled, the orphans abandoned to their own resources, strikes at the very core of the reader's humanity, arousing indignation and stoking desire for real change. Yet Dickens gives free reign to his political skepticism and resignation precisely at this point. A bureaucratic solution initiated by government seems doomed to failure. These traumatic and unfortunate urban environments sow "more evil in every footprint than Lord Coodle, and Sir Thomas Doodle, and the

Duke of Foodle, and all the fine gentlemen in office, down to Zoodle, shall set right in five hundred years—though born expressly to do it” (233).

Political remedies thus amount to a mere spinning of wheels, a vain, ultimately selfish pursuit of glory by the aristocratic cogs in the machine whose purportedly good intentions produce negligible improvement. Dickens repeatedly satirizes their grandiose efforts as a hermetically sealed game of musical chairs:

...what are you to do with Noodle? You can't offer him the Presidency of the Council; that is reserved for Poodle. You can't put him in the Woods and Forests; that is hardly good enough for Quoodle. What follows? That the country is shipwrecked, lost, and gone to pieces . . . because you can't provide for Noodle! (174-75);

or as blatant, obscene nepotism—

... Doodle not only condescended to come in, but has done it handsomely, bringing in with him all his nephews, all his male cousins, and all his brothers-in-law. (569-70)

Later in the novel Dickens expresses incredulity that a remedy for the poor can be implemented by any group, political, religious, or secular:

Whether he shall be put into the main road by constables, or by beadles, or by bellringing, or by force of figures, or

by correct principles of taste, or by high church, or by low church, or by no church; whether he shall be set to splitting trusses of polemical straws with the crooked knife of his mind or whether he shall be put to stone-breaking instead. In the midst of which dust and noise there is but one thing perfectly clear, to wit, that Tom only may and can, or shall and will, be reclaimed according to somebody's theory but nobody's practice. (632)

By obliterating so conclusively any hope in the reader's mind for an organizational-based solution, the author reinforces his belief that true reform can occur only on an individual basis, through sometimes spontaneous but at other moments carefully considered acts of philanthropical kindness.

If one assumes, however, that all altruism is in some psychological sense selfish, since the behavior is motivated by an allegedly higher ideal which will gratify the ego more than the act sacrificed (not to mention the increase in status one inevitably gains over those in one's debt), then the factor which would seemingly distinguish the spiritual state of one character from another is not a strong moral fiber nor a rigid adherence to an ethical code (though these attributes are necessarily components), but the manner in which the act is performed. Is the ideal debased by a desire for notoriety, public approbation, or religious reward, or does the charitable donor pursue his ideal to its selfish extreme, harnessing god-like grace to personal anonymity?

Viewed in such a light, the path of benefaction becomes significantly more complicated. An honorable, apparently irreproachable course of action may turn back upon itself and be easily perverted. Dickens illuminates the thorny nature of private philanthropy, the delusions with which an individual may become obsessed in his or her compulsion to do right to others, in several minor characters. With the example of Mrs. Jellyby, the reader is instructed in the foolishness of a person whose distant, altruistic goals have so taken possession of her life that she has become wholly disengaged from the day-to-day needs of her family. Children and husband are ignored in order that "larger" aims be accomplished. At the party celebrating her daughter's marriage, Mrs. Jellyby "sat smiling at the limited vision that could see anything but Borrioboola-Gha" (432). Thus her on-going, noble sacrifice fuels a tyrannous ego.

Esther wisely sums up the situation in discussion with Mr. Jarndyce after her first introduction to the Jellyby household. Perhaps one's obligations begin at home, she remarks "while those are overlooked and neglected, no other duties can possibly be substituted for them" (79). While we may share a certain sense of responsibility for the pain and suffering we witness around us, we haven't the right to devote all our energy to its alleviation unless, like St. John Rivers or the early Dr. Woodcourt, we have studiously limited our personal ties and commitments.

Mrs. Pardiggle serves as another illustration of irresponsible selfishness masquerading as philanthropy, her high-minded impulses guided by a notion of religious compensation which she also buys at the cost of her family's upbringing. Trooping about on

her stern missions, her five ragged children in tow, she visits impoverished villagers who have no desire to hear her message. Forcing herself upon these people, she takes them into "religious custody," so to speak, "as if she were a moral policeman carrying them all off to the station-house" (122). Even sweet Esther can't help but remark in her narrative that Mrs. Pardiggle made "a show that was not conciliatory of doing charity by wholesale and of dealing in it to a large extent" (123). At another point, Esther characterizes her as someone who "pounces upon the poor and applies benevolence to them like a straitwaistcoat" (432). The fact that she asks Esther and Ada to accompany the family on this hapless visit highlights her blustery flamboyance, her need to flaunt the peerless audacity with which she handles rejection.

By portraying Mrs. Jellyby and Mrs. Pardiggle in such conspicuously absurd terms (and, with the minor exception of the Bagnets, by refusing to depict a reasonably normal, happy family in the whole novel), the author seems to infer that support of the sort parents should provide for the mental health of their children is all but impossible under existing conditions. Children in this work, whether orphaned or not, are desperate for attention and love and are just as deprived of basic emotional necessities as any African child is of the physical fundamentals. While Esther, Ada, Richard, and the Coavinses are rescued by Mr. Jarndyce, the main source of benevolence in the novel, his good will remains strangely selective. Why does he exert no influence to remedy the squalor in which the coal miners and their families exist? Could those circumstances simply be beyond his power to change, like the character of Jo, who always lurks just beyond the power of

redemption? And yet Jo (as well as the slums) seems the center around which the plot revolves. In the treatment Jo receives at the hands of others, one perceives a great deal about the author's concept of philanthropy and his moral estimation of the characters he has drawn.

A street urchin, Jo is initially introduced sweeping a crosswalk for alms with which to buy his daily bread. Captain Hawdon, even though ravaged by opium and emotionally shipwrecked upon the reefs of a doomed romanticism, takes the time to show concern for the boy's welfare, tossing him a few coins despite the fact that he himself can ill afford to spare them. Such largesse keeps Jo afloat and requires no compensation on his part. It comes from Captain Hawdon's empathy for the downtrodden and unfortunate—like himself. This transaction is contrasted sharply with those of Mr. Tulkinghorn, Lady Dedlock, or Mr. Snagsby, to all of whom Jo appears as merely a possessor of information or a threat to marital security, to be bribed and silenced without any further thought concerning his daily existence. In fact, Lady Dedlock drops the money into his hand "without touching it, and shuddering as their hands approach" (pg. 238). People are simply a means to an end for these characters, not an end in themselves. Jo, however, even with his hard life on the street, has not become so calloused. He recognizes the suffering of others and, when an emergency arises, runs a medical errand for the brickmaker's wife whose child is ill.

Grouped along with Captain Hawdon as persons embodying a greater sense of humanity are Esther, Dr. Woodcourt, George Rouncewell (in his befriending of Phil and his care of

Sir Leicester), and, naturally, Mr. Jarndyce. These characters act out of a sympathy and compassion for others whose source resides more in the heart than the intellect and is very different from that of Mrs. Jellyby or Mrs. Pardiggle. Their charitable efforts are extended to anyone requiring assistance who comes within their sphere of contact. Social station, manners, or appearance do not deter in the least their reaction to suffering in any of its forms, with the possible exception of Mr. Jarndyce who, the reader supposes, because of his mysterious wealth, must be troubled by an abundance of choice.

Esther immediately steps forward to help with the neglected Jellyby children. She takes Caddy into her confidence and becomes a true friend to her, willing to spend time listening to her problems and assisting her in whatever manner is necessary. When she hears from Charley about Jo's condition, she again tries to do what she conceives of as her duty. And she reproaches the bureaucratic channels for unpardonable foot-dragging:

At first it was too early for the boy to be received into the proper refuge, and at last it was too late. One official sent her to another, and the other sent her back again to the first, and so backward and forward, until it appeared to me as if both must have been appointed for their skill in evading their duties instead of performing them. (440)

This attitude mirrors the cynicism of the third person narrator's voice toward bureaucracy and emphasizes the degree to which duty and altruism are conjoined. A healthy person (as well as a

healthy society) recognizes the importance of moral duties, which often enough seamlessly blend into a concept of altruism (healthy, responsible selfishness). Esther then nurses Charley after she contracts Jo's illness, infecting herself but heroically refusing to spread the disease to Ada, even at the risk of her own life.

Thus the altruism of real friendship (healthy, responsible selfishness) posits self-destruction as its highest ideal. Its eventual result would be the annihilation of the world were everyone to adopt this attitude, an outcome strikingly similar to that of radical nihilism. It is not a coincidence that the author has Krook, an obsessed materialist who can read and understand nothing, spontaneously combust. A frightening, paralyzing sense of futility threatens to strangle the wary reader, which may be why Dickens relentlessly lightens his message with sugary spoonfuls of poetic justice - to relieve the pressure of realism. (No Melvillian sucking of the Pequod down into the vortex for Dickens. While it seems he had that vision—and a nightmarish quality pervades certain segments of this novel—he preferred to dwell on “the romantic side of familiar things.”) That Esther is permanently disfigured and temporarily blinded symbolizes the enormous height to which she has climbed and from which she has dizzyingly fallen. Her acceptance of responsibility in its most extreme form saves her from the fate of Krook, and she is reborn in a certain sense, freed from a sorry fixation on physical beauty and then enlightened about her murky origins; while her spiritual worth becomes even more transparent to her angelic male alter ego, Dr. Woodcourt.

Allan Woodcourt exemplifies the very best values that the author can imagine. Woodcourt works tirelessly in the most

practical way, as a physician, to alleviate the suffering of society's poor. He turns up at the bedside of Captain Hawdon, nurses Miss Flite through various setbacks, and soothes Jo's final days, all with a quiet stoicism. He seeks little monetary compensation for his efforts, no religious reward, and certainly no publicity—until his heroic action after the shipwreck, which confirms not only the reader's estimation of him but also Esther's: "I felt so triumphant ever to have known the man who had done such generous and gallant deeds . . . I could have kneeled down then, so far away, and blessed him in my rapture that he should be so truly good and brave" (508). Esther reacts to this news of Woodcourt almost as if he were a religious idol, the embodiment of every attribute deserving of respect, which in a psychological sense equates with self-adoration, since his ideals parallel her own. Love of self thus merges with duty and humility in a vision of secular sainthood.

Whether sainted or not, however, certain dispensatory miracles seem out of the reach of the good doctor. He is clearly unsuccessful in solving Richard's problem, no doubt because its source is not physical. Even the best philanthropy has limitations. But then Ada's love is no remedy either. Richard's obsession with the lawsuit, his determination to find a sense of justice through the courts which will resolve all his career vacillations, seemingly brings about his demise, another instance of the author's subdued nihilism. While Woodcourt signifies the person who acts benevolently in a crisis, undeterred by the philosophical implications of his predicament, Richard is characterized by paralysis, an inability to stick to a decision until he knows that the "truth" of the Jamdyce litigation has been uncovered. Dickens's

dark irony resides in the fact that no one profits from the case's resolution but the lawyers, the least humane people in the novel.

The problematic nature of philanthropy in *Bleak House* is most clearly delineated in the relationship of John Jarndyce and Harold Skimpole. Jarndyce never fails to affect the greatest modesty during his endeavors of charity, frequently performing acts of kindness in which the part he plays is assiduously kept out of the limelight. (Excessive modesty/humility, however, is in itself a sign of enormous ego. One need only look at the machinations involved in Esther's betrothal to Woodcourt to see the scope of his hubris.) From the coach ride with Esther in which he keeps his identity secret through his surprise rescue of the orphaned Coavinses children, Jarndyce repeatedly acts upon moral obligations as they present themselves to him. Solutions to social problems on a grand scale he apparently avoids. Still, despite his reticent proclivities, he is known far and wide by anyone "who wanted to do anything with anybody else's money. It amazed us when we began to sort his letters . . . to find how great the object of the lives of nearly all his correspondents appeared to be to form themselves into committees for the getting in and laying out of money" (114).

Jarndyce shrinks from the likes of Mrs. Jellyby, Mrs. Pardiggle, and Mr. Quale because they seem to him a society of back-slapping self-congratulators (whereas the real philanthropist can exist in a vacuum, feeding off himself like God). Theirs was unsatisfactory company:

where benevolence took spasmodic forms, where charity was assumed as a regular uniform by loud professors and speculators in cheap notoriety, vehement in profession, restless and vain in action . . . intolerable to those who were anxious quietly to help the weak from falling rather than with a great deal of bluster and self-laudation to raise them up a little way when they were down. (216-217)

Earlier on, in discussion with Esther, he separates charitable people into two classes: those "who did a little and made a great deal of noise; and those who did a great deal and made no noise at all" (115). With such a serious outlook then, it is indeed startling to find Jarndyce supporting the irresponsible and incorrigible habits of a boastful, opinionated aesthete like Harold Skimpole. In fact, such benevolence appears downright contradictory when compared to Jarndyce's paternalistic treatment of Richard.

Skimpole seems to symbolize the do-gooder (he was formerly a physician) who has renounced all attempts to reform the world and chooses instead to perceive his surroundings purely through the prism of art. He is an adult child, and "all he asked of society was to let him live." He requested nothing more each day than "the papers, conversation, music, mutton, coffee, landscape, fruit in the season, a few sheets of Bristol-board, and a little claret" (85). Certainly one should not expect him to work for anything. While many of his speeches are humorous and entertaining and the reader may allow for a level of captivation on the part of Jarndyce, such levity doesn't fully explain the indulgence with which he regards

Skimpole unless the statement Harold makes one night at dinner is indeed correct:

I almost feel as if you ought to be grateful to me for giving you the opportunity of enjoying the luxury of generosity. I know you like it. For anything I can tell, I may have come into the world expressly for the purpose of increasing your stock of happiness. (86)

If this scathingly logical assessment of philanthropy is so, and nowhere in the novel does Jarndyce or the author rebut it, then theirs is a mutually beneficial relationship, a symbiotic parasitism, which, when extended to a view of the world in general, implies philosophical stasis, a necessary, unchanging state of affairs! Thus the author's attack upon Victorian social injustice becomes a fulmination of frustration. The impossibility of long-lasting reform reclines in the shadows of this novel like Skimpole on his sofa.

Jarndyce, the god-like, jaundiced philanthropist, forever a prey to the east wind which clouds his judgment of humanity, is thus inextricably entwined with the aesthetic leech, Skimpole, in an eternal dance of deconstruction. Ridding himself of Harold and his ilk (the evil and the irresponsible) would not only stop the music of art and literature, which arises out of conflict and strife, it would erase his character's reason for being. Dickens thus seems to embrace a form of tragic stoicism in his recognition that pleasure and pain are so knotted together that whoever wants as much as possible of the one, must also experience as much as possible of

the other. Beyond the novel's conclusion, with its idealized union of Esther and Woodcourt, looms the realistic strivings of Caddy, a good and tireless woman undeservedly saddled with a lame husband and handicapped child.

While Dickens admittedly romanticizes the unpalatable bleakness of urban Victorian life, his fiction takes into consideration the narcotic cravings of a philosophically shaken public, desperate for reassurance about progress. The reader of his time (as well as our own) wants to believe in idealistic notions of selflessness, the efficacy of altruism, and the happy logic of just deserts. The evidence of the author's skepticism on these matters, however, suffuses (and enriches) the text.

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Suspensions of Society in Melville, Hawthorne, and Thoreau

LOIS EASTER

It is the heritage of Americans since the inception of their country to struggle with an admiration for individualists, but also to feel a strong pull toward familial and societal ties and obligations. The Puritanical legacy of belief that anything outside of society is evil conflicts with legends of heroes and heroines who pulled themselves out of civilization to cross the ocean to the New World. Even the very first American writers express this dichotomy in their diaries, letters, autobiographies, and works of fiction and nonfiction, either by giving preference to neither individual nor community, or by choosing one to be the most beneficial. Such is the case with the writings of Melville, Hawthorne, and Thoreau, who share a suspicious view of society as a prison which saps the vitality of the individual, compelling him or her to escape physically or ultimately die.

For some the prison is both physical and emotional; for others, it is merely one or the other. In Thoreau's sojourn to Walden, for example, he points out that "it makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the country jail." He comes to the realization that solitude, so frightening to many, can be liberating after spending time in an actual prison, and he determines to separate himself from the community of Concord, thereby

avoiding an additional emotional imprisonment. Hawthorne's Hester Prynne, similarly, chooses to isolate herself from the censorious community of Boston. After being forced to stay in prison and the town, she lives in a small cottage which is "not in close vicinity to any other habitation," for the purpose, it seems, to purify herself, perhaps not so much from her deed, but from the hypocritical morality of the community, a morality truncating and contaminating in its own way. While Hester's isolation has possible redeeming value, the self-induced solitude of Melville's Bartleby appears pathological as he spends hours contemplating the walls surrounding him: "For long periods he would stand looking out . . . Upon the dead brick wall." Far from being rejuvenated, he is emotionally imprisoned, paralyzed, behind the walls of the Tombs. Consumed by an emotional imprisonment like Bartleby, Dimmesdale chooses to keep the secret of his guilt and is then forced to endure its festering without the soothing of outside counsel. To insure his suffering, he is continuously watched by Chillingworth, who represents a small societal link, potent in its own right, which causes "him to die a daily living death."

While isolation is a process of consummation for Dimmesdale and Bartleby, eroding their strength little by little, solitude increases the strength of Hester and Thoreau; for the solitude of the latter contains sources of rejuvenation. For Hester, these sources are Pearl and the forest. Hester affirms Pearl's source of strength, explaining to Mistress Hibbens that were it not for the presence of her daughter, she "would willingly go with her to meet the Black Man." She also finds new strength by walking through the forest. Pastoral life as a source of rejuvenation is reiterated by Thoreau,

who, similarly, is reborn because of his move to Walden. He “went into the woods” in order to “suck out all the marrow of life.”

Bartleby, however, is not so lusty or life-embracing. He works and lives in an office which is “deficient in what some landscape painters call ‘life.’” He has no family and no friends and seems to subsist on very little, eating “only ginger nuts.” His life is so lacking in outside sources of stimulation and significance that he seems nothing more than a faint vestige of a ghost. Consumed with an intensity equal to Bartleby’s, Dimmesdale is at least allowed some respite from his grinding guilt, occasionally comforted by glimpses of a free, almost transcendental world as he lies in the forest with Hester, but such comforts are cut short after his encounters with Chillingworth.

In the end, Dimmesdale cannot break loose of Chillingworth, so he must die. Such is the fate of all, these authors seem to suggest, if they cannot forge their identity apart from the oppression of society. While Bartleby has rebelled against society’s norms, he too must die because he is too weak to physically remove himself from his prison-like world, unable to discover open spaces, sources of rejuvenation. In society he is physically and emotionally withdrawn; he “seemed absolutely alone in the universe.” He retreats into his own world, his “dead wall revery,” and refuses food and conversation. Finally curled in a fetal position, he peacefully dies. Perhaps even more painful, is the death of Dimmesdale, whose religious position cements him to the community. Crushed by these opposing desires, Dimmesdale can only resolve his conflict in death.

In contrast, Hester successfully removes herself from society, as does Thoreau. The community of Boston fully recognized Hester as set apart from them. She is “shut out from the sphere of human charities” and is looked upon as “the object of severe and universal observation.” Hester’s escape is successful because she so completely distances herself from society that neither they nor she think of her as being a part of it. Thoreau, likewise, severs the community cord. He goes to Walden as a practical experiment to re-invent himself—a man apart from society and “with the fewest obstacles.” By removing his body from the constant watchful eyes of society, his mind flourishes.

While it is important to note that neither Hester nor Thoreau ever totally reject outside human interaction, they do distance themselves far enough from it to have escaped its compromises, its duplicity, its confusion—in short, its imprisonment.

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Poetic Tension in Matthew Arnold's

"Dover Beach"

STEVEN MAYER

In his poem "Dover Beach," Matthew Arnold generates a powerful divergence of image and impression that results in a compelling and dichotomous tension—a tension between sight and sound, sea and land, calm and chaos, past and present, and illusion and reality. Like the natural and historical forces that seem to converge and, in turn, collide, on that remote beach in Victorian England, both halves of the dichotomy threaten to tear apart, while at the same time, protect and even redeem the fragile world of doubt and apprehension that Arnold details so vividly. In his critical essay on Wordsworth, Arnold identifies poetry as "nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth" (9:39). Arnold saw this poetic truth as man's only means of redemption, regardless of the pain it caused or the fear its revelations inspired.

In *Matthew Arnold: The Poet as Humanist*, G. Robert Stange comments on the process Arnold uses in his "continual effort to lay bare truth":

[Arnold's] typical method is to reveal truth by means of opposing views of the matter at hand; through the simultaneous perception of opposites, he creates a

continuing dialectic . . . he sees the problems he treats through a series of antitheses, and tries to get at his truth by circling around a question, reaching the center of the problem by approaching it from several different directions in turn. (7)

According to John Tyree Fain, "Dover Beach" is certainly not an exception to the Arnoldian methodology described by Stange. In a perceptive interpretation of the poem's structure, Fain separates it into three parts: a physical setting, an intellectual corollary, and a conclusion in which the speaker envisions the lovers' mutually pledged fidelity as the only alternative to the long, withdrawing Sea of Faith, the decline of Christianity (41-2).

Fain recognizes that in lines 1 through 5 "the predominant tone is one of serenity" (41). But as the speaker urgently enjoins his companion to "Listen!", the sights fade and the timeless sounds, older than humanity and more ancient even than the chalk cliffs of Dover, intrude upon and overwhelm the elusive visual images. Just as the faint light across the English Channel "Gleams, and is gone," so the illusion of calm, security, and constancy slowly ebbs with the tide.

In lines 6 and 7, beginning with the word "Only," Arnold seems to define a periphery, a frontier where the harsh truth of reality, "the grating roar of pebbles," is uncovered by the rhythmic and eternal sounds of the waves. Thus, Arnold shifts the dichotomy from the illusory sweetness of the visual setting to auditory echoes of past aeons: the sounds of cliff-builders, the "tremulous cadence" of ancient oceans carrying ancient and

never-ending human sorrows. And corresponding to this shift is a recognition that, with “the eternal note of sadness,” comes a confusion of uncertainty in the stony nakedness of a Victorian wasteland.

Fain notes that, in order to “emphasize the eternal quality of the sound, Sophocles, and with him his tragic vision, is adduced as authority for the identification of the sound with the ebb and flow of human misery” (41). In this second stanza, the speaker has progressed from the level of simple observation to the allusive awareness of a connection between the mundane present and the classical past:

Sophocles long ago
 Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
 Of human misery. (lines 15-18)

According to Stange, this pattern in “Dover Beach” and other Arnold poems is one in which the speaker proceeds “from an almost conversational tone, to an elevated meditation” (56). In this way, Arnold succeeds in attaching the multiple and seemingly antithetical images of sight and sound, and sea and land, with the ever more cerebral impressions of calm and confusion, past and present, and illusion and reality.

William E. Buckler, in his book *On the Poetry of Matthew Arnold: Essays in Critical Reconstruction*, asserts that Arnold’s implantation of Sophocles into the text of “Dover Beach” allows the reader to experience the environment of melancholic despair

where armies clash by night, while still maintaining the classical strength that comes with self-redemption (105) and, it seems to me, catharsis.

Buckler denotes the “intensity and volatility of the speaker” and “the rapidity of the poem’s movement from the ‘sweet night air’ to the ‘clash by night’” as among the most conspicuous features of “Dover Beach” (102-03). This swift movement from calm to chaos supports and is supported by the entire cast of opposites that circle the poetic question. But while Buckler acknowledges the speaker’s capacity to express his “intense emotional insights in images that are so luridly memorable” that they tend to convince the reader of their validity (103), he perceives the speaker’s progression from calm to despair as “lacking in external motivation” (104). Buckler sees the speaker as a “congenital melancholic,” for whom, “*beauty itself*, as in the initial landscape, trigger[s] psychic gloom” (emphasis mine, 104).

But, if the profound visual scene can induce calm and serenity in the speaker, why should it be so incongruous that the roar of the surf could provoke melancholy? While Buckler insists that the speaker must be “moved essentially from within, by some master current of the self” (104), isn’t it just as possible that, in the speaker’s state of heightened perception, he recognizes, consciously or unconsciously, that the sounds he hears are untouched by the modern world, that through these sounds he is connected to a great past, and through that past he can comprehend the futility of a present that seems to have no grounding?

All of these dichotomies are again present in the third stanza, where they seem to leapfrog one another in the reader’s mind as

they jostle for preeminence of meaning. The first three lines, "The Sea of Faith / Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore / Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled" return, for a moment, to visual images of the sea as a great blanket of spiritual certainty. But the word "Was" in the second line of the stanza signals the reader that this is an ancient view of the sea—a sea that is now in retreat. Yet, for a brief moment, these images and impressions induce sensations of calm and security—and, it seems, illusion. In three short lines, the speaker, through the visual realm, has drawn an image of a symbolic sea imbued with the firm beliefs of lost cultures. This sea, in turn, generates a fleeting calm that is soon shattered by the recitation that, as seductive as it seems, the sea as a vision of security is now only a glorious illusion.

Once again, the other half of Arnold's multiple dichotomy completes this perception:

But now I only hear
 Its melancholy, long withdrawing roar,
 Retreating, to the breath
 Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
 And naked shingles of the world. (24-28)

The speaker's sense again shifts to the auditory, and through this change in his elemental means of awareness, he is transported to a turbulent but present reality where the "naked shingles" of the sea are revealed as the bare and stark skeleton of a desolate world.

In the final stanza, the speaker offers his solution, one that Anthony Hecht, in his critical poem "The Dover Bitch," refers to as "a sort of mournful cosmic last resort" (18):

Ah, love, let us be true
 To one another! for the world, which seems
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,
 So various, so beautiful, so new,
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain:
 And we are here as on a darkling plain
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
 Where ignorant armies clash by night. (29-37)

In spite of Hecht's biting humor, it seems clear the speaker has learned that to suffer in truth is infinitely preferable to existing in a void of semblance, a "land of dreams," where joy and love and light are merely illusions.

By demonstrating the utter isolation of modern man, Arnold (along with Melville) can be seen as an early precursor to the modernist movement of the twentieth century. And it was through his unique utilization of the classical dialectic, in the form of his presentation of dichotomies of image and idea, that enabled Arnold to encompass the poetic truth that represented, in his view, the purest objective of all great poetry and the ultimate deliverance of humanity.

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