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Writer's 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 printed on standard weight paper 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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Introduction

This volume is the fifth 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 eleven outstanding essays covering a wide range of literature from Alexander Pope to Kate Chopin. The essays deal with poetry, drama, and fiction, and represent a diversity of critical approaches.

The cover design incorporates a painting by the American artist John Singer Sargent. The work is entitled, "Daughters of Edward Boit."

Glenda Hudson and Lorna Clymer
Editors

The *Heimlich Unheimlich*: *Bleak House* and
the Horror of the Familiar

Neal Stanifer

Of all the critical objections to the peculiarly nineteenth-century strain of novels dubbed "sensational," perhaps the most virulently and energetically asserted was the charge that these novels cast unfair aspersions on the inviolability of the British household. In novels such as *Lady Audley's Secret*, for instance, bigamy, deception and murderous intent found their sites in the genteel households of the well-to-do. Wilkie Collins as well placed *The Woman in White*, his story of unlawful incarceration and poisoning, not in a far-off land or a remote time, but in contemporary England, in homes very much like those of his readers or their neighbors. And in Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*, the focus of this essay, the dark secret of an antenuptial liaison haunts a fashionable, contemporary lady to her death. In fact, as Richard D. Altick has noted, had the Sensation novel of the nineteenth century required a characteristic epigraph, it could not have done better than one Dickens intended for *Martin Chuzzlewit*: "Your homes the scene, yourselves the actors, here!" (Presence 40). It was the contemporariness and proximity of the Sensation novel which lent it its punch and made it so terribly dangerous in the eyes of its detractors. "Sensation

novels," Lyn Pykett shows, "are almost always stories of a or even *the* family, and their plots habitually reveal and exploit the fear that the respectable Victorian family had some dark secret at its core" (Pykett 10). This fear would be fully addressed by Sigmund Freud in 1919 in a paper entitled "*Das Unheimliche*." In his essay, Freud's thesis is that one type of fear which is to be encountered in literature is derived from the surrounding of the familiar and homely (*das heimlich*) with an atmosphere of the foreign and unaccountable, what he termed "the uncanny" (*das unheimlich*). "The uncanny," Freud writes, "retains its character not only in experience but in fiction as well, so long as the setting is one of material reality..." (Freud 228).

It is this "material reality" which the Sensation novelist strives to evoke. Unlike its parent genre, the Gothic novel of the previous century, the Sensation novel conventionally eschews the foreign and the medieval in favor of the proximate and the timely. Rather than dwell on the mysterious secret behind the cobwebs of antiquity, the Sensation novelist concentrates on showing the dangerous and thrilling cracks in the structures of cherished contemporary institutions – marriage, family, and home being chief among them. This was an interest unconfined to the popular novelists of the day; millions of readers were eager to purchase the increasingly frequent newspapers of

the time, a great many of which featured stories of domestic murders, bigamies, separations, and infidelities. And yet, despite the thrill of scandal, Victorian readers and Victorian writers shared a reverence for the institutions of the patriarchal home and family, when properly run. Dickens himself, in *Bleak House*, reserves a special place for the well-run and regulated British household, and in fact, as I shall demonstrate in what follows, his novel systematically collapses all other sources of succor or hope, leaving the institution of the patriarchal family the lone refuge in a world rapidly running to entropy.

Dickens' demolitionist strategy is nowhere more obvious or more poetic than in his attack upon the institution of Chancery, which is portrayed in the novel in a clearly Dantean light. The institution, "which gives to monied might the means abundantly of wearying out the right," is made by the omniscient narrator to sound a prefatory warning: "Suffer any wrong that can be done you, rather than come here!" (Dickens 13). This warning ominously and accurately mirrors the warning at the mouth of Dante's Hell: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here!" And in fact, the narrator wastes little time in introducing the suit which is the true cohesive element of the novel – Jarndyce and Jarndyce – and in describing it as "perennially hopeless" (14). Of note here is that the purpose of Chancery in the case

of Jarndyce and Jarndyce is to decide the dispensation of estates following a death intestate. However, since the court itself is paid for its efforts from within the estate in question, and since the court and the court alone determines who is in or out of the cause, as well as what proof or documentation is enough to settle the matter of justice, there is no reason other than morality for the court to ever conclude its pursuit of the cause. And morality is not the court's long suit.

In fact, far from condensing and adjudicating the matter of Jarndyce and Jarndyce, the suit in Chancery is described as reaching out its despoiling hand to fatally tar anything it can grasp. "How many people out of the suit," comments the narrator, "Jarndyce and Jarndyce has stretched forth its unwholesome hand to spoil and corrupt, would be a very wide question" (15). And indeed, Dickens gives us as evidence one Richard Carstone, born and raised in Jarndyce and Jarndyce, and spoiled by the unrealistic expectation of a judgment in the cause to the extent that he passes up several opportunities for profitable situations and willfully severs his ties with John Jarndyce, the closest thing to family that he has.

Perhaps the most interesting strategy here employed by Dickens lies in his appropriation and inversion of Gothic conventions to deepen the sense of horror at the workings of

Chancery. In the Gothic tradition, generally, the source of horror is contained in a geographically specific space, usually an old family home or castle, itself arguably emblematic of the patriarchal household. As a rule, the Gothic heroine finds herself trapped within this space and confronted by an uncanny and sexually aggressive masculine antagonist. Thereupon, she must solve some mystery, and then must be rescued by some man who has been searching for her. Once out of the space of the Gothic castle, however, the Gothic heroine is safe. The uncanny in the Gothic is geographically confined in space and distanced in time, placed usually at some remove from the present. In *Bleak House*, however, Dickens has turned the Gothic tradition inside-out. His *unheimlich* is Chancery, and Chancery is neither confined in space nor removed in time, but demonstrably omnipresent and contemporary. In effect, Dickens has merely inverted the frame of the Gothic, so that rather than situating the Uncanny inside the family structure, he has placed it everywhere *except* in the well-run home. Chancery can stretch out its evil hand, but it cannot harm a home which respects the status quo, as evidenced by the ostensibly happy ending of the novel.

But the home is in no wise inviolate, even if run well. Allied with Chancery at least superficially is the institution of

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law enforcement, in *Bleak House* represented in the person of Mr. Bucket. On the surface, an active, intelligent, perceptive agent of justice, the inspector himself bears closer inspection, and critic D. A. Miller has provided just that. In *The Novel and the Police*, Miller devotes a chapter to the Foucauldian dissemination of authority in *Bleak House*, focusing on the character of Bucket. Miller notes that "the relatively friendly treatment that *Bleak House* accords to the Detective Police is qualified by a number of reservations about the nature and effects of its power" (94). Among these reservations, Miller numbers the connections between Bucket and the courts, the passionlessness with which Bucket pursues his cases, and his dependence upon "the regularity of corruption ...that happens also to be invariably justified" (94). This last point is interesting in that it echoes one of the main objections to Sensation literature launched by the genre's critics, that such novels would have the common reader believe that every respectable household hid dark secrets of bigamy, murder, infidelity, bankruptcy, and worse. Still, as opposed to the obfuscation of Chancery, Bucket is a character who can deliver a detective-story plot which at least *seems* to move forward and to resolve itself within a unified space. Miller cautions us, however, about this assumption of unity. In the case of the amateur detectives (Mrs. Snagsby and Mr.

Guppy), the results of their detective work is failure "in every respect except that of catching on" (72). And what they catch on to, moreover, is an erotic secret which they must then keep, joining the growing legions of secret-keepers in *Bleak House*, from Chancery itself down to Jo the Outlaw. *Bleak House* is replete with characters who bear the burden of dark secrets. It is noteworthy that Bucket shares with Tulkinghorn the distinction of being one of only two characters who derive real power from the secrets in their possession. Perhaps this trait is the reason that Volumnia Dedlock refers to Bucket as a "Blue Chamber," a reference to the legend of Bluebeard, who kept the bodies of his slain wives in a secret room, a "blue chamber" (Dickens 750). As Volumnia rightly points out, there is something invasive and decidedly uncanny about Bucket's secretive and inquisitive nature. This is only exacerbated by his dispassionate approach to his job, as reflected in his reference to the Tulkinghorn murder as a "beautiful case" (749).

Notwithstanding all his derring-do and adroitness in apprehending the murderess of Tulkinghorn, Bucket is, in the larger scheme of *Bleak House* at any rate, a failure. Although portrayed somewhat sympathetically and certainly with flair and color, Bucket fails to make much of a difference in the novel, except to add some melodrama and physical motion to its pages. When

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confronted with the dying Gridley, Bucket tries to rouse his spirits and fails. When charged with finding Lady Dedlock before she can take her own life, he fails. And even after he has apprehended Hortense, the murderess of Tulkinghorn, he is confronted by his prisoner with two feats his detective skill can never accomplish: to bring Tulkinghorn back from the dead and to untarnish the reputation of Lady Dedlock (Miller 96). Despite his small successes, it must be admitted that as an agency of salvation and succor, Mr. Bucket is a failure. His usefulness seems to be limited entirely to the punitive and the carceral. Clearly, the protagonists in *Bleak House* will be saved neither by the law or its enforcers.

Also a failure in the novel, and perhaps surprisingly so, is the saving agency of religion. As represented in the person of the oily Mr. Chadband, religion appears to be lampooned, unless one takes into account the possibility that it was the particular *style* of religion to which Dickens took offense, and not religion itself. Nevertheless, Mr. Chadband is not the only example of the failure of religion. One very poignant example exists in the death scene of Jo the Outlaw. In this scene, Dr. Woodcourt, realizing that Jo is insensible to religion, and fearing that the child should die without faith, tries to get Jo to recite an "Our Father." The conclusion of this scene is remarkable in

that, not only does Jo die in the midst of mangling a line, but his death also makes for an occasion for the omniscient narrator to unleash a rebuke on the religious everywhere:

“Dead, your Majesty. Dead, my lords and gentlemen. Dead, Right Reverends and Wrong Reverends of every order. Dead, men and women, born with Heavenly compassion in your hearts. And dying thus around us, every day” (677).

The “Christian” burial of Captain Hawdon, alias Nemo, is another sardonically delivered indictment of mainstream religion. The narrator, and Dickens by extension, openly proclaims that any culture which would stuff a man into “a beastly scrap of ground which a Turk would reject as a savage abomination, and a Caffre would shudder at” can only provide “a shameful testimony to future ages, how civilisation and barbarism walked this boastful island together” (165).

Add to this the compassionless Bible-quoting of Esther’s aunt-godmother, Miss Barbary, and the combined effect is enough to show that religion, in and of itself, offers no succor. Religion is not enough to save one.

Of interest as well in the aforementioned death scene of Jo the Outlaw is the fact that it is not only religion which fails, but language (in the complete sense of a system of signifiers by which we seek to represent reality). As an illiterate who “don’t

know nothink," Jo is stranded by the novel on the outside of a system of discourse which *should* provide a site of recourse, especially when one considers that the primary difficulties encountered by characters in the novel are linguistic and discursive ones (the suit in Chancery being built on words). And yet, Dickens goes to enormous lengths to prove that there is no succor to be had from language in any form.

The first instance of the failure of language is given to the reader in the character of Mr. Tangle, a lawyer whose badly garbled speech instantly calls into question the prospects of any sort of resolution of a suit in Chancery. "Mlud, no," says Mr. Tangle, "variety of points – feel it my duty tsubmit – ludship" (15). This damaged speech, with its attendant suggestion of a damaged thought process, prefigures that of the "debilitated cousin" of the Dedlock family. One is a professional whose business is grounded in forensic expression, the other a scion of the upper classes; neither speaks English any better than the lowly Jo with his "stow hooking it." This failure, however, is only a cosmetic blemish. While irritating or comic, the speech of each character can still be discerned with effort. There is, however, a much more serious problem with language in the novel; there is no clear relationship of Word to Will.

As critics from Lacan and Foucault to Derrida and Kristeva have demonstrated, the manufacture of discourse is an exercise of power. Foucault in particular introduced the thesis that discourse itself is an agency for the dissemination of restrictive frames which control and contain what *can* be said and even thought. Although Foucault's subject was sexuality, it is particularly appropriate to our present argument because what is at stake in *Bleak House* is an entire patriarchal system which founds itself upon the expression and execution of a phallic Will. A "Will," in the form of a legal document (or lack thereof), is at the frozen core of Jarndyce and Jarndyce. As John Jarndyce puts it, the suit in Chancery "was about a Will when it was about anything," but a willful and cynical failure on the part of the lawyers to interpret that Will has rendered it "a dead letter," despite "cartloads of papers" generated on the cause (108). In short, the greatest evil of Chancery is that it has severed the tie between the Phallic Will and its execution, an act tantamount to the emasculation of a great family.

Witness also the Dedlock household, where the public form of the Phallic Will, as expressed through the politics of Sir Leicester, is shown to be a petty and malfunctioning thing hardly capable of putting a candidate in office: "Lord Coodle would go out, Sir Thomas Doodle wouldn't come in, and there

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being nobody in Great Britain (to speak of) except Coodle and Doodle, there has been no Government" (589). And even when a candidate does take office, he invariably finds that he can't do what he promised to do, as is the case with Volumnia's pensioning and, more importantly, the problems of the rookeries and slums. The rookeries, the narrator tells us

"have bred a crowd of foul existence that...comes and goes, fetching and carrying fever, and sowing more evil in its 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" (236)

This reads as a satiric remark on the ineffectiveness of the British government to find an answer to the "condition of England question," but note that it also contains embedded within its language an endorsement of the system it criticizes. Dickens is not expressing outrage at the existence of Lords who execute the Phallic Will, but rather at their ineptitude in getting that Will executed. Dickens, then, is not criticizing the system itself, merely its state of entropic malfunction. This malfunction, one may assume, could be remedied by Lords who are more responsible, more Fatherly, as it were. What England seems to cry out for is a Father-figure, a patriarchal head for its chaotic household. But in the world of *Bleak House*, there are

precious few exemplary father figures to be found.

Certainly, Sir Leicester Dedlock is no such patriarchal exemplar. His posturing and puffing is comic and reminiscent of the Deportment of Mr. Turveydrop, all antiquated pose and equipage. Sir Leicester's ability to execute his own Will is hardly ever demonstrated, and even when he does demonstrate it (by refusing Mr. Rouncewell's request for the resituation of Rosa), he is later countermanded by his wife. In fact, Sir Leicester is one of a collection of male characters in the novel who permit their wives control of discourse. In matters of opinion, Sir Leicester gallantly defers to his more intelligent and fashionable wife. His own Word has no power to carry Will. Lady Dedlock's own words, in fact, in the form of the letter she leaves behind when she flees, are enough to rob Sir Leicester of the power of the Word itself. After his collapse upon reading her letter, he struggles with language, barely able to communicate his Will and much in danger of being misapprehended. Only through the interpretive agency of Mr. Bucket is Sir Leicester able to communicate his instructions.

Thus the text demonstrates a breach between the Phallic Will and the Word which is its instrument. But it also demonstrates a deeper breach, that between the Word and its meaning, or in Lacan's terms the "signifier" and the "signified." In one

sense, at least, it would be a mistake to interpret Jarndyce and Jarndyce as a failure to execute Will, since the Will of the court of Chancery is clearly to obfuscate and prolong the cause in order to bleed the contested estate of its monetary value. Viewed in this way, Chancery is the only agency in the novel capable of completely executing its own Will. But it does so only by robbing the rest of the world of that same power, by deliberately creating unmeaning to conceal its theft, as the "London particular" hides the court itself. Examples of this sort of obfuscation abound in the novel, and some of them are more subtle than others. From the unnecessarily cryptic (even cryptographic) letter sent to Esther from Kenge and Carboy, to Whole's workmanlike homilies and incantatory references to his own family, the legal profession in *Bleak House* employs the Word as a mask to conceal its own wrongdoing. And what is at the core of this wrongdoing is a suit which has become so mired in the accumulation of legal documents that it is now unintelligible. Presumably, somewhere near the bottom of the mountain of papers lies the original document, the vessel of the decedent's Will, but Chancery is no longer capable of interpreting that initial sign without considering the spreading web of opportunistic signs which have attached themselves to it as the lawyers have fastened themselves, leech-like, to the estates in

Jarndyce and Jarndyce. Chancery does not lack for Will, but it is a Will which runs in the wrong direction. What Chancery does lack is a demonstrable link between what is said and what is meant, between the Sign and the Truth.

This phenomenon is not restricted to Chancery. Other sites within the novel demonstrate this severing of language from meaning. The Smallweeds provide one example with the outbursts of the grandmother seeming to hint at some dark family secret: "Mrs. Smallweed, following her usual instinct, breaks out with 'Fifteen hundred pound. Fifteen hundred pound in a black box, fifteen hundred pound locked up, fifteen hundred pound put away and hid!'" (311). The reader is challenged to interpret this as some mad, unconscious confession concerning the whereabouts of buried money, and the reactions of Grandfather Smallweed seem to lend credence to this reading, as he shrieks and yells at her, calling her "brimstone beast" and assorted other choice names. And yet, Dickens never reveals any hidden money, nor does he give any indication that Mrs. Smallweed's ravings are anything but the outbursts of a madwoman.

Likewise, the ministries of Mr. Chadband, the evangelical friend of the Snagsby family, are full of language and empty of meaning. Ostensibly delivered for the better enlightenment of

his listeners, Mr. Chadband's sermonettes are in fact nothing more than verbal perambulations and padding, as when he attempts to browbeat Jo into revealing the secret of a nonexistent sexual infidelity on Mr. Snagsby's part. He does this, ironically, by harping on the concept of "the Terewth" (381). Never quite coming to the answer to his own question, "What is this Terewth?," Mr. Chadband substitutes interminable questions and fruitless examples for answers. Meanwhile, the person who is supposed to be providing the real answers has fallen asleep, and Mr. Chadband prevents his audience from waking him.

Charity, like language, is a site in the novel which *should* be capable of making a difference, but is often little more than hollow gesturing. In the decades preceding the publication of *Bleak House*, the Victorians had become acquainted with the "condition of England question." According to Richard Altick, the "noisome rookeries of London...long antedated...Tom-All-Alone's" (Victorian 42). Altick goes on to note that "these warrens – a most suitable word, with its English connotation of tight packing and prolific breeding – were long rows and blocks, newly built with the cheapest of materials, or subdivided old houses, all designed to cram the most people into the least space" (43). The effects of older sorts of poverty and depriva-

tion had been spread over wider, more rural areas, allowing the genteel witness to pass by. The new urban poor, however, were crammed elbow-to-elbow in the midst of the city, and were unavoidable. The institutions for the prevention of such squalor had clearly failed, and "no ordinary exercise of private philanthropy would suffice to relieve it. Its magnitude was such that only a concerted effort on an unheard-of scale would have any hope of success" (41). It is against such a social backdrop that Dickens introduces his readers to Mrs. Jellyby and her cabal of "telescopic philanthropists." Although realistically the efforts of a single woman would make hardly a dent in the mass of misery which was represented in just one of the London rookeries, this fact seems to be beside the point. It appears not to be Dickens' point that Mrs. Jellyby should save the masses of English poor. She is introduced on purpose to demonstrate that grandiose acts of charity cannot take precedence over the keeping of a well-ordered home. Indeed, there is something of the nature of the comic grotesque in the Jellyby household, and it can be accounted for in the fact that Mrs. Jellyby is so busy being important to the world that she has forgotten her place as a Victorian wife and mother. The appalling state of her household reveals two things about the Jellyby family, in Dickens' scheme. The first is that Mrs. Jellyby is an inadequate mother.

The second is that Mr. Jellyby is lacking in masculine qualities which should enable him to keep order in his own household.

This motif of the emasculated patriarch recurs again and again in the novel. Perhaps the most glaring example is the Badger household. Mrs. Badger goes on and on about her previous husbands, and rather than being offended or embarrassed, Mr. Badger actually leads her in praising the men who came before him, extolling their questionable virtues to the exclusion of his own. The scenes at the Badger household, while played for comic effect, are no doubt designed to cause uneasiness, at the very least, in the male Victorian reader. No less disturbing to the Victorian reader must have been the relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Snagsby, with the husband in a constant state of nervous unrest lest his "little woman" should suspect him of wrongdoing and likewise the relationship between Sir Leicester Dedlock and Lady Dedlock. Although modern audiences might remark only Sir Leicester's gallantry, there exists also an undercurrent of submissiveness as Sir Leicester takes his conversational as well as operational cues from Lady Dedlock. Due to the nature of the relationship, however, this situation may be viewed in a more romantic and less perverse light than that of the Badgers. The same is true in the case of the Bagnets, wherein "Lignum" expects "the old

girl" to serve up his opinions. Here, finally, is a quaint and homely relationship, albeit one in which the reins of power are surrendered to the female in a comically phallocentric fashion, by framing the discourse of the wife as the opinions of the husband, along with the constant reiteration on Mr. Bagnet's part that while he may cherish the old girl, he would never admit it in front of her – "discipline must be maintained." Nevertheless, to judge by the outcome of the novel, wherein the Bagnets are still celebrating birthdays and visiting with old friends, this is a relationship of which Dickens approves.

Perhaps Dickens is willing to overlook this transfer of Phallic power in the Bagnet relationship because he places so much stock in the institution of the home, the foundation and bulwark of the Victorian middle-class world. Whatever their idiosyncrasies, the Bagnets are fiercely committed to their family and their household. Unlike the Jellyby household, with its financially insolvent and powerless patriarch, the Bagnet house is clean, well-maintained, and notwithstanding the specter of George Rouncewell's loan, financially in the black. Clearly, if there is one source of salvation from the entropic clutch of Chancery in this novel, it is the Victorian household. And yet, how safe is that household after all? D. A. Miller points out that, in *Bleak House*, "the 'outside' of power is speci-

fied as a domestic space, occupied by an ideal of the family" (76). Here again, we see Dickens turning the Gothic inside-out. From a Gothic milieu which contained the peril of the uncanny within the "house" and left the outside world, if not normal, at least natural, we arrive at an inverted scheme which has the uncanny embodied in the familiar institutions of law, language, charity, and religion, each winding down entropically into purposelessness, while the "house" stands as in the eye of a storm, inviolate despite the trouble outside its walls. But a closer examination of this cherished Victorian institution is warranted before we can pronounce the inhabitants of Bleak House safe from the entropy all around them.

In the first place, a distinction should be made between the traditional patriarchal household and the one represented by John Jarndyce's Bleak House. To wit: John Jarndyce is no patriarch. Having persuaded his charges to call him "Guardian," he then fails to guard them, losing Richard to Chancery and Ada to Richard. When confronted with expressions of gratitude or adverse conditions, he displays a neurotic aversion whose symptom (his fantasy of the "east wind") might almost place him on a footing with the mad Miss Flite. And so far from being a perceptive judge of character, John Jarndyce is tarred by his sympathies for the disingenuous and finally recre-

ant Mr. Skimpole. This is certainly not a patriarchal household in the traditional sense, and John Jarndyce certainly does not possess the Phallic Will.

So if this is not John Jarndyce's household, whose is it? Clearly, it is the province and space of the dutiful and deserving Esther Summerson. Taking as her pattern the six years she spent in training at Greenleaf observing a well-ordered and comfortable household, Esther transforms the chaotic décor and more chaotic owner of Bleak House into something better resembling the Victorian ideal. And she does all this without resorting to the sort of undignified snooping and skullduggery associated with the Gothic heroine. Self-deprecating, humble, dutiful, Esther's attitude toward her place in society is contained in her monologue following her return from recuperating at Boythorn's place:

"Once more duty, duty, Esther," said I; "and if you are not overjoyed to do it more than cheerfully and contentedly, through anything and everything, you ought to be. That's all I have to say to *you*, my dear!" (562)

And once she has gotten herself fired up with the energy of domestic responsibilities, she turns her silent guns on those who fail in such responsibilities:

It struck me that if Mrs. Jellyby had discharged her own natural duties and obligations, before she swept the horizon with a telescope in search of others, she would have taken the best precautions against becoming absurd; but I need scarcely observe that I kept this to myself. (563)

In her inward expression of strong opinions in support of the patriarchal scheme of woman's "natural duties and obligations," coupled with her silence and self-effacement, Esther does more to ensconce herself in the doll's house of Victorian femininity than Jarndyce ever could. And in an era when the press and the Sensation novelist are casting their searchlights through the windows of staid Victorian homes and glimpsing horrors at every turn, this doll's house is no safe place to be. The subordinate position of the Angel in the House requires constant vigilance and reaffirmation, even in submission. As D. A. Miller puts it, "Esther never ceases to earn her place, as though, were she to do so, she might even at the end be displaced from it" (102). Or to put it more generally, "the instability of the family subject is indispensable to counter the instability of the family structure, of which it is an effect" (102).

And lest we should forget the penalty to be paid by a woman who climbs out of her place, we have the example of Lady Dedlock to remind us. For it is not merely for her past sexual transgressions that she is doomed, but more importantly

for her force of character and her interference in the homosocial bond between Sir Leicester and Mr. Tulkinghorn. Tulkinghorn covets the Phallic power which is embodied in Sir Leicester but which, ironically, is Lady Dedlock's to manipulate. In his admiration for Lady Dedlock's strength, just as in his misogynist tirades against all of womankind, Tulkinghorn betrays his desire to occupy that feminine space now occupied by Lady Dedlock. And like Lady Dedlock, he professes to act out of concern for Sir Leicester, his "sole consideration." Like the Gothic heroine, Tulkinghorn is a discoverer of secrets within the castle. Unlike the Gothic heroine, however, he is male, which makes his occupation of the feminine space, in Foucault's terms, "unthinkable." What Lady Dedlock has managed by her feminine beauty, Tulkinghorn would manage by an accumulation of secrets. And here again is Freud's *unheimlich* in the sense not only of the horrifying and uncanny, but also in the sense of the unhomely and discomfiting. Tulkinghorn becomes Lady Dedlock's rival. But rather than use his power to oust her from her position, he does something even more horrifying; he forces her to agree to remain in her place as if nothing had changed, all the while knowing full well that he may disclose her secrets in any way and to anyone he chooses. This, then, is the true horror at the heart of the Victorian

feminine domestic ideal. It is the most homely of the unhomely, the melodramatic reminder that to step outside of one's sphere is to invite instant and permanent disaster, but also that even remaining inside the sphere requires constant devotion to the patriarchal structure, the very structure which confines one in the first place.

At the conclusion of *Bleak House*, Dickens has left no doubt as to Esther's place in her social world. She has been married off for her own good to Alan Woodcourt and moved into a smaller replica of the Bleak House of which she was to become the mistress. Like Alice in Wonderland, she has performed a feat of miniaturization, and yet, in this miniaturized space, she seems to glow. Deferring all the while to the glory of her husband, seeming content and more than content to dwell in her restricted sphere, surrounded by her children and her darling tragic Ada, Esther has found her sphere. Significantly, the last paragraph of the novel places the increasingly invisible and (paradoxically) increasingly more self-assured Esther in the center of a web of family, hinting with the last unfinished lines at something she has lost through her adventures – her beauty. A plain woman in a small home, dutifully attending to a growing family, Esther seems to be living the Victorian middle-class dream, at least until the veil is lifted. For this home in which

she has been confined will never be inviolate. There will always come the Detective Inspectors, the newspapermen, and the Dickens to root out its secrets and display them before a Sensation-loving England

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Two Takes on One Truth:
Critiques of Victorian Society by Charlotte Bronte
and Thomas Hardy

Elizabeth Baldrige

In Victorian times, social convention ruled everyday life. Reason was the valued virtue of the day, and passion was shunned. Love, being necessarily somewhat passionate, had an interesting place in Victorian society. Men were to be educated, but most importantly, were to be gentlemanly: pure, patient, passive, always placing societal values and reason over their own personal drives and passions. Social convention, then, was to be more important than one's love for another. This idealized role of the Victorian gentleman is an ever-present archetype in Victorian novels.

Accompanying this archetype, though, is the conflict between reason and passion. In her book, *Masculine Identity in Hardy and Gissing*, Annette Federico provides a clear cause for, and definition of, this conflict: "Attached to a belief in honor and service, this strict doctrine of male virtue placed tremendous pressure on men, who represented in a sense the purveyors of patriarchal respectability" (56). Victorian gentlemen, then, felt a responsibility to protect and be examples of Victorian social values, while simultaneously harboring great

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desire for certain women. These men, whom Federico calls "Pathological Gentlemen," "are not sexless or functionally sterile, but sexual and willful men whose consciousness is conditioned by an impulse toward anticonsciousness, which is further exploited and regulated by institutionalized masculinity" (62). Thus, these Victorian men are forced to live with this duality—being secure pillars of social values and simultaneously individuals insecure with their own passions.

While the presence of the Victorian gentleman and his conflict are both archetypal, the way in which the gentleman addresses and eliminates his conflict is not always the same. In Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, Monsieur Paul Emanuel handles the conflict much differently than Thomas Hardy's Angel Clare from *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. The role of the gentleman in Victorian novels is to be the vehicle for the writer's overall message. The writer takes an archetypal gentleman with a common conflict and makes his perspective on society known through the actions of the gentleman.

Paul Emanuel and Angel Clare both conform to the mold of the Victorian gentleman with seeming ease. Professor Paul Emanuel is an elevated, educated French bachelor who teaches at his cousin's school. Not only is he educated, but he is also a very religious, highly moral man: "He was a religious little

man, in his way: the self-denying and self-sacrificing part of the Catholic religion commanded the homage of his soul" (Bronte 279). His religious position is also illustrated in his name. The name Paul causes him to appear saintly, while Emanuel goes even further and portrays him as a savior—the most self-denying of all men. Thus we are introduced, through abstract observations, to a man whose religion and reason not only come before his personal needs and passions but rule them.

Along with these abstract observations, Bronte provides a concrete example of M. Paul's gentlemanly qualities in discussing his history. When M. Paul was in love with Justine Marie and was not allowed to court her because of his "debts and destitution," he did not lose patience and react passionately as one might expect (Bronte 485). On the contrary, he is the perfect gentleman: patient and passive. Even after Justine Marie dies in a convent, Paul continues to show gentlemanly values by supporting her relatives—the very people that disallowed the relationship in the first place. He is also sure to love Justine Marie forever, for "the essence of Emanuel's nature is—constancy" (488). Through such examples, it is clear that Bronte intended to show M. Paul to be the epitome of gentlemanliness.

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Quite similar to M. Paul is Angel Clare, the gentleman of Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, who, Federico asserts, is a "saintly male" (55). Clare is a result of the "Victorian code of Christian manliness (which) is largely the basis for such unaggressive and, above all, patient super-gentlemen" (56). Clare is, like Paul, a very intelligent individual. He was "the single one of (his brothers) whose early promise might have done full justice to an academical training" (Hardy 169). Though Angel did not go to Cambridge for an education, he "spent years and years in desultory studies, undertakings, and meditations" (171-2). Angel is definitely a man of intellect.

Accompanying this intellect is an incredible morality typical of the Victorian gentleman. This is especially apparent in his love for Tess, in which "he was, in truth, more spiritual than animal; he had himself well in hand, and was singularly free from grossness" (257). Like M. Paul, Angel's morality is connected in a great part to his patience and self-denial. He is, after all, an "Angel," a savior figure to Tess. He is her guide not only in education, but also in morality: "To her sublime trustfulness he was all that goodness could be—knew all that a guide, philosopher, and friend should know" (257). He denies himself passions in order to guide Tess in the right direction. Thus, he easily fits the mold of Victorian gentleman.

Both characters, then, provide superb examples of the characteristic Victorian gentleman. This inhuman, ethereal quality, though, can only last for a limited time. The men are, after all, worldly entities. Accordingly, both men deviate somewhat from the mold. It is in this deviation that the classic and expected conflict begins to form.

Both men may be patient and unaggressive individuals, but there are times when they are both highly passionate as well. M. Paul is perhaps the most obviously passionate of the two. As John Maynard points out in his book, *Charlotte Bronte and Sexuality*, "M. Paul has appeared almost from first sight as an advocate of feeling" (196). Throughout *Villette*, several references are made to M. Paul's passions. He is passionate about literature and his students: "Sometimes he would break out on these raw amateur actresses with a passion of impatience at their falseness of conception" (Bronte 198). He is also passionate in emotion, as Lucy notes "there certainly was something in M. Paul's anger—a kind of passion of emotion—that specially tended to draw tears" (320). These emotions, however, do not seem to pose much of a problem to M. Paul's being a gentleman. He is a literature professor, and thus, allowed to be passionate about literature. His passions in emotion are also excusable, as one cannot exist without the other.

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The conflict begins to appear when classic Victorian restraint is unable to masquerade M. Paul's passions. "His passions were strong, his aversions and attachments alike vivid; the force he exerted in holding both in check, by no means mitigated an observer's sense of their vehemence" (279). This inability to hide passions reflects both the strength of the passions, and their seeming contradiction with M. Paul's status as a gentleman. Paul attempts to eliminate the conflict by holding his emotions "in check," thereby not acting on them. M. Paul, then, simply accepts passions as something very human and acceptable when not acted upon.

Angel Clare is also passionate, but in quite a different way from M. Paul. The majority of Angel's passions are not for literature, religion, or even farming. They are, surprisingly, for Tess: "It was then, as has been said that she impressed him most deeply. She was no longer the milkmaid, but a visionary essence of woman—a whole sex condensed into one typical form" (Hardy 187). Clearly this is a deviation from the usual self-denying, morally driven Angel Clare. His impressions are no longer with purity, but with sexuality, and these are his strongest, deepest impressions. This is not an instance of admiration, but a time when Angel feels the most passionate about Tess.

Angel has clearly dwelt upon and studies his passions to a great extent, for he seems to have a good understanding of them. For instance, he insists that, "To a young man with the least fire in him that little upward lift in the middle of her red top lip was distracting, infatuating, maddening" (209). Despite the absence of the word passion, the idea is obviously present. Different from M. Paul, however, this statement seems to imply that Angel is conscious of these passionate drives, for he acknowledges that any man with the slightest passion would be infatuated. Upon careful study, one must note that this statement is qualitative. Angel must justify his intense, immoral passions as something that any man in his position would feel. Thus, Angel attempts to resolve the conflict by making this passion part of the mold of the Victorian gentleman—it's something any of them would feel.

M. Paul and Angel both make their passions somewhat more universal in order to deal with them, so the two seem to handle the conflict in a somewhat similar fashion. That is, until one studies the gentleman's view of his beloved. As Annette Federico explains, the Victorian gentleman's "feminine ideal is a fairly accurate index to his perception of a counterpart masculine ideal, which, of course, he knows he embodies himself" (131). As with the gentleman, the feminine ideal

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cannot be "ideal" at all times. This "feminine ideal" differs in the Victorian gentleman according to how much the man will allow society to rule his life. The gentleman will either do as he chooses and love whom he chooses, or do as society dictates and love an easily molded "ideal."

M. Paul views passions as a universal human experience, acceptable when not acted on or displaced. M. Paul's opinions and views of Lucy accurately fit his views. For instance, when Lucy attends the concert wearing a pink dress, she finds M. Paul "looking at (her) gravely and intently: at (her), or rather, at (her) pink dress—sardonic comment on which gleamed in his eye" (Bronte 299). This disdainful expression clearly illustrates M. Paul's dislike of Lucy's outward display of frivolous passions. He later explains to Lucy, "What fatal influence had (caused her) to appear on one occasion in a scarlet gown—he might indeed conjecture, but, for the present would not openly declare...Pink or scarlet, yellow or crimson, pea-green or sky-blue; it was all one: these were all flaunting, giddy colours" (419). This outward display is clearly frowned upon, to say the least. M. Paul would not approve of himself being frivolously passionate, thus he is uncomfortable with seeing his ideal do so.

M. Paul does not, however, chastise Lucy and attempt to make her fit the "ideal" mode. He acknowledges her existence

as a human with passions, and thereby, accepts his own. In Paul's relationship with Lucy, he breaks out from societal constraints. As John Maynard asserts, "M. Paul's passion is trapped by the self-interested manipulations of Madame Walravens, Pere Silas, and company" (198). M. Paul may have played the reserved, "super-gentleman" in his relationship with Justine Marie, but will not do so now with Lucy Snowe. M. Paul acknowledges the mistakes of his past, and refuses to repeat them, regardless of social ramifications. He becomes a true individual.

Angel Clare, as previously mentioned, has somewhat of a different take on the conflicts of passion and society. To Angel, passions are sins requiring either justification by universality or forgiveness for faltering. Because Angel sees himself as a pure and chaste vessel, he projects this saintly image onto his feminine ideal—Tess Durbeyfield. She is "honest-hearted, receptive, intelligent, graceful to a degree, chaste as a vestal" (Hardy 224). Or, at least, that is how he defines her mold. Angel insists that Tess must be "the most honest, spotless creature that ever lived" (240). Clearly, this is more a description of his ideal projected on to Tess, than of Tess herself.

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Angel takes Federico's statement to new extremes in that that he notes several times how similar Tess is to himself. He, in fact, sees her as an extension of his being. He calls attention to how her "natural quickness, and her admiration for him, hav(e) led her to pick up his vocabulary, his accent, and fragments of his knowledge, to a surprising extent" (238). Angel later insists, "What I am in worldly estate, she is. What I become, she must become. What I cannot be, she cannot be" (285). Thus, Angel seems vaguely aware that this feminine ideal is a reflection of the masculine ideal that he sees as himself.

Angel Clare cannot accept his own moral imperfections, and thus will not stand to have his feminine ideal entertain such emotions either. For Angel, even a rape not provoked or desired by Tess, is something too passionate and filthy for his ideal to have been involved with. Despite his own forty-eight hours of pre-marital pleasure, Angel cannot, indeed, will not, forgive Tess for her "impurity."

Within the remote depths of his constitution...there lay hidden a hard logical deposit (Victorian reason), like a vein of metal in a soft loam, which turned the edge of everything that attempted to traverse it ...with regard to the other sex, when he ceased to believe he ceased to follow; contrasting in this with many impressionable natures, who remain sensuously infatuated with what they intellectually despise (311).

Angel falls prisoner, then, to social expectations. He is, as Federico argues, "a man eager to sacrifice himself (and unfortunately others) to support his unreasonable idealizations of what constitutes morality" (57). Angel Clare ignores the controllable mistakes of his past, and unfairly judges Tess for something she could not control. He is unable to deal with the conflict, and chooses assimilation over individuality.

M. Paul is, then, Charlotte Brontë's response to Victorian social constraints. To Brontë, constraints are things to be destroyed, as individualism and passion must be priority. This being true, the ending of *Villette* contains a very deep, underlying idea essential to Brontë's critique of the time. For although passion and individualism were very much favored by Brontë, M. Paul, as her example, must die to reach his innermost passions. Thus, Brontë makes her statement—that social constraints can only be truly broken when the society itself no longer exists.

Even Brontë's ending shows this. It is clear to Lucy that freedom can only be reached outside of the society and its expectations: "Let it be theirs to conceive the delight of joy born again fresh out of great terror, the rapture of rescue from peril, the wondrous reprieve from dread, the fruition of return. Let them picture union and a happy succeeding life" (Brontë

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596). Allow one to live in such disillusionment until the reality of the situation must be acknowledged, for the reality—that one cannot exist apart from society and its expectations and constraints—cannot allow a happy ending.

Clearly, Thomas Hardy does not desire such individualism for his gentleman Angel Clare. To Hardy, this social ideal is something to be striven for. As with Bronte's work, the ending of Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* communicates his message quite clearly. Tess has to die because she is not ideal in society's eyes, and only the ideal can survive. Angel must survive as one striving to reach that social ideal. This point is made more blatant with Angel's marriage to Liza-Lu—the ideal, unadulterated form of Tess. In Hardy's view, it is the ideal, or those who constantly strive to be ideal, who can, and should, survive in society. Society would not be harmonious, or even in existence, were it not for conformists who strive to be all that society expects of them. These keepers of balance are, then, worthy of praise in Hardy's eyes.

This brings about an interesting observation. Bronte's take on things is, essentially, that to be passionate and individualistic, one must escape society. Society and individual passions are, thus, incompatible. Hardy's approach is that only those striving for harmony within a society, that is to say, those attempting to

meet social expectations, are the only people who can possibly exist within a social setting. Society and individual passions are, thus, incompatible. Bronte may applaud those who strive for individualism, and passion, and Hardy may praise those who attempt to maintain social expectations, but the two agree that one belongs in the world and the other does not.

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Locked Cages, Locked Doors: The Destructive
Image of the Angel in the House in Henrik Ibsen's
A Doll's House and Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*

Susanne Langham

Published within two decades of each other, Henrik Ibsen's play *A Doll's House* (1879) and Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899) both portray female protagonists trapped by the conventions of nineteenth-century society that required women to either conform to a specific ideal of womanhood or risk being labeled as 'unwomanly.' Nora Helmer, the heroine of *A Doll's House* sees herself as a doll, a mere plaything for her husband and thus trapped within a dollhouse. Similarly, *The Awakening's* Edna Pontellier feels trapped by the constraints of her role as wife and mother. Just as Nora is portrayed as almost literally trapped in a dollhouse, Edna's entrapment is likened to that of a caged bird, longing to be set free. Critics debate whether Nora's search for self should be read as representative of the struggle of 'everyman' or specifically as an examination of the nineteenth-century woman. Likewise, there is much controversy over whether Edna's eventual suicide should be interpreted as a move toward freedom, or condemned as selfishness. Despite these debates, both *A Doll's House* and *The Awakening* can be used effectively to demonstrate the destructive

aspect of the 'angel in the house' ideal of womanhood. This ideal, as can be seen from these two works, stifles a woman's sense of self and identity as an autonomous human being, and throws her into the dilemma of having to choose between sacrificing her self by maintaining a role, or risk losing everything in order to be free. Ultimately, the angel in the house construct functions to drive both Edna and Nora to perform what are often construed as the most selfish of acts, suicide and abandonment, as means of self preservation.

Virginia Woolf coined the phrase 'angel in the house' as it is used to describe the Victorian conception of the ideal woman. Although Woolf adopted the phrase some time after the writing of *A Doll's House* and *The Awakening* it accurately describes the expected role of women at the time these works were written. As such, Nora and Edna are perfect examples of women unable or unwilling to remain angels in the house. This conception of the angel in the house upheld ideal femininity as being a perfect wife and doting mother, while remaining pure. In her essay, "Killing the Angel in the House," Elaine Showalter writes that Woolf envisioned the angel in the house as "the spirit of Victorian womanhood, who hovered over her as she wrote and whispered, 'Be sympathetic, be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our sex. Never let anybody guess that you

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have a mind of your own. Above all, be pure'" (208). Showalter argues that this myth of womanhood is dangerous to women and hampers their autonomy. Often a woman who is a non-conformist is labeled as mad and in some cases, the pressure to conform even leads to mental breakdown. Looking at women writers and literary portrayals of women Showalter explains:

The frequency with which one encounters madness in [these women] suggests that for them it is a form of genuine self-expression, sometimes the only one possible....madness may indeed be the divinest sense, a way of maintaining the self in the face of baffling and contradictory reality. On the simplest level, madness offers a woman a socially acceptable excuse for expressing anger and hostility; and conversely, the expression of these "unfeminine" feelings may be construed as signs of madness. (211-212)

Although critics like Austin E. Quigley argue against a feminist interpretation of *A Doll's House*, claiming that "the characters' typological limitations seem to set complementary limitations upon their abilities to discuss or embody complex thematic concerns" (586), it seems a stronger case can be made in favor of a feminist interpretation. In order for Nora to represent the human struggle for autonomy one would have to assume that society really treats men and women as equal, and that their struggle for autonomy is the same. While agreeing that men and women are similar in some respects, Joan

Templeton disputes that she merely represents the human struggle:

But to say that Nora Helmer stands for the individual in search of his or her self, besides being a singularly unhelpful and platitudinous generalization, is wrong, if not absurd. For it means that Nora's conflict has essentially nothing to do with her identity as a nineteenth-century married woman, a married woman, or a woman. Yet both Nora and *A Doll's House* are unimaginable otherwise. (31)

As the play opens, Nora appears to be a happy housewife returning from shopping. From his repeated references to her as "my little lark" (1.1), "my little squirrel" (1.2), and "my little spendthrift" (1.2), it is obvious that she belongs, as property, to her husband Torvald. His use of the diminutive 'little' in referring to Nora exemplifies that he does not see her as equal to himself but rather like a child, a doll and a plaything. He even goes so far as to call her a "poor little girl" (1.5). Just as a father reprimands his child, Torvald asks Nora whether she has disobeyed him by eating macaroons. Torvald's view of Nora as a doll for his own enjoyment and entertainment is made especially clear in his complaint that the three weeks she spent evenings away from him, under the auspices of making Christmas ornaments, were "the dullest three weeks" (1.5) he had ever experienced. Although Nora seems happy to indulge in Torvald's childlike treatment of her, we soon learn that she is

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just play-acting at fulfilling her expected role. There is much more to Nora than first meets the eye.

A side of Nora contrasting with her childlike image is revealed when her distant longtime friend Christine Linde visits her. As Nora discloses the secret that she borrowed money in order to finance a trip that would save her husband's life by returning him to health, it becomes apparent that Nora is serious and intelligent. She has managed to figure out a way to borrow money without Torvald knowing it, even though women were not allowed to borrow money without their husband's permission. Unfortunately, Nora had to commit forgery in order to borrow the money, although she doesn't see this as harmful because she did it with good intention. Nora is not the spendthrift she initially appears to be. In fact, she confesses to spending only half of her allowance, using the rest to pay off her loan and having secretly taken on copying work when Torvald thought she was working on ornaments. Nora's desire to keep her loan a secret from Torvald exhibits her awareness that her actions go against those expected of a married woman, and of the implications her actions would have on her marriage. Nora explains, "... how painful and humiliating it would be for Torvald, with his manly independence, to know that he owed me anything! It would

upset our mutual relations altogether; our beautiful happy home would no longer be what it is now" (1.12).

Nora clearly realizes that the happiness of their home is dependent upon her willingness to sacrifice for her family, and maintain the role of the angel in the house. However, from early on in the play there are clues that Nora is discontented in this role, but when she expresses her feelings, her sanity is questioned. Christine calls Nora a "mad creature" (1.11) when she recounts acquiring the loan, and Dr. Rank asks Nora if she is 'mad' when she breaks the mold of feminine purity by saying 'damned' (1.16). Nora's dissatisfaction with her role and consciousness of the inequities between men and women is expressed by the joy and satisfaction she felt while working: "it was a tremendous pleasure to sit there working and earning money. It was like *being a man*" (1.13, emphasis added). The crucial turning point for Nora is her realization that Torvald will not appreciate the sacrifices she has made for him but that he, in fact, will condemn her for her actions. This critical realization propels Nora to withdraw from her children and contemplate suicide.

Edna, like Nora, is driven to contemplate suicide. While Nora's despondency seems to develop gradually, Edna's is manifest from the beginning of *The Awakening*. And although

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Edna experiences "An indescribable oppression, which seemed to generate in some unfamiliar part of her consciousness" (49), she does not immediately identify the source of her feelings. As the novel progresses, Edna gradually awakens to the realization that she cannot fit the role of wife and mother that she is expected to fulfill.

The Awakening begins with the description of a caged parrot that speaks "a language which nobody understood" (43). The parrot is symbolic of Edna; its language represents her feelings of being misunderstood. The mother women of Grand Isle, whom Edna is not one of, are clearly portrayed as self-sacrificing angels in the house, "fluttering about with extended, protecting wings when any harm, real or imaginary, threatened their precious brood. They were women who idolized their children, worshipped their husbands and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels" (51). Edna's feelings for her children are in sharp contrast with those of the 'ideal' mother-women:

She was fond of her children in an uneven, impulsive way. She would sometimes gather them passionately to her heart; she would sometimes forget them.... Their absence was a sort of relief, though she did not admit this, even to herself. It seemed to free her of a responsibility which she had blindly assumed and for which Fate had not fitted her. (63)

As the novel progresses, Edna slowly awakens to the understanding that she is not content to play a role, and that her feelings of depression are rooted in her inability to develop her own identity within the strictures of marriage, motherhood, in short, as a woman. As the narrator reveals, Edna awakens to find that she "could only realize that she herself—her present self—was in some way different from the other self" (88). One can clearly see that 'the other self' refers to Edna's role as wife and mother.

Just as Nora finds some enjoyment in working, Edna finds some satisfaction in painting. Whereas Nora's copying work still relegates her to serving others, Edna's painting is a means of a more genuine self-expression. Like Nora, as Edna begins to deviate from the accepted role, her sanity is questioned. When Edna refuses to abide by the custom of accepting visitors on Tuesdays and begins to actively pursue her interest in painting, her husband, Leonce, wonders about her mental stability. Eventually, Leonce even speaks to a doctor about her behavior. Although Edna takes measure toward self-fulfillment, abandoning her role, and even moving to a 'pigeon-house' (166) of her own, her despondency is not cured. Yet, Edna seems to find some satisfaction in having come to a realization about her place in the world, commenting that "perhaps it is better to

wake up after all than to remain a dupe to illusion's all of one's life" (17). In the end, Edna chooses to sacrifice her physical self, through suicide in "the ultimate bid for freedom" (Foster, 168).

Robert White's summary of *The Awakening* as "a novel about houses ... as well being a novel about the need to escape from the limitations of the home, the confines of the house, the urge, to employ the words of one of Kate Chopin's favorite poets, to 'Unscrew the locks from the doors,' (100), can be equally applied to *A Doll's House*. While Nora chooses not to act on her suicidal impulses as Edna does, she realizes that she has duties to her self, and must leave her family in order to educate and develop her autonomy. Although the ultimate decision of these heroines is different, unable to live up to the angel in the house ideal, both of these women are forced to choose between continuing to live the role of the angel in the house, or taking drastic measures to develop an autonomous self.

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Male and Female Double Standards
of Behavior and Love and Marriage as Revealed
in Thomas Hardy and Henrik Ibsen

Deborah Olson Keeling

In Thomas Hardy's novel *Tess of D D Urbervilles* and Henrik Ibsen's play *A Doll's House*, both of the authors have female protagonists who step outside the socially acceptable cultural norms of female behavior in order to help their families survive. In each case, the result of both of the protagonists' behaviors ultimately results in their separation from their husbands and their families. Hardy and Ibsen both demonstrate an understanding of the double standard of behavior accorded to men and women and reveal this understanding in their texts. Each author reveals in the course of his work that even the most intimate of male and female relationships, those of love and marriage, can be severed by the sharply delineated double-edged sword of this culturally constructed double standard of behavior. The double-edged sword of oppression that the protagonists in the novel confront, while injuring themselves the most, does not leave their husbands, lovers, or families unscathed. Considering the time period in which these novels were published, Ibsen's in 1879 and Hardy's in 1891, both authors demonstrate significant insights into the inequalities

and resulting oppression that continued to place women in subordinate positions to men.

In "Thomas Hardy, The Man Who 'Liked' Women" Mary Childers places the word "liked" in quotation marks because she questions the premise the title of her essay espouses. Childers gives examples from Hardy's novels where he repeatedly places his female characters in the rigid frame of socially constructed stereotypical roles and behaviors. She explains that "According to Hardy, women are irrational, irresponsible, vain, and inconstant" (317). At the same time, when Hardy's male characters act irrationally, irresponsibly, or with vanity, or inconstancy Hardy does not attribute their behavior to essential behavioral qualities inherent in the male sex. Childers suggest that rather than taking a confrontational approach and accusing Hardy of liking or not liking women that it is better to look at the representations of women in his work and identify the way that these representations "... are psychologically, culturally, and economically overdetermined..." (321). By using Childers' approach, the reader observes that while some of Hardy's explicit observations about women are reflections of the stereotypical characteristics attributed to them the plots in which his characters find themselves implicitly reveal that both sexes behave in similar fashions. The real

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differences are not those of male and female behaviors but the difference found in the set of double behavioral standards that are applied unequally to men and women.

Hardy reveals his intuitive understanding of the social construction of acceptable standards of behavior when Tess is pregnant with Alec's child, and she has isolated herself from the community in which she lives. Tess ventures outside only at dusk to enjoy nature, and Hardy tells us that because of "... a cloud of moral hobgoblins by which she was terrified without reason . . . she looked upon herself as a figure of Guilt intruding into the haunts of Innocence" (86). Conventional morality labels Tess a fallen woman. Yet, when Tess goes out in the evenings Hardy points out the dichotomy of natural law and social law. Hardy explains that "She had been made to break a necessary social law, but no law known to the environment in which she fancied herself such an anomaly" (86). Tess is a victim of social law, which has no basis or relevance in natural law.

Hardy also demonstrates the double standard of social law as it relates to men and women and how its influence can destroy the most intimate of relationships between them. When Tess and Angel make their confessions of similar past behaviors, Tess accepts Angel's past failings, but Angel cannot accept hers:

Forgive me as you are forgiven! I forgive you, Angel."

"You - yes, you do,"

"But you do not forgive me?"

"Forgiveness does not apply to the case. You were one person; now you are another. How can forgiveness meet such a grotesque prestidigitation as that?" (228)

For Angel, the tenets of social law are so powerful that they completely shift his perception of Tess. In just a few moments, Tess who has acted no differently than Angel and who Angel agrees was more "... sinned against than sinning ..." has been condemned by the double standard of social law while Angel has been forgiven by it. (232)

Hardy reveals his understanding of the fallacy of the over generalizations that are the basis for stereotypical behaviors, by showing examples of stereotypical behaviors attributed to women in his male characters. Hardy implicitly reveals the stereotypical inconstancy that he explicitly attributes to women in the behaviors of both Angel and Alec. While Tess remains constant in her feelings towards Angel and Alec and in her beliefs, if not in her behaviors, Angel and Alec both swing back and forth in the degree of their feelings for and actions towards Tess as well as in their religious and social beliefs. Hardy demonstrates Angel's inconstancy of feelings and Tess's constancy of feelings in Tess's plea to Angel for forgiveness:

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I thought, Angel, that you loved me – me, my very self!
If it is I you do love, O how can it be that you look and
speak so? It frightens me! Having begun to love 'ee, I
love 'ee for ever—in all changes, in all disgraces,
because you are yourself. I ask no more. Then how can
you, O my own husband, stop loving me?" (228)

Tess does not understand that it is the double standard of social law that causes the separation between her and her husband and which ultimately requires her to accept personal responsibility for the division. Hardy's unfolding of the story line reveals the true nature of the rift and the myth of stereotypical behavior.

In Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* similar evidence is found to support the premise that Ibsen, like Hardy, was also sensitive to the unequal standards that men and women were held to.

According to Neville Davis in his essay "Not just a bang and a whimper: the Inconclusiveness of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*," it was not really Ibsen's intent to highlight the Women's Rights movement when he wrote the play. Davis quotes Ibsen's disclaimer that "I am not even very sure what Women's Rights really are" (33). Although, Ibsen may not have been able to define Women's Rights, his play demonstrates his understanding of the double standard by which men and women were judged. Neville quotes from Ibsen's synopsis, which appeared in the program for his play:

There are two kinds of moral laws, two kinds of conscience, one for men and one, quite different, for women. They don't understand each other, but in practical life, woman is judged by law, as though she weren't a woman but a man A woman cannot be herself in modern society, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who assess feminine conduct from a masculine standpoint. (33)

Nora is condemned by the double standard of social law. Ibsen reveals his intuitive understanding of this double standard and its unfairness during the serious conversation Nora and Torvald have towards the end of the play. Nora is just beginning to understand this double standard and the resulting double life she has been leading and is attempting to explain it to Torvald:

I am learning too, that the law is quite another thing from what I supposed, but I find it impossible to convince myself that the law is right. According to it a woman has no right to spare her old dying father or to save her husband's life. I can't believe that. (69 Act 3)

Social law pronounces Nora a criminal unworthy of raising her own children because she has stepped outside the socially acceptable cultural norms of female behavior in order to protect her family while Krogstad, who has committed a similar infraction, continues to take care of his children. The parallel behaviors of Nora and Krogstad and the difference in the consequences of their behaviors reveal Ibsen's understanding of the double standard behavior that men and women are held to.

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Ibsen reveals his understanding of the fallacy of the essentiality and over generalizations of stereotypical behaviors by the contrast of Nora's behavior when she is with Torvald and when she is away from him. When Nora is with Torvald, she acts like a "doll child" who does not have a care or serious thought in the world. (66 Act 3). In contrast, when Nora is away from Torvald we see that she is a woman who has learned to behave in the stereotypical ways expected of her and that in reality she has been the person who is responsible for saving Torvald's life and keeping her family together. As for Torvald, Ibsen demonstrates Torvald's inconstancy and how easily he is swayed by social law and opinion. When Torvald realizes that Nora has stepped outside of her socially acceptable role, even though it was in order to save his own life, he says to her, "Miserable creature—what have you done?"

... I shall not allow you to bring up the children; I dare not trust them to you? (62-63 Act 3). Conversely, when the evidence that would provide social proof for Nora's act is destroyed Torvald does an about face and expects Nora to resume her previous role behaving like his doll child. When Nora questions Torvald's rapid change in attitude he explains that "... No man would sacrifice his honor for the one he loves" to which Nora replies, "It is a thing hundreds of thousands of women have

done? (70 Act 3). Once more, the reader sees an example of the destructiveness of the double edged sword of double standards and how it can sever even the most intimate of relationships, those of love and marriage, between men and women.

Both Hardy's and Ibsen's protagonists, Nora and Tess, step outside the socially acceptable cultural norms of female behavior in order to help their families when the male members could not or would not, and they are consequently condemned by social law for their actions. As a result, both protagonists are considered to be of poor moral character from which the children in their families "would probably gain less good by [their] precepts than harm by [their] example[s]" (Hardy 101). Sadly, both of the protagonists have internalized the social laws that have judged and pronounced them morally deficient to the extent that neither of them feel worthy to be near the children they love. Both protagonists contemplate suicide as a final way to protect their loved ones from the scandal that their socially unacceptable behaviors could invoke. It is ultimately the double standard of social law by which men and women are judged that results in the protagonists being separated from their loved ones. Tess is separated from her loved ones by death, and Nora is separated from her loved ones by choice. In the end, Hardy and Ibsen leave all of us, both men and women, with the

memory of a black flag waving in the wind, the echo of a slamming door, and the certainty that something is inherently wrong with the way that Nora and Tess were treated.

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Benevolence and Buccaneers
Pro-Imperialist Ideology and Anti-Imperialist Sentiments
in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*
and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*

Nora E. Traut

Imperialistic attitudes permeate the works of both Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911) and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883). Both works were written during the period of Europe's race for African territory known as the 'Imperial Scramble,' which lasted from 1880 until 1910 (Smith 129). England was already firmly entrenched in colonies throughout the world, especially in India where Hodgson initially places her heroine, Mary. The two texts deal with disparate aspects of imperialism: benevolence and greed. Burnett promulgates the myth of bilateral benevolence while Stevenson exposes the greedy foundation upon which imperialism rests. While Burnett's work seems to justify imperialism by reinforcing the prevalent pro-imperialist ideologies of the time, she actually uses this reasoning to argue for its end. She contends that the best already lies in Britain; therefore, there is no need to seek elsewhere. Stevenson exposes the danger of society's quest for foreign soil by exposing the darker side of human nature it incites.

In *The Secret Garden*, England is presented as so superior to India that even nature favors her over her Asian dependent. Nature is more alive and vibrant in the northern country where growth is possible: "Never, never had Mary dreamed of a sky so blue. In India skies were hot and blazing . . ." (60). This hot country is depicted as an unhealthy place through the description of Mary. She is first portrayed as having "a little thin face and a little thin body, thin light hair and a sour expression. Her hair was yellow, and her face was yellow because she had been born in India . . ." (1). Yellow, a color symbolically associated with illness, portrays Mary's emotional and physical health. She is a spindly, anemic thing that fails to thrive. This description creates an image of a malnourished plant—limp and drooping from neglect, yellow from lack of nourishment. Mary cannot thrive here because she has no connection with England. Her British parents neglect her through their self-centeredness: Her father is too "busy" and her mother cares "only to go to parties and amuse herself with gay people" (1). Mary is so distant from her mother that she, like the Indians, refers to her as "the Mem Sahib" (3). Mary's resultant identification with the Indians underscores her isolation from both family and England.

The shared English identity of Stevenson's characters plays an important role in his work. Early in his story, he presents the British aristocracy as superior to the villainous pirates. There seems to be a great contrast between the two segments of society, and it is easy to admire the good Dr. Livesey in comparison with the drunken and foul Billy Bones. Jim Hawkins notes the marked contrast between the physician and the old "sea-dog" (4): "I remember observing the contrast the neat, bright doctor, with his powder as white as snow, and his bright, black eyes and pleasant manners, made with the coltish country folk, and above all with that filthy, heavy, bleared scarecrow of a pirate of ours, sitting, far gone in rum . . ." (5). Dr. Livesey is established as an aristocratic man. His noble deportment places him above the country people who surround him, and Billy Bones is placed far below them all. He is depicted as the lowest of all Englishmen in direct contrast to Dr. Livesey's nobility.

At the same time Stevenson is establishing the societal differences between the aristocracy and the pirates, an ambivalent view of the buccaneers is illustrated. Billy Bones recounts gloriously frightening episodes of his sea adventures: "Dreadful stories they were; about hanging, and walking the plank . . . and wild deeds and places on the Spanish Main." His

tales involve "some of the wickedest men that God ever allowed upon the sea." Although Jim's father fears "the inn would be ruined," these harrowing narratives actually increase their business: people "rather liked it; it was a fine excitement" Some of the younger men "[pretend] to admire him . . . saying there was the sort of man that made England terrible at sea" (4). There is an attraction to the violence—an admiration for their exploits. When Squire Trelawney speaks of the famous pirate, Flint, he calls him "'the bloodthirstiest buccaneer that sailed.... The Spaniards were so prodigiously afraid of him, that, I tell you, sir, I was sometimes proud he was an Englishman'" (32). The pirates may represent the worst of mankind, but they have brought great notoriety to the strength of the British navy, and nationalistic pride cannot be separated from their horrendous exploits.

This strong navy enables England to have overseas colonies in which many Britons, such as Mary's parents, live. When Mary arrives in England, she is not only an English girl, but, having grown up in India, she is also a foreigner. She creates a link between these two places. Mary uses similar phrases to describe two scenes of desertion: her Indian bungalow and the garden. As she awakens from her sleep in the deserted bungalow, she says, "'How . . . quiet it is,'" and the similar words, "'How

still it is!' " (Burnett 6, 79) are whispered after she passes through the hidden gate. The abandoned garden she discovers in this new territory becomes "a world all her own" and she seems to be "hundreds of miles away from any one . . ." (79-80). This combination of identification with India and the sensation of geographical distance reinforces the impression of its being foreign soil, thus connecting the garden to colonized territories. This fertile land lies fallow until Mary *discovers* it and claims it as her own.

Mary justifies her takeover of the garden by claiming that no one wants it: " 'It isn't anybody's. Nobody wants it, nobody cares for it, nobody ever goes into it Nobody has any right to take it from me when I care about it and they don't. They're letting it die, all shut in by itself'" (102). Like the other *unclaimed* regions of the world, the garden lies neglected; it needs Mary's intervention to bring it to fruition. Explorers from the industrialized nations had often marked the 'gross negligence' of foreign lands they visited. In 1911, Mary Eliza Bakewell Gaunt, an Australian, judged the Liberians harshly when she witnessed conditions in Monrovia that differed considerably from her native land: "Never have I seen such a dreary, neglected town. It would be pitiful anywhere in the world. It is ten times more so here, where one feels that it

marks the failure of a race, that it almost justifies the infamous traffic of our forefathers " (Romero, 101). While one is shocked at Gaunt's implication that Africans are better off enslaved, how much more shocking is it to see a "dreary, neglected" piece of land in England? Burnett is suggesting the English should take care of their responsibilities in the Mother Country instead of concentrating elsewhere.

There is no need to justify the desire for buried treasure. Stevenson is well aware that his reader will understand the attraction; in fact, he leaves out the island's latitude and longitude for this reason. He begins his book with the sentence,

Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen . . . asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted (1)

By implying that there is an island still bearing recoverable treasure, his book begins on a note of verisimilitude and prompts the reader to wonder if it can be found today. Immediately this sparks in the reader the same emotion that lies at the center of his work—the greed that lies buried deep in the hearts of men everywhere. It is avarice that spurs men to hunt far from home for riches that belong to others. This treasure-hunting quest is linked to European imperialism through the

66 · *Calliope*

ship's name, the *Hispaniola*. This was the first colony the Spanish created in their quest for others' wealth. By manning his ship with pirates of all classes, Stevenson casts aspersions on imperialism.

The treasure hunt begins as soon as Billy Bones dies and there is a scramble for his belongings. Jim and his mother claim a share because the dead man owed them money, and the pirates seek their own dubious compensation. Jim and his mother ransack the dead man's body in search of the key to his sea-chest: "I tore open his shirt at the neck, and there, sure enough, hanging to a bit of tarry string, which I cut with his own gully, we found the key. At this triumph we were filled with hope . . ." (21). This piratical act of ransacking a dead man's body brings them into communion with the pirates; they are all searching for the same thing and are not above resorting to plunder.

The English aristocracy joins in the treasure lust. As soon as the squire and Dr. Livesey are sure they possess Flint's treasure map, there is no question about what they will do with it. They will do exactly what the pirates planned to do—hunt for treasure. Victorian England was accustomed to seeking resources in foreign lands; it was considered their right, even their obligation. "Almost all British imperialist ideologies . . .

shared certain assumptions: that Britain was in the vanguard of real 'progress,' that Britons were racially or culturally superior to other peoples, and that they had a 'duty' to assist the advancement of other peoples and a concomitant right to exploit them" (Smith 86-87). Stevenson contends self-interest and exploitation are the primary incentives. The squire excitedly cries, " 'I [will] fit out a ship in Bristol dock, and take you and Hawkins here along, and I'll have that treasure if I search a year' "(Stevenson 32). The motivating factor is constant among men—greed. The squire predicts, "'We'll have . . . money to eat—to roll inn—to play duck and drake with ever after'" (34). It is the lure of money that entices them to leave their home shores and venture overseas.

The one person who is not greedy is Jim's mother. He counsels his mother to " 'take the whole [of Billy Bones' loot] and let's be going . . . ' " (23). In her attempt to be honest and fair, she only takes what she feels competent to calculate as the balance due her: " 'I'll show these rogues that I'm an honest woman. . . . I'll have my dues, and not a farthing over' " (22). Through her effort to be fair, she is short-changed and "deplor[es] the balance of the money" (28). Her honesty is not rewarded; it is punished.

Greed does not come into play in Burnett's work. Both Mary and the garden benefit from her discovery and ministrations, and the garden's prolific blooms correspond with Mary's own blossoming humanity. In a period of imperialistic fervor, this idea of mutual benefit was not foreign. As European countries scrambled to claim 'unclaimed' African land, the Mother Country was assured that both Europe and Africa would profit. The redeeming qualities of England would be bestowed upon the backward, therefore inferior, countries of the 'Dark Continent.' In accordance with popular belief, both the colonized and colonizer benefited from this intervention. The pro-imperialist attitude was that "British expansion was a lawful aspect of human progress, beneficial to all concerned and involving many humanitarian obligations for Britain" (Smith 86). This superior attitude makes itself present in the garden where Mary, the colonizer, brings great benefit to the neglected plants. Her colonization of the garden seems blessed by nature. It begins to thrive under her attention in a way it never could have without this outside intervention. The robin recognizes the benefits of Mary's colonization process: "Now here was this new kind of creature who was not half Ben's size and yet had had the sense to come into his garden and begin at once" (Burnett 82). This garden, like so much 'unclaimed' land in the

world, desperately needs intervention and management by some foreign power. It lies fallow until Mary sets it free. The botanical inhabitants of Mary's secret garden benefit from her imperialistic activities: "they began to cheer up under the dark earth and work tremendously" (90).

In contrast to the benefits of Mary's colonization efforts, the island invaded by the Englishmen suffers. Earlier voyagers to this island have left their mark; in building the stockade, "a fine and lofty grove had been destroyed. Most of the soil had been washed away or buried in drift after the removal of the trees . . . " (Stevenson 100). The new arrivals, rather than bringing great benefit to the land, upset the island's calm. As soon as the men receive word that they are allowed to go onshore they "gave a cheer that started the echo in a far-away hill, and sent the birds once more flying and squalling round the anchorage" (71). The arrival of Europeans brings destruction to the land, and its native tranquility is shattered.

The birds are more receptive to Mary, who is compared to this feathery breed: "Her garden was her nest and she was like a missel thrush" (Burnett 124). She is at home in the English soil and benefits from the Mother Country where she begins to flourish in the pure moor winds: "[W]hen she began to walk quickly or even run along the paths and down the avenue, she

was stirring her slow blood and making herself stronger by fighting with the wind which swept down from the moor" (44). From her native soil she receives the elements essential for growth that are lacking in India. Restoring life to the plants causes her own spiritual life to flourish. She begins to feel the thrill of being alive: "She clasped her hands for pure joy and looked up in the sky and it was so blue and pink and pearly and white and flooded with springtime light that she felt as if she must flute and sing aloud herself and knew that thrushes and robins and skylarks could not possibly help it" (158). Mary, who has long suffered from the absence of this nourishment, responds like the plants themselves when placed in her proper environment.

The effect on her is so strong that she is sure Colin would benefit from the natural goodness in the native soil: "Perhaps if he had a great deal of fresh air and knew Dickon and the robin and saw things growing he might not think so much about dying" (155). There is a redeeming quality about this garden; it has life-giving capabilities. Colin says, " 'Oh, Mary! If I could get into it I think I should live to grow up!' " (184). Colin, a native English child, has been neglected by his countrymen. Neither his father nor the servants provide the nurture he requires. Through their neglect and over-indulgence, he has

been denied the sustenance that naturally abounds in England. The life-giving moors surround him, and yet he withers from lack of proper attention until Mary discovers the neglected garden and presents it to him.

While Mary represents a colonizer, Colin represents the king of England. The land that has been claimed by Mary is gladly handed over to the 'rightful owner,' Colin. When he is brought into the garden, he claims his rights: " 'It is my garden now' " (233), and Mary and Dickon never dispute his claim. Ben Weatherstaff acknowledges him as the rightful owner when he helps him plant a rosebush: " 'Here, lad Set it in the earth thysel' same as th' king does when he goes to a new place' " (235). Now that he is in his rightful place, Colin can flourish, and England's own resources and inhabitants are no longer neglected.

Whereas the children profit and grow along with the plants they nurture, the island's invaders do not improve from their exploits; on the contrary, they become indistinguishable from each other as the gentlemen exhibit piratical behavior. They are linked by a common greediness that motivates them all. Stevenson deals with one of the standard justifications of imperialism by ironically applying it to his characters. Imperialism sought to bring cohesion to diverse segments of

British society. The policy of imperialism seemed the ideal way to link together disparate interests and social groups. . . . A highly emotional imperialist ideology would perhaps overcome seemingly irreconcilable class and interest differences by emphasizing shared images of national greatness (Smith 96).

Stevenson's characters demonstrate this cohesion in a way not intended by the pro-imperialists. His characters are united in images of greatness, but only for themselves. Their unity in purpose drives them into deadly competition with each other as they seek their goal—treasure. Class differences do indeed disintegrate as they begin to behave alike. The squire scoffs at the monetary motive behind the pirates . . . not recognizing himself as one of them: " 'Money! . . . What were these villains after but money? What do they care for but money? For what would they risk their rascal carcasses but money?' " (32). All of the men are after the same thing, and yet the squire feels that somehow he has nothing in common with the buccaneers. Events on the island prove how similar they are.

When the gentlemen commit unprincipled acts, the line between honorable and dishonorable characters becomes hazy. Normally a noble man will follow form at all costs. Flying the British colors and exposing one's location to the enemy is presumably a proud and patriotic (but ridiculous) action, but

deserting a ship is ironically considered logical and necessary by these same conscientious men. Long John Silver refers to himself as "Cap'n Silver" explaining that the men "have chosen [him] cap'n, after [Captain Smollett's] desertion . . ." (104). According to the rules of the sea, since the men never mutinied, the captain deserted his ship. Protocol becomes mixed up by the gentlemen as they begin to pick and choose which rules they will follow.

The gentlemen become involved in battle with little pressure. The captain politely asks, " 'Mr Trelawney, will you please pick me off one of these men, sir?' " (90). Trelawney rises to the occasion: he "was as cool as steel. He looked to the priming of his gun" (91). They are fitted to acts of violence despite their gentility. The lower-class Joyce, on the other hand, is a "doubtful case—a pleasant, polite man for a valet, and to brush one's clothes, but not entirely fitted for a man of war" (92). A gentleman of quality must possess the very characteristics that make a pirate so despicable; he must be capable of committing violence. These noble men soon come to define their role on the island: "our best hope, it was decided, was to kill off the buccaneers . . ." (102). Unable to impose their authority over the pirates, they resort to tactics common among 'men of fortune.' They will kill their

competitors and keep the treasure to themselves.

Treachery is expected when it comes from pirates, but the aristocracy is not above their own underhanded actions. Silver is regarded with deep suspicion because it is expected for a pirate to behave dishonorably and try to deceive his enemy. When he approaches the stockade, the captain warns his followers, " 'Keep indoors, men Ten to one this is a trick' " (104). Captain Smollett tells him, " 'If there's any treachery, it'll be on your side, and the Lord help you' " (105). The nobility should be above such deceptive tactics, but later Dr. Livesey tries to talk Jim into breaking his "word of honour as a young gentleman" (165) and escaping with him. The doctor, fearing for Jim's safety, begs him to " 'Whip over [the fence], and we'll run for it' " (167). The doctor therefore is resorting to the buccaneers' treacherous tactics.

This same good doctor is the one that conveniently forgets his profession when it behooves him. After the initial battle at the stockade, one pirate remains alive but wounded. Contrary to gentlemanly behavior or professional ethics, he takes care of him: "the mutineer, indeed, died under the doctor's knife . . . " (115). Dr. Livesey's action runs counter to the expected behavior of a physician; he takes the life of a defenseless person.

When the gentlemen decide what to do with the remaining buccaneers before leaving the island, they follow the pattern of earlier pirates: "A council was held, and it was decided that we must desert them on the island . . ." (189). Previously, Silver had discussed different possible methods of dealing with the squire and his followers: " 'Put 'em ashore like maroons? That would have been England's way' " (61). The squire and his entourage take this piratical action when they have the upper hand, thus further connecting them with buccaneers.

The English explorers in both works come to no good in their overseas adventures. Mary languishes in India, and Stevenson's gentlemen become pirates. Only when an Englishman reimplants himself in British soil does he become content. Archibald Craven "has travelled far and wide" but can never find peace. He searches in "the most beautiful places in Europe . . ." (Burnett 290), but never finds complete happiness until he returns to the Mother Country. Upon meeting his now healthy son he says, " 'Take me into the garden, my boy' " (303). He has returned to his child and his Mother Country where he belongs; there is no need to search elsewhere when all is contained in the English soil.

While Stevenson speaks sharply against the deleterious effect imperialism has upon man, he leaves us fully aware of our

own share in the corruption. With Silver's escape and residual treasure waiting for discovery, the reader knows he'll have to work fast to make his own claim. The story, therefore, ends where it began. The reader's greed is piqued, and Treasure Island is still inhabited by both man and treasure. There is further adventure and mayhem ahead.

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A Doll's House and *Hedda Gabler*.
Works on the Threshold of the Modernist Age

Irma Waugh

Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879) and *Hedda Gabler* (1890) are watershed works that link the Victorian age to the age of Modernism. Both of these works contain elements of each era and show a transition of thought from one period to the other. The Victorian age is characteristically marked by writing that deals with contemporary social, economic, religious, and intellectual problems and issues. Many writers of this time period were quick to highlight the narrow-mindedness, sexual prudishness, and concern with keeping up appearances that typically mark the societal views of the Victorian age (Abrams 153). While much of the literature of this time pointed out contradictions and deficits of society, writers did not dissect the institutions or culturally accepted ways of life. Women were typically treated as children, and many in the middle classes viewed marriages of convenience as normal. The age of Modernism, on the other hand, sought to expose culturally accepted modes of "social organization" (Abrams 119), such as marriage. Writers of this era showed a purposeful break with some of the widely held traditions of Western culture. The loss of faith in Western culture that started in the late nineteenth

century culminated in complete despair by World War I. In Ibsen's works, modern audiences can see a departure from the Victorian era and the beginnings of this loss of faith in Western civilization's institution of marriage. The female protagonists in *A Doll's House* and *Hedda Gabler* illustrate the changing values of society toward marriage and the changing role of women, especially in their relationships toward the family.

Modern audiences viewing Ibsen's plays may fail to recognize the impact his works had on nineteenth century audiences. Present day theatregoers have been exposed to the darker places of the human psyche to such an extent that little surprises them. One hundred years ago, however, both European and American audiences were astounded at and welcoming of the portrait Ibsen painted of the middle classes:

Ibsen didn't believe in the structure that created middle-class love or friendship. He mocked fidelity in a society that didn't want infidelity to be examined. It was the first time that characters talked about themselves from the inside, revealed themselves. He went right to what he thought had to be done because the continuous middle class goes on and on and deserves to go under. Ibsen laughed at what the middle class considered honorable. He attacked the institution of marriage. He was highly skeptical of standard ideals of family and friendship. He said they were all open to discussion. (Adler 111)

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Ibsen did more than raise the consciousness of viewers; he was a force for change. Not surprisingly, Ibsen's plays received a violent reaction. Many commented that his plays were an "open drain—a toilet" (Adler 111). Yet, others praised his bravery for they felt that the lives of ordinary people needed to be reevaluated. Ibsen was the playwright who held up a mirror to the audience for self-examination and forced them to confront their lives.

These polarized perceptions of Ibsen's work appear to be just what Ibsen wanted. *A Doll's House* and *Hedda Gabler* caused heated discussion and proved to be the playwright's interventions designed to cause self-reflection and change. Viewers were forced to examine the middle class values that they had always accepted without question. These works were a far cry from typical works of the Victorian age that dealt with noble families and worked within the framework of society. Ibsen's works shook the establishment of marriage.

Although earlier works of the Victorian age pointed out flaws in relationships between husband and wife, Ibsen's plays focused on the nature of the marriage bond and the role that husband and wife play: "You must love your father and mother. You must love your husband. You must love your wife. Ibsen says all this is nonsense. You do not have to love your husband

or your mother, and your mother does not have to love you. It is not your own idea; it was handed down. He attacks all institutions that are handed down" (113 Adler). *A Doll's House* begins with Nora appearing to live the life of a cared for and submissive woman. Ibsen shows Nora's gradual transformation culminating in autonomy through the iterations of the word "wonderful." In each act, Nora repeats this word at least three times each. Each time, it represents what Nora believes to be of utmost value at that point in her life (Johnston 318). In Act I, "wonderful" means the good life materially and socially that Nora hopes to lead. Torvald states, "Our hard times are over." Nora replies, "Yes, it is really wonderful" (Ibsen 5). Nora yearns for the material security and social status she intends to gain from her marriage to Torvald. In Act II, what is wonderful to Nora is the very opposite of what wonderful was in the first act. Now, Nora has become a sacrifice on behalf of her husband. She believes that "it is splendid to be waiting for a wonderful thing to happen" (50). She is convinced that her very life will have to be sacrificed for her husband and his reputation. She accepts this as her wifely duty. In Act III, Torvald's cruelty toward Nora is eye opening. Nora now expects more from her life and her marriage. She realizes that Torvald would never have made the sacrifices for her the way that she has always

sacrificed for him. She begins to question the very institution of marriage and begins to consider her own wants and needs: "We have been married now eight years. Does it not occur to you that this is the first time we two, you and I, husband and wife, have had a serious conversation?" (66). Nora wants more from her life than her present role as Torvald's wife will allow. Ibsen, through Nora, tears at the sacred institution of marriage. One critic notes concerning this passage: "[Nora] could be describing the situation of all nineteenth century . . . husbands and wives up to this point" (Johnston 326). Ibsen's work challenged the mental schema audiences had about the roles and purpose of marriage. Unions must now be based on more than a means of livelihood or for support. Nora believes that a transformed view of marriage would be "the most wonderful thing of all" (72). Ibsen challenges audiences to depart from their ingrained views of marriage and commitment. His repetition of the word "wonderful" illustrates his method for bringing "into the audience's consciousness three different levels of the evolving world-concept [of marriage]" (Johnston 320).

Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* further shows the clear progression toward the age of Modernism and a departure from the Victorian age. Hedda's marriage to Jorgen Tesman has been described as a marriage of convenience. Because Hedda has no

means of support, she chooses to marry a man who will be able to maintain her high standard of living (Else Host qtd. in Gates). Gates' explanation of Hedda's marriage to the stable university professor involves Hedda's view of herself. Gates argues that Hedda's self-identity includes her belief that she is "an object of art" (606) to be viewed by others as such. Both of these views complement Hedda's moment of realization in a conversation with Judge Brack during Act II: "I really had danced myself out, Judge. My time was up. (With a slight shudder.) Ugh! No, I don't want to say that, or think it, either" (Ibsen 251). Hedda realizes that her place in society as a helpless, beautiful object is one that she can no longer fight against. The pairing of the pistol and Hedda in her hopeless, melancholy mood prepares the audience for her eventual self-destruction. Hedda starts out as a victim of her culture. Later, instead of merely speaking about the evils of a loveless marriage, she acts and breaks out of this institution. Her final scene shows the progression toward the Modernist era. Hedda's action illustrates a definite departure from an accepted cultural norm. She ends her marriage. She refuses to live as the object of the male gaze. Ibsen's portrayal of this marriage is shocking not only because of the break-up of a marriage and the violent suicide, but because the mover of all this action is a woman. That Ibsen

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chose a female character versus a male character to carry the action further emphasizes his push for changes within the marriage arrangement since women were typically viewed as keepers of the home.

A Doll's House and *Hedda Gabler* truly represent departures from earlier period works in their treatment of the marriage arrangement. Another drastic change showing the link to the Modern age is the way each woman treats her family. Nora and Hedda each do something that is perceived by many as shocking and atypical female behavior. Nora's conviction for change is so strong that she is willing to leave her children and her husband: "I have heard that when a wife deserts her husband's house, as I am doing now, he is legally freed from all obligations toward her. In any case I set you free from all your obligations. You are not to feel yourself bound in the slightest way, any more than I shall. There must be perfect freedom on both sides. See, here is your ring back. Give me mine" (71). Nora leaves a loveless union. While writers of the Victorian age highlighted the flaws in marital relationships, never did a character leave the marriage. More astounding is that Ibsen chose a woman to take this decisive direction. This act represents a major step toward the polemical Modernist Era.

Hedda Gabler takes another, even bolder, step beyond Nora—she commits suicide with an unborn child living within her. The onlookers view the scene in disbelief:

Tesman: (*shrieking to Brack*). Shot herself! Shot herself in the temple! Can you imagine!

Brack: (*in the armchair, prostrated*). But good God! People don't *do* such things! (Ibsen 304)

Hedda takes control of her destiny and is unconcerned about the appearance of her action. Brack's comment suggests that he is holding on to the accepted social arrangements for in his mind "people don't do such things." Hedda's act appears monstrous to many by twenty-first century standards let alone nineteenth century standards. Ibsen's Hedda, a female character, kills herself in a most masculine fashion. She blows herself away with a pistol—no ambiguity in this manner of death. Hedda's suicide represents her attempt to free herself from the artificial society of which she is a part. Ibsen dramatically emphasizes the need for an end to the culturally accepted norms of marriage. Marriage is no longer acceptable as a business negotiation or a means of survival. Ibsen's Hedda shows the extent to which the playwright believes that the nineteenth century middle class needs major change.

Some critics have interpreted Ibsen's works as feminist rhetoric. Even in the nineteenth century, some women found *A Doll's House* and *Hedda Gabler* inspiring (Farfan 59). Yet, these plays appear to be more about self-identity and the establishment of self in the world, apart from gender, than they are cries for feminist ideals. Nora and Hedda both act in ways that are contrary to what their culture would expect. Although audiences in the early twenty-first century would not blink twice at their actions, early viewers were both shocked and appreciative of these plays. Ibsen's works serve as a foundation for discussion about what one expects from self and what one expects from marriage. These are topics relevant to viewers today.

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“It Happened to All of Them:”
Indian Emasculation and Redemption in Silko’s *Ceremony*

Sam See

Gender identity in the post-WWII Native American culture of Silko’s *Ceremony* is determined by the gendered conflicts experienced between Native Americans and whites. Through the use of gendered imagery (i.e., whiteness is strength and masculinity whereas ethnicity is weakness and femininity), Silko depicts an emasculated Indian generation in which both males and females are feminine (weak) in relation to their masculine (strong) white subjugators. While the matriarchal Laguna culture has a history of distinct gender roles, white domination directly preceding and including WWII disrupts Laguna identity by destroying the means by which the natives establish identity and gender roles. That is, by taking their land, leaving them impoverished, exposing them to alcohol, and duping their men into fighting in their war, whites (male) penetrate and disrupt the established Laguna (female) social order, leaving many (including Tayo) psychologically gelded and without a sense of self. Only by reclaiming what the whites have taken – thus reversing their position in the gendered

conflict, now assuming the role of male conqueror – can the Laguna reestablish their previous gender roles and reclaim their identities.

Noted feminist author bell hooks contends that the subjugator/subjugatee relationship shared by the whites and Laguna pervades time as the paradigm through which the white European male establishes social dominance. According to hooks, the white male assumes the role of sexual and/or racial dominator in an allegory of domination that is the foundation of American history and culture: "Race and sex have always been overlapping discourses in the United States . . . Rape as both right and rite of the white male dominating group was a cultural norm . . . and also an apt metaphor for European imperialist colonization of African and North America" (57). Domination in the black slave system provides a clear analogy for the domination experienced by the Laguna and, for that matter, any other racial group subjugated by the white male. hooks's presentation of black slaves' struggle for masculinity (strength) is analogous to that of the Laguna: "Oppressed black men and women have rarely challenged the use of gendered metaphors to describe the impact of racist domination and/or black liberation

struggle. The discourse of black resistance has almost always equated freedom with manhood, the economic and material domination of black men with castration, emasculation . . . Freedom from racial domination was expressed in terms of redeeming black masculinity" (58). Thus, in the allegory of domination, racial minorities are feminized by the masculine white conqueror and can only regain their strength by assuming the masculine role themselves.

As represented by those who retain the long-established Laguna culture (e.g., Grandmother and Josiah), male and female gender roles are clearly delineated in traditional Laguna society. Overtly matriarchal in nature, the Laguna culture is female-centered; indeed, their mythology regards a "Mother" figure as the ultimate creator and redeemer (170), the core of Laguna identity. Above all, females are defined by their domestic roles: they are the heads of the household, as Grandmother is for Tayo's family; the caregivers, as demonstrated by Auntie assuming responsibility for Tayo upon his mother's abandonment (29); and the defenders of the family's reputation, as Auntie tells Tayo she has had to do because of his mother (88). Male responsibilities are similarly lucid: as demonstrated by

Josiah and Robert, the Laguna male provides financially for the family, assuming occupational and social roles while the female controls the home. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the various medicine men called upon to help Tayo, males are the retainers of ancient wisdom and tradition, revered for their spiritual connections and maintenance of the culture.

These roles are dramatically altered by the persistent and growing domination of white culture in the Laguna world. Such dominance takes many forms, though the theme of trickery stains each method with the indelible witchery of the white destroyer. Offered the opportunity to assimilate themselves into white culture, the oppressed Laguna consistently allow themselves to be misled in their vain attempts to regain their strength and, thus, their identities. After all, to be white is, in Silko's gendered imagery, to be male, to be strong. Thus, for the Laguna, to be white is to be whole, to regain their stolen strength. Indeed, as Auntie believes her Christian faith and Rocky's education will serve as a passageway from the defeat of being Laguna to the promise of being white (51, 77), so do most of the Laguna believe the white lie that they, too, can succeed in the white world. Unsurprisingly, these are the very same

Lagunas who are gelded by the larger gendered white/Indian conflict.

Influencing Laguna males to participate in WWII serves as a particularly destructive mode of trickery for the white conqueror. Indeed, Tayo and his peers are led to believe that they will possess "that feeling they belonged to America" (43) by joining the war; in fact, some Laguna even experience moments of such acceptance. For example, Tayo is rendered "visible" only when wearing the war uniform of the white, a profound change from the invisibility of his prior existence (40). However, despite such temporary recovery, this generation of Laguna men is psychologically castrated by the horrors they witness abroad and the disorientation they experience upon their return (16). Enticed by the prospect of becoming visible, of conquering rather than being conquered by the ethnic boundaries that oppress them, the Laguna male enters the war to become masculine, only to emerge even more feminized. Nevertheless, though "it was the white people who gave them that feeling [of belonging] and it was the white people who took it away again when the war was over" (43), Laguna veterans "blamed themselves just like they blamed themselves for losing

the land the white people took" (43). Thus, as the white man emasculates the Laguna by weakening his spirit through the horrors of war, the Laguna emasculates himself with the razors of guilt and shame.

Furthermore, white land theft is particularly problematic for the Laguna male because his gender role of economic provider so depends upon his interaction with the environment. Thus, as whites take the land from the Laguna, so too do they take the Laguna males' masculinity. Such is the case with Josiah's cattle: learned by watching his "traditionally" male Uncle Josiah herd the spotted cattle, Tayo feels obligated by his gender to tend to the animals. However, upon his return from the war, Tayo is emasculated by his loss of the cattle, symbolically his loss of the masculinity that his uncle attempted to bequeath him. Cordoned off by barbed wire and confined to reservations, the Indians themselves become cattle to the whites, yet another form of conquest in which white is male and Laguna is female. For the Laguna male, then, as the land is stolen, so is the foundation of his maleness. As the land is no longer his, neither is his identity. Here, again, the white trickery works dually for the destroyers, as "the people had been taught to despise them-

selves because they were left with barren land and dry rivers” (204), thus further defeating themselves in a battle they’d already lost with the whites.

A generation of Laguna males, then, loses its masculinity to the stronger masculine power of the white presence. So profound is the defeating effect of whites upon the Laguna that even the concept of whiteness oppresses the Laguna male, sending him to molder in feminized weakness. For example, as Tayo is socially excluded because of his mother’s association with a white man (35), so too does the whiteness of the hospital walls render Tayo invisible (123). The image of whiteness is pervasive in the Laguna world and with it comes the conquering presence of the gendered white/Indian conflict. Thus, the Laguna lives the existence of the conquered, the feminized, the defeated: drunken, suicidal, homicidal, and impoverished, the Laguna male cannot function in the conquered Laguna world because the emasculated male cannot be a man

Similar to their male counterparts, many Indian females are thrust into gender roles diametrically opposed to their traditional positions. As represented by Tayo’s mother Laura, the younger generation of Laguna females, those born into a world

of white domination, has never lived a purely Laguna life. Indeed, only Grandmother and the mysterious woman of the hills serve as reminders of the traditional female gender role. Economically and spiritually depressed, Laura and many of her female peers resort to prostitution to survive, sacrificing the honor of their female role to numb themselves with sex and alcohol (112). As with the Indian male, the Laguna female exacerbates and perpetuates her position as weak and feminized by willingly engaging in behavior she believes may eventually redeem (i.e., empower) her. Undoubtedly, by allowing the white man to dominate her sexually, the Laguna female seeks access into the white world, thus escaping her conquered and powerless existence. Ironically, however, this sexual domination is only a physical manifestation of the larger gendered dominion that the white man has over the Laguna; the female has now merely contributed to and perpetuated the process. As hooks relates in her discussion of rape, sexual domination of the female subjugates both the female and her traditional male partner: "Rape – the terrorist act re-enact[s] the drama of conquest, as men of the dominating group sexually violate the bodies of women who are among the dominated. The intent of

this act [rape] was to continually remind dominated men of their loss of power; rape was a gesture of symbolic castration" (57). Additionally, female prostitution exacerbates the Laguna male's emasculation by depriving him of the mother figure so essential to identity in the matriarchal Laguna culture. A generation of males is raised "alone, while [their] mothers sleep with the men – the white men" (111). A generation of males, then, lacks a vital component of its identity.

Economic defeat further compounds Laguna female "feminization." While the Laguna male is economically subjugated by land theft, the Laguna female is conquered by white economic discrimination. For example, Helen Jean is discriminated against as she searches for a job, obtaining the lowest wage and most demeaning work available (162). An Indian woman who attempts to pierce white control by leaving the reservation, Helen Jean finds herself among the ranks of Laura and her peers despite her efforts to recover the strength of her traditional gender role. Indeed, so strong is white resistance to her penetration of its boundaries that Helen, too, ultimately resorts to prostitution to help her family survive (165). As with the other cases of Indian self-defeat, Helen is even reprimanded

by a fellow Indian for her resistance to prostitute herself: "You bitch! You think you're better than a white woman?" (165).

The Indian culture takes such an active role in relegating itself to a feminized, victimized position that it no longer requires whites to conquer it; the people defeat themselves, consequently perpetuating the roles assigned to them by whites.

However, as Tayo demonstrates through his participation in various ceremonies, reversing the positions in the white/Indian conflict can salvage traditional Laguna gender roles. That is, penetration of white boundaries enables the Laguna to become the "males" in the cultural conflict, to assume the very role they have tried to claim in their futile attempts to assimilate into white culture. Indeed, while the Laguna have resorted to self-hatred (i.e., prostitution and alcoholism are used to numb their ethnicity) in an effort to themselves become white, Tayo realizes that only by defeating the white lies and connecting with his past can he reclaim himself and become a male by Laguna standards.

Tayo takes several steps in assuming the role of conqueror, all of which are centered upon reclaiming what the whites have taken. For example, by consummating a relationship with the

mysterious woman in the hills, Tayo reclaims the female counterpart he lost in childhood to the lure of prostitution. Such reclamation provokes Tayo's sense of cultural identity and reminds him of whom he can and will be:

The changes pulled against themselves inside him . . .
The terror of the dreaming he had done on this bed was gone, uprooted from his belly; and the woman had filled the hollow spaces with new dreams . . . The dreams had been terror at loss, at something lost forever; but nothing was lost; all was retained between the sky and the earth, and within himself. He had lost nothing . . . This feeling was their life, vitality locked deep in blood memory, and the people were strong . . . (220)

Furthermore, Tayo's penetration of the white man's barbed wire is both a literal and symbolic transgression of the control imposed upon the Laguna by whites (194). In cutting the wire that fences in Josiah's cattle, Tayo begins the process of cutting away the restrictions imposed upon his identity, his strength, and, thus, his masculinity. Indeed, no longer spiritually confined by the white man's domination, Tayo is now able to see and hear "the world as it always was: no boundaries, only transitions through all distances and time" (246). Tayo is free to define himself by whatever standard he pleases; and, although Silko leaves such a conclusion unmade, Tayo's participation in

the traditional Laguna ceremony suggests that he will assume the traditional Laguna male gender role. Thus, by assuming the role of the male in the conflict between whites and Indians, the Laguna can regain the strength needed to assume their preferred gender roles.

Laguna gender roles, then, experience tremendous metamorphosis in Silko's *Ceremony*. From traditional to gendered through oppression to the choice of the empowered Laguna, Indian gender roles are consistent with the novel's theme of change, best highlighted by Betonie's discussion of ceremonies: "There are balances and harmonies always shifting . . . It is a matter of transitions, you see; the changing, the becoming must be cared for closely" (130). Played out through the dynamics of a gendered white/Indian conflict, change in these gender roles is directly related to the position assumed by the Lagunas and whites in the larger cultural conflict. That is, when whites are the male conquerors, the female, conquered Laguna cannot define themselves; rather, their position in the conflict defines them. However, when the Laguna resist white domination and utilize the strength of the masculine position, they can choose to define themselves as male or female, Laguna or white,

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destroyer or survivor. Indeed, they have challenged the white lie and are therefore free.

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"The Rape of the Lock":
Burlesque, Mock-Heroic, and Satirical Implications

Anthony Jaime

The social affectations and expectations of eighteenth-century England were such that they provided Alexander Pope with enormous amusement through the often ludicrous and farcical posturing of the people surrounding him. Consequently, many of Pope's writings, including "The Rape of the Lock," frequently addressed such societal posturing and in his dedication to Mrs. Arabella Fermor, the real life model of Belinda, he states that his poem "... was intended only to divert a few young ladies, who have good sense and humor enough, to laugh not only at their sex's little unguarded follies but their own" (Pope qtd. in Wall, 50). Thus, Pope makes clear that it was his intention to engender humor within the audience through his treatment of the subject matter. Nonetheless, it can also be seen as an attempt to modify the social attitudes of the day by criticizing those same social institutions through wit and ridicule. Specifically, Pope's expanded and final version of "The Rape of the Lock" can be viewed as a wittily composed and deftly executed satirical look at the workings of English aristocratic society, in which he pays particular attention to the modish fashions and sexual and moral principles of the time.

"The Rape of the Lock," originally a poem that was ostensibly composed as a private but humorous method of settling a dispute between quarreling families, eventually metamorphosed into the much larger and grandiose form of a *mock heroic* poem made available to the public. "The Rape of the Lock" contains characters of heroic stature, a visit to the underworld, a voyage by ship down the Thames, a battle of heroic proportion, divine intervention in the form of the supernatural machinery, and a heavenly resolution. This form falls within the parameters of the literary convention of burlesque, which is defined by M. H. Abrams as "an incongruous imitation" that ". . . imitates the manner (form and style) or else the matter of a serious literary work or genre but makes the imitation amusing by the ridiculous disparity between the manner and the subject matter" (Abrams, 17). Furthermore, burlesque can be either "lower or higher in level and dignity than the subject to which it is incongruously applied" and the varieties of high burlesque include the mock epic or mock heroic poem (Abrams, 17, 18).

Given these precepts, it is then possible to use Joseph Addison's treatise in "The Spectator, No. 267 [On Epic Poems]," by using it as guideline and comparing it with "The Rape of the Lock" to analyze the manner in which Pope so

cleverly constructed his satirical social commentary. According to Addison, "The first thing to be considered in an Epic Poem is the Fable, which is perfect or imperfect, according as the Action which it relates is more or less so" (Addison qtd. in Wall, 247). Inasmuch as a fable is a brief tale that offers a moral lesson, the question can then be posed: What lesson did Pope have in mind when he constructed this mock-heroic poem? Since we know that Pope was concerned with the pretentious social posturing of the aristocracy, it may be assumed that the general lesson is one which attempts to impart more worth to a person's substance and intelligence rather than paying homage to the artificial trappings which one can readily assume or just as easily discard.

The opening lines of the poem, "What dire offense from am'rous causes springs, / What mighty contests rise from trivial things" (I, 1, 2), imply as much and foretell where this poem will lead. We are told from the outset that this poem will be concerned with amorous affairs and trivial things, and thus, the stage is set. Pope uses the quintessential heroic couplet throughout this poem, and we can see within the first two lines that he has already created the distance necessary to separate the frivolous and inconsequential subject matter from the heroic manner. The startling contrast created by the juxtaposition of

dire offence and *am rous causes* and *mighty contests* and *trivial things* creates a sense of immense distance that leads one to ask how could an amorous affair be equated with a *dire offence* or how a *mighty contest* could arise from a *trivial thing*? Adding further strength to this couplet is its a-b parallel construction that contrasts *dire offence* with *am rous causes* in line a of the couplet and *mighty contests* with *trivial things* in line b.

Perhaps an even better indicator of this lesson can be found in the passage, "Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair, / While the fops envy, and the ladies stare! / Honor forbid! at whose unrivaled shrine / Ease, pleasure, virtue, all, our sex resign. / Methinks already I your tears survey, / Already hear the horrid things they say, / Already see you a degraded toast, / And all your honor in a whisper lost!" (IV, 103-110). In this passage, which relates the consequences in the aftermath of the Baron cutting Belinda's hair, Pope is again indicating that appearances are more important than substance. From these two examples, it can therefore be observed how Pope employed irony and satire to create a moral lesson in the fable that Addison claims is necessary to fulfill epic conventions.

Addison further observes that "Unity of Action" must be preserved and that the author of an epic poem "... artfully interweaves in the several succeeding parts of it, an account of

everything which relates to them . . . (Addison, qtd. in Wall).

This Pope skillfully does, and we learn many facets of Belinda's life before her actual conflict over the loss of her lock of hair, which is a central action of this poem. As Addison points out, the action of the *Aeneid* and the *Iliad* was exceedingly short but ". . . so beautifully extended and diversified by the Invention of *Episodes*, and the Machinery of the Gods, with like Poetical Ornaments, that they make up an agreeable Story . . ."

(Addison qtd. in Wall, 250). Correspondingly, the actual action in "Rape of the Lock" is also very short but the addition of three more cantos, the machinery, and the poetical ornamentation of Clarissa's speech serve not only to extend and diversify the poem but also to expatiate upon its moral lesson.

It is through the literary device of supernatural control, known as *the machinery*, that "The Rape of the Lock" achieves much of its cohesiveness, and imparts the epic aspect of divine intervention to this poem. By following the actions of Belinda as she is waking from her slumber but still in a dream state, we are introduced to her *sylph*, "Belinda still her downy pillow pressed, / Her guardian Sylph prolonged the balmy rest" (I, 19, 20). Her guardian sylph is Ariel, a supernatural creature who commands an army of similar creatures that correspond to the ancient gods and deities found in an epic, but are lower in level

and dignity as conforms to the conventions of a mock-heroic poem.

The very next couplet states, "Twas he had summoned to her silent bed / The morning dream that hovered o'er her head" (I, 21-22), which allows the reader to equate Belinda's Ariel-inspired dream with that of a hero in an epic receiving a divine message in a dream. However, as is proper in a mock-heroic poem, the trivial must be emphasized. Therefore, instead of Belinda receiving a message of heavenly importance in her dream she is instead shown "A youth more glitt'ring than a birthnight beau / (That ev'n in slumber caused her cheek to glow)" (I, 23-24). Thus, the cynical implications indicate that for Belinda, the amorous dream of a glittering youth is placed on the same level as the significance attached to a divine revelation, which qualifies her character as trivial and mundane. Even Pope himself, when describing *the machinery* in the dedication, states, "For the ancient Poets are in one respect like many modern Ladies; Let an Action be never so trivial in it self, they always make it appear of utmost importance" (Pope qtd. in Wall, 50). Again, these examples are another manifest illustration of Pope's skill in rendering an account of everything relevant to Belinda that also holds satirical implications for her character.

In his discourse, Addison also lists the qualifications for an epic poem: it needs to first be "one action," second an "entire action", and "the third qualification of an Epic Poem is its *Greatness*" (Addison qtd. in Wall, 249). When examining "The Rape of the Lock" in this context, it can be seen that Pope labored mightily to impart the consequence of greatness to his characters and their deeds. One such example can be found within the following two couplets, "Her files of pins extend their shining rows / Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, and *billet-doux*, / Now awful beauty puts on all its arms / The fair each moment rises in her charms," (I, 137-140). In these two couplets, Belinda is in the act of performing her toilet and dressing, but she is compared to a warrior donning armor and preparing for battle. "Files of pins extend their shining rows" is a clear-cut reference to shining rows of soldiers standing in ranks (files) which by likening her hair pins to soldiers trivializes the nature of this scene. Further undermining is achieved in the next line when the Bible is listed alongside such trivial items as powders, puffs, and love letters (*billet-doux*). Through such description, we can see that Pope has attributed much larger characteristics to these mundane acts and items that in turn lend a sense of greatness to Belinda's character. While comic in nature, it also adds a serious dimension to foreshadowed and

upcoming conflict over the loss of the lock of hair. Once again, however, we can see how this continues to add to the satirical implications of the poem.

Another excellent example of epic qualification is the scene of the actual combat in which Pope was able to imbue the sense of greatness in so trivial a circumstance as the battle over a lock of hair. In this particular scene, Pope makes reference to a deity, "Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air, / Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair; / The doubtful beam long nods from side to side; / at length the wits mount up, the hairs subside" (V, 71-74). By conjuring up a vision of the outcome of this battle being weighed in Jove's scales, Pope has elevated the frivolous fight over a lock of hair to a battle of immense, great, and heroic proportions. This adds to the comic sense of the poem, but it nevertheless contributes to the overall satirical tone of the poem also.

From the discourse by Addison, we can see that he has clearly outlined the necessary elements for the structure of an epic poem. Just as clearly, through careful examination of "The Rape of Lock", we can see that Pope has satisfied the conditions of an epic, as all of the elements are present with the exception that they have been modified to fit the conventions of

a mock heroic poem, which by its very nature must contain elements of the ridiculous and satire.

The conditions of satire are satisfied by manipulation of these elements in such manner as to overemphasize and make ridiculous their inconsequential and trifling attributes in contrast to references contained in actual epic works. During Pope's day, superficial fashion and form held more sway in reality than did the actual worth of people or the substance of interpersonal relationships. Pope was addressing the petty, insignificant, and trifling manner in which the aristocracy pursued their lives, paying particular attention to their love affairs. He did so in this poem by following exactly the guidelines previously stated, and he imitated the form and manner of an epic, but he so distanced the trivial and mundane nature of the subject matter from the lofty ideals of an epic, that the ridiculous comparisons between such elements created a sublime satire and scathing indictment of English upper class society.

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In her novel, *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley incorporates aspects of Burkean sublimity in Victor's experiences to demonstrate how scientists can become hostages, even victims, of their imagination through the seemingly infinite possibilities of science. Although Shelley parallels the reaction and subsequent pain/pleasure that is elicited in Burkean sublimity, she twists Burke's explanation that sublimity results in a perceived object folding back onto, and thus, overwhelming the perceiver's reasoning. Instead, Victor's ability to reason is overwhelmed by his own imagination, which induces sublimity through his scientific creation of the monster. Thus, the monster, as the embodiment of Victor's imagination, and science, which enables him to create it, together enslave Victor through the overwhelming pain/pleasure of sublimity until the completed project restores his power of reasoning.

As Burke predicts, the pain/pleasure of sublimity caused by the obscurity, terror, and power of Victor's scientific creative abilities overwhelms him until his mind is "so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it" (qtd in Sage 33).

Validating Burke's prediction, Victor, engulfed in the sublimity

of his project, exclaims, "I could not tear my thoughts from my employment, loathsome in itself, but which had taken an irresistible hold of my imagination" (489). While "animated by an almost supernatural enthusiasm" (488), which is one manifestation of the sublime, Victor is immersed in his unfinished project, but immediately upon completion the pain/pleasure of sublimity vanishes, leaving only reason and terror behind.

The sublimity that motivated Victor ends the moment he first views the monster because, as Burke notes, the sublime must have obscurity and power coupled with terror to exist. The obscurity and power that shrouded Victor's project vanishes when the object of his imagination is completed. Thus, without sublimity denying him reason, Victor admits, "I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart" (490). Once reason is restored, Victor flees from the monster in complete terror, unable to face his creation. Victor is completely unprepared to master that which he himself created—the manifestation of his imagination. As a result, Victor's life is held hostage in the monster's grip—his unleashed imagination—until he dies its victim. Through Victor's experiences, Shelley asks an important question; though the infinite possibilities of science may unlock

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man's imagination, does man have the reasoning abilities to master the infinite possibilities of his imagination and science?

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Form in Literature and Art:
The Form of Baudelaire's Poem vs. Ribera's Painting

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Form is a crucial element in all types of art. It can contribute to mood, theme, and other important elements of content. Such is the case with two different works of art: a poem by Charles Baudelaire and a

painting by Jusepe Ribera. Though the content of each work is far different from the other, there are many striking similarities found in the form of each. Focusing on the form of the poem and the form of the painting reveals that the two works are actually quite alike, nearly congruent. In fact, excluding content as wholly as possible renders the two works practically identical, with respect to the form of each.

One of the most obvious similarities of form between Baudelaire's "You'd Take the Entire Universe to Bed with You" and Ribera's "Saint Paul the Hermit" is that both works appear dark in nature. Ribera's painting is blatantly dark, as he has used very dark colors to create shadows and an intentional absence of light. Baudelaire's poem is dark as well, in that he uses

language that conveys an emotive darkness. Both works therefore incite a dark mood, through use of formal elements, specifically color and language. The reader of the poem and the viewer of the painting can feel a sense of brooding due to the use of these tools.

In addition, each work presents (initially) an unflattering portrait of one central figure. Ribera uses light, color, and a brutal realism in order to depict the subject of his painting. Baudelaire uses language that creates imagery through both connotative and literal meaning in order to depict his subject as unsavory. What is important here is not the content; rather, what matters is the form of emotive tools (color and language, respectively) each artist uses to present an attitude toward his subject. However, each artist also uses the same tools less obviously to hint at a respect for his subject, thereby altering the mood of his work of art somewhat. Baudelaire sneaks in a few words of praise coupled with his insults, and Ribera mildly asserts a sense of spirituality surrounding the hermit. Upon further exploration, we can see that all of these tools and the ways in which they are used ultimately define the tone of the painting and the tone of the poem.

A third similarity between the two works may seem simplistic, but is quite important as well. Baudelaire's poem is divided

into three stanzas, and Ribera's painting contains three distinct points of interest. Each work, therefore, can be similarly dissected. Baudelaire has three direct declarations for the addressee of his poem, all of which contribute to one complete message. Ribera's painting has three separate interest points as well: a choked-off source of light, the main figure of the painting, and a human skull. The content here is not relevant, but the number of divisions of the painting is relevant to the form.

Another important aspect of the division is the fact that the third stanza, which is the shortest and located at the bottom of the poem, happens to be very revealing with respect to the theme. Baudelaire's theme may at first seem to be an attack upon his subject, but the final stanza reveals a sort of admiration for the subject as well. As it so happens, the same is true of the form of Ribera's painting. The human skull, the least noticeable of the three interest points and also located at the lowest end of the work, is an important clue to the theme of the painting. Until the painting is examined carefully, the artist seems to be portraying the hermit as a lost soul, undeserving of any respect. But Saint Paul's interaction with the skull reveals the artist's respect for the spirituality of the subject, and an admiration for Saint Paul's sacrifice of comfort and materialism for the sake of spiritual awareness.

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Of course, form and content are irrevocably intertwined once the artist creates his or her art. But by ignoring content as much as is possible, an appreciator and examiner of the art can recognize distinct similarities of form between otherwise unique works.

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Internal Structure in Piercy and Baudelaire

Deanna Sanchez

In the genre of poetry, internal structure is very significant in relation to a poem's content, theme, and tone. In analyzing how important internal structure is, we can discuss what would happen if we switched the internal structures of two different poems. The poem by Marge Piercy, "Barbie Doll," tells the story of a girl's life and death. It has a narrative internal structure. The poem, "You'd Take the Entire Universe to Bed with You," by Charles Baudelaire, is a dissertation on the evil ways of a certain woman. It has a discursive internal structure. Both poems have a similar subject, the effect beauty can have on a person's life, but have different content, tone, and theme. The poet's choices of these elements would be distinctly different if each poem had the other's internal structure.

Because a discursive structure involves an argument or treatise on a subject, the theme of "Barbie Doll" would most certainly be argued instead of implied, changing the content of the poem. In place of the short narrative of the girl's sad life, we would probably see specific arguments of how society's blind acceptance of its impossible standard of beauty led to the

girl's suicide. The poem may turn into a lecture against the ills of society. The use of sarcasm in the absurd suggestion that the girl should be happy to be pretty in death emphasizes the tragedy of her death. The impact that the use of dramatic irony has in these last two lines would be lost.

The last two lines also convey the poem's tone, which is one of sadness. If the structure were discursive, the tone might change from sadness to anger. This may also change the theme, which would be directly stated. The theme may become more personal, more about the specific girl than about the world as a whole. The reader would lose the compulsion to make the connections internally and lose the necessity of thinking about the subject and the theme in a universal way.

If the internal structure were switched from discursive to narrative in the poem, "You'd Take the Entire Universe to Bed with You," differences in content, tone, and theme would also result. Charles Baudelaire uses discursive internal structure to express the anger, hate, and grudging admiration the speaker has for the woman he is speaking of. He is arguing with her, telling her directly what he thinks about her. If the poem were narrative, there would be a story, perhaps describing what

occurred between the man and woman to make him feel this way about her. This could open up many avenues the poet does not want opened. We may see a different side of the story, the woman's side of the story. We may see the speaker in a different light and may disagree with his opinion of the woman. He could end up being the antagonist. This could affect the tone also. Instead of anger, we could have pettiness or obsession on the part of the speaker.

The theme, that beauty on the outside may not mean beauty on the inside, may stay the same if we agree with his argument, but may change if we are given the opportunity to disagree. The poet's use of figurative language to describe the woman may also lose its impact if we do not feel the same way about the woman as the speaker does. This poem is dependent on its one-sided discursive structure. The poet only wants us to know how the speaker feels about the woman, not why he feels this way. The speaker's passionate dissertation would definitely be affected if the reader was given the opportunity to disagree with his view.

Though both poems deal with beauty and the effect it has on the subjects' lives, the poems have different themes and tones

that are directly related to their internal structure. The poems would have to change in many other ways if their internal structures were changed. The main difference for both would be the impact that the reader gets as he or she reads the poem. The poet has chosen his or her elements carefully and for a specific purpose.

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