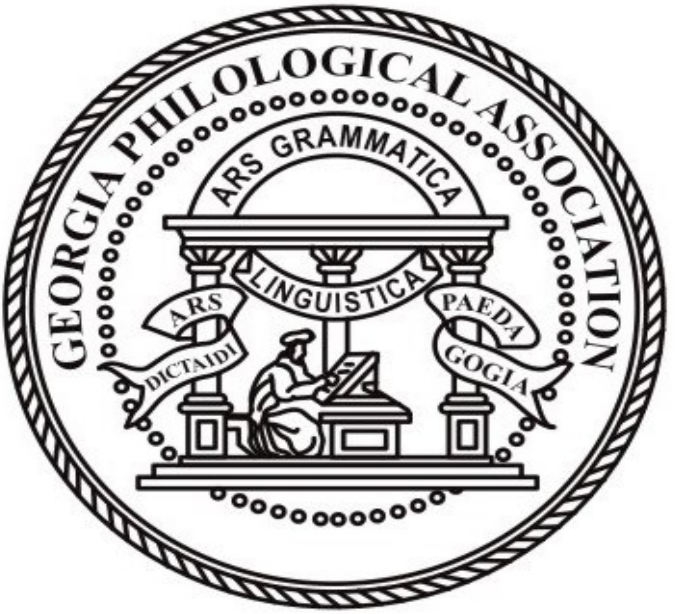
ISBN 978-1-387-94194-0
90000
9 781387 941940

The Journal of the Georgia Philological Association

Vol. 7

The Journal of the Georgia Philological Association

Volume 7



Journal of the Georgia Philological Association

Vol. 7 (2017-18)

The *Journal of the Georgia Philological Association* is published annually and contains selected expanded essays from proceedings from its annual conference held in the Spring as well as blind submissions. GPA membership is a prerequisite for final publication of all articles. To submit to the *JGPA*, email manuscripts, double-spaced and in MLA format as an attachment to:

Farrah Senn, Editor-in-Chief
Journal of the Georgia Philological Association
gpasubmissions@ega.edu

Complete submission instructions and more information can be found on the GPA web page at http://www.ega.edu/gpa.

All views or conclusions are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the Georgia Philological Association.

Annual Memberships

Faculty, Full and Part-time	$25
Students	
Graduate	$20
Undergraduate	$15
Independent Scholars and Retired Faculty	$20

Subscription Rates (order forms available on the website):

	Print	Electronic
Institutions and Libraries	$60	$60
Individuals		
Members	$20	Included in membership
Non-members	$30	$30

This journal is a member of the CELJ, the Council of Editors of Learned Journals. It is indexed in the MLA International Bibliography and EBSCOhost Research Databases.

Journal of the Georgia Philological Association

Published by the Georgia Philological Association
2018

First Printing: 2006

ISBN 978-1-365-87185-6

Georgia Philological Association
http://www.ega.edu/gpa

Table of Contents

Foreword

From the GPA President…

I am honored to once again be serving as president of the Georgia Philological Association (GPA) for the 2017-2018 academic year and to be writing the forward to the latest edition of our peer-reviewed journal. I was surprised and pleased to be elected to the presidency for an unprecedented second term and am humbled by the opportunity to continue to facilitate the growth of the GPA.

The twelfth annual conference of the GPA was held on May 19, 2017, at the Conference Center on the Macon campus of Middle Georgia State University. This occasion marked the inaugural presentation of the Vicki Hill Memorial Graduate Recognition Award. Dr. Harry Bayne suggested that we create this award in memoriam of Dr. Hill, one of the founding members of the GPA along with Dr. Bayne and others. This $100 award will henceforth be given to the graduate student who presents the most successful paper at the conference each year, and the winner will be chosen by the Executive Committee of the GPA. The first Vicki Hill Memorial Graduate Recognition Award was presented to Anca Garcia, a graduate student attending Valdosta State University, for her paper entitled "Ismail Kadare and the Unraveling of the Communist Curtain." A version of that paper appears in this volume of *The Journal of the Georgia Philological Association*. The Vicki Hill Memorial Graduate Recognition Award is intended to honor a life of scholarship and service, and I feel certain that Dr. Hill would be pleased that her legacy is supporting young academics who are just beginning lifetimes of valuable contributions to academia. The award is funded entirely by contributions from GPA members; I urge anyone who is interested in cultivating the next generation of academics to make a donation to the award fund.

The thirteenth annual conference of the GPA will be held on May 18, 2018, again on the Macon campus of MGSU. At this meeting, the GPA will celebrate another milestone when we confer a lifetime membership in the GPA on Sara Selby. Professor Selby

describes her current role in the academy in the following biographical statement:

> My current position is Professor of English and Academic Affairs Projects Specialist at South Georgia State College (SGSC). I am responsible for coordinating a number of faculty development activities, including establishment of a Center for Teaching and Learning, creation and facilitation of a certified instructor training program for delivery of online courses, facilitation of yearly Faculty Learning Communities, and development of monthly presentations for our faculty academy and mentoring experience program (FAME). I represent the institution at a number of System-wide meetings and initiatives, including the Consortium on Teaching and Learning, the Regents' Administrative Committee on Distance Education, the Steering Committee for the LEAP (Liberal Education and America's Promise) Initiative, and the Affordable Learning Georgia Initiative. I serve as an institutional coordinator for Quality Matters, am on the steering committee for SGSC's Gateways to Completion activities, and am a member of the Academic and Student Affairs Leadership Team. Under the aegis of two ALG grants, I have in the past three years co-authored an Instructor's Guide for the OpenStax *Concepts of Biology* textbook, helped to remix the OpenStax *Microbiology* textbook into a *Microbiology for Allied Health Students* Text, and co-authored a Lab Manual and a collection of instructional materials and case studies for Microbiology for Allied Health Students. I have been recognized as an Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Award recipient. I currently teach two courses per year, one being a hybrid British Literature course in the fall on the Waycross campus of SGSC, and the other being a Freshman Composition course in the spring for dual enrollment students at Clinch County High School in Homerville, Georgia.

When I solicited comments from GPA members about Professor Selby's contributions to both the association and the academy at large, I received multiple observations of her professional career. Dr. Bayne supplied the following remarks:

Yazoo City, Mississippi, native Sara Selby was a senior TA and administrative assistant in the Freshman English office when I came to Ole Miss in 1985. She made herself invaluable to us newcomers by handing out campus maps and dictionaries and by providing information about office assignments (and whose graduate seminars to avoid). In that capacity she was unfailingly kind and patient. I asked a lot of questions, and because the other office personnel were not always congenial or knowledgeable, Sara was of tremendous help to me. In the succeeding years, while I never took any classes with her, she was a ubiquitous and accommodating presence in the English Department, and best of all, reliably sane. During that period (1985-1990), she regularly participated in professional conferences, both on campus and off. When I completed my very sloppy dissertation in 1990 and needed to have it professionally typed and formatted, my director, Dr. Ben Fisher—without hesitation—recommended Sara, and she accomplished the task swiftly and flawlessly. After I began teaching at Brewton-Parker College in 1990, I had no contact with her for about 15 years, although I was aware that she had moved to Georgia to teach at Waycross College. When the Arts and Letters faculty at Brewton-Parker voted to create the Georgia Philological Association in October 2005, I made a point of seeing that Sara received the call for papers by e-mail, and she was among the speakers at the first annual meeting in the spring of 2006. Her well-received multimedia presentation, "*Wuthering Heights* and Pop Culture, or Googling Heathcliff," proved to be the high mark of that initial GPA gathering. In 2010, when the GPA's future appeared uncertain, Sara appeared at the annual meeting, held that year at a motel in Vidalia, and generously offered to host the conference at Waycross College in 2011. I attended that meeting and the one in 2012—memorable, seamlessly run conferences that assured me that the organization was in very capable hands.

Dr. Dave Buehrer echoed Dr. Bayne's sentiments in his recollections of Professor Selby. He told me, "Sara Selby was responsible for essentially taking on the GPA Conference in her

position as Prof. of English and Dean of Humanities & Social Sciences at Waycross College once Brewton-Parker had to pull out with funding and facilities after the 2010 meeting (which was actually held at a hotel conference room in Vidalia). So, she played an integral role in keeping the organization going and hosting/organizing our annual meeting from 2011-2014 in Waycross."

I also contacted Dr. Ben Fisher, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Mississippi, for a statement; Professor Selby and I have the good fortune of sharing Dr. Fisher as a graduate school mentor, and I think she would agree with me that praise from Dr. Fisher is highly coveted by the students he shepherds. Dr. Fisher commented, "I can say that Sara's interest in Poe and in the Brontës often made me re-think ideas concerning those writers. Also, that Sara has always been conscientious and diligent in her work, and that she is a steadfast friend. Sara has contributed much over the years to GPA, and her all-around efforts and accomplishments have benefitted our profession."

I am looking forward to presenting the lifetime membership award to Professor Selby in May, and I am also looking forward to conferring the next Vicki Hill Memorial Graduate Recognition Award on a deserving graduate student scholar. These are exciting times of growth and possibility for the GPA, and I am privileged to be a part of a flourishing organization devoted to the promotion of regional scholarship.

Lorraine Dubuisson
President
Georgia Philological Association

Introduction

From the Editor …

This marks the seventh iteration of *The Journal of the Georgia Philological Association* and the second issue under the extremely-capable hands of Editor-in-Chief Dr. Farrah Senn of Andrew College. Several of the essays included here represent expanded versions of papers presented at the 12th Annual Meeting of the GPA held on the Macon Campus of MGSU on May 19, 2017, while the rest are outside submissions from scholars new to our organization. We're proud to offer a forum for regional scholarship on a wide variety of literary, cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical issues, and all of our published articles have undergone rigorous, blind peer review and been subject to sometimes extensive revision. While it's the *Journal*'s policy to give preference to papers first presented at the annual conference, we certainly welcome submissions from others interested in exploring philology in its broadest sense, which is reflected in the very language of our CFP for this year's conference:

> We invite proposals for session topics, panel discussion topics, and scholarly papers in English on any subjects relating to American, British, French, Hispanic, Russian, German, or Slavic literature or language, as well as composition, philosophy, history, translation, the general humanities, interdisciplinary studies, and pedagogy.

As this CFP demonstrates, ours is an organization that encourages interdisciplinarity and intersectionality, and these concepts are nicely evidenced by the eight articles featured in this volume of the *Journal*.

We begin with an expanded version of the transcript of the 2017 annual meeting's keynote address by Dr. Laura E. Thomason of MGSU, which is adapted from her 2013 book, *The Matrimonial Trap: Eighteenth-Century Women Writers Redefine Marriage* (Bucknell UP).

In her essay comparing Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748), Thomason elucidates the severe limitations placed on even upper-class women of British society in the

17th and early 18th century, especially when it came to their so-called "choices" in who they would marry. But she contends that for the female protagonists of these novels, and paralleling their real-life counterparts of that time-period, "the potential financial risk of holding out for a freely chosen companionate marriage was worth the reward of such a match. Companionacy thus becomes a necessary, if elusive, corrective to the imbalance of power that marriage could create" (8). The next selection extends this cultural study of women's roles and stifling restrictions in 19th-century patriarchal society, if from a more psychoanalytical perspective. In "'Bang!—Just Like a Candle!': Extinguishing Angels with Vaporous, Carrollian Glass," Val Czerny argues that "[w]hereas Gilman's [unnamed female] narrator [in "The Yellow Wall-Paper"] perceives herself as if she is in a nightmare from which she cannot escape, which is bad enough, it is helpful to look into Carrollian perspectives on dreaming in order to explore the consciousness that can overtake someone's identity […] if, indeed, the dream itself has the ability actually to become reality" (21-22). In her "fresh interpretation" of the story, then, Czerny "offers an unconventional exploration of Gilman's narrator's struggles with an illusionary identity—accentuated by a nineteenth-century adherence to a rigorous pronouncement of chronic, discordant convictions regarding defined roles" (17).

The next two pieces in the issue delve into mythological perspectives on popular culture and contemporary fiction, respectively. In "A Parthenos in Pop Culture: Katniss Evergreen in *The Hunger Games*," Calabria Turner reads the young female protagonist of Collins's novel as defying "the role of traditional tribute in Panem by encapsulating all attributes of the Greek parthenos–chastity, unstable behavior, compassion, courage, and intelligence–each of which shape her into a modern heroine of mythic proportions" (31). That is, Katniss embodies the classical model of the parthenos as evidenced in Antigone, while also reflecting a contemporary feminist position in her ability to move beyond proscribed gender roles. In "Ismail Kadare and the Unraveling of the Communist Curtain," Anca Garcia pits the Albanian novelist's *Agamemnon's Daughter* (pub. 2003) against its prototext in Euripides's *Iphigenia in Aulis*, but not merely to reveal the

contemporary writer's "anxiety of influence." In fact, Garcia hopes to show that "a study of the adaptation and intertextuality in the novel" will expose "Kadare's intention to deconstruct the very essence of the tragedy and to describe the grotesque of the communist simulacrum" (48). Furthermore, Garcia employs Genette's generic narratological theory to argue that Kadare's novella "builds an antithetical, mirror-adaptation of the tragedy: a serious parody describing life in communism as a simulacrum of a heroic and tragic existence" (50), thus complicating notions of adaptation and intertextuality.

Sabrina Wengier's essay, "A Self-Made Woman: Mme de Merteuil and the Politics of Love in *Les liaisons dangereuses*," also addresses the often paradoxical and hybrid gender roles with which women were afflicted, here in the context of late 18th-century French society. Employing Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's and Gayle Rubin's feminist theories as applied to the sexual relations portrayed in Laclos's epistolary novel, Wengier concludes that while "Mme de Merteuil functions well within the male-dominated society, she [ultimately] realizes that she is powerless when confronted with men's innate sense of solidarity and bonding" (62). Katie Dodril, in "The Narrative Structure of *Emma* on the Page and the Screen," continues this focus on women's voices and expectations as presented in earlier fiction. Dodril is concerned about Austen's narrative technique in the novel, however, and how it fosters Emma's portrayal: through her "use of the narrative device free indirect discourse," Austen creates "a complex main character" and "is able to make Emma a more sympathetic character" (81) than she would be if a more objective, third person narration had been employed.

In "*The Algerine Captive*: An Early American Argument for Freedom through Literacy," Molly Gross explores how Royall Tyler exploits the popular "captivity narrative" genre, best exemplified in Mary Rowlandson's account, to blur the lines between factual autobiography and imaginative fiction. More importantly, according to Gross, "Tyler used *The Algerine Captive* as a means to criticize a government insensitive to slavery and advocate for the extent to which literacy enables freedom" (92). Lastly, Marcus Johnson, in "A Century of Intellectual Agency: Kant, Jacotot, and Nietzsche," critiques these three prominent 18th and 19th-century philosophers for the similarities and differences in their pedagogical positions. In his genealogical analysis, Johnson contends that all three thinkers

"understood education as cultivation," and he attempts to show "how each connected this goal to the related goals of progress and equality, as well as the individual and the collective" (107). He concludes, however, that despite their marked differences, "Kant, Jacotot, and Nietzsche would likely agree that the ultimate goal for such an educator would be to instill in students the ability to undertake and compose their own study," or essentially "to think for themselves" (126).

From myriad explorations of women's roles in world literature and popular culture, to metafictional and intertextual commentary exposing the absurdity of life under communism, to genealogical analysis of Continental theories of pedagogy–the varied nature of the contributions in this volume of the *JGPA* is reflective of our organization's aim to remain openly and purposefully interdisciplinary. We hope to continue this focus on the intersections of literature, pop culture, philosophy, pedagogy, and the humanities at large in future issues of the *Journal*. Thank you for your support of the GPA, and we welcome your contributions to this forum for regional scholarship.

Dave Buehrer
Co-Editor
Journal of the Georgia Philological Association

GPA Annual Meeting Keynote Address – The Marriage Game/The Matrimonial Trap: Why Everyone Who Has Read *Pride and Prejudice* Should Read Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*[1]

Laura E. Thomason, Ph.D
Middle Georgia State University

Social commentators in 18th-century England perceived an overwhelming trend toward mercenary marriages, but many modern historians date the rise of the loving, egalitarian family to the same period. Examining two important novels—Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*—alongside eighteenth-century women writers' discussions of marriage can help illuminate that contradiction. For genteel women of the period, marriage was nearly compulsory, yet its purpose was evolving and its value was unclear. Women writers responded to this unstable situation by redefining marriage as a type of egalitarian friendship, drawing on classical and early modern traditions that valorized such friendships. This redefined vision of marriage offered women the expectation of choice and companionacy while still allowing them to rely on marriage for economic stability.

Women of the social class that called itself "the polite" or "the genteel" were virtually required to marry for legal and financial reasons as well as social ones.[2] Anne Donnellan wrote to Elizabeth Montagu in 1742 that marriage is "the settlement in the world we should aim at, and the only way we females have of making ourselves of use to Society and raising ourselves in this world" (qtd. in Climenson 113). Educated to be "accomplished" in elegant practices such as dancing, drawing, and speaking French, women of this class were not equipped to earn a living through work. They needed the financial support that a marriage would bring. As Jane West explained in 1806, "the manner of the times, and the prevailing style of education, render women at once extravagant and dependent: girls can do nothing to maintain themselves; they must therefore at all events get husbands" (334). Although a woman would be supported by her husband during her life, and then after his death via a stipulated

"jointure," she would bring a sum of money called a "portion" into the marriage as well. Families of modest means or with many children to provide for relied on the marital economy of portions and jointures to meet current and future financial exigencies and to put roofs over their children's heads. Austen's Charlotte Lucas could thus credibly claim in 1813 that she would marry to secure "a comfortable home," with little consideration for the marriage relationship (85).[3] However, once married, women did not own property independently, thanks to a legal system that transferred family assets through the patriarchal line. The law largely kept women from accumulating capital, investing in property, or participating in financial decisions. As Lady Mary Pierrepont wrote to her future husband Edward Wortley Montagu in 1710, "since I am so unfortunate to have nothing in my own disposal, do not think I have any hand in makeing Settlements" (1:64). Thus, the genteel women most affected by the circumstances of their marriages had the least social or legal standing to participate in deciding those circumstances.

Meanwhile, as law and custom kept marriage compulsory, favoring arranged or "prudential" marriages, marital choice and emotional fulfillment in marriage arose as ideals—though not yet as realities. In 1710, Lady Mary Pierrepont said she wanted to marry "one […] that I very much lovd, and that very much lovd me" (1:61); Mary Delany in 1751 called marriage "a state that should always be a matter of choice" (3:25). Unsurprisingly, the competing factors of emotion, duty, social mores, and economic necessity coexisted with difficulty. An arranged or prudential marriage became the default position against which women like Pierrepont and Delany were reacting—or from which they were trying to escape.[4] Both Pierrepont and Delany knew the threat of an unwanted, parentally arranged marriage firsthand: Pierrepont eloped with Edward Wortley Montagu in 1712 to avoid marrying Clotworthy Skeffington, an Irish peer selected by her father. Delany, born Mary Granville, married Alexander Pendarves, 43 years her senior, in 1718 to appease the uncle on whose financial support her family relied. After Pendarves died in 1724, the widowed Mrs. Pendarves did not remarry until 1743, choosing Dr. Patrick Delany, a clergyman and secretary to Jonathan Swift who offered her "the tenderness of affection and the faith of

friendship" (qtd. in Johnson 123-24). As a widow, Delany had more freedom to choose her husband over her family's objections, but social constraints on unmarried women's behavior impeded choice and companionacy. Mary Astell described these constraints in 1694: "Modesty requiring that a Woman should not love before Marriage, but only make choice of one whom she can love hereafter: She who has none but innocent affections, being easily able to fix them where Duty requires" (102). The perfect young woman was neither eager to marry nor opposed to "changing her condition" under the proper circumstances: a parentally approved, legally contracted marriage. In view of these contradictory values, exemplified by an illusory choice grudgingly offered, the idea of marital choice became less a blessing than an additional source of anxiety.

However, the period of courtship was recognized as a period of power: a brief time during which a daughter, no matter how dutiful, might play some role in choosing her future. Yet the pressures of filial and social duty often eclipsed those moments of freedom. Young women were taught to please and to trust their families above themselves. As Sarah Scott's character Emilia Leonard explains in *The Test of Filial Duty* (1772), "It is very true that I do suffer extremely, when I give pain to those who are rendered sensible of it only by their partiality to me; to grieve those who wish to please me, seems an ungrateful and unnatural return" (81). Women thus trained acquiesced in the choices made for them rather than choosing for themselves. Scott and her contemporaries suggest that an arranged marriage was likely to be the main concrete expedient of the abstract value labeled "filial duty." In turn, they often conflate arranged marriage with mercenary marriage, which they uniformly reject as immoral. Although Elizabeth Montagu frankly acknowledged in 1740 that for her, "living in a cottage on love is the worst diet and the worst habitation one can find out," these female intellectuals were more likely to see economically motivated marriages as a main cause of marital misery (82–83). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, for example, repeatedly acknowledged "the mistake of interested Matches, which are gennerally unfortunate" (2:430). A woman could marry for money but could not want too much money; should love her husband, but only after she married him; ought to trust her family, rather than her instincts, in selecting a spouse.

As these examples suggest, 18th-century England suffered from a sense of crisis about the purpose and value of marriage. As a focus for anxiety about women's place in society, matrimony became a nearly obsessive topic of imaginative, legal, and didactic literature in the 18th-century. Women's place in the family structure was uncertain; Ruth Perry argues that "it was a mixed blessing for women to exchange whatever power and status they had in their families of origin for the power and status of women in conjugal families" (2). In this period of transition, questions arose about where a woman's primary loyalty lay and where she could turn for protection if it were needed. Socially and legally vulnerable and constrained by their role, genteel women had many reasons to regard marriage with skepticism or even outright hostility. It is no surprise, then, that for the early feminist writers studied by Eve Tavor Bannet, "marriage was a duty which, on the whole, they and their heroines preferred to leave to others" (93). The emotional risk of a prudential marriage was not commensurate with its financial reward. My subjects' writing suggests, on the other hand, that the potential financial risk of holding out for a freely chosen companionate marriage was worth the reward of such a match. Companionacy thus becomes a necessary, if elusive, corrective to the imbalance of power that marriage could create. These women promote an ideal of marriage based on similarity of character, suggesting that friendship is more reasonable, honest, and durable than romantic love. None of them rejects outright the traditional expectation of wifely obedience. Instead, they justify or rationalize it, using the prospect of a mutually respectful marriage relationship to recast the idea of obedience as a mutual obligation or as a natural consequence of friendship. This reasoning minimizes the importance of romantic love, which was seen as a dangerous threat to their already limited autonomy, whereas conduct books emphasized the presence of love in marriage as a means of both cementing and confirming obedience. In my subjects' writing, passionate love represents a loss of control and judgment, qualities of which women were often deprived and qualities that they believed a companionate marriage should enable, protect, and preserve. A woman's right to select her husband is a prerequisite for a relationship in which a wife maintains some self-determination. Defining ideal marriage as

requiring friendship and respect enables these women to argue, in effect, for more egalitarian marital relationships, without overtly calling for a change in the wife's traditional role.

Two novels, published sixty-five years apart, serve as case studies to illustrate further the changing understanding of marriage in the 18th-century. The latter, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), remains widely popular to this day for its recognizably modern depiction of a complicated courtship between two complex individuals. Yet the circumstances around Elizabeth and Darcy's eventual marriage are familiar to observers of 18th-century culture and represent the remnants of concerns that had lingered for more than a century: the Bennet estate's entail that threatens to impoverish the five sisters; Mrs. Bennet's resulting obsession with seeing her daughters married; Lady Catherine de Bourgh's compulsive policing of class boundaries on behalf of her nephew; and, as mentioned earlier, Charlotte Lucas's decision to accept a "prudential" marriage despite knowing the ways in which it will limit her future happiness. These persistent threats to choice and companionacy ultimately recede into the background in *Pride and Prejudice* so that marriages based on hard-won compatibility and interpersonal understanding can take center stage. Conversely, in the earlier novel, Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748), the drive toward an arranged marriage that would "raise a family" from wealthy gentry to titled nobility results in heartbreak. Today, Richardson's novel is far less widely known, read, and adapted than Austen's, but in its time, *Clarissa* was a blockbuster: Lois Bueler's 2010 reception study of the novel collects and comments on two volumes' worth of criticism, commentaries, adaptations, and responses spanning the years 1747 (when the first volume of *Clarissa* was published) to 1804, illustrating the extent of *Clarissa*'s influence; many women, including my research subjects, commented on its powerful effects.

The reasons for *Clarissa*'s influence are many and varied, but Richardson's novel dramatizes with particular pathos the effect on women of the clash between socioeconomic and emotional motivations for marriage. *Clarissa* depicts an unimpeachably virtuous heroine, Clarissa Harlowe, victimized by her tyrannical family. They insist on her marriage to a wealthy but oafish man, Roger Solmes, as a means of elevating Clarissa's brother James into the nobility. Though she wishes to do her duty and obey her family as she always has in the

past, she cannot accept the marriage. Her family assumes that she is refusing because she has a "prepossession" in favor of another man, Lovelace, whose reputation is uncertain and whom James Harlowe despises. To escape the marriage to Solmes, she runs away with the libertine Lovelace who imprisons, drugs, and rapes her. Having lost her only valuable possession—her virtue—Clarissa effectively dies of a broken heart. It all sounds, and is, melodramatic, but the obstacles facing Clarissa were familiar ones to any young woman urged to comply with her "friends," eschew even innocent attachments, and disregard her emotional needs in order to secure her future and help her family advance. Mary Delany, for example, wrote to her sister that "to call Clarissa fool, argues a weak judgment in the criticizer" (2:561). The conduct writer Hester Chapone felt so strongly about *Clarissa* that she wrote several letters to Samuel Richardson arguing that women should have greater marital choice. By showing that even the most morally upright woman could be victimized by those who were supposed to protect her, *Clarissa* suggested that the elaborate social structures intended to safeguard women could in fact be used to do just the opposite. In the novel's preface, Richardson states his desire "to caution parents against the undue exertion of their natural authority over their children in the great article of marriage," but the pathos that his heroine embodies makes a larger argument for women's autonomy (36). *Clarissa*'s popularity reminds us that novels were only one part of a larger conversation about the meaning and purpose of marriage and its connection to other social structures. If it is true that, as Nancy Armstrong argues, novels were particularly influential in dictating "what was female," then the importance of *Clarissa* for our understanding of women's roles in marriage in the 18thcentury cannot be overstated (5).

Throughout the period, writers of and for the genteel class, including Richardson, were attempting to stabilize the social and individual value of marriage while the morals and standards that had traditionally justified it were shifting. That conversation took place so consistently in the press, in the theatre, and in personal correspondence as well as in fiction that by the time Jane Austen's famous "It is a truth universally acknowledged…" first appeared in print in 1813, readers had already had plenty of practice interpreting

tales of courtship and marriage and making morally based judgments about others' marriages (3). *Pride and Prejudice* celebrates and valorizes the kind of companionate relationship for which women such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Mary Delany had to struggle, argue, and compromise, and which Richardson depicted as nearly impossible to achieve. Austen's novel suggests, however tentatively, that reading audiences were willing to valorize choice and companionacy in marriage and to find the triumph of those qualities believable in a way that they might not have done just over half a century earlier. The feminization of the novel, combined with the Enlightenment emphasis on reason and the value placed on individual feelings by the cult of sensibility, created conditions under which Elizabeth Bennet, a progressive heroine, could receive a very conservative reward: marriage to a man of her choice who just happens to have a sprawling estate and £10,000 a year. Concern for emotional fulfillment in marriage was rising, while duty and tradition no longer were de facto sufficient motivations for a match. At the same time, property laws restricting women's economic power still held sway, and families still used marriage as a means of building wealth and influence for future generations. The contradictions between these two trends are obvious. While *Clarissa* suggests that those contradictions are irreconcilable, *Pride and Prejudice* hints that when women are allowed to choose their husbands, marriages succeed and societies stabilize.

The women that I study, not unlike Clarissa Harlowe and Elizabeth Bennet, are suspicious of passion and instead regard friendship and a similarity of character as the keys to happiness in marriage. Both these seminal novels and the lives of 18th-century women suggest that in trying to make a love story the overarching narrative of 18th-century marriage, scholars frame the argument in the wrong terms. Reducing marriage to a choice between love and money elides women's concerns about what companionacy was and whether it was achievable. The experiences of later figures such as Frances Burney and Hester Lynch Piozzi hint that when a companionate relationship was, with difficulty, achieved, it made possible a powerful degree of interdependence and collaboration between spouses. Yet Burney's and Piozzi's marriages must be regarded as exceptional. More generally, marriage was, for upper-class women of the period, a source of apprehension. Although none of the women I

consider could afford, literally or figuratively, to dismiss marriage, all of them approach the subject skeptically. Marriage is "serious and hazardous" (Delany 2:133); it is "surrounded with precipices […] [and] perhaps, after all, better miss'd than found" (Montagu 3:83);" and the wrong marriage is "perjury before the altar of God" (Chapone 206).

These women suggest that friendship is the only correct emotion on which to base a long-term relationship; as Delany notes, "People may fancy themselves in love […] but I never yet heard of anybody's carrying friendship on by mere imagination" (1:148). Because friendship is honest, and is motivated by neither greed nor lust, it is a better basis for marriage than either passionate love or financial gain. By endorsing companionacy in these terms, these women tacitly argue for equality between husbands and wives: a friendship is a relationship of equals. Although they support the Biblical ideal of wifely subordination, they stress the wife's role as a "help meet," a suitable helper for her husband, and suggest that the role of help meet makes the wife equal, or nearly equal, to the husband. Each of them imagines an ideal of marriage much like that described by Montagu: marriage to a man who "thought that the truest wisdome which most conduced to our happynesse, and that it was not below a man of sense to take satisfaction in the conversation of a reasonable woman" (1:61). But, each of them casts this image as an ideal to be promoted, argued for, and celebrated where it is found, not as a pervasive reality already accepted by society.

Notes

[1] Portions of this address are adapted from my *The Matrimonial Trap: Eighteenth-Century Women Writers Redefine Marriage* (2013) and appear courtesy of Bucknell University Press.

[2] Amanda Vickery notes that "'the polite' and 'the genteel' are the only terms consistently used by the women studied here to convey their social prestige." Vickery focuses on women from families of "moderate social eminence"—lesser gentry and professionals (12).

[3] Charlotte famously marries the ridiculous Mr. Collins and carves out an enjoyable life based mostly on avoiding her husband. In this respect, she is not unlike Bluestocking women such as Sarah Scott who, though married, led a largely independent life.

[4] Lawrence Stone suggests that "more advanced parents" had been allowing girls veto power since the mid-seventeenth century, but also cites the Marquis of Halifax's remark in 1688 that "young women are seldom permitted to make their own choice" (278).

Works Cited

Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*. Oxford UP, 1987.

Astell, Mary. *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*. Edited by Patricia Springborg. Broadview Press, 2002.

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. W. W. Norton & Co., 2001.

Bannet, Eve Tavor. *The Domestic Revolution: Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel*. Johns Hopkins UP, 2000.

Bueler, Lois E., ed. *Clarissa: The Eighteenth-Century Response, 1747-1804*, 2 vols. AMS Press, 2010.

Chapone, Hester. *Letters on Filial Obedience*. Edited by Rhoda Zuk. In *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738–1785*, general editor Gary Kelly, vol. 3. Pickering and Chatto, 1999.

Climenson, Emily J. *Elizabeth Montagu: The Queen of the Blue-Stockings: Her Correspondence from1720 to 1761*, vol. 1. John Murray, 1906.

Hall, Augusta Waddington, Lady Llanover, ed. *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany, With Interesting Reminiscences of King George the Third and Queen Charlotte*. 6 vols. 1862.

Halsband, Robert. ed. *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*. 3 vols. Clarendon Press, 1965.

Johnson, R. Brimley. *Mrs. Delany at Court and among the Wits, Being the Record of a Great Lady of Genius in the Art of Living*. Stanley Paul & Co., Ltd., 1925.

Montagu, Matthew, ed. *The Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu*, vol. 1. AMS Press, 1974.

Perry, Ruth. *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748–1818*. Cambridge UP, 2004.

Scott, Sarah. *The Test of Filial Duty*, in *Bluestocking Feminism: Writings of the Bluestocking Circle, 1738–1785*, edited by Gary Kelly, vol. 6. Pickering and Chatto, 1999.

Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500–1800*. Harper & Row, 1977.

Vickery, Amanda. *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England*. Yale UP, 1998.

West, Jane. *Letters to a Young Lady in which the Duties and Characters of Women are Considered*, vol. 2, 1806.

"Bang!—Just Like a Candle!": Extinguishing Angels with Vaporous, Carrollian Glass

Val Czerny, Ph.D.
East Georgia State College

Referring to the role of women in the 19th-century, Carol Dyhouse points to the irony inherent in a society that "enshrined independence as one of the highest human virtues" while persistently accentuating the "desirability" for women to play a role marked by faultless *dependence*. Conveying her point in 1978, Dyhouse drew attention to this irony in Western culture that, on the whole, tended to go unnoticed—an irony still telling even today as gender roles continue to be examined and defined. "It is not difficult," Dyhouse remarks, "to understand the feelings of indignity and resentment expressed by feminists who could only experience passivity as humiliating impotence" (175). Assuredly, it is *not* difficult to comprehend that the recurrent, day-to-day monotony of recognizing one's impotence, of being unable to alter one's state of existence not only in the political or social environments, but also in the domestic, private realm, would have turned the very *experience* of passivity into resentment and humiliation, for, indeed, our human condition impels us to change, improve, create, and grow. However, whereas Dyhouse focuses on the *experience* of helpless, powerless passivity regarding 19th-century women who were expected to conform to the dependent role, Charlotte Perkins Gilman—who lived under and struggled against 19th-century gender biases—proposes that our focus should be a bit more atypical. In "The Yellow Wall-Paper," Gilman creates a narrator who, through her unreliability, presents not the mere *experience* of the passive state, but its very *non*-experiential condition—that is, in terms of the human spirit, its *illusionary* orientation in a prescriptive, well-versed ideology that disavowed what it could not compose or orchestrate. Gilman, of course, is not alone when it comes to fiction that provides peculiar, unconventional approaches. Lewis Carroll, an expert in mathematical logic, wrote

fiction involving complicated, symbolic, logical absurdities in relation to our struggles with biased perceptions, ignorance, traditions, and the unknown in what we consider our familiar world. Playing with the game-like idea of existing in an illusionary condition, Lewis Carroll, in *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, presents a peculiar situation regarding his character, the Red King. Indeed, the Red King's dream accentuates a "looking-glass" perspective—where reversal presides as the controlling mental exercise—on presumed, accepted states of reality. Thus, both Carroll and Gilman are authors who understood that using atypical approaches in order to augment dilemmas about conventional attitudes can go a long way in arousing our consciousness, our sense of justice, and our indignation against undiscerning pronouncements that favor one idea, belief, or group over another. Hence, in order to examine uncustomarily the narrator's disturbing insanity at the end of Gilman's story, and using the Red King's dream as a philosophical frame, this fresh interpretation of "The Yellow Wall-Paper" offers an unconventional exploration of Gilman's narrator's struggles with an illusionary identity—accentuated by a nineteenth-century adherence to a rigorous pronouncement of chronic, discordant convictions regarding defined roles. Indeed, the narrator's insanity, viewed through a Carrollian, "looking-glass" lens, can be perceived as a recognition of reversal—a *reflection* of chaos, where, in a fraction of a second, the feeble, dependent role and corresponding attempts to nullify a "passive" identity's independence take on new meaning.

The illusionary identity that Gilman's narrator in "The Yellow Wall-Paper" is expected to embrace is based, primarily, upon a nineteenth-century ideal that was not confined to British, Victorian culture but spread across the Atlantic to North America, where, it could be argued, the founders of the United States "enshrined independence" as *the* highest human virtue. This ideal, where a woman is dependent and "confined to the domestic circle," as Dyhouse explains, had been "succinctly expressed in the writings of [John] Ruskin and Coventry Patmore, who saw the home as a sanctuary, a haven of spirituality presided over by an ethereal angel-wife" (175-76). Published in 1854, Coventry Patmore's poem, *The Angel in the House*, acquired a strong popularity during the 19th-century, and its effects extended well into the twentieth. The long poem describes a lover's pursuit and eventual conquering of a woman

who becomes his wife. In Canto XII of the first book, entitled "The Abdication," the lover, in his quest for the woman, surrounds and envelopes her, supposedly vapor-like, as if "a mist":

> With subtle, swift, unseen increase;
> And then, unlook'd for, strikes amain
> Some stroke that frightens her to death,
> And grows all harmlessness again,
> Ere she can cry, or get her breath.
> At times, she stops, and stands at bay;
> But he, in all more strong than she,
> Subdues her with his pale dismay,
> Or more admired audacity. (98)

The lover either imagines that the woman admires his audacity, or he finds audacity worthy of his own self-admiration. In either case, he realizes that the woman he is pursuing is not comfortable, for when he "looks as if he loved her so, / She smiles to him against her will" (99). The "subtle, swift, unseen increase" followed by the stroke that "grows all harmlessness again" is rich in sexual imagery, but within that imagery, it is not tenderness, for example, or even a pursuit defined by a love that seeks to know, confide in, and commune with his "mistress" that motivates the lover. It is, instead, the *game* of pursuit that arouses him above all. The lover, line after line, finds great enjoyment in the game, for "The Abdication" is portrayed as just that—a game that the lover must necessarily win, regardless of the negative responses from his fair one's "flatter'd breast" (99). When he conquers her will—that is, when she agrees to marry him—the lover declares the "summit won" and proceeds to describe the ways in which his mistress seeks his "close-watch'd approval" and "[p]rotection as from danger and blame" (104).

Through its popularity, the concepts in *The Angel in the House* dominated the 19th-century ideal of the proper wife, so much so that the effects of the game that Patmore describes in his poem extended beyond the realm of the "love" relationship and into other areas of knowledge, such as medicine. Like Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Gertrude Stein lived under and struggled against 19th-century gender biases. Indeed, at the turn of the century, Stein was already approaching her thirties, and by 1901, after studying four years at

Harvard and another four years at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Stein made the decision to abandon the pursuit of acquiring her degree (Wagner-Martin 221-22). Quite highly educated with magna cum laude honors in philosophy and pursuing a degree in medicine at the then male-dominated Johns Hopkins, Gertrude Stein, disagreeing with the beliefs of her professors about women's medicine, chose to boycott the classes of Dr. J. Whitridge Williams and Dr. William Osler. In boycotting Osler's classes, she also was making a statement against the 19th-century medical practices of S. Weir Mitchell, for Osler and Mitchell had created a certain regimen for women called the "Mitchell-Osler treatment," which Stein viewed as exercising abuses against women's health. Linda Wagner-Martin points out that when Stein "chose to boycott the seminars of both Dr. Williams and Dr. Osler, she was taking on the most powerful men in American women's medicine" (222). Stein's vehement objection to the principles of medicine that she had studied and would have been expected to practice is, in part, a direct response to the Mitchell-Osler Treatment. Osler, one of the disciples of Mitchell, was influential in the medical school's faculty's decision not to allow Stein to graduate with her class. Because she would have to conform to the practices of the time,[1] Stein, in the end, "gave up the field rather than go against her own convictions" (Wagner-Martin 252, 222). Not only believing that much of the practice of women's medicine at the time was inappropriate, Stein also felt that it was valueless. Its uselessness emerged, distinctly, through Mitchell's conceptions of rest, where rest is described not as method for health, but as a stratagem for control.

In Chapter Four of his *Fat and Blood and How to Make Them*, published in 1877, Mitchell prescribes rest for women as a type of maneuver for men, where "belief in his opinions and obedience to his decrees" is the "success" that "rest" is meant to achieve (250). For Mitchell, "rest" is not the rest that women would suppose. The "rest I like for them," he says,

> is not at all their notion of rest. To lie abed half the day, […] is all very well, but when they are bidden to stay in bed a month, and neither to read, write, nor sew, and to have one nurse,— who is not a relative,—then rest becomes for some women a rather bitter medicine, and they are glad enough to accept the order to rise and go about *when* the doctor issues a mandate. (251; emphasis added)

In other words, women are allowed to return to activity—mental or otherwise—only *when* the male doctor perceives that proper submission to male authority has been achieved. In fact, since Mitchell's idea of rest is not the concept of rest that most women understand and desire, it is not *rest* for them at all. Hence, Stein perceived such prescriptions not only as useless or counterproductive, but as damaging since they are forms of abuse. Indeed, Mitchell's conception of rest can only be comprehended as such from the dominant, patriarchal perspective, where, like the lover in *The Angel in the House*, one subdues his object of possession through a certain "admired audacity" until his mistress seeks his "close-watch'd approval" and supposed "[p]rotection as from danger and blame."

Charlotte Perkins Gilman experienced Mitchell's rigorous prescription for "rest" first-hand, as not only she, but other prominent women at the turn of the century were treated by "overfeeding, isolation from family and friends, and the absence of any intellectual effort" (Wagner-Martin 249). Although Gilman herself had the power to discontinue her prescribed "rest cure" when she recognized its damaging effects, she "translated" the experience of undergoing a more lengthy Mitchell-Osler Treatment through her short story, "The Yellow Wall-Paper," where the narrator, known only as John's wife, is expected to conform to the *rigorous* "rest" treatment, which is, in fact, a pronouncement of male authority seeking to create the ideal "angel in the house." Although the idea of "rigor" is not usually associated with rest, "rigor" as a term to describe the goal of the rest "cure" is well-suited to the prescription, for "rigor," in Latin, means "numbness" (Barnhart 666), and it is, in part, the narrator's difficulty in remaining numb that causes her exhaustion. "Personally," writes the narrator, "I disagree with their ideas. […] I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good"—a good that could be cultivated through "less opposition" (207). In addition, "rigor," borrowed from the Old French *rigoros* and the Medieval Latin *rigorosus*, also means "harsh, severe, stern, strict" (Barnhart 666), and so corresponds with Mitchell's idea of rest as a "bitter medicine," where the pronouncement of the treatment becomes the overriding law until the bitterness achieves its effects. I "am absolutely *forbidden* to 'work,'" writes the narrator (207; emphasis

added), and for one who believes that "congenial work" will "do me good," the severe edict that restricts that desire is bitter medicine indeed.

The pronouncement that forbids creates for the narrator an *experience* that may be labeled as postpartum depression, but more enlightening than her experience is, in fact, her *non*-experiential condition. In other words, rather than focusing on the narrator's disease, it may be more profitable to focus upon her expected role—that is, upon the ideal of dependency that an "angel of the house" is meant to adopt and affirm. Whenever a role is expected of an individual, that individual necessarily becomes a performer—acting in such a way as both to please and fool those requiring the performance. A problem emerges, however, when the playacting becomes too draining, when the very presence of the one or ones demanding the performance reminds the actress of her crippled state. "John is away all day," writes the narrator, "and even some nights when his cases are serious. I am glad my case is not serious!" (208). If her case were serious, the narrator implies, then John would be too frequently in her presence, for the problem is that John exhausts her. "I take pains," she writes, "to control myself—before him, at least, and that makes me very tired" (207). However, it is not solely the effort of having to "control" herself—that is, of having to perform and respond to John's expected ideas of what signifies health—that impoverishes the narrator's individuality and sense of selfhood. She is aware of all of his prescriptions and presumptions. She knows exactly what she is supposed to do in order to appear "healthy"—that is, like an angel in the house—to him. However, John knows so little about *her*, for, she writes, "John does not know how much I really suffer. He knows there is no *reason* to suffer, and that satisfies him. […] It is so discouraging not to have any advice and companionship about my work" (208-09; emphasis in original). Isolated, forbidden to explore her "imaginative power and habit of storymaking" (209), unable to talk with anyone who might understand that "habit," and rebuffed at each inquiry about a possible leave-taking from a house she has not chosen to reside in, the narrator finds herself, in effect, as if she were in a dream—a nightmare, in fact, where "there are hedges and walls and gates that lock" (207).

The experience of being in a dream, especially if it is a nightmare, can sometimes be harrowing, but there always exists, in

the back of the mind, the possibility that one can wake up. Whereas Gilman's narrator perceives herself as if she is in a nightmare from which she cannot escape, which is bad enough, it is helpful to look into Carrollian perspectives on dreaming in order to explore the consciousness that can overtake someone's identity—such as Gilman's narrator's—if, indeed, the dream itself has the ability actually to become reality. Carroll exhorts us to see that a different sort of distress emerges when one begins to realize—as Gilman's narrator slowly begins to apprehend—that the dream itself happens to be someone else's. In *Through the Looking-Glass*, Carroll explores the troubling psychological and metaphysical condition of being an embodied happenstance in someone else's dream. When Alice steps through the looking glass on the chimneypiece, the glass turns "into a sort of […] bright silvery mist" that, like the mist in Patmore's poem, surrounds her before melting away (143). Her journeys on the other side of the looking glass take her, at length, into a wood, where she meets "two fat little men," Tweedledum and Tweedledee (179). When Alice asks them about "the best way out of this wood," the "fat little men only looked at each other and grinned" (181). A bit later, when Alice is startled by a noise that she believes may be coming from a wild beast, Tweedledee remarks that "[i]t's only the Red King snoring" (188). When they look upon the Red King sleeping, Tweedledee starts up the conversation:

> "He's dreaming now," said Tweedledee: "and what do you think he's dreaming about?" Alice said "Nobody can guess that." "Why about *you*!" Tweedledee exclaimed. […] "And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?" "Where I am now, of course," said Alice. "Not you!" Tweedledee retorted contemptuously. "You'd be nowhere. Why you're only a sort of thing in his dream!" "If that there King was to wake," added Tweedledum, "you'd go out—bang!—just like a candle!" (189)

Alice's initial response is to be indignant to their claim, at which Tweedledee begins to shout very loudly. His overbearing pronouncement—his definition of who Alice is—is so loud that it strikes fear in Alice, a staggering, deafening blow similar to Patmore's "stroke that frightens her to death." Her fear, of course, is

that the Red King might wake up, at which Tweedledum dispassionately says:

> "Well, it's no use *your* talking about waking him […] when you're only one of the things in his dream. You know very well you're not real." "I am real!" said Alice, and began to cry. "You won't make yourself a bit realler by crying," Tweedledee remarked: "there's nothing to cry about." "If I wasn't real," Alice said—half-laughing through her tears, it all seemed so ridiculous—"I shouldn't be able to cry." "I hope you don't suppose those are *real* tears?" Tweedledum interrupted in a tone of great contempt. (189)

Fear, pain, and laughter all come together at once as Alice attempts to understand the plight of her identity based on the little men's words. In a radio panel discussion of *Alice*, responding to the idea of the Red King's dream and the insistence by Tweedledee and Tweedledum that Alice is not real, Bertrand Russell once remarked: "If it were not put humourously, we should find it too painful" (qtd. in Gardner 189 n10). Indeed, Russell, had he been expected to play a dependent role as an angel in the house, may have understood the humor of it all as even *more* painful than the grim metaphysical condition of being a mere illusionary element. For if we blithely laugh at Alice's insanely absurd situation, and claim, perhaps, that her situation is all part of a nonsensically-conceived narrative, then its seriousness is markedly reduced. Gilman's story demonstrates that Gilman recognized the pain and distress brought on by an absence of identity, and she also perceived the even greater pain one feels from being laughed at when attempting to establish one's personhood. When Gilman's narrator attempts to express her pain to her husband, she is treated lightly and with amusement. She becomes so used to his blithe responses that she gradually discerns how she and her very selfhood are becoming less real as each day passes. "I suppose John never was nervous in his life," writes the narrator in "The Yellow Wall-Paper." He "laughs at me, of course, but one expects that" (209, 207).

Appropriately, before Alice perceives the ridiculousness of her situation, Carroll paints her as a weeping child. She cries because her very identity is in the process of being snuffed out as each suffocating, obliterating, overpowering word blazons out of the fat little men's lips. To be told that we do not exist—that we are an illusion—except as a fragment, an insignificant excerpt of someone

else's life's aspirations, is to un-define—to erase—our very actuality. To *experience* states of nervousness or depression is one thing. But to be confined and locked in someone else's pronouncement of "rest" that is deliberately not meant to be rest, to be laughed at or humored when one wishes to find her way out of the woods, to be supervised by someone who "hardly lets me stir without special direction" (Gilman 208), and be expected to seek that "close-watch'd approval" as if it is some sort of protection and expression of love, and to be convinced to "feel basely ungrateful not to value" the disproportionate removal of "all care" (208), is not simply to experience a state of non-health. It is to be in a state of non-existence, an illusionary state that, like a looking-glass on a wall, merely reflects what the bearer wishes to see—that is, an extension of himself and his dreams. To know oneself as "real," as Alice does, and yet to be made to sit quietly upon a chimneypiece and perform as a "looking-glass" for another or others where even one's pain is not acknowledged as "real," is knowledge that necessarily leads to an utter and complete state of despair. "I cry at nothing," confesses John's wife, "and cry most of the time. […] I tried to have a real earnest reasonable talk with him the other day, and tell him how I wish he would let me go and make a visit to Cousin Henry and Julia. But he said I wasn't able to go, […] and I did not make a very good case for myself, for I was crying before I had finished" (211-12).

The only visit that would be appropriate for John's wife is explained in terms of a threat. John will willingly send his wife not to Cousin Henry and Julia, but to Weir Mitchell—a person the narrator dreads, for, she writes, "I had a friend who was in his hands once, and she says he is just like John and my brother, only more so!" (210). John approves of Weir because Weir is a mirror-image form of himself. Like Tweedledum and Tweedledee, they both, in unison, vociferously pronounce the illusionary state of the narrator. Without their methods of making the narrator conform to their definition of how and who she should be—especially in terms of the belief that those methods outwardly appear to show "care" and "concern"—without their assistance, in their ideology of the world, the narrator would "go out—bang!—just like a candle!" Rather than allowing his wife to have company with family members who would

provide “advice and companionship about [her] work” (209), John maintains complete control over the narrator by physically carrying her to bed, where he proceeds to read, not, obviously, his wife’s writings, but the works he feels she should know—words that exhaust her (212). Symbolically and quite literally, she must remain in bed, confined in a room, or at the most, in a garden that surrounds the house, where she can only be educated according to her husband’s wishes. She is to be a reflection of her husband—to be his dream alone—and hence the narrator begins to reveal that she wanders at night.

The problem with expecting another human being to be a mere/mirror image of oneself—however altruistic one may convince himself that his motives are—is that one who has such expectations rarely recognizes that a mirror image is always a reversal. Aware that he was drawing a “Looking-glass House,” Sir John Tenniel, in his drawing depicting Alice as emerging into the looking-glass realm, sketches a grinning face on the back of the clock and turns the ornament on the fireplace into a gargoyle with its tongue sticking out. Tenniel, exceptional in presenting details, even reversed his monogram at the bottom of his drawing, but he did not reverse Alice (Gardner 146 n8). Whereas the house at the beginning of Carroll’s story is ordered in the accustomed manner of perceiving the world, the Looking-glass House defies conventional, rational modes of thought and behavior. When Alice, on the other side of the looking-glass, attempts to read the poem “Jabberwocky,” she finds that the writing is backwards, and she must hold the book up to a mirror in order to read it. Martin Gardner points out that the “fact that the printing appeared reversed to Alice is evidence that she herself was not reversed by her passage through the mirror.” However, he continues, “there are now scientific reasons for suspecting that an unreversed Alice could not exist for more than a fraction of a second in a looking-glass world” (148 n15). To expect, scientifically, the rational to survive in a world that is defined by contrariness and incongruity, according to Gardner, eliminates existence. On the reverse side, to expect the incongruous to conform to some prescriptive, rigid manner of existence is also to annihilate the existence of that unconventional presence. In other words, using a Carrollian “looking-glass” philosophy, we can apprehend that what Gilman so perceptively portrays in “The Yellow Wall-Paper” is that it

is not solely the inability to conform to "loving" rules designed for her benefit that consumes and preoccupies the narrator and thus exacerbates her dis-ease. It is the inability of the narrator's *husband* to see and know his wife that is the central issue of the story. That is why John possesses a name, whereas his wife does not. Gilman gives John a name so that he can feel comfortable with possessing an identity. His wife lacks a name since her identity has seemingly been minutely refracted—partitioned, dispersed—and ultimately, as if in a silvery vapor, expunged.

John sees himself in some projected image of an "angel" in the looking-glass of his wife, and so, in effect, his wife does not exist. In fact, we know very little about John's wife because she, who really *is* real—at least in the scope of the narrative—tends only to express what she is supposed to be learning through John's, to borrow once more from Patmore, "close-watch'd approval." Through that desire to please and accept John's convictions, the narrator conceals her true desires, and so readers must persistently and perceptively read between the lines. For example, as a mother, feeling the intense loss caused by her separation from her child and possessing no control over that separation, the narrator, motivated by self-sacrifice and attempting to rationalize the patriarchal "care" that supposedly understands such separation as a healthy treatment, praises her sequestered condition—minus her child—in the yellow wall-papered room. It "is lucky," she writes, "that John kept me here after all; I can stand it so much easier than a baby [can], you see" (212). John, possessing what he sees as a sort of benevolent control, but control nonetheless, over his wife, is the composer, the Red King, the dreamer of what he believes to be a well-versed, harmonious ideology. However, the wife he creates is a mere looking-glass, an illusion, a reflection of something that is, in fact, *unable* to exist.

The "angel in the house," the "darling" (213), the perfectly "healthy" woman in men's eyes, has never existed, or if she does, she exists only on the other side—in some looking-glass house or behind some wall-paper that possesses a "pointless pattern" (211). When, at the end of the story, John finds the key under the plantain leaf and opens the door to the nursery, he "stop[s] short by the door" (218) because, for a moment, he has stepped through the "bright silvery

mist" of the looking-glass of his own creation and meets, face-to-face, what he has composed. "I've pulled off most of the paper," says his "angelic" creation through a looking-glass "mist" that envelopes "With subtle, swift, unseen increase," and "so you can't put me back!" (218). Disavowing the reality of his wife's identity, John has rigorously fabricated his own version of his wife, but when he opens the door and steps onto the threshold, he, unreversed, is able, for a brief moment, a "fraction of a second," to see the illusion. He must faint, of course, because, as Gardner points out, one who is unreversed cannot "exist for more than a fraction of a second in a looking-glass world." He faces, briefly, the unfaceable, or rather, the reverse face, of a dictatorially-constructed element in one of his dreams. By having to see his dream for what it is—a sort of gargoyle that, instead of sticking its tongue out, creeps around the room—John, in an instant, observes his life, his aspirations, as false, or, rather, as antithetical to true existence. It is not his *wife* who has reached a mental state of insanity. Instead, it is his wife who has awakened, and so, quite without warning, *John* goes out—bang!—just like a candle, and falls right across the path of his constructed illusion.

If it is not John's *wife* who has reached a mental state of insanity, but, instead, it is the looking-glass *image* that manifests grim, chaotic behavior, the question then arises as to what has happened to John's wife. Since the image she is meant to portray, the part of the act she is meant to perform, does not exist, who, exactly, is John's wife? She has no name, as Alice does, but like Alice, she possesses a certain knowledge of the ridiculous. "John is a physician," she writes, "and *perhaps* […] that is one reason I do not get well faster" (207; emphasis in original). To add to that concept, to emphasize the ridiculousness behind the idea of "physician," the narrator says: "My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing" (207). The term "physician" is derived from the Old French *fisicien*, which is from *fisique*—which means "the art of healing" (Barnhart 565), and healing cannot occur if the physician only desires to perpetuate an illusion. Gilman's narrator perceives the irony of the inability to get well, and so we can recognize the nonsensical behavior of both her husband and her brother, who run off in their different directions and leave the narrator to fend for herself in a wallpapered room, where she turns to the task of exploring her own selfhood and her own belief system.

Correspondingly, in *Through the Looking-Glass*, Alice briefly becomes a sort of referee between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, who dress up in full armor in order to fight a battle over a "spoilt" rattle. But when the shadow of an enormous crow creates a dark cloud over the woods, "the two brothers t[ake] to their heels and [are] out of sight in a moment" (193). Alice simply stops under a large tree, and discovering someone's shawl being blown away, catches it and returns it to its owner, the White Queen. She converses with the queen and learns, ultimately, about the art of believing impossible things.

If one practices enough, according to the White Queen, one can achieve the ability to believe "as many as six impossible things before breakfast" (199), but the art of believing should be cultivated carefully and slowly. In a letter to a child-friend, Mary MacDonald, Carroll expressed a bit more advice about this art. "Don't be in such a hurry to believe next time—," he wrote, "—I'll tell you why—If you set to work to believe everything, you will tire out the muscles of your mind, and then you'll be so weak you won't be able to believe the simplest truest things" ("To Mary MacDonald" 22). So, where might Gilman's narrator be? No doubt she is somewhere learning to disbelieve all that "Tweedledum" and "Tweedledee" have told her about her nerves—attempting to plug her ears to their noise and, like Tenniel's gargoyle, stick out her tongue at their *depress*ors. But, even more importantly, as we read Gilman's story, we discover that she is still there, with full mental clarity and autonomy, existing in-between the lines, refusing to go out—bang!—like a candle. Instead of being a weak, feeble light, she is brightly burning, waiting for readers to find her and others like her in order to learn, above all, the art of true seeing in a world shaped by illusion, and in order to cultivate, in a world governed by the games that define presumed states of reality, that rarely acquired expertise —the art of knowing how to disbelieve.

Note

[1]J. Whitridge Williams's textbook, *Obstetrics*, is "still one of the classic obstetrics texts" utilized in the 21st-century. See Linda Wagner-Martin 222.

Works Cited

Barnhart, Robert K., editor. *The Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology: The Origins of American English Words*. HarperCollins, 1995.

Carroll, Lewis. *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*. 1871. *The Annotated Alice: The Definitive Edition*, edited by Martin Gardner, W.W. Norton, 2000, pp. 128-274.

Carroll, Lewis. "To Mary MacDonald." 23 May 1864. Letter II of *A Selection from the Letters of Lewis Carroll to His Child-Friends*. 1933. Edited by Evelyn M. Hatch, Kessinger Publishing, 2006, pp. 22-23.

Dyhouse, Carol. "The Role of Women: From Self-Sacrifice to Self-Awareness." *The Victorians*, edited by Laurence Lerner, Holmes & Meier, 1978, pp. 174-94.

Gardner, Martin. Notes. *The Annotated Alice: The Definitive Edition*, edited by Martin Gardner, W.W. Norton, 2000, pp. 128-274.

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. "The Yellow Wall-Paper." 1892. *American Short Stories*, edited by Bert Hitchcock et al., 7th ed., Longman, 2002, pp. 206-18.

Mitchell, S. Weir. "From *Fat and Blood and How to Make Them*." 1877. *Three Lives*. 1909. By Gertrude Stein, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000, pp. 249-51.

Patmore, Coventry. *The Angel in the House*. 1854. *Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation*, eBook #4099, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4099/4099-h/4099-h.htm.

Wagner-Martin, Linda. "The Woman Question: Rights, the Vote, Education, Health." *Three Lives*. 1909. By Gertrude Stein, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000, pp. 219-59.

A Parthenos in Pop Culture: Katniss Everdeen in *The Hunger Games*

Calabria Turner
Georgia College and State University

Katniss Everdeen's connection to Greek mythology has been admitted by *The Hunger Games* author Suzanne Collins, which has caused the subsequent dive by critics into the tales of Theseus and Greek goddesses, but none have yet to explore Katniss Everdeen's evident representation of the sacrificial Greek parthenos. In many instances a parthenos is simply a girl of marrying age, but oftentimes a parthenos is the demanded sacrifice for the continuance of good fortune, either for family or the state of the nation. According to Greek dramatic tradition, parthenoi lives can follow two basic paths: the first path leads to marriage, and the second to death. Mary Lefkowitz defines the parthenoi in her book *Women in Greek Myth* as "young women who have just reached puberty and who are on the verge of losing that status, either to become wives or mothers and so lose their autonomy, or literally to die" (82). The chapter on parthenos, from which the above definition comes, ends by saying "these heroic *parthenoi* [have] the characteristics of real life young women: passionate temperament, sudden decisiveness, and courageous determination," all of which Katniss embodies (94). All adolescents in Panem find themselves facing the possibility of becoming tributes in The Hunger Games, the bloody reality television show required by the government. Katniss Everdeen defies the role of traditional tribute in Panem by encapsulating all attributes of the Greek parthenos--chastity, unstable behavior, compassion, courage, and intelligence--each of which shape her into a modern heroine of mythic proportions.

In order to demand a sacrifice, there must first be ruling body mandating such. The makers and enforces of The Hunger Games take on qualities of the Greek gods in how they manipulate the generations of Panem through the Games. As a "time for repentance and a time for thanks," the Capitol, the seat of the ruling body, sets The Hunger Games as a mock festivity (Collins 15). Yet, there is no repentance

from any of the districts, especially by Districts 2 and 4, the prosperous districts, where the Games are treated as today's Olympics, a sporting event meant to train for and earn glory, though training is illegal, and glory comes at the price of murdering 23 adolescents ranging from the ages of twelve to eighteen. Especially in the working districts, there is never thanks, all people suffering in one form or another by the overbearing guards, the inability to speak freely, and the consistent shortage of food. The Capitol allows for such shortages so the children will enter their names into the drawing, in addition to the government requirement, for tesserae, "a meager year's supply of grain and oil for one person" (Collins 13). As the children, ages "twelve- through eighteen-year-olds," consistently enter their names into the drawings, their parents are taught the insignificance of their contribution and abilities. Their role, as is any parent's, is to supply the family with the necessary provisions, and they cannot do this. The Capitol succeeds in making parents feel impotent as each parent watches their children's chances of dying increase for the sake of obtaining food that will barely sustain the family.

The Capitol consistently reveals the impotence of the adults as they yearly remove two children from each district in the arena where the battles are publicly televised, each citizen being forced to watch by law, which, in turn, creates more impotent-feeling adults. Such an analysis is supported in the article "Burn with Us: Sacrificing Childhood in *The Hunger Games*," as Tan and Ming state: "If children grow up as tools of their parents' survival […] then those children will grow into the same adults, who can only enable as these same ideologies are impressed onto their children" (2). The time of repentance and thanks is a form of mocking and subjugating the citizens of Panem, especially those in the labor-intensive districts. The parents are physically unable to save their children from death, and so doubly fail in their parental roles. The feeling of impotence is inherited as those who do survive the yearly reapings must watch their own children go through the same experience, with the parents having passed the age of eighteen no longer being able to draw for tesserae, and thus just as unable as their parents before them to save their children. The adults have been raised in a cycle of death generation

after generation for seventy-four years. Not until an adolescent breaks the ongoing image of the proper tribute will Panem experience change.

The Capitol also takes on the role of the ancient gods in their sentience and ability to alter the natural world unnaturally. Katniss has been taught, as all in Panem are taught, even Effie Trinket, to beware the ever-watching and ever-listening eyes of the Capitol. Their knowledge goes so far as to affect their language, the subjects they discuss, and the places they discuss them. Out of fear of the repercussions of disobeying and speaking forcefully against the gods, or those of the Capitol, Katniss "learned to hold [her] tongue and to turn [her] features into an indifferent mask so that no one could read [her] thoughts [.…] Even at home" (6). Speaking out against the Capitol is a mortal sin, one capable of deadly consequences for the speaker and their loved ones. The Capitol's god-like qualities pervade Panem so strongly that people have learned to act under extreme caution, as if obeying moral imperatives. Even once winning The Hunger Games, Peeta and Katniss are restrained from visiting each other at night: "I [Katniss] find my own bedroom door has been locked from the outside. […] [An] insidious fear that the Capitol may be monitoring me and confining me [is there]. I've been unable to escape since The Hunger Games began, but this feels different" (365). After having already searched for Peeta, Katniss is unable to seek him out, once more due to the Capitol's constraints. Knowing her purpose, they lock her away for the sake of asserting power, reminding Katniss, even though she and Peeta outthought the Gamemakers, that the Capitol is still controlling their lives. Katniss manipulates the Capitol into allowing the Games to end with two victors, which causes the Capitol to feel the need to remind Katniss of their seemingly omnipotent power over her.

Furthermore, the Capitol asserts their god-like qualities in their physical alterations on the human body, and through their ability to create and alter nature as they please. Members of Katniss' Remake Center team appear, one with "orange corkscrew locks," and with another "whose entire body has been dyed a pale shade of pea green" (Collins 62). The Capitol's ability to alter the human body goes beyond hair and skin dye, to seemingly magical potions capable of taking severe burns and turning them into "soft baby-skin pink" in a matter of hours, even returning Katniss' hearing in her left ear (188).

Even with such god-like abilities, the Capitol is seemingly unable to save Peeta's leg, leaving him with a prosthetic. This situation, more likely, is another reprimand to Peeta and Katniss for their final actions in the arena, rather than an inability on the part of the Capitol. Being unable to save Peeta's leg is more believable by an audience than being unable to return Katniss' hearing. The Capitol does still have to maintain appearances with their wealthy districts. Furthermore, the use of the mutts, or mutations, in the arena bespeaks of the Capitol's god-like creative abilities. As the mutts are unleashed on the remaining tributes, Katniss realizes, "They're no natural-born animals. They resemble huge wolves [….] They are unmistakably human. […] 'It's them. It's all of them [i.e., the deceased tributes]'" (Collins 331-34). Beyond possessing the power to alter the human body, the Capitol possesses the power to create unnatural creatures, beings they are able to manipulate at will. The Capitol's power suggests their unlimited control over their domain through the ability to create unnatural beings through a combination of cloning, mutating, and mind control.

The altering appearances of the arena are another affirmation towards the Capitol as manifestations of the Greek gods. The entire arena is a product of the Capitol's work and control, proven as they constantly monitor the fire, the release of the mutts, and the allowance of water into the streams. For example, when Peeta and Katniss go to wash, they find the stream is "only a bone-dry bed," knowing "they [the Gamemakers] must have drained it while we slept" (Collins 326). Even the Capitol's control over the arena is another way of reinforcing the impotence of Panem's citizens. They must watch as the world the Capitol created to house the tributes is altered to force the tributes closer together when those in the Capitol have not seen a recent death. Even outside the Games, where the citizens of the labor-intensive districts work, they have no control over what they may keep and no control over their environments, with the mine explosion killing Katniss' father serving as an example. Katniss figures, "I'd have thought, in District Eleven, you'd [Rue] have a bit more to eat than us [those in the other districts]. You know, since you grow the food," but those of District Eleven are "not allowed to eat the crops" (282). The districts are not permitted to profit from their own work.

The Capitol is capable of complete control over nature and the physical body, another show of their immense power over Panem. Yet, even with the Capitol's sentience and creative powers, two adolescents manage to easily disrupt the nation's power balance.

With the Capitol as the Greek gods, Katniss Everdeen is the demanded sacrifice, a parthenos, meeting the physical requirements perfectly. Mary Lefkowitz states of the parthenos: "young women who have just reached puberty […] at perhaps fourteen years old" were entering the most important stages of their lives (82). As young women, the possibility of marriage and motherhood is becoming a reality. This stage of their lives is when they are the most attractive to men. Katniss is "at the age of sixteen," and while she has not reached romantic or sexual maturity in this novel, the youths around her have realized her potential as a future mate (Collins 13). Gale, "who is eighteen," and Peeta, who is at the same age as Katniss, have both reached a stage of manhood where they fully recognize their love for Katniss, wanting to enter into romantic, and presumably sexual, partnerships with her (Collins 13). Though Katniss cannot imagine Gale's broken statement before she leaves for the Capitol–"Katniss, remember I –" could be completed with "love you," readers can easily finish the statement in their heads (Collins 48). She also cannot believe Peeta's declaration of love is anything other than a ploy to "make me look weak!" (135). Her inability to see the affection these young men have for her reinforces that Katniss is on the cusp of romantic and sexual maturity. She realizes she is jealous when other women speak of Gale, and she also understands she has growing feelings for Peeta, but she is unable to process them fully, likely due to the all-consuming task of providing for her family and surviving The Hunger Games.

Katniss is the complete representation of chastity, another key factor for parthenoi, largely stemming from her preoccupation with, and obligation to, providing. Kathryn Hansen, in her article "The Metamorphosis of Katniss Everdeen: *The Hunger Games*, Myth, and Femininity," further notes Katniss' "virginity, with her romantic and sexual innocence [are] a running theme" (163). In Greek mythology, the virginity of a young woman was a particularly attractive feature. In her book, Mary Lefkowitz claims that "Gods are almost always attracted to *parthenoi* just before the time of their marriage, and never after they have taken a mortal husband" (84). The innocence, physical

and mental, of the parthenos is the tempting factor. To be able to bring the parthenos into the world of sexual knowledge, and to be their first encounter, is part of the desire. The gods are bringing the young women one step closer to reaching their potential as mothers, while also being able to be as close as possible to the innocence these women can no longer have. Such is the Capitol audience's attraction to the Games. Katniss, under the direction of her instructor Haymitch, has her innocence and appeal heightened through the idea of a romantic relationship with Peeta in order to exploit the Capitol audience and win the sympathies of other viewers who could sponsor gifts for her and Peeta during the Games.

Another highly praised aspect of the parthenos is her compassion, which Katniss reveals in all her interactions with her sister, Prim, and her fellow tribute, Rue. Antigone's final days of life are a prime example of the compassion of parthenoi. After the death of her brothers, killed in a war against one another, Antigone fights the edict of her uncle, King Creon, who has sworn death to anyone who removes the brothers' bodies from the battlefield for proper burial rights (Lefkowitz 88). Her actions earn her death, but ultimately ensure her brothers have peace in death. Antigone and Katniss display equal acts of compassion. Katniss enacts two moments of defiance out of deep care for the two younger girls. When Prim is chosen as the female tribute from District 12, Katniss cannot fathom the odds, but once she sees "the untucked blouse forming a ducktail" on Prim's skirt, she shouts, "'I volunteer!' I gasp. 'I volunteer as tribute!'" (Collins 22). Her love inspires a natural desire to save her sister, and so she defies the odds of the Capitol by placing herself into the role of tribute, a word nearly synonymous with corpse. Katniss is spurred to action by her deep emotions, which, in District 12, makes her treasured: "But a shift has occurred since I stepped up to take Prim's place, and now it seems I have become someone precious" (Collins 24). At this moment, Katniss' locus of love is centered solely on her family, which is often the case for those in District 12, where expanding the circle of concern outside of one's own family is a luxury due to the significant difficulty many experience when trying to keep their families fed. Katniss' compassion for her sister has made the citizens of District 12 expand

their circle of concern, which is clearly indicated as they salute instead of clap for Katniss. Her compassion is strong enough to move others.

Her value is equally noticed by District 11 after the death of Rue. After partnering in the Games, Rue and Katniss become dear to one another, which motivates Katniss to carry out a ritual-like cleansing and decoration of Rue's body after she dies. Katniss sings Rue a lullaby until Rue dies, and proceeds to "slowly, one stem at a time, [d]ecorate her body in the flowers. Covering the ugly wound. Wreathing her face. Weaving her hair with bright colors" (Collins 237). Katniss' actions are those of defiance. Not only is she fulfilling the rightful role of the Grecian female by preparing the body for burial, but she is also directly defying the Capitol. Lefkowitz also indicates, in her article "Women in Greek Myth," that Greek "society often assigned the task of lamenting and burying the dead" to women (217). Though Katniss cannot bury Rue due to the rules of the Games, she does ensure all of Panem sees Rue's significance. Katniss' act of caring for Rue's body is a show of respect for her fellow citizens, the tributes. She is ensuring that all viewers of the Games know that Katniss values human life, while also attempting to show the Capitol Rue's significance beyond that of tribute. Incorporating the flowers into Rue's death is Katniss' way of giving physical expression to her love for Rue, and it is also Katniss' way of letting others see Rue's inherent value. Katniss' choices, which stem from her compassion, reveal deep defiance towards The Capitol's attempts at instilling a sense of ineptness and hopelessness.

Though Katniss' experiences would leave many consumed with ineptitude, she exudes great courage, another significant attribute of the sacrificial parthenos. Lefkowitz notes of Antigone, "it is not coincidental that Antigone is a *parthenos* who is about to be married. That is the time in a woman's life when she is most capable of daring action. […] [T]hey [parthenoi] can perform acts of great heroism, like volunteering to die in order to save the state or their families" (88, 83). Katniss displays the courage of Antigone, which is revealed through her mentality and actions. Her courage is not only displayed when she volunteers for her sister, or when she defies the Capitol with her farewell to Rue in the arena. To provide in District 12, Katniss hunts, and while "most of the Peacekeepers turn a blind eye" to those who hunt in the woods, such actions are considered trespassing

(Collins 5). Katniss realizes at the age of eleven, a year before being able to enter her name for tesserae, she must hunt to save her family. Katniss is thrust into the role of provider while her mother is "the woman who sat by, blank and unreachable, while her children turned to skin and bones" (Collins 8). While her mother is succumbing to grief, Katniss becomes the provider her family needs, which forces her to bury the emotions of her father's death and also disregard any childhood innocence pertaining to the perils of adulthood. Katniss displays courageous selflessness on a deeply personal and developmental level by sacrificing her innocence to keep Prim and their mother alive.

Before Rue's death, Katniss also displays courageous disregard for self when she responds to Rue's cries for help. Katniss' response is both compassionate and brave. Rue's existence in the arena, no matter their team up, is a constant threat to Katniss' life. Therefore, Katniss, in order to increase the possibility of keeping her promise to Prim, has no logical reason for attempting to save Rue's life. In fact, in responding, Katniss increases the threat to her own life. Yet, she quickly and without hesitation reacts: "'Rue!' I shout back, so she knows I'm near. So, *they* know I'm near, and hopefully the girl who attacked them […] will be enough to pull their attention away from her. 'Rue! I'm coming!'" (Collins 232). Katniss very intentionally decides to make her whereabouts known to Rue's attacker. Stemming from Rue's similarities to Prim, Katniss develops deep devotion to Rue with ease. Katniss, by using her reputation from the Training Center and from within the arena, desires to tempt Rue's attackers away from Rue, either by drawing them in to kill Katniss, or, better yet, by scaring them away. The hold of her promise to Prim is released in the present reality of Rue dying, even though Rue's death would make Katniss one step closer to victory. Katniss' reiteration of her cry to Rue strengthens the evidence towards her valor, which distances Katniss from the image of the stereotypical tribute.

Katniss' ploy to save Rue is only one example of her intelligence, and such smarts are key for parthenos. Being desired by a god is no easy task to achieve, so displaying wisdom and intellect, seemingly inheritable traits, must be considered. In her book,

Lefkowitz writes, “What enables humans to survive the long intervals in their lives […] is their intelligence, and this is why heroic *parthenoi*, in addition to being beautiful, must also be wise” (85). Recognizing the ephemeral nature of beauty, the gods seek women of depth, and while Katniss is clearly physically desirable (note the descriptions of her in Cinna’s designs), she is also a desirable tribute due to her enduring qualities. Katniss displays her learned skills in District 12, hunting and bartering for the needs of herself and her family. For example, Katniss obtains a goat for Prim, a goat that will produce milk and cheese. Katniss’ wit and skills are highlighted in the arena. Prime moments of Katniss’ wit are when she is interpreting Haymitch’s messages from outside and within the Games. Soon after her release into the arena, Katniss suffers from dehydration, and criticizes Haymitch for his unwillingness to send her water after two days of going without, until she realizes, “*Maybe he’s sending you a message*. […]There’s only one good reason Haymitch could be withholding water from me. Because he knows I’ve almost found it” (Collins 169). Not only able to read messages of preservation, Katniss interprets Haymitch’s instruction for gaining more sponsors: “Haymitch couldn’t be sending a clearer message. One kiss equals one pot of broth” (Collins 261). Katniss not only reads the signs of the forest, but she reads the signs from her guide. Without her ability to interpret the instruction of Haymitch, she and Peeta would die. Once able to read and intuit the value of her romantic scenes with Peeta, she is able to heighten her kisses and their moments of verbal intimacy in order to have their needs fulfilled by the sponsors. Such self-consciousness becomes key to saving their lives, a method of preservation. Katniss even acts with foresight: knowing the sponsors can provide for the inevitable needs of the future, she ramps up her romance with Peeta in the cave, which provides her with the sleeping drought for Peeta and her favorite meal from the Capitol.

Katniss also displays her intelligence by offensively and defensively acting against the Careers, those tributes who illegally trained for the Games before the drawings. When outnumbered six to one, Katniss must find a way to outwit, instead of fighting off, her opponents, and so she retaliates in two ways. First, trapped in a tree that is surrounded by six adversaries, Katniss concludes “the [tracker jacker] nest may be the sole option I have left. If I can drop it down on them, I may be able to escape,” which she does (Collins 186). Her

second moment of elucidation comes at the Career's stockpile near the Cornucopia. After using patience and observation, Katniss determines the stockpile is surrounded by mines, knowledge she uses to her advantage by spilling the suspended apples, triggering an avalanche of explosions: "the apples spill to the ground, and I'm blown backward into the air" (Collins 221). Katniss removes the two advantages the Careers rely on to win The Hunger Games: their strength and their brute control over the food supply. The Careers have little in the way of hunting skills, and so they are unable to supply their bodies with the food that will fuel their strength. Depleting their strength and forcing them to hunt will also decrease the amount of time the Careers have to hunt the physically weaker tributes and herself. Though Katniss has given the Careers further motivation to kill her, she has still evened the ever-present odds of the Games.

The parthenoi are known for their cleverness and wit, but they are also known for making sudden and rash decisions. When Antigone refuses to follow Creon's orders, "she is reckless," according to Lefkowitz (88). In her book, Lefkowitz also notes, "the myths often tell of young women who make serious errors of judgment" (83). Likely these errors are due to fluctuating hormones in the adolescent body. Katniss therefore is not unlike her parthenoi compatriots. At the age of sixteen, Katniss is a prime candidate for fluctuating hormones, no matter the level-headedness she displays in District 12 and the Games. Perhaps her largest rashly-made decision is her moment of volunteering for the Games, but it is certainly not her only one. Katniss is taken with sudden fury with the Gamemakers during her final assessment at the Training Center, the assessment that will determine her number from one to twelve, a number that will indicate her potential as a tribute: "Without thinking, I pull an arrow from my quiver and send it straight at the Gamemakers' table" (Collins 182). Katniss' actions are typical of the parthenoi. Her rashness is brazen and puts her life, and potentially the lives of those she loves, at risk. There is no time for logic or thoughts of consequences to enter her mind when she acts so impulsively. Her justifications for her anger also align with those of Antigone. Like the Grecian princess, Katniss is deeply angered by the injustice of the

Games, the treatment of the tributes, and the government of Panem. Katniss' impulsive action is a personal moment of recognition, a spark to push her from the complacency she lives within in District 12, but it is potentially harmful nonetheless.

Katniss' final act in the arena is the culmination of the parthenos traits. The rule allowing two from one district to win is revoked, and she and Peeta are faced, once more, with the necessity to kill one another at the Capitol's behest. Yet, Katniss is able to outwit the Gamemakers due to her intelligence, compassion, bravery, and even because of her tendency to make dangerously rash decisions. Katniss uses her knowledge of the Capitol against them: "*We both know they have to have a victor*. […] Without a victor […] [t]hey'd [the Gamemakers] have failed the Capitol. Might possibly even be executed" (Collins 344). When the rule is revoked, only she and Peeta are in danger of death, but when Katniss decides she and Peeta should eat the berries, she puts the lives of the Gamemakers in danger. Katniss is also aware that "if he [Peeta] dies, I'll never go home, not really" (Collins 343). Though Katniss has not reached her full romantic maturity, she is completely aware of her strong attachment to Peeta. Combining her feelings for Peeta with the romance strategy she has been using to gain sponsors, she perfects her plan. Katniss' bravery and recklessness are ultimately shown as she takes the poisonous berries from her pouch. Though she may not realize it at the time, Katniss is fighting the Capitol by denying them the one victor, by seeking to make the Capitol declare her and Peeta the joint victor*s* of The Hunger Games. The danger of her plan lies in the fact that the Gamemakers may choose to let them die. Had Peeta not said, "Hold them out. I want everyone to see," the Gamemakers might not have recalled what Katniss stored away many hours ago (Collins 344). Katniss' plan is a large gamble, one she almost loses as the berries pass her lips (Collins 345). With her quick thinking and disregard for potential consequences, Katniss saves her life and Peeta's. He undeniably would have killed himself to save Katniss, indicated when he removes the tourniquet on his leg. Denying the path set before her by the lives of the previous tributes, Katniss and Peeta both survive the seventy-fourth Hunger Games.

Katniss and Peeta return to District 12 alive, but there are twenty-two other tributes who return to their districts in wooden boxes, the personifications of lost potential. According to Lefkowitz

as well as scholar Emily Kearns in her book *The Heroes of Attica*, "it is this lost potential that makes *parthenos* so desirable to sacrifice to the gods" because "she is giving up what is due to her in life" (Lefkowitz 83; Kearns 57). Kearns is specifically referring to a young girl's virginity, but the potential of those in the Games is much more. Katniss embodies the potential for life, not because she has a womb and therefore is capable of reproduction, but because she has been the provider of her family for years. Her skills in hunting have become tools for bartering. When Katniss brings squirrels and deer into the Hob, she provides sustenance for her family in trade, and this trade does the same for others in District 12. Though the lives of the other tributes outside of the Games are little known, they are still representative of lost potential. Those twenty-three each had lives, wants, and goals not concerning The Hunger Games, a fact more explored during the Quarter Quell in *Catching Fire* and during the rebellion in *Mockingjay*.

Though Katniss does not realize it, her potential for Panem grows each moment she personally experiences the darkness of the Capitol on a higher level than in District 12. Initially Katniss believes Gale's "rages [in the woods are] pointless. […] It doesn't change anything. It doesn't make things fair. It doesn't fill out stomachs," but eventually she begins to enact her own, seemingly small, embodiments of rage: once when she shoots the apple in the Training Center and again when she pays homage to Rue (Collins 14). Katniss "want[s] to do something, right here, right now, to shame them, to make them accountable, to show the Capitol that whatever they do or force us to do there is a part of every tribute they can't own" (Collins 236-37). During her moments of personal rebellion, Katniss, as later seen in the timeline outside of *The Hunger Games* scope, is becoming a symbol for hope and possibility to the repressed in Panem. Haymitch gives Katniss a small hint of her growing symbolization: "Word is the Capitol is furious about you showing them up in the arena. The one thing they can't stand is being laughed at, and they're the joke of Panem" (Collins 356-57). The Capitol's seeming omniscience surrounds all districts, which indicates the aforementioned laughter is not only coming from the wealthy districts, but also from those like District 12, the ones who truly fear

the power of the Capitol. Before Katniss volunteers for the Games, she mentions the paranoia all in District 12 have, which silences many, if not all, complaints towards the Capitol, but now people laugh at the Capitol, heavily indicating a shift in the atmosphere caused specifically by Katniss and Peeta. Her potential is breaking the boundary lines of District 12 by reaching out to all of Panem.

By these same definitions, Rue and the other tributes take on aspects of the parthenoi, but never fulfill all of the needed qualities. With so many dying by the will of the Capitol, or the will of the gods, one would think the prosperity of the nation would reach further than the Capitol and its closest districts, but it does not. Traditionally, a sacrifice, as is the case with Iphigenia and Heracles' daughters, is only demanded or given through the understanding that the parthenos' death means prosperity and success to the givers of the sacrifice (Lefkowitz 90-92). Yet, the districts only receive victor gifts for a year, and any children of Katniss' would never be safe from the annual drawings. Death by starvation would still be common, indicated by the deaths that Katniss is accustomed to seeing, even though Haymitch won the Games years ago. The Capitol's failure to bring prosperity to all of their districts creates the necessary environment for a different kind of tribute, one who fulfills all qualities of the parthenos. As the parthenos, Katniss brings in the potential, unwittingly, for the success of the rebellion forming in District 13. If the end of *Mockingjay* is any indication, Katniss' potential is fulfilled.

Works Cited

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic, 2008.

Hansen, Kathryn. "The Metamorphosis of Katniss Everdeen: *The Hunger Games*, Myth, and Femininity." *Children's Literature Association*, 2015, pp. 161-78.

Kearns, Emily. "The Heroes of Attica." *Bulletin Supplement(University of London. Institute of Classical Studies)*, no. 57,1989, pp. iii-212., www.jstor.org/stable/43768242.

Lefkowitz, Mary. *Women in Greek Myth*. Johns Hopkins UP, 2 ed., 2007.

--. "Women in Greek Myth." *The American Scholar*, 2001, pp. 207-19.

Tan, Susan and Shau Ming. "Burn with Us: Sacrificing Childhood in *The Hunger Games.*" *The Lion and the Unicorn*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2013, pp. 54-73.

Ismail Kadare and the Unraveling of the Communist Curtain

Anca Garcia
Valdosta State University

The tragedy of a tragedy is to lose its message. We cannot entirely grasp the slave narratives or Holocaust literature, no matter how vivid, shocking, or heartbreaking their details might be. We have never lived them. We cannot claim to fully sympathize with a victim's agony from our armchair comfort, from our cozy living room solitude, or from the tranquility of our family circle. Intertextual references sometimes help, as do metatextual comments. Sometimes, however, when any attempt to describe the indescribable fails, good writers abandon the holistic pretenses and embrace possible misunderstandings. Even a partial truth weighs more than no truth at all. Ismail Kadare demonstrates this in *Agamemnon's Daughter*, an interesting novella often misinterpreted as the unsophisticated and tedious adaptation of an ancient tragedy juxtaposed with an already gruesome depiction of the Albanian communist reality.

In 1990, while Communists still ruled Albania, Ismail Kadare decided to claim political asylum in France. A fierce critic of the Central and Eastern European communist regimes, he summarized in his 1995 journal *Albanian Spring: The Anatomy of Tyranny* the essence of a dictatorship:

> In symbolizing dictatorship, it has been shown that people sometimes refer to creatures, usually distasteful ones - dinosaurs, tyrannosaurs, and many-headed hydras - and at othertimes to building: fortresses, pyramids, bunkers. This ambivalence, this plasticity, is nothing more than one of the numerous manifestations of the monstrous character of the phenomenon. Just as in the popular imagination the forces of hell draw power from an ability to change form in an instant, so dictatorship can only be seen for what it is, that is multiform, two-faced, hybrid. As we've just seen, dictatorship can be associated with animals, with buildings; in other words, in our imagination it can be at the same time a thing

> with claws and with gates, it can be tiger and pyramid, dungeon and dragon. [...] Such, then, is dictatorship; unfortunately, it is highly changeable, and therefore dangerous. It is not only because of its origins that one fine day the fanfares and the little flags join the fair, to be accompanied the next day by barbed wire. It's a sign of its very essence: reversible. That's why the ambivalence of its image is rightly considered to be a feature of its foundation. (Kadare, *Albanian* 127)

His past, however, reveals a different political position. Kadare was born in 1936 in Gijokastër, just like Enver Hoxha, the Albanian communist dictator whom he depicts positively in the novel *The Great Winter* (1977). The text literally uses Hoxha's personal memoirs of the winter of 1961 when Albania left the Soviet sphere. It gravitates around the moment when Hoxha told the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev that Albanians would rather eat grass than suffer Soviet humiliation. Although Kadare later declared that he needed to write *The Great Winter* to survive, many considered him for a long time a conformist who used artistic flattery to win the dictator's appreciation. Despite a three-year publishing ban after one of his politically satirical pamphlets surfaced in 1975, and the political evasion of his novels which take refuge in mythology and folklore, Kadare continued for decades to carry the "writer in residence" stigma. The international artistic marginalization continued because the regime still allowed him to travel abroad, a privilege usually reserved to its most avid supporters. His anticommunist reputation grew only in the early 2000s, after his exile, when he published a number of critical novels, short stories, and journals that he wrote earlier while still in his country. He published the most important one, the novella *Agamemnon's Daughter*, in 2003 in France, but he wrote it in an impoverished and hopeless communist Albania between 1985 and 1986, around the time of Enver Hoxha's death.

The text has a dramatic history. Kadare's French publisher observes that the writer risked his life when he smuggled its manuscript almost page by page to France in the late '80s, camouflaging it to "look like an Albanian translation of a work written in the West" (Kadare, *Agamemmnon's* ix). Kadare did not

want to publish the text right away and told his publisher to use it only in case he died because "the tone and content of the unpublished works would make it much harder for the Communist propaganda machine to bend [his] work and posthumous image to its own ends" (xi). Ostensibly, *Agamemnon's Daughter* was meant to be from the beginning "bottom-drawer literature," a type of literature writers in Communism produced to keep their sanity intact under totalitarian pressure. Not intended for publication, "bottom-drawer literature" contained openly critical messages, and its authors risked repercussions for daring to imagine it. Undoubtedly, Ismail Kadare understood his texts' political messages because he declares in his interviews that with every dissident book he wrote, he had the impression he was "thrusting a dagger into the dictatorship. […] That is the fundamental function of literature: maintaining the moral torch" (Guppy).

Though *Agamemnon's Daughter* obviously attempts to restore morality by unmasking the absurdity of a totalitarian society, critics have not always received it favorably, some even noting that the text lacks Kadare's usual elegance and sophistication. Many consider it an unoriginal attempt to recycle old plots and myths. A love story of an unnamed narrator and the daughter of the second most important communist leader, the story evolves into a meditation on sacrifice and power. The title already establishes the much-debated thematic relationship with the ancient tragedy *Iphigenia in Aulis*, but the author emphasizes this relationship a few pages later when he quotes Euripides to make the sacrificial theme clear: "the sacrifice that Suzana had been talking about is something similar to the fate of Iphigenia" (10). According to Brian Dillon, this operation attempts "to exemplify the implacable and senseless end" of the relationship in the novel, but it fails to convince because "the narratives refuse to merge, the myth is in excess of this mundane predicament," and Kadare "wants [by all means] his readers to accept the mythic, elemental import of the tale Agamemnon's daughter as a plausible symbol for the unreason at the heart of his country, even as he knows it will not map the territory precisely" (Dillon 21). The critic further asserts that these "mythical tendencies rather take away from his otherwise elegantly involuted tales of spiraling suspicion and dread" (Dillon 21). James Wood, however, centers the text on "an icy interpretation of the Iphigenia story […] the first great account of

absolute political tyranny" (Wood), inevitably placing Kadare among other explorers of the totalitarian theme such as Orwell or Kundera, while Lizzie Skurnick wonders whether this interpretation ultimately represents a collaborationist writer's "apology or […] protest" (Skurnick).

Clearly the novel has sparked controversy precisely because it adapts an ancient Greek tragedy. Yet texts recycling old myths or tragic plots occurred often in communism as two very common evasion types (and by evasion I mean avoiding communist topics or descriptions of the gloomy communist reality the writers endured) transmuted the *chronotope* by placing the plot either in different time periods or in foreign, sometimes mythical, geographical backgrounds. Kadare himself uses both techniques in some of his earliest novels, for which other Albanian writers, supportive of the regime, criticized him. The writer's unusual myth adaptation shows his initial intention to produce bottom-drawer literature, which nullifies the entire evasive process: Kadare excludes the evasion through his explicit text, vivid images of the communist terror, and realistic characters and plot. Why then did Ismail Kadare use the tragic frame when he could have more easily described the fear instilled by the communist regime? It seems that his adaptation does not recycle the plot in *Iphigenia in Aulis*, as the critics above stated, but builds in fact a more subtle story. Therefore, a study of the adaptation and intertextuality in the novel reveals Kadare's intention to deconstruct the very essence of the tragedy and to describe the grotesque of the communist simulacrum.

In *Adaptation and Appropriation*, Julie Sanders analyzes modalities through which an adaptation perpetuates but also innovates the existing literary canon. This intertextual impulse, Sanders notices, which acts similarly to postcolonial hybridity in the sense that it affects both parts involved, sometimes implies the repetition, the translation, and the relocation of the source texts. This stimulates creativity, but also irrevocably changes these sources. In Kadare's novel, relocating the ancient Greek tragedy to communist Tirana, translating its plot to an unnamed narrator's impossible relationship with Suzana, the communist successor's daughter, contaminates the myth and transforms it into the archetype of despotism. Agamemnon becomes the first representative of a long line of oppressive rulers,

which includes Stalin and Suzana's father, capable of sacrificing their own children for their political career. The novella uses the myth as a background for the *bricolage*, but also alters and reinterprets it from a contemporary perspective.

Linda Hutcheon in her study *A Theory of Adaptation* also describes this process. According to Hutcheon, since adaptations openly relate to prior texts, we experience while reading not only the pleasure of recognizing the source text, but also the pleasure of noticing the change operated by the second text. Moreover, adaptations sometimes involve what Hutcheon calls "transcoding," a shift of medium or genre or even a change in "ontology from real to fictional, from a historical account or biography to a fictionalized narrative or drama" (8). Hence, the parallel between characters in Kadare's novella and the Greek tragedy – Agamemnon, Stalin, and Suzana's father as agents of power, Iphigenia, Suzana, and Yakov as sacrificial subjects, Achilles and the narrator, Calchas and Suzana's father's top adviser, Menelaus and the Guide – doubled by the sacrificial reason (which is stagnation in both texts), to which the novel adds elements of local myths and allusions to Dante's *Inferno*, indicate a plot repetition and an ontological transposition (the transposition being this time one from fiction to political reality).

However, the assumption that the writer only intended to create a double-layered political manifesto bringing together two stories connected through the poignancy of their plot reduces the novella's value. The ontological transposition combined with the author's awareness of the impossibility of publishing his text, and his unwillingness to name the majority of the characters – only Suzana and Leka B. have names in the text, yet not even these two characters have last names – suggest that they represent real historical personages. This would also imply that Ismail Kadare meant to dissimulate in *Agamemnon's Daughter* a parody of the communist reality in his country. The relationship between the two texts, the tragedy and the novella, becomes therefore more complicated, and it would possibly suggest the relation between the *hypotext* and the *hypertext* as described by Gerard Genette in his 1997 study *Palimpsests*.

As mentioned above, the intertextual relation between Euripides' ancient *hypotext* and Kadare's contemporary hypertext can be easily identified. However, the latter's parodic dimension is more

difficult to support. Following Aristotle, Genette considers parody, pastiche, and travesty minor genres. All of them imply a hypertextual relation, which transposes an epic text into a more familiar, even vulgar one. Yet Kadare's novel does not follow that pattern. Its ridicule of the communist society never becomes throughout the text vulgar, anti-tragic, or familiar, not even when the heroic context is gone. Genette also discusses, on the other hand, what he calls the genre of "canonical parody." He describes it as a serious type of parody – he offers as examples Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and Michel Tournier's *Friday* – that does not mock the source text, and that can lead sometimes to works completely different ideologically from the *hypotext* to which they relate. *Agamemnon's Daughter* does exactly that: it refuses to follow the simple parallelism between two despots performing two sacrificial acts, to concatenate a mythical element and a contemporary situation, but it builds an antithetical, mirror-adaptation of the tragedy: a serious parody describing life in communism as a simulacrum of a heroic and tragic existence.

Genette's observation that the term parody (as well as paratext) etymologically derives from the Greek *para* and *ode*, which meant "singing alongside" or "*counterchant*," suggests J. Hillis Miller's essay "The Critic as a Host," where Hillis Miller describes the deconstructivist process as a binary opposition between parasite and host. For Hillis Miller the prefix *para*

> […]is a double antithetical prefix signifying at once proximity and distance, similarity and difference, interiority and exteriority, something inside a domestic economy and at the same time outside it, something simultaneously this side of a boundary line, threshold, or margin, and also beyond it, equivalent in status and also secondary or subsidiary, submissive, as of guest or host, slave to master. A thing in "para," moreover, is not only simultaneously on both sides of the boundary line between inside and out. It is also the boundary itself, the screen which is a permeable membrane connecting inside and outside. (Hillis Miller 219).

Hence, if we interpret Kadare's novel deconstructively, as a *hypertext*-parody-guest-parasite to Euripide's *hypotext*-tragedy-

source-host, we also have to consider the liminal space, or as Hillis Miller notes, the third term of the relationship “host and guest, host and host, host and parasite, parasite and parasite” (224). The metatextual passages in the novel accurately create this chain of relationships between the “parasite” and the “host” texts.

Although not easily discernible, the first scene in the novella revolves precisely around this type of metatextual commentary. When the unnamed narrator cautiously pulls aside the curtain separating him from the parade, his gesture acquires symbolic value because the “human flood” outside does not look human anymore; those people seem to exist only to mechanically carry “placards, bouquets of flowers, and portraits of the members of the Politburo” (Kadare 3). The description concentrates on the suddenly animated politician portraits which “looked even stilted than usual as they jiggled along above the thronging mass of heads and arms,” while they “seem[ed] to cast oblique and threatening glances” (3). By placing the protagonist in this liminal space behind the curtain, the novel suggests theatricality and adornment; the curtain becomes both a borderline membrane between the intimate human conscience and the public communist masquerade, and a metaphor alluding to the Iron Curtain, the image of the Eastern bloc during the Cold War.

The next few passages follow the same logic. The narrator is waiting for Suzana, but simultaneously, he fears the consequences of not joining the parade. He is more concerned with the fact that his lateness could be noticed, and his simulated affection for his lover conceals, in fact, this guilt:

> However, the feeling that had burrowed into my chest was not remotely like the anxiety customary associated with waiting for a woman. It was much more crushing, and no doubt heightened by the music and the unending, exhausting commotion rising from the street. I almost thought that one of the portraits would end up detaching itself from its bearer, then float up my window and look inside with its painted frozen stare, and say: "And what are you doing up here? Aha! So that's the reason! You've relinquished your place down there on the reviewing stand to wait for a woman, haven't you?” (6)

Torn between the desperate desire for an intimate space and a counterfeit public reality creeping through every crevice of this

intimacy, the protagonist does not feel love anymore; he performs it. Thus, if the ancient tragedy clearly delineated the stage as a performative place, the novella disrupts the dramatic binary opposition between the theatricality and reality at the level of characters and space, portraying a world of dysfunctional and emotionally disarticulated people in a surreal reality.

The idea of sacrifice, which the critics identified as the rationality for the adaptation, perpetuates this atmosphere. In the ancient tragedy, neither Agamemnon nor fate – the goddess Artemis through her prophet Calchas's voice – fully controls Iphigenia's sacrifice. Agamemnon in his turn does not entirely fit the tyrant archetype capable of sacrificing his daughter for power and glory. He has the potential to become the hero of the Greek army stranded on the island of Aulis, but, from the very beginning, Euripides describes him as a human being who meditates on the idea of power and believes that "glory is perilous" (Euripides 298). He fears that an attempt to save his daughter would set the whole army against him and his family, especially since Odysseus, "cunning / in his tactics always and in his ear / […] close to the mob," would not hesitate to take revenge if he did not comply (320). Euripides suggests here that not even rulers have a choice when they face the mob's demands. Iphigenia implores her father to spare her, and the tragedy contains a very emotional passage: "If I had the tongue of Orpheus / So that I could charm with song the stones to / Leap and follow me, or if my words could / Quite beguile anyone I wished - I'd use / My magic bow. But only with tears can I / Make arguments and here I offer them" (359). As Agamemnon cannot change what Greece itself "lays upon" him, and Iphigenia thus needs to save her family, she accepts her tragic fate (359). Despite her fear, she even convinces a passionate Achilles not to risk his life helping her because "she is the savior of Greece" (370).

Suzana's sacrifice derives instead from her own choices that infringe on her father's wishes: "her father could not comprehend her having an affair with a young man who is practically engaged to somebody else," a man in the running for a scholarship abroad reserved only to committed regime members (8). The narrator's duplicity transpires from his every gesture towards the female

character. He does not speak honestly about their relationship and many of the passages in the novel suggest that they only share a sexual relationship. He does not love her. Instead, he objectifies her:

> I carried on staring at the naked parts of her body. To be honest, I wasn't at all sure I was inclined to swap the smooth, white body of this half-girl, half-woman for anything in the world, including Vienna. The Champs-Elysees of her thighs led all the way to her Arc de Triomphe with its immortal flame. [...] I had never met a woman like Suzana, who kept on smiling with ecstasy during lovemaking, as if she were in the midst of a blissful dream. (Kadare 8)

Even the idea of sacrifice is mentioned accidentally by Suzana, and the narrator does nothing to change her mind. When he talks about the gravity of the theme and the association with the Greek tragedy, he does it purely incidentally and in an intertextual manner, as this association comes to his mind while reading Robert Graves' book *The Greek Myths*. In fact, from his perspective, the real meaning of the word sacrifice is propagandistic and grandiloquent; it reminds him of slogans such as "Comrades! The age in which we live demands sacrifices for the sake of oil [...] the sacrifices of our cattle breeders"(10). This parallelism eventually makes him feel just as guilty as Suzana's father for "performing the sacrifice. Sometimes it seemed to be me and sometimes him; more likely, it was the two of us in tandem" (12). He is definitely not Achilles ready to die to save the victim, but part of the sacrificial mob who feels "unable to react"(72) after he learns that she has offered herself to him as a virgin and exclaims, "*I beg you, Suzana, don't be my downfall*!" (73) in one of his few moments of ingenuousness.

The metatextual commentary regarding the sacrifice does become more serious towards the end of the novella, when the narrator draws the parallel between Iphigenia, Suzana, and Yakov, Stalin's son who was left to die after he became a prisoner of war, but the surreal atmosphere in the beginning still lingers on in the text, with the portrait of Stalin and of Suzana's father as triggers of the meditation. In contrast with the ancient tragedy, Kadare's character and the projections of his mind (because we only get to know the other characters through his eyes) seem to lack basic humanity in the most important moments of their existence. The novel ends up being more theatrical than the tragedy itself; the mob/chorus in the tragedy

shows tremendous compassion towards the end of the play for the sacrificial victim, whereas the participants in the parade are totally unaware of the role attributed to them. When the ceremony is about to come to a close and the "evening news presenters in long dresses, like vestal virgins" (102) end their march, all that is left of the communist procession is an image of kitsch, of an absurd space in-between celebration and sadness which again dismantles the binary opposition between the nobility of the tragic sacrificial act and its mirror image in the novel. Kadare deconstructs the solemnity of the ancient mythic elements just to put us face to face with the dishabille caricature of the communist sham:

> Little by little I ended up back on the Grand Boulevard in a slow-moving crowd, under a sun that now felt scorching. Cardboard wreaths and silk flowers were scattered over the pavement. Burst and trampled balloons lay in the dust. The giant effigies which no one was now bothering to hold up straight, were leaning against walls and fences, staring at a slant, and sometimes upside down. There was a palpable sense of sweaty fatigue, of winding down, letting go. (102-03)

Following the same deconstructivist perspective, another major binary opposition that appears in the text is the one between fear, on one hand, and courage and freedom of mind on the other. At a first glance, the whole novella represents an act of courage, with the main character-narrator expressing a silent criticism--and there are permanent references in the novel to the bifold relationship between the silence in his thoughts that is constantly interrupted by the noise of the parade--against the regime that took over his life. However, even in his most intimate thoughts, his distress permanently creeps in: from the "fear of what might happen"(13) if his absence from the parade would be noticed, to the fear to fully engage in a relationship that, as we have discussed above, might lead to his downfall; fear of the agents at every checkpoint that stands in his way to the parade, a clear allusion to Dante's *Inferno*; and fear that others may become jealous of his unexplainable invitation to the grandstand of power. Although this feeling of terror the character elicits is constant throughout the novel, it does not necessarily provide him with an aura of greatness; on the contrary, it rather shows the futility of his

courage, as it mainly remains a process of mind. The only moments when he is capable of open criticism, which take place during the talks with his uncle, are not real samples of courage since the circle of fear, the communist practice that trialed entire families for the guilt of one member, binds them both to secrecy:

> We were breaking off relations with the Chinese not because of their atrocities, but for the opposite reason--because they were on the point of giving them up. Whereas Albania would curl up and die if it had to give up being cruel! We'd connived with the Chinese for the sole purpose of inventing new horrors. Now that they were moving in another direction, we couldn't think of anything better to do than leave them behind. [...]
>
> He was flabbergasted by what he heard, and he stared at me with wide eyes filled with hatred and horror. He tried to butt in two or three times, but his mouth had probably gone dry. Only when I got to declaim "accused land" did he manage to articulate: "I am going to report you!"
>
> "Go ahead!" I responded. "But don't forget that the shadow of my fall will affect you, too." (45-47)

Another symbolic moment in the novel, a possible apology Kadare inserted in the text, as Lizzie Skurnick mentioned above, is the dispute between the narrator and his uncle on the slogan which once made the climax of the laudatory novel the writer dedicated to Enver Hoxha. The mockery and the acidity of the passage leave space for no ambiguity, and it transforms the entirety of Albania into a sacrificial victim. The majority of the comparisons are borrowed again from a theatrical register which makes the absurdity of the totalitarian regime even more pronounced:

> The last [quarrel] arose over a slogan in one of the Guide's speeches: *We shall eat grass if we have to but we will never renounce the principles of Marxism-Leninism!* I told my uncle I thought the statement was the height of absurdity and deeply offensive to the nation's dignity. "What are the principles for whose sake we were supposed to turn into cows? What use could they possibly be to us then? To glorify our shepherd?" [...] Lord, what a pantomime!
>
> "Do you have any idea of the terrible joke that's being played on us? [...] The rest of the world is moving on and

> making the most of life, whereas we are supposed to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of some so-called principles? [...] By what right must our martyred, pauperized countrymen remain the last defenders of principles they didn't even invent? In the name of the future of humanity? [...] Really! What a farce!" (47-48)

Another effect of fear is suspicion, and many passages in the novel reflect precisely the permanent binary relation suspicion-punishment/(lack of) guilt that characterized life under communism. Kadare is actually not the only one to speak out about this profound sense of suspicion; Milan Kundera also discusses it in his study *The Art of the Novel*. In concentrational systems, explains Kundera in discussing the atmosphere in Kafka's novels, "the logic is reversed. The person punished does not know the reason for the punishment. The absurdity of the punishment is so unbearable that the accused needs to find a justification for his penalty: *the punishment seeks the offense*" (Kundera 103, emphasis mine). In *Agamemnon's Daughter*, straight from the beginning, the narrator is overwhelmed by a sensation of guilt that he has been invited to sit in the grandstand at the public celebration, and although he has no idea what made him receive the invitation in the first place, he knows that everyone will be suspicious of the sudden honor bestowed on him and wonder what deeds he had done for the political establishment to deserve it. In fact, his feeling of culpability is so pronounced that he starts blaming himself: "All the way home, I could not throw off a guilty feeling, as I wondered over and over again: he must be right, but what *did* I do to earn this invitation?" (Kadare 5). There are clues later in the novel that the character is himself guilty of ruining the life of two colleagues in the neighboring office, but the episode is quickly resolved and the narrator insists on his innocence, saying that it was in fact "their stupidity" (27) that nearly caused his ruination as well. However, the questions he asks himself about his conscience will continue through the rest of the text, and he will constantly feel ashamed during every interaction with others.

The main character's guilt and suspicion are repeated on a grand scale by the rest of the country, and Kadare's novella becomes strikingly dramatic when it describes the painful images of the purges

that affect all of Albania. Besides the two office colleagues who are punished even though their real charge is never made public, from the beginning of the novella to its end, people are accused of the most absurd crimes and punished severely. Nobody is spared, and the sentences are offered at random. Some become a "mask of supplication" (14) because they dared to laugh on the day Stalin died, like the neighbor on the balcony; others disappear without a trace. Some even regain a little humanity in the process, as does Leka B., and this is probably why he is the only character in the novel, besides Suzana, who is given a first name. Others give the impression that they are untouchable, like the painter Th. D, a possible image in the novel of the writer himself, but they are still at risk of being killed in an unexpected car accident (let us not forget that the main purpose of writing the novella in the first place was Kadare's fear that, in the case of an unexpected accident or death, his posthumous image would be altered by the communist regime). Some even manage to return to the circle of power by offering others as victims in their place. The communist society, similarly to the ancient Greeks trapped in Aulis, is imprisoned in a circle of guilt, punishment and suspicion that affects all its levels. And since the blame falls so randomly, there is no possibility to fight against it either.

None of these stories compares, however, with the fate of the Head of Broadcasting, the protagonist of one of the most powerful episodes in the novella, whose demise is so abrupt that it makes everyone else insensitive to tragedy: "the most awful part was realizing we were getting used to the idea of what seemed to be, only the day before, a somber foreboding too ghastly to seem plausible." They are also too scared to react, even while "the cogs and wheels of the collective guilt" are pushing everyone further down, to the lowest levels of humanity, where they are made to collaborate in punishing everyone and themselves for unknown offences (86). Hence the myth of the Bald Man in the novel who falls into the netherworld, and who has to feed an eagle his own flesh to return to the surface; he ultimately dies in the process. In the universe described in *Agamemnon's Daughter*, everyone lives in a *thanatocracy*, as Matei Calinescu once called the communist totalitarianism, in which they desperately try to survive. In this sense, Kadare is very close here to Kafka and Orwell.

This proximity brings us to the most important binary opposition and the one towards which all the other converge, namely the generic opposition between the tragedy and the novella. It thematically and structurally organizes the text, but at the same time it includes all the other antinomies analyzed above. As I mentioned before, the adaptation of the ancient tragedy always contains its reverse: every noble character in Euripides's text has his or her own usually abject opposite in the novella, people are reduced to bearers of effigies or masks, the idea of sacrifice is caricaturized, and almost every mythological element is being deconstructed. The Greeks can leave Aulis once the sacrificial act is over, but the people of communist Tirana live in a world so meaningless, that they have simply lost their consistence. The communist world is reduced to a spectacle of failed communication, guilt, and suspicion. Language has lost its "gentle and compassionate set phrases" (Kadare 100), and it is now composed mainly of slogans. Love is downsized to sex. The text, although dramatic in most of its parts, has the air of a *panoptikum* and of artificiality, through which the novella loses its boundaries, possibly because, as Milan Kundera asserts in the essay mentioned above, the novel as a genre is ontologically incompatible with the totalitarian world: "the world of one single Truth and the relative, ambiguous world of the novel are molded of entirely different substances" (Kundera 14). Hence, the search for answers in the novel is totally incongruous with the lack of freedom in the oppressive systems.

The incompatibility is also the reason behind the adaptative process. Tragedy, as a superior genre, with a plot that is usually morally concentrated around a strong sense of righteousness, is irreconcilable with the idea of a system in which everything is reversible, in which people's lives are governed by a "complete absence of coherence and logic" and a "war machine set in motion by malice" (Kadare 86-87), which makes fate and gods' choices seem much more bearable in comparison. Communism exhibits the type of simulacrum once defined by Jean Baudrillard, which "no longer has to be rational, since it's no longer measured against some ideal or negative substance. It is no longer more than operational" (Baudrillard 3). Agamemnon, Stalin, the Guide or Suzana's father may seem to

follow the same wish for power and to be strong enough to sacrifice their children. However, Agamemnon in the tragedy is an archetypal figure who shows remorse and tries to save the rest of his family, while his counterparts in the novel are simple cardboard portraits, images of power that conceal only emptiness, or, as Baudrillard has put it, in a simulacrum "power is no longer present except to conceal that there is none" (Baudrillard 46). Put together, face to face, the plot of the ancient tragedy and the novel of the life in communism reflect in detail the vitality of the first and the absence of life in the other. Kadare's intent here is not to recreate the ancient text, but to create a mirror-image meant to suggest that in communism, not even tragedy is genuine, regardless of how gruesome and terrifying the system would be. The simulacrum slowly creates its own space in between the two worlds, deconstructing their systems and altering the process of adaptation. In other words, the novella is not a loyal adaptation as it has been perceived by the critics, but a parodic construction of a simulacrum, sometimes incomprehensible, that exposes the meaningless of the life in communism. As Kadare asserts in his later essays, right before the fall of the Iron Curtain:

> Dictatorship in various countries had already achieved a measure of loyalty that was far from negligible. They had even succeeded in bringing forth both abusers and victims prone to turn against one another, but never against the regime. That explains why their internal quarrels, their battles and their crises often remain incomprehensible, even mysterious, to a candid eye and spirit. They look that way because, despite the fact that they're engaged in a fight to the death, their struggle always takes place far away, in a *universe whose dimensions are very different*. Each side, like the other, is a child of the dictatorship. (Kadare, *Albanian* 128-29; emphasis mine)

Works Cited

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulations*. Trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman, Semitext[e], 1983.

Dillon, Brian. "Metaphors for Death." *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 August 2007, https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/private/metaphors-for-death/. Accessed 15 Mar. 2016.

Euripides. "Iphigenia in Aulis." *The Complete Greek Tragedies.* Trans. Charles R. Walker, vol. 4, University of Chicago Press, 1960, pp. 297-390.

Genette, Gérard. *The Architext: An Introduction.* Trans. Jane E. Lewin, U of California P, 1992.

---. *Palimpsests*. Trans. Chana Newman and Claude Doubinsky, U of Nebraska P, 1997.

Guppy, Susha. "Ismail Kadare: The Art of Fiction." Interview with Ismail Kadare. *The Paris Review*, no. 153, Winter 1999, n.pag., https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1105/ismail-kadare-the-art-of-fiction-no-153-ismail-kadare. Accessed 15 Mar. 2016.

Hillis Miller, J. "The Critic as Host." *Deconstruction and Criticism*, Ed. Harold Bloom et al., Seabury, 1979, pp. 217-55.

Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Adaptation.* Rutledge, 2006.

Kadare, Ismail. *Agamemnon's Daughter: A Novella and Stories.* Trans. David Bellos, Arcade Publishing, 2006.

---. *Albanian Spring: The Anatomy of Tyranny*. Trans. Emile Capouya, Saqi Books, 1995.

Kundera, Milan. *The Art of the Novel*. Trans. Linda Asher, Perennial Classics, 2000.

Sanders, Julie. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. Rutledge, 2006.

Skurnick, Lizzie. "Fiction Chronicle." *The New York Times.com*, 8 Apr. 2008, n.pag. Accessed 31 Mar. 2016.

Wood, James. "Chronicles and Fragments: The Novels of Ismail Kadare." *The New Yorker*, vols. 20 & 27, Dec. 2010, n.pag., http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/12/20/chronicles-and-fragments. Accessed 31 Mar. 2016.

A Self-Made Woman: Mme de Merteuil and the Politics of Love in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*

Sabrina Wengier, Ph.D
Middle Georgia State University

> En effet, ces liens réciproquement donnés et reçus, pour parler le jargon de l'amour, vous seul pouvez, à votre choix, les resserrer ou les rompre: heureuses encore, si dans votre légèreté, préférant le mystère à l'éclat, vous vous contentez d'un abandon humiliant, et ne faites pas de l'idole de la veille la victime du lendemain.[1] (*Les liaisons dangereuses* letter 81, 196)

This is how Mme de Merteuil, the formidable heroine of Choderlos de Laclos's epistolary novel *Les liaisons dangereuses*,[2] published in 1782, summarizes the gender relations of her time: women are at the mercy of men's whims. Although this assessment seems true for most women in the novel, Mme de Merteuil seems to be the exception to the rule. In that same letter, she makes a point of showing just how different a woman she is. She declares herself "née pour venger mon sexe et maîtriser le vôtre"[3] (letter 81, 197). *LD* is the fascinating account of the vices of 18th-century libertine society and of what happens when innocent people become entangled in the libertine web. It is the story of the "liens réciproquement donnés et reçus" (“mutual exchange of the bonds of love") between a power couple, the Vicomte de Valmont and Mme de Merteuil, and many men and women. Furthermore, it is the story of Mme de Merteuil's downfall at the hands of men, and it is the story of the victory of men over the one woman who had managed to use them all.

The novel opens with Mme de Merteuil urging Valmont to help her make a fool out of her ex-lover, Gercourt (who dared to leave her), by deflowering the young woman Gercourt has carefully selected to marry, Cécile de Volanges, fifteen years old and fresh out of the convent. Valmont declines Mme de Merteuil’s offer at first, citing his current plan to seduce Mme de Tourvel, a pious, innocent, and heretofore happily married woman. But the seduction of Mme de Tourvel is painfully slow, and Valmont finally seeks solace and

adventure with Cécile who, in the meantime, has fallen in love with the young Chevalier Danceny. Furthermore, Valmont and Mme de Merteuil strike a deal: Mme de Merteuil agrees to spend one more night with Valmont if he can bring her written proof of his affair with Mme de Tourvel. Although Valmont and Mme de Merteuil had been lovers, and had parted as friends and allies, Mme de Merteuil ultimately refuses to honor the deal. War ensues with Valmont, leaving him and Mme de Tourvel dead, Cécile in a convent, and Mme de Merteuil disfigured by smallpox and financially and socially ruined.

LD was a *succès de scandale* and continues to be. Valmont and Mme de Merteuil, two libertine monsters, continue to fascinate and disturb. *LD* is a modern novel in that it is centered on the basic opposition of men and women, and on what happens when one woman attempts to upset the social order. As Elisabeth Douvan and Lloyd Free put it, Laclos's novel deals with "the universal problems of the relationship between men and women, the corruption of innocence, the relation of emotion and intellect, of sex and love, love and power, good and evil, the nature and styles of love, the bases of social adhesion" (260). Laclos creates complex characters that are entangled into these binary modes and render them permeable. Mme de Merteuil is the most complex character of the two. She is a powerful woman who must act like a powerless woman. She has learned to use male privilege and she has transformed herself into a hybrid being with a feminine and a masculine side. Although Mme de Merteuil functions well within the male-dominated society, she realizes that she is powerless when confronted with men's innate sense of solidarity and bonding.

The ecosystem of this libertine society thus thrives on schemes of seduction, love, competition, and rivalry. Each seduction and ruining of an innocent life allows the libertine to confirm his/her spot in the hierarchy of success. As Mme de Merteuil is aware, the economy of this (libertine) society is dominated by men's choices and decisions, and the currency is women. Even though libertine men all prey on the same pool of women and are de facto rivals, this competition also creates a sense of friendship and a true bond amongst these men. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick calls it "homosocial

bonding" in her seminal work *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Sedgwick builds on René Girard's theory of mimetic desire. For Girard, desire is triangular and joins a subject of desire, an object of desire, and what he calls a mediator or model that the subject of desire imitates. Girard distinguishes between external mediation, in which case the mediator is an unattainable figure—Girard cites the example of the adventurer Amadis de Gaula who influences Don Quixote's sense of adventure in Cervantes's novel; and internal mediation, that is, a figure the subject knows—as with Sancho Panza emulating Don Quixote. Girard adds that when the two subjects are within physical reach of each other, the subject and the mediator end up desiring the same object and becoming rivals. Sedgwick complicates Girard's theory and objects to his gender-neutral approach:

> Girard's reading presents itself as one whose symmetry is undisturbed by such differences as gender; although the triangles that most shape his view tend, in the European tradition, to involve bonds of "rivalry" between males "over" a woman, in his view *any* relation of rivalry is structured by the same play of emulation and identification, whether the entities occupying the corners of the triangle be heroes, heroines, gods, books, or whatever. (23)

Sedgwick advocates for a gendered reading of the triangle because, in the corpus of books Girard uses as a basis for his theory, she identifies a clear pattern of two male rivals fighting over a passive female object of desire. She also notes that although these male rivals vie for the same woman, the competition ends up creating a homosocial bond between the men, and they come to desire each other through emulation and identification. In *LD*, the gendered terms of mimetic desire Sedgwick proposes are complicated by the presence of Mme de Merteuil. No longer is it two men preying over one woman, but rather it is a man, Valmont, and a woman, Mme de Merteuil, preying over a woman (or a man). Valmont and Mme de Merteuil are in a constant state of competition to outdo each other in their libertine schemes and in that sense, Mme de Merteuil enjoys the male privilege of being the hunter rather than the hunted.

Additionally, I will also draw from Gayle Rubin's "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex." Rubin uses structuralism and cultural anthropology (Claude Lévi-Strauss),

Marxism, and psychoanalysis (Freud) to understand the origin of the patterns of oppression against women and to propose a way of thinking about the economics of sex and gender (177). She focuses in particular on the way women are exchanged in patriarchal societies. Rubin writes:

> If women are the gifts, then it is men who are the exchange partners. And it is the partners, not the presents, upon whom reciprocal exchange confers its quasi-mystical power of social linkage. The relations of such a system are such that women are in no position to realize the benefits of their own circulation. As long as the relations specify that men exchange women, it is men who are the beneficiaries of the products of such exchanges—social organization. (174)

In the political economy of sex and gender that Rubin proposes, women have no way out. They are the objects of transactions between men, and these transactions become the very fabric of society, the threads that bond men together and create social organization.

Sedgwick's gendered reading of the concept of mimetic desire will help show how Mme de Merteuil has entered the role usually reserved to men and how she disrupts the traditional terms of the love triangle by her hybridity. Rubin's economic reading of gender norms and sex along with Sedgwick's concept of homosocial bonding will reveal why Mme de Merteuil is left with little chance to win her war over Valmont, as he enjoys the ultimate male privilege of having a network of men to support him and follow in his footsteps.

A close reading of the characterizations of Mme de Merteuil and Valmont demonstrates the gender differences at play in *LD*. In a letter warning Mme de Tourvel about Valmont's character, Mme de Volanges describes the libertine as follows:

> Encore plus faux et dangereux qu'il n'est aimable et séduisant, jamais, depuis sa plus grande jeunesse, il n'a fait un pas ou dit une parole sans avoir un projet, et jamais il n'eût un projet qui ne fût malhonnête ou criminel. […] Sa conduite est le résultat de ses principes. Il sait calculer tout ce qu'un homme peut se permettre d'horreurs, sans se compromettre; et pour être cruel et méchant sans danger, il a choisi les femmes pour victimes.

> Je ne m'arrête pas à compter celles qu'il a séduites: mais combien n'en a-t-il pas perdues?[4] (letter 9, 27)

Valmont's calculating charm and his manipulation of women remain within the limits of acceptable social mores, and even though his evil tendencies are well known, his presence remains welcome in good social circles.

Valmont's despicable ways find an echo in Mme de Merteuil's own behavior. Letter 81, an autobiographical letter, provides a window into her soul, as she tells Valmont how she molded herself, learned how to disguise her emotions at will, and established her impeccable reputation despite less than impeccable behavior. She writes:

> Si cependant vous m'avez vue, disposant des événements et des opinions, faire de ces hommes si redoutables le jouet de mes caprices ou de mes fantaisies; ôter aux uns la volonté, aux autres la puissance de me nuire; si j'ai su tour à tour, et suivant mes goûts mobiles, attacher à ma suite ou rejeter loin de moi *Ces Tyrans détrônés devenus mes esclaves*;[5]
>
> Si, au milieu de ces révolutions fréquentes, ma réputation s'est pourtant conservée pure; n'avez-vous pas dû en conclure que, née pour venger mon sexe et maîtriser le vôtre, j'avais su me créer des moyens inconnus jusqu'à moi? […] quand m'avez-vous vue m'écarter des règles que je me suis prescrites, et manquer à mes principes?[6] (letter 81, 196-97; author's italics)

Mme de Merteuil depicts herself as a self-made woman, whose greatest accomplishment is her victory over the opposite sex. She is proud that she has devised a way to manipulate men in the same way that men usually manipulate women. The behavior she describes directly mirrors Valmont's handling of women. They each have a set of "principles" that guides their interactions with members of the opposite sex and allows them to remain in good standing with society while ensuring that they continue to enjoy illicit pleasures at will.

Despite those similarities, there are important differences between the two libertines. While Valmont's portrait is written by a third party, Mme de Volanges, Mme de Merteuil's is a self-portrait. Valmont is an open book; as a man, he is free to behave with evil and criminal intent so long as he does not cross the line too outrageously. By contrast, there is no line for Mme de Merteuil; any behavior

outside of the virtuous widow persona she has crafted for herself risks her losing the status she has worked so hard to attain. Her portrait must be a self-portrait because only Mme de Merteuil knows who the true Mme de Merteuil is. Valmont's exploits are publicly acknowledged, equally praised and loathed; Mme de Merteuil, on the other hand, is her own supporter. She takes a risk by sharing her accomplishments with Valmont, however. Their friendship is strong, but it functions very much like the doctrine of "mutually-assured destruction": both possess information about the other that could compromise them, so that it is in their best interest to remain friends rather than turn into enemies.

One of Mme de Merteuil's proudest achievements is that she is different from other women. She is at once critical of her sex ("qu'ai-je de commun avec ces femmes inconsidérées?"[7] letter 81, 197) and praising and aware of the qualities every ordinary woman must develop in order to survive in a man's world: "Dans cette partie si inégale, notre fortune est de ne pas perdre, et votre malheur de ne pas gagner. Quand je vous accorderais autant de talent qu'à nous, de combien encore ne devrions-nous pas vous surpasser, par la nécessité où nous sommes d'en faire un continuel usage!"[8] (letter 81, 195). She enjoys the challenge of being a woman and takes it as a stimulating advantage, but her main strength lies in her ability to be both masculine and feminine. For example, she enjoys using her feminine wiles and acting abilities playing the fragile woman to get what she wants. She describes how she feigns a "slight tremor" in her hand as a potential suitor touches her and directs "shy glances" that encourage him. Each small gesture is highly calculated, and Mme de Merteuil is as good an actor as, and probably better than, the men who also play the game of love and seduction. She is not at the mercy of the men with whom she chooses to have a relationship. She makes them believe that they are seducing her while she is the one truly driving the seduction.

Mme de Merteuil's quasi-masculine guile is accompanied by what Laurent Versini calls "masculine energy" (114). She has a seemingly insatiable sexual appetite. While Valmont writes that he must pace himself with Cécile or else risk falling ill, Mme de Merteuil uses an excess of sex as a way to rid herself of Belleroche, a lover

with whom she has grown bored. Her libido does not fail; men's do. This masculine energy, not only in her sexual encounters but also in the way she steers her relationships, is what allows her to exist at the same level as the male libertines in the novel, especially Valmont. Mme de Merteuil is the ultimate seducer, and therefore the ultimate rival. Her ability to channel both feminine and masculine energy makes her an ideal being, a hybrid man and woman.

Thanks to this hybridity, Mme de Merteuil drastically upsets the traditional political economy of sex where men dominate and exchange women. On the contrary, Mme de Merteuil exchanges men for her own pleasure. In the gendered terms of Sedgwick's love triangle, Mme de Merteuil has inserted herself in the traditionally masculine role. She and Valmont preside over various objects of desire: Cécile de Volanges, Mme de Tourvel, Belleroche, Prévan, and the Chevalier Danceny. Men and women alike are the currency being exchanged between Mme de Merteuil and Valmont. In these transactions, Valmont and Mme de Merteuil are on equal terms. They are both driven by the common quest for the power to manipulate and use others and the pleasure they draw from it.[9] However, Valmont is not as subtle and guarded as Mme de Merteuil is in the game of love and seduction because he does not need to be. As he writes to Mme de Merteuil once he has raped Cécile, "Tandis que, maniant avec adresse les armes de votre sexe, vous triomphez par la finesse; moi, rendant à l'homme ses droits imprescriptibles, je subjuguais par l'autorité"[10] (letter 96, 245). Valmont vaunts the male privilege that allows him to take forceful action while Mme de Merteuil must proceed by "dainty wiles."

However, Mme de Merteuil, through the careful crafting of her principles and the systems and processes she has invented to implement those principles, has acquired the same male privilege of choosing and disposing of her victims. For instance, of her future relationship with Prévan—a libertine newcomer trying to establish his reputation by seducing her—she predicts, "je veux l'avoir et je l'aurai; il veut le dire, et il ne le dira pas: en deux mots, voilà notre Roman"[11] (letter 81, 205). Mme de Merteuil deprives Prévan of any agency in their affair: even though he is the one who proposed the challenge of seducing her, she reverses the terms of desire by stating that *she* is the one who wants him and will have him. He has no choice left in the matter and he will suffer the consequences of her

seductive powers. But to seduce him, she will use all of her feminine attributes, thus easily slipping in and out of one gender role for the other. Mme de Merteuil understands how to be a woman, and when to act like a man.

Libertines, accomplices, confidants, friends, ex-lovers, rivals: these terms define Valmont and Mme de Merteuil's relationship. Their rivalry functions as an integral part of their friendship because their pool of victims is different: he preys on women, she mostly preys on men. Mme de Merteuil is the ideal friend for Valmont. She is a formidable libertine, but her accomplishments must remain behind the scenes. She cannot steal Valmont's spotlight in the way that Prévan could, for instance. Her victories are innocuous and do not jeopardize his public status. Perhaps this is why, even though he has male friends—Vressac, Belleroche, Danceny—he only fully confides in Mme de Merteuil. Most of the time, he treats her as though she were a man because she acts like him. She has become so skillful at acting like a man that Valmont sometimes forget that she is a woman. But Mme de Merteuil, despite her inherent hybridity, never forgets that she is a woman, and that is precisely what justifies a feminist reading of *LD.* Mme de Merteuil is a remarkable woman because she has overcome the obstacles thrown her way by society by using her wits and her feminine side against men. Never once in the novel does she say that she wishes she were a man. But she does enjoy, and is proud of the fact that she enjoys, some male privilege thanks to the position of power she has carved out for herself.

Mme de Merteuil's hard-won male privilege makes her able to play a male role in Sedgwick's theory, leading her to select Belleroche and Danceny as Valmont's proxies. Mme de Merteuil's character flaws are her pride and her attachment to Valmont. He is the only true friend she can claim, and the only person with whom she can be herself. She chooses his two intimate friends to lead Valmont on and make him desire her. For instance, she tells Valmont that she and Belleroche reconciled after a fight by having sex: "sur cette même ottomane où vous et moi scellâmes si gaiement et de la même manière notre éternelle rupture"[12] (letter 10, 32-33). Mme de Merteuil knows that a reminder of their past relationship will not be left unanswered by Valmont. He indeed rises to the occasion by suggesting they renew

their bond. Mme de Merteuil hoped for such an offer, and she knew Valmont would take the bait. She shows herself as the object of another man's desire, and not any man, but Valmont's friend. She portrays herself as the one being exchanged and transacted between Belleroche and Valmont, thereby letting the latter believe that he holds the power. However, Mme de Merteuil has brilliantly and skillfully turned Valmont and Belleroche into the objects of her transaction. She runs the political economy of sex in this love triangle.

However, Mme de Merteuil does not limit herself to transacting men. She proceeds much the same way with women, with Cécile being her first victim. Of the girl, she tells Valmont, "si j'avais moins de mœurs, je crois qu'il [Belleroche] aurait, en ce moment, un *rival* dangereux; c'est la petite Volanges. Je raffolle de cet enfant: c'est une vraie passion"[13] (letter 20, 48-49; italics mine). Mme de Merteuil is genuine in her infatuation with Cécile, but she is also still hoping, at this point in the novel, that Valmont will decide to help with Cécile's sexual education and social ruin. Mme de Merteuil presents Cécile as the object of her own desire, thereby making the transaction more palatable for Valmont. In Girard's concept of mimetic desire, Mme de Merteuil seeks for Valmont to emulate her. In the meantime, while she waits for him to make his decision, Mme de Merteuil sets to exploit the budding romance between Cécile and Danceny. She understands that Danceny needs guidance as he is too young, too slow, and too respectful. Mme de Merteuil demands of Valmont that he become Danceny's friend: "Emparez-nous de Danceny, et conduisez-le"[14] (letter 51, 122). How does Valmont "s'empare de" Danceny? He waxes poetic about love, opening up about his desperate longing for Mme de Tourvel. Valmont manages to win over and seduce Danceny who, "dans l'enchantement qu'il était de [s]a candeur, […] [lui] a tout dit, et [lui] a juré une amitié sans réserve"[15] (letter 57, 132). Valmont, who, despite being so different from Danceny, finds a sense of kinship with him in their unrequited loves, and so offers his help to the young couple. When Cécile refuses to give Valmont the key to her room—Valmont's idea of a secure way to deliver the letters—he simply complains to Danceny of her lack of cooperation. Danceny does not even ask what secure method Valmont has devised; instead, he instructs Cécile to let Valmont in. Cécile feels frustrated and stifled by the two men's "amitié sans reserve." Her reply to Danceny shows that she intuitively understands

that the bonds of (male) friendship are stronger than the bonds of love: “M. de Valmont a beau être votre ami, je crois que je vous aime bien autant qu’il peut vous aimer, pour le moins; et cependant c’est toujours lui qui a raison, et moi j’ai toujours tort. Je vous assure que je suis bien fâchée”[16] (letter 94, 240-1).

Not surprisingly, it is not long after Valmont strikes a friendship with Danceny that he decides to seduce Cécile after all. After he rapes Cécile, he justifies his action by telling Mme de Merteuil: “je me rappelais en outre que vous me l’aviez *offerte*, avant que Danceny eût rien à y prétendre; et je me trouvais fondé à réclamer quelques droits sur un bien qu’il ne possédait qu’à mon refus et par mon abandon”[17] (letter 96, 244; italics mine). This passage strongly echoes Gayle Rubin’s assertion that women, given as gifts, are powerless. In this transaction, Cécile endures her rape, her lover forcing her into the situation, her mentor Mme de Merteuil telling her that she should stop being silly and enjoy sex with Valmont, thus becoming a puppet at the hands of the adults manipulating her. Valmont and Mme de Merteuil bond over their destruction of Cécile’s innocence, but Cécile’s situation differs from Rubin’s assessment of the political economy of sex because Mme de Merteuil is the one responsible for Cécile’s woes. Mme de Merteuil, a woman, is close to being able to reap the benefits of the situation: Gercourt, her ex-lover, will be mocked as soon as he marries Cécile and Mme Merteuil can tell him and society that his carefully chosen bride is not a virgin. *LD* makes Mme de Merteuil an exchange partner but does not alter the situation of the woman being transacted, suggesting that a woman in the position of power might simply perpetuate the patriarchy.

As for Valmont, what does he gain from this transaction? Valmont enjoys the sense of kinship that having sex with Cécile gives him toward Danceny as he meddles with his friend and Cécile’s relationship. Valmont composes some of her letters to Danceny, as a way to teach her how to write like a woman. But he also playfully takes advantage of the situation as when he writes on her behalf, “Oh! vous avez là un bien bon ami, je vous assure! Il fait tout comme vous feriez vous-même”[18] (letter 132, 172). To make it even, he also supervises some of the letters that Danceny writes to Cécile. Valmont has thus carved himself a polymorphous role: he can be Danceny for

Cécile and Cécile for Danceny, Danceny's friend, and Cécile's lover. He thus plays all the roles in the love triangle that entangles him with Cécile and Danceny. He sums up their *ménage à trois* as follows : "Que n'aurai-je pas fait pour ce Danceny! J'aurai été à la fois son ami, son confident, son rival et sa maîtresse!"[19] (letter 115, 313). He seems to see his having sex with Cécile as a service he performs for Danceny and as an activity that strengthens his bond with his friend.

What of Mme de Merteuil in the Valmont-Danceny-Cécile love triangle? In this mini-society, Mme de Merteuil is the ruler, the one who distributes the roles. Let us not forget that she was the initiator of all of the relationships. She "offered" Cécile to Valmont; she supported Cécile's involvement with both Danceny and Valmont; she encouraged the friendship between the two men; and she even almost took care of Cécile's sexual education herself! Later on in the novel, as an act of revenge against Valmont, she will choose Danceny as her lover. The homosocial bond that exists between Danceny and Valmont is made twice as strong because it is fueled by the presence of not one but two women they desire. Cécile is a passive object being transacted by the others, while Mme de Merteuil is the active agent in this complex web of relationship. But she destabilizes her own political regime by having sex with Danceny; Valmont is upset because she has refused to honor their deal, instead electing to spend the night with the one he calls "un novice qui ne saura ni vous prendre, ni vous quitter, et avec qui il vous faudra tout faire"[20] (letter 115, 312). While Valmont felt that Danceny was no threat in his relationship with Cécile—Danceny is not bold enough to attempt to have sex with Cécile—Mme de Merteuil's choice of Danceny as lover positions the young man as Valmont's rival. The exchange she performs between the two men is unacceptable for Valmont, who is not used to being in a position where he is exchanged and gains nothing. Valmont's anger is not directed at his rival Danceny but at Mme de Merteuil. When he confronts Danceny about forgetting his true love Cécile in favor of an affair with an older woman, he does so gently, and Danceny happily returns to Cécile. Danceny and Valmont's homosocial bond is quite intact; however, the homosocial bond that had united Valmont and Mme de Merteuil is destroyed. Mme de Merteuil has no one on to turn to. Valmont has plenty of male friends, while Mme de Merteuil only pretends to have female friends; she lacks the support system the men enjoy. Although she

longs for female friendship—“Je me suis souvent aperçue du besoin d’avoir une femme dans ma confidence”[21] (letter 54, 127)—no woman will suffice, because, in her eyes, no woman can match her spirit and principles. She thinks Cécile could become her confidante, but after she observes her pliability and lack of confidence, she decides that the young woman lacks the necessary wit and spirit and will only be a *machine à plaisir*. Mme de Merteuil's self-appointed mission may be to "venger [s]on sexe et maîtriser le vôtre”[22] (letter 81, 197), but she sees it as a solitary operation, not one that entails educating and freeing the minds of other women. Female bonds and female friendships are tested throughout the novel and end up disappearing in the end.

One side story provides insight into the way female friendship is dysfunctional in *LD*. Valmont tells Mme de Merteuil the story of “the three inseparables” as a cautionary tale to warn her of the real danger he believes Prévan to be. The "three inseparables" are three women who kept no secrets from each other and who formed a happy and content group with their respective lovers. Prévan, to prove his libertine skills, takes up the challenge to separate them and bring their group down. He seduces each of the three separately, demanding that they keep their relationships with him a secret and that they leave their lovers. They do, and shortly thereafter, the jilted lovers each challenge Prévan to a duel. However, instead of proceeding with the duel, Prévan convinces the three men that they are better off without their depraved mistresses, and the four men become friends. This episode is another clear instance of Sedgwick’s homosocial bonds being created and cemented through the exploitation of women. Prévan also becomes a Girardian model: the men come to admire him, and their desire to kill him turns into a desire to *be* him. On the other hand, the three inseparables, after betraying each other by not sharing that they were having an affair with Prévan, lose their friendship and the respect of society and are forced to withdraw to a convent.

In her study of friendship in *LD*, Dawn Marlan questions why Valmont decides to share this story with Mme de Merteuil. She argues that “If Valmont were merely Merteuil’s rival, he would have no reason to tell her the story of the inseparables. He tells her as a mode of advice because he is her friend. He uses a story of mistrust

between the sexes as a vehicle for friendship across the gender divide" (320). Indeed, Valmont presents the story as a gesture of friendship. But Valmont also has an ulterior motive: he wants Prévan eliminated, as he sees him as "le seul homme, peut-être, que je craindrais de rencontrer sur mon chemin" (letter 70, 159). He knows that if he can convince Mme de Merteuil of Prévan's power, then she will see the endeavor as worthy of her time. Although telling the story of "the three inseparables" might seem like a gesture of friendship, it is a calculated gesture. Valmont knows that Mme de Merteuil is the only one who can rid him of the dangerous rival who is trying to supplant him. Mme de Merteuil is happy to oblige, and she does it so well that she forces Prévan out of society. Her victory confirms her position as the leading libertine and ultimate seducer.

What finally brings down Mme de Merteuil and Valmont's friendship is the prospect of sex and a night together. As I previously showed, Mme de Merteuil has managed to appropriate the masculine position in the love triangles in which she participates. She posits herself as object of desire because as a woman, that is the role she must project; but she is first and foremost a desiring subject who carefully selects her prey, men or women. She is responsible for much of the traffic in men and women, to use Rubin's formula, in the novel. By her actions, Mme de Merteuil has become one of the men, at least in Valmont's eyes—and his are the only ones that count for Mme de Merteuil. That is, her friendship with Valmont becomes a homosocial bond. Each of their joint or separate victories strengthens their bond. However, as Sedgwick explains, the traditional homosocial bond depends upon a sexual bond that will never be acted upon. She further explains that there is a "radically discontinuous relation of male homosocial and homosexual bonds" (5). Such discontinuity exists between Valmont and Mme de Merteuil as long as they are only friends. Add sexual benefits to their friendship and the necessary discontinuity is ruined. In essence, Mme de Merteuil is the only *man* with whom Valmont can have sex. (Let us remember how enthusiastic Valmont was that he could pretend to be Danceny's mistress). With his male privilege, "ses droits imprescriptibles"[23] (letter 96, 245), Valmont believes that, as a woman, Mme de Merteuil has no right to refuse him. But Mme de Merteuil refuses this traditional order of things. She knows that accepting his proposal would mean relinquishing her position of control. Jealousy also guides her

conduct, as she realizes that Valmont is deeply in love with Mme de Tourvel despite his own blindness to his sentiments. If she were to have sex with Valmont again, she would be a distraction just like Cécile, a countess, and a courtesan he pursued all while deeply in love with Mme de Tourvel. Mme de Merteuil tells him that she wishes he would try to seduce her but she notes, “A vos yeux, je ne vaux pas que vous vous donniez tant de peine. Vous désirez moins mes bontés que vous ne voulez abuser de votre empire"[24] (letter 152, 404). In other words, if she agrees to have sex with him, she will become part of the traffic in women. She will be like the others, interchangeable and unimportant. Her homosocial bond/cross-gender bond with Valmont is therefore unsustainable with the prospect of sex between them.

Deprived of her friend and of female friends, Mme de Merteuil holds on to her independence at all cost. As she writes at the end of her autobiographical letter:

> Mais de prétendre que je me sois donné tant de soins pour n’en pas retirer les fruits; qu’après m’être autant élevée au-dessus des autres femmes par mes travaux pénibles, je consente à ramper comme elles dans ma marche, entre l’imprudence et la timidité; que surtout je pusse redouter un homme au point de ne plus voir mon salut que dans la fuite? Non, Vicomte; jamais. Il faut vaincre ou périr.[25] (letter 81, 205)

Although she is here referring to Prévan, this assessment of the situation foreshadows her final predicament with Valmont. She knows that more is at stake here: her way of life, status, and independence. Mme de Merteuil considers relationships the way a general strategizes for war—much of her and Valmont’s vocabulary of love borrows from the language of warfare, and they literally declare “war” on each other. However, Mme de Merteuil is a one-woman army, whereas Valmont leads a whole battalion of men. Before she declares war on Valmont, when they are still friends conspiring and scheming together, she would have no qualms about targeting and destroying women. Now, however, she has become the target.

During her “vaincre ou périr” campaign, Mme de Merteuil manages some important victories: she destroys Valmont and Mme de

Tourvel's relationship, and she turns Danceny against Valmont by sharing the tale of his sexual exploits with Cécile. In the end, when Danceny kills Valmont in their duel over Cécile's honor, Danceny has *de facto* eliminated Mme de Merteuil's rival. However, just as Prévan turns his would-be duel into a male-bonding moment, so does Valmont with Danceny. As he lies dying, he publicly proclaims his friendship for the young man and tells his servants to show Danceny "tous les égards qu'on doit à un brave et galant homme"[26] (letter 163, 422). Gone are the references to the novice schoolboy. Valmont's proclamation performatively turns Danceny into a man. As a man, he is given his first responsibility: to distribute as he sees fit Mme de Merteuil and Valmont's correspondence to show the world the former's true colors. Danceny believes that Valmont gave him the letters as part of a sense of "vengeance commune de M. de Valmont et de moi, à laquelle nous avions droit tous deux, et dont il m'avait *expressément chargé*"[27] (letter 169, 434; italics mine). Valmont's last act on earth is to ensure the continuity of a male-dominated society by destroying Mme de Merteuil's reputation. As critic Peter Conroy notes, "This reconciliation between two foes who only moments before were trying to kill each other is a powerful depiction of male bonding, of men who in a moment of ultimate stress and antagonism can put aside their differences and establish a real intimacy" (254). As Sedgwick shows, such intimacy occurs at the expense of women. Danceny takes it upon himself to rehabilitate Prévan, adding another layer of wrongdoing and disgrace to Mme de Merteuil's record. By doing so, Danceny ensures Valmont's succession through the only worthy rival he had ever feared. This bond they create beyond death is akin to the "quasi-mystical power of social linkage" that Rubin evokes. Their transacting Mme de Merteuil out of society is what brings them together.

Mme de Merteuil loses her war because she alone cannot resist homosocial bonds and society as a whole. In the gendered love triangle Sedgwick has identified, Mme de Merteuil has reclaimed the terms of Rubin's political economy of sex. Mme de Merteuil has entered and participated in the male bonding process and has enjoyed the position of masculine power—albeit far from the spotlight—at the expense of all the other women in the novel. She has shown no qualms at treating these women like objects, toying with their hearts, and destroying their reputations. In the end, however, she is alone,

disfigured by smallpox, and must flee the country, as disgrace prevents her from going into society and a lost trial leaves her penniless. Is she a victim of her dangerous liaison with Valmont like Cécile and Mme de Tourvel? Has the woman who has managed to "[s'élever] au-dessus des autres femmes"[28] (letter 81, 205) finally been brought down to their level? One could argue that she has: she has indeed lost her war, and she is forever disgraced. But she left and escaped the humiliation she would have suffered had she stayed. Despite her wasted face, she has retained her freedom and her independence.[29] In a letter to Valmont where she discusses the plight of aging women, she explains to him that there are two categories of older women: the ones who only relied on their good looks and for whom age is a source of despair, and another class of women, who cultivated their minds: "[ces] femmes qui, ayant eu un caractère et n'ayant pas négligé de nourrir leur raison, savent se créer une existence, quand celle de la nature leur manque, et prennent le parti de mettre à leur esprit les parures qu'elles employaient avant pour leur figure"[30] (letter 113, 303-304). Although Mme de Merteuil is far from old—most likely in her mid-twenties—she certainly fits nicely this description of cultivated women, and such a thought strikes a positive note for her future in exile.

Between "vaincre" and "périr," it seems then that Mme de Merteuil might have found a middle ground. But whereas Valmont will probably be remembered for his grand gesture and will remain a model to follow for future libertine men, Mme de Merteuil will be remembered as a fallen and awful woman. Although Cécile did look up to her, Mme de Merteuil gave up on the idea of handing the reins to her and providing her with the tools to continue the fight to "venger [son] sexe et subjuguer le vôtre"[31] (letter 81, 197). Valmont has equipped Danceny to fight his battle after he is gone; he has ensured the boy has become a man, and he has even gained a successor. Mme de Merteuil failed to secure the connection that participates in the fabric of social organization. Perhaps she was too proud—only she could do it-- or too lucid. But Mme de Merteuil did manage to disrupt the gender norms of her time by reveling both in her femininity and in her being able to be one of the men. She may have had to enjoy her triumphs alone, but she understood their importance, and she

managed to acquire and live with some male privilege. However, her hybridity is not a sustainable position in the sexual and gendered economy of her time.

Notes

[1] “In fact, in this mutual exchange of the bonds of love, to use the current jargon, only you men are able to decide whether to strengthen them or break them. We can consider ourselves lucky if indeed, in your flighty way, you prefer to lie low rather than show off and are content merely to humiliate us by deserting us and not turn the woman you worshipped yesterday into today's victim!" (letter 81, 162). All translations are from the Oxford edition unless otherwise noted.

[2] I will hereafter refer to the novel as *LD*.

[3] “born to avenge my sex and subjugate yours” (162).

[4] "He's even more deceitful and dangerous than he is pleasant and attractive. From his earliest youth he has never made the slightest move or uttered a single word without having some evil or criminal intent. […] His despicable behavior is a matter of principles. He calculates precisely how far he can pursue his abominable conduct without compromising himself; and to gratify his cruel and wicked nature without any risk, he's chosen to prey on women. I’m not thinking of those he may have seduced but of who knows how many he has ruined" (23-24).

[5] The origin of this quote is unclear.

[6] "If, however, you have noticed me, regardless of the circumstances and of public opinion, making these males jump like puppets to my fads and fancies, imposing my will on some and rendering the others powerless to harm me; if, following the vagaries of my likes and dislikes, I've either enrolled into my following of admirers or else sent packing those throneless tyrants who have become our slaves; if, in the course of all these frequent and violent changes, my reputation has remained unscathed, mustn't you have been forced to conclude that, having been born to avenge my sex and subjugate yours, I must have succeeded in elaborating certain methods hitherto unknown? […] When did you last see me depart from the rules which I've laid down for myself and be untrue to my principles?" (letter 81, 162)

[7] “But what have I in common with those feckless women?” (163).

[8] “In this highly unfair contest, if we don’t lose, it’s our good luck and if you don’t win, it’s just bad luck for you. Even if I were to grant that you have as many gifts as we have, we’d still be that much better than you because we need to make use of them all the time” (161).

[9] Thinking back to Girard’s concept of the mediator in the theory of mimetic desire, God is who Valmont and Mme de Merteuil both aspire to be, and they often compare themselves to Him. Mme de Merteuil claims, “Me voilà comme la Divinité, recevant les vœux opposés des aveugles mortels, et ne changeant rien à mes décrets immuables” (letter 63, 211) ("So here I am like the Divinity, with blind mortals vying in their prayers to me while I never change my immutable decrees” [119]). Similarly, Valmont is outraged by Mme de Tourvel’s devotion and prayers: “Quel Dieu osait-elle invoquer ? […] C’est moi qui règlerait son sort” (letter 23, 126) ("What God was she daring to pray to? […] I’m the one who’ll decide her fate now” [49]).

[10] “Whereas to achieve your goal you artfully deploy the dainty wiles of your sex, I claimed the inalienable prerogative of the male and asserted my authority” (202).

[11] “As for Prévan, I want to have him and have him I shall; he wants to tell and he won’t: that’s our romance in a nutshell” (169).

[12] “on that very ottoman where you and I consummated in similar style our joyous decision to part forever” (28).

[13] “Incidentally, were I a less moral woman than I am, I think my knight would at the moment be facing a dangerous *rival*: the little Volanges girl. The child is adorable and I’m quite infatuated” (41; italics mine).

[14] “Take Danceny in hand, guide his steps” (101). Note on the Oxford translation: the verb “s’emparer” has a stronger meaning than taking in hand. It means to seize, to take possession of.

[15] “was so delighted by [his] candour, that he told [him] all and promised [him] unconditional friendship” (109).

[16] "I know M. de Valmont is your friend but I reckon I certainly love you at least as much as he possibly can, yet he's always right, and I'm always wrong. I can tell you, I feel really fed up" (198).

[17] “I also remembered that you had *offered* her to me before Danceny had any lien on her and I felt it reasonable to claim some rights on a property he owned by default purely because I had turned it down” (202; italics mine).

[18] “Oh! You have such a good friend, I assure you! He does it all exactly the way you would do it.” (This is my translation as this passage is omitted from the Oxford translation.)

[19] “The things I'm doing for Danceny! I'll have been his friend, his confidant, his rival… and his mistress!" (260).

[20] “a novice who'll not know either to take you or leave you and with whom you'll have to do it all" (259).

[21] “I’ve often felt the need for a confidante” (106).

[22] “avenge my sex and subjugate yours" (162).

[23] “the inalienable prerogative of the male” (202).

[24] “the truth is that in your eyes I’m not worth all that trouble on your part. You’re less interested in gaining my favours than in exercising your power” (335).

[25] “But to imagine I’ve taken such care only to fail to reap the fruits of my labours; that having raised myself with such arduous efforts above the ordinary run of women, I could ever consent to cringe like them, wavering between cowardice and recklessness, and above all that I could be so scared of any man as to flee for my life, no, Vicomte, never, never! I must conquer or die in the attempt” (169).

[26] "show the Chevalier Danceny all the respect due to a fine and gallant gentleman” (350).

[27] “One of them was necessary for Monsieur de Valmont’s and my revenge; we both had the right, and he *expressly requested* me, to do this” (359; italics mine).

[28] “raised [her]self above the ordinary run of women” (169).

[29] It is interesting that in his film adaptation of the novel Stephen Frears chooses to show a defeated Mme de Merteuil. After Valmont’s death, she goes to the theater where she is booed upon entering her box. The film ends with Mme de Merteuil back at home, taking off her make up—her mask—after a bout of

screaming and crying. Frears thus removes the open-ended outcome Laclos writes for his female protagonist.

[30] “those women of character who haven’t neglected to enrich their minds and are capable of creating a life of their own when nature begins to desert them; these women are determined to decorate their minds, just as earlier they decorated their faces” (252).

[31] “born to avenge my sex and subjugate yours” (162).

Works Cited

Conroy, Jr., Peter V. “Male Bonding and Female Isolation in Laclos’s *Les liaisons dangereuses*.” *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 267, 1989, pp. 253-71.

Dangerous Liaisons. Directed by Stephen Frears, performances by Glenn Close and John Malkovich, Warner Brothers, 1988.

Douvan, Elizabeth, and Lloys Free. "*Les liaisons dangereuses* and Comtemporary Consciousness." *Laclos: Critical Approaches to* Les liaisons dangereuses, edited by Lloyd Free, Studia Humanitatis, 1978, pp. 259-96.

Laclos, Choderlos de. *Les liaisons dangereuses*. Livre de poche, 1987.

---. *Dangerous Liaisons*. Translated by Douglas Parmée, Oxford UP, 1995.

Marlan, Dawn. “The Seducer as Friend: The Disappearance of Sex as a Sign of Conquest in *Les liaisons dangereuses*.” *PMLA,* vol. 116, no. 2, 2001, pp. 314-28.

Rubin, Gayle. “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex.” *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, edited by Rayna R. Reiter, Monthly Review P, 1975, pp. 157-210.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire.* Columbia UP, 1985.

Versini, Laurent, editor. *Laclos et le libertinage: 1782-1982. Actes du colloque du Bicentennaire des* Liaisons dangereuses. PUF, 1983.

The Narrative Structure of *Emma* on the Page and the Screen

Katie Dodrill, MA
Andrew College

Jane Austen famously described her rich, beautiful, smart and elitist creation Emma as "a heroine whom no one but myself will much like" (qtd in Dickson 119). That readers like Emma has been proven with the novel's enduring popularity; the wonder is that Austen herself liked a character whose life was so different from her own. Rebecca Dickson points out that Emma "is the only one of Austen's protagonists who is rich and well-connected" (99). Though Austen had experienced the success of publishing two books by the time she wrote *Emma*, she still lived, along with her mother and sister, in a cottage owned by her brother (99). As a single woman living on her family's charity, she did not have the income or social power that she gave to Emma. Perhaps this is why, in many ways, Austen does not paint Emma in a sympathetic light. Emma is, to put it bluntly, a snob, and her elitist attitudes undergo very little change over the course of the novel. Why, then, does *Emma* remain so popular with readers? In the mid-1990s, the novel was made into a Hollywood period piece, and it was also modernized in the movie *Clueless*. Of course, the book's entertaining plot and Austen's ironic and funny social observation have contributed to its popularity, but there may be a subtler reason: Austen's use of the narrative device free indirect discourse to create a complex main character. Through free indirect discourse, Austen is able to make Emma a more sympathetic character. Since free indirect discourse does not adapt seamlessly onscreen, film and television versions of the novel have changed the plot to make Emma's character softer and more likeable. This interesting narrative structure makes *Emma* a fascinating work of literature.

Emma tells the story of the twenty-one-year-old Emma Woodhouse, who, because she was "handsome, clever, and rich, with

a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence" (Austen 3). While praising Emma, the third person narrator also lets the reader know of her faults: she has "rather too much of her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself" (3). Though Emma is "clever," she makes many errors of judgment throughout the novel, showcasing Austen's talent for gentle satire in Emma's mistakes and in the depictions of the silly Miss Bates, the hypochondriac Mr. Woodhouse, and the vulgar Mrs. Elton. As the novel begins, Emma fills the void in her life left by the marriage of her former governess by making friends with Harriet Smith, "the natural daughter of somebody" (19) ("Austen-speak" for illegitimate) and a boarder at a school in town. Acting as a sort of self-appointed fairy godmother for Harriet, Emma talks her out of accepting a proposal from Robert Martin, a farmer, and into love with Mr. Elton, the vicar. Through a series of comic misunderstandings, Emma believes that Mr. Elton is courting Harriet, but it becomes clear to the reader that Emma is actually his object of desire. Emma later tries to match Harriet with Frank Churchill, not realizing that Frank is actually secretly engaged to Jane Fairfax, nor that Harriet is actually in love with the gentlemanly Mr. Knightley. In a final mix-up, Emma believes Mr. Knightley to be in love with Harriet—and she realizes her own love of Mr. Knightley. Of course, everything comes right in the end, with Emma marrying Mr. Knightley and Harriet marrying Robert Martin. The main characters are happy, and they retain the social status they had at the novel's beginning.

Many critics consider *Emma,* written toward the end of Austen's life, to be her most finely crafted work. Its many characters and plotlines are elegantly held together through the main character and the use of a complex narrative structure. In "Free Indirect Discourse and the Clever Heroine of *Emma*," Louise Flavin defines free indirect discourse as "a mode of speech or thought presentation that allows a narrator to recount what a character has said while retaining the idiomatic qualities of the speaker's words" (51). For example, in Chapter 12, when Harriet Smith is telling Emma about Robert Martin's proposal, Harriet says,

> Who could have thought it? She was so surprised she did not know what to do. Yes, quite a proposal of marriage; and a very good letter, at least she thought so. And he wrote as if he really loved her very much – but she did not know – and so,

> she was come as fast as she could to ask Miss Woodhouse what she should do. Emma was half ashamed of her friend for seeming so pleased and so doubtful. (Austen 43)

Harriet is speaking of herself, so if Austen were using direct speech, Harriet would have said "*I* was so surprised…he wrote as if he really loved *me* very much…," and so on. In another example, when Mr. Elton is proposing to Emma and she (mistakenly believing he loves Harriet) tells him she will deliver a message for him, he says to Emma, "'Miss Smith! – Message to Miss Smith! – What could she possibly mean?'" (116). In direct speech, Mr. Elton would say, "What can *you* possibly mean?" A third example illustrates Emma and Mrs. Weston's soothing of Mr. Woodhouse's anxiety about Emma's going to a party: "With this treatment, Mr. Woodhouse was soon composed enough for talking as usual. 'He should be happy to see Mrs. Goddard. He had a great regard for Mrs. Goddard; and Emma should write a line and invite her'" (190). According to Flavin, "free indirect speech conveys the dual perspective of the speaker and its effect on a listener" (55). In using free indirect speech, Austen is emphasizing Emma's reactions to Harriet, Mr. Elton, and Mr. Woodhouse; the reader recognizes how silly Harriet's indecision sounds to Emma even without Austen's statement that Emma is "half-ashamed of her friend" (43). It is obvious, too, that Emma finds Mr. Elton's surprise ridiculous. Emma's father's free indirect speech illustrates Emma's importance to him and her love of him, even when his worries annoy her. Austen's use of free indirect discourse is an important tool in her funny, ironic character portrayals.

While these examples are of other characters' use of free indirect discourse, Emma herself uses it throughout the novel as well. In fact, Flavin notes that Emma has the most free indirect speech of any Austen protagonist (51). In his introduction to the 2004 edition of *Emma*, Steven Marcus posits that Austen uses free indirect discourse as an "entry into Emma's consciousness" that helps the reader "'[get] to know' with intimacy and in copious and fulminating detail the imagined inner life of a represented character" (xvii). Emma's cleverness and sense of fun are made apparent throughout the novel, but Austen also depicts her as quite conceited. For example, Flavin

points out that Emma uses free indirect speech in the following passage to "mock" Miss Bates (52):

> How would [Mr. Knightley] bear to have Miss Bates belonging to him – To have her haunting the Abbey, and thanking him all day long for his great kindness in marrying Jane? – "So very kind and obliging! – But he always had been such a very kind neighbor!" – And then fly off, through half a sentence, to her mother's old petticoat. Not that it was such a very old petticoat either – for still it would last a great while – and indeed, she must thankfully say that their petticoats were all very strong. (Austen 225-226).

While this speech shows Emma's playfulness and wit, it also shows her willingness to make fun of those intellectually and economically beneath her, something Austen later takes her to task for through Mr. Knightley. While Austen is certainly bringing Emma's rudeness to the reader's attention in this passage, in using free indirect speech rather than direct speech, Austen makes her a more sympathetic character.

Critics such as Daniel Gunn suggest that Austen also employs a less obvious narrative structure that combines narrator commentary with free indirect discourse (Gunn 38). For instance, in describing Emma's dislike of Mrs. Elton, Austen writes: "Emma had not to listen to such paradings again – to any so exclusively addressed to herself – so disgustingly decorated with a 'dear Miss Woodhouse.' The change on Mrs. Elton's side soon afterwards appeared, and she was left in peace" (Austen 255). While most of this passage contains narratorial observation, the phrase "so disgustingly decorated with a 'dear Miss Woodhouse'" provides Emma's own perception of Mrs. Elton's bad-mannered familiarity. According to Rachel Provenzano Oberman, discerning the difference between the narrator and the character is a difficult but necessary task: "Understanding whose voice is speaking is crucial in distinguishing the authorial (narrative) voice from the voice of the character whose consciousness is being narrated; otherwise, it is easy to misconstrue a character's subjective thoughts as a narrator's objective standard, or vice-versa" (2). Oberman examines several passages in which it is difficult to separate the narrative voice from Emma's voice, such as the observation comparing Emma to Harriet: "It was rather late in the day to set about being simple-minded and ignorant" (Austen 127). According to Oberman, "When this passage is read as narrative statement, there is

an ugly harshness […] but, seen as part of Emma's narrated monologue, it forms a comic beginning to Emma's attempt at self-reform" (3). Oberman argues that Emma's use of free indirect discourse "represents the true story of development" as Emma learns to recognize other characters' views and to incorporate them into her own "consciousness" (12). Certainly, free indirect discourse is an important narrative device in the book that makes Emma more relatable and less self-important.

Movie versions of *Emma* have by necessity represented her thoughts less subtly than in the book's free indirect discourse. The 1996 film adaptation of *Emma* directed by Douglas McGrath uses several methods to show viewers Emma's thoughts. One method in the movie is diary writing, in which Emma is shown writing and her words are heard in a voiceover. Her diary writing is used primarily for fairly straightforward explication, and usually about private matters; for example, Emma writes about her suspicions that Frank Churchill loves her. Her facial expressions also reveal her feelings in the movie. When Miss Bates chatters too much or Mr. Woodhouse annoys Emma with his worries, she smiles condescendingly, sometimes to herself and sometimes at another character, inviting that character to join in her mockery of the speaker. A third device the movie uses in place of free indirect discourse is the voiceover. When Emma first meets Robert Martin, the viewer sees her smiling at the farmer, but hears her in voiceover saying, "Really, Harriet, you could do better than this." At another point, Emma is outwardly polite as Miss Bates speaks of her niece, but Emma's voiceover refers to "that ninny Jane Fairfax." A final technique used in the movie instead of free indirect discourse is Emma's employment of direct speech to reveal her feelings. She gossips, for instance, to Mr. Knightley and Mrs. Weston about Mrs. Elton: "Is it possible Mr. Elton met her while doing charity work in a mental infirmary?"

According to Flavin, "Austen is able to control our response to Emma […] through the careful manipulation of modes of speech and thought renderings. […] Consistently, the narrator guides our response to the characters through the mode of speech presentation" (51). Austen's use of free indirect discourse softens Emma's comments and lessens their cattiness. While in the movie the viewer

hears Emma directly think of Jane Fairfax as a ninny, the book reveals her feelings as follows:

> Why she did not like Jane Fairfax might be a difficult question to answer.[…] But "she could never get acquainted with her: she did not know how it was, but there was such coldness and reserve – such apparent indifference whether she pleased or not – and then, her aunt was such an eternal talker! – and she was made such a fuss with by everybody…" These were her reasons; she had no better. (150)

In showing Emma's false graciousness while she inwardly calls Jane Fairfax a ninny, the movie makes her a less likeable character. Austen's use of free indirect speech instead of first person monologues, rude faces, and sarcastic comments tempers Emma's offensiveness, therefore.

Of course, an unsympathetic heroine would probably not make for a popular movie, so McGrath makes Emma more agreeable through changing her personality. According to Dickson, McGrath "presents Emma as having real democratic impulses," even though Austen writes her as "a genuinely unfeeling snob" (101). Dickson posits that McGrath "mutes" Emma's elitist tendencies and shows her recognizing Harriet as an equal – something she never does in the book (101). Indeed, while Emma is happy for Harriet in the end, she reflects, on finding out that Harriet's father is merely a tradesman, not a gentleman, "The stain of illegitimacy, unbleached by nobility or wealth, would have been a stain indeed" (Austen 436). As Harriet becomes busy with wedding preparations, Emma is grateful: "The intimacy between [them] must sink […] and, fortunately, what ought to be, and must be, seemed already beginning, and in the most gradual, natural manner" (436). Emma states early in the book that she could not be friends with a farmer's wife, and her attitude has not changed by the book's end. However, the movie's end implies no such dissolving of her friendship with Harriet. Emma must behave less snobbishly in the movie because of her thoughts being revealed as direct, often rude comments or expressions. In the book, Austen allows Emma to retain her elitist beliefs but still be a likeable character. Free indirect discourse allows her playfulness and wit to shine through while also realistically revealing the snobbishness of a rich, beautiful, smart young woman who is well aware of her social and economic status.

In the Amy Heckerling-directed 1995 film *Clueless*, the plot of *Emma* is transplanted from the rural English village of Highbury to the rich California playground of Beverly Hills. The main character, Cher, is a spoiled, rich teenager who looks after her father, takes on the project of "making over" a less socially savvy friend, and tries—usually unsuccessfully—to "make matches" among the other characters. Similar to the McGrath film, *Clueless* uses several methods to replace free indirect discourse, and the result makes Cher less likeable than Emma, causing the movie's plot to change from the book's. Like the traditional film version of *Emma, Clueless* uses voiceovers, relying on them even more heavily than the McGrath-directed movie. Cher's voiceovers serve mainly for explication and are less spiteful than Emma's in the McGrath film. *Clueless* also uses Cher's facial expressions instead of free indirect speech, though her expressions are generally more indicative of distress than of annoyance with other characters. Again like the McGrath film, *Clueless* uses direct speech to show Cher's thoughts, but Cher's direct speech contains some interesting qualities. *Clueless* is known for using familiar 1990s slang and even for creating certain phrases that became popular because of the movie. For instance, the characters often use the word "like" to express their feelings, as in, "I was like, 'Oh my God.'" While "like" is certainly a popular word among teenagers, *Clueless* uses it not just to reproduce modern phrasing, but to soften harsh or judgmental statements. Using "like" locates a statement in a sort of middle ground between direct and indirect speech. Therefore, when Cher says "I was like, totally buggin'" to express her annoyance, the emotion created is more understated than a more direct expression of her feelings might be. Cher uses the phrase "As if!" for similar effect in the movie, distancing herself from situations or characters she does not like in a more indirect manner than directly stating her feelings. *Clueless*'s use of slang not only softens Cher's rudeness, but also brings humor to it. The viewer often pays more attention to the silliness of phrases such as "As if!" than to their actual meaning.

While the movie does use some clever replacements for free indirect discourse, it must necessarily use direct speech more often than the novel. Cher screams at one character for ruining her shoes

and makes rude comments to another for wearing the same dress as Cher; Emma's more delicately expressed feelings in the novel are much more relatable. In order to make Cher a more likeable character, *Clueless*, like the traditional film version, diminishes the protagonist's elitist tendencies. At the movie's end, Cher has not all but given up her friendship with Tai (Harriet's counterpart) as Emma does in the book; *Clueless* implies that Cher has become humbler and that the two will remain friends. While Austen's Emma does become less manipulative, there is no indication that she has become less conscious of her social class.

Despite her stated goal, Austen did not create a character that no one but herself liked. Emma's wit, vivacity, intelligence, and perhaps even her snobbery combine to form an imperfect but endearing character, and Austen's complex narrative structure enhances Emma's charm. The use of free indirect discourse allows Emma to shine despite her blemishes. While movie versions can reproduce the novel's plot, they struggle to portray Emma's intricate inner thoughts with the subtle clarity of the book. *Emma* stands as a work of great literature due to Austen's flawless depiction of her flawed heroine.

Works Cited

Austen, Jane. *Emma*. Barnes & Noble Classics, 2004.

Clueless. Directed by Amy Heckerling, Paramount Pictures, 1995.

Dickson, Rebecca. *Jane Austen: An Illustrated Treasury*. Metro Books, 2008.

Emma. Directed by Douglas McGrath, Miramax, 1996.

Flavin, Louise. "Free Indirect Discourse and the Clever Heroine of *Emma*." *Persuasions*, vol. 13, 1991, pp. 50-57.

Gunn, Daniel P. "Free Indirect Discourse and Narrative Authority in *Emma*." *Narrative*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2004, pp. 35-54.

Marcus, Steven. Introduction. *Emma*, by Jane Austen, Barnes & Noble Classics, 2004, pp. xiii-xci.

Oberman, Rachel Provenzano. "Fused Voices: Narrated Monologue in Jane Austen's *Emma*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2009, pp. 1-15.

The Algerine Captive: An Early American Argument for Freedom through Literacy

Molly Gross, MFA
Kentucky Wesleyan College

At age eleven, Mary Whitmore Hoople was captured by a group of Delaware, Seneca, and Oneida Indians in Canada in 1778 (Hoople 35). Pieced together from notes and published in 1967, her story was retold by Elizabeth Hoople:

> My father leapt from bed and reached for his musket but a shot through the open door laid him out dead on the floor. At the same instant the first Indian buried his hatchet in [my brother] Phillip's head and a second did the same to my mother grabbing her by her long hair and scalping her. My big sister, Sally, caught the baby as it fell from Mother's arms and rushed outside. I grabbed little Johnny and followed her as did also our brothers Peter and George. By this time all the ruffians were inside the cabin and looting it. Then the place burst into flames and the Indians, about twenty of them, swung us on to their horses and began to ride off. (Hoople 35)

The narrative further details how the baby was killed by an Indian who "dashed its brains out against a tree," and the other children were divided amongst the tribes. Though Mary never saw her sister again and lived with the Delaware Indians for the next seven years, she surprisingly notes that, "My Delaware mother was good to me and kind, and heaven knows I needed kindness" (Hoople 36).

Elizabeth was not the only Hoople descendant to be moved by Mary's story, as my great-grandmother was a Hoople, and this tale has been fragmented over family dinners throughout my life (including Thanksgivings, ironically). It was not until reading Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive*, however, that I realized my family history contained a captivity narrative, and it was possible to be as emotionally affected by this type of fictional account as it was a relative's. This can be attributed to Tyler's craftsmanship in the way of rhetorical story-telling, but before exploring that, it is important to

review where his novel fits into the timeline and context of captivity and slave narratives that came before his and Hoople's.

Nearly two hundred years before Hoople's narrative was published, captivity-related literature was wildly popular, and almost entirely nonfiction. There were in fact "155 Indian captivity narratives published between 1682 and 1800" (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 668); the start-date refers to Mary Rowlandson's *Narrative of the Captivity, Sufferings and Removes of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, which details her capture by Indians in Massachusetts. Scholars consider her the first to have published in the genre, but she popularized it as well, judging by its twelve editions (Sieminski 37) and a woodcut made for the 1773 printing that exaggerated her encounter by replacing the child in her arms with a musket (Sieminski 39-40). Similar literary tributaries broke off and overlapped through the eighteenth century leading up to Tyler's novel in 1797. Travel literature had been popular for decades, but there were additions such as Joseph Addison's *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* in 1705 and the diaries of Captain James Cook. Puritan captivity narratives like John Williams' *The Redeemed Captive, Returning to Zion* in 1707 provoked contemplation of religion. Next, *A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronnisaw, An African Prince, as Related by Himself*, was among the first slave narratives, published in 1770 (and these continued well into the nineteenth century). War-related captivity narratives such as Ethan Allen's *Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity* in 1779 offered insight into being held by the British during the American Revolution. Finally, based on encounters with pirates off the Barbary Coast, Mathew Carey published what Armstrong and Tennenhouse consider the first Barbary captivity narrative in 1794, *A Short Account of Algiers* (which Tyler may have read). Occurring parallel to these publications, of course, were political and social conditions that fueled authors and journal-keepers, suggesting that, if it had not been Rowlandson to publish first, it was going to be someone else, and soon. Not only were land and culture battles going on with Native Americans, but tension was high because of the Boston Massacre in 1770, America declaring independence from Great Britain six years later, and hundreds of thousands more African slaves were counted in

the U.S. census of 1790 than any other country (Crain xxviii). Moreover, Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* was published in 1792 and "available from some 30 percent of the libraries in America" (Davidson 210), suggesting tension in the social and domestic landscape.

In other words, whether it was conscious or not, America was defining freedom. What did freedom mean for the American man? What did it mean for the American woman? For the Native American? For the African slave? In terms of one's religion? What could earn freedom? What could buy freedom? Who could take it? Who could lose it? And how quickly?

By 1797, there was not much that was unique about another captivity narrative that attempted to answer these questions. Even the general content of *The Algerine Captive* was nothing new: the protagonist experiences travel, witnesses slavery, is held captive, is asked to convert his religion, uses literacy to raise his station, and ultimately attains freedom and redemption. What was more unique at the time was that the Barbary Coast and Algerines were hardly written about or understood, as admitted in the preface (Tyler 7). Furthermore, and perhaps most compelling is that Royall Tyler was an impostor in the genre. He was a lawyer and playwright--the crowd-pleasing kind--with a "relish for urban pleasures" (Crain xx). He had never been any kind of captive that would qualify him to write one of the fact-based narratives popular in his day. His narrative is fiction and his protagonist made-up. That is not to say Tyler was not well-read in this genre--he likely was, given his education, adherence to the genre's model, and his protagonist being privileged through literacy--but it implies Tyler had a message to send that only artfully-crafted story-telling could channel through this particular type of narrative. Un-packing this type of story-telling means examining not only the message, but the literary tools that crafted it and the readers that heard it. In terms of its message, Tyler used *The Algerine Captive* as a means to criticize a government insensitive to slavery and advocate for the extent to which literacy enables freedom. Through the crafting of pathos in his narrative, this message reaches his intended audience with as much or more of an emotional impact than other captivity narratives based on fact.

Tyler's novel is divided into two volumes, and before Volume II reveals his disapproval of slavery and the government's

exploitation of it, he uses Volume I to offer subtle criticism of these conditions to suggest America's ignorance of the slavery problem. The first note of satire is immediate, in Underhill's dedication to David Humphreys, who was an actual "trusted diplomat" to George Washington and had asked citizens in 1793 to aid American slaves in Algiers (Tyler 228). Why he was not able to arrange for their freedom is unclear, but two other diplomats managed it three years later (228). Perhaps his failure provoked Tyler's praise-coated sarcasm in the dedication where he asks if he may present "a detail of those miseries of slavery, from which [Humphreys'] public energies have principally conduced to liberate hundreds of our fellow citizens" (Tyler 3). In this way, Tyler is asking his reader to use a critical eye, establishing the narrative as a fictional account told by a character who will mock real figures of government. In this case, they are figures who are not sympathetic enough to American slaves, which, as we will explore later, aids in evoking sympathy for the "miseries" experienced by them.

Another example of Tyler's disapproval of America's attitudes towards slavery is seen in Underhill's encounter with Thomas Paine. The philosophical author is judged immediately by Underhill as having a "tendency […] to overturn ancient opinions of government and religion" (87). This hardly compares with how harshly his appearance is judged, his attire being "a snuff coloured coat, olive velvet vest, drab breeches, coarse hose," worn by "a spare man, rather under size; subject to the extreme of low, and highly exhilarated spirits" (88). Underhill seems to find him not only unattractive but argumentative and over-sensitive as well, as regarding strong personalities or alcohol or both. Underhill recounts Paine's views on governance, hilariously nicknaming him "*Un*common Sense" in the process (a nod to a well-read audience): "the minority, in all deliberative bodies, ought, in all cases, to govern the majority" (89). Paine is not necessarily making a distinction based on race, however, which these terms denote presently, but one on education, explaining "the proportion of men of sense, to the ignorant among mankind, is at least twenty, thirty, or even forty- nine, to an hundred. The majority of mankind are consequently most prone to errour; and, if we would achieve right, the minority ought, in all cases, to govern" (89). He

then elaborates on how much nicer America would be if it had simply remained under Great Britain's rule. His own logic is used against him by a Mr. Wolcott, a real satirical author, who points out that the majority of the room agrees with Paine, making himself the *minority* that should govern. Paine's carefully-narrated unlikable qualities combined with Wolcott's rhetorical victory sends two messages: one, that Underhill sees no common sense in the elite feeling entitled to dominate or enslave the masses; and two, that Royall Tyler agrees with this assessment.

In contrast to this criticism, Tyler also uses Underhill to praise certain aspects of America. This allows him to gain more of his reader's trust, as Underhill cannot be painted as a total complainer: he must rationally discern those who deserve respect from those who do not. One instance of this is seen in chapter XXIII when Underhill, now a surgeon, travels to Philadelphia to see Benjamin Franklin. Tyler then gains the opportunity to describe the background of "this truly great man," who

> […] by the sole exertion of native genius, and indefatigable industry, had raised himself to the pinnacle of politics and letters. A man, who, from an humble printer's boy, had elevated himself to be the desirable companion of the great ones of the earth […] and, from hawking vile ballads, to the contracting and signing treaties, which gave peace and independence to three millions of his fellow citizens. (75)

Underhill is clearly impressed by Franklin's ability to improve his station through hard work and literacy, but he is also sending the message that success and the power to make change are not just to be awarded through inherited privilege, but can be earned through effort. In fact, the Paine and Franklin scenes are key in how the first volume of the novel lays the foundation that Tyler, through Underhill, believes America is being wrongly operated by a handful of elites who do not have the interests of human rights at heart so long as humans are being treated as a commodity.

Underhill is not painted as a budding Wolcott or Franklin that Tyler wants his audience to admire in the same way, however. In Chapter XXV, his medical practice is suffering and he considers resuming teaching. His reluctance is evident in saying, "my own prior experience in school keeping, would have determined me rather to have preferred laboring, with the slaves on their plantations, than

sustaining the slavery and contempt of a school" (83). Drawing such a comparison makes him appear unconcerned with the true weight of what slaves endured, though the description may not have sounded unusual to an audience of educated New Englanders or Southerners of his time. It comes at a critical point in the volume, however, as Underhill finds a job as the doctor on a slave ship a few chapters later and has a rude awakening.

Tyler, through Underhill, narrates the end of Volume I with gut-wrenching pathos. Underhill describes over a hundred slaves connected in groups with rings and poles, "while their conductors incessantly applied the scourge to those, who loitered, or sought to strangle themselves, by lifting their feet from the ground in despair" (95). Words like "incessantly" and "despair" highlight Tyler's attitude about the degree of suffering being enough to elicit suicide even as the slaves are being boarded. The implied narrator goes on to describe how the men refused to eat in spite of being beaten, and "would have died under the operation, if the ingenious cruelty of the clerk, Randolph, had not suggested the plan of whipping the women and children in sight of the men" (98), so that "in a few hours they all eat their provisions, *mingled with their tears*" (99). What goes unsaid but is perhaps most horrifying is that the character Randolph is ultimately legally employed, through however long a chain of command, by the American government. In other words, Tyler demonstrates to his audience that the mistreatment of slaves is not only tolerated but an expected feature of a government employee in this role. The reminder of his novel being fiction does not weaken the pathos in his description here; on the contrary, it affords Tyler the ability to paint a scene common to other captivity narratives, as seen in Hoople, with a more poetically morbid pallet to argue for change.

Tyler's view on slavery as embedded in Underhill's narrative is once again observed later, in Volume II, after Underhill himself has been enslaved. He is forced to work in a quarry, contemplates escape, is terrorized by seeing other slaves impaled, and endures a number of other hardships that never quite equal what he first observed on the ship. This could involve Tyler's message on literacy, but before exploring this, it is first important to show how Underhill's experience allows Tyler to indicate America's insensitivity to slavery

that echoes the Dedication at the start of the narrative. As Underhill creates connections and opportunities with his captors by utilizing his medical knowledge, he also meets a Jew who helps him send letters to America to plead for his freedom (202). Unfortunately, his letters "never found the way to [his] friends" (202). The foiled plan is reminiscent of how the American slaves cannot be saved for several years in spite of Humphreys' knowledge of their plight, and Underhill is struggling to even send the first letter. Though Underhill is eventually returned safely, on a logical and political level, Tyler suggests that there are significant flaws in the system of recovering slaves. On an emotional level of the narrative, in a literary market where most captive-protagonists are being held in their own country, he may be placing his audience in the shoes of captives kept overseas, like Africans were in America at the time. Either way, Volume II evokes empathy and makes the reader question the effectiveness of a representative government.

Alongside Tyler's messages about America's insensitivity to slavery, Underhill's narrative weaves a message that is equally important and even more obvious: the power of literacy. Of course, it is not unusual in captivity or slave narratives for the author to demonstrate the benefits reaped by a captive or slave who learns to read and write. It is somewhat different, however, that because Tyler's novel blends travelogue with captivity narrative to result in, again, one of the first Barbary captivity narratives featuring an American, Underhill is a protagonist who does not work to acquire education or a local language. Instead, he engages those of higher status with the utility of his existing skills to earn his freedom.

Our own awareness of the importance of Underhill's literacy is triggered early in the novel. As a young man, his parents squabbled over whether he would attend college or not (25). During a phase when he studied with the minister, he was "laboring incessantly at Greek and Latin" and "committed to memory about four hundred of the most sonorous lines in Homer," though evidently this was very rote instruction. Other clergymen, Underhill notes, were "ever pleased to express astonishing admiration at [his] literary acquirements" (26) to the point that they suggested he become a general or congressman (26). In spite of this, Underhill endures a period following where his parents opt out of the college plan and he begins farming with his father. His father, after all, believes that "confining a lad of lively

genius to the study of [languages], for five or six of the most precious years of his youth, is like the ingenious cruelty of those tyrants, I have heard of, who chained the living and the dead together" (28). In a humorous and telling turn of events, Underhill rejects his father's view and after working on the farm, he confesses he "gave Greek names to all [their] farming tools, and cheered the cattle with hexameter verse" (29), and made other such acts of grasping at languages. Tyler seems to be making the point early on that his protagonist not only has a love for literacy and language, but he sees literacy as a means to becoming something in life, whereas he does not find the same satisfaction in farming. Tyler may also be implying that Southern farmers have little understanding or respect for the importance of literacy.

Tyler believes that anyone in society can gain success through literacy, even women and those who suffer from disabilities. For instance, Underhill describes the blind boy being read to, writing, "His brothers and sisters enriched his mind, by reading to him, in succession, two hours every day, from the best authors" (37). They likely saw this as a benefit to his mind and his future, in spite of his disability, reminding the audience that, like Franklin, success is achievable for anyone through literacy. Tyler's support of women's literacy is evident when Underhill lends a woman many books, which she reads "with astonishing rapidity" (53). His surprise might resonate with a modern audience as sexist, but in 1797, there may have been readers who were equally surprised at this character's eagerness, and who were therefore spurred to read as well.

Tyler, through his careful narration in Volume I, classifies literacy as a tool that dictates honor and class. In regard to the duel to which Underhill is challenged when accused of flirting with an engaged woman, he writes to Mr. Jasper T: "It seems to me, by your account of things, that the principal difference between a man of honor, and a vulgar murderer, is that the latter will kill you in a rage, while the former will write you complaisant letters, and smile in your face, and bow gracefully, while he cuts your throat" (49). In this case, it is literacy that divides the murderer from the gentleman.

Near the conclusion of Volume I, Tyler's message about literacy becomes more about helping Underhill and others survive

rather than the pettiness of finding a job or achieving fame like it was in the first half of the novel. The first example of this is seen in Chapter XXXI, when Underhill's medical knowledge earns him the respect of both the captain and the slaves onboard the ship. Tyler's narration reads that "death raged dreadfully among the slaves" (100), and "[t]he captain was […] alarmed for the success of the voyage […] upon [Underhill's] urging the necessity of landing the slaves, he ordered the ship about, and [they] anchored" (100). Not only is he aware that reaching land may improve the health of the passengers, but he feels confident in sharing his view, and the captain likewise listens to him. Underhill goes on to say that "under [his] direction, they recovered surprisingly" (100), and even "looked on [him] as the source of this sudden transition from the filth and rigor of the ship, to the cleanliness and kindness of the shore" (100). It is not his medical literacy or courage alone that are to credit for this improved situation, but also his compassion for his comrades. Compassion alone, however, would have had no impact on the captain or the passengers' health. His knowledge and experience through the reading and practicing of medicine allowed his compassion to be exercised, with literacy as his vehicle.

When Underhill is captured and becomes a slave himself, literacy becomes his only weapon of defense and his most treasured skill, even though it is not immediately useful to him. When he and the slaves are sold in Chapter 2 of Volume II, for instance, there is a language barrier between the slaves and masters, and this is what seems to make it easier to discern one from another, and therefore consider slaves beasts and slave handlers/owners civilized. Tyler, through Underhill, compares the situation to the "swop of a horse" (116), for example, helping his audience to picture how a horse is unable to explain to his handler that he would please rather return to his herd or would very much like to graze in the field. Underhill also observes, "My fellow slaves are grossely illiterate" (120), reflecting a social hierarchy within slave culture, one that he will eventually use in his favor.

For instance, once meeting with the Mullah, Underhill's luck begins to change. Underhill is bathed and clothed before meeting the man, and they then have a lengthy discussion, bringing up "illiterate fishermen" and an "illiterate camel driver" (132), which is Tyler drawing more attention to how the lines are being drawn in this

hierarchy of literacy. The importance of literacy is also mentioned more subtly when they have a debate written in an almost script-like format. Underhill tells the Mullah that his religion was “promulgated by the swords," but then the Mullah brings up the violence depicted in the Bible. Both men studied texts from which their respective religions derive their principles and many similarities, yet both men criticize the other’s religion; still, their debate is rooted in texts, as they are each using two sides of the same sword in a civilized duel. The Mullah seems impressed, drawn to Underhill’s knowledge as well as communication skills, and urges him to convert to Islam, which again is an expected feature of this type of narrative. Underhill refuses. Because the Mullah offered freedom in exchange for Underhill’s conversion, it could be inferred Underhill saw an abandonment of his beliefs as a more unbearable torture than his captivity, and the very reading and writing skills the Mullah praised as, ironically, the more effective key to opening his shackles. Tyler suggests here that literacy contributes to the preservation of our identity and can even propel us through obstacles and toward higher status, however rugged a path may be.

With Tyler’s messages on slavery and literacy addressed, we should now assess the intentions behind Royall Tyler’s choice to write this novel in the form of a fictional travel/captivity/slave narrative, and how it is rhetorically crafted to be logical, trustworthy, and emotionally effective. First, Tyler must have considered the Indian captivity narratives his audience was already reading (and it probably did not escape his attention that they were strong sellers commercially). Even if some of their tales were partially fictionalized or embellished, most Americans were aware of or had even experienced encounters with Native Americans, so reading about tribes and towns they knew around them likely assisted in the audience perceiving the events in the novel realistically—i.e., the context was familiar to them. Monika Fludernik points out, for instance, that “Instead of imitating reality, realistic novels refer to aspects of reality which are already familiar to readers” (55). Other scholars of narratology agree, asserting that “the use of a narrative should be coherent internally and fit the context in which it occurs, meaning that it should strive to make sense in connection with the

reality of the intended audience" (Iverson). Tyler strives for a realistic context by writing and setting the first volume of the novel in America and even including real people as characters, such as Thomas Paine and Benjamin Franklin. It is possible he hoped the reader would be sold on the realistic environment before moving the setting to a more unfamiliar landscape and culture overseas in the second volume.

His intention to hold still the veil that envelops the reader's sense of realism in the narrative is illustrated in Tyler's forty-two pages in the middle of Volume II that describes Algiers' history, government, economy, military, social customs, and religion. The narrative shifts to third person in this section, a rhetorical tactic to objectively convey knowledge about Algiers to the audience. And why not? The tactic serves a dual purpose: its logos solidifies the illusion of the narrative being nonfiction, and it also builds on the trust between narrator and audience due to the information being detailed enough to seemingly come from an authority on Algiers. Finally, the section intensifies the novel's pathos, because if we have more trust in the country's history, we put more faith in the events that evoke emotion as well.

Naturally, Tyler might have feared some of his readers might be reminded that narrative is not history, taking away from the realism of much of Volume II. Monika Fludernik explains how most readers juxtapose history and narrative, stating, "[A]cademic history is not narrative but argumentative since it puts together arguments using existing sources and does not depict human experience" (59). We cannot, therefore, label Tyler's human-depicting narrative as either academic history or as argumentative. Furthermore, she writes, "Narrative is fictional per se, not because it is 'made up' or deals with fantastic occurrences, but because it is based on the representation of psychological states and mental perceptions" (Fludernik 60). The term "narrative" can be assigned to fiction or non-fiction, therefore, but there is a blurring of this line in *The Algerine Captive.* If the author's name matched the protagonist's name on the title page, would anyone--besides those who knew Tyler personally--have known it was fiction?

Cathy Davidson has a similar but more subtle line drawn than Fludernik with regard to history vs. narrative. In *Revolution and the Word,* she discusses how

> […][i]f we argue that history provides the context, then who or what, we must also ask, provides the history. Organizing a multiplicity of disparate dates into a coherent structure, any history is itself necessarily a narrative. Historians tell their stories as much as do novelists, and through much the same means--by what they bring in and what they leave out, by how they structure their material and to what end. (70)

Davidson admits, however, "we [cannot] really ever think of history or context as something that contains fiction" (70). In other words, to her the line is fuzzy because all history is narrative, but not all narrative is history. Davidson's view makes sense, and it is exemplified through Underhill's historical narrative in spite of the shift of point of view in his historical section about Algiers. It seems Tyler wanted this line blurred as well, or else he might not have included both real and fictional elements in one narrative. This does not mean that Tyler was attempting to fool his audience into thinking Doctor Updike Underhill's story is fact. There is something about the title character's very name, let alone its contrast to the author's, that suggests folly. What should be noted, however, is that Tyler wanted his audience to be aware of delving into fiction, then feel consumed by the world of the novel with one eye open, still being able to draw comparisons and think critically about the reality of their own country.

As important as it is to consider what Tyler did to appeal to his reader's sense of logic, his attempt at realism may have also stemmed from his efforts to build a trusting relationship with his audience through Underhill's narrative. James Phelan acknowledges this point in "Rhetoric, Ethics, and Narrative Communication":

> The ethical component of literary communication is double-layered: There is an ethics of the telling stemming from how the author relates to her audience through the deployment of the various means at her disposal, and there is an ethics of the told, stemming from the ethical dimensions of what is represented through those means. (56)

In relation to *The Algerine Captive,* therefore, Tyler chose a method of story-telling that educated American readers were accustomed to believing was non-fiction. Because he did not have the "means" to tell

his own true story about being a captive in Algiers, he chose to make it up, and this complicates those layers of ethics. Perhaps this is why Tyler is so straightforward from the dedication at the start of the novel that the narrative is fictionalized, and this earns some of the reader's trust in a new form of literary ethos. The narrative the reader knows is fiction comes to represent a true story, replicating the realism of other narratives in its class, so the audience simply becomes dually aware of both the fantasy and the potential reality and become absorbed in it.

Royall Tyler is also skilled in his use of metanarrative as a tool for developing ethos in his narrative. Though he does not have the experience of a captive on the Barbary Coast as Updike Underhill unfortunately does, he establishes side-conversations with the audience that temporarily transport readers out of the narrative's past and into an alternative present. This helps to establish a trusting relationship, much like an aside from a plotting Shakespearean character. Examples include recapping phrases like "What added to the misfortune, mentioned in the last chapter" (27), as well as sympathizing phrases such as, "I think it almost as bad to oblige my readers to purchase the imprecations of others" (81), and humble expressions like, "This last article, I confess" (60). These asides function as ethos because they develop Underhill's out-of-narrative-awareness of how he is telling the story and that positions the reader as an insider, building trust with his audience. Most importantly, the ethos compensates for the credibility he lacks in writing a fictional narrative about something the reader knows Royall Tyler has not experienced, making the reader trust he at least knows a lot about it.

Appealing to the readers' emotions might be the author's most obvious and developed tactic used in the narrative, as evidenced by the samples quoted above when Underhill writes of the slaves being brought on the ship. To provide another view of Tyler's use of pathos, critics Armstrong and Tennenhouse offer insight on the narrow genre of Barbary narratives, helping readers learn to "assume that people, being human, cannot be objects of exchange: [authors] make this point by putting their citizen protagonists in the position of slaves so that citizens may experience the indignity of those born or sold into slavery" (673). The careful diction Tyler uses to describe how degraded the slaves felt was a technique in his rhetorical tool box that in this case aims to extract such empathy: despair, dumb sorrow, sobbing, shrieks, etc. (95). A bond is also cultivated between author

and audience when the narrator uses emotional detail, such as "I cannot reflect on this transaction yet without shuddering" (96). This forced empathy can very well make a reader devastated or horrified. Therefore, if Tyler foresaw this effect or sought it, he may have hoped readers being brought to such emotional states might seek out change in the system. To what degree he does not specify, other than ending his novel with the proclamation: "BY UNITING WE STAND, BY DIVIDING WE FALL" (226). Even without the capitalization, this closing would leave readers feeling motivated, but being shouted at, essentially, also makes us alert and riled. In other words, Tyler's desire to awaken his readers--to make us *feel*--may have been as far as his intentions reached.

One of the last questions remaining is, did these appeals work on Tyler's intended audience? According to Caleb Crain in the Introduction to the 2002 edition of the novel, there was a letter to the editor printed in 1798 in the *Farmer's Weekly Museum*, which stated, "in his novel Tyler was too quick to blame Southerners for and exonerate New Englanders from complicity in the slave trade" (xxviii). This could be a defense of Southerners who may not want to be remembered in history nor literature for turning their heads in the face of slavery. In 1803, from Crain's notes, *The Monthly Review* printed the opinion that "the author too feebly defends that religion which he professes to revere" (xxviii), referring to Underhill's conversations with the Mullah, no doubt. Collectively, these critiques seem like deflections from advocating slavery and eagerness to condemn Islam, making this novel eerily pertinent to the political and social climate of 21st-first century America. Most interestingly, the response of Royall Tyler himself to the latter comment has been preserved, and may shed light on his intentions:

> The part objected to was written with a view to do away with the vulgar prejudices of the good Sale, the translator of the Koran, he was even jeopardizing the truths of Christianity; for the Author considered then, and now considers, that, after exhibiting Islamism in its best light, the Majometan imposture will be obvious to those who compare the language, the dogma, the fables, the monstrous absurdities of the Koran,

> with the sublime doctrines, morals and language of the Gospel Dispensation. (qtd. in Crain xxxi-xxxii)

Not much analysis exists about what Tyler meant by the entirety of his response. It would be difficult to dispute, however, that he certainly meant for Underhill's captivity with Muslims in Algiers to affirm through satire the goodness in Islam in order to provide an accurate representation for Americans and break down negative stereotypes.

Regardless, *The Algerine Captive,* in more ways than one, is a lesson in tolerance for "the other," who in this case represents any human held in captivity or forced into labor. The nature of a fictional narrative affords Tyler more room to employ rhetoric that evokes empathy for these individuals, particularly when they are ripped from their native land and taken overseas—a viewpoint American readers had hardly been exposed to in the already-popular Indian captivity narratives. Over two volumes, Tyler also uses satire and detailed descriptions of the Algerine culture to make his unsuspecting audience question the function, responsibilities, and humanitarianism of their own American government, which may not be representing the people as well as it assumes it is. Furthermore, Tyler wants us to know that unlike in other antebellum slave narratives and previous Indian captivity narratives, Christianity does not save the protagonist from a life of slavery and redeem his character, and neither does his government. However, literacy does. The engine of literacy in the form of this novel helps Tyler affirm the young country's "necessity of uniting [its] federal strength to enforce a due respect among other nations" to seek "union among ourselves" (Tyler 226). In other words, literacy does not merely afford freedoms, it breeds tolerance. Whether Tyler's audience was able to be receptive to that notion may not be as evident in the popularity of the novel at the time as it is in the dozens of Barbary captivity narratives that followed in its wake. But this and even a lesser known and later published captivity narrative about the Hoople family have relevant themes in today's society. Perhaps until we one day unite in those ever-questioned definitions of human freedom, or freedom itself stops changing its parameters, novels like these will continue to surface, be studied, and encourage conversations about the answers.

Works Cited

Armstrong, Nancy, and Leonard Tennenhouse. "The Problem of Population and the Form of the American Novel." *American Literary History*, vol. 20, no. 4, Winter 2008, pp. 667-685, https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/39696519/Armstrong--The_Problem_of_Population_copy_2.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1521990162&Signature=%2BD6cKGaKGl9ASJPVIVnWpYfpcyM%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DThe_Problem_of_Population_and_the_Form_o.pdf.

Crain, Caleb. Introduction. *The Algerine Captive,* by Royall Tyler, The Modern Library, 2002, pp. xvii – xxxiii.

Davidson, Cathy N. "Literacy, Education, and the Reader." *Revolution and the Word,* Oxford UP, 1986, pp. 55-83.

Davidson, Cathy N. and Arnold E. Davidson. "Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive:* A Study in Contrasts." *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, vol. 7, no. 3, 1976, pp. 53-67, https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/ariel/article/view/32168/26229.pdf.

Fludernik, Monika. *An Introduction to Narratology*. Translated by Patricia Häusler-Greenfield and Monika Fludernik, Routledge, 2009. Tianjin University, http://glearning.tju.edu.cn/pluginfile.php/145673/mod_resource/content/1/%E5%8F%99%E4%BA%8B%E4%BB%8B%E7%BB%8D.pdf.

Hoople, Elizabeth. *The Hooples of Hoople Creek.* Ryerson Press, 1967.

Iverson, Stefan. "Narratives in Rhetorical Discourse." *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, 2014, http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/narratives-rhetorical-discourse.

Phelan, James. "Rhetoric, Ethics, and Narrative Communication: Or, from Story and Discourse to Authors, Resources, and Audiences." *Soundings,* vol. 94, no. 1-2, Spring/Summer 2011, pp. 55-75,

https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/5770325/phelan.rhetoric_ethics_narrative_communication.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1521991930&Signature=EwFyjXgY9Q3x7bx6zWPiiqz20gw%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DRHETORIC_ETHICS _AND_NARRATIVE_COMMUNICA.pdf.

Sieminski, Greg. “The Puritan Captivity Narrative and the Politics of the American Revolution.” *American Quarterly,* vol. 42, no. 1, March 1990, pp. 35-56, http://www.jstor.org.kwc.idm.oclc.org/stable/pdf/2713224.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ae23b9db72b2827974893ae6d96b7a5db

Tyler, Royall. *The Algerine Captive.* The Modern Library, 2002.

A Century of Intellectual Agency: Kant, Jacotot, and Nietzsche

Marcus Johnson, Ph.D
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

Introduction

Despite the wax and wane of educational fads, the goals of teaching students to think for themselves and to think critically have garnered sustained, perennial interest, at least since the Enlightenment. As one might expect, the goals have been understood and emphasized differently over the last three-plus centuries. Much contemporary scholarship that employs the word *critical*, for example, emphasizes teaching students to recognize various forms of injustice, both open and hidden. This view has been strongly influenced by the Frankfurt School of critical theory. The conceptualization of critical thinking tracked by this essay follows a different genealogical path, however, linked to teaching that aimed to cultivate the intellectual agency of people and persons. The essay examines how Immanuel Kant, Joseph Jacotot, and Friedrich Nietzsche understood education as cultivation and how each connected this goal to the related goals of progress and equality for the individual and society.

Methodologically, Nietzschean genealogical analyses of this sort have a close, historical connection to classical philology, and today reside along the border of what is considered philological analysis. For a discussion of Nietzschean genealogical analysis and its connection to classical philology, see Johnson (2017a).

Overview

Immanuel Kant was a progressive-thinking philosopher who, just prior to the French Revolution, suggested that rational agency would develop naturally within societies with appropriate forms of liberty. That is, provided that personal agency is not artificially obstructed, individual liberty will flourish, as will the personal

responsibility that must obtain alongside it. Kant also maintained that agency, however, has often been obstructed by self-interested persons and groups who create conditions that shackle people to a state of intellectual dependency. Such conditions must be overturned, he reasoned, because it is almost impossible for people conditioned to defer thinking and responsibility to others (authorities) to suddenly develop the ability to think for themselves. In Kant's view, gaining intellectual agency is usually not the result of a decision that one makes; rather, it is a capacity that is developed. Societies, therefore, that wish to cultivate (or sustain) intellectual agency, in Kantian fashion, will need institutions that cultivate this capacity.

A second perspective on cultivating intellectual agency can be found in the work of Joseph Jacotot, who wrote on the other side (in the aftermath) of the French Revolution. Jacotot's approach confirmed Kant's assertion that the primary goal of education should be to teach students to think for themselves. He was, however, more skeptical about the possibility of institutionalized emancipation for the masses. Jacotot rescinded his faith in the ability of state-sponsored institutions to cultivate intellectual agency, and he transferred it instead to the individual educator guided by personal principles.

A third understanding of agency and its connection to education can be found in the writing of Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche wrote roughly a century after Kant, and in places, Nietzsche's perspective utterly contrasts with that of both Kant and Jacotot. Despite Nietzsche's rejection of common conceptions of equality and progress, and his post-Darwinian naturalistic ethic, he nonetheless esteemed his own form of intellectual integrity and agency. His somewhat skeptical perspective helps to complicate a historical understanding of the goal of cultivating intellectual agency.

Immanuel Kant

In 1783, the Treaty of Paris ended the American Revolution. Six years later, in 1789, the French Revolution began. Between and beyond these historical events, in Konigsberg, Prussia, in 1784, Immanuel Kant wrote a short essay on the promise of enlightenment, or the effect that freedom was beginning to have on people's intellectual agency. Kant began with a claim that perhaps seems out of place to many academics today--namely, that intellectual bondage is primarily self-imposed. He moderated this somewhat contentious

assertion in two ways: first by suggesting that even though our state of intellectual bondage or freedom is ultimately the responsibility of the person, it is exceedingly difficult and rare for individuals to emancipate themselves from such bondage once they have been socialized into it; and secondly, by supposing that although we all have the cognitive ability to think for ourselves, what most lack is the resolve to do so. From this tension between individual and social responsibility for agency was developed a vision and a mantra of intellectual agency that has inspired thinkers for two and one quarter centuries: *sapere aude*, or have the courage to think for yourself.

Kant began his essay (more or less) with the following:

> Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude! Have the courage to use your own reason* – that is the motto of enlightenment.
>
> Laziness and cowardice are the reasons why so great a portion of mankind, after nature has long since discharged them from external direction, nevertheless remains under lifelong tutelage, and why it is so easy for others to set themselves up as their guardians. It is so easy not to *think*. If I have a book which understands for me, a pastor who has a conscience for me, a physician who decides my diet, and so forth, I need not trouble myself. I need not think, *if I can only pay* – there are others who will happily undertake the irksome work for me.
>
> The far greater part of mankind believes that the path to competence is very dangerous and troublesome. This belief is supported and maintained by those guardians who have *so kindly* assumed superintendence over the masses. After the guardians have first made their domestic cattle dumb and have made sure that these placid creatures will not dare take a single step without the harness of the cart to which they are tethered, the guardians then show them the danger which threatens if they try to go alone. Actually, however, this

> danger is not so great, and indeed by falling a few times, they would finally learn to walk alone. But priests, pedagogues, and politicians flaunt past failures to make people timid and to frighten them away from all further attempts to think for themselves. (29-30)

Kant maintained that his time was not an "enlightened age," but it was an "age of enlightenment" (30). Prussians, and others, were finding the will and courage to unshackle themselves from their self-imposed intellectual dependency. A wave of courage and resolve was rising from the sea of ignorance. Because of its difficultly and relative uniqueness, this Northern European development, even in its then-nascent state, was believed by Kant to hold great promise for humanity.

Because people are socialized into norms of thinking and acting, self-emancipation is difficult in autocratic and/or conservative societies. For this reason, Kant maintained that large-scale, public emancipation was the surer approach. So strong was his optimism in mass intellectual emancipation that he declared, "indeed, if only freedom is granted, enlightenment is almost sure to follow" (30). Although self-emancipation is exceedingly unlikely, when done properly, as part of a social program, the enlightenment of the masses naturally develops, according to Kant. It is this faith in social and moral progress that earns him the label, *progressive.*

There are always those who actively and passively endeavor to maintain the unenlightened status quo. The masses' preexisting lack of intellectual agency, combined with the ideological and material influence of the powerful and self-interested, often allows the powerful to incite the masses to oppose the very ideas and practices that would secure liberty and agency. Despite these obstacles, Kant had confidence that people would surely "work themselves gradually out of barbarity if only intentional artifices are not made to hold them in it" (36). It would be natural to ask Kant about the foundation and justification for his conviction concerning the moral and social advance of humanity. The belief is perhaps best explained historically through its connection to changing views on evolution (see Johnson, 2017b). Kant's pre-Darwinian understanding supposed the world evolved purposefully. This view was perhaps most fully developed a couple decades later by Hegel in his *Phenomenology of the Spirit* (1807).

The implications of Kant's views of emancipation and progress on education are perhaps best explained in reference to following passage near the close of the 1789 essay:

> But only one who is himself enlightened, is not afraid of shadows, and has a numerous and well-disciplined army to assure public peace, can say: "Argue as much as you will, and about what you will, only obey!" A republic could not dare say such a thing. Here is shown a strange and unexpected trend in human affairs in which almost everything, looked at in the large, is paradoxical. A greater degree of civil freedom appears advantageous to the freedom of mind of the people, and yet it places inescapable limitations upon it. A lower degree of civil freedom, on the contrary, provides the mind with room for each man to extend himself to his full capacity. As nature has uncovered from under this hard shell the seed for which she most tenderly cares – the propensity and vocation to free thinking – this gradually works back upon the character of the people, who thereby gradually become capable of managing freedom; finally, it affects the principles of government, which finds it to its advantage to treat men, who are now more than machines, in accordance with their dignity. (36-37)

It is perhaps helpful to note that this essay of Kant's was written as something of an open letter to the new Prussian monarch, Frederick William II. To engage the monarch, Kant channeled the recently-deceased, enlightened monarch Fredrick the Great by confirming the latter's view that a (republican) society could be *too* free – but that the Prussian state had attained the proper balance of freedom and order. Perspectives on the nature of freedom differ across time and place. Then-current examples of republics on the continent were the Dutch Republic and Venice. The Dutch Republic was wracked with revolts in the decade prior to 1789, and the Prussians sided with the monarchy, which included Willimena, who was of Prussian descent. Venice, due to ongoing wars with the Turks, and for other reasons, was in decline, and it was viewed in contrast with the relative rise of the Northern European states. It appears that for many Prussians, Frederick's enlightened leadership was the model of state

organization and function that could successfully navigate between the dangers of anarchy and despotism. (And recall that this was even prior to the French Revolution.) Frederick's stern but accommodatingly liberal approach to government seemed to hold the greatest promise for real social progress.

Kant and others from his period viewed Frederick, then, as an exemplary leader whose example it might be wise to follow. From Frederick's qualities, a vision of effective leadership that identifies the characteristics of and qualifications for educators likely to cultivate intellectual agency can be derived:

1. The knowledge and ability to provide an effective balance of structure and freedom for the students;
2. Management skills and self-efficacy that afford the confidence in teachers to say, "contest premises, claims, and conclusions – including those officially sanctioned and my own – as much as you wish, but conduct yourself with discipline"; and
3. The guidance in their own thoughts by reason and not by superstition or unexamined prejudices.

But, before moving on, and to provide a set of criteria against which Jacotot and Nietzsche can be read, these characteristics will be developed a bit more fully.

Perhaps most experienced teachers understand that insufficient structure can quickly doom even the most thoughtful attempt to develop critical thinking, creative thinking, and agency. Many self-directed learning activities intended to facilitate independent learning and critical thinking fail because students equate freedom with hanging out and talking, and they equate strict structure with academic activity. In the absence of the accustomed structure, many students are not inclined by habit to proceed without explicit guidance through a task. To successfully cultivate intellectual agency through systematic, rational thinking, teachers generally must provide an appropriate degree of structure and will model the disciplined and systematic structure of their own thinking.

Like leaders of state, leaders of classrooms do not work in a vacuum. Kant praised Frederick for allowing free thinking and open debate within the confines of a functioning civil system. Given its small size and geographic location, the success and even existence of Prussia depended on it being well-administered and efficiently run.

The liberty allowed by Frederick was limited by the order needed to ensure the Prussian state was not overrun by less liberal states. Fredericks's freedom of thought was practical. Effective teachers find a similar balance between freedom and social realities. Sometimes teachers are in situations that allow them to offer students nearly complete freedom to work at their own pace and on topics of their choice. These teachers encourage students to have the courage to think for themselves. Although this approach is perhaps ideal, present realities do not generally support this approach. Teachers commonly must ensure *all students succeed* to reach proficiency on a prescribed curriculum. When the goal is to have students provide correct answers to standardized questions, it is unreasonable and inefficient to spend time and effort developing critical thinking skills. Direct instruction, drill, repeated review, and assessment are more effective. Different ends call for different means. Usually, perhaps, the goal for teachers lies somewhere between these two. When that is the case, Frederick offers a good model: liberty tempered by practical considerations. Student success in such cases may well depend on the teacher tempering the desire to promote intellectual agency with a teaching style that promotes recall of closed questions.

The third quality derived from Kant's analysis is that teachers who value the ability and freedom to think for one self are more likely to cultivate intellectual agency than are teachers who aim to lead students to *proper* beliefs. Teachers who wish to lead students to transform society so that it comes to reflect a prescribed image are engaged in a different kind of work than those who aim to develop in students the ability to consider and to decide what kind of society they would like to create. Those who aim to guide students according to a prescribed code engage students differently than teachers who wish to cultivate intellectual agency. Frederick would likely not have been amenable to religious freedom were he himself a zealot, and teachers who are morally, religiously, or socially zealous seem far less likely to allow students to come to their own conclusions than are those who understand the histories and limitations of the various perspectives they wish to convey as opportunities and cognitive tools to students.

From Kant, a view has been developed that enlightened, skilled, and efficacious teachers are best suited to encourage students

to think for themselves. These teachers can be effective, however, only in a free society where enlightened and intellectually-nurturing teaching are sponsored by the state or the larger society. Only in this setting can emancipation emerge as a matter of course. Only in enlightened societies will enlightened teachers flourish in public service. In the absence of this requisite liberty, emancipation might take place, but it will be a rare occurrence.

This was Kant's view from within an enlightened European monarchy, just prior to the French Revolution. It was optimistic and progressive, and the vision presumed that intellectual emancipation would develop alongside moral, scientific, and technical evolution. As shown below, however, the prospect of cultivating intellectual agency was understood differently by some, such as Joseph Jacotot. Jacotot shared Kant's desire to spread the courage and ability to think for oneself, but his experience with educational developments during the aftermath of the Revolution led him to believe that individual agency and thoughtfulness were not likely to be promoted by social and state institutions, which tended to evolve toward self-preservation and promotion at the expense of the ideals upon which they are founded.

Joseph Jacotot

In exile following the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in France in 1818, Joseph Jacotot had experiences that caused him to renounce the prevailing pedagogical principles of his period. Jacotot did not abandon the methods because they were ineffective; he rejected the practices because they did not support the revolutionary vision and purpose of education. Prior to the revolution, the purpose of education had been to transmit truths. This transmission also directly and indirectly served to support the existing social, political, and religious dynamic. In his view, the recognition of the freedom and equality of individuals that was at the heart of the revolution should have been reflected by changes to the educational system that encouraged and facilitated the development of free persons. Education policy moved in a different direction, however.

Effective teaching in the nineteenth century was based on practices still espoused today: the careful and progressive movement from the simple, familiar, and concrete to the complex, unfamiliar, and abstract. Truth and skill were thought to be best conveyed to the student when the teacher organized the curriculum systematically and

presented it through a series of logical progressions. Taken generally, these are instructional principles commendable and effective. Tradeoffs are required, however, for the increased efficiency of delivery and learning. One cost, and the one of most concern to Jacotot, was that this method of leading students efficiently to a correct belief, process, or solution tends to have the effect of dampening students' intellectual agency. Because students indirectly internalize their mode of learning, and then they generalize the experience, leading students to proper understandings teaches students to follow the lead of authorities who tell them what to believe. This relationship between knowledge and power, developed in one's youth, transfers to the larger social realm and creates passive and obedient citizens who have been disciplined to pursue the proper and the sanctioned. Disciplined in this way, the *experience of thinking* causes thinking to be understood by the student as thinking within the parameters provided by authorities. When thinking is understood to occur within these unacknowledged and pre-established parameters, the thinker is led by experience to accept without questioning the given presuppositions or perspectives of the knowledge providers. Knowledge comes to be understood as something that is given by an authority, rather than taken as guided by one's own interest and will (see e.g., Payne, 1830). In a closed or unfree society, this sort of thinking and learning within sanctioned boundaries is championed: accumulated knowledge is transferred, and the existing social relations are supported rather than challenged. Jacotot believed that such goals were inconsistent with a post-Revolutionary educational system because they treated students as means to an end rather than as persons of inherent worth, free to question, challenge, and think.

Jacotot advocated instead for emancipatory education. In its simplest terms, emancipatory education is teaching that enables students to recognize they can think for themselves. With emancipatory education, the student continues to learn content and skills, but the socializing experience that accompanies the delivery is different. Efficient transmission gives way to teacher-facilitated student struggles. This is a minimalist approach, or constructivism at its extreme. In practice, it takes the form of autodidactic learning. The role of the teacher is to provide needed structure and encouragement,

but little else. This approach doesn't teach students content so much as showing them that they can learn the content on their own, with limited guidance from others.

In diluted form, elements of this approach are widely affirmed today, and educators often proclaim their commitment to developing critical thinking. In practice, however, most teaching does not seem to follow Jacotot's model. In contemporary public K-12 at most settings in the US, the denied but actual expectation is to teach to the test. In college, the context is often rather different. Here, the term *emancipatory teaching* is usually understood through Critical Pedagogy and transformative teaching, both of which have an origin in the Frankfurt School's critiques of Western society. These critical approaches explicate and inculcate so that students are led to understand *properly* – to understand Western society as one characterized by oppression and in need of transformation so that the traditional identities and sources of power give way to a new center of power. Critical Pedagogy is based on a moralistic rather than rational or scientific worldview (see e.g., MacDonald, 2002). The moralistic view has long been the norm, however. From Scholastic education through the revolutionary period, and up to today, the interests of power have almost always been presented as moral universals.

Jacotot warned two centuries ago that this false- or pseudo-emancipation was beginning in France. In the immediate aftermath of the revolution, as educators and philanthropists sought to use education to promote social and moral progress, Jacotot's vision of cultivating intellectual agency was altered to the point that it resembled the stultifying explication enacted by previous forms of institutionalized education. The *mistake*, if we are generous enough to call it that, was complicated and messy, but it might be explained as a logical error of equating emancipation with progress. That is, policy makers sought to use education to emancipate the people, but *emancipation* was understood as and through social *progress*. Whereas Jacotot presumed individual equality and sought to use education to emancipate, the policymakers presumed inequality and sought to use education to secure equality. As a result of this view, education became compulsory, and the state mandated a centralized curriculum that would promote progress. This conceptual slippage between emancipation and social progress supported the proclamation that knowledge, skills, and values must be doled out by state

apparatuses to shepherd the progress of society. As a result, the Revolutionary educational goal of emancipating free persons was subsumed beneath and conceptualized through a social engineering project that treated persons as instruments in the service of social progress. Progress was understood as the washing away of the old regime and the institutionalization of the new power brokers of the bourgeoisie.

Jacotot regarded as faulty the assumption that the state was needed to make people equal. The revolutionary spirit presupposed that the people were equal, and as a result, persons were treated as equals. The post-revolutionary approach took the opposite view, that people are unequal and need to be made equal. As a result, the state would need the power required for social engineering. And although the program was presented to the people as a moral endeavor, the nature of the educational experiment changed from one of presuming people were equals and treating them as such to presuming inequality and treating people as unequal. All of this could be avoided, suggested Jacotot, if the state and individuals presumed that people are, in fact, equal, and acted in accordance with that belief. Those who wished to be educated by the state would be educated. This was a radical liberty that is hardly recognizable or comprehensible today. It rejects the view that the people needing to be *properly* educated cannot know what is good for them, and it rejects the view that people must be forced to receive education so that they might appreciate the value of that education. In the West today, most would likely reject the idea that religious service should be compulsory on the basis that it is good for them and they can't know that it's good for them to be religious unless they attend. Far fewer are comfortable with the idea, which developed at the same time, that people should be allowed to choose whether they wish to be educated by the state. In the early nineteenth century, however, thinkers such as Jacotot understood freedom for and from religious and state instruction to be parallel issues.

In addition to using educational inculcation as a political technology to underwrite state power, Jacotot also witnessed the natural tendency of institutions to evolve in ways that protect and promote themselves. As students and the public became convinced

they needed the state educational system to help prepare them for 19th-century life and to emancipate them from their prior feudal beliefs, the cultivation of intellectual agency was alchemically altered into a means of controlling the population.

The role of teachers in the development of the new state apparatus was not overlooked by Jacotot. He maintained that it was often rather difficult for a professor or skilled pedagogue to cultivate intellectual agency, precisely because they were so accustomed to and focused on leading students to the correct answer. He supported the counterintuitive belief that those teachers with the *least* experience and training (as teachers or content experts) were often the most emancipatory: because in such settings, he reasoned, neither the teacher nor the student presumed the teacher had the final and ultimate answers. Both expected the student, after some initial directing, to think, figure things out, and more or less independently come to his or her own conclusions.

Institutionalized education, however, like other institutions, tends to reify its constructs and thereby comes to alter the purpose of education to promoting and maintaining the institution. Jacotot concluded from his post-Revolutionary experiences that emancipation and the cultivation of intellectual agency will not consistently occur in institutionalized settings because such settings are always too politicized. The goal in such settings inevitably transforms from treating individual students as persons who can make their own decisions to controlling the populace: for their own good, for progress, for equality, for justice, or what have you. As such, Jacotot's conclusion differed from Kant's. Kant held that enlightenment required a social movement sponsored by the state. Jacotot believed the revolution would devour its educational leaders and that the cultivator of agency will most often be the individual teacher who values liberty and agency.

Friedrich Nietzsche

Kant believed we should encourage people to think for themselves, and this would come to fruition through social institutions in a free (but not too free) society. Jacotot also believed that we should encourage and enable people to think for themselves, but he contended such agency could not be accomplished through state institutions because these are places of contested power that will

eventually treat students as instruments. The final thinker to be discussed, Friedrich Nietzsche, rejected Kant's premise that society would naturally progress toward individual liberty, and he agreed with Jacotot that state institutions use people as instruments. However, whereas Jacotot believed we would not need to work toward equality if we began with the presupposition that everyone is equal, Nietzsche began with a very different set of presuppositions. He believed we did not need to work toward equality because people neither are, nor ever will be, equal. People are different and unequal. The notion of equality, he claimed, was a lie propagated by those who aim to gain the support of the masses in order to control them. He maintained the lie of equality was a tool used by the business class to wrest power from the aristocracy and consolidate it for themselves. Equality was and is propaganda. Those who promoted the idea knew it was nonsense, but they also recognized it was a profitable bit of folly because the masses were generally incapable of separating what they wished to be true from what really was true. The masses had, after all, been indoctrinated to trust in faith (over reason) for the last 1500-plus years.

Despite his unfashionable beliefs regarding progress and equality, Nietzsche nonetheless held in high regard the courage to think critically. He understood emancipation to be more a matter of liberating oneself from self-incurred tutelage, after Kant, than a matter of escaping from institutional forms of oppression. Nietzsche's version of *sapere aude* was more psychological than Kant's, however. Nietzsche was less concerned about freeing students from their tendency to blindly accept the dictates of authority than he was about freeing students from their own beliefs: those they would cling to because they do not have the courage to think for themselves or to face difficult truths. As he puts it, "Even the most courageous among us only rarely has the courage to face what he already knows" (Nietzsche, *Twilight*: Maxims 2).

A second difference between Kant and Nietzsche concerning agency was Nietzsche's view of the role of institutional education. In *Twilight of the Idols,* for example, his criticism of the German education system was severe. Channeling Jacotot, he claimed that German public education had replaced the goal of cultivating

intellectual agency with the goal of creating marginally thoughtful instruments of the state:

> The entire system of higher education in Germany has lost what matters most: the end as well as the means to the end. That education, that Bildung, is itself an end — and not "the Reich" — and that educators are needed to that end, and not secondary-school teachers and university scholars — that has been forgotten. […] What the “higher schools” in Germany really achieve is a brutal training, designed to prepare huge numbers of young men, with as little loss of time as possible, to become usable, abusable, in government service. “Higher education” and huge numbers – that is a contradiction to start with. (*Twilight*: Germans 5)

Moreover, he traced this development back to Kant:

> "What is the task of all higher education?" To turn men into machines. "What are the means?" Man must learn to be bored. "How is that accomplished?" By means of the concept of duty. "Who serves as the model?" The philologist: he teaches grinding. "Who is the perfect man?" The civil servant. "Which philosophy offers the highest formula for the civil servant?" Kant's: the civil servant as a thing-in-itself, raised up to be judge over the civil servant as phenomenon. (*Twilight*: Skirmishes 29)

Nietzsche saw this instrumental approach to education as a new one that contrasted with the traditional (idealized) goal of cultivating intellectual agency: “Learning to think: in our schools, one no longer has any idea of this. Even in the universities, even among the real scholars of philosophy, logic as a theory, as a practice, as a craft, is beginning to die out” (*Twilight*: Germans 7).

Thus, Nietzsche’s perspective was similar to Jacotot’s. State institutions were thought to be unfit for agency development. This nearly-sacred task must be carried out by individuals predisposed to intellectual honesty and generosity. In common with Jacotot, Nietzsche suggested that these were not the sort of people most often desired and employed by the system. His criteria, however, bore similarities to those gleaned from Kant’s *sapere aude* essay discussed above:

> Educators are needed who have themselves been educated; superior, noble spirits, prove themselves every moment by

> their words and silences: representatives of a culture grown ripe and sweet – not the learned boors whom secondary schools and universities today offer our youths as "higher wet nurses." (*Twilight:* Germans 5)

Kant, Jacotot, and Nietzsche believed that similar sorts of teachers were needed for the cultivation of intellectual agency: thoughtful and restrained persons who are skilled at allowing thinking to develop. The sort of teachers desired by each of the authors were ones who were cultured. For Nietzsche, and perhaps Jacotot, culture is far from being synonymous with the state. The two are largely in conflict with one another, and the state, according to Nietzsche, sustained itself at the expense of the people and of higher culture, as the famous passage from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* indicates:

> The state is the coldest of all cold monsters. Coldly it lies: "I, the state, am the people." It is a lie! Creators were they who created peoples, and hung a faith and a love over them: thus they served life. Destroyers are they who lay snares for many and call it the state. […] Where there is still a people, there the state is not understood, but is hated as the evil eye, and as sin against laws and customs. (*Zarathustra* 76)

Nietzsche despised the state because he believed it was a parasite of culture. The rise of the German state was and would correspond with the decline of High Culture, as creative energies were diverted from the culture to the state. The noble spirit and the love of life captured in the phrase *amor fati* was and would be debased and bled by the fantasy of equality. The emergence of great cultured individuals, such as Goethe, would be suppressed. For Jacotot, equality was a presupposition; for Nietzsche, it was a fantasy.

Of equality, Nietzsche said, "Equality for equals, and inequality for unequals: that would be true voice of justice: and, what follows from it, never make equal what is unequal" (*Twilight*: Skirmishes 48). Similarly, in the *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche argued against the faith in social and moral progress shared, with variations, by Kant and Hegel. He rejected the view that human society and morality evolve, rationally and progressively, from a barbaric past to a present summit. Instead, for Nietzsche, morality is better understood as the manifestation of a contest between competing

groups of people with contrasting moral codes. Slaves and conquered peoples desired equality, while strong and noble people, who found the idea to be laughable, valued strength, courage, and beauty. Nineteenth-century bourgeois morality, with its Judeo-Christian roots, was understood to be aligned with the ignoble (or slave) morality that valued the strength of the herd and was fearful of the strong individual: “morality is the herd instinct in the individual” (Nietzsche, *Gay Science* 116). Nietzsche contended that morality flourished, in part, because of the superfluity of man and in part due to the surplus of mindless man-power that allowed the state to secure the loyalty of the poor and wretched by pandering the pleasant lie that meekness, weakness, and submission were morally good – and, conversely, that willfulness, worldliness, and aggressiveness were evil. In cultures where this view prevailed, Nietzsche remarked, “the enlightened man goes amongst men as among animals” (*Zarathustra* 112). In his view, Kant was mistaken to believe that enlightenment could involve the enlightenment of all via the state. Jacotot’s mistake was to be found in his presumption of equality. From Nietzsche’s perspective, naïve belief in equality was a failure of *sapere aude*: the failure to reject false but popular truths that have been internalized.

Nietzsche, however, shared Jacotot’s view that much of the mischief done to humans by humans was done in the name of improving mankind, and he too rejected this project, as traditionally understood:

> At all times morality has aimed to "improve" men […] "[I]mprovement" has meant both taming the beast called man, and breeding a particular kind of man. […] To call the taming of an animal its "improvement" sounds almost like a joke to our ears. Whoever knows what goes on in kennels doubts that dogs are "improved" there. They are weakened, they are made less harmful, and through the depressive effect of fear, through pain, through wounds, and through hunger, they become sickly beasts. It is no different with the tamed man whom the priest has "improved." (*Twilight:* Improvers 2)

Jacotot criticized the post-Revolutionary education system in France for conflating the improvement of man with the progress of society. Nietzsche reflected Jacotot’s distinction between improving the individual and promoting social progress. Improving the individual had little to no connection to the raising up of all of humanity.

It is Darwin and naturalism that is the key to understanding the difference between Nietzsche's view of progress and that shared by Jacotot and Kant. Both Kant and Jacotot wrote before Darwin, and each held a pre-Darwinian conception of social evolution as the unfolding of history. Humanity was understood to be part of a cosmic whole that evolved along a natural, somewhat deterministic path. Nietzsche did not share this position. His view was influenced by Darwin's notion that evolutionary change was directed by natural selection, and he therefore did not believe that evolutionary change would lead to a more rational or necessarily better society, or that social change would tend to elevate humanity as a whole. There would be winners and losers, and because evolution occurred through the unforeseen arrival of rare exceptions–-random mutations, if you prefer--evolution would be propelled by individuals leading the way from out front. Nietzsche held that humanity is not the goal or center of evolution, and there is no Geist to shepherd human society to its fullest collective potential.

For Nietzsche, improving the masses was not the path to progress. It was the path to regress and to the Last Man (see *Zarathustra*, Prologue). The hope of progress lay not with the masses, but in instances of individual greatness. Great persons have always surfaced, usually near the edge of chaos. The goal of education, therefore, would be to cultivate the arrival of such people; or, said differently, to breed the Overman. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche intimated that modernity would not be able to accept an Overman. The prevailing, herd-based moral system esteemed equality, sameness, humility, and so on. This system was grounded in jealous, but impotent, resentment toward great individuals (the nobility and aristocrats). Because of the resentful worldview of the masses and the nature of evolutionary change, the Overman cannot be cultivated as one among many. Enlightenment and emancipation will not be extended to the masses. The best we can do is shelter the superior people from the soul-sapping doctrines of equality, heaven, and the like, and then support their emancipation from humanity as it currently exists. That is, the goal of cultivation is not to improve humanity, but to overcome it.

It is not surprising that Nietzsche's enlightened teacher would look rather different than that of Kant and Jacotot. Despite the different goals, however, the ideal teacher of Nietzsche (especially as drawn from his later work) is surprisingly similar to Jacotot's. The similarity is perhaps due primarily to the fact that neither Nietzsche nor Jacotot begin with the goal of making equal. As such, neither is burdened by what to do with students who don't desire to learn. Their concern rests, then, not on compelling imprisoned students to learn skills and values useful to the state, but with restraining themselves from teaching too much and thereby stultifying the thinking of their students. For Nietzsche, this model teacher can be found in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Like many gurus before him, Zarathustra left society and went to the mountains for solitude and reflection. After extended reflection, he decided to return to society to teach. Zarathustra found no viable students in the crowds, however, and decided that a message like his must be directed to a person who wished to be enlightened. As the story continues, Zarathustra communes with animals, dwarves, and sailors, bestowing truths on all. Zarathustra embodies the magnanimous person who gives of himself without expecting anything in return. This person might be understood as a teacher so full of gifts that he can't help but share them with others. Rather than create a system or school, however, the magnanimous teacher implores students to be independent thinkers – and then departs before the student can become too dependent on him.

The parallel to Jacotot's model for Nietzsche is perhaps clear: for each philosopher, the enlightened pedagogue esteems individual agency and is careful not to stultify the thinking of the student by offering too much. Jacotot understood the cultivation of intellectual agency to promote the enlightenment of all of mankind, but Nietzsche believed evolution would involve the overcoming of, or moving beyond, humanity by the most excellent individual examples of mankind.

Conclusion

There are many different goals of education. Some of these complement one another, and others are in opposition. Of interest to me is the prevalence of Critical Pedagogy in education scholarship. This perspective tends to presume that Western culture is bad (unjust,

unequal, oppressive) and that the primary purpose of education should be to transform students' beliefs so that, among other things, students learn to see oppression, injustice, and privilege, even in those places where it does not seem to exist. The Hegel-Marx-Frankfurt School lineage of much Critical Pedagogy takes a pre-Darwinian view of evolution that sometimes posits, but more often presumes, a narrative of social change, whereby progress is understood to require replacing traditional Western forms of association and identity and undermining the Euro-centric identity of Western culture (see, e.g., Johnson, 2016 & MacDonald, 2002).

The genealogy discussed above presents a different trajectory of the development of ideas and practices associated with emancipatory education and offers a narrative of intellectual emancipation that describes a loss of faith, by some, in the likelihood that institutions will teach people to have the courage to think for themselves. In contrast to the tendency in Critical Pedagogy, I do not claim that this narrative of emancipation is connected to a moral imperative, and that all who resist it stand in the way of social and moral progress. Progress, in fact, is not posited at all. For what it is worth, however, I maintain, with Kant, that the cultivation of intellectual agency is far less likely to occur in theocratic or otherwise ideologically-closed societies. This distinction does not preclude autocracies such as that of Frederick the Great's Prussia from being open. Nor does it suggest that democracies cannot be ideologically closed. That elections are held does not ensure that people are free to think, much less express themselves, as they wish. But it seems clear that open societies are more likely to give rise to educators and educational systems that cultivate intellectual agency.

Jacotot provides two lessons. The first one was discussed by Ranciere (1991), and it concerns the nature of equality and emancipation. Ranciere explained that neo-Marxist sociologists and educational theorists generally presuppose the very thing that they wish to fix: namely, inequality. Because the mission of the neo-Marxist redeemer is to find inequality and emancipate people from it, there is a vested interest in discovering and creating ever-new forms of oppression. In a roundabout and paradoxical way, contends Ranciere, the neo-Marxists often create the very *problems* that they

(and only they) can solve. Jacotot's experiences in post-Revolutionary France presaged this development, and a couple of decades prior to Marx's earliest work. Jacotot noted how the goal of securing progress (toward equality) required educational institutions to presuppose inequality and to grant great power to the state to ensure progress. This leads to the second lesson of Jacotot, which is that bureaucratic entities tend to evolve in ways that serve themselves rather than cultivate the agency of persons. When institutions help people, the people become dependent upon those institutions. If the help is long-standing, as with compulsory education, values are inculcated. *The good* will almost inevitably be understood in ways that support and legitimize the institution. Relatedly, institutions evolve to understand their own sustenance and expansion to be far more necessary for the development of a desired state of affairs than any particular individual they might serve. The combined lesson, then, is that institutional education cannot be fully relied upon to cultivate intellectual agency. It might indeed play some role, but to this point, history has confirmed the school is a highly politicized field of power and that, as often as not, the expansion of power is supported by teaching people to think properly rather than by encouraging and supporting people to think freely. The cultivation of intellectual agency must, then, be safeguarded by individuals, working within and apart from the sanctioned institutions, who value intellectual agency, and who do not sacrifice the goal of developing agency for that of social or moral progress, justice, equality, truth, proper beliefs, patriotism, and so forth.

Nietzsche further separated social progress, the state, and equality from the goal of cultivating intellectual agency by indirectly reminding us that both Kant and Jacotot held a pre-Darwinian conception of evolution and morality. Nietzsche's naturalism informs readers that the common belief in a set of universal morals that remain forever unchanged, or that unfold over time, was derived from a now-defunct view of evolution. Nietzsche thus separates the goal of cultivating intellectual agency from social progress and from equality. He contended that evolutionary theory suggests that human progress will not occur by raising up the masses so that they are equal to the greatest humans. Progress will involve overcoming mankind (the masses) through the cultivation of great iterations of humanity.

For Nietzsche, the purpose of cultivating intellectual agency is to encourage excellent persons to examine and come to understand the world around them, so they can reject presuppositions concerning agency that have been imposed on them by both *priests and politicians* interested in manipulating people in an underhanded and moralistic way. Only once persons disburden themselves from this intellectual yoke will they be able to choose values that are healthy for them, and thereby *evolve* beyond the intellectual and spiritual sickness that causes them to long for an end to the existing world, characterized as full of suffering and injustice, and long instead for a new and different un-world to come into being.

Although Nietzsche was intentionally provocative and often overstated his case, I think it is helpful to attend to his reminder that many presumptions remain, carried over without reflection, from ideas whose original justifications may no longer grant warrant for supposition. Moreover, it is by studying the history of the evolution of such ideas that allow us to reflect upon our continued assent to commonly-held beliefs. If one's goal is to cultivate intellectual agency, genealogical analyses such as this one might serve as helpful examples for students learning to think for themselves – although Kant, Jacotot, and Nietzsche would likely agree that the ultimate goal for such an educator would be to instill in students the ability to undertake and compose their own study.

Works Cited

Ansell-Pearson, K. *Viroid Life: Perspectives on Nietzsche and the Trans-human Condition*. Routledge, 1997.

Hegel, G. *Phenomenology of Spirit*. 1807. Oxford UP, 1977.

Johnson, M. "Emancipatory and Pluralist Perspectives on Democracy and Economic Inequality in Social Studies and Citizenship Education." *Teaching for Democracy in an Age of Economic Disparity*, eds. C. Maley & T. Davis, Routledge, 2016, pp. 42-58.

---. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, and Philology." *Journal of the Georgia Philological Association*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2017a, pp. 10-27.

---. "The Function and Influence of the Emancipatory Binary and the Progressive Triad in the Discourse on Citizenship in Social Studies Education." *International Journal of Social Studies Education*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2017b, pp. 98-120.

Kant, I. "What is Enlightenment?" 1784. *The Politics of Truth*, eds. M. Foucault & S. Lotringer, Semiotext(e), 2007, pp. 29-38.

MacDonald, K. *The Culture of Critique: An Evolutionary Analysis of Jewish Involvement in Twentieth-Century Intellectual and Political Movements*. 1st Books Library, 2002.

Nietzsche, F. *The Gay Science*. 1882. Vintage Books, 1974.

---. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One*. 1883. Penguin Classics, 1983.

---. *On the Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic*. 1887. Cambridge UP, 1997.

---. *Beyond Good and Evil: A Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. 1886. Costa, 2012.

---. *Twilight of the Idols, or, How to Philosophize with a Hammer*. 1889. Penguin, 1990.

Payne. J. *A Compendious Exposition of the Principles and Practice of Professor Jacotot's Celebrated System of Education*. London: R. Stevens, 1830. https://archive.org/details/acompendiousexp00payngoog.

Ranciere, J. *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*. Stanford UP, 1991.