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Guest Editors for the Twenty-Second Annual English Graduate Symposium

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The *Shawangunk Review* is the journal of the English Graduate Program at the State University of New York, New Paltz. The *Review* publishes the proceedings of the annual English Graduate Symposium and literary articles by graduate students as well as poetry and book reviews by students and faculty. The views expressed in the *Shawangunk Review* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Department of English at SUNY New Paltz. Please address correspondence to *Shawangunk Review*, Department of English, SUNY New Paltz, New Paltz, NY 12561.

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From the Editors

Volume XXII of the *Shawangunk Review* features the proceedings of the 2010 English Graduate Symposium, “Reading the Long Nineteenth Century,” which was co-directed by Jacqueline George and Jed Mayer. On behalf of the English Department, we would like to thank Professors George and Mayer for arranging an excellent program, in which six of our MA students presented papers, and the distinguished scholar William R. McKelvy of Washington University in Saint Louis delivered the keynote address, “Reading *Kim* (1901) by *The Light that Failed* (1891).” Professor McKelvy has generously granted us permission to publish the address, and we are deeply appreciative of his contributions to the symposium and to the present volume of the *Review*.

Mary Holland will direct the 2012 Symposium, entitled “Innovations and Traditions in Contemporary Fiction.” Please contact Professor Holland for information about the symposium and watch for her posting of a call for papers.

We are pleased to present in this volume of the *Review* a special section of poems with commentary by the poets on their own work. These “self-interviews,” a feature of major poetry journals, provide an important resource for the understanding of poetry through the eyes of the poet. Included in this section are poets of national and international reputation, rising younger poets, and New Paltz graduate student poets.

We are also pleased to publish five outstanding essays written by graduate students for English courses in the 2010-2011 academic year. The essays and symposium papers offer abundant evidence of the variety and sophistication of work being done in our graduate programs.

The submission deadline for Volume XXIII of the *Review* is December 15, 2011. We welcome poetry, book reviews, and critical essays

concerning any area of literary studies. Please see submission guidelines on page 185. Students writing a thesis (ENG590) are encouraged to submit an abstract and to apply for the Russell S. Cleverley Memorial Fellowship (for information see page 184).

Current and former graduate students are encouraged to provide information regarding academic and professional achievements for the “News and Notes” column (e.g., conference participation, publications, grants, and honors, as well as news regarding progress in PhD programs and reports about teaching and employment activities).

Volume XXII of the *Review* has an elegant new look created by Brittany Harold, senior Art major in the Graphic Design program. The editors thank Ms. Harold for undertaking the project and congratulate her on the results.

Many thanks as always to Jason Taylor for typesetting and production supervision.

I SYMPOSIUM

INTRODUCTION

Reading the Long Nineteenth Century

Jacqueline George and Jed Mayer

The theme for the Twenty-Second Annual English Graduate Symposium emerged out of cramped conditions. The coordinators of this Symposium, like many of their colleagues, have been sharing an office while the University undergoes construction and refurbishing, and these otherwise cramped conditions have fostered a collegial exchange of ideas across our respective disciplines, Romanticism and Victorian studies. Thus, the theme of this Symposium, *Reading the Long Nineteenth Century*, reflects our response to the sometimes cramped conditions of our chosen fields, as we have worked towards a more expansive historical framework from which to address problems and issues that emerge out of the political contexts of the revolutions of the late eighteenth century, and continue well into the early twentieth, until the Great War beginning in 1914. Scholars working within this model have enriched our understanding of the complex relationships between the forces of revolution, capital, and empire, which in many ways define the era.

This more expansive historical framework has fostered new work in a variety of fields, and, for the participants of this Symposium, has enabled us to trace the emergence of certain key cultural trends increasingly regarded as crucial to our understanding of past, present, and future. In particular, many of the papers presented at this Symposium reflect a common concern with the emergence of nonhuman or post-human perspectives in the Long Nineteenth Century, perspectives which, though specific as to the time and place of their emergence and development, may also afford us with a richer understanding of our

current ecological plight and of the ethical status of the other creatures with whom we share our planet. If our period begins with revolution in industry and technology as much as in politics, it might also be said of the former revolution—beginning with the production and marketing of Isaac Watts’s steam engine in 1774, and the application of this new source of power in mills, factories, and transportation—that we have yet to grasp fully the extent of its impact. By looking across disciplinary boundaries, the participants of this Symposium have developed a critical language which can trace the emergence and development of issues that remain hauntingly present to us in the twenty-first century.

One such issue, which has caused particular disquiet among professors of English, is the practice and representation of reading. Our present moment is one in which the technologies of reading are in a radical period of transformation. Hypertext, digitized libraries, e-books, and other forms of electronic textuality are raising new questions about what it means to read. From Sven Birkert’s early (and dire) forecast for the “fate of reading in an electronic age” to computer-assisted literary analysis such as the Poetry Visualization tool developed by Ira Greenberg and Laura Mandell, scholars are concerned with questions of how the rapidly growing number of digitized texts available to us affect ways of reading. Yet as Ann M. Blair’s recent work reminds us, such dramatic shifts in the concepts of *reading* and *reader* are hardly new; indeed, the changes we see in the twenty-first century can be understood as an iteration of a much longer process, including (but not limited to) the cultural and technological transformations felt by Britons during the Long Nineteenth Century.

In his assessment of Romantic notions regarding the publication and consumption of books during the nineteenth century, “when there were suddenly too many books,” Andrew Piper draws connections between social and material aspects of reading in a “new Media reality” (4-5). In this way, Piper builds on William St. Clair’s vast chronicle of Romantic-era book production and circulation, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*. St. Clair’s text, which includes nearly 300 pages of data regarding print runs, books costs, periodicals, and other evidence, serves as a tangible manifestation of the “explosion of reading” in Europe and North America during this time (103). The size and shape of this explosion, we would argue, demands the kind of expansive analytical framework that a Long Nineteenth Century provides, not simply to draw connections between our moment and the past, but to begin to

draw connections between (and, eventually, make sense of) the sheer volume of texts available to us for study.

In the spirit of this more capacious understanding of reading technologies and practices, the papers by the presenters in our first panel are both products of and reflections upon the act of reading the Long Nineteenth Century. Each essay demonstrates an attention to interactions and connections between texts, as well as the ways in which the act of writing can, in itself, be interpreted as an extension of reading. Heather Ozgercin's essay, "From the Natural to the Produced: The Origin of the Victorian Species," utilizes the concept of sociological paradigms in order to examine the relationship between Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode" and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Ozgercin argues that these works, which are often disconnected according to formal, thematic, as well as literary-historical criteria, in fact can be read as existing along a continuum of shared and evolved ideas. By expanding the boundaries of literary criticism to incorporate social phenomena such as paradigm shifts, catalysts, and manipulations of discourse, Ozgercin demonstrates the value of a more capacious analytical framework. Her formulation of a Romantic-Victorian continuum creates a space within which readers might forge new connections between texts.

Working within a similarly holistic conception of literary history, the essays by Erin Rodino and Lee Conell perform close readings of two nineteenth-century texts that re-imagine their literary antecedents. In "Madeline's Moment of Transcendence in 'The Eve of St. Agnes,'" Rodino examines the ways in which John Keats reflects upon and revises the genre of the medieval romance in order to articulate a markedly Romantic conception of romantic love. Tracing the ways in which Keats blends the temporal and spiritual worlds, or sensory experience with the divine, Rodino argues for a sympathetic reading of the poem's protagonists, Madeline and Prophyro. This interplay between form and content is also essential in Conell's "Browning's Bauble-World: Representation in 'Caliban Upon Setebos.'" In this essay, Conell argues for a reading of Robert Browning's poem that emphasizes its intertextual relationship with Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Browning exploits intertextuality, Conell suggests, not only to articulate his version of the Caliban figure but also to comment on the act of representation and creation itself. Thus Conell's own intertextual analysis reveals new knowledge at the levels of narrative and production, which are at play

in nineteenth-century modes of reading.

The Long Nineteenth Century has played an important role in the emergence of animal studies, a critical perspective which has had a tremendous impact on the humanities, decentering the very notion of what it means to be human by paying closer attention to animals and our attitudes towards them. In addressing the role of “speciesism” in cultural practices and representations of animals, those working in the field of animal studies have addressed the notion of “animal difference,” in part because this is, as Cary Wolfe argues, “the most different difference, and therefore the most instructive” for understanding how and why certain groups are subject to marginalization (67). Some of the earliest work in this field, including John Berger’s “Why Look at Animals,” and Harriet Ritvo’s *The Animal Estate*, established the nineteenth century as a pivotal era in the history of the animal, and the dialogues that emerged at this Symposium demonstrated that this period continues to offer fresh perspectives on the place of animals in human cultures.

As the papers by the presenters in our second panel show, the nineteenth century is significant as a transitional period in our relationship to animals, witnessing the emergence of animal welfare and animal rights movements, but also of industrialized farming practices and the institutionalization of animal experimentation. Thomas Doran’s essay, “Unlearning ‘The Sand Martin’: John Clare’s Poetics of Irrecoverable Ambiguity,” addresses the coalescence and divergence of scientific and poetic discourses in the first half of the nineteenth century through a richly nuanced close reading of the so-called “peasant poet,” John Clare. This traditionally marginalized poet might be heard as a lone voice, calling for a reconsideration of the limits of reading the Long Nineteenth Century through the artificially divided perspectives of Romanticism and Victorianism, as he merges the poetic tropes associated with Romantic representations of the nonhuman with the language of early Victorian natural history. Doran’s subtle account of the poet’s approach to animals pursues its subject into the fields and forests of his native Northamptonshire landscape and finds a poetic response divided against itself. Clare struggles between his almost instinctual desire to identify with other marginalized creatures in a period of agriculture enclosure and a skeptical awareness that such identifications might be merely a projection of his own human attitudes onto the nonhuman. The chief virtue and originality of Doran’s complex approach to this

conflict is in his willingness to find poetic as well as moral virtues in Clare's ambiguity, to respect the poet's unresolved relationship to animals as ethically honest and aesthetically illuminating.

The papers by Monica Ayres and Jennifer Gutman expand upon the tensions between literary and scientific perspectives on animals by considering the impact of the later-nineteenth-century vivisection debates on gothic literature. In "The Sanity of Science: Renfield and Vivisection," Monica Ayres considers one of the more famous works of this genre, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, as haunted by contemporary anxieties regarding the increasingly permeable border between human and animal in this period. In the figure of Renfield, Ayres finds a hybrid creature as complex as the novel's title character. He also raises important questions regarding the moral status of animals in an era when scientific advancement increasingly depended upon the suffering of animals in physiological laboratories. Performing demented experiments upon animals in his asylum cell, Renfield himself is also experimented upon by his keeper, Doctor Seward, and Ayres regards this disturbing mirror effect as reflective of a time in which Darwin's theories revolutionized the ways in which we regard the human-animal divide. H. G. Wells's late-Victorian gothic novel is similarly influenced by Darwin and the vivisection debates, yet as Jennifer Gutman argues in "The Duality of Language and the Ambiguity of Species in *The Island of Doctor Moreau*," the very medium through which the novel is written is fatally undermined as a means of distinguishing human and animal by the linguistic primitivism which the narrative itself evokes. Gutman offers a critical perspective one might term "evolutionary post-structuralism," as she traces the de-evolution of language into animal cries and moans, while the animal experiments of Doctor Moreau run amok. The outstanding and original work of these panelists is a testament to the value of merging animal studies approaches with a more expansive understanding of cultural trends running straight through the nineteenth century.

Many of the Symposium's central themes were echoed and amplified in the Keynote Address given by our guest, William McKelvy. Could the scattered pieces of notepaper on which Prof. McKelvy composed eloquent responses to both panels be found, the introduction to this issue of *Shawangunk Review* would be superfluous. The coordinators and presenters of this Symposium were delighted to discover the panels' richest ideas linked together and woven into a rich tapestry

of ideas by our Keynote Speaker in his commentaries following the presentations. We can't thank Prof. McKelvy enough for his enthusiastic and enlightening responses to the outstanding work done by our graduate students. Like much of McKelvy's recent work, the Keynote Address concerns the role of print culture in the Long Nineteenth Century. If John Clare marks the hazy division between Romantic and Victorian periods, certainly McKelvy's subject, Rudyard Kipling, calls into question the separation of the literature of the *fin de siècle* and modernism. Though his address begins with a discussion of Kipling's best-known novel, *Kim*, its main subject is a lesser-known work, the author's first novel, *The Light that Failed*, published in 1891 (and currently out of print). McKelvy argues for the timeliness of a work that portrays "a new ability to experience modernity's global dimensions" and "pictures a new world order that was brought into existence by revolutions in communications and transport that had created a global mass media." In discussing the novel's depiction of a pictorial journalist covering foreign military campaigns, McKelvy engaged the interest of Symposium attendants from a wide range of fields and periods with his vivid evocation of the global information economy of the late nineteenth century. Although the world he evokes is linked together by undersea telegraphic cable lines rather than coaxial cables and satellite, the discussion and debate following the Keynote Address enabled all participants to end the day with a richer sense of the Long Nineteenth Century and its cultural and technological aftereffects.

Together, the panelists' essays and McKelvy's Keynote Address demonstrate the potential of a critical practice that privileges acts of connection, expansion, and production. Their analyses of particular texts and moments of the Long Nineteenth Century can serve as examples to any reader who might question the limitations of traditional literary-historical boundaries. Moreover, these works confirm the English Department's ongoing commitment to intellectual exchange between and among its faculty and students, both within and without cramped conditions.

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II KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Reading *Kim* (1901) by *The Light that Failed* (1891)

William R. McKelvy

In October of 1901 Henry James wrote to Rudyard Kipling about his recently published novel *Kim*. “I overflow, I beg you to believe, with *Kim*,” James enthuses,

and I rejoice in such a saturation. . . . I’ve surrendered luxuriously to your genius . . . the beauty, the quantity, the prodigality, the Ganges-flood, leave me simply gaping as your procession passes. . . . The way you make the general picture live and sound . . . makes me want to say to you: “Come, all else is folly—sell all you have and give to the poor!” By which I mean chuck public affairs . . . and stick to your canvas and your paint-box. . . . *there* is the only truth. The rest is base humbug. Ask the Lama. (210-11)

About six years later, and shortly after Kipling had been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, E. M. Forster gave a lecture entitled “Kipling’s Poems” in which the poetry is repeatedly found wanting. Kipling’s *Kim*, however, Forster calls “the greatest of all of his books.” It is credited with giving expression to the “real India,” one “that has its capital not at Simla, nor at any city built by men, the India of Buddha and of Brahma that desires not government appointments but unity with the divine.” Forster continues, explaining his view that *Kim* had been invested with a genuine “mysticism” that was a crucial source for Kipling’s art at its best: “There is no explanation of the gift of mysticism . . . it pays no honour to rank, character or avocation; only one thing is certain; it is the peculiar gift of India, and India has given it to Kipling, as he gave it to his boy hero, Kim” (21).

For James, the novel is a sumptuous spectacle given life by a master artist not to be distracted from his canvas and his paint-box. Like the unwavering Lama on his spiritual quest, James implies, the

artist must be immersed in the creative act itself in order to produce enduring and redeeming art. For Forster, the novel is simultaneously visionary and humane, particularly at its end. There the Lama's soul, freed from the prison house of the body, "is united to the World Soul, and beholds all India at once, from the Himalayas to Ceylon," but he then returns from this threshold of nirvana "in order that Kim also may attain salvation." This mystic act of fellowship, bestowed in *Kim* across complicated ethnic, sectarian, and political lines, is, according to Forster, the real India's gift to Kipling. Writing of the final scene's "supreme beauty" (22), Forster finds in *Kim* a moving exception to the dominant authoritarian ethos he sees in Kipling's other prose works and much of his verse.

Both James and Forster describe *Kim* as an unusually successful work of art, and much of this approbation rests on an ability to appreciate the book as a portrait of an idealized artist, the aforementioned Lama, a Tibetan abbot who adopts the orphaned Kim as his disciple on his quest for enlightenment. As the narrative approaches its conclusion, a crisis in this quest occurs when the artist-priest is insulted: a Russian intelligence officer tries to buy the Lama's hand-crafted cosmic map, The Wheel of Life, and when he proves unwilling to part with his picture at any price, he is sacrilegiously struck by the Russian and the image of The Wheel is "brutally disfigured" (218). In the ensuing chaos, Kim, by then also a British secret agent, is able to steal a trove of intelligence that the Russian and a French collaborator have been gathering for eight months.

With the violent disruption of the Lama's quest and the destruction of his Wheel leading to an important success for British imperial interests, some critics have suggested that the intriguing cultural hybridities on display in *Kim* are merely the elements of a more efficient, frequently covert exercise of imperial power. "What *Kim* figures more clearly than any other Victorian text," Richard Thomas writes, "is a world in which colonization through ethnocide, deportation, and slavery (the operations of a modern and premodern world) has begun to give way to colonization through the mediated instrumentality of information (the operations of a postmodern world)" (23); "social knowledge has become coextensive with military intelligence" (30).

Not quite so for James and Forster, though, writing at the start of the last century and well aware of contemporary critiques of imperialism. Both James and Forster in praising Kipling's novel attribute to

it a striking visual agency that is at the service of the true, the beautiful, or the real. This kind of enthusiasm has even carried forward, I would argue, in a modified strain of more contemporary criticism that is disposed to see in *Kim* a complicated depiction of the realities and fantasies of Western imperialism, an intermittently realistic portrait of contact between colonizer and colonized as well as a palimpsestic prophecy of de-colonization. Kipling is a believer in the project of British imperialism, so this line of criticism goes, but is not at all times an orthodox adherent, for he does not primarily justify it, at least not in *Kim*, with a consistent appeal to an ideology of racial superiority. Rather, with something like historical fidelity, he depicts, as Zohreh Sullivan puts it, “the contradictory politics of everyday life in British India” (1). For Edward Said, Kipling “rendered India with such skill” that the novel ultimately bears witness, in admittedly limited ways, against Kipling’s faith in the righteousness and durability of Britain’s role there (xxi). This is the case for Said because Kipling did not simply impose his vision on India and produce exotic spectacles for the entertainment of Western readers. He also portrayed an evolving cultural landscape that showed signs of being indifferent or hostile to the notion of needing authority imposed from abroad.

Critics ranging from Sullivan and Said, of course, don’t precisely mimic either James or Forster in their praise for *Kim*. But Sullivan, Said, James, Forster, and Kipling himself in *Kim* all share an exalted faith in the mission of literary realism. The various truths that critics see being depicted in *Kim* are revelations of the power of a liberal literary epistemology with some confidence that the kind of knowledge on display in and circulated by *Kim* is not always an instrument for the imposition of unilateral power but also a potential vehicle for sympathy, a means to acknowledge or confront otherness and diversity, and a way for contradictory political and historical logics to see the light of day. For a hypothetical optimist in today’s literary academy, someone able to believe that our departments can serve a better purpose than housing the defensive guardians of this or that professional discourse, it is even conceivable that *Kim* appears so frequently on our reading lists because it productively speaks to the realities and burdens of global citizenship.

While *Kim* is in print with various levels of annotation from at least five publishers catering to academic audiences (Longman 2011, Broadview 2005, Norton 2002, Oxford 1987, Penguin 1987), Kipling’s

first novel, *The Light that Failed*, published in 1891, remains out of print in anything resembling a scholarly edition. Tonight I want to speak in more detail about the earlier work and ask why it attracts so little commentary and so few readers. *The Light that Failed* has not been adapted into our habitual pedagogical practices in part, I will argue, because it has so little faith in the comforting thoughts outlined above. Where *Kim* does plausibly express and convey confidence about aesthetic vision and the possibilities for worldly enlightenment and insight as mediated by the novel itself, *The Light that Failed* depicts a new visual and verbal abundance that is paradoxically associated with ignorance and blindness. Where *Kim* is an attempt to embody a new iconic syncretism born of multi-cultural exchange, *The Light that Failed*, which also has an itinerant artist at its center, is an iconoclastic tribute to the shallowness of mass produced imagery that circulates in defiance of recent restrictions imposed by time and space. An innovative *Künstlerroman* that recorded a new ability to experience modernity's global dimensions, *The Light that Failed* pictures a new world order that was brought into existence by revolutions in communications and transport that had created a global mass media for Europeans and Americans in general and for the British in particular. In *How to Read World Literature* (2009), David Damrosch has called Kipling "the first global writer in a modern sense" (105), and Damrosch goes on to describe authors such as Walcott and Rushdie as Kipling's heirs in terms of literary practice. While Damrosch charts the creative habits that define his version of global writing, I want to spell out the conditions that created the global public of the late nineteenth century and show how *The Light that Failed* was an early portrait, from a surprising political perspective, of what the anti-imperial writer J. A. Hobson called *The Psychology of Jingoism* (1901).

By making his first novel's hero a pictorial journalist—a "special artist" best known for the intrepid coverage of military campaigns conducted far from home—Kipling created an opportunity to launch a broader critique of fin de siècle aestheticism. Juxtaposing loquacious, ornamental metropolitans with soldiers and war correspondents who speak in laconic codes that register contact with reality, *The Light that Failed* elaborates a contrast made in Kipling's poem "In Partibus," in which the speaker describes his encounters in London "with long-haired things / In velvet collar-rolls, / Who talk about the Aims of Art." Consorting with these "men of sorts" (as they are called in *The Light*

that Failed [40]) makes the speaker long

. . . to meet an Army man,
Set up, and trimmed and taut,
Who does not spout hashed libraries
Or think the next man's thought.

Sent to India for publication in 1889, the poem ends with a plea to Anglo-Indian readers to send a particular kind of "news":

Hear now, a voice across the seas
To kin beyond my ken,
If ye have ever filled an hour
With stories from my pen,
For pity's sake send some one here
To bring me news of men! (195-96)

The Light that Failed provides an extended representation of a society dependent on "news of men" that has travelled "across the seas." And it does so in a way that suggests that manly news is a potential tonic for metropolitan readers. But the novel also registers a contradictory sentiment that the scale and scope of the age's market for news—and particularly its illustrated organs—has accustomed the British public to a vicarious, mediated experience of imperial responsibilities. The news at times, particularly for those involved in the production of it, is a welcome alternative to purportedly debased literary rhetoric, but the unprecedented demand for news also raised concerns that the nation's consumption of mass media had degenerated into the endless pursuit of the moment's sensation. Structurally resembling the artificiality and linguistic excess associated with the aesthetes, this more widespread phenomenon of vicarious sensationalism is the novel's more important subject matter, not its unoriginal charge that a prevailing discourse of aestheticism was (pejoratively) effeminate.

* * *

In October of 1889, Kipling had arrived in London just shy of his twenty-fourth birthday, and the press was soon expressing an eagerness to see if the prodigy known for his stories and poems about life in India could find similar success as a novelist living and working in England. The resulting work headlined the January 1891 issue of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* to be followed in March by a slightly longer version published in a single volume. Like *Kim*, *The Light that Failed* tells

the story of an orphaned boy on the brink of sexual maturity. At the novel's start, Dick Heldar and a fellow foundling Maisie are entertaining themselves by shooting a cheap Belgian revolver into the sea. This foregrounding of modern mechanized violence and global markets is accompanied by the initiation of romantic and vocational plots. Young Dick vows that he will become an artist of fame and fortune and that he will make Maisie his wife. When we next encounter Dick ten years later, he is on the verge of making good on the first vow. Having passed through the urban, studio-based study of drawing and painting, he is in Egypt on the latest stop of a journey that allows him to perfect his technique as he depicts the peoples, landscapes, climates, and conflicts that are presented to a man moving around the world in the heyday of European colonization. Enlisted by Gilbert Torpenhow, a veteran correspondent, to become a special artist, Dick portrays and participates in fighting in Egypt and the Sudan during the Nile Expedition of 1884 to rescue General Gordon. Heldar's sketches create a stir in London where they are initially reproduced in an illustrated weekly modeled on such real-life periodicals as the *Illustrated London News* (1842-) and the *Graphic* (1869-). Recalled to London, Dick achieves fame there as his sketches from the field are exhibited alongside paintings based on them. In addition to exhibiting and selling paintings of military subjects, Heldar makes money through the reproduction of his work in magazines and the separate sale of prints produced in a variety of ways. Though he has established a reputation for graphic realism, he is soon pressured by financial incentives to translate his original sketches and water colors into more cosmetically satisfying images that compromise his artistic integrity.

Heldar then encounters Maisie, after their ten-year separation, and learns that she is focused on becoming herself an artist. A veteran of colonial campaigns to suppress armed revolts against foreign control, Heldar is now brought low in the midst of London by his inability to deal with the domestic struggle for independence represented by Maisie's professional ambitions and her utter lack of interest in marriage. Only after Heldar goes blind as a result of an earlier head injury in the field does Maisie take pity on him and agree to marry him. But Kipling withholds evidence that this union, like the similar one at the end of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), will be satisfying or biologically productive. And in the longer version of the novel, Maisie will balk at her commission to become the wedded caregiver of Heldar. In

both versions of the text, Helder completes his definitive masterpiece in London on the eve of his total blindness. But it is destroyed, turned into “a formless, scarred muddle of colours” (135) by a vindictive working class girl, Bessie Broke, a few minutes after it has been pronounced finished. In the shorter version of the novel, knowledge of the destruction of the painting is withheld from Helder by Maisie. In the longer version, Helder’s blind attachment to the disfigured painting only helps to drive a disgusted Maisie away from a scene she finds grotesquely comic. When Helder learns the true fate of his masterpiece, he decides to return to Sudan—despite his blindness—and rejoin the brotherhood of war correspondents in the field where his life is brought to a speedy end with a bullet to the head.

The final emphasis on failure (in both versions of the novel) amounts to a bitter declaration by Kipling that traditional English domesticity is fatally compromised by the commercialization of all dimensions of modern life. This pessimism or cynicism has been traced to a series of traumas and disappointments suffered by Kipling even as he became an international literary celebrity in his mid-twenties. Without denying these strong autobiographical elements, I want to explain how we might also understand the novel’s darkness in terms of a social realism that has gone unrecognized, one that reported in detail about human and mechanical networks that had created a new mass readership accustomed to a steady stream of verbal and visual accounts of events from across the globe in the 1870s and after.

Following Chapter 1 with its depiction of Dick and Maisie becoming romantically entangled during their sea-side bout of pistol play, Kipling opens Chapter 2 on the banks of the Nile with a crisp dialogue between Dick and Torpenhow just prior to the novel’s central battle scene in the Soudan. “I’m not angry with the British public,” Dick begins:

... but I wish we had a few thousand of them scattered among these rocks. They wouldn’t be in such a hurry to get at their morning papers then. Can’t you imagine the regulation householder—*Lover of Justice*, *Constant Reader*, *Paterfamilias*, and all that lot—frizzling on hot gravel?
(17)

The ideal of a judicious, well-informed readership seeking to make well-ordered domesticity a model for politics and public life is noted here. But Kipling’s subject is a different kind of reality: a news industry that served (and profited by) a mass readership that is emotionally

satisfied by the cyclical sufferings and triumphs of soldiers and correspondents—and their adversaries:

With the soldiers sweated and toiled the correspondents of the newspapers, and they were almost as ignorant as their companions. But it was above all things necessary that England at breakfast should be amused and thrilled and interested, whether Gordon lived or died, or half the British army went to pieces in the sands. The Soudan campaign was a picturesque one, and lent itself to vivid word-painting. Now and again a 'Special' managed to get slain,—which was not altogether a disadvantage to the paper that employed him,—and more often the hand-to-hand nature of the fighting allowed of miraculous escapes which were worth telegraphing home at eighteenpence the word. (19)

Here the informative, educational function of the press, a key resource in the mainstream formulation of a liberal polity, has been pushed aside by an alternative vision of a press that “amused and thrilled” its audience. Working for a syndicate that “supplied the masses,” Helder and Torpenhow produce a particular kind of journalism that was partially predetermined by the predictable experiences their audience sought: “all it [the Syndicate] demanded was picturesqueness and abundance of detail; for there is more joy in England over a soldier who insubordinately steps out of square to rescue a comrade than over twenty generals slaving even to baldness at the gross details of transport and commissariat” (20). Pronounced “bloodthirsty” by Helder, this reading public is also liable to seek out sentimental anecdote over information about tactics, supplies, and strategic goals. The immediacy of this reporting—its investment in “the hand-to-hand”—is not, however, allowed the privilege of an alliance with a sense of journalistic realism. Rather, the details of this popular mode of representation are things to be consumed in lieu of more general truths to be arrived at by something approaching intellectual or critical labor. Despite all of the circulation of information, soldiers, correspondents, and readers remain at some level “ignorant.” With the special artist identified as a vehicle for satisfying a barbaric or decadent desire to witness violence as kind of entertainment in the comfort and safety of one’s home, *The Light that Failed* portrays a modern world in which savagery is a universal trait shared by the colonized, the colonizer, and the distant spectators of their frequently violent contact.

In May of 1890, as Kipling was still composing *The Light that Failed*, the novelist and journalist Grant Allen sought to explain on the

pages of the middlebrow weekly *The Speaker* what he took to be the dramatic rise in the portrayal of graphic violence in the popular fiction of the day. According to Allen, the “novelist nowadays is expected to go into business as a wholesale dealer in human gore,” and this new “taste of the people” was not limited to fiction. Allen contended:

we have learned to gloat on blood, instead of shrinking appalled from it. Our theater, our art, our literature, our politics, each bears witness alike to the backward movement. The gladiatorial spirit is abroad among our people once more.

Allen linked this trend to a general rise of modern European militarism, but he also claimed that the new British culture of graphic violence was “more largely due to the existing epoch of Little Wars, and especially . . . to the Conquest of Africa.” Since the end of the Napoleonic wars Britons had mostly experienced combat as a confrontation with peoples understood to be barbaric or only semi-civilized, and “one can’t deal much with barbarians,” as Allen would put, “and not become to a certain extent barbarized.” Comparing the media’s representation of the Crimean war to the extended conflict featured in *The Light that Failed*, Allen insists that “thirty years ago people would have judged the current pictures of the Soudanese warfare as indecent.” British soldiers had of course a long history of facing non-Europeans, but those encounters were now experienced virtually by the nation at large thanks to what Allen described as “the cosmopolitanisation of the globe, the annihilation of space and sea and distance in the nineteenth century by steam and electricity”:

The telegraph and the railway have put us in close connection with the Nile and the Niger. When a Little War breaks out in Afghanistan or Zulu-land, we know all about its veriest skirmish in London as soon as men know in Calcutta or Cape Town. The Special Correspondent, the Special Artist, the Special Commissioner, run up and down the world . . . by special train, and send us particulars by special wire, which tells us as much as if we were on the spot to see and hear it. Graphic detail becomes cheap as dirt. Blood is spattered through whole columns of our newspapers.

Writers in the 1890s were the heirs, of course, of long established debates concerning the promise and perils of newly abundant print media and an expansion of readers. But in the wake of the Third Reform Bill of 1884 and the consolidation of industrial modes of production that

made print media—much of it increasingly illustrated—affordable to all but the truly destitute, this commentary was invested with a new urgency, one based on the sense that the mass consumption of print was constitutive of the new era's mass politics. While the 1850s and 60s had witnessed the construction of reliable telegraphic communication between Britain and North America and major European population centers, the 1870s and the next two decades featured the world-wide expansion of undersea cables linking all of the non-polar continents. This system of telegraphic communication was a stimulant for and fueled by further breakthroughs in physical transportation that included the completion of the transcontinental railway in the United States and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. With railways and increasingly large, speedy, and efficient steam-powered ships allowing for the regularly timed transportation of peoples and goods, the telegraphic network was a costly shadow system that monitored and managed the circuits of physical transport. Average citizens took advantage of relatively affordable postal communications while they also became daily readers of telegraphs in a highly mediated fashion: mass circulating newspapers functioned as mechanisms for the physical multiplication of telegraphic texts that had been sent at a great cost. The mass consumption of those telegrams allowed publishers to invest in the machinery and correspondents that produced and reproduced the telegraphic news that emotionally and physically linked reading publics across the globe.

In 1901—ten years after the publication of *The Light that Failed* and the same year that saw *Kim*'s triumphant appearance—J. A. Hobson's *The Psychology of Jingoism* would fully theorize this convergence of media history and this history of empire. For Hobson, the New Imperialism of the nineteenth century was different from that of past times in that it required the support of national publics even as its financial rewards were enjoyed by a relatively small number of capitalists and syndicated commercial interests with highly flexible affiliations to nation-states. The rise of the modern reading nation and global mediation make this possible in Hobson's view. "Only in recent times, and even now over but a small part of the world," he writes, "has the great mass of the individuals of any nation been placed in such quick touch with great political events that their opinions, their passion, and their will, have played an appreciable part in originating strife, or in determining by sanction or by criticism any important turn in the political conduct

of a war” (I-2). The “nature of present-day Jingoism, as distinguished from the national war-spirit in earlier times,” Hobson argues, depends on “new industrial and social conditions”:

Foremost among these is the rapid and multifarious intercommunication of ideas rendered possible by modern methods of transport. The mechanical facilities for cheap, quick carriage of persons, goods, and news, signify that each average man or woman of to-day is habitually susceptible to the direct influence of a thousand times as many other persons as were their ancestors before the age of steam and electricity. (6)

“Imperialism,” as Hobson puts it in his famous study of that name,

is only beginning to realize its full resources, and to develop into a fine art the management of nations: the broad bestowal of a franchise, wielded by a people whose education has reached the stage of an uncritical ability to read printed matter, favours immensely the designs of keen business politicians, who, by controlling the press, the schools, and where necessary the churches, impose Imperialism upon the masses under the attractive guise of sensational patriotism. (382)

Here “business politicians” manage nations in a larger endeavor which, Hobson strives to show, is almost always against national interests. And this distinction between the geographically centered state and the deterritorialized realms of business is at the heart of the different tones of *Kim* and *The Light that Failed*. Where *Kim* depicts a particular imperial state—the British Raj—in which devoted servants manage the cultural diversity of a carefully mapped territory, *The Light that Failed* implies that the state officially governed in and from London has a ceremonial role in a larger drama of post-national global commerce. One must admire the honesty that prevented Kipling in 1890 from seeing London as the center of a political system that mediated national interests and imperial business. Rather, to the young Kipling newly arrived from his (technically) native India, London appeared to be a central marketplace for a popular, public brand of military intelligence—news of men from across the seas—that had become coextensive with a global system of economic speculation that was much larger than any nation-state, larger than the British Empire itself.

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III SYMPOSIUM PAPERS

From the Natural to the Produced: The Origin of the Victorian Species

Heather Ozgercin

The Romantic period of British literature showcases one of the most complex groupings of varied literary practices and sentiments in history. This grouping has undergone countless debates regarding both its legitimacy and pedagogical significance. Though much attention has been paid to the segregation and diversity between authors and their works, I wish to explore the inextricable relationship these diverse texts can share. By reading Romantic works on a linear continuum, we can approach them as a gradual progression from some origin toward some end, thus revealing their codependency.

But why would I posit such a context for considering British Romantic literature? I have created a small case study, if you will, that aims at defining the linear spectrum on which British Romantic literature resides in order to locate a paradigm shift in the philosophy, approaches, and agendas that become the foundation for the Victorian era. I will employ the sociological understanding of paradigm shifts in societal behavior to illustrate how the defamiliarization of a specific understanding manipulates, and thus reinvents, an original concept. Conclusively, I will postulate that this transfer effect both defines the inextricable links between various texts during the Romantic period and ultimately enables the germination of a new period in literature.

So, my agenda is twofold. First, I will appropriate Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* as a dialogic response to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode." After proving their existence on a suitable continuum (I am obviously of the camp that champions the diversity of the Romantic era), I will utilize this reading to create a sociological analogy aimed at fusing the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As if

the Romantic era were not diverse enough, let us consider these texts as prefatory—and thus part of—the Victorian era; let us consider a long nineteenth century.

Let us purpose Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode" as the beginning of our discussion of Romantic literature. "Dejection," the poem, not the act, will define a sort of original Romantic sentiment that Shelley will later manipulate. Several times throughout this text, Coleridge visits the idea of creating meaning through perception and communion with Nature. At each moment, he postulates the possible ramifications of such subjectivity. The speaker asserts, "I may not hope from outward forms to win / The passion and the life, whose fountains are within" (45-46). Sources for both passion and livelihood are solely subjective. They cannot be gained, penetrated, or understood by any means outside of personal meditation. (This is certainly a continuation of the famous "recollected in tranquility" approach heralded in *Lyrical Ballads*.) This lesson is augmented and applied to the natural world when the speaker continues, exclaiming, "I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!" (38). Here, perception is gained through nature and knowledge made three dimensional, but not tactile. How can this be? Considering context, title, and poem's end, the word "see" should signal epiphany—a heightened, almost spiritual perception. Therefore, the sense of touch would prove superfluous and contradictory to the rule of "fountains within." This process bonds man with nature, resulting in an epiphany that is personal and, as the poem later concludes, praiseworthy.

As the poem continues, Coleridge adds a type of *feeling* had by the subject, but in fact, not the kind that is lacking. His speaker cries, "I turn from you, and listen to the wind / Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream / Of agony" (96-98). The subject is once again given the ability to perceive, and thus report on nature. This time he "listens" and deduces. Again, the man does not viscerally *feel* the wind, but concludes that the wind itself "scream[s] of agony." Coleridge is illustrating the ability of man's emotions (not sensory experience) and his perception to coalesce. He makes this clear when he later offers, "It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud" (117). Coming from a different vantage point, a listener may hear the wind in a different fashion. The poem eventually ends with joy, punctuated with a note that demonstrates how the reexamination of the wind made the man agree with the latter comprehension of it. With this finale it is unclear

whether Coleridge is committed to questioning the subjective nature of perception itself, or if he is pleased to champion its existence. Either way, the seed was planted for future writers to revisit man's stake in sculpting knowledge, whether through rumination or process.

The culmination of those future efforts would come in the form of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Published sixteen years after Coleridge's "Dejection," this text is quite significantly removed from the sentiments of earlier Romantic authors, but not detached. In *Frankenstein*, we have moved outside of the pastoral landscape and into the city; we have forgotten Romantic ruminations and replaced them with tedious, unrelenting labor. *Frankenstein* is the story of the inorganic world, the world of production. From this context, we can see how Shelley dialogues with previous Romantic intent and places those intentions in a world in which they could never survive. This active dialectic further links her text with a Romantic continuum, while it results in the manipulation of fundamental, early Romantic practices and beliefs.

Let us begin at the beginning. The novel opens with the letters of the traveling Robert Walton. The opening arctic water setting is as far removed from the novel's future urban setting as possible. While in this landscape, Walton describes "a foretaste of those icy climes [where] [i]nspired by this wind of promise, my day dreams become more fervent and vivid" (5). Possibly in direct dialogue with Coleridge's "Dejection," Walton *perceives* the wind and *creates the understanding* that they are of promise. In the natural setting Shelley allows her characters to commune with Nature. This behavior ends, however, at the city limits.

Victor Frankenstein is first revealed to the reader in this natural world. Here, he is perceived by Walton to be a noble, caring gentleman. It is also in this locale that Frankenstein tells his tale. In accordance with Romantic sentiment, the man—in nature—recollects his experiences. Frankenstein "writes" his story while in the natural world, a feat he could not have accomplished in the city.

Also intrinsic to the city is the omnipotence of production. According to the narrator of the novel, pre-production, Frankenstein had "paid no visit to Geneva, but was engaged heart and soul, in the pursuit of some discoveries" (32). It is interesting and illuminating to realize that both heart (passion) and soul (life) are in pursuit here. Again, Shelley converses with Coleridge, offering an instance when knowledge is not found within, recalled, or discovered as in an epiphany. In fact, the "discoveries" Frankenstein seeks have to be built—quite a different

kind of *creating*. In a clever manipulation Coleridge's original intent, the subject is *not* trying to better know the heart and soul within; antithetically he is trying to manufacture a separate heart and soul in an effort to then study/gain knowledge from an outside source.

The perils of production reiterate, and furthermore pronounce, just how far removed Frankenstein is from his own ideas. In recalling his history, he admits, "the same feelings which made me neglect the scenes around me caused me also to forget those friends who were so many miles absent" (37). Shelley reminds the reader that Frankenstein is so enraptured by production that he has no perception of the world around him. In this formula, the man in pursuit of knowledge is enslaved by that pursuit and holds no power over the end result. When Frankenstein finds out that x , y , and z can produce life, then x , y , and z are responsible for that comprehension, not Frankenstein.

After manufacturing his "knowledge," Frankenstein laments, "Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room" (39). Here, Nature is replaced by the mechanic, what we would today call "plastic-ness" of production. But more chilling than this change are the results. While Coleridge's subject enjoyed epiphany and was able to rejoice in his emotional connection with the wind, Frankenstein runs away. Without consolation, nor a secondary version of the epiphany, this act of running signals a continuing, relentless pursuit: a no-end-in-sight search for answers, meaning, and, eventually, comfort. The complex beginning of Mary Shelley's novel repositions Romantic sentiment in a setting ill-equipped for such behavior. This opening action showcases the inherent flaws of searching for knowledge in the unnatural world, in an "unnatural" manner, and the plot wholly imagines the repercussions of this new kind of Romanticism.

Once we draw some clear distinctions between the foundation for the Romantic continuum and the zenith whereby the original sentiment was re-imagined, we can actively employ them to better apprehend the move toward a paradigm shift in tradition. Sociologists define large-scale changes in societal behavior similar to the way I've underscored the move from Coleridge to Shelley. The change is accredited to a paradigm shift, with the shift accredited to a catalyst, most often a manipulation, reinterpretation, or deterioration of a controlling idea. Think of Coleridge's approach as the original statement, like Darwin's theory on "survival of the fittest." To review, Coleridge's original idea placed man as observer and perceiver of a natural world, and the

man created knowledge via communion with the world he was in. This formula places man's ability as the central factor for outcome. Conversely, consider Shelley's text as the manipulated context, sort of like Social Darwinism. Shelley's man resides in a public sphere without the ability to consider or perceive natural happenings. This formula makes outside forces and a tangible product (the monster) the way to gain knowledge, which sidesteps the need for a man to *perceive* and *recollect*. In this sphere, products hold meaning and man is less important to the equation.

If you recall the journey from Darwin's ideas to Social Darwinism, the transfer went from having the idea reside in the natural world to imposing it on the social sphere. These worlds are radically dissimilar and thus the original rule does not smoothly translate. In the natural world a species's ability to thrive is dependent upon each creature's personal genetic makeup, or inward qualities. Social Darwinism faults outside factors for the ability or inability of one to survive, which circumvents any personal responsibility or control in one's future. Recall that the source of Romantic sentiments resided in and were concerned with the natural world, but when forced to translate to the public sphere, various elements of the original idea were lost in translation. The literary version does not exactly mirror the Darwinian example, but the principle is preserved. The original Romantic ideology observed the behaviors and active participation of a man, as well as his own attributes of perception with the creation of knowledge. When supplanted in foreign territory the man, and his perception, is irrelevant to the final product or final knowledge, and outside forces are responsible for creating an end result. Like my sociological example, the original intent is made awkward and unattractive in its new world. In *Frankenstein*, the defamiliarization of Romantic sentiment in a non-Romantic setting is personified as a monster, ugly, rogue, and socially abhorrent.

So what shift did Shelley initiate? If we concur that these similarities between the journey of Darwin's teachings and the evolution of the Romantic tradition are not coincidental, then we can deduce that the rest of the equation followed suit. In other terms, the work that came after Mary Shelley that appeared to be a more severe or complete detachment from Romanticism is in fact the result of a paradigm shift. On the one hand, we get ankle-covered Victorianism, foreshadowed when Frankenstein laments, "how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge" (35). More interesting, however, is the continuation of the

grotesque. Like Victor Frankenstein, authors return to the monster and the dangerous. Starting from Polidori's vampire, to texts such as *Dracula* and *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, the Victorian era becomes a literary period that does not recollect in tranquility, but experiments, hunts, and creates, which might just be a more productive way of finding answers.

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Madeline's Moment of Transcendence in "The Eve of St. Agnes"

Erin Rodino

The relationship between Madeline and Porphyro in John Keats's poem "The Eve of St. Agnes" is read in a variety of ways; one popular reading is often synonymous with the opinion of critic Jack Stillinger. In his essay "The Hoodwinking of Madeline," Stillinger refers to the relationship as "a mere fairy-tale romance, unhappily short on meaning" (49). He goes on to criticize the poem's construction: "But still something is wanting. The realistic notes all seem to occur in the framework, and the action is all romance. There is no interaction between the contrasting elements, and hence no conflict" (50). In his essay "The 'story' of Keats," however, Stillinger contrastingly demonstrates a clear understanding of Keats's "great density of opposites" (246) as part of the poem's essential, and well-crafted, ambiguity. This essay will consider this ambiguity via the relationship between Madeline and Porphyro, arguing that theirs is not a "mere fairy-tale romance," but instead an example of a moment of transcendence made possible by the juxtaposition of divine and human elements. The poem thus becomes a representation of a romantic relationship based around a distinct momentary experience that is simultaneously otherworldly and temporal. This momentary transcendent experience, I will show, becomes the foundation of the ultimate legitimacy of Madeline and Porphyro's romantic relationship.

By "momentary transcendent experience," I refer to Madeline's transgression of the boundaries of traditional religious practice in order to experience a divine state that is enhanced with human emotion. Madeline possesses the human capability of obtaining a divine state while remaining very much situated in humanity. Her ability to reach this state teaches us that it is possible, but that it is only momentary. However, it is not the length of time this experience lasts that matters to the poem, but the hope that it is attainable in the temporal world.

In the beginning of the poem, Madeline observes the Eve of St. Agnes by conducting a Catholic ritual designed to discover the man she will marry; the rest of the poem serves to reinterpret this religious framework. She intently prays, then retires to bed despite the festivi-

ties that are still going on around her. She lies in bed naked, hoping to dream of the man whom she will marry. Unbeknownst to Madeline, Porphyro is attempting to gain entry to her chamber from Elizabeth, who eventually heeds his pleas. As a result, Porphyro approaches Madeline at the very same time she is dreaming about him; when she awakes, they consummate their love and then flee into the night together.

Although the ritual of the Eve of St. Agnes seems to come to fruition, Madeline's behavior does not adhere to church law; she engages in sexual intercourse prior to marriage, which is in direct opposition to St. Agnes, the patron saint of virgins. However, Madeline's experience transcends this rigid way of thinking and is instead presented as an emotional, passionate, transforming human experience that is sublimely moving. This is one way that the poem reinterprets and humanizes the original, medieval lore surrounding the Eve of St. Agnes.

To fully interpret Madeline's experience it is essential to look at its inter-textual relationships with other poems by Keats, particularly those that articulate more liberal ideas about the soul. For example, Keats's humanistic philosophy is present in the last lines of his famous poem "Ode on an Grecian Urn": "Beauty is truth, truth beauty, —that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know" (49-50). In this poem, spiritual ideals are based on beauty, and not just physical beauty, but a fluid, philosophical conception of beauty that leads mankind closer to truth. Earl Wasserman notes: "What [Keats's] imagination seized as beauty was to him, the truth that is to come; and his poetry most often explores the relation of what we experience as beauty to what we intuit as truth" (100). Truth is found through beauty, and in Madeline and Porphyro's case, the truth they find is in a moment of human transcendence that elevates them closer to an eternity that exists on earth.

The ending of "Ode on a Grecian Urn" is also important to this discussion because it discusses the eternal characteristics of the urn that outlast a humankind whose "generation[s] waste" (46) and perish. That eternal presence on the urn consists of a beauty that is attached to it, but it still exists "in midst of other woe" (47); this is important because eternal realms must exist alongside woe, or human suffering. Without the assurance of human suffering, eternal moments would not find their proper recognition or significance on earth. Thus, Keats's humanistic philosophy involves eternal moments that are situated

in temporal time; a non-traditional definition of beauty that points toward universal truths; non-ritualistic elements; and, because it is situated in the temporal world, the presence of humankind, and therefore human suffering. It cannot function in isolation or disconnected from humanity. Madeline and Porphyro adhere to these tenants throughout their romantic affair.

The opposition between traditional religion and the embrace of beauty are present textually throughout the poem. One example is the Beadsmen or “holy man” whose fingers are numb from repetitive prayer while he is “emprison’d in black purgatorial rails” (18). The Beadsmen is surrounded by images of coldness, darkness and death. Despite being a steadfast “holy man” who would spend the entire night praying, he still encompasses a “weak spirit [that] fails” (17) when imagining the ache from the women observing the Eve of St. Agnes. A lack of passion is coupled with religious zeal in characters like the Beadsmen; he, like Madeline and the other young girls conducting rituals and saying prayers, lacks the passion that the religion requires if spiritual transcendence should occur. The Beadsmen, despite his steadfast faith, cannot even enjoy “Music’s golden tongue” because “the joys of his life” are over as he nears death. He can only repent for himself and the sinners around him. Contrary to “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” there is no beauty in dark, silent, solitary hallways and chapels where joy is denied for the “sake to grieve” (20). This suppression of joy meets disapproval because, according to Ronald Sharp,

Beauty, for Keats, is simply that which affirms life. The notion that without beauty there is no reason to live is thus tautological for Keats, since by *beauty* he means precisely that which does make us want to live. . . . the primary object of [Keats] is to console man and to reconcile him to life, by revealing and pointing up its concrete beauty. (32, 34)

Keats chooses to reconcile not the Beadsmen but Madeline to life by having her oppose the traditional religious rituals in which she initially participates. Madeline’s observance of a superstitious holiday such as the Eve of St. Agnes is criticized by the poem, which presents “a humanistic alternative to the defunct pieties of traditional religion” (Sharp 37). Rituals that are ignorant of human emotion and passion are ridiculed because emotion and passion create the transcendent experience, something of which rituals alone are incapable. For example, in the beginning of the poem, Madeline depends on rituals for human transcendence and she does so in isolation. At this point, Madeline is under

the false impression that if her “ceremonies” are properly executed she will find love. What the poem reveals, however, is love’s dependence on human contact. Initially, Madeline is “Hoodwink’d with faery fancy” (70) that relies solely on nonsensical custom. When Madeline consummates her relationship with Porphyro, however, she not only leaves traditional religion behind by having sex out of wedlock, but also suspends the ritual of the Eve of St. Agnes. Instead of having just a vision of her love—what the ritual predicts—she physically and wholeheartedly takes her love (an act that is assuredly not connected with the medieval Church). Madeline’s rejection of Church law, then, begins with her dream state.

In this way, Keats relies on the dream-state to present the crossover from human ignorance to human transcendence. In Keats’s poetry, dreams are the means by which human minds can travel beyond sensual reality. They cause that binding reality to perish, allowing humans to move into a divine, delicate world that is temporary but necessary for the transformation and nourishment of the soul. Dreams are products of the unconscious imagination at work, without the impediment of intellect and reason; dreams are the imagination in pure form. Keats’s emphasis on dreams emerges also in “Sleep and Poetry,” “A Sonnet to Sleep,” and, notably, “Ode to a Nightingale.” In this ode, the metaphorical image of the nightingale represents a momentary transcendence of time for the poet. This moment is so greatly removed from human life that the narrator must ask at the poem’s end, when the bird flies out of sight, “Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music—Do I wake or sleep?” (79-80). This is a perfect example of transcendent experience being linked to dreams, so much so that the poet questions his own consciousness.

In his letters, Keats compares these experiences to Adam in the Garden of Eden:

but of the holiness of the Heart’s affections and the truth of Imagination—What the imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth—whether it existed before or not. . . . The Imagination may be compared to Adam’s dream—he awoke and found it truth. (184)

It is fitting, then, that Madeline awakes to Porphyro from a dream in which he plays a part, paralleling Adam’s waking to Eve; but again traditional religion is transformed by the poem when Madeline plays Adam’s role. Here, Madeline is in the same state as the narrator in “Ode to a Nightingale”; she experiences a “wakeful swoon” (236). Prior

to being fully asleep, Madeline lies in a “chilly nest,” a repetitive image that symbolizes the coldness of humanity and the negative aspects of a ritualistic mode of religious living. This imagery is juxtaposed with the “poppied warmth” and relief of a “fatigued soul,” which are direct results of Madeline’s dream vision. The equilibrium created by these opposing forces sets the conditions for momentary transcendence.

The realms of consciousness and sleep are surrounded by other dichotomies in the poem, such as joy and pain, sunshine and rain, a shut and opened rose, all of which emphasize the opposition between humanly and heavenly sentiments; such opposition is the cause for Madeline’s “perplex’d” state (236). Despite her confusion, however, Madeline is balancing on a precise equilibrium; her simultaneous experience of the temporal world and the eternal cause her “limbs, and soul,” like the nightingale, to fly away (238). This suggests that Madeline experiences her moment of transcendence even before she is aware of Porphyro’s physical presence. Porphyro finds her in this state, not knowing that he is already part of it:

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh expell’d
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep:
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh. (298-303)

The couple, like Adam and Eve, experiences this bliss for a moment before the suffering and pain of existence returns.

Keats’s poetry often attempts to reconcile humans with suffering, and Madeline and Porphyro are no exception. The pain and confusion the couple experience after their relationship’s consummation is a part of “the humanized religion” Madeline chooses (Wasserman 41). Madeline’s weeping after her return to reality represents her fall away from her transcendent moment. It is important to note, however, that the very ending of the poem does not demonstrate the suffering of the couple as much as the continuance of the Beadsmen’s suffering; despite his repetitive prayers, he “slept among his ashes cold” (378). The lovers suffer and run into the storm, both literally and metaphorically, but the Beadsmen reaches his death among cold, unforgiving, joyless images; he never, despite all of his penitence, receives a glimpse of worldly joy. This destination is a result of his reliance on traditional religious ritual, as opposed to a more material experience of life. The Beadsmen is a

representation of a life that is void of spiritual transcendence, despite religion.

In the end, Stillinger is correct: the oscillation between negative and positive descriptions in “The Eve of St. Agnes” definitely creates ambiguity. This ambiguity, however, is also an important aspect of Keats’s aestheticism. The dismal outcomes of characters such as the Beadsman illuminate the outcome of the lovers. Since death is the fate of all humanity, the poem suggests, divine moments should be upheld to a greater standard of worth, despite how quickly they may come and go. It is most important to see that the eternal is only translated by means of human perception; in this light, Madeline’s experience is more than mere romance; it is a moment of divine humanity.

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Browning's Bauble-World: Representation in "Caliban Upon Setebos"

Lee Conell

The speakers in the dramatic monologues of Robert Browning frequently communicate not just with silent listeners, but with other texts. In "Caliban Upon Setebos," a poem fraught with this intertextuality, much critical attention has concentrated on the Darwinian allusions suggested by the work's subtitle, "Natural Theology in the Island," to the extent that one contemporary critic recently stated: "As has long been recognized, Darwin's is perhaps the most important intertextual presence in Browning's poem" (Peterfreund 319). Yet I would argue that to deny the equal importance of the dense intertextual relationship between "Caliban Upon Setebos" and Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is to deny the deftness with which Browning exploits intertextuality not just to represent his speaker, but to comment on the act of representation and creation itself. Rather than serve as a mere passing allusion or jumping off point in "Caliban Upon Setebos," *The Tempest* is essential to revealing Browning's understanding of artifice. The choices Browning makes in terms of the poem's form and content foreground his concern with the force that creation through language and other symbols has on our understanding of the world.

To examine the influence that the theme of representation in *The Tempest* exerts on "Caliban Upon Setebos," it seems key to acknowledge the degree to which artifice is emphasized in Shakespeare's play, particularly in its final soliloquy, when Prospero, who has seemingly orchestrated much of the storyline of the play, addresses the audience as what he truly is: a character in a play controlled by both writer and audience reception. Only the audience's "indulgence" will, he says, "set [him] free" (5.I.338). Prospero's stark confession to being a character, a representation, is indicative of Shakespeare's willingness to expose his own role as a creator and reveal to the audience the power language contains. The exposure of such power structures comes about largely due to the play's willingness to reveal its own artifice.

As in *The Tempest*, an acknowledgment of artifice runs through "Caliban Upon Setebos," not only in its content but in its form. Prospero's words read as such a bald acknowledgment of artifice because of

the device Shakespeare chooses for this acknowledgment: the soliloquy. Without other characters interacting to help create the sense of a world, we are forced to see the representation that has played out in front of us for what it really is: a series of shadows. Similarly, Browning uses the form of the soliloquy in "Caliban Upon Setebos" to highlight the complex relationship his poem has both with artifice and with *The Tempest*. Browning's other dramatic monologues usually contain speakers seemingly addressing an audience beyond the reader. In "Caliban Upon Setebos," Caliban seems to be addressing only himself; in fact, he *hopes* that he address only himself, that Setebos is not a silent listener, and that "Prospero and Miranda sleep" (20). The absence of another character leads the readers toward a greater awareness that they themselves are the ultimate audience in a piece of artifice. Moreover, by leaving out a concrete listener, Browning parallels Caliban's monologue with Prospero's soliloquy, alluding to the original context where Caliban as a character lived: the theater. If we consider a certain theatricality to be inherent in the soliloquy, Browning, in choosing such a form for his own Caliban, seems to acknowledge that he has pulled his character from the stage, where some suspension of disbelief on the part of an audience is necessary for the play's representations to succeed.

Thus, the lack of concrete listener does not mean no conversation occurs in "Caliban Upon Setebos." Rather, this lack reminds us of the play with which Browning is in dialogue, in turn strengthening our awareness of the text as artifice responding to artifice. "Caliban upon Setebos" could even be read as a sort of prologue to *The Tempest*, with the storm Browning's Caliban fears to be a result of Setebos's wrath doubling as the storm that starts Shakespeare's play. If we see Browning's poem as prologue, suddenly his Caliban grants Shakespeare's Caliban a new depth, and we as audience can begin to understand the way intertextuality alters and transforms not just the work in which it occurs, but the work to which it alludes. This transformation might be read as an aggressive act. Joseph Dupras argues that when we read "Caliban Upon Setebos" as a prologue, "Caliban's soliloquy about life's tyrannies and insurrections transforms *The Tempest* into a dramatic sequel that Browning might have written. Browning upstages Shakespeare" (81-82). Whereas Dupras sees the intertextual relationship as one that implies some competition—Browning attempting to upstage Shakespeare—I read Browning's incorporation of Shakespeare

as a means to examine the many levels and layers of representation in any text. The world created by an icon as venerated as Shakespeare is still one of mere human artifice, as Browning emphasizes by taking an aspect of that artifice (the character Caliban) and ostentatiously re-making it. In so doing, Browning suggests that the artist's worlds and words are always mutable, subject to new interpretations and representations.

While the form of the dramatic monologue and the oncoming tempest at the end of the poem establish ties between Browning and Shakespeare, choosing Caliban as a speaker, rather than another character from another play, also encourages Browning to sever some of those ties to make Caliban his own character. In large part this is due to the fact that for writers, critics, and audiences, Caliban serves the special function of having no clear function at all—or at least none that we can easily pin down. Is he a monster? A victim? A slave? A brute? Is he human or animal? Because of his multivalency, Caliban invites contortion, allowing Browning to turn him into his own “creature.” Therefore, although Caliban is a pre-established character, Browning can easily represent him in new ways that call our attention to the mutability of art.

One example of such mutability reveals itself through the stylistic decisions Browning makes in determining how his Caliban will speak of himself. In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare's Caliban does not hesitate to use the first person pronoun. When shortly after the audience is introduced to Caliban, Prospero threatens him with punishment, Caliban retorts, “I must eat my dinner. / This island's *mine* by Sycorax *my* mother” (1.2.330-31, emphasis mine). Browning's Caliban, however, refers to himself in the third person throughout the poem, a particularly ironic choice given that the conventions of the soliloquy encourage some use of first person; after all, the speaker must discuss a matter from his or her own point of view. Unlike the Caliban of *The Tempest*, Browning's Caliban informs us of his actions and feelings by announcing that “*he* kicks both feet in the cool slush” (4, emphasis mine). Sycorax is spoken of not as “my dam” but “his dam” (16). Confining Caliban to the third person allows Browning to achieve a number of effects that play with audience expectations and perceptions of the narrator. In deviating from the Caliban of *The Tempest's* way of speaking, Browning differentiates the two Calibans, making clear that although he is using a preexisting character, he is *recreating* this character for his

own purposes. Browning's Caliban does not merely echo Shakespeare's, but speaks with his own voice.

Some critics have argued that this new voice cues the reader into the brutishness of Browning's Caliban, revealing his lack of self-awareness as represented by the lack of the personal pronoun "I." Such assertions about Caliban's primitivism make sense when we see the poem's sole function as a response to natural theology, or view Caliban as a "creature," the missing link between ape and man; however, when we consider the way the poem deals explicitly with the artifice of its storytelling (in part by borrowing from other texts), then the use of the third person pronoun may in fact reveal a Caliban *more* sophisticated, *more* able, than the one we see throughout *The Tempest*. By speaking of himself in the third person, Caliban drastically changes the usually more direct tone of the dramatic monologue form, creating a narrative distancing of his thoughts and movements. Speaking of his own actions, he notes that "He looks out o'er yon sea which sunbeams cross. . . . And talks to his own self, howe'er he please" (12, 15). If Caliban had used the first person pronoun in these lines, Browning might have suggested that he was engaged in a musing reflection. Instead, Caliban seems to demonstrate some enlightenment concerning his part as a character in a larger story, an awareness of his own artifice not unlike Prospero's in his final soliloquy. Caliban narrates his action the way we the readers, or Browning the writer, might. Caliban is *not* ignorant of himself as artifice. Rather, he expresses an acute awareness of himself as another's creation through his narrating his actions in the third person, as though another person were reporting these actions (which, of course, Browning is). Ultimately, then, the use of the third person by Caliban reveals an existential savvy, a sort of dim acknowledgement of his own status as representation. Of course, there is only so much awareness Browning grants Caliban. While the use of the third person creates a sense of acknowledged narrative distance, this distance is restrained due to the fact that Caliban uses only the third person limited point of view. He does not have the privilege of third person omniscient, emphasizing his own limitations as a character and his lack of access to the "big picture" controlled by a creator we might consider to be Browning, Shakespeare, a deity, the audience, or some combination of the above.

Just because he lacks access to the "big picture" of both his island and his universe does not prevent Caliban from imaginatively

speculating on what that larger narrative might involve. Indeed, Caliban's imagination, his use of and attraction to creativity and artifice throughout the poem, highlights another representational difference between Browning's Caliban and Shakespeare's. Shakespeare's Caliban tells Prospero: "You taught me language; and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you / For learning me your language!" (1.2.365-68). Shakespeare's Caliban sees representation through language as a tool that has disempowered him, even as it empowers Prospero. Browning's Caliban, however, uses language to gain some small power back by playing his own game of representation; he is further complicated as a character by his skillful ability to make use of the devices of artifice that Browning himself uses, including figurative language, metaphors, and similes. At the start of the poem, for example, Caliban notes "a pompion plant, / Coating the cave-top as a brow its eye" (7-8). Clearly, Caliban has the ability not only to understand similes, but to create them. In the chaos of the natural world, he finds signs, symbols, and representations of his own self. Of course, in having Caliban play with language and poetic devices, Browning defamiliarizes the poet's attempts at wordplay and makes clear to the readers their own eagerness to spot signs and symbols in the chaos of the text, just as Caliban spots the human eyebrow in nature.

The desire for signs, for clear representations that point to a larger creator, is demonstrated in Caliban's readiness to attribute human features to his world. Browning also uses Caliban to express the human need for representation by revealing to us Caliban's desire to create representations himself. Caliban stitches "a book of broad leaves" and pretends they are Prospero's books; he then picks out a "four-legged serpent" to be Miranda, a "tall pouch-bill cane" to be Ariel, and a "sea-beast, lumpish," to be Caliban (150-63). Clearly, Caliban's casting of the island's characters parallels the casting of not just any play, but of *The Tempest*. Browning thereby encourages us to see the artifice of both the play and the poem. Just as Caliban has recast himself as Prospero, Browning has recast Caliban in "Caliban Upon Setebos," turning the character into something that fits his own artistic aims and into an artist in his own right, as we see in Caliban's decision to "cut a pipe of pithless elder-joint / That, blown through, gives exact the scream o' the jay" (119-20). The act's primary function is to mimic another's voice, just as Browning mimics—and purposefully contorts--Shakespeare's Caliban. Moreover, Caliban's use of his own representations as an

analogue for how Setebos himself uses representation demonstrates the dense layers of signs and symbols built up throughout the poem, with one representation signifying not a specific object, but another representation by a “creator.” Indeed, the layers of representations in “Caliban Upon Setebos” grow so complex that, rather than focusing solely on the concrete content at hand (such as Caliban’s theory of natural theology), the poem begs us to pay more attention to the degree to which we, like Caliban, use representation and artifice to try to forge an understanding of the world. Representation, after all, is essential not only to Caliban’s comprehension of the world, but to our ability to read the words of any poem.

Of course, this ability is based upon our use of signs to create what Caliban accuses Setebos of making: a “bauble-world to ape yon real” (147). If Caliban accuses his supposedly divine creator of making a bauble-world, what kind of world is one of his actual creators, Browning, forging through representation? Is he making a bauble-world out of Shakespeare’s universe? A bauble-world out of the society Browning lived in, where claims about natural theology similar to Caliban’s occurred?

Or is Browning, by acknowledging the bauble-world he creates through his emphasis on its artifice, in fact revealing the inescapable representation inherent to our understanding of the universe? Caliban expresses his views through language, through signs the readers understand only because they have participated in the game of representation themselves, a game with rules that they had to learn just like Caliban. Ultimately, in establishing his ties with another author both through formal and content-based decisions, Browning, admitting from the outset that the world of his poem is an artificial “bauble-world,” suggests that his aim is not to be wholly original, formulating brand new representations for the reader to grasp. Rather, in using a pre-created character as his mold, the poem, through its obvious artifice, may lead us to see that even when a writer does not create in her work an intertextual relationship as obvious as the one between “Caliban Upon Setebos” and *The Tempest*, all creators—even Caliban, who must use the language Prospero taught him not only to curse but also to poetize—work in a pre-established world of signs and symbols. These signs and symbols, though they can be manipulated, controlled, and represented, can never be entirely reinvented.

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Unlearning “The Sand Martin”: John Clare’s Poetics of Irretrievable Ambiguity

Thomas Doran

In his animal poems, John Clare reveals himself as a transitional figure between the idealizing tendencies of the Romantic poets and a less anthropomorphic mode of writing that participates in the contemporary fascination with animals. As an amateur naturalist, Clare was aware of the difference between the poetic artifice of the animal and the unbridgeable rift between human and animal existence. He knew what he was not, and if he identified with the reclusive habits of certain birds, he struggled with the logic of such identification, casting doubt on the apparent simplicity of this relationship, that is, the subject’s desire, through metaphor, to escape into the (stereotypically) naive or spectacular realm of the animal, the flight from oppression through total, doe-eyed denial. “The Sand Martin”—a sonnet where we already see a large emphasis on poetic artifice—represents this tension in Clare’s attempts to disconnect the poet from the identifying animal, anticipating Victorian critic John Ruskin’s notion of the “pathetic fallacy.” Accordingly, I will define Clare’s generous portrayal of animals and show how it illuminates the complex interrelationship between his life and poetry and Clare’s quest for a glimpse of the real animal, independent from the human imagination’s steady erosion of the real animal in the transaction of representation and poetic expression. Perhaps my study can illuminate Clare’s attempts to truly know animals and his skepticism of and resistance to the routine artistic subjection of the animal to the whims of both human psychology and the conventional creative imagination, which constitutes an unflattering symbolic concept of animals as mere objects of utility, walls on which to project human desires and insecurities.

To exemplify this unflattering portrayal of animals, we might consider Clare’s early poem “Insects,” written between 1812 and 1831 but published later (*John Clare* 190). In his earlier poetry, Clare himself was not immune to the Romantic poet’s tendency to anthropomorphize animals; here, the insects laugh, love, sup, and even imbibe “golden wine” (3-10). Likewise, Clare seems to project upon the insects not only basic human actions and desires but also his own introversion and “fear

of mortal folk,” even suggesting that the insects “Are fairy folk in splendid masquerade” (21-22). Hence, Clare not only anthropomorphizes the insects but constructs for them a human psychosis, which wholly evacuates them of their real nature. He empties them of their meaning in order to serve his own. However, I would suggest that Clare’s portrayal is less about figurative appropriation than it is about the temptation of self-identification.

In considering the idealizing tendencies of such early poems, we must grant the profound picture of freedom animals must have represented in Clare’s post-enclosure village. In “John Clare and Enclosure,” Bob Heyes describes the enclosure of Clare’s village when he was 16 years old and how it obliterated the “real sense of community and mutuality” which previously existed in Helpston (14). Hayes further examines the motif of enclosure in Clare’s poetry, which coincides with, and certainly influences, the animal motif. The animals in his poems often seem immune to the rigid boundaries of the post-enclosure human experience. They build nests upon the new boundaries and scamper up trees on property that is no longer public or communal and is consequently out of Clare’s reach. Essentially, the animals are immune to enclosure. As I will show, the presence of animals in Clare’s poetry often speaks directly to particular influences on Clare’s personal sense of enclosure, and he asserts a vicarious, albeit heavily mediated and metaphorical, existence through them; however, unlike the insects’ simplicity, the existence Clare’s later birds exemplify is less Romantic and more intricate, realistic, nuanced, and earnest.

Without absolving Clare of his early, unflattering poetic vision of animals, I would suggest that Clare’s development as an amateur naturalist, in opposition to dominant scientific methodology, enabled him to transcend this phase. In his letters, Clare often criticized the systematic essentialism and degradation of the classifying imagination of natural history. In a letter to his publishers, Taylor and Hessey, Clare remarks:

I love to see the nightingale in its hazel retreat & the cuckoo hiding in its solitudes of oaken foliage & not to examine their carcasses in glass cases yet naturalists and botanists seem to have no taste for this practical feeling they merely make collections of dryd specimens classing them after Linnaeus into tribes & familys & there they delight to show them as a sort of ambitious fame with them ‘a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush’ well everyone to his hobby. . . . What absurditys for a world that is said to get wiser and wiser every day. (*John Clare* 458-59)

Thus, in addition to what James McKusick describes as Clare's "resistance to [Romantic] sublimity, abstraction and transcendence and . . . enthusiastic engagement with particularity, local tradition and regional dialect" ("Beyond the Visionary Company" 222), we see him rejecting the encyclopedic scope and influence of Albertus Magnus, Linnaeus, and others as merely a cruel hobby. In the same letter, Clare offers a condensed sort of poetics: "I have no specimens to send you so be as it may you must be content with my descriptions and observations" (458). Resisting the systematic language and practice of natural history enabled Clare to resist false poetic representations of animals as we can see in a close reading of his poem "The Sand Martin."

Often Clare's richest bird poems focus on the species whose behaviors appear superficially abnormal to a human observer. Evidence from Clare's journal suggests that prior to his observation of the bird, he identified with its reclusive nature, saw the potential for a figuratively symbiotic relationship, and yearned to make this connection at least on the level of the text (*John Clare's Birds* 62). To define this connection simply, many sand martins build their nests in quarries, the aftermath of human labor, in pits of human excavation. They carve out holes where stone has been removed to build human homes elsewhere. So, much like the figure of the outsider artist, the birds are secluded but also figure themselves in a curious negation of seclusion by making immediate, on-site use of resources as opposed to the human withdrawal (or seclusion) of these resources.

Thus, with self-identification and this strange paradox of seclusion, the poem opens:

Thou hermit haunter of the lonely glen
And common wild and heath—the desolate face
Of rude waste landscapes far away from men
Where frequent quarries give thee dwelling place. (1-4)

Clare stages the sand martin's complex relation to humans with reference to the bird's nesting place. In the abandoned quarry, we see but the palimpsests of human toil, and the octave further develops through the sand martin's appropriation of this labor, "With strangest taste and labour undeterred / Drilling small holes along the quarry's side" (5-6). The metrical variation in line six emphasizes this appropriation both in the opening trochee, "drilling," emphasizing laborious action, as well as the spondee "small holes," suggesting the disparity between the gaping concavity of human industry, the quarry itself, and the minuscule bird

nest. Clare's rejection of human industry in favor of the bird's minor yet curious projects parallels his own marginality, "drilling small holes" on the peripheries of mainstream poetry and eschewing dominant modes of poetic representation.

In "John Clare's Version of Pastoral," James McKusick claims the sonnet "resists a crude anthropomorphism" by describing "everything in the poem . . . from both a human and non-human point of view," thereby allowing Clare to balance the animal's autonomy with his own self-identification, having "been forced out of his home in Helpstone" (83). Perhaps, my discussion up to this point bears out McKusick's assertion, but the resolution of the poem calls into question any notion of a balanced perspective. McKusick sees "more affinity between Clare and the bird than there is between Clare and the rest of mankind" (83); in fact, critics like Timothy Brownlow and John Barrell cite "The Sand Martin" as an example of "Clare's personal history enacted by natural events" (Brownlow 55), where Clare "is identifying himself with the bird" (Barrell 123). However, when identifying with the bird, Clare also attempts to implicitly apologize for the poetic usurpation of animals to serve as vehicles for self-indulgence; it requires a severe restriction of logic to use animals, as Keith Thomas describes in *Man and the Natural World*, for their "almost inexhaustible fund of symbolic meaning" (qtd. in Kenyon-Jones 3). Although Clare identified with what looks like the sand martin's reclusive behavior, he was aware of the limits of interspecies identification, namely the markedly different motivations for this sort of behavior in humans and wild animals. Clare sought to subtly imbue his poetic representation with this disparity, to maintain the ambiguous tension between the human and non-human animal by balancing what we can know about animals with what we cannot. As Randy Malamud outlines in *Poetic Animals and Animal Souls*:

It would be useful for more people to confront . . . how much we don't know about animals, and to accept the limitations of our epistemologies—instead of the alternative: faking it; masking our ignorance in self-centered fantasies; perverting natural and ecological paradigms to flatter the centrality and omniscience of our own existence. (35)

Along these lines, I would define Clare's ethos of representation in "The Sand Martin" as fair insofar as it acknowledges the complex ambiguity of the non-human animal and accepts a certain degree of symbolic incompatibility, holding this problem of representation, this symbolic rift, in tension.

Along these lines, we see the poem turn on a foremost object of interest, the sand martin's nest, while explicitly introducing two outside interests in this nest with strikingly disparate goals but a curious connection: the speaker of the poem (that is, the introduction of the first person, "I") and the other human figure in the poem, referred to as the "nesting boy" (8-9). The nesting boy certainly represents a human destructiveness that stands in opposition to the speaker's praise of the bird, so the fact that the sand martin's nest is "seldom by the nesting boy descried" (8) brings relief to the reader and speaker alike. However, the nesting boy also seems to occupy the same space as the speaker. In "Clare's Animals," Anne Barton describes Clare's

mixed attitude towards those village boys who, every spring, rapturously sought out birds' nests and took the eggs. As an adult, he deplored such depredations: the ruined nests and distraught parent birds—but he was also fully aware that he had once robbed nests himself. There was no way in which he could delude himself that it had not been fun, an important part of childhood's evanescent joys, or sternly reprimand a later generation of boys for doing the same. (17)

Also, rather than a group of boys out on a hunt to pilfer martin eggs, we see only one boy, alone on the hunt. Hence, the volta takes on a momentary ambiguity. When the speaker declares "I've seen thee far away from all thy tribe" (9), "thee" could refer to either the sand martin or the nesting boy. Of course, if we read Clare's later description of how he watched the birds, "Flirting about the unfrequented sky / And felt a feeling that I can't describe" (10-11), we clearly recognize that the speaker continues to address the bird. Though this is all to the good of the poem and its perpetuation of a humane perspective, that moment of confusion regarding who the poet is addressing, boy or bird, suffices in showing the speaker's interest in the lone nesting boy: like both poet and sand martin, another hermit-like being. Thus, Clare enacts a subtle shift from self-identification with the hermit bird to a feeling of seclusion shared by the bird and the boy. Indeed, he creates a human intermediary to identify with, an at least partial transition from the problematic self-identification with a bird to a more reasonable self-identification with a perhaps a younger version of himself. The explicit introduction of the first person voice in the sestet, which marks the turn of the poem, further calls into question any attempt at simplistic identification with the sand martin, as far as it acts as, essentially, an exposure of this complex human identity.

In a straightforward sense, to say “I’ve seen thee” (9) is to remove the bird mask but also, in removing the mask, to admit that a mask was ever present; the shift from apostrophe to confession (while remaining an apostrophe) suggests an acceptance of the insufficiency of the metaphorical relationship between human and bird and a refusal to continue identifying fully. Randy Malamud claims that “unless the poet consciously orients herself otherwise, the poetic ‘I’ is inherently exploitative of nonhuman animals. . . . It is the ‘I’ that speaks for people to people and essentially about people” (34). However, Clare effectively achieves this other orientation by using human feeling (and identifying it as such) and poetic convention to dislodge the speaker from simplistic identification with animal representations. In this sense, the first person turn is yoked to the limits of human knowledge, which is itself a form of seclusion.

The repetition of the motif of seclusion in “The Sand Martin,” with the poem’s references to “hermit haunter,” “lonely glen,” “desolate face,” “far away from men,” “nesting boy,” “seldom descried,” “unfrequented sky,” “lone seclusion,” “hermit joy,” and “lone heath,” seems to work against the speaker’s claim that the sand martin evokes a “feeling I can’t describe” (9); the inability to describe the paradoxical feeling of seclusion’s joy infuses the feeling itself with an eremitic mysticism. “Hermit joy,” is both a feeling shared and not shared between the speaker and the bird; the presence of the feeling is what they share, but the actual individual experience of subjectivity and seclusion in the consciousness of oneself is ultimately incommunicable.

In the close of the poem, we return to the anthropomorphic treatment of place at the opening of the poem; he describes himself watching the bird “circle round nor go beyond / That lone heath and its melancholy pond” (13-14). In contrast to Clare’s earlier personification of the quarry, which emphasized our destructive qualities, the “melancholy pond” is simply a metaphor for humans, namely those of the black bile, who might hastily identify with the sand martin’s seclusion. The resolution of this problem of identification rests in an acceptance of ineluctable, mutual difference. Ultimately, Clare’s immersion of the human finally in nature, as a simple and familiar object in the life of the bird, suggests that, indeed, if we recall our own connection with the natural world, we may begin to see nonhuman animals not as objects of utility that serve only to communicate one or two persistent human feelings, nor as grand or mystical spectacles, but simply

as another form of life that we cannot fully know.

In his poetry, Clare resists naive forms of animal representation that commit ideological violence upon nonhuman animals. We see not only the construction but a struggle to create a complex portrayal of animals based on respect, perspective, realism, and attempted empathy; consequently, we can see how Clare's identity is, in part, constructed through his art and how he does not simply create work that responds to his environment but actually constructs the poetic understanding of this environment. Crucial to this project is his own resistance of the desire to identify with the hermetic appearance of animals, accepting that linguistic silence in animals does not always equal seclusion, and seclusion is not the same for humans and nonhuman animals alike. Clare does not attempt to give voice to animals; instead he subtly censures their misuse (both by himself and other poets). As John Coletta points out, Clare identifies with animals through a reversal of subject and object by acknowledging "his own potential for utterance through recognizing an aspect of himself not first in himself but in an Other" (245) while also resisting hyperbolic representations based on skewed perspectives of human mobility, sense-perception, work-ethic, and so on. Of course, in poetry, resisting a trope often means ironically enacting it. Perhaps, we may describe Clare's ultimate goal in "The Sand Martin" using Randy Malamud's heuristic: "A higher aspiration for animal poetry would be to situate poet/reader and animal as coterminous; cohabitants; simultaneous, and thus ecologically and experientially equal" (33). In the "rude waste landscapes" of time, we all occupy similar yet irretrievably disparate biological and emotional histories, and it is this rift between relation and difference, which we must choose either to embrace or misunderstand.

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The Sanity of Science: Renfield and Vivisection

Monica Ayres

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has been read from diverse critical perspectives since its publication in 1897. Some of these critics have recognized the importance of animals in the plot in relation to the novel's representation of the British fear of the ethnic "other" and the complex sexuality of the vampires. Yet critics have thus far overlooked what I will argue is a crucial element of the novel's treatment of animal issues, namely, the complex relationship between humans and animals in light of the debates on vivisection in the later nineteenth century.

The relationships between Dr. Seward and his lunatic patient Renfield, as well as between Renfield and his animal subjects, are some of the most fascinating in the novel for the way these relationships blur lines between scientist and subject, sanity and insanity. Though Renfield is a minor character, Stoker utilizes him to comment on the state of science and the treatment of animals in the late nineteenth century; more specifically, though, the activities of both Renfield and Dr. Seward call into question the morality of scientists who chose to experiment on live subjects, often without remorse or without respect for the value of animal life. To better understand how Stoker uses vivisection in the novel, I will focus on the ways in which the character of Renfield is represented as both an experimenter and as a subject of experimentation, blurring the line between human and animal and between subject and object of scientific inquiry.

The connection between scientific and literary discourses was unusually strong in the later-nineteenth century, as both scientists and novelists sought to answer questions about the world by looking at it in empirical terms, and the two often worked together to further scientific understanding. Scientists drew upon novels during presentations, and novelists drew upon science as a source of inspiration for their novels. At the same time, many novelists used their art as a means of criticizing the state of science. The lack of morality exhibited by scientists and the relationship between humans and animals became a focal point, particularly in regard to vivisection (Kucich 121). Ivan Kreilkamp argues that both the novel and experimental physiology worked to pinpoint exactly what "cruelty to animals" means, what species belong in this defini-

tion, and how one can establish a moral code in an environment where so many species can potentially be objects of sympathy (89). Scientists and animal rights activists alike tried to answer these questions during the vivisection debates of the late nineteenth century.

The term “vivisection” refers to scientific experiments performed on live animals, often without sedative or anesthetic. The practice of vivisection was a highly debated topic in the 1870s and 1880s as animal rights activists confronted scientists over the issue of live-animal experimentation. Antivivisectionist literature at this time, as Jed Mayer argues, “subvert[ed] the language of scientific discourses by subjecting them to the discourses of aesthetics, politics, theology, and philosophy,” thus combining the language of science with the language of criticism (431). In 1876, the antivivisectionists experienced a minor victory with the passage of the Cruelty to Animals Act, which, according to Lynne Crockett, “regulated vivisection by requiring a license to perform it, by ensuring that it only be practiced for new discoveries with beneficial results . . . and by requiring that anesthesia be used,” yet it did not make vivisection illegal (4). Under this Act, as long as a physiologist had a license, he could perform vivisections in a laboratory. Yet the problem remained that people would illegally conduct vivisections behind closed doors and in private homes. The Act, unfortunately, did not directly address the problem of vivisection, but only made it more difficult for scientists to perform legally.

The issue of vivisection is apparent in Stoker’s *Dracula*. Through the character of the lunatic Renfield, Stoker seems to be making his own anti-vivisection argument and uses Renfield as both a scientist and a victim. Renfield appears in the beginning of the novel as one of Dr. Seward’s patients in the insane asylum. Dr. Seward is drawn to Renfield for a variety of reasons, but mostly because of Renfield’s interactions with animals, believing that “his redeeming quality is a love of animals” (69). Dr. Seward does not yet understand the nature of Renfield’s experiments and thinks that Renfield cares about the animals with a kindness that Seward has not seen in other patients. However, once Seward discovers the purpose behind Renfield’s menagerie, he begins to see Renfield as a crazed lunatic obsessed with killing others, though he takes lives only for scientific purposes.

Renfield is not only a representation of a mad scientist, but he is also the most obvious example of a vivisector in the novel. He collects live animals, beginning with flies, and consumes them in order

to try and absorb their lives into his. Dr. Seward has classified him as a “zoophagous [life-eating] maniac; what he desires is to absorb as many lives as he can, and he has laid himself out to achieve it in a cumulative way” (71). Renfield “feeds many flies to one spider and many spiders to one bird, and then wanted a cat to eat the many birds” (71). Like many vivisectors, Renfield is able to reduce the animals he is using in his experiments from living, feeling creatures to mere objects and says: “haven’t I got enough to worry, and pain, and distract me already, without thinking of souls!” (238). Renfield repeatedly mentions that he wants nothing to do with the souls of the animals since worrying about souls will only distract him from completing his experiments; it is seemingly easier for Renfield, and other vivisectors, to focus on the bodies, rather than the souls of the animals, to justify their experiments without calling their own morality into question. He is also aware of other scientists’ work and is familiar with Van Helsing’s “idiotic brain theories,” which shows that there is a greater purpose behind his work and he knows what else is going on in the scientific community (225).

Renfield not only conducts these experiments and eats the animals himself, but he meticulously records every detail, presumably to use at a later time. He keeps track of the number of animals consumed and constantly jots down notes in his notebook. Seward notices “whole pages of it are filled with masses of figures, generally single numbers added up in batches, and then the totals added in batches again, as though he were ‘focussing’ some account, as the auditors put it” (69). Even when he does not have his notebook, he records his findings on a wall in his cell. Yet every instance of this experimentation in the novel is described by Seward not as a scientific method of gathering and recording information, but as an aspect of Renfield’s mania, and he worries that Renfield is “too dangerous a person to be roaming about. Those ideas of his might work out dangerously with strangers” (97). Seward fears that Renfield’s lack of concern for animal life will become so strong that he will be unable to differentiate between animals and humans, leaving humans susceptible to his dangerous experiments. By attributing this to Renfield’s mania, Seward is echoing the sentiment of anti-vivisectionists that live experimentation is immoral and in direct contrast to human nature.

Stoker’s representation of Renfield suggests a possible connection between his mania and the madness of scientific inquiry taken to excess, perhaps implying that scientists who, like Renfield, experiment on

live subjects are experiencing bouts of madness. Renfield's occasional fits of remorse also suggest that there is a chance that scientists will realize they should not be endangering any form of life. When Renfield is having moments of clarity, he takes no interest in his research and even gets upset when Seward tries to discuss it with him. Stoker provides a commentary about scientists that perform vivisection in noting that Renfield can only bring himself to take the life of others when he is experiencing psychotic episodes.

Renfield is not only a vivisector, but is a subject for scientific experimentation. Dr. Seward becomes so fascinated by Renfield's apparent bloodlust that he cannot help but constantly observe the patient. However, rather than try to slow down the progress of Renfield's mania, he instead aids the progression and is fully aware of his actions. After appointing himself "master of the facts of [Renfield's] hallucinations," Seward takes a moment to address the apparent cruelty in his actions: "I now see, something of a cruelty. I seemed to wish to keep him to the point of his madness—a thing which I avoid with the patients as I would the mouth of hell" (61). This moment of moral doubt is short-lived, and Seward, like many vivisectors, is concerned with the scientific "greater good," recognizing that he can justify his actions if they are for the sake of scientific advancement. Seward's most obvious declaration of his intentions is expressed three months after our first encounter with the patient:

It would almost be worth while to complete the experiment. It might be done if there were only a sufficient cause. Men sneered at vivisection, and yet look at its results today! Why not advance science in its most vital aspect—the knowledge of the brain? Had I even the secret of one such mind—did I hold the key to the fancy of even one lunatic—I might advance my own branch of science to a pitch compared with which Burdon-Sanderson's physiology or Ferrier's brain-knowledge would be as nothing. (71)

The experiment in which he is interested is Renfield's testing on the animals, but it can also refer to Seward's experimental use of Renfield. Though Renfield is never operated on, *per se*, he becomes a source for scientific inquiry and observation. This is the only place in the novel where vivisection is directly addressed, and though Seward serves as a vivisection supporter, Stoker uses this passage to explore the rationalization of vivisection from a scientific perspective and to call into question the morality of the scientists.

One interpretation of this passage suggests that Seward is simply another selfless scientist looking to further his field at any cost, yet the pairing of “I” alongside the names of Victorian scientists at the end of the quotation calls this selflessness into question as it becomes clear that Seward does not want to advance his field, but to advance his own career to the level, or past the level, of Burdon-Sanderson and Ferrier. It is only appropriate that Stoker invokes Ferrier at this point in the novel since he was at the center of the Victorian vivisection debate. Like Seward, David Ferrier was interested in science relating to the brain. He experimented on live monkeys without the certificate required by the 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act and was put on trial in 1881 (Otis 27). Ferrier, like the fictional Seward, began his experiments in insane asylums and thought that the subjects must be both live and alert in order to collect information (Otis 28, 30). Seward finds himself fascinated with Renfield and finds him such a “wonderfully interesting study” that Seward wishes to “get a glimpse of his mind” (110). The connection between Seward and Ferrier is strong, and though Seward never goes so far as to operate on animals, his subject, like many helpless animals that found themselves the victims of vivisection, dies as a result of the experiment or, rather, lack of intervention.

Dr. Seward justifies his actions by dehumanizing the patient and frequently refers to Renfield as his “pet” or uses animal terms to describe him. In his letter to the Editor of the *Morning Post*, antivivisectionist George Hoggan pointed out that dogs, even when strapped to the operating table, will continue to wag their tails and lick the hand of the very person that is causing them pain (340). Like the dogs of the real vivisection experiments, Renfield, too, continues to hold Seward in high regard, even thanking him up until his death, and “[fawns] on him like a dog” (70). Unlike the animals to which he is compared, Renfield is human and able to plead his case before his death. He recognizes that Seward is using him for scientific gain and refuses to act as Seward wants him to: “You must get a new patient, doctor, if you wish to study zoophagy!” (236). Renfield’s voice is insufficient to save him, and Seward refuses his pleas for freedom. Renfield also recognizes that he is in jeopardy of suffering great pain under the watch of Seward and says: “They think I could hurt you! Fancy *me* hurting *you*! The fools!” (102). He acknowledges the fact that he is himself the subject of an experiment and is less of a threat to Seward than Seward is to him.

In his own study of Renfield, Seward points out that Renfield is

essentially playing God by taking lives into his own hands, but notes: “The real God taketh heed lest a sparrow fall, but the God created from human vanity sees no difference between an eagle and a sparrow” (96). Seward suggests that the madman will eventually continue his experiments on larger and larger creatures and could possibly move to humans, yet Seward fails to see his own moral flaws in using a human for his research. Just as the God of human vanity fails to see the difference between a sparrow and an eagle, the scientist that plays God can also fail to see the difference between the animal and the human. In his article “Some Popular Fallacies about Vivisection,” Lewis Carroll imagined

the possible advent of a day when anatomy shall claim, as legitimate subjects for experiment, first, our condemned criminals—next, perhaps, the inmates of our refuges for incurables—then the hopeless lunatic, the pauper hospital-patient, and generally “him that hath no helper.” (348)

This article was written some twenty years before *Dracula* was published, and arguments like it became a commonplace in antivivisection literature, so it is possible that Stoker was familiar with the argument. Carroll also suggests that man has some element of beast in him, causing him to have a certain bloodlust that can be aroused by a scene of torture, which then leads to interest and pleasure on the part of the witness, and Seward’s own fascination with Renfield is realized only when he witnesses Renfield consuming live animals (Carroll 345).

Though Seward and Renfield are in different social classes and have different goals for their experiments, the only real difference between the two of them as scientists is a medical degree. Both characters observe the process of consumption of life, and both Renfield and Seward take endless notes on their observations. Seward’s notes, recorded on a phonograph, provide some of the only views we receive of Renfield, since the reader never is able to read Renfield’s notes, and Seward’s are very meticulous in order to capture every moment of Renfield’s psychosis.

Stoker likens Seward to Renfield when Seward discusses the “thought that has been buzzing around [his] brain” alongside an analysis of Renfield’s consumption of flies (71). The word “buzzing” connects the two scientists since both are concerned with things that buzz, be it flies or thoughts, and essentially breaks down the barrier that “distinguishes patient from physician” (Hughes 6). Seward also expresses anxiety about living in an insane asylum, though he himself

is not considered insane: "I am beginning to wonder if my long habit of life amongst the insane is beginning to tell upon my own brain" (124). Throughout the novel, Seward questions his own sanity, which causes the reader to wonder who is sane and who is insane, a sentiment that almost every character in the novel expresses at some point in the Dracula hunt.

Seward, throughout the novel, remains blind to the similarities that exist between him and Renfield and fails to recognize that Renfield is simply a more grotesque version of himself. Renfield consumes live animals for his experiments, and Seward consumes Renfield's behavior for his own scientific gain. In his article "So Unlike the Normal Lunatic," William Hughes argues that "this discursive intimacy between physician and patient permits in the novel a realignment of their relative or reciprocal positions" (2). This reiterates the connection between Renfield and Seward and suggests that Seward is likely suffering from the same mental affliction as his patient.

Though there is little hope for redemption offered in the novel, Renfield finds peace in his death since he no longer has to live a soulless life. In his "Popular Fallacies" article, Lewis Carroll not only discusses the logical fallacies behind vivisection, but also notes that the suffering animal is lucky in its death as it finally finds an end to his pain, yet the scientist who inflicts this pain, and has lost his own soul in the process, will continue to live with deadened sympathies that he will then pass down to future generations; this is one of the greatest tragedies of vivisection (Carroll 345). Stoker offers the only solution to this problem in the death of Renfield. Only by eliminating that which has demonized science, namely vivisection, can science progress into an imagined twentieth-century future and regain its authority by establishing its morality.

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The Duality of Language and the Ambiguity of Species in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

Jennifer Gutman

In the world that H. G. Wells presents on *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, boundaries are blurred between opposing forces. Distinctions between certain dichotomies—waking/dreaming, reality/unreality, natural/constructed, and man/beast—are not easily discernable. Through its exploration of the uncertainty of boundaries, the novel offers unsettling perspectives on scientific and cultural issues of the later nineteenth century. Twenty years before Wells published *Moreau*, Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man* linked the psychological capacities of man to those of animals, a comparison that stirred much controversy in proud Victorian minds. In Wells's novel, the character of Moreau challenges Darwin's concept that animal and man are gradations of the same species and seeks to prove that beasts and humans are fundamentally distinct, using language as both a reason for and means of enforcing this distinction. This paper looks to argue that while Moreau attempts to use language to differentiate man from beast, he inadvertently reveals the limitations of human language as a means of rational communication, thus undermining the very distinction he draws between humans and animals. In their attempts to distinguish themselves from the Beast People, Moreau and the narrator Prendick actually enforce the connection between these two allegedly distinct species categories, making a correlation that Wells himself promoted in his own scientific writings, which argue that the human-animal connection is one that holds true long after the artificial constructs of civilization and progress are broken down.

In *The Descent of Man*, Darwin foregrounds his argument about the relation between humans and animals by discussing the fundamental components of existence that are true for all living things: "the lower animals, like man, manifestly feel pleasure and pain, happiness and misery" (69). He continues with a discussion on a multitude of personality traits that animals and humans hold in common, including "furious rage," "long-delayed and artful revenge," fidelity, love, emulation, praise, pride, shame, modesty, sense of humor, ennui, wonder, and curiosity. Imagination, which Darwin calls "one of the highest

prerogatives of man” (75), can be seen at work in certain animals’ habits: “There must be something special, which causes dogs to howl in the night, and especially during moonlight, in that remarkable and melancholy manner called baying” (75). With this example, he draws attention not only to the validity of animals’ own language, but the complexities of their non-verbal form of communication in the diversity of a dog’s bark to represent different states of emotion. Darwin elevates this form of communication over that of words, even in human language: “Our cries of pain, fear, surprise, anger, together with their appropriate actions, and the murmur of a mother to her beloved child, are more expressive than any words” (86). This ability for unarticulated communication and meaningful connection that both man and animal share is a unique commonality because not only does it connect the two species, but it does so on a plane that exceeds human artifice because of its closeness to nature.

In *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, the unifying qualities between human and beasts are made explicit, not as a result of nature, as Darwin proposed, but of scientific intervention. When Prendick first encounters one of the “Beast People,” he has an ambiguous reaction of both repulsion and connection: “I had never beheld such a repulsive and extraordinary face before, and yet—if the contradiction is credible—I experienced at the same time an odd feeling that in some way I had already encountered exactly the features and gestures that now amazed me” (20). Prendick feels a sense of familiarity with these seemingly foreign creatures because they are made of human and animal traits; the result is a product that is unnatural and grotesque, yet unsettlingly recognizable because they are made of qualities of his own kind—qualities that he himself shares. Wells’s own writings on human evolution and the nature of evolution in general reflect this critique of humans as animals. In his essay titled “Human Evolution, an Artificial Process,” Wells identifies two attributes that make a “civilized man”:

- (1) an inherited factor, the natural man, who is the product of natural selection, the culminating ape, and a type of animal more obstinately unchangeable than any other living creature; and (2) an acquired factor, the artificial man, the highly plastic creature of tradition, suggestion, and reasoned thought. (217)

In this two-part definition of man, the first part inherently links man to animal, and the second reveals man’s separation, which is a construct of his own creation. It is through the second part that man acquires a

sense of comfort in his distinction from the animal world, but as Wells discusses in “Zoological Retrogression,” the scientific facts surrounding the process of evolution reinforce the reality of that first part of the definition of civilized man: that we are inextricably related to and descended from the animal realm against which we define ourselves. Human evolution, Wells notes, is not, as was popularly believed, on an upward ascension ending with its final and greatest expression of man, but on a path more like “a footway worn by leisurely wanderers in an undulating country” (159). Like other species, humans are at just as much risk of falling victim to evolution’s fickle path, with the potential to experience both “rapid progress . . . followed by rapid extinction or degeneration” and “degradation happen[ing] upon some fortunate discovery or valuable discipline and ris[ing] again . . . to victory” (167-68). A central conflict in *The Island of Dr. Moreau* exists between man’s belief that he is a separate from and superior to animals, which is enforced through language, and the reality that humans and animals are actually inherently connected, which is ironically exposed through the same medium.

In the midst of all of the physical, emotional, and psychological attributes that Moreau finds contemptible among animals, he locates the most significant divide of man and animal in language: “the great difference between man and monkey is in the larynx . . . in the incapacity to frame delicately different sound-symbols by which thought could be sustained” (136-37). This point of difference is not insurmountable, however, but one that can be overcome through re-education, which Moreau attempts to do: “I taught him the rudiments of English, gave him ideas of counting, even made the thing read the alphabet” (117). Language acts as the psychological instrument in Moreau’s attempts to humanize beasts. He teaches them to use language as humans do: to express laws that are used both to confine their instinctive nature and as a means of oppression. The rigid structures of language are ingrained in them through Moreau’s teaching of the Law: “They were really hypnotized; had been told that certain things were impossible, and that certain things were not to be done, and these prohibitions were woven into the texture of their minds beyond any possibility of disobedience or dispute” (125). The Law they are forced to recite and live by consists of a series of rules that they must not break, lest they subvert their new human forms. During the day, the Beast People recite the Law with the most fervor, but as night falls, their instinctive natures

come into direct conflict with the opposing values that are being forced upon them. The Law “battled in their minds with the deep-seated, ever-rebellious cravings of their animal natures” (125), and it is in this tension that the hierarchy established by language comes into question. In his book *What Animals Mean In the Fiction of Modernity*, Philip Armstrong discusses the parody that results from the Beast People’s use of man’s regimented language: “This type of ‘silliness’ is satirized also in the Beast Folk’s chanting of the ‘Law’, and the parroted phrase ‘Are we not men?’, by which their animal desires are held in check” (80). The Beast People use the language that they are taught, but in a way that renders the language essentially absurd. Their incessant chanting of these propositions that are in direct opposition to their natural instincts reveals something inherently irrational in the system being used to indoctrinate them. Rather than become more human through their recitation of the Law, the Beast People actually reveal the senselessness of the commonly accepted belief that humans are a separate and distinct species.

This language-based hierarchy is subtly questioned throughout the novel, first when Prendick arrives on the island and assumes that the Beast People were created through a conversion of humans to animals. Moreau corrects him, though, by responding “*non sunt homines, sunt animalia qui nos habemus . . . vivisected. A humanizing process*” (127). This phrase, which is referred to as “bad Schoolboy Latin” in the novel, translates as “these are not men that have us, they are animals.” Armstrong argues that the use of bad school boy Latin by a supposed master-scientist may be read as “a parody of the jargon by which nineteenth-century medical science and natural history sought to rarefy and universalize their arts” (78). The construct of language is used as a means of creating power by Moreau, but Wells also uses it as an ironic deconstruction of the doctor’s human-animal hierarchies. When discussing the Ape-Man’s absorption of the English language, Moreau states: “I tried him with some other questions, but his chattering prompt responses were, as often as not . . . quite parrot-like” (87). This parrot-like identification is mirrored in Prendick’s first verbal confrontation with one of the Beast People, as they find a point of commonality in their hands: “His eyes came back to my hands. He held his own hand out and counted his digits slowly. ‘One, Two, Three, Four, Five—eh?’” (85). Not knowing how else to communicate, Prendick “did the same thing by way of reply” (85), mimicking

the Beast Man's act of counting. Armstrong notes the significance of Prendick's mirroring in an attempt at communicating with this strange creature: "he repeats the digit-counting performance in turn, because he misunderstands it as a greeting," which "suggests that *he* is the one at cross-purposes with the other's question; he is the one engaging, parrot-like, in mimicry" (79). The construct of language seemingly differentiates man from beast, but when broken down to its essence of delivering meaning and allowing mutual understanding, each party experiences the same challenge and struggle toward comprehension. Wells seems to suggest that the only thing differentiating man from beasts is the former's talents for artifice.

The validity of man's artificial state of being is called into question at various points in the novel through the Beast People's unintended parody of human language. This notion has already been explored in the Beast People's recitation of the Law, but it also manifests itself when Prendick is alone on the island and finds himself in conversation with a creature, the Monkey Man, who learned English from Moreau. Ironically, his use of language discredits how it is used by humans as a measure of intelligence and power: "He had an idea, I believe, that to gabble about names that meant nothing was the proper use of speech. He called it 'big thinks', to distinguish it from 'little thinks'—the sane everyday interests of life . . . he had developed in the most wonderful way the distinctive silliness of man without losing one jot of the natural folly of a monkey" (191-92). In the Monkey Man's seemingly ridiculous mimicking of man's language, he actually expresses the "natural folly" that exists within it; his characterization of "big thinks" is an insightful expression of the hypocrisy of man's elevation of himself through nonsensical jargon. The crude simplification of man's use of lofty speech acts as a parody of the means of control that is used to degrade the Beast People and exposes the illegitimacy of man's supposed superiority. In his attempt to understand the jargon that acts as a means of separation between the species, the Monkey Man actually exposes the inherent meaninglessness and absurdity in this constructed and embellished form of language and its function as a means of power.

When Prendick is left on the island to experience the Beast People's reversion alone, the transitory nature of Moreau's enforced human constructs is revealed. As the layers of scientific manufacturing begin to peel away, the origin of the Beast People, and of all species, peers through. In *Descent of Man*, Darwin discusses the origin of language

and links it to the origin of species: "I cannot doubt that language owes its origin to the imitation and modification of various natural sounds, the voices of other animals, and man's own instinctive cries, aided by signs and gestures" (88). As Darwin notes, non-verbal sound acts as the basis of language, showing the inherent connection between the two. In the beginning of Prendick's journey, this recognition of a shared linguistic origin manifests itself in the form of empathy upon his hearing the Puma's cry: "It was as if all the pain in the world had found a voice" (59). The experience of pain, but more importantly, the common expression of pain through a universal cry, allows Prendick to relate to an animal that he would otherwise dissociate himself from. By the end of his experience on the island, however, Prendick affirms their common linguistic origins in the form of disgust during the Beast People's reversion: "Can you imagine language, once clear-cut and exact, softening and guttering, losing shape and import, becoming mere lumps of sound again" (192). This language reversion, and Prendick's contemplation of it, is symbolic in that it proves that utterance is at the origin of our own language; the so-called shape of language in the form of words breaks down, and this loss of shape implies that words are an artificial construct. As the form of the language decays, so does its "import": the significance of a species, according to Prendick, depends on the coherence of its language. Despite Prendick's distaste for this reversion to natural, guttural sound, his observation reveals the connection between the language of man and beast and exposes the faults in his own argument.

Prendick's regard for humanity changes after his experience on the island. He can no longer look at his fellow people as completely human and notices their animalistic qualities peering through their human exterior. Language continues to act as a measure of a species when Prendick returns home, but at the end of the novel, he sees it as equating man and animal rather than identifying them as distinct: "Then I would turn aside into some chapel, and even there, such was my disturbance, it seemed that the preacher gibbered Big Thinks even as the ape man had done" (205). The ironic parody of the island that revealed the insufficiency of language as a humanizing instrument when used by the Beast People is mirrored in Prendick's disillusioned confrontation with humanity. His self-torture and alienation at the end of the novel speaks to an anxiety in discovering the vanity of the social myth of human progress. For a society entering the twentieth century with faith in

human progress, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* acted as a reminder of where man is, and will always be, inherently grounded. Mankind's desire to be removed from instinctive nature through the constructs of civilization is literalized in Moreau's vivisection experiments; the results speak to the futility and absurdity of such a process.

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IV POETRY

“The First Step toward Comprehension”: Poets on the Making of Their Poems

H. R. Stoneback

“Poetry is the first step toward comprehension of life and death.” These are the words of Stéphane Hessel, the 93-year-old French writer and diplomat who currently has the hottest-selling book in France (*Indignez Vous!*). Hessel, a French Resistance fighter in World War Two and concentration-camp survivor, with a long and distinguished career as diplomat, tells his readers (most of them young enough to be his great-grandchildren, since this book is all the rage among young French readers) what poets *know*: poetry is a life and death matter. And the first step toward comprehension of poetry may well be some understanding of the poet’s intention. Intentionality is sometimes treated as the poor country cousin of literary criticism and *explication de texte*, and perhaps it should be so treated, especially when intentionality is awkwardly deployed by non-poets. In any case, the commentary of poets on their own work is a rare gift that is all too seldom given, usually only to readers who attend poetry readings and hear the poet comment between readings of poems.

In this issue, we feature a group of poems accompanied by commentary on the poems by their authors. The “self-interview” of poets has been an increasingly popular and compelling feature of leading journals, including the benchmark publication in American poetry for nearly a century—*Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. Readers and students of poetry, as well as poets themselves, find such commentary engaging for the way it demystifies the act of making a poem and clarifies many aspects of the craft. The tour of the poet’s workshop and storehouse of image, form, theme, sources, etc. invites readers to a better understanding of how poems are made and their mode of being as created objects.

And the practical details of where poems come from and how and why poets write them may indeed lead to a deeper understanding of poetry, to a restoration of the sense of mystery regarding the act of creation and the well-wrought poem.

We are pleased to welcome back to the pages of *The Shawangunk Review* the distinguished poets whose work has appeared in previous issues of this journal: Mary de Rachewiltz, who in her mid-80s is still writing poems, still teaching the students who take classes at her home, Brunnenburg Castle in Italy, where she oversees the archives of her father Ezra Pound (and has hosted many New Paltz students and faculty at conferences held there in 2008 and 2010); William Bedford Clark, professor of English at Texas A&M University and General Editor of the multivolume Robert Penn Warren Correspondence project; Don Johnson, professor of English at East Tennessee State University; David Appelbaum, professor of Philosophy at New Paltz; Andrew Higgins, professor of English at New Paltz; Robert Singleton, adjunct instructor of English at New Paltz; and Robert Waugh, Professor Emeritus at New Paltz. We are also pleased to present here the work of three rising younger poets who are New Paltz graduates now in PhD programs, and whose work appeared in *The Shawangunk Review* when they were students here: Brad McDuffie (Indiana University of Pennsylvania), Matthew Nickel (University of Louisiana, Lafayette), and Alex Andriess (Boston College).

We are particularly delighted to welcome to *The Shawangunk Review* Rosanna Warren, distinguished poet and literary critic, who teaches Comparative Literature at Boston University. She has graciously provided commentary and granted permission to reprint a recent poem from *The New Yorker*. Although this is the first appearance of her poetry in these pages, she was instrumental in granting permissions (through the executor of her father's literary estate) for our landmark 2005 Robert Penn Warren Centennial Issue (portions of which were reprinted in our Twentieth Anniversary *Best of the Shawangunk Review* issue in 2009). Likewise, we are very pleased to welcome to these pages Vivian Shipley, widely published award-winning poet, Distinguished Professor of English at Southern Connecticut University, and editor of *The Connecticut Review*; and Jesse Graves, professor of English at East Tennessee State University and recent guest editor of *The Southern Quarterly*. We are pleased to continue to support and encourage the poetry of our graduate students, and poems by Sarah Hurd, David Hurst,

Wyatt Krause, James Sherwood, Pamela Ugor, and Daniel Valentin are included.

One question I raised with most of the poets here had to do with how the process of computer composition has affected the evolution of their poems, the revision process, and so forth. Scholars and literary critics have lately lamented the disappearance of manuscripts and typescripts, with all the evidence of deletion, revision, superscription, and other things that do indeed illuminate the process by which the poem reached its final form. Some observers have even maintained that the computer has changed the way we make poems. From my discussions of the matter with some of the poets here, discussions that for the most part do not inform these commentaries, I have concluded that while this may well be a lamentable loss for the scholar and literary critic, it probably does not matter much to the poet. Poets will always pause, in the ruck and moil and traffic of daily life, to jot down images and lines on napkins or stray envelopes or whatever is at hand. Such jottings, if they stay with us, will continue to develop through further phases and find their way to the computer where the final record of deletion and addition will be lost. But poets care only about the final form toward which the poem has yearned from the moment of inception. Even those of us old enough to have annotated carbon copies of poems composed on typewriters never look back, once the poem is done, at its phases of development. That's for scholars and literary critics to do.

All the poets here have something useful and important to tell us about why and how they make poems and how their poems achieved their final form. On this much misapprehended matter of poetic form, a quotation from Robert Penn Warren will suffice here: "Form is the recognition of fate made joyful, because made comprehensible." When I told Rosanna Warren that one of my current students loved her father's definition of form, she said it was "a gorgeous, deep, wise quotation." So it is.

Man in Stream

Rosanna Warren

You stand in the brook, mud smearing
your forearms, a bloodied mosquito on your brow,
your yellow T-shirt dampened to your chest
as the current flees between your legs,
amber, verdigris, unraveling
today's story, last night's travail . . .

You stare at the father beaver, eye to eye,
but he out-stares you—you who trespass in his world,
who have, however unwilling, yanked out his fort,
stick by tooth-gnarled, mud-clabbered stick,
though you whistle vespers to the wood thrush
and trace flame-flicker in the grain of yellow birch.

Death outpaces us. Upended roots
of fallen trees still cling to moss-furred granite.
Lichen smolders on wood-rot, fungus trails in wisps.
I wanted a day with cracks, to let the godlight in.
The forest is always a nocturne, but it gleams,
the birch tree tosses its change from palm to palm,
and we who unmake are ourselves unmade
if we know, if only we know
how to give ourselves in this untendered light.

Commentary: In this poem, a number of elements combine:

New England scenery (beaver dam, stream, yellow birch, wood thrush)

Anecdote: personal intimacy and conflict between an “I” and a “you”

Free verse flowing around some traditional pentameters

Unrhymed stanzas of 6, 6, 6, and 3 lines

I hope, a fairly high degree of phonetic intensity: alliteration and assonance (as in, “amber, verdigris, unraveling / today’s story, last night’s travail . . .”)

Most important, for me, was the third stanza, which breaks out of the naturalistic narrative-descriptive mode and vaults into a state of intuition verging (I hoped) on the Hölderlinian: “I wanted a day with cracks, to let the godlight in.” Important that “godlight” should be a neologism—language has to stretch to present such an experience.

Syntax gauged to intensify states of paradox, mystery, passion, especially in final tercet. (I like, at times, a fairly simple vocabulary but a charged syntax: “if we know, if only we know.”)

Word play, especially in the cramming of senses in the last phrase, “untendered light.”

Poetry

Mary de Rachewiltz

It pays to rise early and see
Glauké, the mother goat, rise
and leave the cave when the sun
dials the hour in the shadow
of a tree on the sheer cliff
over silvery sandstone,
to watch her training the kid,
obstinate, half white, half black:
tu verra Blanchette, le loup!
and push her down the mountain
to graze on greener pasture.

In time even the nettles
may disappear, uprooted
by grunting snouts or trodden
into the ground by donkeys.

If one keeps watch long enough
even Poetry may pay.

Commentary: I'll try to recollect why/when I wrote the two poems. "Poetry" is the result of a joyful surprise: A friend sent some of my poems to *Poetry Magazine* and lo and behold, they were not only published but even paid for! So I felt, at age 85, I had finally made it into the sanctum sanctorum.

Well, a year later I felt goats were once more my only company. Blanchette is the name of the goat in *Lettres de mon moulin* by A. Daudet. I have always loved that story, so simple and true.

I grew up in Gais, "goat" in German. I watch real goats and they are often my topic, also in Italian. Goats have a will of their own, they are as hard to tame as words, the word "stile" for instance, if one is multi-lingual.

The Wardrobe of the Dead

Don Johnson

My dead brother-in-law hums in my ear
each morning when I shave. The triple head
Norelco my sister passed on whispers
that we're still connected. I also wear
his best friend's golf shirt from a course
at Hilton Head too pricey for my blood.
He died less than a year after my brother-
in-law. His wife thought the green shirt
would look good on me. My best friend
in Montana sent me felt-soled wading sandals
and a white fishing shirt after a mutual friend
and his wife drowned canoeing to Wild Horse
Island on Flathead Lake in January. Their two
dogs survived and swam to shore. Since I have
a Lab my friend did not ship a dog.
He did mail earlier a box of dress shirts
belonging to his ex-lover's ex-husband
who was more my size than his. The ex still lives.

But when I reach into my closet, my hand
gravitates toward the wardrobe of the dead,
more often now that I am shrinking,
dragged down by a compression fracture
of the spine that left me one inch shorter,
perfect for my father's legacy of flannel shirts
that I can haul out from the dark without looking.

Commentary: I had been thinking about this poem for the last two years, since my father's death. The clothes, watches, letters, and photos from him were expected. But at about the same time I started getting other "gifts" from friends and family members, and the contributions seemed to speed up as the months went by, until it seemed that every time I went to my closet I was touching or stumbling over something that had belonged to someone who had recently died. It became kind of a joke between my wife and me. Every time I would walk out of the bedroom she would look at me and ask, "More dead people's clothes?" But the whole scene had an ominous tone as well, as if my life was being manipulated from beyond the grave. The poem really kicked off when it occurred to me that the hum of my shaver each morning was a direct communication from my deceased brother-in-law. Once I had that down, the rest of the poem more or less flowed out. When I described the closet as "the wardrobe of the dead," I had my title. One of the issues that came up with trusted readers was including the humorous references to the dog and my best friend's ex-girlfriend's ex-lover. One of them felt that the humor was out of place, but I felt the entire poem was more or less morbidly humorous, and I wanted to keep it in. The poem went through about ten revisions, with the last a lengthening of the final line so as not to give the impression that I was hurriedly jumping out of the poem.

One Quail, Whistling
for Dave Smith

Don Johnson

Across the pasture, out of green-briars
at the hill's foot, one quail whistles.

My grandfather answers from a distance
of sixty years. Younger than I am now,
he doesn't echo the bird's name
or try to whistle his grown children back

with the shrill trochee even their
black neighbors knew as "Uncle Monk's
whistle." He coaxes the scattered covey in
on three soft notes, the last

almost inaudible, the way he says
my grandmother's name, "Catherine."

And they come. One scurries from berry canes
beside what used to be the outdoor kitchen,
another from the marble yard where grown men
lagged clay taws in the Depression—

another, and another, and another,
until the last two strut from khaki-colored

stalks of lespedeza to stand six inches
from his dusty wingtips, tilting their heads

like hounds at a distant train signal. No one
now sows "blessed Jesus" here or spares

edge-growing millet. So the "bobwhite"
that shears again across my fallow field

will go unanswered. With my grandfather's
warbled gift I could whistle him in to my feet

then startle him back to the nearest fencerow
with a weight shift. Or I can stand here
sharing that other old man's delight
in his homecoming, planting himself
twenty yards from the cabin his mother
had built, where he and his children
were born, those rapt birds clucking at his feet
where in thirty years almost nothing had changed.

Commentary: For the past five years I have been reconstructing a log cabin that both my father and grandfather had been born in in Chatham, Virginia. I was working on the cabin one evening when I heard a quail whistle from across the field directly in front of me. It was a rare occurrence, since almost all the wild quail in this region (northeast Tennessee) have died out. I listened for another quail to answer the first, but the response never came, so my joy at hearing the first whistle was turned to sadness at the prospect that that one bird could call out and call out, and no other bird would come back to him. Standing there inside the unchinked walls of my cabin I thought back to a scene that had played out in the early fifties when the cabin was on its original site in southern Virginia. I had come back to the old homeplace with my grandfather for the annual cleaning of the family cemetery. On this day, he stood out in the kitchen garden and started responding to a quail he had heard in the nearby scrub oaks. After two calls the birds started responding to him and moving closer. Before long, I could see them scurrying around the garden, with two actually coming right up to his feet. He was mightily pleased, first at having the birds still on the place and coming in to his call. He was most pleased at being able

to demonstrate for his young grandson his expertise at communicating with the birds.

From the beginning, the problem I had with this poem was the handling of time and space. I had to bring together the scene at my home and the scene I had witnessed some sixty years earlier. Several of my friends have read the poem and commented on other issues without bringing up the time problem, so, I assume, it's been handled satisfactorily. I revised the last line multiple times, ultimately trying to suggest that despite the fact that the cabin's outbuildings had disappeared (suggesting that other things had deteriorated as well), the grandfather, because his beloved quail were still there, was content to think that little had changed.

Digging Up Peonies

Vivian Shipley

Overcoming fear of stalks that are too close,
I remind myself it's Lexington, that mist
on fields meant rattlesnakes in rows of corn
would be cold, sluggish. Like prying out
potatoes with my fingers, I dig up tubers
as if I could lift my father, seeded with cancer,
if only for a day from gravity, from ground.
My parents know what I know—this is the end.
They will not return to this house my father built.
No refugee in Kosovo, wheelbarrowing
his grandmother to safety, I will bring as much
of Kentucky, of their dirt as I can carry with me
on our flight to Connecticut. A bride, moving
to New Haven over thirty years ago, I have
not taken root. I cannot explain this urge
to go to creekstone fences my father stacked,
dig up box after box of peonies I will bank
into granite piled along my side garden.
My father will see pink, fuchsia, blossoming
from his bed. Is this what revision is, change
of location, spreading, to retell my story
another time, in another soil? Unable to untie
what binds me to Kentucky, to bones of all
those who are in my bones, I will save what
I can of my mother, of my father from this earth,
from the dissolution that binds us after all.

Commentary: I was raised as a Methodist in Kentucky with a very fundamental faith which I have lost even though I yearn for the certainty of my early religious experience. I am not sure of what happens to the spirit after death, but I do know that each day is what we have and that each day contains grace if we seek to find it. When I moved my parents from Kentucky to Connecticut to care for them because my father was dying of cancer, I had to take them from the house that my father had built. My mother and father knew they would never return to their beloved home. Before leaving, I dug up box after box of peony tubers from their side yard and brought them to Connecticut. The peonies had come from my grandmother's farm outside of Somerset, Kentucky and Grandma Todd had taken them from her mother's Pulaski County farm. Today, I raked leaves and unearthed maroon spears starting to sprout from tubers that had rooted in three generations of Kentucky earth. Thought of the beauty, the ravishing pink, white and fuchsia flowers of the peony brought the spirits of my parents, my grandparents and my great-parents back to me, back into this world. Nourishing to my heart like the peonies, writing my poems is a quest I undertake each day to find some meaning for an individual life. The spiritual journey is universal unlike the physical one of the body which is personal. Poetry can ease the quest, the journey because when words are placed on a page, are given the permanence of print, the spirit has prevailed, will endure.

First Ice

Vivian Shipley

Unlike my sorrow which has started to scab,
grass has not closed over this raw red
Kentucky clay. Over eight months now.
My father's plot is still unmarked, a rupture

in my heart that needs to find a name
to heal. I've come back to these hills to see
the communion altar the Ladies' Guild
built in Howe Valley Methodist Church

with my donation, to measure other stones
so Daddy's will not be the tallest. He avoided
standing out, showing off in life, and there
is no reason I can think of he should in death.

Marble I had chosen yesterday is too black,
too glossy; I'll have to go back in the morning
to Cheneyville, prove Mr. Crum was right,
that it's women who always change their minds.

What I want is a pint bottle of Wild Turkey,
a jelly glass, to sit in my cousin Sue's kitchen
and nip at Jim's country ham. Instead, to thank
Hansel Pile for putting a wreath on my father's

grave, I head out across Hardin County, a place
so religious even grapevines are tied to crosses.
Sure enough, I find pictures of Jesus, head
wrapped in thorns, cracked linoleum floors,

deviled eggs sprinkled with paprika. Minding
my manners, I admire trophies won by Hansel's
bulls, linger over the photograph of Sammy,
his Grand Champion at the Indiana Fair. Done

with the judge's ring, Hansel tells me his secret:
a donkey to lead cattle around, get them used

to a rope. No blue ribbons for the donkey.
All night every night, it walked and walked,
stupid, helpless, tethered as it was to one halter
then another. In winter, Hansel turned the donkey
out to pasture without food. I imagine its cracked
hooves, scraping at what was in frozen ground,
stumbling through February, monotony broken
by breath, a shadow moving from tuft to tuft.
The donkey knew its duty here, knew its worth,
knew its only chance for hay, corn. A small gray
memory, each spring it came back to the pen
as I do to Howe Valley, these hills, to my father.
Braided to reason, to its life, I think of the donkey,
of what we accept if we wear it long enough
like the rope hooked to the bull, like octagonal links
of a gold necklace I finger, like the weight of grief.

Commentary: “First Ice” is a literal description of my experience picking out a grave stone for my father’s grave. The only thing in the poem that is not the literal truth is that I’m a Jack Daniels woman and not a Wild Turkey one. When I went to visit Hansel Pile and heard the story of the donkey that led bulls around the ring to train them, I knew I would write a poem about the donkey. For me, the story also became a metaphor for how I was beginning to heal after my father’s death and I chose the title of the poem because I wanted to convey the way in which my grief was beginning to scab and not be so raw. In the country in Kentucky, we used to have a game to see who would be the first one to find first ice, which was ice that we could walk on. I was a bit of

a sissy cat and never won because I was too afraid of falling through the ice into the pond. The challenge that I faced in writing the poem was in controlling the emotion and not letting it become too sentimental. I had to find first ice to skate on to avoid wading around in self pity. To test it, I entered it in the Robert Frost Foundation Prize poetry contest because it was an anonymous contest. It was very reassuring to me when Baron Wormser, a poet I respect a great deal, picked the poem for the first place winner.

Hudson River Voices

H. R. Stoneback

I. Grace is Place

For twenty years we spent summer weeks,
long spring and autumn weekends, even
icy snowbound winter nights by a roaring
driftwood fire, backgammon by firelight, at our
rustic shack (no utilities) right on the Hudson:
West Park—across from the Vanderbilt Mansion.
The voice of the river sang in our hearts,
deep-fleshed, on skin, in moon-night and morning sun.
Once she said: “We will remember this morning
years from now as if it’s some golden myth.”
Those first summers the thing we noticed most

was how voices carried across wide water.
We’d see the headlights of distant cars parking
at the Vanderbilt place. When their lights went
off, we could hear voices talking far across
the river as if they were right next to us.
Free from the ambient buzz of power, we heard
every sound. Sometimes voices shouted for joy
at the night and the river. One night, late,
we heard a single voice singing, a woman’s
voice singing the old folksong “The Water
Is Wide” over and over. We listened

in haunted stillness, then harmonized in whispers.
I could say the river froze in its flow,
the moon fell into the tide, fish leapt up—
But no it was only silence and distant song.
We wondered then how many had stood there
far across the river and under the big trees,
and listened to our singing, sometimes late-night
raucous singing with a crowd, *bone-fire* voices

raised against the darkness, sometimes just
the two of us singing away the ghosts
of eternity, singing back into the lost

history of place, then cursing the cost,
inviting all the ghosts to sing through us.
One night she sang, crystalline: *We shall sing
on that beautiful shore*. Voices roared applause
across the river, one loud *Hallelujah*.

(Years later, in a full church high on a hill
above the Hudson, her voice on our CD
sang that song as her coffin rolled down
the aisle and hundreds wept together.)

Austere voices, burnt to the bone,
voices heard over the midnight river

may be the only thing that lasts and marks
the earth with the sign: *we have been here
and we did our best to sing, sing it all*.

Grace is Place, in distant voices recalled.

II. Place is Grace

One morning, I listened to her singing
the vowels of sunrise, erasing, displacing
hard consonants and dissonance of the crowd
the night before. She was down on the smoothstone
beach, making coffee over the hot coals
of the last night's bonfire and I thought
This is the sound of eternity.

Then, as we drank coffee and skipped rounded

stonesongs out over the waves and tidal surge,
counting the skips and steps of the dance
of the stones and songs across the rising tide,
we heard another distant song, heard
before seen and the familiar song was known:
Then the Clearwater appeared, tacked close by
our cottage and we heard the crew singing
my old song, "Lonesome Mountain Streams," published
in the Clearwater Songbook, and she said:
That is the sound of immortality.
When strangers sail and sing your riversong.
When all else forgets, the river remembers.
Voices over wide water.
Place is Grace, in distant voices recalled.

**A version of this poem appeared in the journal Henry and the final version will be included in the forthcoming volume The Voices of Women Singing.*

Commentary: When the editor of a journal asked me for a poem about the Hudson River for a special issue, I said yes I could give her a river-poem. I thought it would be a simple imagistic exercise and all I knew when the poem started was that I wanted to evoke the sound of voices singing over wide water. Imagistic song strips story to the bone, but sometimes the narrative impulse demands context and tonal modality for the hermetic image, perhaps to make the emotional core of the image more accessible to the reader but more likely because the poet longs to comprehend the image. As a poet and as a singer-songwriter, I have always tried to walk the line that demarcates the terrain of tension between song and story. Thus this two-part poem grew from its core image, and many things that I could not foresee found their way inside the poem.

When I invited poets to provide commentary on their own poems for this issue, I suggested that they might consider form as well as the development or evolution of the poem. Since I asked them to do that, I reckon I have to do it here, even if I am wary of explication and explanation that ineluctably remakes or rewrites the poem in prose. Form includes many resources that some poets employ: meter, rhyme, rhythm, sound, sense, line, stanza, shape and weight of placement of words on the page and in the chanting voice. The song is more important, for some poets, than the typography. This poem rides on more or less traditional pentameters construed with a Poundian sense of the need to break the pentameter and, having broken it, the simultaneous sense of the necessity of a formal counter-current (a consideration that governs important work of Pound and Eliot). Form has a heuristic function that shapes a poem in its search for the thing that works. For example, this poem seemed to demand an 11-line stanza—why I don't know and I certainly had no model in mind—but once it made the demand the heuristic value kicked in. Yet such order can never be the only consideration. Once we have imposed the order, we work against the pressure and the tension it provides. I resisted, for example, extending the quatrain that ends Part One into an 11-line stanza. When it comes to meter, I confess to the influence of my literary mentor, Robert Penn Warren; I once heard Red say at a reading: "This poem is in pentameter, except when it's not—iambic, except when it's not." Yet I would insist that the chosen form here creates several syllables or instants of silence in such short lines as line 43 above, and as in the penultimate line of the poem. Why do this deliberately?—for emphasis and the way *voice* intersects line. And to let the voices over the silent river be heard, in space and time.

Rhyme: at one point in its development, I sensed this poem was trying to lean into oblique and direct rhyme; for example, in the last and first lines of stanzas two and three, stanzas three and four (Part

One) and stanzas one and two (Part Two). I have (as songwriters must) a certain fondness for rhyme, and I am often willing to risk it, but I did not want this poem to evolve in that way—after several revisions, I let the stanza-linkage rhymes stand and ended Part One with a rhymed couplet. No space to comment here on alliteration, assonance, and all the other gifts of sound. I will add that I kept trying to get rid of the invertible word-game in the subtitles “Grace is Place” and “Place is Grace.” It’s not the sort of thing I generally do, and I revised and cut the subtitles completely, but the poem kept demanding their return. So there they are, for now. Also: I suppose this poem, since it’s about singing and contains allusions to a hymn and other songs, has connections (not by conscious design) to the movement known as “Hymnagism” (see other poem-commentaries and the book review of the *Des Hymnagistes Anthology* in this issue).

As for the question that I suggested other poets here might consider—what effect does composition/revision on the computer have on their work, if any—I suspect it does not much matter and I have recorded my general thoughts on this question in the introduction to this section. Once the poem is done, most of us don’t look back. But because I wrote the poem above very recently, at a time when I was asking other poets questions about the evolution and development of their poems, I can say this: the poem started when, waiting for a red-light to change, I jotted on the envelope of my telephone bill: “Voices singing over wide water.” And I even remember some of my typos, such as “*bone-fire*.” I meant to type *bonfire*. When I saw the typo, I thought now isn’t that interesting. And I drove to the office laughing at my folk etymology for the word: “It’s a good fire. *C’est bon*.” But etymology gnawed at the edges of my memory and when I got home that night I checked: bonfire, of course, comes from ME *banefyre*, a fire in which bones are burned. I had known that once and all but forgotten it. Taking the advice that I often give as a visiting poet, when someone in the

audience asks my “advice to young writers”—*read the dictionary, read the etymologies*—I had stumbled on a key image. Etymologies give the poet gifts and so do typos. Finally, the typo led to another corner of memory. In our correspondence, Mary de Rachewiltz often incorporates in her letters to me allusions to great one-liners that her father, Ezra Pound, said or wrote, or a great quote from somebody else about her father’s work. A few years ago, she quoted Rebecca West’s 1913 commentary on *Imagisme*: “Poetry should be burnt to the bone by austere fires.” And that led to my line: “Austere voices, burnt to the bone.” But I only realized that weeks after my line was written and if I had not written this commentary I would have forgotten it by next year. A typo that led to an etymology that led to resurrection of a great line buried in memory that led to what the reader (I hope) will see as a core image in the poem. Poetry should give us permission to have fun. That typo was fun. Typos have the power to teach and delight.

California Dreaming

William Bedford Clark

i.

Tawny girls, tired surf:
The sun drowns at Torrey Pines—
Sealight rusted gold.

ii.

The stern Pacific's buckling wall, last seen
As they walked that hill in Del Mar,
Gave nightmare a new tint—aquamarine.

Comment: Somewhere (I think it was in the liner notes to a Glenn Gould recording), I read that Beethoven's bagatelles were constructed out of "chips from the composer's workbench." The observation seems apt. What didn't make it into a sonata or quartet might, with sufficient dressing up (or down), be turned into a miniature that could stand nicely—if modestly—on its own. I suspect many if not most poets do much the same thing—do a bit of detailed work fitting together fragments that never found their place into a sonnet or ballade. My little diptych "California Dreaming" is one venture along those lines. I like to think there is an implicit hinge that links the two metrically dissimilar tercets (one a lowly haiku, the other of 10-8-10 irregular syllables and rhyming *aba*). In borrowing my title from the Mamas and Papas, I was trying to suggest at least a tenuous connection of the sort, and certainly both sections do touch on atmospheric and color. In any case, the degree to which these six fugitive lines qualify as a poem remains the reader's call.

Prague Spring

David Appelbaum

Bluer than must be shadow
a waif in season
appetite to go

leaves, stubble toils
down cavernous snow
to the falls of Acheron

stitched words on the sea
undo hell by lot
in cheap simulacrum

no closer to home
than hidden carnal rage
in stutter of itself

Commentary: In a strange way, exegesis of the poem does not separate itself from the poem itself, as if ascending to a meta-level, looking down from on high, and ordaining what is—form, theme, image, origin, prosody, and so on. Such commentary does not try to locate the dislocation that the poem marks but repeats it, writes the poem again for emphasis or deferral. Perhaps this restates the fact that Emmanuel Levinas notices about the poem's imagery, that "being *resembles* itself, doubles itself and immobilizes." It stuns thought toward a recognition that what is spoken of, the epos, does not narrate an event or describe an object, but serves, or can serve, to disrupt the play of language as it produces in a seamless production the story of the world. The meaning it offers points to the gap of meaning, where meaning is neither present nor absent, where some primal affectivity *feels* bare being. It is a time when what is, is not yet. The poem's meaning then comes as a traumatization of the entire field of meaningfulness, including the exegesis. In "resembling" the poem, or rather, the doubling of the poem, the exegesis furthers, deepens, and intensifies the immobility. Its help lies in the short gasp of wonder that can arise when the words cease having their meaning-function.

Emissaries

Jesse Graves

Some mornings when I'm reading
early, no light yet but the table lamp,
my left hand will run through scales
along the spine of the open book.
My hands keep their own remembrance
buried in fine grooves of flesh.
The fingers turn over ignitions, faucets,
always attuned to their proper force,
knuckles never breaking things
unless my brain overpowers them.
They've discovered spectacular terrains,
soft enclosures I can never enter again.
I send them ahead as scouts for survey,
emissaries that flip the lights
in every dark hallway of the future.

Commentary: Over the past several years, my poems have gotten longer and more driven by narrative, and they tend to need longer lines and more expansive structures. Once I noticed this trend, I set myself a task, that for one month I would write no poems longer than 20 lines, or any lines exceeding 12 syllables. One component of the art of poetry is compression, doing the most with the least, and I felt that I needed to reconnect with that aspect of the craft. Most of my favorite poets can write both profound long poems and incisive short poems—I think here not only of Walt Whitman and William Wordsworth, but also of contemporary examples like B. H. Fairchild and Robert Morgan. Many of the poems I attempted during my experiment weren't really poems at all, and they didn't go anywhere, but a couple emerged as the right match of form and content. "Emissaries" says all I wanted to say about its subject, because that subject remains mysterious to me. How does one account for what might be called "muscle memory"? The poem might have pursued the science of the phenomena, but I was really only interested in the feeling of experiencing it. I wrote the poem

in one sitting, early in the morning, with a maroon-red Sailor fountain pen, a gift from my old friend and mentor, the poet Jeff Daniel Marion. The dark blue ink gliding over textured, unlined paper in the pale light of an East Tennessee winter morning was beautiful enough to inspire its own lines of poetry . . . which gives me an idea . . .

Wild Strawberries at St. Mary's Hospital

Jesse Graves

After a long stagger through gleaming tiles and interlocking hallways,
Through a glassed-in walkway between buildings,
Fighting off a milky, breaded, cafeteria smell,

I followed your singing to a concrete bench beside a flower garden:

A pair of bright red heads peering out of the mulch,
Two wild strawberries grown in the sculpted domestic beds,
Ignoring me from beneath the shrubbery's damp morning webs.

Why so quiet now? Mute messengers, you've lost your nerve.

You live in the shadows of plastic-looking purple and yellow tulips.
An affront to hospital groundskeepers, the surgeons of the soil.

Summer air idling around us in the roar of central cooling units.

You were one of the disappointments of my childhood.

Scattered beautifully at the corners of the yard where I built castles,
In fields where we spread salt for the lumbering cows,
Along the road banks covered with gravel dust.

I defied my mother who said, they're pretty but you can't eat them.

You twisted my mouth into a ribbon, made my eyes stream,
Left a bitter burning film on my tongue all day.

I don't believe you called me here to tell me anything good.

You're not supposed to be here—you're an irregularity,
A blemish, a spot on the x-ray of the hospital's controlled space.

When I try to picture you as a sign of hope, of happy remembrance,
I recall a scene from a subtitled black and white movie:

An old man visits his childhood home and remembers his love
For a young cousin, a Swedish maiden in a summer dress,
How they picked wild strawberries together by a lake.

The pair coming back inside to a fine meal, a happy clucking family.

And then I remember his dream of the clock with no hands,
The death carriage in an empty street, his own body revealed.

Late morning scrolling past and I can't go back inside.
My uncle is in there, beginning the dying that I knew
Would happen, that I knew I would run away from.

Life unfolding on a screen, real time and false space. Ever unfolding.

Commentary: Hospitals can be disorienting places, with their long hallways, fluorescent lights, and impersonal decorations. This disorientation becomes magnified if one receives traumatic news about a loved one, and my poem “Wild Strawberries at St. Mary’s Hospital” attempts to convey that sense of wanting to escape both the physical setting and the emotional distress of such an instance. I lost my favorite uncle, Gerald Graves, a decade ago, and wasn’t able to write about it for some time, but certain episodes of our experience together are unforgettable to me, and I now feel compelled to write about them. The poem opens in the state of disbelief I felt at receiving his grim diagnosis, and the dream-like quality of trying to get outside for fresh air. The wild strawberries in the hospital arboretum were so out of place in the otherwise manicured garden that I felt as though they had called out to me. I wanted to view them as a hopeful sign, but found that impossible. I recently had seen Ingmar Bergman’s magnificent film “Wild Strawberries,” and the imagery remained prevalent in my mind for a very long time. I felt so disembodied in the hospital garden that it seemed I could be watching a film of my life, a film whose plot had just taken a turn I hoped wouldn’t happen, but was powerless to reverse.

A Resort in a Florida Key

Robert Waugh

The bougainvillea simmers in the dawn,
it spills across a rusty, sober branch
of gray palmetto, sparking mutual lights—
you can see them in the dew, in the ripe moisture,
our choruses of color. Not far off
the purple petals of the morning glory
nod sage assessments to these spectacles
and concur to the day. The impudent
hibiscus asks to advance radical outrage
within the soil, a species of raw darkness
around its root, its stamen chortles outrage,
and then the nitter-natter of all else
appealing, and concealing, every blade
of grass maintaining for the revolution,
every distinct fiber of Spanish moss;
but neither the morning glory nor bougainvillea
can see their way to such a thought, the day
steadies and humming works out all that it
can be, no clouds upon its brow, no shadow
westward upon the beach, only the sun
complacent in its generosity,
giving itself forth, staving off the night—
we know about the night, and so we need
say nothing more but silence the hibiscus
that sinks into a pet. The world in this
balance of light proceeds upon its triumph.

Commentary: This poem began as a few lines as I stepped out of a heated pool on an extended vacation in Florida, more lines were added as the vacation proceeded until I finished the poem back here in the big cold. Florida has always struck me as rather sinister in its abundance, and I think that the poem was wrestling with that, playful as it is. It strikes me now as rather stiff but quietly ironic.

Suspended Animation

Andrew Higgins

You're leaning back in the bed, the IV in
dripping sodium chloride and antibiotics
while you play video games, intent on the tricks
you guide the electric snowboarders through, a spin,
a dip, and a backwards flip, and the nurse begins
to take your vitals. They're okay. No longer frantic,
your mother and I plumb the strange semiotics
of the Pediatrics Ward and the infection in
your left lung, white on the x-ray, like snow.
You've nearly finished the race, and the snowboarder falls,
stands up and dusts the pixilated snow
off his electric suit. The hospital halls
sparkle. It's early November. Too soon for snow.
We wait. You pause the game. And everything stalls.

Commentary: I wrote this while sitting in the hospital with Sammy. Liz and I were taking turns spending nights at the hospital. I can't remember when exactly in the whole ordeal I wrote this, but it was before his surgery, late at night, while he was sleeping. I often write sonnets as a way of escape. I think what's made the sonnet such a venerable form in English poetry is the fact that it strikes a balance between form and content which allows the poet to lose him or herself in the form without letting fully go of the thread of thought. The structure is rigid enough to distract the writer into creativity, yet supple enough to allow for the intelligent development of theme (not that I manage to pull it off—I'm speaking of the ideal, of course). In comparison to the sonnet, forms like the villanelle or the sestina are more gimmicky. Circus tricks. Whereas free verse, unless handled carefully, leads a writer to narcissism.

White Oak Road

For George Washburn

Robert Singleton

While you search the truth
Of our abandonment for a shield,
You close the shade upon us.

The moon stalks above you like a demented kitten
mowing down paths of long gray string,
while the thighs of the new light
meet near the shadow of the cross
and the hospital bed and the shoulder wound.

The voice of the night
Is a voice bordered and stained with tears.

Closed between voices and doors,
you pass the clutch of hymn and rook
and jump from the lord
echoed in boundaries of glass,
as a gray pentacle
and a shadowy cyclamen.

Commentary: The poem “White Oak Road” is dedicated to the memory of my great, great, (great?) uncle George Washburn of the 90th New York Infantry regiment. He was wounded in action at the Battle of Cedar Creek in the Shenandoah Valley on October 19, 1864 and subsequently died in a military hospital in Philadelphia on October 31, 1864. His service records list “a gun shot wound to the shoulder” as the cause, which more than likely meant death from an amputation or some kind of infection. The poem concentrates on the exact moment between life and death, the moment where historical life meets memory. I’ve been working on a number of poems with that general theme lately, and this one fits in that category. The moment is brought together in the final stanza by the images of the pentangle, a five-pointed star indicating the four compass points and a fifth where memory scatters, and the cyclamen, a member of the primrose family with brightly colored heart shaped leaves that resemble stained glass where memory is frozen.

Hudson River Love Song

Alex Andriese

Black Creek gurgled down to the river-
Dark. Sparrows sang a Franciscan song
To Saint Francis, who had arrived, finally,
Walking along the headlands of the Hudson,

And Saint Francis was not Walt Whitman
And the song he sang held up like a lantern,
The knit-knot of constellation delicately
Suspended for us. Like something to fish for.

Like the moon in the Hudson River dark.

Commentary: In writing a poem, I think, you are constantly making and rejecting other poems. Finally there is no poem except the one a reader can read. But the writer retains the memory of all the poems he didn't write, and maybe even the writing itself contains the memory of these rejected things.

I tend to write by hand until the page is thick with scrawl. Eventually I type what I've written so that I can see the shape of it. I don't like to look at computer screens until I'm ready to send the poem to someone else. Computers have a way of sanitizing or even falsifying, the body-bound quirks of language. I don't doubt that much greater poems than mine are written on computers, but I can't stand it. Computers are where you do your business.

"Hudson River Love Song" is like a chant. Also the only poem I've written at one go. It came to me as at the end of a long, incredibly stupid poem about a waitress and a flock of geese (which disappeared). Brad McDuffie suggested I lop off these lines and make a poem. The poem, first published in *Des Hymnagistes*, sings not of a "sudden emotion" (as in Pound's Imagism) but of gradual motion, dropping down from Whitman and Burroughs walking along Black Creek in the day to Saint Francis walking along the Hudson in the dark, I think it's still an indirect result of reading Pound's imagist principles of directness and concision.

Double Cure

Brad McDuffie

We settled in the Great Basin,
Where the waters of Walker Lake
Parted the valley below
The Wassuck Range.

Bankrupted by the city
And the Church, the desert
Was an anopsic wilderness
And at last we walked by faith.

So, revival came from the cutthroat,
Brook, brown and rainbow trout.
We lifted them from the waters,
Broke and partook.

Commentary: I wrote this poem for the *Des Hymnagistes* anthology. It is the third poem of a cycle of poems I titled “Seven Hymns from the West,” in which I was exploring the relationship between some of the old hymns that had been ingrained in me as a boy and the Imagist poetry movement. I think that this poem is the clearest approximation of how I was trying to work out the tension between those two ideas. I remember having a difficult time with the word “anopsic.” I kept taking it out and putting it back in. I finally left it in when Alex Shakespeare said he liked it. Looking at it now, it has sort of a theological feel to it that goes along with the rest of the poem. I remember being excited about how “cutthroat” worked as an endline, and when I looked up at the eighth line and saw “faith” I knew I got a lucky break and was thankful for it.

I was listening to a bunch of great hymns at the time and had a live recording of Bob Dylan singing “Rock of Ages” on repeat. I heard someone say once that the problem with the Church is that no one knows the old hymns anymore, and I guess I’ve come to feel the same could be said about modern poetry. But then again, the other night I was sitting in the Rosendale Theater and the credits to the Coen brother’s adaptation of *True Grit* rolled and Iris Dement was singing “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms.”

Le Grand Cerf et l'Ombre

(After E. P.)

Matthew Nickel

The old stag stands in the forest
The spirit of the stag drifts in the half-light filtered
through
Beech leaves and crossed antlers

Le Grand Cerf glides in the sun-crossed shaking sweet
fern. . . .

As light as the shadow of the leaves
that shape the fern and forest floor
He moved among cathedral pews
Praying he walked with patches of stained light upon
him

Domine non sum dignus, the prayer still on his tongue
“Help thou thy unbelief”
And he: “that ship?
And two seas I’ve abided over.”
“Not so far, no, not so far now,
There is an island—where no one knows—
A land fairer than day . . .”

*“Nunc dimittis servum tuum,
Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace.”*

He prays the sign,
thinking

Large as the shadow of the stag
That waits for the arrow in the green dark forest.

Commentary: Why was this poem included in Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology (Des Hymnagistes Press 2010)—in other words, what makes it hymnagism?

Hymnagism is complicated and there is no manifesto and there are

no rules like there was with Imagism. The whole book tells you what it is, from the poems through the “Documents” to the end. This poem is merely a translation of a poem by Ezra Pound, “The Fish and the Shadow.” By “translation” I mean something more like what Pound sought in his *personae*. The woman in Pound’s poem descends the stair having just dreamt of being in the time of Andrew de Mareuil, a twelfth-century troubadour poet. The man in this poem enters the cathedral and speaks to an apparition. As I wrote the poem, I was thinking of the transition of poetry from Arnaut Daniel to Dante, where the inaccessible lady of the troubadours became the intercessory lady of the Christian tradition. Maybe the religious potential of Pound’s poem is to be realized in this poem just as the religious potential of Daniel’s songs manifested into the cantos of Dante’s *Commedia*.

If it is hymnagistic, what is the hymn, how does it sing?

The apparition tells of “a land fairer than day,” and any hymnodist or church-goer should recognize those lines from the hymn “In the Sweet By-and-By,” echoing the general hope that the man and the apparition shall meet “on that beautiful shore.” The whole form of the poem relies on this fact. The Latin words from the Mass of the Roman Catholic Church may also be chanted. The *Nunc dimittis* obviously echoes Pound’s “Cantico del Sole” (echoing another hymn by Saint Francis) as well as Simeon’s canticle.

Why is your title in French?

I guess I like the sound of “Le Grand Cerf” better than “The Great Stag.” Then too, it is a literary allusion and a reference to a very old city in France with cobblestone streets and an old cathedral and a very numinous forest.

Love Song

Sarah Hurd

Your hands are Nothing—
I've ever seen before.
They are rough with insolence,
Grains of sand
That beckon—
Silently—
Refusing to listen—
To the distant murmuring oceanic sunrise,
But waiting—

Silvery smooth
Like the half-stead crescent moon
Lurking behind molten ever-greens—
As if to hide their shine
Under the weeping forest umbrella
To burn the paths
To tear the trees asunder—
And the past—
In the softly trembling wake—
Standing charred and broken.

Here they are tempestuously quiet,
As if to stroke
The phantom
Of some girl's lost dream.
And you,
You touch the phantom
Of some girl . . .
And her lost dream.

What secrets lie beneath?
What stories hide
Beneath the winding crevice of lines?
Maybe scars—
Or maybe not—
Or maybe lines of scars

Or maybe lines of stories
Of stories lines and scars of stories
That flow into each other
Babbling, murmuring, colliding
Rushing, too fast, too fast
Into the INCOMPREHENSIBLE!

Lines that,
Like Babylonian typescript,
Must say everything
You would care to know—
And quietly
Say nothing at all.

Commentary: “Love Song” documents the life of a troubled man through using the conceit of his hands, which take on all the non-visual memories of his past. The poem’s form, unrhymed free verse, seeks to emulate the psychological interrogation present in H. D.’s imagist poems. Hands become a vehicle that drives the speaker into the psyche of her (silent) partner, instead of relying on a precisely metered verse. Because of its descent into the psychology of the Speaker’s partner, the poem also interrogates the epistemological limitations of empathy within the context of relationship.

The poem oscillates between an condemnation of all the attributes of the subject’s psychology that the speaker finds troubling, to an understanding of her own solipsistic complicity in unfairly judging her partner. Although the speaker consistently struggles to understand and represent emotionality in a logical way, the poem utilizes natural imagery and anaphoric repetition to symbolize the complexity of these emotions. The Speaker, at the poem’s turn in stanza 6, represents the

harrowing trauma of this journey out of our own experience and into another, the unfamiliarity that becomes immensely troubling. Not only does the Speaker at the conclusion of the poem acknowledge the epistemological limitations inherent in their relationship, she also understands the comfort of her own solipsistic understanding (and the risk it poses to her partner).

The poem ends with a recognition of the Speaker's complicity, her understanding that her Partner's reactions are meaningful and symbolic (his hands must speak because his words cannot) and places emphasis on her desire and ability to discern that meaning using her clouded empathetic solipsistic empathy.

Becoming Sky

David J. Hurst

And the first drips
of the day's dew
sizzle upon
the sunflowers' field's
grasses and flowers
silent to human ears
October's sun forces its way
its countenance flourishing
in colors complementing
the mountain's seven melding hues
painted in a diminishing bouquet
spattered perfection
but best when ripe
which lasts an instant
in an inspiring moment
then loses perfection
composting to sky

Commentary: This was a poem inspired by my morning commute to work. After crossing the green bridge on 299, I cracked the window and looked at the foliage covering the Shawangunk mountain range and loved how the moisture was lifting from the gorgeous flora as the sun seemed to flirt with life.

This fleeting moment of universe and me melded, absorbed, and dispelled. The autumnal loss of perfection and inevitable death of life is a commonly used theme but influenced me nonetheless because of the power that sustains the cliché.

I felt my first writing of "Becoming Sky" was very wordy. After I let the poem sit and looked at it a few months later, I cut out what I felt were filler words that didn't best describe what my moment captured. I condensed the poem to as few words as I felt necessary for the image I wanted to create.

Melting Dross

Wyatt Krause

The mind is an oilfield,
drilled for ideals, ideas,
alchemic explosions.
Who cares for the excess, the waste,
The mental erosions.

It's time to get up,
get the morning coffee, hover, with a
Brand name on the box, a brand name lover,
Awaken from a dream world
just to find another.

Wake to the static,
slumber the same way,
can't find sweet
silence during the day.

Open the Daily Bugle,
glean more knowledge
than Shakespeare.
Advertisements, Chastisements,
somehow emptier, this mental sphere.

Billboards, internet,
constant streaming of
Sensations.
Waste and excess everywhere
So hard to see visions, elation.

The world's full of dross,
lots of dead clay,
Can we refine it,
Burn some away?

The world is so full
Of messages, where can one more
Fit in?

Nothing new under the sun,
Wise men say with a grin.

So put pen to the paper,
Ink on that quill,
feel lucky, feel
Brave, go forth and
slap clay on the wheel.

The creation grows
In the refiner's spire,
For what comes next,
Just look to the fire

The muses still live!
Unfettered fingers fly
across the keys.

A thankful utterance, a spark,
The listless chains fall free.

Superheated thoughts emerge as
possible masterwork marks
fly free from the forge.
I've burned all the dross I can,
This creative piece now yours.

So much to write,
dross melting away,
fluid hope fast,
time to seize the day.

Commentary: My creative process is, for all its promises and faults, akin to a whirlwind—frenetic, with concepts everywhere, blown onto the page and off again just as fast. Perhaps the fact that I have no true “process” of writing, or cling to a particular poetic style is the stamp of being a product of the 21st century. We don’t have to go far to find creativity—movies, music, videogames, a tour through art blogs online or three coffee houses in New Paltz is all you need to know that the passion to create is still thriving. But it is also daunting to have images, sound bites, snappy one-liners in commercials constantly bombarding us. Where do you find your own voice in all of that? Where can you state with a sense of pride that you fit in to society’s grand, amorphous scheme? In a cynical society like ours, where comments on internet forums are often trite at best, and lethally venomous at worst, how do you put earnest writing out for others to view, to judge, to critique?

I submit this poem, my own *Ars Poetica* on creative expression, as a rallying call to my own creative thoughts and inspiration. I love good poetry—the epics of *Beowulf* and *The Canterbury Tales* are comfort food to me as I marvel at the sincere wordsmithing of Shakespeare and the intellectual might of T. S. Eliot. “Melting Dross” is immature in comparison, but earnest, a use of simple, song-like rhyme a way to imitate the crescendo of my own creative hopes and dreams. I find it a promise to myself for writing to come. It’s a personal line in the sand that is being drawn, that once it is crossed over, will hopefully find creative fulfillment and invigoration.

The process of artistic creation can feel all too daunting, as if there are chains attached. This poem is the acceptance of that fact, so hopefully one day, a person can move past this obstacle with a sense of finality.

Fabric

James Sherwood

Aglet. Frittle. Greeble. Lacuna.
Sheath. Depression. Projection. Void.
Words *mean*—naming is power.
En arche en ho logos: In the beginning was the Word.
We utter into order, declaring
what is and what is not.
But the universe is unspooling,
glittering stars spattered on
a fading tapestry, fraying.
Warp and weft widen,
the truth slips through,
fibers in outstretched fingers.

The threads trip us up.
Tangling tongues hang
on words like
femoroacetabular impingement
or neuropathy, etiology,
idiopathic (a way of saying
“we don’t know why”).
Cat’s cradles clot together,
knotted skeins, tripwires.
One spiderwebbed sentence
like cracks beneath our feet;
we are unstrung.

When I was little, I lay on the floor—
the sun streamed through the pane,
bent beams bleached boxes
on the dark carpet.
Backlit bits of dust
tumbled lazily above me.
I asked my mother what
they were; she said
sunbeams, but I heard

“sun-*beans*” —drifting motes
of a star made manifest.
Words *mean*.

Now, I carefully pick through
bolts and rolls of the
cloth of language,
hoping it will be a safety-
net and not a noose.
Burlap or taffeta?
Misunderstanding can be
serendipity.
When words fail me and
the world is torn,
I mend the rends
with sun-beans.

The sun will go dark, immense like
a monstrous balloon before it
collapses.
You can't unfray the framework
but you might patch it.
You can't undo what is
but you can speak of it.
These words are my strands.
Help me to tighten these seams.

Commentary: This poem was written in a few sittings in the Fall of 2010, with minor revisions over the following months. While I appreciate and value revision, many of my poems are only lightly revised. Sometimes, when the muse is particularly kind, she speaks quickly

and clearly, and a poem springs forth, fully-formed from one's head, as Athena from Zeus.

I do welcome feedback from fellow poets. One particularly astute critic noted I did not capitalize "word" in the first stanza—seeing as I invoke the Gospel of John in the very same line, it seemed right to make that change.

Another reader said "the whole poem is the third stanza—cut the rest." Indeed, that is the "heart" of the poem, in terms of theme and architecture . . . but it only tells so much, and I wanted the poem to function on various levels. As an example, Dante, in his "Letter to Can Grande," explains the filters through which the *La Divina Commedia* might be read: i.e. literal/metaphorical/moral/anagogical. Poetry often compresses, but that compression is augmented by context. Here, a single moment in time is framed or book-ended by the birth and eventual death of the universe.

In terms of prosody, the poem is clearly not a fixed form, but as T. S. Eliot notes in his 1917 essay "Reflections on Vers Libre," "No verse is free for the man who wants to do a good job." I take great care in the topography, sound-sense, and metrics of my poems—I believe this is clear to the reader who scans or reads them aloud. Endstopping and enjambment make or change meanings, emphasize or deemphasize.

The overall conceit in the poem is one of textiles—man-made objects serving as metaphors for larger ideas—and I tried to couple that with a theme of the importance of language and communication (which is, in my own philosophy, one of the markers of what it means to be human, defining humanity. Language is the vehicle for our pleasure and our pain, and it is the way in which we make sense of existence. We may hold emotional and spiritual convictions, but they cannot exist in a vacuum; they must be communicated in order to mean, and in fact we have these beliefs because they were somehow communicated to us—it is virtually a tautological relationship. This

poem is a communication and is about communication (and is obviously concerned with miscommunication). In Forster's words, "Only connect."

So much more succinct, no?

Some notes about language:

A "frittle" (line 1) is a temporary impression/depression left in the skin—think of the morning crease in one's face from a bunched-up pillowcase. May be related to the Latin "Frittilus," a dice-cup with an inlaid pattern.

A "greeble" (also line 1) is detailing added to a flat surface to break it up visually—picture cinema spaceships, bristling with ray-guns and antennae.

For Mum 4-15-07

Pamela Ugor

Such sweet sleepy sounds

 This unseen upon a cloud

The rainfall drowns us

Commentary: This is written in the Japanese haiku style with the 5-7-5-syllable form. Originally this poem was a short story. However, the story was laden with emotions. In thinking about removing emotions and simplifying and extracting the essence of a moment I thought about the haiku, a form I love for simplification.

In working in the haiku form the poem began to connect to sounds and images instead of emotions. The sounds of the poem reflect the rain and the music of an Icelandic band called Mum. This is where the title comes from. It also works if a reader were to picture a mum in reference to a flower.

Thinking about spring rains and the images that go along with rain, the layout of the haiku worked in that visually it looks like a cloud. The haiku itself comments on what is not seen without telling the reader. The date references what was going on in upstate NY at the time, which was days-long rainstorms and flooding all over the NY area.

El Doctor

Daniel Valentin

Guillermo—El Doctor

Your creation. Your flesh—your blood—
to create. Me.

Dear curator, how could you put me on this pedestal.

Presenting me—you swollen, arrogant—
do not touch.

But I yearn as Galatea. You who birthed this anatomy;
who edenized me. The precision in which you—completed:
the arch of my back—the slope of my nose—the fury in my eyes.

My outwards. My innards.

You incisor, you splicer, formulator—
what have you done?

this is my ode to you—but I beg

let me go

el doctor—father.

Commentary: “El Doctor” was birthed from a simple idea, be mad at the idea of creation. Inspired after reading the story of Pygmalion and Galatea, I was interested in exploring why Galatea would be mad at her creation. In order for the poem to feel angry I wanted to emphasize the “you,” the creator, in contrast with the “me/my,” the person who was born. When exploring Galatea, I think she was mad at her perfection and being put on a pedestal; therefore, I decided the creator would need several different terms: curator, incisor, etc. But eventually I needed a word which would emphasize creation, but have a hard sound. I came up with “el doctor.” The sound and rhythm in Spanish gave a harsh sound versus its English counterpart, but it was important that the word be immediately identifiable for native English speakers. I wanted to emphasize hard sounds and a disjointed feeling (through the use of dashes and ending lines with consonants). But as angry as Galatea was at her creator, I think she was happy to be alive, so rather than frame the first and last word of the poem with hard-sounding consonants, I used words that would sound smooth and personalize this doctor. This makes the poem sound more personal and elevates the anger in the poet’s voice.

V GRADUATE ESSAYS

Patronymic Power Play: The Delegitimization of Female Identity in *Philadelphia Fire*

Liz Bonhag

Philadelphia Fire, a novel by John Edgar Wideman centering around the bombing of the MOVE cult in 1985, explores the issues of social oppression that surround African Americans in late twentieth-century America. This essay posits that although much criticism of *Philadelphia Fire* focuses on the importance of the relationship between fathers and sons as the backbone of a strong black resistance against white oppression, I contend this patriarchic allegiance is built in the novel by undercutting the power of women. *Philadelphia Fire* presents a troubling characterization of women, most notably that females are rarely regarded as whole individuals, but rather as a collection of sexualized and objectified parts. Wideman's use of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* as a postcolonial allegory of black oppression in America also serves as an allegory of the ways in which women become the victims in the struggle between black men and white men for power in Philadelphia in the same way that Miranda becomes a victim, and even a tool, in the power struggle between Prospero and Caliban for power of lineage on the island.

Among critics, *Philadelphia Fire* is commonly viewed as a postcolonial text that explores the issue of a reduced sense of black patriarchy and patronymic lineage in the context of a society controlled by white men. Mary Paniccia Carden expresses this concept succinctly: "Remembering Penn's invocation of a new, egalitarian city and mode of citizenship, Wideman tracks the relation of contemporary African American men to a national history defined in and as white male authority and ownership" (475). She argues that *Philadelphia Fire* dem-

onstrates that “the relationship between black fathers and sons has been colonized and damaged by white claims to foundational masculinity, claims that root manhood in possessive individualism and ‘vertical’ patriarchy, in discourses, objects, and material positions withheld from black fathers, uninherited by black sons” (475-76). Indeed, white ownership and authority throughout American history has significantly affected the lineage of black families. I recall my sister’s experience of meeting a black woman with our maiden name, Kelso. My sister remarked to her that she had never met a black person named Kelso (the name being specifically of Scottish origin), and the woman responded that she had never met a *white* person named Kelso. Although a lighthearted encounter, this interaction brought up the much darker implication that the name had crossed racial boundaries due to the same issues of white ownership (in this case most likely through slavery) and subsequent denial of black patronymic lineage that Wideman scrutinizes in *Philadelphia Fire*.

It becomes apparent that, for Wideman, patronymic lineage—being given your father’s name—is the ultimate conferment of power from one generation to the next. In his autobiographical text on the subject, *Fatheralong*, Wideman states:

What’s your name? American history can be read as a long paternity suit. . . . Think of our country as a vast orphanage. . . . For the majority of Americans, the issues of paternity and patrimony are settled. To be white is to be connected to the Great White Father, the ultimate source of power, privilege, and legitimacy. For the minority who can’t claim to be white, the issue is also settled. But less happily. (82)

Here Wideman expands the issue from one of degraded manhood (the terminology used in Carden’s criticism) to one of disempowerment; there is reason to believe that for Wideman, power and manhood are closely linked, perhaps even one and the same. This is evidenced by the fact that although he seems to criticize the concept of America’s “paternity suit,” what he actually criticizes is that minorities cannot use it to claim power for themselves in the same way that white people can. He seems to have no problem with patriarchy itself, and even endorses it by advocating its reestablishment in black communities in an effort at empowerment. Indeed, Wideman states that a person who does not have a father is orphaned. This completely nullifies motherhood and renders maternal lineage meaningless.

In order to make his argument that the American racial power struggle is based upon issues of patronymic lineage, Wideman must somehow reduce the importance of women. If women hold just as much power as men and the lineage of women holds just as much meaning as male lineage (which we know to be a biological fact), then the argument that connection to the “Great White *Father*” provides the “ultimate source of power, privilege and legitimacy” becomes at most a half-truth. When viewed from the standpoint of gender equity, Wideman’s argument becomes very tenuous, and this, I argue, is why his text, *Philadelphia Fire*, attempts to portray women as fragmented parts that exist primarily for male pleasure and ownership, and as a vehicle through which to perpetuate male lineage, rather than as whole people with autonomy and rights over their own bodies.

The deconstruction of women into assorted body parts in *Philadelphia Fire* begins almost immediately, in Cudjoe’s description of “a dark haired lady” (6). Wideman does not give this woman a name—he only refers to her by her hair color and gender—suggesting that in Cudjoe’s mind this body part is the most meaningful aspect of her identity; her name is inconsequential. Her importance in the novel is that she unsuccessfully attempted to teach Cudjoe “the Greek for her body parts. Hair is . . . eyes are . . . nose is . . . the Greek words escaping him even as he hears them. But he learns the heat of her shoulders, curve of bone beneath the skin. No language she speaks is his” (6). Immediately Wideman illustrates his protagonist’s disconnect from women. Not even for a second is Cudjoe able to hear, learn from, or understand this woman. The only things he is able to know about her are superficial, sexualized, and targeted toward his use of her: “the heat of her shoulders,” for example. And this, it appears, he teaches himself, thus effectively removing her voice and her knowledge from his memory and from the text. Wideman immediately conveys to readers the unimportance of female knowledge, identity, and voice and the importance of the parts of women’s bodies through which men can derive sexual pleasure and procreate themselves, which in Cudjoe’s case turn out to be the only aspects of this woman worth paying attention to or remembering.

Jerry Varsava praises Wideman’s work as an “eloquent” demonstration of the need for increased personal responsibility in a world in which diversity is intrapersonal as well as interpersonal: “In admitting that African Americans are implicated in the dissolution of civic order

in contemporary urban American society, Wideman courageously engages the issue of personal accountability” (425). While the blatantly sexist treatment of black women by the novel’s black protagonists does demonstrate that the “economy of oppression” is complex, the novel fails to demonstrate Varsava’s connected argument that *Philadelphia Fire* advocates for “personal accountability.” In fact, the novel seems to excuse characters from the responsibilities that Varsava claims it advocates for.

One instance in which Cudjoe confronts himself regarding his obviously problematic obsession with reducing the women in his life to mere parts blatantly excuses him from engaging the question of sexism. Cudjoe stares “like a dummy” (27) at a woman’s uncovered crotch in Clark Park. Seemingly aware of the heavily sexualized descriptions of women in the narrative, Cudjoe asks himself: “What was he looking for in women’s bodies?” (27). But the question is quickly dismissed: “Surely he’d have tripped over it trudging up and back those golden beaches on Mykonos. But no. The mystery persisted” (27). Although the narration pauses to question the treatment of females in the novel, the immediate refusal to actively engage the issue negates any possibility that this is a serious concern in the text. Perhaps the reason the “mystery” of Cudjoe’s constant objectification of women persists is that his plan for resolving the problem is to accidentally “trip over” the answer. The fact that such a blasé response satisfies Cudjoe’s meaningful question demonstrates the frivolity with which Wideman treats female identity in this novel.

Another voyeuristic encounter reveals more about how men view women as objects in the novel. Cudjoe wakes up in the night and spies on his editor’s teenage daughter as she takes an outdoor shower. When Cudjoe begins to feel that his leering is inappropriate, he directs his mental apologies to Sam, Cassy’s father, instead of to Cassy herself. This is an odd thing to do, as it’s Cassy’s privacy that is being violated, not Sam’s; Sam isn’t even alive at this time. We learn that the reason Cudjoe feels sorry for Sam is that Cassy represents her father’s “last god-damned chance” at purity in his life; he himself has “sinned grievously” (65). It becomes clear then, that in Cudjoe’s mind, Cassy—a living, breathing, woman with personal rights to privacy—is less deserving of consideration than the reputation of her dead father. Cudjoe even imagines a fight between himself and Sam over who has rights to Cassy, sexual rights for Cudjoe and paternal rights for Sam, stating that if Sam

were alive he'd "probably try to kick Cudjoe's ass. Old liver spotted fists flailing. Battering Cudjoe's hard brown skin" (66). This fight over who has rights to Cassy leaves no room for Cassy to have rights to herself, and does not even consider such a possibility. This struggle for power between men, like so many others in this novel, is played out at the expense and disempowerment of a woman.

The encounter with Cassy also leads Cudjoe to make a statement about women's bodies being like cities, which turns out to be an avenue through which to understand how women function in the novel. Cudjoe states that Cassy's

fingers caress her breasts, rub the black patch of groin, preparing them, offering them to the same god at whom she stares, rapt, when she arches her neck, leans her head back on her shoulders. She welcomes him, drinks him into every pore of her body, her skin the thousand eyed gate of a great city thrown open to receive him. (63)

Clearly, this fantasy-based "description" of what Cudjoe sees Cassy doing in the shower is rife with problematic assumptions, not the least of which that Cudjoe positions himself to be not just *a* god but specifically *her* god. However, for my purposes, I'd like to focus on a more subtle aspect of this passage, that of woman as city; I'll leave the reader to perform his/her own analysis of the more blatantly troubling statements.

Earlier in the novel, when viewing Philadelphia from the steps of the art museum, Cudjoe envisions the city speaking to him:

I belong to you, the city says. This is what I was meant to be. You can grasp the pattern. Makes sense of me. Connect the dots. I was constructed for you. Like a field of stars, I need you to bring me to life. My names, my gods poised on the tip of your tongue. All you have to do is speak and you reveal me, complete me. (44)

This passage, describing how Cudjoe perceives Philadelphia, is strikingly similar to the one which describes how he perceives Cassy. Both the woman and the city, in his mind, look to him to make sense out of their fragmented parts. He is rendered godlike in comparison to their incomplete forms, and therefore is welcomed—urged even—to use them as he sees fit. As Carden puts it, "Philadelphia's lines, zones, parts, and patterns offer more than affirmation of the founder's colonial vision; they present a multifaceted cityscape that provides Cudjoe with opportunities to revise histories of white paternal domination" (483). It

is in this way that, just as the racial power struggle between white and black men is played out on the cityscape of Philadelphia, so too is it played out on the bodies of women. Philadelphia is important primarily because those who dominate the land can perpetuate their culture and increase their power and influence; similarly, women become important only inasmuch as those who dominate them can perpetuate themselves and their lineage, which Wideman argues is the ultimate source of power, privilege, and legitimacy.

Cudjoe's production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* figures into the majority of criticism on *Philadelphia Fire*, and it becomes extremely important in the context of male power leveraged on the back of a disenfranchised woman. The significance of *The Tempest* is heavily emphasized in the text:

This is the central event. I assure you. I repeat. Whatever my assurance is worth. Being the fabulator. This is the central event, this production of *The Tempest* staged by Cudjoe in the late late 1960s, outdoors, in a park in West Philly. . . . *The Tempest* sits dead center . . . it is the bounty and hub of all else written about the fire, though it comes here . . . nearer the end than the beginning. (132)

The Tempest serves as an allegory of how women in Wideman's text are viewed not as autonomous beings, but rather as tools in a male battle for dominance. Further, Jessica Slights advocates that *The Tempest* be viewed as a text that challenges "the limitations of a critical binarism that has been unable to reconcile feminist theory's insistence that women be read as active agents of discourse and postcolonial theory's insistence that ethnic and racial others be recognized as legitimate subjects within that same discourse" (375). I would argue that critical binarism has become similarly problematic in much of the work concerning *Philadelphia Fire*. Postcolonial and feminist readings of the text cannot remain at odds with each other if a truly rigorous analysis of the "economy of oppression" in the novel is performed.

Slights offers an artful analysis of *The Tempest*, challenging both nineteenth-century readings of the play, which are racially problematic, as well as post-colonial readings, which confront the racist underpinnings of traditional criticism, yet then become problematic themselves in terms of gender inequity. She states that "contemporary scholars dispense with Miranda in favor of analyses of the politically and culturally charged confrontation between Prospero and Caliban" (360). This

confrontation is the focus of most criticism of the play in the context of *Philadelphia Fire*. Varsava states that

Cudjoe rewrites *The Tempest* as an allegory of racial hate and colonialism. . . . In it [he] offers the most powerful, most eloquent critique of racism in the novel [and a] compelling deconstruction of the Caliban myth as codified in *The Tempest* and taught to literally millions of people since the early seventeenth century. (437)

In this way, *Philadelphia Fire*'s adoption of *The Tempest* casts the play in the same postcolonial light that Slight's describes as inherently problematic due to the fact that such readings fail to acknowledge Miranda and her rights, in favor of focusing on the relationship between Prospero and Caliban, and championing Caliban's attempted rape of Miranda as an act of resistance against oppression without considering its moral implications.

Slight's argument regarding how Miranda functions in the power dynamics between Prospero and Caliban centers around a consideration of "Caliban's obsession with lineage and the direct threat that his fixation with dynasty poses to Miranda" (372). The points that Slight makes about the relationship of Miranda to Caliban and Prospero are the exact points that I wish to make about the relationship of women to black and white men in *Philadelphia Fire*. The treatment of women as tools for perpetuating power through lineage rather than as autonomous beings is the issue at stake in both texts. Regarding his attempted rape of Miranda, Caliban directly states that his motivation was to reproduce himself and thus his power: "'O ho, O ho,' retorts Caliban, 'would't had been done! / Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else / This isle with Calibans'" (Slight's 372). This sentiment seems to come from the same place as John/Cudjoe's sentiment that the words *father* and *son* are "indications of time and the possibility of salvation, redemption, continuity" (103). The ultimate power in both cases comes from reproduction of oneself and one's heritage.

The obvious issue with male power derived from reproduction, however, is the necessary use of a woman's body to achieve that power. Caliban's method of reclaiming power that Prospero had robbed him of via enslavement requires the objectification and abuse of Miranda. Postcolonial criticism is right to advocate for Caliban's reclamation of power, but this becomes troublesome when the power is derived from an act of rape. Slight articulates this problem in the context of recent

world history:

. . . in both the distant and the more recent past of *Tempest* criticism [Miranda is understood] as a counter in a power game dominated by the male characters in the play. It is this objectification of Miranda that, in turn, legitimates Caliban's attempted rape as [a] self-actualizing act. . . . As Caliban's gleeful politicization of his violent assault on Miranda emphasizes—and as horrifying recent events in Bosnia, Algeria and Kosovo have demonstrated—rape can be deployed as a powerful tool of war. (374)

Although it is commonly recognized, as Slights points out, that rape is often used not just as a tool to perpetuate power in a society via reproduction, but also as a weapon against the woman involved, post-colonial readings of *The Tempest* do not view Caliban's attempted rape of Miranda in a negative light. The attempted assault is not commonly perceived as oppressive act, but instead as an act of resistance *against* oppression. This perspective necessitates the objectification of Miranda and the negation of her rights as an autonomous being.

In his interpretation of the play, John/Cudjoe takes extreme issue with Miranda for not participating in Caliban's scheme for power on the island. He suggests that it is in fact Miranda (and not Prospero) who represents the greatest force of evil on the island due to her rejection of Caliban's sexual advances. John/Cudjoe states:

But is Caliban the snake on this island paradise or is the serpent wound round old Prospero's wand? Or is it Caliban's magic twanger, his Mr. William Wigglestaff he waggled at Miss Miranda and said: "C'mere fine bitch. Make this talk." (140)

The "serpent wound round old Prospero's wand" can be read as a scathing image of Miranda coupling with her father, an emblem of her allegiance to her father. It is this duty to her father which John/Cudjoe sees as the reason Miranda deplors Caliban's attempt at raping her, rather than as an assertion of her own will. It is fitting, given Cudjoe's earlier figuring of Cassy as her father's property, that he also does not see Miranda as an autonomous being. The threatening command at the end of John/Cudjoe's commentary—"C'mere fine bitch. Make this talk."—recalls the description of the dark haired lady who attempts to teach Cudjoe her language. Here, as in that instance, Cudjoe threatens female knowledge, voice, and identity as conveyed through a woman's language with his own sexually based evaluation of her worth. He

stymies her interest in communicating via words with his interest in communicating sexual interest. This interpretation of *The Tempest* can also be read as a primitization (and thus a degradation) of Caliban, as it emphasizes Caliban's sexual and physical prowess over his mental capacities by asserting that his most essential power lies not in his mind or his voice, but in his mute genitalia.

In reading *Philadelphia Fire*, or *The Tempest*, it is an act of legitimization, respect, and empowerment to recognize the moral agency of the "racialized or ethnic other" and hold them to the same standards of "personal accountability" (to use Varsava's term) that the dominant group is held to. Slight's articulates the importance of this, stating that even as postcolonial critics "attempt to reclaim Caliban as an oppressed revolutionary, these contemporary critics repeat the primitivization of Caliban initiated by their predecessors and thereby deny him the moral agency upon which the political rights they are rightly so eager grant him must necessarily be predicated" (375). To praise immoral actions, to celebrate reclamations of power that have been leveraged on the bodies of other marginalized groups, is to lower expectations of and thereby degrade the agency of an already disenfranchised people.

The basic premise of Slight's criticism of postcolonial readings of *The Tempest* is the same as my argument against contemporary readings of *Philadelphia Fire*, namely that the racial struggle for power between male groups becomes problematic if the methods of amelioration employed necessitates the undercutting of female power. Slight's states:

Understanding Caliban as a moral agent, which entails acknowledging that he is wrong to try to rape Miranda, does not logically (and certainly not ethically) require either that we justify his enslavement or that we deny Miranda the right to freedom from violence. The assumption that both Miranda and Caliban cannot act simultaneously as moral agents in the life-world of *The Tempest* is the product, I suspect, of the epidemic of binary thinking that swept through academe as postcolonial criticism was gaining a hold in both North America and Britain. (375)

Wideman's advocacy of black patronymic lineage as a method of reclaiming power in America is the product of the same binary thinking that Slight's reprimands. He is right to address the problem of black male identity in a society scarred by white ownership and oppression, but his method of addressing the problem fails to acknowledge the negative implications it entails for women and their identities. A more

effective approach to the issue would include the type of dialectical thinking that Slight's champions, which creates room for the rights of oppressed men as well as women.

Varsava makes an excellent point about the importance not only of intentions to correct inequity, but also of choosing the right avenues through which to realize those intentions. He makes this point through analysis of Margaret Jones's evaluation of King and his control of the MOVE movement, stating that

King and his ministry did not fall victim to some inquisition; his ideas did not bring him down. Rather, his infringement of the rights of others—the zealots's normal failing—led finally to the grotesque misadventure of May 13th 1985. As Margret says, King's ideas were right but “he did it wrong.”
(431)

A perhaps under-acknowledged repercussion of racism is the way in which the struggle for black Americans to actualize their identity in the face of white oppression can lead to unintentional reproductions of inequity that continue the cycle of human degradation and objectification. We are defenseless against the inequities we inherit, but we become empowered when we choose to pass on a fairer future to our sons, as well as to our daughters.

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“With Eyeless Rage”: Shakespeare’s Re-Visioning of the Self and Nature Out of the Sources of *King Lear*

Lee Conell

While the role of nature in *King Lear* has been investigated by generations of literary scholars, only recently have critics begun to explore the nexus where Lear’s ideas about land, nature, power, and women meet. Such an exploration might lead us to consider *King Lear* through an ecocritical, ecofeminist lens, which demonstrates the vulnerability of women and land to patriarchal power in the text and also explains the many troubling power equations at work in Lear’s mind, equations that see women and nature as malleable to man’s will and as existing for male desire. As these power equations begin to break down in the play, a new “space” is revealed, one where the boundaries between human society and nature are no longer so distinct. In order to explore this space, I will contrast Shakespeare’s *King Lear* with the *True Chronicle Historie of King Leir* (to be referred to as the Old Play), a play that, rather than blurring these power equations, sets to work at reinforcing them. Examining the manner in which the Old Play reinforces dichotomies through nature imagery that is similar (and sometimes identical) to the sort Shakespeare employs to disrupt these same dichotomies will demonstrate that *King Lear* is actively concerned with challenging the dichotomies the Old Play sets out to restore. Because of this concern, performing an ecofeminist reading of *King Lear* is not to force an arbitrary theoretical slant on the text. Rather, the ecofeminism of *King Lear* is rooted not only in the play, but in its divergence from its source materials. Looking at the decisions concerning nature that Shakespeare did *not* make and the author of the Old Play *did*, including the use of animal imagery and the storm scene, should help foreground Shakespeare’s own interest in exposing just what ecofeminism seeks to uncover: the dichotomies between men and women and between humans and nature as culturally constructed and dependent on man-made power structures.

These power structures may include language itself. According to Gretchen T. Legler, “One of the primary projects of ecofeminist literary critics is analysis of the cultural construction of nature, which also includes an analysis of language, desire, knowledge, and power”

(227). As Legler's articulation of important projects for ecofeminists demonstrates, the key themes we might look at through an ecofeminist lens—the use and misuse of language, the desire for land and for power—double as key themes in *King Lear*, as witnessed in the play's first scene: Lear links giving up his land and power with giving up his favorite daughter, who is to be married off on the same day he divides his kingdom. In order to earn both her share of the land and a husband, Cordelia must “pay” her father through flattering verbal showmanship that demonstrates her love; only in obtaining her father's land will she make herself attractive to potential suitors for whom marriage and extension of land ownership are one in the same. We see this same equation at work when Goneril's and Regan's obvious shows of flattery and declarations of love are met with no affirmation that their love is emotionally reciprocated, but rather with the exchange of land. When Goneril tells Lear, “Beyond all manner of so much I love you,” Lear does not reply with equal claims of love, but says, “Of all these bounds . . . With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads, / We make thee lady” (I.I.63, 66-69). Land, love, and women, are treated by Lear as objects that may be seamlessly exchanged for one another through his patriarchal power. Moreover, the daughters' declarations of love are sexually charged due to their use of the language of courtship: Goneril claims that her love for her father is one that “makes breath poor, and speech unable,” while Regan professes herself “an enemy to all other joys, / Which the most precious square of sense possesses” (I.I.58, 72-73). In order to satisfy their father, Goneril and Regan verbally connect ideas of erotic desire with the acquisition of land. The sisters understand that, in their father's mind, a desire for his land is not disconnected with a sort of desire for Lear himself. Reading *King Lear* through an ecofeminist lens that demonstrates the subjectivity of women and land to patriarchal power seems not to diminish the text, then, but rather to explain the many troubling power equations at work in Lear's mind, equations that see women and nature as malleable to man's will and subject to his desire; these equations, by play's end, have been all but exploded.

Yet when ecofeminist lenses *have* been applied to *King Lear*, they have tended to read Lear's troubling power equations as equations that the text itself does not explode, but supports. In part this may be due to Shakespeare's unquestionable canonicity. Legler notes, “One important role ecofeminist literary criticism can play in this burgeoning field

of inquiry is that it can serve as a kind of pivot from which scholars can critique the canon of nature literature. . . . Many canonical authors still place nature 'out there' as an 'other'" (228). While Legler is referring to the canon of American nature writers (Emerson, Thoreau, etc.), it is clear that an ecofeminist critique of canonical authors might be primed to demonstrate the problematic ways these authors reinforce the power dichotomies of the status quo; such a critique might therefore lose sight of significant and radical questioning of these same dichotomies within the text.

Thus, it is no surprise that ecological critic Simon Estok in addressing *King Lear* states: "Power, identity, and home stand in an irreconcilably agonistic relationship with the natural world, and the play is, in effect, an extremely conservative—indeed, reactionary—lesson about what tragedies happen when Nature goes unbounded" (16). Estok, in his ecocritical examination of *Lear*, falls in line with Legler's suggestion that ecofeminist literary scholars critique and question the presentation of nature in canonical texts. Yet I take issue with Estok's claim for, when we compare Shakespeare's choices with the choices made by the author of the Old Play, we see that *King Lear* itself is critiquing and questioning standard presentations of nature through its exposure of Lear's belief in and adherences to those same presentations. Therefore, rather than serving as a lesson about the tragedies that occur when nature goes unbounded, *King Lear* demonstrates that false beliefs about control and dominion over women and nature—not nature itself—lead to those tragedies.

In the Old Play, however, those beliefs about women and nature, and the Othering of the two, are not only upheld by the text, but lead to Leir's ultimate restoration as ruler. Having already turned to the initial scene of land division in *King Lear*, let us consider several differing factors in that same scene in the Old Play. First, while Goneril's and Regan's expressions of love in Shakespeare's play are followed not by reaffirmations of love, but are treated almost as monetary currency immediately exchanged for land, the actual legal division of land in the Old Play does not occur concurrent to each sisters' expression of love. After the Old Play's Gonorill declares her love, Leir replies, "O, how thy words revive my dying soule!" (253). After Shakespeare's Goneril makes her declaration, Lear says, "Of all these bounds, even from this line to this . . . We make thee lady" (1.1.61, 64). While the opening of *King Lear* consists of a blatant demonstration of the power equations

Lear lives by, the Old Play uses the test in part to convince us of Leir's genuine need for affirmation of his daughters' love for him.

Although Leir does seem to genuinely wish to affirm love between himself and his daughters in the play's opening scene, he still has, like Shakespeare's Lear, other motives. We learn that the test is also an attempt to entrap Cordella into marriage without love, an act we are told by the play's Kent figure, Perillus, is unnatural: "Do not force love, where fancy cannot swell, / Lest streames being stopt, above the banks do swell" (75-76). As this image demonstrates, from the start of *Leir* nature is seen as a trustworthy analogue to human situations. After all, Perillus's words prove absolutely accurate, and the play seems to suggest that attempting to force his daughter into a loveless marriage, rather than any other misstep, is where Leir goes most astray; this is the act that causes the play's "swelling" of conflict, and it is foreshadowed to us through nature imagery that reliably describes it.

Nature serves as trusty analogue once more when Leir declares, before the love test begins, "As doth the Sun exceed the smallest Starre, / So much the fathers love exceeds the childs" (212-13). Leir sees himself and his relation to his daughters reflected in this imagery; the natural world does not act on him, but provides a shadowy echo of his situation. Nature therefore has a patriarchal bent and a clear order in the *Leir* story: some stars, we see in Leir's observation of the sun, exceed others in brightness. The natural world is again used to echo the patriarchal order when, before the test of love begins, Leir refers to his daughters as "flourishing branches of a Kingly stocke, / Sprung from a tree that once did flourish greene" (225-26). Once more Leir describes his own vision of his role in the daughters' lives through symbols based around the order he projects onto the natural world. This consistent order proves essential to understanding the Old Play as a drama of romance and restoration of this order, rather than a descent into the chaos and disorder that we see in *King Lear*. In the opening scene of *Leir*, then, an immediate difference between the old play and Shakespeare's manifests itself: land and nature are not actively part of the power equation, part of the action, but are rather a reliable analogue to this action, a point of outside reference without real agency.

We do not see this difference only in what Shakespeare adds or subtracts from the Old Play, but also in the imagery the two plays share. Among the most outstanding shared imagery occurs in both plays' treatment of the pelican. In the Old Play, after Leir has disowned

Cordella, he declares, "I am as kind as is the Pellican, / That kills it selfe, to save her young ones lives" (512-13). Shakespeare, too, takes up this pelican imagery when Edgar, disguised as a madman, first encounters Lear. Lear, noting Edgar's poor state, assumes "his daughters brought him to this pass" (3.4.61). Lear cries, "'t was this flesh begot / Those pelican daughters (3.4.71-72). In addition to the parent/child, male/female dichotomies in which the daughters already play the subordinate role, Lear attempts to dominate his daughters further by foisting them into the subordinate position of the human/animal dichotomy.

In the Old Play, however, Leir applies the pelican image to himself. Although the king plays the same role in each scenario—the cannibalized pelican—in the old play, Leir relates to this animal imagery in a manner that caters to conventional ideas about the pelican as a Christ-like symbol of self-sacrifice. His application of animal imagery to himself also retains a certain distance. Leir is not the pelican itself, but is "as kind as is the pelican" (512). The use of simile grants an acknowledged sense of detachment; nature is aligned with Leir, yes, is a reliable analogue for his situation, true, but remains a distinct and separate Other. In contrast, Shakespeare's Lear does not just associate his daughters (as opposed to himself) with the pelican, but applies the word to them directly ("pelican daughters"). The effect is to make clear the merging of women and animals in Lear's mind, demonstrating the interconnection between the subordination of both the female and the animal under the male-driven hierarchy.

Initially, the Old Play's treatment of nature imagery, at least through the example of the pelican, may seem far less ecophobic and misogynistic than Shakespeare's; after all, the Old Play applies the pelican image and concurrent animalization to its primary male character, not its female characters. Moreover, the pelican parent seems self-sacrificing and noble. It is essential, however, to consider the differing states of our speakers as they employ their pelican imagery. While Leir may make foolish decisions, he does not seem mad. As we see in the opening scene, his love test has a reasonable (if controlling and patriarchal) explanation behind it—to trap his youngest daughter into a loveless marriage—and at no point in the play, even when he is starving and near death, does he seem to lose touch with reality. Just like his distribution of land, Leir's use of nature imagery—the neat order of the sun and the stars, the clear branching off of the daughters from Leir's roots—appears seamlessly reasonable. And this reasonableness is

precisely what makes the Old Play far more conservative than Shakespeare's. The Old Play does not call attention to its own use of nature, and thus the audience is not goaded into questioning it; rather, the nature imagery primarily serves the function of a reliable, passive analogue to describe the situation of its very reasonable human characters.

In *King Lear*, however, the imagery is spouted out by a man who possibly exhibits signs of madness from the play's start. How does his madness compromise the audience's understanding of Lear's view of nature and women? Estok writes: "It goes against Nature, in Lear's way of thinking, to have a child who is hostile to the domestic spaces he imagines, a child as obstinate, silent, and inexpressive as Cordelia, or as thankless as Goneril. The play as a whole seems to share Lear's view" (28). Yet I would argue that the play does not share Lear's view, but in fact takes an active role in critiquing it. Lear's application of nature imagery to his daughters does not only seem unreasonable, but draws attention to itself in the way the more conventional use of this imagery in the Old Play does not. It is difficult not to be uncomfortably aware of Lear's unabashed misogyny when we see how eager he is to blame Edgar's feigned madness on daughters, even though, as Kent must actually remind him, "He hath no daughters, sir" (3.4.66). Kent, a vehicle of truth-telling through the play, reinforces the idea that Lear's rant is based around nothing but a projection of his own mishandled situation. Thus, Shakespeare creates a space for us to clearly witness and critique the same act ecofeminism critiques: the denigration of women and animal based around a patriarchal desire to seize and hold on to power. When Lear loses this power, the interconnections he makes in subordinating both women and animal are exposed for all to see.

That this exposure is unique to *King Lear* and is absent in the Old Play is also observable through the plays' respective storm scenes. In the Old Play, the storm scene inches us closer to the restoration to come. It is initiated when Leir asks the messenger sent to kill him for some token that proves his daughters hired him for the grisly mission; if Leir can be convinced of that, then he "Would wish no longer life, but crave to die" (1625). When the messenger swears by hell the daughters sent him, Leir tells him, "Swear not by hell; for that stands gaping wide, / To swallow thee, and if thou do this deed" (1632-33). At Leir's words, the stage directions indicate thunder and lightning, to which the messenger replies, "I would that word were in his belly agayne," (1634). In the Old Play, the storm scene is hardly more than a stage

direction; moreover, the thunder and lightning fall in line with the rest of the orderly world in the play, reflecting Leir's conviction that the culturally constructed social order extends into the natural world as well. Indeed, nature responds to Leir's words to such an extent that the Messenger seems to believe Leir has something to do with the thunder, claiming, "This old man is some strong Magician" (1637). This sense of nature as responsive to man's imposed order falls in line with the dichotomies the Old Play reinforces and emphasizes. Nature's order in the play reflects the moral and social order man himself has established, a reflection we see again when, due to his harsh treatment of Cordella, which upends the expected role of father to daughter, Leir bemoans the fact that "The causeless ire of my respectless brest, / Hath sowrd the sweet milk of dame Natures paps" (2059-60). Nature, which in the Old Play reflects the established order of the human world, is here gendered female, furthering the interconnection we see between male beliefs about women and nature, and once again extending beliefs about the interconnected subordinate role both women and nature should play. Nature falls in line with man's moral structures, supporting the order he has created, an order based on power equations to which he subscribes. Because female nature in the play adheres to the culturally created moral structures built up in a patriarchal society, it ultimately upholds and conforms to man's dominance over nature and woman.

In *King Lear*, no such conformation takes place. Instead, the storm scene demonstrates that the natural world exists in its own right, outside of the binary moral structures established in Lear's civilization. This shift from the Old Play initially reveals itself through *King Lear*'s description of the storm as possessing an "eyeless rage" (3.1.8). The storm, stripped of anthropomorphic elements, is without the sense of justice derived from upholding the dichotomies that the Old Play restores. Rather, nature is now understood as outside the projection of man; the storm cannot even *see*, so how can it be expected to recognize these same dichotomies? Lear as an old man on the heath, wronged by his daughters, cannot pretend to subordinate these outside forces any longer. As the play's dichotomies have broken down, Lear's power and authority, which depend on these dichotomies, falls away as well, and the actual subjugation man believed he had over nature at the play's start—Lear hands over his land so easily, as if this land has ever been entirely under his control—is exposed as a cultural construction.

More importantly still, Shakespeare does not use the storm as a

mere representation of Lear's state of mind, which would render nature, once again, responsive to man. As Auden notes, "In *King Lear* the storm is *not* the macrocosm of inner passion, though Lear would like it to be. The storm is without passion, and pays no attention to who is just and who is sinful. . . . Lear goes mad and sees amiss: the audience must see what is really there" (229). Even if Lear recognizes the storm as a reflection of the tempest in his mind, as Auden suggests, we the audience see its "reality" on the stage. Thus, although Lear himself may prove ecophobic, as Estok argues, the play, by presenting us with a storm that is eyeless and careless, articulates that nature is outside of man's subjugation. Our desire to see it as a sign for our own situation only perpetuates our folly, for in fact the play shows that our social fabric is not the same as the fabric of the cosmos, but human-created, human-centric, and dependent on binary oppositions.

By the time the play has reached the storm scene, Lear seems almost willing to dissolve those dichotomies he once tried to uphold. "You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout," he says, "Till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks!" (3.2.2-3). Symbols that seem blatantly masculine and phallic Lear now wants to see drowned and destroyed by nature itself. Janet Adelman notes that in the play, "all the traditional guarantees of identity itself dissolve in a terrifying female moisture in which mother and daughter, male and female, inner and outer, self and other, lose their boundaries" (103). As Adelman makes clear, it is not only nature that goes unbounded in the play. A whole slew of dichotomies blend and unravel, to the extent that the play's head patriarch finally calls for their destruction. The fragility of the established order, the fact that this order is *not* upheld in nature as a neat analogue to man's experience, becomes so obvious that the audience may be led to look critically at these same binaries.

When the Old Play does conclude, it makes the restoration of its established order quite explicit. Once Leir is "again possessed" of his "right," he orders his very thank yous, saying, "First to the heavens, next, thanks to you, my sonne" (2631-33). In Leir's hierarchy of gratitude, we see total affirmation and restoration of the order with which the play began. In Shakespeare's *Lear*, however, we see complete dissolution of this order as the play moves toward its end, a dissolution that is manifested when Lear begs Cordelia to go to prison with him: "We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage. / When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down, / And ask of thee forgiveness" (5.3.9-11).

By this point in the play, Lear sees himself as the criminal, the animal, the humble servant kneeling to his daughter, as taking on all the roles he previously subordinated. His earlier positions in the play have now flipped. Of course, there is a darker side to his desire to assume these roles. As Estok aptly notes, “Lear fantasizes that he will finally have a daughter within a bounded space who will give him undivided love” (33). By delimiting space and placing the female within it, Lear may hope to regain his role as subjugator, even as he professes a reversal to his earlier patriarchal roles. Ultimately, for Lear, those old power equations may not have crumbled at all.

Yet even if dichotomies never entirely crumble in Lear’s mind, Shakespeare sets to work at making the audience see the extent to which these dichotomies are culturally constructed and thus subject to breakdown. Compared to the Old Play, this is a radical move. In the Old Play, the audience is never forced to see nature as a cultural construction because by the play’s end all has been restored: the old rule the young, the parent rules over the child, the male rules the female, human beings rule over animals, and man rules over both good and “viper” daughters (2583). Nature once more serves merely as analogue, not active agent, to man’s experience. In *King Lear* those interconnected dichotomies have flipped, and we are left only with the remaining young, Albany and Edgar, ruling over the dead.

Clearly, to begin an ecofeminist reading of *King Lear* is to begin to expose a number of interconnected power structures the play dissolves, not just between male and female, human and animal, and civilization and nature, but between parent and child, and master and servant. Yet the simultaneous Othering of women and nature in Lear’s mind seems to be the primary key to understanding the faulty power equations that set the play’s tragedy in motion, as it is this exact interconnection that leads Lear to divide his land up for his daughters’ husbands or future husbands. Moreover, it is this choice that ultimately strips him of his previous identity, that may lead him to madness, and that may in turn lead the audience to a greater understanding of the man-made dichotomies by which society chooses to function. That Shakespeare is critiquing these dichotomies, not restoring them, becomes especially clear when we compare his portrayals of women and nature with those of the Old Play. In the Old Play we watch the restoration of binaries that satisfy the status quo. In *King Lear* we watch a tragedy that shows us not only Lear’s story, but the culturally constructed dichotomies by

which we, the audience, may unconsciously live, and which the play leaves us to scrutinize and truly see.

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The Governance of Myth: Early Modern Women Writers Reading the Fall

Jennifer Gutman

Within the restricting structures of early modern England, women writers subverted their enforced social identities through the seemingly pious context of religious poetry and prose. In this period, women confronted cultural and social myths, particularly those of the Bible, which governed and informed their lives. Specifically, the myth of the fall from Eden informed every cultural aspect of the early modern period: familial, political, religious, and economic. Early modern women writers questioned the story of the fall, and in some cases myth in general, in order to breathe new life into their own female identities: to make meaning of their realities and construct their identities in a way that would free them from the blame associated with their gender through the figure of Eve.

Because of its power and ubiquitous role in their everyday lives, the story of the fall acted as a constant within the varying genres, tones, and styles that characterizes women's writing from this period. Within the differing and often bizarre contexts of their poetry and prose, addressing the story of Adam and Eve remained a pressing concern while confronting socially imposed stereotypes. To better understand the function of this dynamic in their writing, it is important to first assess the role of women in this period marked by fluctuation, revolution, and upheaval—a context which inevitably created spaces for new voices to be heard.

Within the tumultuous political, religious, and economic climate of the seventeenth century, one question remained in constant debate, as noted in the introduction of Elaine Beilin's book *Redeeming Eve*: "Woman was, in fact, the subject of a longstanding controversy, the 'woman question,' which over the course of a hundred years continued the medieval debate about the inherent virtue or vice of women" (xviii). Women inherited this controversy from their Biblical foremothers, Eve and the Virgin Mary, and such an extended link reveals the paradigm through which people understood and interpreted women's lives in this period. Early modern England was comprised of an interconnected system of church and state. This involved not only all of the

public spheres of religion, politics, and economics, but also the private sphere of home and family. Susan Amussen lays out this dynamic in her book *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England*: “the family and the state were inextricably intertwined in the minds of English women and men of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and . . . we cannot understand politics (as conventionally defined) without understanding the politics of the family” (2). In addition to the connection between the private and public spheres, women had to accept the fact that the roles in each were determined by a patriarchal understanding of the Bible: “everyone also agreed that the model for relations in the family and the state was the relationship between God and man. . . . There was only one divisive question: Who was God’s representative on earth? . . . for political writers usually the King, for writers of household manuals the father or head of the household” (36-37). Just as people interpreted the Bible to justify the role of authority and power of men, the story of the fall and Eve’s actions were used to justify the subordination of women and their characterization as weak, deceptive, and immoral.

In 1615, Joseph Swetnam published *The Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Forward, and Unconstant Women* in which he explicitly links women with the sins of Eve: “she was no sooner made, but straightway her mind was set upon mischief, for by her aspiring mind and wanton will, she quickly procured man’s fall, and therefore ever since they are and have been a woe to man, and follow the line of their first leader” (1545). This publication, which triggered a pamphlet war of the sexes, represents the common misogynist line against women in the seventeenth century that explicitly associated their gender with the sins of Eve. Swetnam further emphasizes this connection in his attack: “if thou chasten her, then she will turn into a serpent” (1545). Here, Eve as representative of women is directly associated with Satan, implying her complete fault for the fall from Eden. Such attacks point to the burden of figural interpretation that demonized early modern women. Because of the strong connection between religion and personal value systems, figural Biblical interpretations acted as a template for understanding human life. Thus, women were not just associated with Eve, but also with her postlapsarian polarity, the Virgin Mary:

Invariably returning to the first woman, the attackers . . . would point out that Eve listened to Satan and thus initiated all of humankind’s future woe. Since then, women had followed their guilty foremother by

being disobedient, talkative, lascivious shrews. . . . Also acknowledging Eve's fault, they nevertheless propose that the second Eve, the Virgin Mary, is the source of all redemption. Their image of the virtuous woman is a domesticated version of the Virgin: remaining at home to keep the household goods, a good woman was pious, humble, constant, and patient, as well as obedient, chaste, and silent. (Beilin xix)

The interconnectedness of religion, home, and society made it impossible for women to escape figural Biblical definition, in both public consciousness and their own. Women were thus trapped within a binary of moral extremes: they were obliged to adhere to the virtues of Mary in order to escape the sins of Eve. The preference to identify with the pious Mary over the dubious Eve was an understandable commonplace, and women worked to fit the social expectations of such an image.

In order to escape identification with Eve, women were expected to fulfill a role of virtuous piety. This social function transcended all others and informed the ways in which women conducted their public and private lives. In her essay on recusant women, Marie Rowlands establishes the priority of spirituality in a woman's life:

In marriage the first duty was the procreation of children and the educating and rearing of them in the true faith. Women were, however, saved not merely by bearing children but also by educating, disciplining and training them to piety . . . there was no doubt that spiritual duties took precedence over natural duties, even those towards husbands and children. (165)

Whether it was a direct result of the pressures of social expectations or not, many women believed that their role in the world was meant to uphold Christian values and virtues. In "Women and the Urban Economy," Mary Prior discusses narratives written by women in which they portrayed themselves as being

vigorous, capable of quick thinking and practical organization. They served the church intelligently and faithfully, they prayed systematically, and in all things they were subject to proper authorities. (166)

This ideal image, which they created for themselves in writing, directly contrasted with "traditional clerical platitudes about the frailty of women" and "the older image of woman [that] represented her as the root of all evil, the temptation of man and the bringer of discord" (166). Yet, looking to the virtues of Mary was not the only way to escape identi-

fiction with Eve, and women writers went straight to this source of supposed evil to rectify her demonization and their own.

Before discussing works in which women writers reinterpret the story of the fall and Eve's role therein, it is important to first understand how scripture allows for such a multitude of conflicting readings. In his essay "Odysseus' Scar," Erich Auerbach posits an important contrast between the foregrounding style of Homeric epic and the backgrounding of physical and psychological details in Biblical verse. Auerbach lays out the format of the former: "the basic impulse of the Homeric style: to represent phenomena in a fully externalized form, visible and palpable in all their parts, and completely fixed in their spatial and temporal relations" (6). This foregrounding of details includes psychological dimensions—"Much that is terrible takes place in Homeric poems, but it seldom takes place wordlessly" (6)—leaving any question as to what the characters think and feel answered through their direct discourse. Of course, even such foregrounding inevitably obscures certain dimensions that are left out of the dominant narrative. In scripture, though, the reader is presented with a very different representation of reality. Contextualizing his analysis in the example of Abraham and Isaac, Auerbach notes the sparsity of scriptural language:

Where are the two speakers? We are not told. . . . unexpected and mysterious, he enters the scene from some unknown height or depth and calls: Abraham! . . . and of Abraham too nothing is made perceptible except the words in which he answers God: *Hinne-ni*, Behold me here—with which, to be sure, a most touching gesture expressive of obedience and readiness is suggested, but it is left to the reader to visualize it. (8-9)

The landscape in which their journey takes place is one that lacks detail; it "is like a silent progress through the indeterminate and the contingent, a holding of the breath, a process which has no present, which is inserted, like a blank duration, between what has passed and what lies ahead" (10). While the characters speak in Biblical verse, they do so in a way that does not make their thoughts or emotions explicit, unlike Homeric epic in which speech clearly expresses internal thoughts and feelings. Auerbach explains the important contrast between "these two equally ancient and equally epic texts":

On the one hand, externalized, uniformly illuminated phenomena, at a definite time and in a definite place, connected together without lacunae in a perpetual foreground. . . . On the other hand, the exter-

nalization of only so much of the phenomena as is necessary for the purpose of the narrative, all else left in obscurity . . . time and place are undefined and call for interpretation; thoughts and feeling remain unexpressed. . . . the whole . . . remains mysterious and “fraught with background.” (11-12)

The Bible’s action is presented without any clues as to the psychological motives or symbolic meaning of its characters, and this leaves Biblical verse not only open to interpretation, but requiring it in order to extract any meaning. This process of interpreting scripture, then, inevitably leads to “interpretive transformation,” that is, “to fit our own life into its world, feel ourselves to be elements in its structure of universal history” (15). One of the major ways in which this “interpretive transformation” manifested itself was in the interpretation of Old Testament figures as precursors for New Testament figures, imbuing the original text with a complex web of underlying meaning. This process extended beyond religious texts and translated into the lives of individuals. Creating the background that Biblical verse leaves out and applying it to the ways in which we understand our own lives was a necessary task for early modern women writers; after being condemned by the traditional interpretations of the story of the fall for so long, women took advantage of the story “fraught with background” and interpreted it in defense of their own livelihoods.

Through the medium granted to them for pious work, early modern women writers challenged the role of myths as templates for reality and gained voices through the story that had denied them one: the fall. The various approaches to this myth of three such women—Amelia Lanyer, Lady Anne Southwell, and Dorothy Calthorpe—will be the focus of the rest of this paper.

In order to escape the evilness associated with Eve, Amelia Lanyer sets out to reinterpret her through a lens of virtue in “Eve’s Apology in Defense of Women.” In this poem, Lanyer illustrates the influence of religion and figural interpretation and its effect on the way people structured meaning within their lives. In her defense of women, she calls on not only Adam and Eve, but parallel Biblical figures, Pilate and Pilate’s wife. Understanding this context is crucial for understanding Lanyer’s implicit argument: like Pilate, who condemns Jesus to death, Adam is at fault for the condemnation of Eve. Here, Lanyer situates the injustices of the early modern period within Biblical contexts:

Now Pontius Pilate is to judge the cause
Of faultless Jesus, who before him stands;
Who neither hath offended prince, nor laws,
Although he now be brought in woeful bands. (1-4)

The position set up in these lines seems to equate the plight of Jesus with that of the oppressed seventeenth-century woman who is “faultless” and not guilty of transgressing any laws. Their oppression is imposed from above, from the dominant conception of Eve as sinful and deceptive, and Jesus suffers under the same type of unflinching authority. In the imagined dynamic she creates through figural interpretation, Lanyer implicitly aligns the highest emblem of Christian virtue with women.

The defense of Jesus, then, becomes also a self-defense, and Lanyer equates Jesus to herself and all women being unjustly condemned. Beilin notes this multi-layered web uniting figures from the Old Testament, New Testament, and the present, and Lanyer’s possible reasoning for doing so:

Viewing women’s history from Eve to the present, Lanyer represents her sex as the heroic protectors of the Christian spirit. In her work, she infuses the image of the true Christian woman, already so important to women writers, with a dramatic new scope. Ranging from Genesis to Gethsemane to the present, her generous imagination successfully unites the most sacred moments of Scripture with figures of contemporary life. (180)

This weaving of myth and reality emphasizes the role of religion in the early modern European’s life and the difficulty in understanding life on a personal, private scale without using the symbolic forces of religious myths. But while Lanyer’s intentions for redeeming Eve, and as a result the female gender as a whole, are admirable and quite revolutionary for her time, she remains confined within the mythological structure—the Eden story—that she challenges, and she continues to be defined, though on the opposite end, by moral extremes. Other women writer’s during this period went beyond redeeming Eve through non-traditional interpretation and actually questioned and challenged the structures that were in place to oppress them: that is, the nature of myths and their powerful control over individual lives.

Lady Anne Southwell exhibits this more modern curiosity about the nature of myths and their function in our lives in “An Elegy Written by the Lady A. S. to the Countess of Londonderry” from 1626.

Southwell uses this moment of reflection on the death of a loved one to question the nature of mortality and the beliefs that control our lives. Southwell spends the first twenty lines contemplating the ascension of her friend's soul to heaven, but then an important shift occurs from the more typical type of elegy to one of inquiry and questioning: "Yet in thy passage, fair soul, let me know / What things thou saw'st in rising from below" (19-20). From here, she strays from Christian conceptions of the after-life and explores the realms of Greek and Roman myth and astrology and science. The narrator urges her friend's soul to observe these realms through which her soul ascends and expand her vision that was too narrowly focused during her lifetime: "Thy hungry eyes, that never could before / See but by faith and faithfully adore" (43-44). Southwell identifies this problem with the absolute faith that systematic religion on Earth enforces, and she argues that these human institutions of faith do not uphold religion's true essence:

Fain would I know from some that have been there
What state or shape celestial bodies bear!
For man to heaven hath thrown a waxen ball,
In which he thinks h'hath got true forms of all,
And, from the forge house of his fantasy,
He creates new and spins out destiny. (51-56)

What follows is a direct attack on those who profess spiritual awareness on Earth, which limits the possibilities of that which exists beyond the grasp of our consciousness. The religious myths of the Bible are interpreted by those in power and made "new," that is, distorted from the original, and such interpretations have a direct effect on human "destiny," perhaps not in the after-life, but certainly during it. The interplay between myth and reality on Earth is palpable, inescapable, and, according to Southwell, unwarranted. She refers to the myth of the fall to further this suspicion of its power in determining life-meaning: "In Eve's disdained nature we are base, / And whips persuade us more than love or grace" (89-90). Southwell makes an important distinction here between the image of whips, which represents aggressive human power, versus love or grace, which represents God and subjective piety. The person who overbearingly asserts his/her own version of religion and piety as an objective truth is like a "titmouse" who "can salute the lusty spring / And wear it out with jolly reveling" (103-04). The person who subscribes to a more personal, subjective faith, as Southwell indicates the Countess of Londonderry did, is like a "pure white and

vestal clothed swan” that “sings at her death and never sings but then” (105-06). This dichotomy implies an important message: the biblical interpretations that those in power use to impose control over people, like using Eve to condemn women, are not, perhaps, congruous with God’s intentions or the true nature of scriptural meaning. And, in any case, it is impossible to know. By pointing to the corrupt motives of church officials and those who have the power of shaping social consciousness, Southwell reveals the problematic nature of myth as a tool for imposing meaning. In her abstract conception of the postlapsarian paradise, Dorothy Calthorpe also questions the validity of myth. Ironically, she situates her skepticism within a revisioning of the myth of the fall so as to push at the borders of its definitive interpretations from within.

In her prose piece “A Description of the Garden of Eden,” written some time between 1672 and 1684, Calthorpe situates the reader between the realms of myth and reality. The story of the fall is presented in the first paragraph, thus establishing this as the context in which the rest of the piece will conceivably play out. What follows, however, is an account of the Garden of Eden in frighteningly modern and industrial terms. This tension between the idyllic and the structured is established in the introductory exposition: “When the most high God began that great and wonderful work of the Creation of the world, he first finished this stately fabric and then filled it with all sorts of varieties” (167). While we seem to be in the familiar landscape of Eden, the word “stately” indicates a societal, governmental aspect to this typical conception of paradise. As the description progresses, a tension between essence and appearance emerges. This is first indicated with the line “Everything seemed to congratulate man’s happiness” (167), the “seemed” being a telling and perhaps ironic qualifier. The “bounds” of the garden itself seemed “extremely large,” but, as the next line indicates, “it was encompassed about with a brave wall of black and white marble and environed round with a murmuring river” (167). In addition to the state of entrapment that this suggests, the modern design also implies an eerily mechanized dimension to this garden. When we are introduced to the “crystal house” beneath the “tree of life,” the opposing “natures” of this garden are undeniable. Nature does not represent beauty on its own in this paradise; rather, it is dependent on a mechanistic mediation: “these fruits not only pleased their taste, but their eyes, shining with such a luster through these walls . . . the

very leaves of this blessed tree shined like satin and enameled with the morning dew” (168). Nature here is not natural. It is described in constructed and machined terms representative of man’s art. The verbs indicate a perverse sense of motion, not of human life, but of industry: “walks were paved”; “beds of flowers planked”; “fountains pouring”; “rocks running”; “sucklings twining” (168)—everything in motion as in a factory. The contradictory structure of this paradise—composed of nature but shaped by art—carries with it a skepticism toward myth, reality, and the act of construction.

Within Calthorpe’s description of the Garden of Eden, it is evident that we are no longer dealing just with God’s creation. Rather, the description develops in such a rapid and extreme manner that the act of creating itself becomes overwhelming, grotesque, and threatening. An ominous tone is suggested with “a great many larks perpetually hovering and singing about them” and “bunches of grapes that longed to be gathered by Eve’s fair hands” (169). Immediately before Adam’s lament, the narrator states: “The whole garden was stored with all sorts of creatures and all kinds of delightful things that could be fancied and desired” (170). The acts beyond fancy or desire, enjoyment and fulfillment, are not possible in this paradise, and as Adam “laments his loss,” we realize that this description is a conception of paradise after the fall from grace. Ironically, Adam sees this place as perfect: “O my children, happy then indeed when I was possessed of this glorious place!” (170). An irony with regard to Adam’s conception of paradise is evident, however, and Eve is not mentioned throughout the entire poem except as a part of the description of this paradise, a man-made construction in and of herself. Once this paradise is recognized as a construction of man, and specifically the fallen man (Adam), the inquiry being made into the realm of myth, and man’s part therein, becomes apparent.

This skepticism about man’s interjection with nature and myth arises in the contradictory description of the walled wilderness separated from the rest of the garden. Ironically, this wilderness is actually not very wild as it is contained by “a wall made of massy silver, and the walks cut with such art that one could hardly find the way out again” (168). If a wilderness is already a difficult place to navigate through, the man-made pathways in this paradisiacal one do not make finding one’s way any easier. In fact, the purpose of the pathways, which is to direct, turn out only to be disorienting. Perhaps this moment of contradictory disorientation within the poem points to the problems with man-made

construction beyond the realm of pathways. Man's participation, and even forceful dominance, in the myth of Eden, and in constructing that myth on Earth, is misleading in two ways. Like the path, man's interpretation actually defies the true nature of the original, the wilderness, or God's natural intentions. Also, in trying to instill order and conformity within a natural state, such as enforced, systematic religion in early modern society, all it actually does is confound.

Calthorpe also indicates a problem with the imposition of claims to reality on myth in the figure of the omniscient narrator. Within the description, all of the characters in Eden are referred to by name: Adam, Eve, and God. But, at one point, an unattributed "I" slips into the description: "The hedges were nothing but oranges and lemons and olives and citrons and other rarities that I want names for" (168-69). It is difficult to assess who is speaking here. In the Bible, it was Adam's job to name that which surrounded him: "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof" (Gen. 2:19). In the Bible, the act of naming implies power and absolute authority, but in Calthorpe's poem, if Adam is in fact narrating this section, he has lost the ability to name, and perhaps the control associated with that task. But if Adam is narrating the entire description, then it seems suspicious that he would be introduced by name throughout, and specifically in the powerful apostrophe before the lament: "And hear how poor Adam laments his loss" (170). Who is telling us to hear? A third party is implied. It would be logical, then, to suppose that this third party, the omniscient narrator, is also the one naming the "other rarities." Perhaps the narrator is Calthorpe herself, and the act of naming is being equated with the act of writing. Whatever the case may be, the ambiguous narrator challenges the reader's capacity to know, and perhaps this is Calthorpe's goal. Like Southwell, Calthorpe seems to express an implicit warning within her ambiguous, tension-filled landscape against man's instinct to name and conquer all that surrounds him. Like the paradox of the disorienting path through the wilderness, man's construction of the realm of myth propels confusion and ambiguity where it means to decipher it. In a paradise that raises more questions than it answers, Calthorpe encourages her readers to think critically about the nature of myths, the ways in which they are constructed, and the logic that exists behind their limiting, rather

than enlightening, interpretations.

In a society that sought to contain them within symbolic figures of evil or purity, women writers in the seventeenth century questioned the legitimacy of such constrictions in order to gain a level of autonomy and humanity. Early modern women writing on the fall were afraid of the repercussions for disobeying the men who played God on Earth. Despite this fear, they confronted stereotypes created by socially motivated interpretations of myth by those in power in order to gain a voice while they still had one. Some authors, like Lanyer, were devoted to deconstructing the dominant interpretation of myth and creating a new one by which women might be defined. Others, like Southwell and Calthorpe, investigated the nature of myth in more depth, and began to expose some of the cracks in the imposition of meaning that results from interpreting myths for specific social purposes. Though approaching it from different angles, Lanyer, Southwell, Calthorpe, and many other women writers from this era, worked toward the same goal: to escape figural definition in a society that compromised their femininity by polarizing it.

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Graduate Essays

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“Words, Words, Words”: *Hamlet* and the Linguistic Performativity of the (Meta) Theater

Michael Renganeschi

As Barnardo and Francisco enter the stage at the opening of *Hamlet*, there is an immediate demand for identification:

BAR. Who's there?
FRAN. Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself.
BAR. Long live the King
FRAN. Barnardo?

(I.I.I-4)

Barnardo's answer not only serves ironically in the context of the play, but also, more immediately, it allows Barnardo safe entry into Francisco's post. The dramatic irony of Barnardo's statement diminishes its value as a description, verifiable as either true or false, and highlights its use as a performative: Barnardo's utterance is an action that establishes him as a fellow member of the King's Guard and gains him access to the watch. By emphasizing the function that language has in constructing reality, the opening words of *Hamlet* anticipate a play that interrogates the line between the aesthetic and the real and explores the potential of performative language to transcend that boundary.

Critical assessment of *Hamlet* has long recognized the metadramatic techniques that Shakespeare employs throughout the play. James Calderwood's book-length study, *To Be and Not to Be: Metadrama in Hamlet*, explores the extent to which "*Hamlet* repeatedly insists upon its own fictionality, or in this case theatricality, and addresses itself to the nature of dramatic illusion" (xv). Kate Flaherty, in "Theatre and Metatheatre in *Hamlet*," argues that *Hamlet* is a play "deeply concerned with notions of play: the power of play, the dangers of play, and the threshold between play and reality" (3). Howard Felperin, in his study of Shakespearean mimesis, goes so far as to suggest that "Hamlet's discourse on the art of theatre is the nearest thing we have to a statement of Shakespeare's own aims and principles as a dramatist" (372). Likewise, Shakespeare scholarship has devoted much attention to performativity. However, much of this attention has been directed toward examining Elizabethan and contemporary notions of the dramatic

performance of gender and subjectivity. While the study of performance has largely expanded the way we think about the stage, it has done little to assess the function of language in performance. I would like to examine the relationship between *Hamlet*, one of Shakespeare's most metadramatic plays, and performativity from a linguistic and philosophical standpoint. In doing so, I will explore how Shakespeare dramatizes a functionalist view of language both in Hamlet's production of *The Mousetrap* and in the play as a whole. Ultimately, by blurring the lines between the aesthetic and the real in both of these plays, Shakespeare emphasizes the transitive force of his play and in doing so gives active force to the words uttered on stage.

In 1955, J. L. Austin delivered a series of lectures at Harvard University, which were later collected and published under the title *How to Do Things with Words*. In the opening of Lecture I, Austin provides the context against which he develops his linguistic theory: "It was for too long the assumption of philosophers that the business of a 'statement' can only be to 'describe' some state of affairs, or to 'state the fact,' which it must do either truly or falsely" (1). To overcome this "descriptive fallacy," Austin develops his distinction between "constatives" and "performatives" (3). According to Austin, constatives are statements that are usually descriptive and can be judged either true or false: Barnardo's statement, "'Tis now struck twelve" (1.1.7) is a constative; it can be verified empirically by listening to and counting the strikes of the clock. On the other hand, performatives are utterances that "do not 'describe' or 'report' or constate anything at all, are not 'true or false,'" and, most importantly, the uttering of a constative "is, or is a part of, the doing of the action" (5). Austin's examples of performatives include "I do . . . as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony"; "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*—as uttered when smashing the bottle against the stern"; "I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow" (5). In this sense, performatives cannot be considered true or false in the same way that a marriage cannot be considered true or false. Instead, Austin argues that a performative must conform to specific "felicity" conditions in order that the action is properly performed: "Thus for naming the ship, it is essential that I should be the person appointed to name her, for (Christian) marrying, it is essential that I should not be already married with a wife living, sane and undivorced, and so on" (8-9). When these felicity conditions are met, Austin refers to the performative as "happy" and the action is successfully executed; when they are

not met, the performative is “unhappy” and the action fails to occur as intended (9).

Later, in Lecture VIII, Austin categorizes performative acts into three groups: the locutionary, “which is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference”; illocutionary, which refers to “utterances which have a certain (conventional) force”; and perlocutionary, which “we bring about or achieve *by* saying something” (109). For Austin, locutionary refers to meaning, illocutionary to force, and perlocutionary to effect. Richard Begam, in his study of *Waiting for Godot*, suggests that by deconstructing the differences between performatives and constatives, Austin moves from “linguistic mimesis” to “linguistic praxis”: “Austin participates in the post-Nietzschean tradition according to which language is a series of metaphors designed to help us manage and control reality, as opposed to a series of descriptors designed to represent the essential nature or structure of reality” (142). Austin’s move from a representational to a functional view of language is of particular interest to a study of performativity in *Hamlet*. By incorporating a production of a play within his play, Shakespeare explores the separation of the aesthetic and the real and interrogates the functionality of language when performed on stage.

While Austin argues that all language is effectively performative, he distinguishes between “normal” and aesthetic uses of language:

A performative utterance will, for example, be in a *peculiar way* hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in soliloquy. . . . Language in such circumstances is in special ways—intelligibly—used not seriously. . . . All this we are *excluding* from consideration. (22)

A performative utterance is always an embodied linguistic phenomenon, and, as such, it depends ultimately on the speaker’s commitment to his or her audience. The inherent non-commitment—to use Austin’s words, the not serious commitment—of theatrical and fictional utterances is responsible for Austin’s exclusion of literary language from his linguistic theory. Upon the stage, Austin argues, actors perform the lines, but the audience, by taking part in the theatrical event, understands it as pretense. So when Richard announces to Bolingbroke that “Therefore, we banish you our territories” (1.3.138), the illocutionary force of his words is hollowed; the audience knows that Bolingbroke eventually exits the stage to enact his exile in obedience to a stage direction, not King Richard’s proclamation.

However, as Branislav Jakovljevic suggests in his study of performativity in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, we should not reduce Austin's attitude toward theater to his use of acting as an example of non-committed speech: "The role of the theater in performative speech-act theory is predicated not only by the commitment of the speaker but also by what we might call the public character of speech" (434). Jakovljevic points out that traditional notions of naturalistic theater, particularly the notion of the fourth wall that separates the audience from the action, allows the audience to scrutinize the action of the play, while preventing the action from moving into the crowd. However, the language and action of the theater, Jakovljevic contends, has the potential to disrupt this illusion: "A happy, successful performative speech act uttered on the naturalistic stage threatens to, as theater professionals put it, 'break the fourth wall' and render null and void the very conventions under which it was uttered" (436). This separation of the aesthetic space of the stage and the experiential reality of the audience has important consequences for our understanding of theater, and art in general. As Richard Begam suggests in his reading of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, this interpretation confirms Kantian ideas of aesthetic privilege: "The issue is consequential for Beckett because it raises the larger question of the division of life from art, of whether there is an aesthetically privileged space where words do not translate into deeds" (143). While Beckett's play actively interrogates the boundaries of performative language, Shakespeare raises similar questions concerning the division between life and art in his metatheatrical crafting of *Hamlet*.

As *Hamlet* blurs this distinction, Shakespeare's language suggests that it is not the poem or soliloquy, as Austin suggests, that hollows or voids the illocutionary force of performative language. Instead, the conditions surrounding each utterance determine whether or not its performative potential is actuated, whether the speech act takes place in the domain of the theater, in the court of law, the shipyard, or the casino. In an insightful and exemplary Speech-Act theory reading of *Coriolanus*, Stanley Fish demonstrates how these felicity conditions ultimately validate or void a speech act on stage. His analysis focuses on the second act of the play, as Brutus and Sicinius realize that they need only leave Coriolanus to his own "verbal devices" in order to ensure his downfall (983): "What Sicinius predicts (correctly) is that Coriolanus will void his request by making it in such a way as to indicate that he does not accept the conditions on its successful performance" (984).

Coriolanus relies on the votes and the approval of the citizens, but he is unable to condescend to make the request: “What must I say? / ‘I Pray, sir’—Plague upon’t! I cannot bring / My tongue to such a pace” (2.3.53-55). As a result, he cannot bring himself to utter the performative formula, or accept the governing conditions, that would allow the interaction to be “happy” and achieve illocutionary force. Fish argues that Coriolanus reveals himself in this scene through his illocutionary behavior: “It is not simply that he cannot bear to request something of his avowed enemies and social inferiors; he cannot bear to request something of anyone” (989). By neglecting the conditions needed to maintain performative felicity, Coriolanus voids his illocutionary act. At the same time, Coriolanus’s agency in this situation—his ability to misperform his performatives by not submitting to the conditions of a specified speech act—suggests the potential for performative action on stage. In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare similarly exposes his hero. However, Hamlet’s behavior throughout the play is more complicated and ambiguous than Coriolanus’s actions among the citizens. By explicitly performing and misperforming the conditions of his speech acts, Hamlet further blurs the lines between the public forum of the stage and the public forum of reality.

At the beginning of Act 2, scene 2, Hamlet, to the chagrin of Polonius, acts out the “antic disposition” he vowed to “put on” earlier in the play (1.5.180). Once Hamlet enters the scene, his language is almost completely performative. It would be specious to argue that Hamlet’s assertion that Polonius is “a fishmonger” (2.2.174) is actually a false constative because Hamlet knows, perhaps too well, the truth about Polonius occupation. Read through a lens of linguistic performativity, Hamlet’s following lines, from his question of Polonius’s daughter to his assertion that Polonius cannot “take anything from [him],” are a humorous mixture of exercitive and behabitive performatives: they function rhetorically to upset Hamlet’s prescribed social role and perform his “antic disposition.” As Polonius quickly recognizes, “Though this be madness, yet there is method” (2.2.205). Hamlet’s performativity, both linguistic and theatrical, sets the stage for his behavior when the Players are introduced later in the scene.

As the Players enter the stage and Hamlet welcomes them to Elsinore, his utterances become more explicitly performative:

Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then.
Th’apportenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me comply

with you in the garb—lest my extent to the players, which I tell you must show fairly outwards, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome. (2.2.366-71)

Hamlet's reiteration of "welcome," his awareness of his performance, and his insistence on social formality suggest the potential performative power of the scene. While his performance with Polonius seems like madness, once Hamlet accepts the performative conditions and assumes his role as Prince of Denmark, he regains the authority to welcome the players to the castle, and in doing so his "welcome" maintains its illocutionary force. In this scene, Hamlet is able to achieve a performativity that Coriolanus failed to achieve: his behaviors and exercises are supported and confirmed by his acceptance of the conditions of social felicity. However, the transitive force of Hamlet's words is contained on the stage, and while his speech acts meet the conditions of performativity, they are still "hollow" in "a peculiar way" (Austin 22). It is not until the boundaries of the stage are broken that the performative power of the actor's words is able to transcend the limits of Austin's analysis.

Directly before Hamlet's production of *The Mousetrap*, he contrives a plan with Horatio to observe the King's reaction to the play:

There is a play tonight before the King:
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle. If his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen. (3.2.75-81)

Hamlet's request directs Horatio to witness the transitive force of the Player's words. In other words, Hamlet wants Horatio to find out if the "one speech" has an active effect on the King. In order for the words that Hamlet has inserted into the Venetian tragedy to have a transitive effect, in order for them to transcend the boundaries of the stage and perform an action on the audience, the situation must meet the required conditions that the utterance demands.

Throughout the third act, Hamlet articulates three important criteria that facilitate the transitivity of speech from the stage to the audience. The first is simply that the audience must be present, demonstrated by Hamlet's concern over the King's attendance: "Will

the King hear this piece of work?" (3.2.46). The second is that the speech be delivered properly and follow the same rhetorical features it would off-stage. Hamlet's insistence on the proper performance of his speech emphasizes this condition: "Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue" (3.2.287). The third condition is perhaps the most important and the most difficult to fulfill. According to Hamlet, there must be an empathic connection between the actor and the audience, or else the words will not affect them: "'Tis a knavish piece of work, but what o' that? Your Majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not. Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung" (3.2.235-38). Hamlet's proverbial allusion suggests that "none will . . . be offended vnlesse shee be guiltie" (qtd. in Jenkins 302, n. 237). During the production of *The Mousetrap*, these three conditions are successfully met, and the performative function of the speech successfully enacts its illocutionary force and achieves its perlocutionary effect: Claudius rises and exits, and Hamlet is able to "catch the conscience of the King" (2.2.601).

At this point it might serve well to reiterate Austin's deconstruction of his own distinctions between performatives and constatives. As Begam suggests in his explication of Austin's speech act theory, the lectures progress from rigorously defined categories toward instability and ambiguity: "Austin's lectures are, however, exploratory and experimental, and the further he advances into them the more he comes to believe that virtually every statement has an assertive and therefore a performative dimension" (142). Toward the end of his lectures, Austin has nearly dismissed the distinct classifications he developed earlier in favor of a range of locutionary and illocutionary acts: "Perhaps we have here not two poles" (146). Shakespeare's use of metadrama and performativity does not contradict Austin's theories of locution; instead, by interrogating the bright-line distinction between the aesthetic and the real, Shakespeare's play affirms the importance of the conditions that determine the felicity of performative utterances.

Like a theatrical performance, a performative utterance depends on specific conventions and has "the general character of [the] ritual or ceremonial": it is, ultimately, a "*conventional act*" (Austin 19). In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare anticipates Austin's examination of the conventions that are the criteria for achieving illocutionary force through performatives and performance. In order for a marriage to be valid, the participants must not only perform the utterance, but also meet the

prescribed social criteria; in order for Coriolanus to receive the votes of the citizens, he must perform the social act of requesting them; in order for Hamlet to “catch the conscience of the King,” his speech must be uttered in accordance with the conventions of the theater. Whether at the altar, in the Roman Forum, or in the Castle of Elsinore, our speech acts must be performed theatrically in order for these conditions to be met, for the locution to have transitive force, and for the performative to be “happy.” When applied to *Hamlet’s* metadramatic theatre, Austin’s speech-act theory opens up avenues of questioning that concern not only the performance on stage, but also the ways in which we do things with all these words, words, words.

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Perspectives on Humans, Animals, and Nature in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Kelly Tempest

In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Hardy paints a picture of a world in transition from a largely rural, agrarian existence to a more urban, machine-driven society. This shift changes the relationship between individuals and the natural world; whereas in earlier times, most people would have lived in close connection with the land, in the world of *Tess*, many characters have become so involved in human affairs that their vision of the countryside and its inhabitants is distorted. Characters in the novel come from a variety of backgrounds and situations, which shape the ways they view and interpret the world. Of the perspectives in the narrative, no single view is favored as absolute truth. Rather, many viewpoints are placed in dialogue with each other, complicating the conclusions that might be derived from any one point of view at any single point in time. Hardy's careful attention to the limited and situated nature of perception challenges the hierarchical view that places humans separate from and above non-human animals and the elements of the natural world. Instead, he shows the similarities, shared history, and mutual dependence that constitute the human/animals/nature relationship, even when individual beings fail to recognize their places as parts of that ecology.

Hardy fills his novel with numerous perspectives and points of view, which qualify and sometimes contradict other observations. The narrator sets up a contrast between social and natural perspectives when he comments that Tess has broken a social law but “no law known to the environment in which she fancied herself such an anomaly” (85). Depending on the viewer's perspective, Tess might appear anywhere along the spectrum from a spiritual manifestation of a pure woman to an irredeemably sinful creature, polluting others by association. As shown in the case of Angel Clare, a single character can see her as both of these things at different times. Norman Page argues that Hardy “shows the intimate relationship existing between man and the objects that surround him: a relationship not fixed and stable but apt to be modified” (n. pag.). In his argument, this statement applies to material objects, but the same can be said of characters' subjective

perceptions of other characters. A character's past history, position in society, and individual personality shape the way that the character views others, and this view is subject to change based on new observations and knowledge gained about the character being viewed. Only the reader is favored with simultaneous knowledge of multiple perspectives, and it is up to the reader to draw his or her own conclusions from the different impressions conveyed.

The novel's various perspectives are placed within the context of a period of immense change in English society. Technologies, including engine-powered farm equipment and steam trains, are changing not only the physical appearance of the landscape, but also the ways that people are able to make their livings from it. The effects of railways and other technologies are felt in each of the various settings in *Tess*. Both Marlott and Trantridge seem to be traditional agricultural villages, but we learn that residents are being forced to leave their ancestral homes. A family had lived in the cottage that Mrs. Stoke-d'Urberville appropriates for her fowls "for several generations before the d'Urbervilles came and built here" (53); the Durbeyfields must leave their cottage in Marlott when Jack dies because "it had long been coveted by the tenant-farmer for his regular laborers" (357). In the first case, a family that has made money through trade is coming into a village and disrupting established ways of life, and in the second, agricultural holdings are being consolidated to boost economic potential. Charles Lock points out that Talbothays, an apparently idyllic pastoral space, is able to prosper only because of its proximity to a train station and the availability of refrigeration technology, which had just been developed in the 1870s (51). Flintcomb-Ash is an inhospitable place because mechanical farming practices are being used without regard for the welfare of the land or the people living upon it. It is farmed by "tenant-farmers, the natural enemies of tree, bush, and brake," whose chief concern is maximizing profit (284). Each of these places is undergoing transformations that change lifestyles and ways of experiencing the world for their inhabitants.

In the novel, two forces are combining to create large urban populations and new classes of people. Families like the Durbeyfields are moving to large towns and cities, in a trend that the narrative cynically calls "the tendency of water to flow uphill when forced by machinery" (358), and technology is allowing large-scale farmers to produce and distribute enough food to feed the populations of these urban centers.

When Tess and Angel deliver milk from Talbothays to the train station, Tess marvels at the idea that strangers in London will be consuming it the next day (187-88). Sandbourne, the “glittering novelty” of a town to which Alec d’Urberville takes Tess at the end of the novel, has grown rapidly in recent years (382-84). Accordingly, Tess’s landlady, a woman who makes her living by running a lodging-house in this large town, is “deeply materialized, poor woman, by her long and enforced bondage to that arithmetical demon Profit-and-Loss” (386). Residents of places like London or Sandbourne are out of touch with the natural world; they exist in a social and economic sphere and do not understand what goes on outside their limited realms of experience.

Because these people in the world of the novel are estranged from nature and its processes, they look upon the natural world and those laboring in it with the eyes of outsiders. The resultant tendency to view inaccurately is shared even by those who are intellectually, but not geographically, divided from the countryside. In his 2001 essay, Richard Kerridge makes a distinction between characters who inhabit the landscape in a reciprocal relationship and characters who simply gaze upon the landscape. The first type includes characters, like Tess and her fellow villagers, who depend upon the land for their livelihoods. These characters may lack sophistication, but they possess remarkable endurance and self-sufficiency. In contrast, characters who perceive the landscape through the lens of aesthetics, like Angel Clare, or business, like Dairyman Crick, make up the second type. These “simply gazing” characters tend to oversimplify people, animals, and inanimate nature. For Angel Clare, Tess becomes “no longer the milkmaid, but a visionary essence of a woman—a whole sex condensed into one typical form” (131). Angel grew up in “country solitudes” (117), but he seems to have spent his youth engaged in spiritual and intellectual pursuits. It is only when he is at Talbothays that he finally becomes acquainted with the natural world and its “phenomena,” like the changing of the seasons and weather patterns (119). Dairyman Crick is surprised when Tess drinks milk when she arrives at the dairy: “it had apparently never occurred [to Crick] that milk was good as a beverage” (108). Though Crick works outdoors with animals, he views his dairy primarily as a business. In this context, he forgets the basic function of milk. Both of these men are molding what they perceive to fit a pre-existing idea of how the world works, based on their own experiences and social positions.

The narrator sometimes takes a similar outsider's view of characters, but is typically quick to qualify his statements about external appearances with reminders of the characters' inner lives. For instance, as Tess walks to Flintcomb-Ash, the narrator comments: "Thus Tess walks on; a figure which is part of the landscape; a field-woman pure and simple" (283). After this statement is made, he adds: "Inside this exterior, over which the eye might have roved as over a thing scarcely percipient, almost inorganic, there was the record of a pulsing life" (283). By embracing multiple viewpoints, the narrator does what most characters cannot: he considers the world from many angles. Some characters are able to change their views in discreet ways, like Angel when he comes to the realization that people who live on dairy farms have existences just as valuable as people in towns and cities (154). However, instances of growth do not change the fact that Angel Clare is a single, embodied being with a limited perspective. Therefore, like all individuals, he interprets what he sees subjectively and cannot attain a universal understanding of the people, animals, and inanimate objects around him. The interplay of this and other situated viewpoints that the narrative reveals allows us to recognize the limitation and fallibility of each perspective represented.

In his 1883 essay, "The Dorsetshire Labourer," Hardy sets out a proposition which he again explores in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, centering on the popular late-Victorian caricature of the typical farmer as "Hodge." Hardy recognizes this image of "Hodge" as one that can only appear valid to a person who is not actually acquainted with rural laborers, a person who is probably estranged from the natural world. He posits that if a visitor were to spend time with "Hodge," he

would become conscious of a new aspect in the life around him. He would find that, without any objective change whatever, variety had taken the place of monotony; that the man who had brought him home—the typical Hodge, as he conjectured—was somehow not typical of anyone but himself.

In *Tess*, the narrator echoes the same sentiments regarding Angel Clare's change in perception due to time spent at Talbothays. From a distance, individuals who share certain outward characteristics might seem indistinguishable from one another, but after one takes the time to get to know these people as individuals, the thought of each of them as simple manifestations of a single type seems absurd.

The same argument that Hardy here puts forth for rural farm

laborers can also be applied to another set of laborers, domesticated animals. One who regards animals from a real or imagined distance likely sees individual animals as identical creatures. They seem to be an intrinsic part of the landscape, rather than sentient beings. When Tess is looking upon the Vale of the Great Dairies for the first time, the narrator tells us: “These myriads of cows stretching under her eyes from the far east to the far west outnumbered any she had ever seen at one glance before. The green lea was speckled as thickly with them as a canvas by Van Alsloot or Sallaert with burghers” (102-03). Looking as an outside observer, the narrator describes the cows in impersonal, aesthetic terms, as an image comparable to one previously encountered in the narrative persona’s experience. An alternate, insider’s view is expressed when Angel Clare returns to the dairy: “Clare was now so familiar with the spot that he knew the individual cows by their names when, a long distance off, he saw them dotted about the meads” (168). We learn in the novel that cows possess individuality: they have names, preferences for particular milkmaids, and degrees of reluctance in yielding their milk. It is only to the unacquainted that they can be classified as “typical” cows.

Beyond distinct physical characteristics, the novel suggests that domesticated animals have individual inner lives. At the beginning of the novel, the Dubeyfields’ horse, Prince, is roused early in the morning. He “looked wonderingly round at the night, at the lantern, at their two figures, as if he could not believe that at that hour, when every living thing was intended to be in shelter and at rest, he was called upon to go out and labour” (25). Though these are human sentiments, in human language, being attributed to the horse, they stem from an observation of his behavior, which indicates confusion and disorientation. These equine actions hint at an animal subjectivity, to which humans are ultimately denied access. Jean R. Brooks states that “though [Hardy] never allows us to forget the inheritance of animal instinct we share with the rest of the animal kingdom, his reverence for its ‘otherness’ is too strong to make him guilty of anthropomorphism” (158). Though humans may project thoughts and feelings onto animal subjects, Hardy’s work encourages us to be conscious of the fact that these are only human projections. At Talbothays, we see the cows gravitating toward certain milkmaids, but we are not told what is happening from the cows’ perspectives. We infer that the cows prefer the milkmaids that they approach, but we cannot know the cows’ perceptions, thoughts, or

motivations.

In *Tess*, the human tendency to anthropomorphize is strongest with domesticated animals, the nonhuman group with which people have the greatest degree of familiarity. With wild animals, and birds in particular, the narrative's respect for difference is greater. Birds in the novel are the ultimate outside gazers; they inhabit a realm of perception entirely alien to human understanding. When Tess first arrives at Talbothays, she "excite[s] the mind of a solitary heron, which, after descending to the ground not far from her path, stood with neck erect, looking at her" (105). We know that the heron looks at Tess, and presumably it experiences some kind of sensation due to her presence. We, as humans, cannot comprehend this sensation, but must be content just to recognize that it exists. At Flintcomb-Ash, birds from the north arrive and look upon the humans working in the fields. The narrator speculates that these birds have witnessed incredible geological events, which, to the human mind, would make great tales. But, being birds, "the traveller's ambition to tell was not theirs, and with dumb impassivity they dismissed experiences which they did not value" (291). The narrative recognizes that animals live in an entirely different mental plane from humans and that their mode of being deserves respect.

Beyond calling for respect for animal subjectivity, Hardy asks us to consider the ways that human and animal life intersect and influence each other, the shared history of all species inhabiting his "Wessex." Even humans who seem to be living far from nature, in a town or city, depend on the land and on animals for the basic materials of their everyday lives. Ivan Kreilkamp argues that "natural and organic life forms are always drawn into human narratives and plots" and that we should therefore "understand Hardy's 'natural' or nonhuman world as fully embedded into and inextricable from the human or social world" (474). Horses plow the fields that yield the grain that makes the humans' bread; a horse may even be the "breadwinner" of a human family (*Tess* 29). Cows, which city dwellers may have never seen, are the source of their milk, cheese, butter, and cream. On the other side, these unseen human consumers create the demand for food that is the reason why horses are asked to labor and cows are made to live on dairy farms. At Trantridge, chickens are given a home in a former human habitation, illustrating fluidity between species over time. The history of interaction between human and domesticated animal is nicely crystallized in a moment at Talbothays when the narrator notices "wooden

posts rubbed to a glossy smoothness by the flanks of infinite cows and calves of bygone years, now passed into an oblivion almost inconceivable in its profundity” (105). However isolated some humans may think they are from nonhuman life, and however “natural” we may consider animals to be, in actuality, humans and animals have a reciprocal relationship.

These examples of human/animal interdependence suggest interactions that are often based on the human use of animals to meet human ends. However, Hardy makes it clear that the relationship between the two is not intrinsically hierarchal. All existence, animate and inanimate, is a part of a universe ruled over by unsympathetic forces. In the rape scene, the narrator tells us that towering over Alec and Tess are

the primeval yews and oaks of The Chase, in which were poised gentle roosting birds in their last nap; and about them stole the hopping rabbits and hares. But, might some say, where was Tess’s guardian angel? Where was the providence of her simple faith? (72-73)

This panoramic view places human tragedy as just one of the many features of the scene. No higher power favors human life above any other existence.

Although, as Richardson reminds us, Hardy wanted his work to be considered as “impressions” rather than “convictions,” and was “anxious that there should be no attempt to construct a single argument or ‘scientific theory’ from his works” (158), we can still draw upon some of the ideas about evolutionary theory that he considered to inform our view of the roles of different forms of biological life in *Tess*. In an 1889 entry from his journal, Hardy laments

a woeful fact—that the human race is too extremely developed for its corporeal conditions, the nerves being evolved to an activity abnormal in such an environment. Even the higher animals are in excess in this respect. . . . This planet simply does not supply the materials for happiness to higher existences. (qtd. in Kerridge 134-35)

Robert Schweik explains that Hardy was “powerfully moved” by “the plight of mankind trapped in a universe oblivious to human feelings and aspirations” (63). Humans, as creatures possessing reason, are at odds with the essentially random and illogical universe. If the measure of evolutionary fitness is the degree to which a creature fits into its surroundings, as Theodore Watts posits in an article that Hardy copied into his notebook in 1876 (Schweik 63), human beings are not well-

evolved creatures.

Based on these ideas about evolution, and the position of animals in the text, we can draw from Hardy's novel a new model for viewing the relationship between humans and animals in the world. Although the possession of reason places humankind out of harmony with its environment, the human ability to behave morally creates certain ethical requirements for people. Hardy wrote in a letter to the Secretary of the Humanitarian League in 1910:

Few people seem to perceive fully as yet that the most far-reaching consequence of the establishment of the common origin of all species is ethical; that it logically involved a readjustment of altruistic morals by enlarging as a *necessity of rightness* the application of what has been called 'The Golden Rule' beyond the area of mere mankind to that of the whole animal kingdom. (qtd. in Richardson 172)

Ronald Morrison notes that Hardy did not articulate these kinds of ideas until the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. At the time of *Tess's* publication, he says, "Hardy was still moving toward a consistent position" on the effect of Darwin's theories on morality (65). The novel shows characters acting to reduce animal suffering, as when Tess euthanizes the injured pheasants (280-82). It also illustrates the destructive consequences of a lack of compassion toward "lower beings," through the story of Tess's suffering.

Of the many views of human behavior the novel offers, one of the most redemptive is attributed to a stranger that Angel Clare meets in Brazil. When Angel acquaints this man with "the sorrowful facts of his marriage," the narrator tells us that "to [the stranger's] cosmopolitan mind such deviations from the social norm, so immense to domesticity, were no more than are irregularities of vale and mountain to the whole terrestrial curve" (346). In an expanding world, an expansive perspective is the most just point of reference, the least likely to cause undue suffering. In a recent article on the transformative potential of animal studies and disability studies, Cary Wolfe champions the need for "a more ambitious and more profound ethical project: a new and more inclusive form of ethical pluralism that it is our charge, now, to frame" (118). This new ethics would be "based not on ability, activity, agency, and empowerment, but on a *compassion* that is rooted in our vulnerability and passivity" (122). Animals, as well as people traditionally placed in "low" positions, are worthy of notice whether or not they are agents of power in Wolfe's new ethics. In Hardy's novel, we can see a

literary model for this kind of project; in *Tess* he suggests the possibility and necessity of a compassion-based morality.

In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Hardy paints a bleak picture of the universe for humankind. Lacking a caring and responsive higher power, the world acts indifferently toward good people. Humans are inherently no more perfect than any other beings, but it is our ability to think reasonably and act morally that provides some hope for outcomes in the world that might match the human ideal of justice. The novel remains aware that human views and human ideas about how the world should be are specific, situated perspectives, which are by no means universal. We have evolved alongside Earth's other animals, and these animals have valid subjectivities that we should recognize and respect. By considering the limits of our viewpoints and showing compassion to the humans and animals that we often judge to be beneath us, we can begin to satisfy our human desire to move toward a world less tragic than the one that Hardy records in *Tess*.

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VI BOOK REVIEWS

Martha C. Nussbaum. *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

Thomas G. Olsen

In his January, 2011 State of the Union address, President Barack Obama asked,

Think about it. Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school education. And yet, as many as a quarter of our students aren't even finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. America has fallen to ninth in the proportion of young people with a college degree. And so the question is whether all of us—as citizens, and as parents—are willing to do what's necessary to give every child a chance to succeed.

Echoing both his previous public pronouncements on the subject of education and in some very unsettling ways the 2006 report *A Test of Leadership*, written under the direction of then-Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, the President's speech conspicuously left the humanities and the arts almost entirely out of his vision for the nation's educational future. Instead, he repeatedly characterized the goals of education as improving test scores, keeping up with the Chinese and other global competitors, and generally making America a "better place to do business and create jobs."

Jobs and economic prosperity are worthy goals, but this is still a discouraging set of beliefs, especially coming from a self-styled "education" president and, himself, the beneficiary of a first-rate education in the humanities and liberal arts. Martha C. Nussbaum's *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* addresses the current circum-

stances standing behind this disturbing omission. A manifesto and a call to action, the book offers as its central themes, first, that the purposeful cultivation of young people's creative imaginations and analytical thinking are—or should be—core educational aspirations, nothing short of national and a global priorities; second, that healthy democracies need citizens schooled in the kinds of broad, creative, sympathetic thinking that the humanities and the arts foster; and third, that current educational bureaucracies and the bureaucrats who sustain them have put modern education on a perilous course toward cultural and economic impoverishment. To borrow from the now-retired nomenclature of another bureaucracy, the threat level is orange and shading into red.

Nussbaum makes no claims that this book is an empirical study (at just over 150 pages, it cannot be), but she does offer a range of persuasive examples and some compelling hard evidence to make the point of her manifesto manifest enough. And indeed examples from all over the globe abound: under political pressure from the European Union, Scotland abandons its four-year university model for a continental-style three-year plan, eliminating a full year of core humanities subjects in the process; Britain's rigid, Gradgrindian "Research Excellence Framework" systematically squeezes out faculty scholarship in the humanities while overvaluing anything that can demonstrate or be made to demonstrate "impact"—and angry students take to the streets; India's famed Visva-Bharati University, once a wellspring of creative thought, succumbs to a national mania for economic measures of success, and thereby becomes yet another second-rate technology school; the University of Chicago encourages its student tour guides to bypass the buildings where humanities classes are in session, taking visiting prospective students and their parents instead to buildings where more "practical" (and we suppose, economically valued) education is on view. Examples from elementary and secondary levels abound as well: deep cuts in arts programs rip through most school districts in California; experiments with lofty titles like *No Child Left Behind* and *The Race to the Top* reduce creative teachers across the nation to soulless teach-to-the-test robots; and layoffs and program eliminations threaten the core missions of schools across the United States. And while public education sheds billions, billionaires and billionaire corporations employ legal chicanery and accounting sleight-of-hand to avoid, as in the case of General Electric, paying any taxes at all. Three different military

campaigns, that number up from two just a short time ago, suck up billions that we don't have.

All these conditions, according to Nussbaum, impoverish our nation and the world. If crudely reckoned measures of economic utility increasingly now form the standard by which educational initiatives are judged (and supported, or funded, or both), and if the spirit of public support for public education continues to dwindle, the far more important goal of "education for democratic citizenship" (4) will be left behind. Instead of this paradigm of short-term utility and economic development, with its bogus emphasis on conventional measures of productivity and "development" that, like the GDP, tell us nothing about justice or distribution or happiness, Nussbaum posits a model centered on *human* development, one that builds creative problem-solving, political engagement, deliberative thinking about complex issues in a complex world, and perhaps most of all, fellow-feeling and respect for peoples unlike ourselves.

In an increasingly globalized world, this last aspiration is essential—and it informs Nussbaum's argument at nearly every turn. The principal danger of short-term, utilitarian educational policies, she argues, is that they run counter to the realities of a world in which very few economic or political decisions, whether taken by individual consumers or the heads of nations, can be made in isolation or with an eye only to the short term. A pair of blue jeans or an iPad has an economic story far beyond its economic value; we are better consumers and better citizens when we strive to understand these stories. So do world leaders when they shop for oil or uranium or wheat futures. "It is irresponsible," she argues, "to bury our heads in the sand, ignoring the many ways in which we influence, every day, the lives of distant people. Education . . . should equip us all to function effectively in such discussions, seeing ourselves as 'citizens of the world,' to use a time-honored phrase" (80).

Indeed, the broad knowledge and the sympathies that Nussbaum wants to see cultivated in the world's educational systems may not guarantee good, ethical behavior, but she makes a strong case that ignorance of them almost certainly guarantees the perpetuation of provincialism, ethnocentrism, and in the worst instances, fanaticism and fundamentalism. She asserts that today "we need world history and global understanding for reasons that go beyond what is required to understand our own nation. The problems we face and the responsibili-

ties we bear call on us to study the nations and cultures of the world in a more focused and systematic way” (81-82). In other words, get a good message out, and early, and good things should follow.

According to Nussbaum, all is not lost—yet. Higher education in the United States stands in a unique, if threatened, position, for unlike most European and Asian models, where students pursue just one subject area during their university years, ours is still premised upon the liberal arts ideal. A student majoring in, say, English is typically expected to learn some science, some social science, some quantitative reasoning, some art, philosophy, psychology, or political science along with his or her grounding in one chosen major within the humanities. Just as important, an American business or engineering major is expected to know something about realms such as formal logic, or biodiversity, or British literature, or modern Latin America, or the principles of sociology. And so on—at least some of them, if only to develop some appreciation for other kinds of knowing and learning. The result of this pluralistic approach, she argues, is that American students tend to have a far better chance at learning some of the great ideas of our shared human heritage than their European or Asian counterparts.

The burden of *Not for Profit* is that this position of privilege, this noble American tradition, is in real danger, and too often from within. For if President Obama is too often silent on the *intrinsic* values of education—its meaning for citizenship, for quality of life, for one’s spirit and happiness, for the protection and advancement of great human ideas—what hope can we cling to in defending the humanities from the almost inexorable forces of commerce, competition, and consumerism that drive so much educational thinking today?

All this said, however, in Nussbaum’s reasoning, technology, the sciences, and quantitative thinking are not the enemies of the humanities—far from it. Instead, she argues that the two spheres complement each other, and should. Indeed, as we look around us, compelling examples abound: without creativity and a broad, informed appreciation for how human beings interact, truly transformative miracles of modern living such as Google, Facebook, and Twitter are little more than clever algorithms and strings of software code. And the converse is true as well: without sophisticated quantitative thinkers, ideas like these would go nowhere, no matter how many creative thinkers are thinking big thoughts.

Not for Profit is well worth the two hours or so needed to read it carefully. A serious call for long-term thinking about and (to borrow from a lexicon whose principles she generally rejects when it comes to thinking about learning) long-term investment in education, the book makes a convincing case that we need to do things differently in this country, as do others in other nations. Though her case is in most aspects a general one and her emphasis strangely never falls on the learning of foreign languages, a time-honored pathway into the minds of others (and this oversight is odd, given that one of the book's three dedicatees is her beloved high school French teacher), her message is unmistakable: if we persist in treating education as merely a cash-crop for feeding narrow national interests, for economic development and commercial competition that is devoid of sympathy for others and operates in ignorance of how a tightly interconnected world actually works, then we are not likely to enjoy the false paradise that our productivity creates for us.

H. R. Stoneback and Matthew Nickel, eds.
Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology. New York: Des
Hymnagistes Press, 2010.

Michael Renganeschi

It doesn't seem like too much of a stretch to say that American Poetry has never been known for its poetic movements. Poetic schools bring to mind the French Symbolists, the British Romantics, or the Spanish Generation of '98. Imagism, our one definitive poetic movement, was, while incredibly influential, short-lived and more of an amalgam of expatriates and Brits than a homogenous American school. Nonetheless, Ezra Pound and the Imagists developed an aesthetic that set the course for twentieth-century American literature. And while Ezra Pound, Robert Frost, Emily Dickenson, and Robert Penn Warren are undeniably some of the most important names in American poetry, for many, names like Hank Williams, Woody Guthrie, Johnny Cash, and Bob Dylan are even more important. The collection of poems recently released by Des Hymnagistes Press, *Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology*, is exactly what our poetry needs: throughout, it is a testament to the power of a poetic form built upon the lyrical beauty of hymnody and resonating with literary history and folk tradition.

Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology lives up to the expectations set for it by the resonances of its title and its cover. The volume is an exact facsimile of the original *Des Imagistes: An Anthology* (1914), a landmark publication of modern literature. The design, while faithful down to the pagination, is by no means the only aspect of the book that resonates with the Imagist movement. While from cover to cover the poems reflect the concision of Imagist form and the concentration of emotional detail, the anthology also features poems from descendants of original Imagist poets. The anthology opens with Catherine Aldington, the daughter of Richard Aldington; her "Four Poems" incorporates the Imagist aesthetic into an idyllic meditation on "a country of dreams and dreads." The book also features poems by Mary de Rachewiltz and Patrizia de Rachewiltz, the daughter and granddaughter of Ezra Pound. Mary's reflections in "Rereading Walt Whitman" transport us momentarily into Pound's library, where we feel like we are rereading Whitman with Pound's notes in the margins, while Patrizia's poetry gives us an

intimate glimpse of Pound as he returns to Italy in 1958 after 12 years in St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Valerie Hemingway, Hemingway's secretary and daughter-in-law, contributes "My Life on the Rocks," which offers a lyrical portrait that spans from the beaches of Brighton to the afternoon cocktails shared poolside with Hemingway in Spain.

The anthology also features poems by renowned Kentucky poet and New Paltz Distinguished Professor H. R. Stoneback, whose poems stretch from Beijing to Honduras and evoke, in vivid and honest detail, just about everything in between. Along with Stoneback is an extraordinary collection of young Hymnagist poets, whose work is a distillation of a long history of American literature, folk music, and church hymnals. It is worth stressing, especially for readers of this journal, that half of these poets have New Paltz connections, a reminder that Hymnagism is an international poetic movement that had its beginnings in poetry readings in New Paltz, Kentucky, and France during the years 2004-2008. Alex Andriess's "No Wind is the King's Wind: 1916" laments, with images of decay and darkness, the spiritual confusion that results from the diminished role of tradition in our modern society. Andriess has the unique ability to write poems that are at once contemporary and deeply rooted in tradition and history. A. B.'s "The Fleeting" reads like an exercise in Imagist aesthetics, a meditation on the transience of our most important moments without one superfluous word or slithering emotion. In William Boyle's poems, you can find echoes of Tom Waits and Vic Chestnutt bouncing off sentences from Hemingway novels. What results sounds like dirges commemorating a river gone dry. Brad McDuffie contributes "Seven Hymns from the West," a self-contained cycle of song built upon the "former days" of Psalm 77 prefaced in the subtitle. McDuffie's hymns move from the desert hills of Nevada to the snow-covered valleys of the Hudson, building an American landscape with glimpses of barren wastelands and fertile Edens. Matthew Nickel, co-editor of the anthology, contributes six poems, including "Portraite d'une Sainte," a two-line complex of emotion and intellect. Nickel's "An Original Sin Image," is perhaps most exemplary of the aesthetics that bring Des Hymnagistes together. The poem is an allusive tribute to T. E. Hulme that moves across the war-torn landscape of post-WWI Europe. Jamie Marcel Stamant rounds out the sextet of New Paltz alumni with two poems that offer concentrated images of youth and home across America. The volume also includes poems from John Gery, the founding Director of the Ezra

Pound Center for Literature at Brunnenburg, Dorf Tirol, Italy, and Jeff Grieneisen, a founding editor of the literary journal *Florida English*. The anthology closes with a poem by the late Sparrow Stoneback, whose “At Mas ‘Les Pèlerins’: Rose Trémière” reaffirms the value of place, tradition, friendship, and family that resonates throughout the volume.

In April, the book, which was published in simultaneous hardcover and paperback editions, had its American premiere at the 2010 Kentucky Writers Day Celebration at the Historic Penn’s Store, the oldest country *store* owned and operated by the same family. In the open fields surrounding the store, contributors to the volume read a selection of their work. In late June, the anthology had its international premiere at Ezra Pound’s Brunnenburg Castle alongside a collection of Pound’s manuscripts and the numinous mountains of Dorf Tirol. The location was fitting: the poems in this anthology evoke a deep sense of place—from Kentucky to the mountains of Italy, from the Hudson Valley to the shores of the Mediterranean—and resound with a profound understanding of our literary past. At the 2010 SAMLA Convention in Atlanta, a lively special session devoted to this volume was held, where *Des Hymnagistes* contributors McDuffie, Nickel, Andriess, and Stoneback read and discussed their work.

Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology is a unique offering to American poetry. By combining the traditions of church hymns, American folk music, and modernist poetry, *Des Hymnagistes* achieve a poetic form that captures the lyricism of the hymn and the emotional force of the Imagist poem. At the end of the anthology we find an anonymous 21st-century quotation that defines the role of the poet:

If poets don’t make people laugh,
They’ll never make them cry.
If poets don’t make people sing,
They’ll never make them pray.

Throughout this volume, these Hymnagist poets offer words to make us laugh and cry, and songs to help us pray.

VI NEWS AND NOTES

In this column we feature news from current and recent graduate students: honors, achievements, publications, conference papers, progress in PhD programs, and other news.

1. Professional activities and achievements of current MA and MAT students and December 2010 graduates:

Amanda Boyle (MA) presented a paper, “Elizabeth Madox Roberts’s Image of Poetry and Prose: An Exploration of Pound and Roberts,” at the II International Imagism Conference, Dorf Tirol, Italy, June 2010.

Lee Conell (MA) presented two papers:

“At the Crossroads of Pound and Cezanne: Imagistic Inspirations in *The Sun Also Rises*” at the II International Imagism Conference, Dorf Tirol, Italy, June 2010;

“With Eyeless Rage”: Shakespeare’s Re-Visioning of the Self and Nature from the Sources of King Lear” at the Nature at the Intersection Conference, New Jersey College, April 2011.

Thomas Doran (MA) will enter the PhD program in English at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Jennifer Gutman (MA) presented a paper, “Kafka’s Outlaw Defining the American Hero: Vision, Uncertainty, and Wonder in *Amerika*,” at the Image of the Outlaw Conference, sponsored by the Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery and Colorado State University, Pueblo, March 2010.

Valerie Hughes (MA) will enter the MS program in Library/Information Science at SUNY Buffalo.

Mary Ellen Iatropolous (MA/MAT) presented four papers: “High-Tech Literacy, Low-Tech Budget: Literacy-Rich, Low-Cost Media Arts Activities” at the New York Statewide Children’s Center in the Courts Conference in Poughkeepsie,

NY, May 2010;

“Orwell and *Angel*: (Re)Negotiating the Dystopian Dilemma” at the Slayage Academic Conference on the Whedonverses in St. Augustine, FL, June 2010;

“Using Media Arts to Teach Literacy Skills” at the Teaching the Hudson Valley Conference in Hyde Park, NY, July 2010;

“The Con in Convention: Gender Performance and Female Agency in Alcott’s *Behind a Mask*” at Northeastern Modern Language Association Conference 2011, Rutgers University, April 2011.

Michelle S. Kramisen (MA) presented four papers:

“Discovery of Dorothy Allison: Using Writing as a Medium to Heal” at the Southern Writers/Southern Writing Graduate Conference, Oxford, MS, July 2010;

“‘I’m Ellen Chesser and I’m lovely’: Rediscovery of Feminine Independence” at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference, Atlanta, GA, November 2010;

“Narrating Trauma: Shell Shock in Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* and Pat Barker’s *Regeneration*” at the 21st Annual Mardi Gras Conference in Baton Rouge, LA, March 2011;

“New Beginnings through Times of War in *The Great Meadow*” at the 13th Annual Elizabeth Madox Roberts Conference at St. Catharine College, KY, April 2010.

Christopher Lawrence (MA) presented three papers:

“Preservation is More than Just a Word: Prioritizing the Ecocritical Canon” at Nature Writing in the 21st Century, SUNY Oneonta, June 2010;

“Evil, Grace, and Comedy in Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*” at the Southern Writers/Southern Writing Graduate Conference, Oxford, MS, July 2010;

“An Ecocritical Reading of Southern Agrarianism in Elizabeth Madox Roberts’s *The Time of Man* and Wendell Berry’s *The Art of the Commonplace*” at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference, Atlanta, GA, November 2010.

Jaclyn Lyons (MA) will enter the master’s program at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University.

Shonet Newton (MA) presented a paper, “‘Sea Garden as an Imagistic Garden of Eden: H. D.’s Exploration of Female Sexuality

in the Early Twentieth Century,” at the II International Imagism Conference, Dorf Tirol, Italy, June 2010.

Heather Ozgercin (MA) presented a paper, “I See Almost-Dead People: The Revision and Visions of Cordelia Chase,” Heroines of Fantasy and Science Fiction Conference, Ithaca College, April 2011

Michael Renganeschi (MA) presented three papers:

“‘A Moment’s Peace’: The Intellectual and Emotional Complex in the Poetry of Dylan Thomas” at the II International Imagism Conference in Dorf Tirol, Italy, June 2010;

“‘I am Mister Dante’: *Across the River and into the Trees* and *La Vita Nuova*” at the 14th International Hemingway Society Biennial Conference in Lausanne, Switzerland, July 2010;

“‘A long time ago we heard a folk song’: The Tradition of American Folk Music in the Short Stories of Breece D’J Pancake” at the American Literature Association Symposium on American Fiction, Savannah, GA, October 2010.

Kristen Rodecker (MAT) presented a paper, “The Woman With the Dog’s Eye: *As I Lay Dying* Through the Eyes of the South,” at the Southern Writers/Southern Writing Graduate Conference, Oxford, MS, July 2010.

Meghan Rogers (MA) presented a paper, “American Women and the Imagist Movement,” at the II International Imagism Conference, Dorf Tirol, Italy, June 2010.

Kelly Tempest (MA) presented a paper, “Sound, Language, and the Non-Human World in Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*,” at the University of Virginia Graduate English Conference, April 2011.

Roy Verspoor (MA) presented a paper, “Young Hemingway: Looking Up to Pound in His U. P. Fiction,” at the II International Imagism Conference in Dorf Tirol, Italy, June 2010.

2. Graduates of our MA program in PhD programs:

Lawrence Beemer (2002) at Ohio University

Michael Beilfuss (2005) at Texas A&M University

Danielle Bienvenue Bray (2004) at the University of Louisiana,

Lafayette

William Boyle (2006) at the University of Mississippi

Nicole Camastra (2005) at the University of Georgia

D. A. Carpenter (2005) at Texas A&M University

Kevin Cavanaugh (2002), at the University of Albany (Curriculum/
Instruction Program)

Steven Florczyk (2002) at the University of Georgia

Timothy Gilmore (2004) at the University of California, Santa Bar-
bara

Tina Iraca (2001) at the University of Connecticut

Jennifer Lee (2007) at the University of Rhode Island

Brad McDuffie (2005) at Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Nicole Myers (2007) at the University of Rhode Island

Matthew Nickel (2006) at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette

Sharon Peelor (1997) at the University of Oklahoma (Education
Studies)

Rachael Price (2005) at the University of Arkansas

Donna Bonsignore Scully (2001) at St. John's University

James Stamant (2005) at Texas A&M University

3. Graduates of our MA program with full-time academic positions:

Eileen Abrahams (2002), Assistant Professor of English, Schenectady
County Community College

Cristy Woehling Beemer (2002), Assistant Professor of English, Uni-
versity of New Hampshire

Kevin Cavanaugh (2002), Assistant Professor of English and Hu-
manities, Dutchess Community College

Lynne Crockett (1996), Associate Professor of English, Sullivan
County Community College

Deborah DiPiero (2001), Assistant Professor of English and Direc-
tor of Writing, St. Andrews Presbyterian College (Laurinburg,
NC)

Dennis Doherty (1991), Instructor of English and Director of Creative Writing, SUNY New Paltz

Laurence Erussard (1992), Associate Professor of English, Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Mary Fakler (1994), Instructor of English, SUNY New Paltz

Penny Freel (1995), Instructor of English, SUNY New Paltz

Thomas Goldpaugh (1978), Associate Professor of English, Marist College

Thomas Impola (1989), Assistant Professor of English, Ulster County Community College

Jennifer Kaufman (2003), Instructor of English, Ulster County Community College

Brad McDuffie (2005), Instructor of English, Nyack College

Michele Morano (1991), Assistant Professor of English, DePaul University

Fiona Paton (1991), Associate Professor of English, SUNY New Paltz

Michael Rambadt (2009), Instructor of English and Humanities, Dutchess Community College

Rachel Rigolino (1992), Instructor of English and Director of the Composition SWW Program, SUNY New Paltz

Arnold A. Schmidt (1990), Professor of English, California State University, Stanislaus

Nicole Boucher Spottke (1996), Assistant Professor of English at Valencia Community College (Orlando, FL)

Kimberley Vanderlaan (1995), Assistant Professor of English, Louisiana Tech University

Amy Leigh Washburn (2005), Assistant Professor of English, Union County College (Elizabeth, NJ)

Meri Weiss (2006), Assistant Professor of English, College of New Rochelle, John Cardinal O'Connor Campus

4. News from graduates of our MA program:

Goretti Benca (2007) presented conference papers at the 13th Annual Elizabeth Madox Roberts Conference (St. Catharine College, KY), the 14th International Hemingway Society Biennial Conference (Lausanne, Switzerland), and the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference (Atlanta, GA).

D. A. Carpenter (2005) published "Good Man, Honest Man: Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan and the Role of the Folk Outlaw" in *The Life, Music and Thought of Woodie Guthrie: A Critical Appraisal*, ed. John S. Partington, Ashgate, 157-72.

Lynne Crockett (1996) published *Victorians and Vivisection: Fictions of Pain from the Fin de Siècle* (Monograph), Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM, 2009.

Dennis Doherty (1991) published a poetry collection, *Crush Test*, with Codhill Press; an essay, "Knitting Bones," in *A Gathering of Tribes*, March 2011; and an essay, "Notes on the Road," in *In Search of . . .* April 2011; as well as three poems, "Edge Crush Test," "Imposition of the Difficult," and "Organ Music," in the online journal *Contemporary American Voices*, March 2011.

Laurence Erussard (1992) presented conference papers at the 45th International Congress on Medieval Studies (Western Michigan University at Kalamazoo), the 20th Conference of the Texas Medieval Association (Southern Methodist University), and the Congress of the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

Kate Hurd (2005) will enter the MS Program in Educational Technology at either George Washington University or Indiana University.

Jennifer Lee (2007) presented conference papers at the University of Rhode Island Graduate Conference and the Southern Connecticut State University Women's Studies Conference.

Brad McDuffie (2005) presented conference papers at the II International Imagism Conference (Dorf Tirol, Italy), the 14th International Hemingway Society Biennial Conference (Lausanne, Switzerland), the American Literature Association Symposium on American Fiction (Savannah, GA), and the

- South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference (Atlanta, GA). He published a poem, "Teaching 'In Our Time' to Freshmen," in the *North Dakota Quarterly*, and an article forthcoming in the *Hemingway Review* was excerpted in the *Kansas City Star*.
- Michele Morano (1991) published an essay, "Evenings at the Collegeview Diner," in *Water-Stone Review* 13 (Fall 2010): 107-121. She gave two conference presentations at the NonfictionNow Conference at the University of Iowa.
- Matthew Nickel (2006) published an article, "Lighthearted Sinners and Pious Puritans, Followers, and Believers: Hemingway's 'Holy War Meat Eaters and Beer Drinkers Happy Hunting Ground and Mountain Religion' in *Under Kilimanjaro*," in *North Dakota Quarterly* 76 (2009): 106-120. He edited *Knowledge Carried to the Heart: A Festschrift for H. R. Stoneback* and co-edited *Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology*. He also presented a paper at the II International Imagism Conference (Dorf Tirol, Italy).
- Sharon Peelor (1997) presented conference papers at the conference of the Society of Philosophy, History and Education and the Oklahoma Educational Studies Association.
- Arnold Schmidt (1990) published *Byron and the Rhetoric of Italian Nationalism* with Palgrave Macmillan.
- Neysa Sensenig (1993) received her PhD in Composition and Rhetoric from the University of Phoenix.
- James Stamant (2005) presented papers at the II International Imagism Conference (Dorf Tirol, Italy) and the Modern Language Association Conference (Los Angeles, CA).
- Kimberly Vanderlaan (1995) published an online article, "Empire and Allegory in Henry James's *The Europeans*," in the *Journal of American Studies* (Cambridge Journals), October 2010.
- Amy Leigh Washburn (2005) received her PhD in Women's Studies from the University of Maryland. She presented a paper at the American Conference for Irish Studies and delivered the keynote address at the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Induction Ceremony, Union County College.

5. The Editors would remind students of the **Russell S. Cleverley Memorial Fellowship**, established by Luella and Donald Cleverley in memory of their son Russell S. Cleverley, who earned his MA in English from SUNY New Paltz in December 1995. The Cleverley Fellowship is open to students matriculated in the MA English program with a 3.5 GPA who register for ENG 590, Thesis in English, in the award semester. The amount of the fellowship is \$500. Please submit a letter of application with transcript, the thesis proposal signed by the thesis director, and two letters of recommendation (one from the thesis director) to Daniel Kempton, English Graduate Director. Applications for the next award (fall 2011) are due May 15, 2011.

Guidelines for Submissions

As the journal of the English Graduate Program, the *Shawangunk Review* publishes the proceedings of the annual English Graduate Symposium. In addition, the Editors welcome submissions from English graduate students in any area of literary studies: essays (criticism; theory; historical, cultural, biographical studies), book reviews, scholarly notes, and poetry. English faculty are invited to submit poetry, translations of poetry, and book reviews.

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with MLA style and should be submitted as an electronic file accompanied by a hard copy. Essays should not exceed 5000 words (15 pages), book reviews 1250 words, poems five pages, and MA thesis abstracts 250 words. With your submission include a brief biographical statement.

Please submit material to the Department of English, SUNY New Paltz and/or kempton@newpaltz.edu; the deadline for Volume XXIII of the *Review* is December 15, 2011.

VIII CONTRIBUTORS

Monica Ayres received her MA in English from SUNY New Paltz in December 2010. She is currently a staff writer at the independent music magazine *The Big Takeover* and an editorial assistant at *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine.

Alex Andriese is a doctoral candidate in English at Boston College. He graduated with a BA in English from SUNY New Paltz in 2007. He has previously published translations of the French poets Yves Nedonsel and André Spire in this review. During the past year he has given papers at the Elizabeth Madox Roberts Conference at St. Catharine College, KY, the Nathaniel Hawthorne Conference in Concord, MA, the Imagism Conference in Dorf Tirol, Italy, the International Hemingway Conference in Lausanne, Switzerland, and the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference in Atlanta, GA.

David Appelbaum is a Professor of Philosophy at SUNY New Paltz. He is a former editor of *Parabola Magazine*, publisher of Codhill Press, and author of *Nieuw Pfalz* (Books 1 and 2), *Window with 4 Panes*, and *The Hairpin Tax* (2010).

Liz Bonhag is an English MAT student at SUNY New Paltz, and she also works as a technical writer. She was selected as an Outstanding Graduate by the English Department when she received her BA from New Paltz in 2007.

William Bedford Clark is Professor of English at Texas A&M University and General Editor of the Robert Penn Warren Correspondence Project. His book of poetry *Blue Norther* was published in 2010.

Lee Conell is an MA student in English and Teaching Assistant at SUNY New Paltz. Her writing has appeared in the *New York Times* and has been anthologized in *Backpack Writing*

(Pearson, 2010). She has contributed to the *Women's Studio Workshop* blog and *Chronogram*.

Thomas Doran received his MA in English from SUNY New Paltz in December 2010 and was named Outstanding Graduate. He was the fall 2010 recipient of the Russell S. Cleverley Memorial Fellowship for his MA thesis. He has presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and his poetry has appeared in *FENCE Magazine* and *Water-Writes*. He currently teaches at Marist College, SUNY New Paltz, and SUNY Sullivan and will begin his PhD in fall 2011.

Jacqueline George is an Assistant Professor of English at SUNY New Paltz. She earned her PhD from the University of Michigan, where she specialized in British Romantic Literature. Her research interests include the history of reading, Romantic subjectivity, and British prose fiction of the 1820s and 30s. Her essay "All these lovers of books have themselves become books!": Leigh Hunt in his Library" recently appeared in *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*.

Jesse Graves is an Assistant Professor of English at East Tennessee State University, where he teaches writing and literature classes. He recently served as guest editor for a special issue of *The Southern Quarterly* on "The Poetry and Prose of Robert Morgan" and is co-editor of *The Southern Poetry Anthology, Volume III: Contemporary Appalachia*. His first poetry collection, *Tennessee Landscape with Blighted Pine*, is forthcoming in fall 2011 from Texas Review Press.

Jennifer Gutman is an MA student in English and Teaching Assistant at SUNY New Paltz. She recently presented a paper at the Image of the Outlaw Conference at Colorado Springs.

Andrew C. Higgins is an Associate Professor of English at SUNY New Paltz. His focus is on poetry, especially the work of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. He has published on Walt Whitman, Longfellow, Sarah Piatt, and Civil War soldiers' memoirs. His poetry has appeared in the *New York Quarterly*, *The Awosting Review*, *Chronogram*, and *The Portland Review*.

Sarah Hurd is an MA student in English and Teaching Assistant at SUNY New Paltz. She writes a vegan column for *Outsider Magazine*, a zine based in Newburgh, NY, and she recently presented a paper at the University of Rhode Island's (Pre)Occupations Conference.

David Hurst is a MEd student in English at SUNY New Paltz and a tenth grade English teacher at Pine Bush High School.

Don Johnson is a Professor of Literature and Language at East Tennessee State University. He is the author of three books of poetry, the most recent of which is *Here and Gone: New and Selected Poems*.

Wyatt Krause is an MA student in English and Teaching Assistant at SUNY New Paltz. After graduation he intends to pursue a career as a fiction writer.

Jed Mayer is an Assistant Professor of Victorian literature at SUNY New Paltz. His current research focuses on the changing role of the nonhuman animal in the nineteenth century, and he has recently published articles in *Victorian Studies*, the *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies*, *Literature Compass*, and *Victorian Poetry*.

Brad McDuffie is an Instructor of English at Nyack College. His work has been published in various journals, including *The South Carolina Review*, *Aethlon*, and *North Dakota Quarterly*. His article "For Ernest, With Love and Squalor: The Influence of Ernest Hemingway on the Life and Work of J. D. Salinger" was excerpted by the *Kansas City Star* in July and will appear in the spring 2011 edition of *The Hemingway Review*.

William R. McKelvy is an Associate Professor of English at Washington University in St. Louis. He is the author of the *English Cult of Literature: Devoted Readers 1774-1880*. His research focuses on the practices and representations of reading during the time when average Britons became daily consumers of print media.

Matthew Nickel is a PhD candidate in English at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette. He has published essays and poems in various books and journals. He has recently edited an anthology, *Knowledge Carried to the Heart: A Festschrift for H. R. Stoneback*, and co-edited *Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology*.

Thomas G. Olsen is an Associate Professor of English and Chair of the English Department at SUNY New Paltz. He specializes in Shakespeare and has published in such journals as *Studies in English Literature*, *Annali d'Italianistica*, and *Shakespeare Yearbook*. His edition of the *Commonplace Book of Sir John Strangeways* for the Renaissance English Text Society appeared in 2004.

Heather Ozgercin is an MA student in English and Teaching Assistant, at SUNY New Paltz. She has recently presented a paper at the Heroines of Fantasy and Science Fiction Conference at Ithaca College.

Mary de Rachewiltz is a distinguished poet, scholar, and translator; she is author of numerous volumes of poetry in Italian as well as several works in English (e.g., *Whose World: Selected Poems*). Along with her award-winning translations of her father's poems (Ezra Pound's *The Cantos*) she has done Italian translations of e. e. cummings, Robinson Jeffers, Marianne Moore, H. D., et al. Her book *Ezra Pound, Father and Teacher: Discretions* stands as one of the most distinguished literary memoirs of the twentieth century. For over twenty years she served as curator of the Ezra Pound Archives at the Beinecke Library (Yale University).

Michael Renganeschi is an MA student in English and Teaching Assistant at SUNY New Paltz. He has presented conference papers on Ernest Hemingway, Dylan Thomas, and Breece D'J Pancake.

Erin Rodino has her MA in English from SUNY New Paltz and intends to apply to doctoral programs for fall 2012. Aside from her academic endeavors she is a contributor to and Chief Editor of the online literary magazine *Scalped*.

James Sherwood recently earned his MA in English from SUNY New Paltz and is now pursuing the MAT in English-Secondary Education, while serving as a Graduate Assistant in the English Department. His poetry and essays have been published in *Chronogram* and *Water Writes*, the 2009 anthology of Hudson Valley writers.

Vivian Shipley is a Distinguished Professor of English at Southern Connecticut State University and Editor of *The Connecticut Review*. In 2010, her eighth book of poetry, *All of Your Message Have Been Erased*, was published by Southeastern Louisiana University and nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Her sixth chapbook, *Greatest Hits: 1974-2010*, was published by Pudding House Press. Raised in Kentucky, with a PhD from Vanderbilt, she was inducted into the University of Kentucky Hall of Distinguished Alumni in April, 2010.

Robert Singleton is an Adjunct Instructor in English at SUNY New Paltz. Recently, he has been working on a series of memoirs with The Center for Civil War Photography, whose mission is to preserve (and digitize) the entire body of work by America's civil war photographers.

H. R. Stoneback is Distinguished Professor of English at SUNY New Paltz. He is a leading Hemingway scholar, author/editor of twenty-three books and some 200 articles on Durrell, Faulkner, Hemingway, Roberts, Warren et al. He is a widely published poet, editor of several anthologies, and author of eight volumes of poetry including *Amazing-Grace-Wheelchair-Jumpshot-Jesus-Love-Poems* (2009), *Hurricane Hymn & Other Poems* (2009), and *Fitzgerald Variations* (2010). Recent and forthcoming books include *Hemingway's Paris: Our Paris?* (2010), *Des Hymnagistes: An Anthology* (2010), and *The Voices of Women Singing* (poems 2011).

Kelly Tempest is an MA student in English and Teaching Assistant at SUNY New Paltz. She recently presented a paper at the University of Virginia Graduate English Conference.

Contributors

Pamela Ugor is an MAT in English at SUNY New Paltz. She writes poetry and has recently published in *The Penn's Store Anthology*.

Rosanna Warren is the Emma MacLachlan Metcalf Professor of the Humanities at Boston University, where she teaches Comparative Literature. A distinguished poet and literary critic, she has served as Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. Her volumes of poetry include *Stained Glass, Departure: Poems* (Norton 2005) and most recently *Ghost in a Red Hat* (Norton 2011). Her recent volume of literary criticism is *Fables of the Self: Studies in Lyric Poetry* (Norton 2008).

Robert H. Waugh is a SUNY New Paltz Professor Emeritus. He is the author of *The Monster in the Mirror: Looking for H. P. Lovecraft* and many articles on science fiction, horror, and fantasy literature, which have been published in such journals as *Extrapolation* and *Lovecraft Studies*. He is also a poet, whose work has appeared in many journals and in two chapbooks published by Codhill Press: *Shorewards, Tidewards* and *Thumbtacks, Glass, Pennies*.