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# Jane Eyre And Her Transatlantic Literary Descendants: The Heroic Female Bildungsroman And Constructions Of National Identity

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***JANE EYRE* AND HER TRANSATLANTIC LITERARY DESCENDANTS: THE  
HEROIC FEMALE *BILDUNGSROMAN* AND CONSTRUCTIONS OF NATIONAL  
IDENTITY**

by

**ABIGAIL RUTH HEINIGER**

**DISSERTATION**

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

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2013

MAJOR: ENGLISH

Approved By:

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Advisor

Date

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## DEDICATION

*This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Mary Rorem Heiniger,  
who spent her vacations and holidays reading chapter drafts,  
and to my father, Stephen Lewis Heiniger,  
who listened to Jane Eyre driving me back and forth from Detroit.  
You made this dream possible.*

*This dissertation is also dedicated to Dr. Anca Vlasopolos.  
It is wonderful to have the opportunity to work with someone whose life and work you admire. It  
is quite another thing to have that person believe in you.  
Thank you for believing!*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## PREFACE

This project began with an avid interest in fairy tales and Charlotte Brontë's distinctive use of fairy lore in *Jane Eyre*, and it evolved into a study of the cultural and nationalistic stakes in the literary microcosm that rippled out from Brontë's debut novel. The rehabilitation of women writers in both British and American literary studies has led to a growing awareness of their transatlantic networks. More significantly, *Jane Eyre* has been incorporated into an increasing number of recent transatlantic studies, suggesting that this novel generated meaningful transatlantic influence. Elizabeth Gaskell was the first to note this, in *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857) she writes: "'Jane Eyre' had had a great run in America" (281). This analysis examines the cultural legacy of that "great run" and puts it in conversation with notable British and European responses to *Jane Eyre* including Brontë's *Villette* (1851) and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856). While both British and American responses to Brontë's first novel have been studied separately before, the evolution of a distinctive nineteenth-century transatlantic literary microcosm has never been analyzed. This transatlantic analysis has uncovered the nationalist stakes both in *Jane Eyre* and the tradition of the heroic female *bildungsroman*, which extends from that novel.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO *JANE EYRE*'S TRANSATLANTIC MICROCOSM

This dissertation examines the role of fairy tales and fairy lore across the arc of Charlotte Brontë's career from *Jane Eyre* (1847) to *Villette* (1853) in order to demonstrate the evolution of the heroic female *bildungsroman* in Brontë's work. *Jane Eyre*'s literary descendants written by women, both in Great Britain, Continental Europe, and across the Atlantic, in the United States and Canada embrace this distinctive narrative paradigm, the heroic female *bildungsroman*. Expanding upon the theory of transatlantic literary exchange modeled by Amanda Claybaugh in *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World* (2007), I demonstrate the ideological influence of *Jane Eyre* and the reciprocal influence of American literary responses on interpretations of Charlotte Brontë's work.

The fairytale allusions and, more particularly, the fairy heroine figure featured in *Jane Eyre* are excised from Brontë's final novel, *Villette* (1851). Nor do they survive intact in *Jane Eyre*'s other literary descendants: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), and Hannah Crafts's *The Bondswoman's Narrative* (ca 1850). These four texts are certainly not the only works of literature that were influenced by *Jane Eyre*; however, these are some of the most prominent examples of literature written by women that are currently being posited as literary descendants of Brontë's debut novel.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, all four of these texts attempt to replace Brontë's fairytale allusions in distinctive and meaningful ways; these authors all model the search for a female mythology, which persists into the twentieth-first century.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, like Brontë's

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<sup>1</sup> Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) is a notable pastiche of *Jane Eyre*.

<sup>2</sup> It may be argued that *Jane Eyre*'s legacy continue well into the twenty-first century with novels like Diane Setterfield's *The Thirteenth Tale* (2006). In *Bluebeard Gothic: Jane Eyre and Its Progeny* (2010), Heta Pyrhönen analyzes Setterfield and other twentieth- and twenty-first-century adaptations of *Jane Eyre*, emphasizing the contradictions and tensions of the "Bluebeard" fairytale embedded in Brontë's novel. However, Pyrhönen claims that this novel "undoubtedly belongs squarely to Britain's national heritage" (11). She does not recognize the transatlantic literary impact.



fairy heroine, the larger-than-life heroines in her literary progeny are invested with a range of regional and national associations that generate nationalistic messages.

Chapter One functions as an introduction to my main argument as well as an overview of my critical approach. It particularly outlines the distinctive transatlantic microcosm that develops around *Jane Eyre* as well as the Cinderella paradigm projected back onto Brontë's novel by American authors and readers. Chapter Two covers the arc of Brontë's career; it explores the dominant fairytale paradigms in *Jane Eyre* and identifies the role of the fairy lore in constructing the heroic Jane Eyre. This chapter demonstrates the connections between the heroic changeling<sup>3</sup> and the local, pre-Victorian fairy lore. The argument relies heavily on primary source material from Haworth and Yorkshire as well as periodicals that the Brontë family read. It concludes by demonstrating how fairytale material in *Villette* is excised.

Chapter Three explores the transatlantic community of women writers in which Brontë was immersed. It begins with the ideological or imaginary transatlantic exchange between Great Britain and the United States discussed by Amanda Claybaugh in *The Novel of Purpose* (2007). It also explores the role that Elizabeth Gaskell's biography *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* played in generating a transatlantic mythology that linked Brontë's life with her texts. Finally, this chapter examines the mainstream literary descendants of *Jane Eyre*. It identifies the heavy reliance on classical mythological allusions to generate a female mythology in the British descendants of *Jane Eyre* in the Victorian Era, particularly *Aurora Leigh*. It also examines Canadian novel *Anne of Green Gables* and U.S. novel *The Wide, Wide World* and the American

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<sup>3</sup> A changeling is a foundling who is half human, half fairy, particularly in Charlotte Brontë's fiction. In "The Foundling," a story from Brontë's juvenilia, the half human, half fairy character Sydney is identified as a changeling. In "Faery and the Beast" (2006), I posit that Jane Eyre is a changeling heroine and argue that through the changeling and its fairy lore tradition, Charlotte Brontë creates a heroine strong enough to break out of the established female dichotomy of angels and fallen angels. This dissertation is only tangentially related to "Faery and the Beast," however it does rely upon the previously established changeling identity of Jane Eyre.

Cinderella paradigm that these novels develop. I argue that the “Beauty and the Beast” and fairy-bride allusions in *Jane Eyre* resonated with the cultural traditions of Brontë’s British audience while Cinderella reflects nineteenth-century American ideals.

Chapter Three concludes with an examination of the recently discovered, unpublished manuscript, *The Bondswoman’s Narrative* (ca. 1850), by Hannah Crafts.<sup>4</sup> This is the first novel written by an escaped female slave in the United States. Recent scholarship on Crafts has commented on the way her text borrows large amounts of material from other popular novels, primarily Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House* (1852) and *Jane Eyre*; critics have even identified the influence of *Villette* in the final chapter of Crafts’s novel. The treatment of *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* in *The Bondswoman’s Narrative* is a distinctive addition to current scholarship on Brontë’s literary progeny, which has focused exclusively on white authors. Furthermore, this close reading of *The Bondswoman’s Narrative* is the first to put this novel in conversation with the network of mainstream authors that developed around *Jane Eyre*. Unlike white American women writers, Crafts’s repositioning of *Jane Eyre* does not rely upon Cinderella allusions; rather, she creates a heroic female *bildungsroman* that undermines this American narrative paradigm, demonstrating that the white fairytale expectations are founded upon exploitation.

Finally, Chapter Four analyzes the cultural significance of transatlantic responses to *Jane Eyre*. Brontë’s novel was incorporated into an American narrative culture. In fact, I argue that American readers project the nineteenth-century American self-rise ethic onto *Jane Eyre*, placing it at the center of a distinctly nationalistic tradition. More specifically, *Jane Eyre* became mired in narratives of nineteenth-century American identity formation. It was absorbed into the parallel tradition of male and female rise tales, related to American individualism and the self-rise ethic.

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<sup>4</sup> This is the correct spelling of the novel’s title. It is also referred to as *The Bondswoman’s Narrative* in recent scholarship.

The male narrative tradition has been dominated in the popular imagination by novels like Horatio Alger's, while the American Cinderella became the term to describe the female narrative tradition.

Since Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's groundbreaking *Madwoman in the Attic* (1987, 2000), scholars have accepted *Jane Eyre* as a retelling of Cinderella.<sup>5</sup> *Jane Eyre* is interpreted as a hardworking, virtuous heroine who receives a fortune and her Prince Charming through the benevolent aid of a fairy godmother. The characterization of *Jane Eyre* as a "sullen Cinderella" (342) is a minor part of Gilbert and Gubar's overarching argument about suppressed female rage in Charlotte Brontë's novel, but scholars have accepted Cinderella as the novel's primary fairytale paradigm.<sup>6</sup> For example, this assumption lies at the heart of John Seelye's analysis of *Jane Eyre* in *Jane Eyre's American Daughters* (2005). Seelye claims:

That Jane is an updated Cinderella is obvious from the first chapter of the romance, in which Jane Eyre is treated by her guardian – her aunt through marriage to her mother's brother – as by a wicked stepmother (23-24).

While certain "Cinderella" motifs are present in this novel, such as the wicked stepmother and the virtuous heroine's rise from rags to riches, the Cinderella label distorts the identity of Brontë's main characters and the themes at work in *Jane Eyre*. This novel resonates with the plot conventions and motifs of "Beauty and the Beast" rather than Cinderella. Rochester is not Prince Charming; he is a beast in need of rehumanizing. Jane is the fairy-like changeling heroine with the power to accomplish his rehumanization and make her own happy ending. Furthermore, Cinderella readings fail to account for the evolution of British attitudes towards this particular

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<sup>5</sup> Although the characterization of *Jane Eyre* as a "sullen Cinderella" (Gilbert and Gubar 342) pervades Gilbert and Gubar's analysis, it is not their central point.

<sup>6</sup> Scholars, including Gilbert and Gubar, have identified several of the other fairytale motifs in *Jane Eyre*, including "Red Riding Hood," and "Bluebeard." However, these scholars still claim that Cinderella is "chief" (Seelye 9) among the fairytale patterns that Brontë uses.

fairy tale, which became increasingly negative throughout the later nineteenth and twentieth century. By contrast, the American Cinderella is a simplified female rise tale that became increasingly popular in the mid-nineteenth century when American responses to *Jane Eyre* were proliferating. I argue the Cinderella tale is incorporated into a larger American narrative tradition revolving around the self-made ethic, and Brontë's novel was positioned at the center of this national paradigm. Thus, *Jane Eyre*, with its fairytale motifs and heroic female bildungsroman, developed a distinctive transatlantic literary microcosm.

This dissertation will demonstrate how the Cinderella readings of *Jane Eyre* are a particularly American phenomenon that began with American literary responses to *Jane Eyre* in the Victorian Era and continue to influence American readings of this novel in the twenty-first century. I am especially interested in the connections between the nineteenth-century transatlantic circulation of texts and current American scholarly interpretations of *Jane Eyre*, beginning with *Madwoman and the Attic*. In *The Novel of Purpose*, Claybaugh demonstrates that Great Britain's greater cultural impact on transatlantic nineteenth-century literature is offset by the material influence of the United States, which had a larger readership and a more prolific publishing industry (15-17). However, *Jane Eyre* was not simply circulated throughout America, it accrued a range of nationalistic meanings among transatlantic readers and authors. *Madwoman and the Attic* demonstrates a concrete result of this material American influence because it applies the Cinderella paradigm featured in American novels back onto Brontë's original text. Moreover, the American interpretation of *Jane Eyre* dominates current critical interpretations of this novel and its fairytale content.

Even Heta Pyrhönen's recent study *Bluebeard Gothic: Jane Eyre and Its Progeny* (2010) relies heavily on the work of Gilbert and Gubar, despite her focus on the "Bluebeard" fairytale.

Like Gilbert and Gubar, Pyrhönen does a psychoanalytic reading of the novel (Pyrhönen 6-7); she examines the twentieth- and twenty-first-century adaptations of *Jane Eyre* and the contradictions and tensions of the “Bluebeard” fairytale embedded in Brontë’s novel. However, Pyrhönen claims that this novel “undoubtedly belongs squarely to Britain’s national heritage” (11). She does not recognize the transatlantic literary impact.<sup>7</sup>

American interpretations not only obscure the cultural work of fairy tales and fairy lore in the original novel but also the imperative for transatlantic women writers to perpetually construct narratives for women that rival heroic male narratives. Victorian readers were inundated with heroic male narratives, from the Classical myths that were staples of nineteenth-century education, to the popular adventure fiction of H.D. Ryder, Robert Louis Stevenson and Charles Kingsley, who was awarded a professorship at Cambridge, due in large part to his heroic novel *Westward Ho!* (1855). This book was so popular that a village in Devon, Great Britain has been named after it, demonstrating how integral these narratives were to constructions of Victorian identity.<sup>8</sup> These popular heroic narratives range from *bildungsromans* to variations on the epic quest. They typically include a central male protagonist who drives the action, fulfilling a quest or obtaining a goal; these narratives also define the ideal man in some way. While the Victorian era also abounds with narratives defining women, the ideal Victorian heroine and her domestic narrative are distinctive from the heroic narrative.

This analysis is concerned with the way that fairy tale and mythic allusions function to bolster these gendered literary traditions of Victorian heroes and heroines, particularly in connection with the literary microcosm of *Jane Eyre* and her literary progeny. While fairytale

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<sup>7</sup> Pyrhönen is a professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Helsinki; thus, she demonstrates the impact of American interpretations of *Jane Eyre* even outside of the United States.

<sup>8</sup> Incidentally, the village of Westward Ho! is the only place in Great Britain to have an exclamation mark in its name.

and mythic allusions may be incorporated into the construction of the hero to create a larger-than-life figure who can represent ideal manhood, the fantastic typically reinforces the domestic narrative for Victorian heroines. When female characters in Victorian literature that are empowered as individuals with supernatural allusions rather than crafted into domestic angels, these larger-than-life females are typically negative foils for the ideal female figure. I argue that *Jane Eyre* generates a heroic changeling for the female bildungsroman; fairytale and fairy-lore allusions are invested in Brontë's female protagonist without necessarily reinforcing the Victorian domestic narrative, bending this gendered literary tradition.

This discussion of the fantastic and Victorian heroines rests upon the foundation laid by Nina Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon* (1987).<sup>9</sup> Auerbach's survey of Victorian literature demonstrates that the supernatural either demonizes or domesticates female characters; it does not transform them into larger-than-life heroes who express a human ideal. As Auerbach states, the default human in Anglo-American Victorian culture is the white, middle-class, Protestant male. Those who fall outside of this group, such as women, consistently seek to explain or verify their humanity because it is not self-evident to the Victorian world. Ironically, women writers frequently rely upon associations between women and "all varieties of creation's mutants" (Auerbach 65) in their attempt to generate a distinct narrative that illustrates women's experience. These associations can function to perpetuate the "otherness" of women rather than illustrate their humanity. Auerbach's analysis depends upon mainstream male authors and artists. I expand upon Auerbach's work by analyzing Brontë's resistance to this literary stereotype with her heroic changeling Jane Eyre. This figure continues to evolve in the works of women writers

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<sup>9</sup> It also draws upon Jessica Simpson's "The Function of Folklore in *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*" (1974) and Jennifer Schacker's *National Dreams* (2003). Simpson examines the distinctive nature of folklore in *Jane Eyre*, contrasting it with a wider body of literature and Schafer positions nineteenth-century fairy tales in nationalistic discourses, both of which are useful to this analysis.

who renegotiate the heroic female *bildungsroman* that Brontë initiates using a wide range of different mythic and fairytale allusions.

The arc of Brontë's literary career from *Jane Eyre* (1847) to *Villette* (1851) models the continued search of women writers for the heroic female character that can define womanhood and the parallel heroic male narratives. In *Jane Eyre*, the fairytale allusions empower the fairy-like heroine. Brontë taps into the local, pre-Victorian fairy lore of Haworth to generate a strong female character, which Brontë then incorporates into a traditional "Beauty and the Beast" plot. This dissertation analyzes Brontë's decision to use local traditions and the way that fairy lore is figured as particularly empowering in the *bildungsroman* of *Jane Eyre*. It also examines the way regionalism is invested in Brontë's fairytale and fairy-lore allusions, giving the heroic female *bildungsroman* the same nationalistic potential as the heroic male narrative in Victorian literature.<sup>10</sup> However, like a shooting star, the brilliant career of the fairy-like heroine in *Jane Eyre* seems to be a singular event. The tradition of strong female fairies that inspires *Jane Eyre* is superseded by the Victorian tradition in which fairies are another incarnation of the ideal domestic doll. Nicola Bown identifies the primary reason for this dramatic shift in *The Victorian Supernatural*: the Victorian fairy was primarily a fantasy created by men in art and fiction (3). Thus, the Victorian fairy became another face of patriarchal representations of the female as the non-human other that Auerbach analyzes in *Woman and the Demon*.

Brontë reacts to this dramatic shift in British fairy lore in her final novel, *Villette*, where the fairy-figure becomes an insipid foil for the heroine. In *Villette*, the character Paulina Mary Home, or Polly, is explicitly characterized as a fairy (27). However, Polly is an angelic Victorian house fairy, the epitome of the ideal domestic woman. Lucy Snowe, the heroine, notes that

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<sup>10</sup> Like Classical heroes who functioned to generate exclusive cultural paradigms, heroic novels like Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* had strong nationalistic stakes. The ideal man is also the ideal citizen of his nation, empire, or polis. Thus, it is imperative for society to define the individual and retell the narrative that immortalizes him.

young Polly languishes when she is unable to fulfill her domestic role as caretaker and nurturer (21). Mr. Home, Polly's father, explicitly contrasts Polly's sheltered domestic existence with Lucy's life as a teacher after they are all reunited in Belgium (329-30). His words suggest that Polly's idyllic life is unrealistic; because of her sheltered existence, she does not understand the harshness of the real world. There is no clear narrative justification for Brontë's extended undermining of the fairy in *Villette* unless the reader assumes that the author is making a veiled commentary on her own treatment of the fairy in *Jane Eyre*. By dismissing Polly as a weak woman, Brontë dismisses the fairy as an insufficient figure of feminine power and announces her search for a new heroic female figure in *Villette*. However, that search for a new mythology ends in ambiguity; like Lucy's obliquely aborted romantic hopes, the reader is left to determine whether or not the flawed human protagonist can offer a viable example of womanhood.

Nor do these fairy tales and fairy lore survive intact in *Jane Eyre*'s most prominent Victorian literary descendants: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), and Hannah Crafts's *The Bondswoman's Narrative* (ca 1850). These four texts are certainly not the only works of literature that were influenced by *Jane Eyre*; however, these are some of the most discussed examples written by women. Moreover, all four of these texts attempt to replace Brontë's fairytale allusions in unique and distinctive ways; these authors are all searching for a female mythology and negotiate Brontë's model of a heroic female *bildungsroman*.

*Jane Eyre*'s European transatlantic descendants, particularly *Aurora Leigh*, feature heavy reliance on Classical mythology, Catholic hagiography, and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* in order to generate a heroic female mythology. Through these allusions, Barrett Browning attempts to appropriate or rehabilitate for women the two primary mythoi of the Western tradition. The plot



of *Aurora Leigh* echoes *Jane Eyre*: the heroine rejects the domineering suitor in order to maintain her personal integrity, but she is reunited with him after he is blinded by a fire that destroys the ancestral home. This similarity was discussed by Barrett Browning as well as her Victorian readers.<sup>11</sup> Thus, this novel-like poem reiterates Brontë's plot but attempts to generate a new mythos. For example, the compound image of the heroine's mother as both Madonna and Medusa suggest that the inherited mythic symbols of women produce ambiguity for the female reader (1.128-73). Moreover, the narrative reproduces this ambiguity through the Classical and Catholic allusions that permeate the text. However, both the form and the narrative of *Aurora Leigh* respond to Milton's *Paradise Lost* in a focused and coherent manner. Barrett Browning's epic-length unrhymed blank verse poem resembles the unrhymed blank verse form of the great English epic, and her female characters clearly offer an alternative to Milton's fallen Eve.<sup>12</sup> This dissertation compares Barrett Browning's New Eve and Brontë's heroic changeling, analyzing some of the possible implications for this shift in the mythic or fantastic paradigms behind the female protagonists.

By contrast, the published American descendants of *Jane Eyre* during the Victorian Era demonstrate more focused attention on developing a single mythic female narrative. The Canadian novel *Anne of Green Gables* and the U.S. novel *The Wide, Wide World*, generate a new fairytale paradigm: Cinderella. These American responses have influenced interpretations of *Jane Eyre*, exerting belated cultural influence on interpretations of Brontë's British novel.

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<sup>11</sup> Julia Holloway's "*Aurora Leigh and Jane Eyre*" (1977) discusses the relationship between these two texts at length. It includes Barrett Browning's letters discussing *Jane Eyre* as well as letters she received from friends like Mrs. Anna Johnson discussing the connection between the two works (129).

<sup>12</sup> Like Barrett Browning's, Eliot's response to *Jane Eyre* in *Middlemarch* (1874) includes an extended treatment of Classical mythology and hagiography. Although *Middlemarch* initially celebrates the Madonna figure, the novel ultimately undermines the search for a new feminine mythos. Like the impossible *Key to All Mythologies* that cannot be written, Eliot demonstrates the impossibility of generating a mythology for understanding women. Thus, this novel repeats the evolution of ideas in Brontë's work: it moves through a wide range of mythological associations and concludes with mundane human existence.

Seelye's *Jane Eyre's American Daughters* is examined here as an example of an American reading. Like *The Madwoman in the Attic*, Seelye's scholarship contributes to the transatlantic reading of *Jane Eyre* as a Cinderella tale. It is a reading which this dissertation seeks to interrogate.

Seelye argues the characterization of Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1849) as a Cinderella tale is "too obvious to discuss" (128). He primarily bases this assertion on the novel's rise-tale plot: an orphaned girl who is redeemed by her final ascent into polite society (Seelye 128). However, the Cinderella motifs in Warner's novel exceed the narrative structure. Like the traditional Cinderella, Warner's heroine Ellen Montgomery undergoes a series of trials that prepare her for marriage. Moreover, Ellen remains a relatively passive figure in arranging this marriage; in fact, the marriage itself is only tacked onto the novel as an afterthought in the revised edition published in 1850. Finally, the role of Ellen's dying mother resembles the role of the returning dead mother in the traditional Cinderella tale; Ellen's mother remains an active influence throughout Ellen's life, enabling the heroine to become a marriageable young woman.

As in the other texts discussed here, Warner uses the Cinderella paradigm as one of many narrative strategies in her novel. However, it is the only significant fairytale motif in this novel. Warner's Cinderella allusions become particularly significant in conjunction with the other American literary descendants of *Jane Eyre*, including extremely popular novels such as Martha Finley's *Elsie Dinsmore*, France Hodgson's *The Secret Garden*, and Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*. The plethora of Cinderella allusions across a range of novels that either resemble or directly respond to Brontë's *Jane Eyre* suggests that this is a meaningful fairytale paradigm in this American literary microcosm. Moreover, these American novels also demonstrate the evolution of an American Cinderella tale that differs from British and European tales.

*Anne of Green Gables* is an important text in this discussion because of the way it concludes an era of American Cinderella-like Victorian novels for young women. According to Warner's biography, her work on *The Wide, Wide World* was punctuated by the publication of *Jane Eyre* in 1847.<sup>13</sup> Seelye claims that Warner's reacts to and revises Brontë's message, especially in the later half of the novel (93-94). Thus, Warner's use of the Cinderella paradigm in her 1850 novel marks the beginning of an era. However, Montgomery is responding to half a century of embedded Cinderella tales when she writes in 1908; *Anne of Green Gables* negotiates this fairytale tradition, both using it and pushing away from it. In fact, the romance of Montgomery's heroine is not arranged by an external helper, an essential motif of the Cinderella tale.

I argue that these American novels condition readers to interpret the heroic female *bildungsroman* as a Cinderella narrative that resembles the domestic narratives of traditional Victorian heroines, thus shaping scholarly and popular interpretations of *Jane Eyre*. Despite the lack of identifiable Cinderella motifs in *Jane Eyre*, American scholars since Gilbert and Gubar have insisted that Cinderella is the most significant fairytale paradigm in Brontë's novel. These assumptions reflect Claybaugh's claim that power in the transatlantic world was "dispersed" (16) between British authors and American readers; Claybaugh states: "In the literary marketplace, British authors were more celebrated and British reviewers more influential, but U.S. readers were more numerous and U.S. publishing houses were increasingly more powerful" (16). Cinderella readings of *Jane Eyre* seem to demonstrate the overwhelming influence of American readers, projecting American responses to Brontë's novel back onto the original text.

American audiences and scholars not only presume that *Jane Eyre* has Cinderella motifs, they claim that Cinderella is the primary fairy tale narrative in the novel. Gilbert and Gubar

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<sup>13</sup> See "Susan Warner" (1985) by Jane Tompkins.

initially identify Jane Eyre as “a sullen Cinderella” (342), and continually make that identification through their analysis. Although they make a single allusion to “Red Riding Hood” (Gilbert and Gubar 344) and mention the “mythic Bluebeard” (354), they do not refer to any other fairy tales. Seelye also makes repeated assertions that *Jane Eyre* is a Cinderella tale (23, 49, 65) and that this tale is “chief” (Seelye 9) among the fairytale patterns Brontë used. Clarke recognizes a wider range of fairytale and folklore influences in her article, but she only examines the importance of the specific connection with the Grimms’ “Aschenputtel” (695).<sup>14</sup>

Seelye makes a biographical sketch of Brontë to support his Cinderella reading of *Jane Eyre*. He claims that Brontë has a special affinity for the Cinderella tale. However, he does not offer support for this statement, and it is not supported by Brontë’s biographies. Although in *Charlotte Brontë: the Evolution of Genius* (1967), Winifred Gérin demonstrates that the Brontë children had access to a wide variety of stories, with a taste for the fantastic, there is no evidence that the Cinderella story was a particular favorite (28-29). Furthermore, there are no clear Cinderella tales in Brontë’s early writings. However, there are other important fairytale allusions in Brontë’s juvenilia. For example, “Beauty and the Beast” is a recurring motif, and her novella length piece *The Spell*<sup>15</sup> is a “Beauty and the Beast” narrative. Thus, Seelye projects an affinity for Cinderella onto Brontë that is not supported by biographical context. The significance of this projection will be further explored in the final chapter. American audiences not only reinterpret *Jane Eyre* through the American narrative frame of Cinderella, American readers also construct an imagined relationship that positions this novel at the center of an American narrative paradigm through Brontë’s preference for Cinderella and, by extension, American cultural

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<sup>14</sup> Aschenputtel is literally translated: ash girl. It is the title of the Cinderella tale in the Grimms’ *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*.

<sup>15</sup> In the “Beauty and the Beast” section of this thesis it will be shown that *The Spell* conforms to the ATU 425 tale type motifs.

values. This dissertation explores the cultural and literary network that evolved around the novel, particularly the American reconstruction of *Jane Eyre*.

The structuralist classification of fairy tales is useful for this analysis of fairytale paradigms in the literary microcosm that developed around *Jane Eyre*. Although most people recognize Cinderella and “Beauty and the Beast” tales when they hear them, the distinctive motifs and conventions that define these tales are catalogued in the Aarne-Thompson-Uther *Index of Folklore Motifs*. In this index, individual tales are assigned a specific tale type number,<sup>16</sup> and they are grouped together under broad subheadings. While each individual tale type is accompanied by a list of possible tropes that make it distinct from other tales within the same group, the subheadings identify the central motif for all the tales within that group. The subheading is not merely a possible plot convention – it is essential. It is the motif at the heart of the conflict that defines the stories. Stith Thompson, one the architects of the Aarne-Thompson-Uther *The Types of International Folktales*, elaborates on the classification system in *The Folktale* (424-27).

Cinderella is classified as a ATU 510 tale, and “Beauty and the Beast” is classified as a ATU 425 tale. The ATU 510 tale type is listed under the subheading “Supernatural Helpers,”<sup>17</sup> and the ATU 425 tale type is grouped under the subheading “Supernatural or Enchanted Husband (Wife) or Other Relatives.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, according to the Aarne-Thompson-Uther Index, the primary distinction between Cinderella and “Beauty and the Beast” is whether the conflict is resolved with the aid of supernatural helpers or centers upon enchanted spouses. The treatment of this central motif has several facets in Cinderella interpretations of *Jane Eyre*.

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<sup>16</sup> The letters ATU may be placed before the tale type number to indicate the Aarne-Thompson-Uther Index; however, since no other folklore index will be used in this paper, these reference letters have been omitted.

<sup>17</sup> “Supernatural Helpers” is the subheading for tales 500 – 559. Although it is not distinct to the ATU 510 tale type, it is the central motif.

<sup>18</sup> “Supernatural or Enchanted Husband (Wife) or Other Relatives” covers tales 400 – 459.

The primary issue is that scholarly and popular American interpretations of *Jane Eyre* as a Cinderella tale fail to identify any supernatural helpers who are integral to the romantic conflict. Although different characters come alongside Jane throughout the novel, these characters do not function like the supernatural helpers in a Cinderella tale because none of these characters solves the central conflict of the Cinderella tale: the romance. No one helps Jane gain Rochester's love and attention to bring about a happy ending. Gilbert and Gubar suggest that Miss Temple is "closer to a fairy godmother than anyone else Jane has met, closer even to a true mother" (345). While Miss Temple may be a mother figure for Jane, it would be difficult to define her as a supernatural helper, and Miss Temple certainly does not solve Jane's romantic conflict. After her marriage to Rev. Nasmyth, Miss Temple leaves Jane at Lowood and never reenters her life. Jane sums up her interactions with Miss Temple, stating: "Miss Temple ... was lost to me" (73). Similarly, Mrs. Fairfax becomes a friend and mother figure at Thornfield, but she does not encourage Jane's relationship with Rochester.<sup>19</sup> Since the Cinderella paradigm does not fit the plot conventions in *Jane Eyre*, this interpretation is clearly projected onto the novel to fulfill another cultural function. I argue that the cultural stakes invested in this particular interpretation are a significant part of the distinctive transatlantic microcosm that developed as *Jane Eyre* evolved in the cultural imagination. Cinderella readings function to domesticate the

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<sup>19</sup> Using the label "fairy godmother" for the supernatural helper in the Cinderella readings presents a problem for both literary and anthropological schools of folklore. According to Jan Ziolkowski in "A Fairytale from before Fairytales," it is necessary to either use a folklore motif index, such as the *Arne-Thompson Index* or to establish a literary precedent for utilizing a tale.<sup>19</sup> The fairy godmother is not a figure that appears frequently in Cinderella tales; the returning dead mother is the most common supernatural helper (Thompson 127). The Cinderella readings of Seeyle and Gilbert and Gubar need to justify their insistence on using this term in order to incorporate their work into the scholarly conversation surrounding either anthropological or literary uses of the fairytale. Establishing literary precedents for the supernatural helper figure would address the tales available to Brontë. Unless Brontë privileged Perrault's French version of Cinderella, she would not have associated fairy godmothers with Cinderella. Since the returning dead mother is the primary supernatural helper in Cinderella tales, Jane's apparent encounter with her dead mother needs to be addressed in this analysis even though it is not explored in Cinderella readings of the novel. When Jane is fleeing Thornfield, the moon seems to appear to her as her late mother (218). However, this apparition does not function to solve the heroine's romantic dilemma. Indeed, the maternal moon in *Jane Eyre* reverses the traditional role of the magic helper in Cinderella: the moon urges Jane to flee Rochester.

independent changeling heroine and attempt to force Brontë's heroic female *bildungsroman* to conform to traditional domestic Victorian narratives. Moreover, Cinderella becomes a tag for female rise narratives in America; it is invested with strong nationalistic resonance for American audiences.

Instead of Cinderella's external fairytale helper, I argue that the fantastic elements driving the narrative and empowering the heroine in *Jane Eyre* are primarily associated with the regional fairy lore that Brontë grew up with in Haworth. Unlike the exoticized beauties that inhabit Brontë's juvenilia, the changeling heroine Jane Eyre has distinctly local associations. Brontë's juvenilia is set in the imaginary African colony of Angria, a hot and intemperate place full of genii and magic.<sup>20</sup> This extraordinary setting produces exotic female characters, including the Amazon-like Zenobia who drives her own chariot.<sup>21</sup> Zenobia serves as a type for most of the heroines that populate Brontë's early fiction: buxom, beautiful, and distinctly non-British. *Jane Eyre* is a stark contrast with this exoticized escapist juvenilia. In her debut novel, Brontë embraces her local setting; for example, Jane finds herself on moors that resemble the Pennine moors surrounding the Brontë parsonage in Haworth. The changeling heroine in *Jane Eyre* is a regional character who can champion this rather desolate home. Jane finds solace on the moors, and eventually takes refuge in a place called Moor House (300). More significantly, Jane is threatened by trips outside Great Britain. When Jane's cousin St. John Rivers attempts to lead her to be a missionary with him in India, Diana and Mary Rivers argue that the hot climate will kill her (365-66). Not only does the regional female hero replace the exotic models of womanhood in Brontë's juvenilia, she also displaces the Creole Bertha, Rochester's first wife

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<sup>20</sup> It has been frequently argued that these stories provided the Brontë children with a sunny escape from life and death in the cold, gray village of Haworth.

<sup>21</sup> In "The Foundling," the beautiful princess Zenobia demonstrates her superiority to the British Sydney by driving "four fiery, prancing blood horses" (34). It is a feat that the British character Julia cannot match (34-36).

(255-59). In typical fairytale fashion, the local changeling heroine demonstrates that she is the “true” bride for the British hero. Moreover, it is a role that none of Rochester’s foreign mistresses could fill: Rochester contrasts his dissatisfaction with his beautiful mistresses to the British “linnet” (275) or fairy who springs up out of the ground in front of Thornfield and saves him.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the regional fairy lore associated with *Jane Eyre* amplifies Brontë’s distinctive localism, investing her female *bildungsroman* with nationalistic potential.

This distinctive regional character inspired a range of literary responses from women writers. For example, both *Villette* and *Aurora Leigh* generate ambiguity with their heroic female characters and their nationalistic stakes. Although it has been argued that *Villette* and *Aurora Leigh* make strong nationalistic claims, I demonstrate these texts also generate a measure of ambivalence in their heroic female models, and they do not settle on a single fantastic paradigm or allusion. Instead, they experiment with a range of mythic or supernatural female characters, none of which is fully satisfactory. This ambivalence extends into the nationalistic associations of the heroic females in these narratives. By contrast, white, middle-class American women writers consistently use Cinderella plots and Cinderella allusions in their responses to *Jane Eyre*, infusing this narrative with distinctive nationalistic resonance. Furthermore, this Cinderella reading is imposed back upon *Jane Eyre* by American readers, along with its American cultural stakes.

The American Cinderella tale embedded in these novels is a simplified rise narrative that incorporates a wide variety of literary tropes associated with sentimental fiction. Traditional Cinderella narratives defined by a combination of plot motifs including supernatural helpers, magical objects, and a final rise through marriage that returns the heroine to her rightful position

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<sup>22</sup> Rochester took a new mistress in each European country he visited: Cèline Varens in France, Giacinta in Italy, and Clara in Germany (274).



in society. Jane Yolen defines this paradigm in “America’s Cinderella” (1977); Yolen claims that this fairytale paradigm is a limited, “sugar-spun caricature” (296) of other European and Asian variations: “America’s Cinderella has been a coy, helpless dreamer, a ‘nice’ girl who awaits her rescue with patience and a song” (297). Huang Mei’s *Transforming the Cinderella Dream: From Frances Burney to Charlotte Brontë* (1990) supports Yolen’s analysis; Huang notes the lack of definition in this pervasive American narrative. Cinderella is a tag applied to all tales that include an abused heroine who is recognized with a shoe (Huang 2-3). Neither Yolen nor Huang examines the cultural resonance of this rise narrative in American discourse in the nineteenth century, where the rise tale was associated with the American self-rise ethic, which I will explore in the final chapter.

The evolution of Cinderella in America is very different from that in Great Britain. By the 1890s, Cinderella is not a term associated with rise tales in British cultural imagination. Instead, the term becomes increasingly pejorative, used to describe a low or degraded individual. Thus, *Jane Eyre*’s Cinderella interpretations position Brontë’s novel at the center of a distinctly American narrative tradition. Exploring the way in which Brontë’s literary descendants generate larger-than-life female heroines to respond to the changeling heroine Jane Eyre allows a new look at the transatlantic microcosm that developed around *Jane Eyre* and the regional and nationalistic stakes in these texts.

Hannah Crafts’s *The Bondwoman’s Narrative* is a distinctive nineteenth-century addition to this transatlantic microcosm. Crafts breaks out of the white, middle-class American paradigm by exposing the exploitation of labor, particularly the slave labor, that enables the American self-rise ethic. Her heroic female *bildungsroman* also resists the domestication of American narratives; she recognizes that the idealized domestic sphere of white heroines is not a viable

option for a fugitive slave. However, Crafts's novel still has latent nationalistic stakes: Hannah refuses to relinquish her national identity. Although the United States fails to recognize Hannah as a citizen, or even as a human, she does not leave for Canada where she could truly be free. Hannah's complex relationship with the U.S. resembles her complex, unresolved feelings for her white father and her white relatives. Religion and the supernatural help Crafts negotiate these tensions and construct a larger-than-life heroic female that responds to *Jane Eyre's* heroic changeling as well as the American Cinderellas constructed by white American women writers.

*Jane Eyre's* heroic female bildungsroman attracted a wide range of women writers. Her changeling heroine challenges the domestic narrative of the traditional Victorian heroine. Women writers responding to the changeling Jane Eyre attempt to negotiate her heroic and nationalistic associations with new mythic or larger-than-life paradigms. However, American writers and readers develop a more complex relationship with Brontë and her novel, positioning it at the center of a distinctly American narrative paradigm that centers upon the self-rise ethic. This dissertation explores the distinctive literary microcosm that develops around *Jane Eyre*, particularly its shifting nationalistic stakes.

## CHAPTER 2: FAERY AND THE BEAST IN *JANE EYRE*

In *Jane Eyre* (1847), Charlotte Brontë rewrites “Beauty and the Beast” with a heroine whose strategy is diametrically opposed to that of the self-effacing Beauties in her juvenilia, including *The Spell*.<sup>23</sup> Brontë transforms this fairytale plot by adding a changeling heroine. Although *Jane Eyre* is not literally a changeling any more than Edward Fairfax Rochester is literally a beast, the fairy lore and fairytale characteristics of each are clearly recognizable. Furthermore, Brontë’s revision of the traditional fairytale plots through the addition of a changeling heroine is the pebble that starts an avalanche. Women writers throughout the nineteenth century and into the present have responded to Brontë’s strong heroine and reappropriated the fairy tale. This analysis will focus on the amalgamation of fairy tales and fairy lore in *Jane Eyre* and will demonstrate that Brontë used these tropes to create a powerful heroic female protagonist who could challenge the Victorian gender norms emerging in the mid-nineteenth century; it also establishes this fairytale reading in current scholarly conversations.

Scholars have frequently dismissed *Jane Eyre*’s fairytale tropes as immature wish fulfillment, yet these tropes continue to entice critical scrutiny. This analysis brings Brontë’s amalgamation of fairy lore and fairy tales, and its articulation of women’s experiences, to the scholarly conversation. The changeling heroine in *Jane Eyre* is based upon the pre-Victorian fairy lore Brontë both read and listened to when she was growing up in Haworth. Although the “Beauty and the Beast” plot is treated extensively by Victorian women writers, the changeling heroine is a distinctive character in literature of the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> Within the novel’s historical and biographical context, the amalgamation of pre-Victorian fairy lore and

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<sup>23</sup> “The Spell” could also be classified more broadly as an ATU 425 tale.

<sup>24</sup> The distinctive nature of Brontë’s fairy lore is noted in Carole Silver’s analysis of the larger fairy-bride tradition in “‘East of the Sun and West of the Moon’: Victorians and Fairy Brides” (1987). The popularity of the “Beauty and the Beast” tale among women writers is analyzed by Laurence Talairach-Vielmas in “Beautiful Maidens, Hideous Suitors: Victorians Fairy Tales and the Process of Civilization” (2010).

the traditional “Beauty and the Beast” plot in *Jane Eyre* enables Brontë to negotiate the expectations being established for Victorian women by fairy tales with beautiful, good, passive heroines.

The fairytale elements in *Jane Eyre* have tantalized critics, who have chased Brontë’s fairytale allusions like an *ignis fatuus* through a marsh of literary and psychological theory in an attempt to identify the power of the novel and its impact on generations of readers and writers. “Cinderella” has been the dominant fairytale paradigm in scholarly readings ever since Gilbert and Gubar identified Brontë’s novel as a Cinderella tale in *Madwoman in the Attic*. Their interpretation assumes *Jane Eyre* is a Victorian novel based upon a Victorian fairytale tradition; Gilbert and Gubar identify the heroine as one of the “real Victorian Cinderellas” (342). They claim that the fairytale motifs are ultimately disempowering because Jane “can no more become such a woman than Cinderella can become her own fairy godmother” (345). Although scholars have investigated a range of different fairytale allusions in this novel, they usually draw similar conclusions: the fairytale heroine is too weak to create her own happiness. Thus, fairytale readings typically position the heroic female *bildungsroman* within a Victorian female narrative paradigm. These readings assume that the use of fairy tales and the fantastic in *Jane Eyre* resembles the use of the fantastic in Victorian art and literature, like that analyzed by Auerback in *Woman and the Demon*. This review of few prominent fairytale readings demonstrates the continued power of this aspect of *Jane Eyre* as well as the tendency of many scholars to miss the complexity of Brontë’s manipulation of fairytale motifs.

In *Secrets Beyond the Door* (2004), Maria Tatar explores the amalgamation of “Cinderella,” “Bluebeard,” and “Beauty and the Beast” in *Jane Eyre*. Like earlier scholars who analyze the ATU 425 tale in Brontë’s novel, including Paula Sullivan and Karen Rowe, Tatar

recognizes that Brontë's extensive fairytale allusions are part of her message about the female *bildungsroman* in nineteenth-century culture (Tatar 68-70).<sup>25</sup> However, Tatar ultimately discounts the fairy tale elements in the novel, concluding that they are insufficient to support Brontë's message and her strong heroine. She claims that the fairy tale breaks down in the latter half of the novel (Tatar 73-74).<sup>26</sup> Tatar sums it up with the statement: "The endings to 'Cinderella' and 'Beauty and the Beast' ring false to Jane's ears and strike her as perversions rather than inspirations" (73).

Although fairytale readings of *Jane Eyre* rarely establish any context for their interpretations, they reflect one side of a well-established feminist tradition of fairytale scholarship. There are many ways in which fairy tales have functioned as a repressive literary tradition. In *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion* (1988), Jack Zipes argues that many popular literary fairy tales were written to do the cultural work of indoctrinating children: the purpose of literary fairy tales was often to "civilize children, to inhibit them, and perhaps pervert their natural growth" (16). This civilizing message frequently depended upon the construction of a gender hierarchy. Thus, popular fairytale collections, such as Charles Perrault's *Histoires ou contes du temps passé*, depicted the ideal woman as a beautiful and passive member of the patriarchy. Similarly, Ruth Bottigheimer has demonstrated the progressive silencing of female characters in successive editions of the Grimms' popular *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*.<sup>27</sup> The ideal that emerges from these popular fairytale collections in the nineteenth century is a "composite female [who] is beautiful, polite, graceful, industrious, properly groomed, and knows how to

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<sup>25</sup> See Paula Sullivan's "Fairy Tale Elements in *Jane Eyre*" (1978) and Karen Rowe's "'Fairy-born and human bred': Jane Eyre's Education in Romance" (1983). Rowe states: "Folktale patterns exert a subtle yet pervasive influence on the structure of female *Bildungsroman* on our expectations as readers and literary critics" (69).

<sup>26</sup> Also see Rowe (70, 77).

<sup>27</sup> See "Silenced Women in the Grimms' Tales: The 'Fit' Between Fairy Tales and Society in Their Historical Context" by Ruth Bottigheimer in *Fairy Tales and Society: Illusion, Allusion, and Paradigm* (1986).

control herself at all times” (Zipes 25).<sup>28</sup> Thus, folklorists have effectively argued that some of the most popular fairytale collections do the cultural work of disseminating repressive images of women. However, there is a wide and nuanced range of feminist readings of fairy tales; since the debate between Alison Lurie and Marcia Lieberman in the 1970s, feminist scholarship on fairy tales has argued about whether or not this genre empowers or represses women.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, fairytale readings of *Jane Eyre* typically emphasize the disempowerment of the heroine.

Recently Heta Pyrhönen explored the “Bluebeard” motifs of Brontë’s novel in *Bluebeard Gothic: Jane Eyre and Its Progeny* (2010).<sup>30</sup> Instead of arriving at a feminist reading, Pyrhönen emphasizes the potential psychosexual message embedded in Brontë’s fairytale allusions, and she examines how these fairytale elements continue to appear in twenty-first-century literary descendants of the novel. She claims that the fairytale paradigm in *Jane Eyre* is especially significant because it makes the novel function like a fairy tale in popular culture: “both serve as cultural myths and mnemonic symbols... they cannot help but address readers in powerful ways” (7). Since Virginia Woolf’s “*Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*” (1916), scholars have struggled to explain the continued appeal of Brontë’s first novel. Pyrhönen recognizes the connection between *Jane Eyre*’s endurance and its use of fairytale motifs.<sup>31</sup> Pyrhönen bases her claims on the recurrence of Bluebeard Gothic tropes in twentieth-century British literary descendants of

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<sup>28</sup> In *National Dreams* (2003), Jennifer Schacker demonstrates that these international collections became extremely popular in Great Britain; they were translated into English and printed in London from the 1820s onward (4). Thus, fairytale scholarship on the cultural work of these popular international collections is relevant to discussion of British literature.

<sup>29</sup> See “Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship” by Donald Haase in *Fairy Tales and Feminism: New Approaches* (2008).

<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, “Beauty and the Beast” also bleeds into “Bluebeard” readings; in fact the “Bluebeard” tale is listed as a variation of the ATU 425 tale. In fact, Pyrhönen uses Charles Perrault’s “Tufty Ricky” as one of her Bluebeard tales, although it is typically classified as a “Beauty and the Beast” tale in Griswold’s handbook (Pyrhönen 48-50).

<sup>31</sup> Although Pyrhönen primarily emphasizes the importance of fairy tales as psycho-sexual narratives that articulate cultural anxieties, she also suggests that the fairytale elements of *Jane Eyre* have kept this work of literature alive among writers.

*Jane Eyre*, including Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* (1938), Emma Tennant's *Adèle: The Hidden Story of Jane Eyre* (2002), and Diane Setterfield's *The Thirteenth Tale* (2006).

Because Pyrhönen insists that this cultural myth is most meaningful for British authors, she focuses on later twentieth-century British adaptations of *Jane Eyre* (11). This dissertation disputes the claim that the importance of Brontë's novel is greatest for British writers. *Jane Eyre*'s literary descendants on both sides of the Atlantic are profoundly influenced by the novel's fairytale message, although they respond in different ways. Nineteenth-century women writers on both sides of the Atlantic responded to Brontë's first novel with new fairytale and mythic paradigms, following Brontë's pattern but seeking new representations for womanhood. The heroic changeling of Brontë's modified "Beauty and the Beast" tale does not endure. Writers responding to *Jane Eyre*, including Brontë, seek a fairytale figure or a mythic paradigm to replace the changeling as the ideal heroine, a figure that can illustrate the experience of womanhood and compete with heroic male narratives. However, as Pyrhönen argues, it does seem that the novel has become enmeshed in its fairytale allusions, leading writers to respond to it as if it were a fairy tale reappropriated to express women's experiences in Western culture.<sup>32</sup>

In *Forbidden Journeys: Fairy Tales and Fantasies by Victorian Women Writers* (1982), Nina Auerbach and U. C. Knoepfelmacher suggest that *Jane Eyre* was incorporated into many "Beauty and the Beast" tales in the Victorian era (2-3).<sup>33</sup> Laurence Talairach-Vielmas claims that "Beauty and the Beast" tales became popular with women writers in the latter half of the nineteenth century in "Beautiful Maidens, Hideous Suitors: Victorian Fairy Tales and the Process of Civilization" (2010):

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<sup>32</sup> Sullivan made similar claims in "Fairy Tale Elements in *Jane Eyre*" (61).

<sup>33</sup> These "Beauty and the Beast" tales are not examined here; although they incorporate elements of *Jane Eyre*, they primarily rework the ATU 425 tale.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, British revisions of “Beauty and the Beast” attracted many women writers. Its appeal probably lies in the fact that the story may be viewed as ‘a female pilgrim’s progress,’ in Marina Warner’s terms: it deals with the violence of male sexuality, which the heroine must learn to tame – and accept – and which marks the main stage of her education into womanhood. (275)

The continued response of women writers to this novel suggests that *Jane Eyre* and its “Beauty and the Beast” plot have been adopted as a sort of communal female *bildungsroman*, despite the dismissal of the fairytale tropes by scholars such as Tatar.

Like Pyrhönen, I suggest that the inclusion of fairytale allusions in *Jane Eyre* allow Brontë to bend the novel genre. In “Jane Eyre: The Temptations of a Motherless Woman” (1973), Adrienne Rich makes the bold statement: “*Jane Eyre* is not a novel... [it] is a tale” (463). Although Rich bases this claim on a metaphysical connection between this narrative and the human psyche, Tatar makes a more concrete observation about *Jane Eyre*’s tale-like status. In *Secrets Beyond the Door*, Tatar claims that women writers have continued to respond to Brontë’s narrative because the novel is actually a fairy tale; it contains the coded symbols and embedded messages that remain culturally significant (7). In the “Introduction” to *The Sadeian Woman* (1979), Angela Carter, a self-identified literary descendent of Brontë, makes a similar claim: the power of *Jane Eyre* is in its “subliterary forms of romance and fairy tale” (vi).<sup>34</sup>

Fairytale readings of *Jane Eyre* have been primarily limited to canonical tales; this analysis attempts to broaden the horizons of the scholarly conversation. While the combination of fairytale motifs in Brontë’s novel is certainly significant, later women writers were particularly intrigued by the concept of feminine empowerment conveyed by the fairy-bride

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<sup>34</sup> Although Rich’s metaphysical reading of the significance of fairy tales is no longer in vogue, Jack Zipes has argued that fairy tales do interact with the human mind in a distinctive manner. In *Why Fairy Tales Stick: The Evolution and Relevance of a Genre* (2006), Zipes claims that the fair tale genre is particularly suited to convey messages to the human brain: “the fairy tale has become a very specific genre in our lives and has inserted itself in inexplicable ways so that many of us try, even without knowing it, to make fairy tales out of our lives” (xi). Thus, scholars recognize that fairy tales are a powerful genre, although there is no single explanation for this observed reality.



tradition in *Jane Eyre*. According to Carole Silver's "'East of the Sun and West of the Moon': Victorians and Fairy Brides" (1987), this fairy lore challenged the patriarchal social norms emerging in the nineteenth century, as the reaction of Victorian folklorists demonstrates.<sup>35</sup> Amid the myriad (often conflicting) messages conveyed by Brontë's fairytale allusions, her fairy lore sets this novel apart from other narratives and may explain the attraction of *Jane Eyre* for nineteenth-century women writers. The pre-Victorian fairy offers an alternative construction of female identity and female power, which clashes with Victorian ideals of feminine passivity and domesticity. The fairy bride maintained her independence and her power after marriage; she could not be confined to the domestic sphere. Most prominent folklorists responded to the fairy bride as if it were a threat to Victorian values and attempted to explain it away as a lost figure from a "conquered race" (Silver 289). These folklorists claimed the fairy bride represented a lost matriarchal culture that was eventually subsumed by more powerful patriarchal cultures. By embedding the fairy-bride tradition in a narrative of progress that glorified the Victorian patriarchy, folklorists attempted to qualify and undermine the counter-culture message: as a remnant of a lost culture, the narrative was no longer relevant.

None of the scholarly fairytale readings of *Jane Eyre* discussed here considers the pre-Victorian fairy lore or fairy-bride tradition that Brontë merges with fairy tales.<sup>36</sup> Gilbert and Gubar only note the fairy references in the novel as pejorative labels applied to the heroine by other characters (361-62). Thus, these scholars miss Brontë's central transformation of the

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<sup>35</sup> In "Heroic Myth and Women in Victorian Literature" (1982), Norman Vance claims that the Victorians have a "pantheon" of male heroes and "a hero-worshipping sub-literature to celebrate them" (169), but there was a lack of powerful British heroines. Thus, Brontë's powerful changeling heroine was enticing to Victorian writers seeking "heroic myth in the presentation of women" (169).

<sup>36</sup> Sullivan notes *Jane Eyre*'s fairy identity but does not analyze the significance or distinctive nature of this trope in Brontë's writing (62).

traditional fairy tale and her creation of a heroic female character.<sup>37</sup> As Brontë worked out the “Beauty and the Beast” plot in her juvenilia, she recognized its insufficiencies as a cultural narrative for women. In *Jane Eyre*, she deals with the weakness of the “Beauty and the Beast” plot in relation to the power of the pre-Victorian changeling heroine. The changeling heroine becomes an alternative to the self-effacing female Beauties in Brontë’s juvenilia. Heroines featured in her earlier stories and novellas, such as Mary and Mina Laury in *The Spell*, find “a kind of strange pleasure in bearing the burden and carrying the yoke of him whose fascinations fettered [them] so strongly” (76). By contrast, the changeling is not enslaved by her love because she has her own rules and she respects those rules – she is not the captive, or captivated, Beauty who is subject to the rules of a Beast.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the changeling relies on her own internal power and creates her own happy ending; she is a heroic female. She breaks out of traditional Victorian narrative paradigms for women. The potential for female empowerment embedded in the changeling character is one element this analysis contributes to fairytale readings of *Jane Eyre*. Contrary to Gilbert and Gubar’s claims, Jane Eyre can be her own “fairy godmother” (345).

While the pre-Victorian North-Country fairy lore that empowered Brontë’s heroine was not the remnant of a past matriarchy, it was lost to later literature. This distinction between pre-Victorian and Victorian influences is explicitly missed by scholars like Gilbert and Gubar, and it is ignored by others. Written on the cusp of the Victorian era, Brontë’s first novel taps into an alternative fairy-lore tradition that challenges emerging ideals for women, but it is a performance that cannot be repeated. All *Jane Eyre*’s literary descendants, including Brontë’s final novel,

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<sup>37</sup> Rowe claims the fairytale paradigms in *Jane Eyre* are tempered with “alternative models of mature love” (70). This dissertation is not disputing this claim; rather, it argues that the changeling heroine is one of the primary agents of Brontë’s transformation of fairytale expectations.

<sup>38</sup> Thus, the changeling cannot fulfill the role of the traditional Beauty because she cannot simply sacrifice herself to “obtain what all women supposedly wanted or want – namely marriage in the form of male domination” (Zipes 41).

*Villette* (1853), are dealing with that perceived lack of the changeling heroine and her pre-Victorian lore. Silver claims that Brontë's heroine Jane Eyre is the last acclaimed portrayal of the fairy bride in British literature (292-94). The following chapters examine this loss, beginning with Brontë's *Villette*, and suggest explanations for it. These chapters also analyze how Brontë and her literary progeny on both sides of the Atlantic attempt find alternative mythology or fairy tales to express the power of the feminine and the possible significance of this shift in transatlantic scholarship on *Jane Eyre*. I argue that the regional pre-Victorian fairy lore that Brontë invested in her debut novel was especially attractive for her transatlantic readers, even though it could not be replicated.

### **Jane Eyre: The Faery and the Beast**

Growing up in the North-Country during the 1820s and 1830s, Charlotte Brontë was immersed in a pre-Victorian fairy-lore tradition. Brontë's father, Reverend Patrick Brontë, was the Perpetual Curate of the Established Church in Haworth; the parsonage was on the edge of the Pennine Moors in West Yorkshire, part of the North-Country.<sup>39</sup> Unlike Victorian fairy lore, which developed a rather canonical set of tropes and ideology as it was mass produced in art and literature, pre-Victorian fairy lore in Great Britain is regional and lacks set conventions. In *National Dreams: The Remaking of Fairy Tales in Nineteenth Century England* (2003), Jennifer Schacker claims that the "ideologically charged textual practices and interpretive frameworks" (1) of Victorian fairy lore still govern and influence the Western perception of this tradition.<sup>40</sup> According to Jeremy Maas in "Victorian Fairy Painting" (2001), the Golden Age of fairy

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<sup>39</sup> See *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857) by Elizabeth Gaskell (34-36). Gaskell's first chapters especially emphasize the importance of Haworth and the surrounding moors on the life and work of Charlotte Brontë.

<sup>40</sup> Schacker posits several social and cultural reasons for the formation of these interpretive frameworks, including the construction of national identity (Schacker 3-4). In *Fairies in Nineteenth Century Art and Literature* (2001), Nicola Bown also emphasizes the gendered shift that occurred in the material production of fairy lore. Most popular and prominent stories and depictions of Victorian fairies were generated by men (Bown 4). This tradition is reflected in Brontë's *Villette* and will be analyzed at length in the next chapter.

painting and literature was between 1840 – 1870, the height of the Victorian Era (11). Thus, reconstructing a pre-Victorian fairy lore is challenging. It requires a shift in interpretive frameworks and material that pre-date the majority of fairy lore produced in Great Britain.

Brontë's writing was a part of a fairy-lore tradition that was both oral and literary. Without constructing a “dichotomizing framework’ in which orality and literacy approached as ‘two opposing types’” (Schacker 6), this analysis demonstrates the existence of alternative fairy-lore traditions with distinctive and powerful representations of womanhood that Brontë incorporated into *Jane Eyre*. This oral fairy lore is also particularly regional. Thus, Brontë's powerful changeling is also a regional figure. While the literary sources available to the Brontës have been well established, only glimmers of the oral tradition remain, captured in the papers of the Brontë family and in the geography surrounding the Brontë parsonage.

In Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Catherine Linton beguiled Hareton into taking her out to the moors, where he “opened the mysteries of the Fairy cave, and twenty other queer places” (153). This passage illustrates the direct connection between the land and pre-Victorian North-Country fairy lore: “the mysteries of the Fairy cave” is a reference to fairy lore about a specific cave on the local moors. According to Jessica Lofthouse in *North-Country Folklore* (1976), fairy lore is literally tied to the land in the North-Country.<sup>41</sup> *Wuthering Heights* suggests that the Brontës were a part of this tradition.

Lofthouse claims that some links between fairy lore and the local environment are overt, such as engraved stones marking the burial sites of fairy creatures (30). However, most stories

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<sup>41</sup> *North Country Folklore* (1976) also reflects the pre-Victorian fairy lore with its distinctive regional flavor and non-canonical tales. It was a living fairy lore, linked to the land and kept alive by eyewitness accounts. During the nineteenth century, fairy sightings by reliable witnesses such as doctors and local clergymen supported the belief that fairies haunted the locations named for them (14-16). Whether or not there was widespread faith in the existence of fairies in the North-Country, these eyewitness accounts demonstrate the extent to which fairy lore circulated in that region as well as the social status of such stories.

are linked to the natural landscape, like the Fairy cave in *Wuthering Heights*. One such place is Jennet's Foss and Jennet's Cave on the Pennine Moors in West Yorkshire. This rather spectacular geographic location has perpetuated stories about the North-Country's distinctive fairy queen, Jennet. Lofthouse states:

The old, low-arched bridge has been replaced by a plain functional one. But take the path on the left bank to a bathing place fit for the Queen of Faery. The beck has its most dramatic moments here, plunging over black rocks in a waterfall called Jennet's Foss, a veil of water half concealing Jennet's Cave behind it. A place for water sprites or naiads... who chose such places to fiddle to the accompaniment of falling water. Old folk-tales make it a gateway of Faery, and Jennet its queen. (21)

Despite the popularity of William Shakespeare's immortal fairy queen, Titania, the regional geography associated with Jennet has kept her stories alive in the North-Country. According to Winifred Gérin's biography *Charlotte Brontë: The Evolution of Genius* (1967), the Brontë children walked with Tabby and listened to her fairy lore (38-39). It is highly improbable that a distinctive and popular landmark such as Jennet's Cave would have been unfamiliar to them.<sup>42</sup> It may even be the cave Emily Brontë alludes to in *Wuthering Heights*. References to Jennet also appear in the proposal scene in *Jane Eyre*.

Fairies are not only tied to the land in the North-Country tradition, but they engage in mundane, local activity, such as going to market and doing laundry (Lofthouse 18-20). Their rural costumes and activities are a reflection of the local culture in miniature. Although female fairies are the most powerful and prominent in these stories, male fairies are mentioned frequently (Lofthouse 11-21). The fairies in the North-Country tradition stories are very different from the

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<sup>42</sup> Although William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* set the British tradition of referring to the Queen of Faery as Titania, there were several other popular names for the immortal ruler of fairy land, including Diana, Bodeca, and Mary. Moreover, all of these popular fairy queen titles are alluded to in *Jane Eyre* and have been noticed by scholars such as Robert Martin in "Jane Eyre and the World of Faery" (92). However, Jane Eyre's extensive association with Jennet, especially through Rochester's pet name for her, "Janet" (219), appears to have gone unnoticed.

decadent, hyper-sexualized and infantilized fairies of later Victorian culture, which Nicola Bown describes in the “Introduction” to *Fairies in Nineteenth Century Art and Literature* (2001). According to Bown, Victorian fairies, like Victorian angels, were depicted as primarily female: “Victorian men idealized and infantilized women, something which might also be said about the way they pictured fairies” (4).

Fairy tales and local folk lore were an integral part of life in the Brontë parsonage when Charlotte Brontë was growing up. In “‘That Kingdom of Gloom’: Charlotte Brontë, the Annuals, and the Gothic” (1993), Christine Alexander includes Ellen Nussey’s account of the amateur folklorist activity of the entire family.<sup>43</sup> The Reverend Patrick Brontë led his children in collecting local stories from the oldest members of the parish in Haworth (Alexander 412). Branwell Brontë’s journal contains the few surviving examples of these tales, including the “Darkwell Gytrash” (Leaf 11, Verso). Although the gytrash is a fairy beast rather than a fairy, the tale has the same elements as Lofthouse’s fairy lore. The tale is closely tied to the local geography and the local people, and the fairy beast is relatively powerful. Like Jennet’s Foss and Jennet’s Cave, Darkwell is a farm on the moors near the parsonage. The gytrash is specifically tied to the place and the family living there; it appears before or after tragic events (Branwell Brontë Leaf 11, Verso). Clearly, the Brontës were familiar with the type of regional tales Lofthouse collected in *North-Country Folklore*.

Biographies of Charlotte Brontë by both Elizabeth Gaskell and Gérin recognize Tabby Ackroyd, the Brontës’ house servant, as the most significant source of folklore in Brontë’s life (Gaskell 63-66; Gérin 38-40). In *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857), Gaskell states:

Tabby had lived in Haworth in the days when the pack-horses went through once a week... What is more, she had known the ‘bottom,’ or valley, in those primitive

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<sup>43</sup> Gérin claims that Ellen Nussey was one of Charlotte Brontë’s closest friends; the two girls met at Miss Wooler’s school (61-64).

days when the fairies frequented the margin of the ‘beck’ on moonlight nights, and had known folk who had seen them.... ‘It wur the factories as had driven ‘em away,’ she said. (63)

Gérin emphasizes the connection between Tabby’s stories and the local environment, especially the moors.

In her tales, where resentment yet burnt at the disfigurement of a beautiful landscape and the abolition of a centuries-old way of life, Tabby became an unconscious poet, filling the hills and woods and streams with an anthropomorphic life in which she believed with all the force of her good sense and rustic piety. In the golden age before the mills had come, there had been fairies by the beck-side in the hollows... (38)

She not only told the Brontë children stories about the fairies inhabiting the local landscape, she also “walked with them on the moors” (39), taking them out into the world she filled with wonder. Tabby’s fairy lore was so real to the children, Charlotte Brontë thought she saw a fairy standing over her little sister Anne’s cradle, according to a letter included in Juliet Barker’s *The Brontës: A Life in Letters* (1998).<sup>44</sup> However, Brontë’s literal belief in fairies is not as significant as her use of fairy tales and the fantastic to work through the trauma of loss. Gérin claims that the Brontë children all used fairy tales and magical stories to cope with the deaths of their mother and older sisters (16-17).<sup>45</sup> Brontë invests her heroine with this power – distinctive, empowering fairy lore.<sup>46</sup> The regionalism of North-Country fairy lore is also incorporated into the fairy

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<sup>44</sup> This story was told by Sarah Garr, a nurse at the Brontë parsonage (Barker 3).

<sup>45</sup> The four surviving children wrote and acted out stories in which they would repeatedly kill and revive heroes and heroines; Gérin states: “It was not for mere love of magic that, for years after, in their games and dramatized stories, they claimed ‘to make alive again’ the casualties of the day” (17). Although it may be impossible to fully understand the psychological significance of these tales and dramas, it is clear that the Brontë children sought empowerment and solace in the stories they told each other. For example, in the short story “The Foundling,” Brontë depicts herself and her siblings as four genii: Tali, Brani, Anni, and Emi (“The Foundling” 130-31). These genii set the world back in order by restoring the dead hero to life at the end of the story: the “four Chief Genii, who rule the destinies of our world... [decree that] the cold corpse in that grace shall breathe again the breath of life” (130).

<sup>46</sup> In the revised edition of *Breaking the Magic Spell* (2002), Jack Zipes argues that folk tales once reflected the needs of a specific community: “Once there was a time when folk tales were part of communal property and told with original and fantastic insights by gifted storytellers who gave vent to the frustrations of the common people and embodied their needs and wishes in the folk narratives. Not only did the tales serve to unite the people of a community and help bridge a gap in their understanding of social problems in a language and narrative mode familiar to the listener’s experiences, but their aura illuminated the possible fulfillment of utopian longings and

heroine. The changeling heroine offers a heroic alternative to the traditional Victorian heroine represented by the exoticized Beauties in Brontë's juvenilia and the Creole Bertha in *Jane Eyre*. The comparison of these female figures will be expanded upon here. This gives Jane's *bildungsroman* potential nationalistic resonance, which became increasingly significant for Brontë's American progeny, as will be explored in the following chapters.

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Jane Eyre is first aware of her changeling identity when it provokes her to resist the abuses of her cousin John Reed. It is that powerful "something" (4) she senses rising from the recesses deep inside of her. Her resistance results in imprisonment in the Red Room, and when she sees herself in the mirror, she thinks she is seeing a half-fairy being:

All looked colder and darker in that visionary hollow than in reality: and the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real spirit: I thought it like one of the tiny phantoms, half fairy, half imp, Bessie's evening stories represented as coming out of lone, ferny dells in moors and appearing before the eyes of belated travelers. (11)

This passage offers a pre-Victorian definition of the fairy that reflects the influence of the Ettrick Shepherd's stories in *Blackwood's Magazine* and the North-Country fairy lore articulated by Lofthouse. Fairies are strange, small creatures, they are associated with local tales and local natural settings, like dells and moors, they usually appear at night in the moonlight, and they are lonely creatures that are linked with travelers who are lost or searching for something. However, it is significant that Jane is not just a fairy; she is a changeling, a half-fairy, like Mary Burnett in "Fairies, Brownies, and Witches" rather than a full fairy like the Lady of the Moor in "Fairies, Deils, and Witches" (Hogg 214-27, 509-19). Brontë establishes this in her juvenilia. Sydney, the

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wishes which did not preclude social integration." (6) Of course this oral folk tale was generally superseded by the literary fairy tale in Western culture. However, through Tabby, Brontë had access to a tradition that could still reflect the needs and longings of a specific community.



protagonist in “The Foundling,” is a changeling: he has a fairy mother and a human father (106-09). This story also demonstrates Brontë’s awareness of the fairy-bride tradition.

The stories of folklorist James Hogg (1770-1835), who published fairy stories in *Blackwood’s Magazine* under the pseudonym of the Ettrick Shepherd, were one of the literary sources of pre-Victorian fairy lore to which Brontë had extensive access. Gérin established that this magazine was a favorite of Charlotte and Branwell (41). Alexander has further established that this author was one of the children’s favorites in the periodical (xix). Thus, Ettrick Shepherd’s fairy lore is worth examining at length. Ettrick Shepherd’s “Fairies, Brownies, and Witches” (1828) depicts one of the powerful female changelings that was lost to later Victorian literature: the heroine, Mary Burnett. Mary reveals her identity as a changeling when her lover, John Allanson, tries to control her with unholy power. This transgression brings Mary’s fairy nature to the fore, and she defends herself against John and finally destroys him. After taking her revenge, Mary leaves to accept her role as the queen of fairyland. Mary Burnett is a particularly strong character. She drives her own chariot, controls her own destiny, and takes vengeance on John Allanson for his sins against her and all womankind (Hogg 224). Although she bears two children, she resists domesticity. She never appears in a domestic setting, such as a house; instead she is active in the outdoors, particularly in rural areas. Her children only appear in the narrative when they are with her in her chariot as she leaves to reign over her fairy realm (Hogg 226-27). The story of Mary Burnett is part of the fairy-bride tradition and provides an example of a variation of these tropes, which are catalogued in “The Human-Fairy Marriage” (1955) by H. N. Gibson. In these unions, the human is a man, and the fairy is “invariably female” (Gibson

358). The fairy bride has conditions and laws that her husband cannot transgress, and when he does, she leaves him and returns to Fairyland (Gibson 358).<sup>47</sup>

Throughout the course of the novel, Jane fulfills all the criteria established in the scene in the Red Room and the larger fairy-bride tradition of pre-Victorian fairy lore. Whenever the fairy side of Jane's changeling nature surfaces, those characteristics surface as well, and they are recognized by other characters. For example, it waxes powerful when she confronts Mrs. Reed and frightens her aunt with her power. It rises when she meets Rochester on the road to and from Thornfield (97-101, 214-17), when Rochester proposes to Jane in the garden (222), when Jane flees Rochester after her aborted wedding (279-86), when she resists St. John Rivers' proposal on the moors outside Moor House (367-70), and when she finally returns to Rochester at Ferndean (384-86). This section analyzes these moments in the text.

It is significant that Jane identifies herself as a fairy or changeling when she looks in the mirror at in the first chapter of the novel (11). From the outset, the fairy is an identity she assumes; it is not imposed upon her. Jane's initial self-identification also justifies the use of an internal definition of the fairy in analyzing *Jane Eyre*. Jane's understanding of the changeling is based on the oral tradition she received from the maid Bessie just as Brontë's definition of a fairy is partially based on the stories she received from Tabby Ackroyd (Gérin 30). This use of the changeling challenges Gilbert and Gubar's claim in *The Madwoman in the Attic* that the "fairy" and "changeling" labels are pejorative terms only applied to Jane by others (361-62).

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<sup>47</sup> The changeling heroine in this story is also distinctive from fairies, like the fairy Lady of the Moor in the Ettrick Shepherd's "Fairies, Deils, and Witches," which was also published in *Blackwood's* in 1828 (509-19). In this story, the Lady of the Moor protects Colin Hyslop from Catholics and evil powers (Hogg 516). Like Mary Burnett, the fairy is an independent and spiritually potent woman who primarily works and acts out of doors. However, the Lady of the Moor is not as sympathetic to humans; she does not show concern for either having or maintaining human relationships, the way that Mary Burnett does with her parents and children (Hogg 226-27).

When Jane confronts her Aunt Reed after the meeting with Mr. Brocklehurst, Jane retaliates for the first time in her life (26-27). Previously, she had defended herself against her cousin's physical attack, but she had not retaliated. Jane consciously gathers her inner power and exerts it in a verbal assault: "*Speak* I must; I had been trodden on severely, and *must* turn: but how? What strength had I to dart retaliation at my antagonist? I gathered my energies and launched them into this blunt sentence" (30). Jane's verbal assault is the culmination of her burgeoning fairy nature. The fairies in the Ettrick Shepherd's stories in *Blackwood's Magazine* exercised similar verbal acuity; fairies traditionally exercise verbal power. Furthermore, as in the Red Room, Jane's appearance after confronting her Aunt Reed associates her with changelings. When she meets with Bessie immediately following the confrontation, the nurse tells her she looks like a small, wandering fairy in the garden (33).

Aunt Reed is so frightened by Jane's words that she runs away, leaving Jane the victorious fairytale heroine: "I was left here alone – winner of the field. It was the hardest battle I had fought, and the first victory I had gained: I stood awhile on the rug, where Mr. Brocklehurst had stood, and I enjoyed my conqueror's solitude." (32) However, Jane's verbal confrontation of Aunt Reed moves from the fairytale triumph of the little heroine over the wicked stepmother figure through a recognition of the transient nature of that triumph. Hatred must pass; love is necessary for human interactions: "Something of vengeance I had tasted for the first time; as aromatic wine it seemed, on swallowing, warm and racy: its after-flavour metallic and corroding, gave me a sensation as if I had been poisoned" (32). Through this first confrontation, Brontë creates a heroine who is empowered by the fairytale tradition but not limited by it. The changeling heroine exercises fairy-like power, but she also has the insight to move beyond the

prescribed boundaries of both fairy tales and fairy lore because Jane is a human with a soul. This balance characterizes the reemergence of the changeling heroine throughout the novel.

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Jane's first encounter with Rochester on the lane leading to Thornfield is liberally laced with fairytale allusions and motifs. In this meeting, the fairy side of Jane's changeling identity grows powerful (97-101). In her confrontation with Aunt Reed, Jane uses her fairy power to break out of a bad situation; in her meeting with Rochester, Jane is beginning a new era of her life. It was an answer for her desire for "intercourse with her kind" (95). The fairy lore in this passage coincides with the beginning of a new order in Jane's life. This fairy lore reflects Brontë's experience in the North-Country as well as the Irish fairy-lore tradition.

According to John Cannon in *The History of the Brontë Family from Ireland to Wuthering Heights* (2000), the Brontës' Irish roots "can be found in every Brontë novel" (20), particularly Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (18).<sup>48</sup> He claims that the foundling tale at the heart of this novel is similar to a tale told by both Hugh and Welsh (Cannon 18-65). Patrick Brontë's Irish father, Hugh Brunty, and grandfather, Welsh Brunty, were both well-known local storytellers in Imdel, a small village near Ballyrone (17-18).<sup>49</sup> If Patrick Brontë carried this tale back from his father, it is likely he shared a wide variety of Irish folklore and fairy lore with his children. Furthermore, Patrick Brontë's interest in collecting and sharing folklore has been well established.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> In the "Introduction" to *The Brontës Tales of Glass Town, Angria, and Gondal*, Christine Alexander claims that Patrick Brontë was "central to the happiness of the four surviving children" (xv) and that his "unusually liberal views" (xv) and his love of literature were indelibly impressed upon them. Thus, the influence of the Irish tradition that Patrick came from should not be ignored.

<sup>49</sup> According to John Cannon in *The History of the Brontë Family: from Ireland to Wuthering Heights* (2000), Patrick Brontë changed the spelling of his name when he left Ireland and went to Cambridge in 1802 (20-21).

<sup>50</sup> In *The Brontës: A Life in Letters* (1999), Juliet Barker includes letters written by Patrick Brontë also confirm Ellen Nussey's assertions. He describes sharing stories with his young children in letters written to Elizabeth Gaskell on

Gaskell minimized Patrick Brontë's Irish roots in her biography *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*. Although she mentions that he was born in Ireland, she emphasizes his lack of stereotypical Irish characteristics: "Mr Brontë has now no trace of his Irish origin remaining in his speech; he never could have shown his Celtic descent in the straight Greek lines and long oval of his face..." (Gaskell 35). Thus, the influence of Irish fairy lore and folklore on *Jane Eyre* is not explored in scholarship, despite links established by Cannon (Cannon 6-8). However, it may be assumed that the Brontë children were familiar with Irish fairy lore as well as the North-Country tradition in which they were immersed at Haworth. Although it is impossible to determine what specific stories the Brontës would have heard, Irish fairy-lore collections, including T. Crofton Croker's *Irish Fairy Legends* (1825-28), provide the regional style and a generalized literary tradition.

In Croker's collection, fairies are both male and female. Like North-Country fairies, Irish fairies reflect the local culture and engage in mundane local activities (Croker 27-32). They are not infantilized, hypersexualized, or particularly mysterious. Rather, fairies are characterized by their verbal acuity, such as the changeling in "The Brewery of Egg-Shells" (Croker 27-30). Furthermore, these mischievous beings enjoy teasing and taunting humans; they do not suffer transgressions against their own rules (Croker 44-49). This sort of personal independence is what makes the pre-Victorian fairy a heroic character rather than a domestic Victorian heroine.

The setting of Jane's first meeting with Rochester is the setting that Jane has associated with fairies since the Red Room episode. It is a lonely, natural setting where moonrise coincides with sunset. Brontë emphasizes the moon in this scene; it is mentioned three times (97, 99, 100). Jane enjoys the setting and the moonlight; she is at peace in a setting that others would find

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24 July and 30 July 1855 (Barker 3-4, 10). An undated letter to Branwell's friend Francis Leyland also describes his practice of storytelling with his children.

intimidating, as if it is her natural element. She states, “I am not at all afraid of being out late when it is moonlight” (100). Jane’s thoughts are shaped by fairy tales as she walks along the moonlit road. When she first sees Rochester and Pilot, she immediately thinks about the story of Gytrash; this story is specifically a local tale Bessie has told her (98). Moreover, the Gytrash in Jane’s story resembles the Darkwell Gytrash Branwell describes in his journal (Branwell Brontë leaf 11, verso).

In this lonely setting, Jane demonstrates her internalized fairy power. She has the ability to verbally deal with Rochester (98-99). She resists his commands to go home and stays to assist him (98). She has the courage to approach his horse and then help him to the animal (99-100), something she claims that she would not normally have done. Moreover, Jane revels in her actions; she enjoys exercising the active, fairy side of her changeling nature: “it marked with change one single hour of a monotonous life... it was an active thing, and I was weary of an existence all passive” (101). Jane’s moonlit roadside behavior resembles both Irish and North-Country fairy lore traditions – particularly her verbal parries with Rochester.

Jane implies that the ease she feels around Rochester is connected to this fairy-like nature of their meeting (103). Rochester’s fairytale connections draw Jane to him and allow Rochester to be a character who is able to recognize Jane’s fairy nature (107). Like her, he is a part of this fairy-haunted place (101). Brontë makes this connection explicit; Jane is inspired to use heath as a metaphor for Rochester: “Like heath that, in the wilderness/The wild wind blows away” (101). Heath is not a fairy plant, but it covers the moors where fairies live. This is the poetic phrase Jane uses to describe Rochester’s disappearance down the road. Jane’s immediate comfort in Rochester’s presence is also related to his appearance. She is comfortable with his lack of beauty as well as his rough manners (99-100).

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Jane's return to Thornfield and her reunion with Rochester after the death of Aunt Reed parallels their first meeting: an isolated roadside encounter (213-16). However, this meeting seems to be an extended allusion to a particular fairy story – “Tamlane” – a traditional Scottish fairy story in which the hero, Tamlane, is saved from enchantment by his betrothed, Burd Janet (Ragan 40). Tamlane was enchanted by the Queen of Fairy, and he is doomed to be sacrificed by her to the devil. Burd Janet saves Tamlane by identifying him, pulling him into a circle of holy water, and holding on to him until he turns into a man (Ragan 40-41).

Brontë's access to this extremely popular Scottish fairy tale is overdetermined. It is included in Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802) under its Scottish title, “Tam Lin” (228-35). It is also printed in several other popular folktale collections that Brontë may have had access to, including the works of Robert Kirk and *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* by Francis Child. Brontë may have gained access to this tale through any number of literary or oral sources, though Scott's collection seems to be the most likely.

The writings of Sir Walter Scott include some of the most significant pre-Victorian fairy lore. In “Fairy Writing and Writers” (2001), Stella Beddoe claims that Sir Walter Scott's research and scholarship put him at the forefront of nineteenth-century British fairy-lore studies (27). Scott's collection *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1801-02) includes several fairy stories. Beddoe states that it is one of the earliest collections to be published and gain a popular audience in Great Britain (27). Scott not only collected stories, he wrote essays on the subject of fairy lore, such as “The Fairies of Popular Superstition.” According to Christine Alexander's “Introduction” to *The Brontës' Tales of Class Town, Angria, and Gondal* (2010), Scott was a “literary hero” (xvii) in the Brontë household. In a letter to Ellen Nussey on 4 July 1834, Brontë recommends

the works of Scott above all others: “read Scott alone all novels after his are worthless [sic]” (Barker 29). Thus, it is highly likely that Brontë would be well aware of Scott’s fairy lore, including the popular “Tam Lin” ballad.

When Jane meets Rochester upon her return to Thornfield, she sees him across a hedge of roses (214) and realizes that he makes a place her “only home” (216). The hedge of roses may be an allusion to the reunion of Burd Janet and Tamlane, which also occurs besides a rose bush. Rochester begins their meeting by naming Jane: “And this is Jane Eyre” (214). Rochester truly recognizes her for who she is; he proceeds to recognize her fairy identity: “a dream or a shade... you elf... blue *ignis fatuus* light in a marsh... Queen Boadicea... fairy as you are... Janet...” (215-16). Queen Boadicea was the legendary queen of the Britons who rebelled against Roman domination. As an ancient, local, female power, she parallels Janet, or Jennet, queen of the fairies (Lofthouse 21). It is significant that the changeling heroine in “Fairies, Brownies, and Witches” was also connected with the figure of the fairy queen (Hogg 224). Jane will similarly name and identify Rochester later in the garden. Identification is a trope that recurs in both fairy tales and fairy lore; and it is central to the action in “Tamlane.”

As the fairy queen, Jane has the power to face death, return to the land of the living, charm Rochester, and disenchant him. Rochester expands on the extent of Jane’s fairy powers when he asks her for a “charm, or a philter, or something of that sort, to make me a handsome man” (215). He knows she can rehumanize him, just as Tamlane knew that Burd Janet could save him. The verbal exchange between Rochester and Jane is also important; it demonstrates that communication and understanding are at the heart of their relationship. Brontë expands the trope of verbal acuity featured in tales about Irish and North-Country fairies along with the



fairytale trope of identification into the communication that lies at the heart of the relationship between Rochester and Jane. Like Burd Janet and Tamlane, each character knows the other.

The fairytale allusions in Rochester's meeting with Jane by the rosebush become explicit in Rochester's metaphorical retelling of this event in the carriage ride with Adèle after the engagement. Rochester states:

“It was a little thing with a veil of gossamer on its head. I beckoned it to come near me.... I never spoke to it, and it never spoke to me, in words: but I read its eyes, and it read mine; and our speechless colloquy was to this effect: - It was a fairy, and come from Elf-land, it said; and its errand was to make me happy: I must go with it out of the common world to a lonely place – such as the moon, for instance – and it nodded its head towards her horn, rising over Hay-hill: it told me of the alabaster cave and silver vale where we might live. I said I should like to go; but reminded it, as you did me, that I had no wings to fly.”

“‘Oh,’ returned the fairy, ‘that does not signify! Here is a talisman that will remove all difficulties;’ and she held out a pretty gold ring. ‘Put it,’ she said, ‘on the fourth finger of my left hand, and I am yours, and you are mine; and we shall leave earth, and make our heaven yonder.’ She nodded again at the moon....”

“Mademoiselle is a fairy,” he said, whispering mysteriously. (35)

In this account of their meeting, Jane is explicitly named a fairy and Gateshead is “Elf-land” (235). Although Rochester interprets the situation as centered around him and his happiness, like the traditional “Beauty and the Beast” plot, he recognizes that the power lies with Jane. She has the power to make him happy; moreover, that power is active. In this account, Rochester is the passive recipient of Jane's proposal just as Tamlane is the relatively passive recipient of Burd Janet's proposal and rescue; Burd Janet is a heroic protagonist. However, Jane only has this power in his retelling of it where he recognizes her as a fairy. In his first retelling of it during the carriage ride, he is active and she is passive, but even Adèle recognizes that as false. Thus, Rochester retells the story with Jane as an active fairy; she is heroic. Like Brontë, Rochester and his audience recognize that the active changeling heroine is necessary to the happy resolution of this modified “Beauty and the Beast” narrative.

It is especially significant that Jane is portrayed as giving Rochester a ring. This is a reversal of the traditional courtship ritual in which the woman is the passive recipient of gifts. Moreover, Jane's active role in her relationship with Rochester places her in the tradition of fairy brides. As discussed earlier, fairy brides set the stipulations for their relationship with their husbands, and they cannot be bound against their will.<sup>51</sup>

Rochester repeatedly desires to escape the world and make his own isolated heaven with Jane, and in his metaphoric retelling, she offers him this escape. However, the scenario Rochester imagines cannot happen. It goes against Jane's moral nature and her fairy nature. Although fairies exercise their power in the moonlight, they are earth powers; fairies do not live on the moon. According to Bown, the local, earth-bound nature of fairy power is one of the defining characteristics of fairies. It sets fairies apart from all the different supernatural powers that fascinated the nineteenth-century British public (Bown 2). However, for Brontë, this was more than a convention; the local nature of Jane's power is an integral part of Brontë's message. *Jane Eyre* is not an escapist fantasy; it is about a heroine who makes her happy ending in this life.

In *Madwoman in the Attic*, Gilbert and Gubar claim that Brontë's happy ending is a rejection of the mindset that patriarchal society used to "keep, say, governesses in their place" (483). While Brontë may be rejecting the patriarchal system in her happy ending, she does not overthrow that system the way Rochester desires. Fairies have earth-bound powers, and Jane creates her happiness within the parameters of the patriarchal world. The regional implications of Brontë's fairy lore also suggest that her larger-than-life heroine is particularly fit to survive in Great Britain.

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<sup>51</sup> See Gibson. Brontë demonstrated her awareness of the fairy-bride tradition in "The Foundling," the only story in her extant juvenilia to deal extensively with fairies and fairy lore.

Jane Eyre's local power is highlighted by Rochester's foreign mistresses and Jane's primary foreign foil, Bertha. The Creole is no match for the changeling who can draw power from the local setting. Bertha's Creole identity is paramount in Rochester's descriptions of her and her madness (268-77).<sup>52</sup> For example, Bertha's mad shouts merge with the hurricane winds rocking the island, and Rochester considers committing suicide to escape her until a "wind fresh from Europe blew over the ocean" (271) and inspired him to lock his wife up in England and seek solace in Europe. Thus, after his disastrous marriage, Rochester seeks consolation with French, Italian, and German mistresses: Cèline Varens, Giacinta, and Clara (274). He claims he was seeking the "antipodes of the Creole" (274), framing his search for the ideal woman in geographic language.<sup>53</sup> However, these relationships are unsatisfying and even degrading, so Rochester returns to England, where he is met by the changeling before he reaches Thornfield. He immediately senses that she has the "authority" (275) to change him. Thus, the changeling heroine is an attempt to work out a viable representation of the experiences of women with nationalistic resonances. Brontë's treatment of the fairy figure in *Villette* (1853), excising it in favor of an unidealized woman who is not particularly attached to any location, further reinforces this interpretation of Brontë's changeling heroine as a local ideal of womanhood.

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Rochester's proposal and Jane's response to him are heavily invested with fairy motifs. Both the time and place of the proposal are traditionally associated with fairies in pre-Victorian fairy lore, and Jane waxes powerful in this setting. The regional associations of the fairy lore further suggest that Jane is somehow the fit or true local bride for the British hero, who can be contrasted with his unfit foreign wife, just as Burd Janet is the true love of Tamlane.

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<sup>52</sup> In *The Wide Sargasso Sea*, Jean Rhys capitalizes on this connection between Bertha's demonization and her Creole identity.

<sup>53</sup> The phrase "the antipodes" means "the opposite," but it is also the term that describes Australia and New Zealand.

Furthermore, both Rochester and Jane recognize her identity as a changeling in this scene; this shared recognition is at the heart of their union.

The proposal opens with an allusion to Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (217). According to Gillian Avery's article, "British and Irish Fairy Tales" in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales*, this Shakespearean play defined the modern British concept of fairies as secularized, small, benevolent beings who were not incompatible with Christian beliefs (69-74). Brontë alludes to Shakespeare's play because her heroine shares several traits with his powerful fairies: Shakespeare's female fairies are fierce, independent spirits who choose their own lovers (Shakespeare 2.1.62-85).<sup>54</sup> The proposal chapter in *Jane Eyre* opens with the phrase: "A splendid Midsummer shone over England: skies so pure..." (217), and like the mortals in Shakespeare's play, Jane wonders if the entire event was a dream (226). Furthermore, throughout the proposal scene, nature seems to respond to Jane's rising and falling passion: the wind wafting through the laurels becomes a roaring gale by the end of the night (223-25). In Shakespeare's play, the weather responds to the mood of fairies; they are earth and weather powers (2.1.84-120). Thus, nature visibly reflects Jane's fairy powers the same way in which it reflected the power of the fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.<sup>55</sup>

The most prominent aspect of the natural setting is the moon, and references to it recur throughout this passage. Although moonlight is mentioned in Shakespeare's play, the moonlight in the proposal scene seems to be an extension of this trope throughout the novel. Unlike the rest of the natural setting, moonlight takes on an active role in its interaction with Jane; it guides her

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<sup>54</sup> Charlotte Brontë discusses Shakespeare in a letter to Ellen Nussey dated 4 July 1834. Brontë implies that she had read Shakespeare's complete works; she advises Ellen to avoid the comedies because they might be too racy (Barker 28-29).

<sup>55</sup> The symbolic connection between *Jane Eyre* and nature has long been recognized; Virginia Woolf discusses it in "*Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights*" (1916). However, further connections between Brontë's symbolic use of weather and fairy lore have not been made.

steps (218), and its beauty is one of the reasons Rochester gives for walking in the garden with her (219). Jane also “reads” Rochester’s face in the moonlight to determine the veracity of his intentions; the moon guides Jane’s understanding and decision. She states: “Mr. Rochester, let me look at your face: turn to the moonlight.... Because I want to read your countenance; turn!” (224).<sup>56</sup> There is also symbolic meaning in the disappearance of the moon when Jane accepts Rochester’s proposal. As a changeling, Jane responds to the moonlight, but it also responds to her. The moon recognizes Jane’s moral danger (225). The sudden absence of moonlight after the proposal can be read as a withdrawal of blessing, which fosters foreboding.

The fairytale trope of identification resurfaces again in the proposal scene. Both Rochester and Jane name each other and themselves, demonstrating that they both exercise the power to define themselves and understand each other. Jane’s names reveal the two sides of her changeling nature: human and fairy. For example, Rochester calls her both “Jane” and “Janet” in successive sentences. The repetition emphasizes the difference and similarity, the significance of the two terms (219). Jane is a reference to her human nature; Janet is a reference to Jennet, the Queen of Faery (Lofthouse 21). Jane makes a point of explicitly declaring her human nature, she says: “I am a free human being with an independent will” (223). By contrast, Rochester recognizes the fairy side of her changeling nature: “You – you strange – you almost unearthly thing!” (224). The declaration of Jane’s changeling nature, both fairy and human, must preclude her relationship with Rochester. The trope of naming demonstrates an understanding of the essence of what is named. Only after Rochester shows that he knows her can Jane trust his declaration of love for her.

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<sup>56</sup> Like Brontë’s symbolic weather, her use of moonlight has been analyzed by several scholars, including Robert Heilman in “Charlotte Brontë’s ‘New’ Gothic” (1958). This dissertation adds fairy lore to the plethora of associations that can be made with Brontë’s use of moonlight.

The last set of names Rochester and Jane exchange have a magical quality because they effect change. Rochester calls her, saying: “I summon you as my wife” (223). The verb “summon” can have magical connotations. Then Rochester asks her to “give me my name – Edward” (224), and she names him “dear Edward” (224). In fairy lore stories like “Tamlane,” naming allows the heroine to attain her lover. The exchange of names also demonstrates the active role both Jane and Rochester play in this relationship. This balanced exchange prevents either from falling victim to imposed labels. Rochester and Jane name each other in order to cement their relationship.

The significance of Jane’s fairy-like potential for mobility can be overlooked in this scene because it is overshadowed by her speech to Rochester. However, an important aspect of Jane’s speech is that everything she says is emphasized by her power to leave and go where she pleases. She gives in to the right to speak her mind only after she decides to leave Thornfield (221); and she concludes with a declaration of that power: “I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will; which I now exert to leave you” (223). Specifically, Jane is free to declare her feelings to Rochester before his impending marriage because she is free to go anywhere. Jane would be inhibited if she were shackled to the domestic sphere; she could not declare her love for Rochester and continue to work for him and his new wife. In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, all the fairies are characterized by their magical powers of mobility; some, like Puck, can even circumnavigate the world in a night (2.1.182-83).

In contrast with the pre-Victorian changeling, the typical fairytale heroine’s ultimate goal is the domestic sphere, as Zipes states: “By denying herself, she could obtain what all women supposedly wanted and want – namely marriage in the form of male domination” (41).<sup>57</sup> Thus,

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<sup>57</sup> Although this quote refers directly to “Beauty and the Beast,” fairytale heroines embrace this ideal in many popular literary fairy tales.

the fairytale heroine resembles the Victorian ideal of femininity, like Coventry Patmore's Angel in the House, and serves to perpetuate dominant ideologies (Zipes 18). By contrast, pre-Victorian fairies and changelings do not seek the domestic sphere, even in marriage.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, while Jane declares her love for Rochester, she is looking for a relationship, not a domestic haven; her potential for mobility remains unhampered. In fact, Jane is prepared to follow the migration of the fairies to Ireland (222). According to North-Country fairy lore, the fairies were driven to Ireland before they were driven underground (Lofthouse 16).

However, even as Jane prepares to leave Rochester and follow the migration of the fairies to Ireland, she acknowledges her need for human relationships:

“I love Thornfield... I have not been buried with inferior minds, and excluded from every glimpse of communion with what is bright and energetic, and high. I have talked face to face, with what I reverence; with what I delight in, - with an original, a vigorous, an expanded mind. I have known you Mr. Rochester.... I see the necessity of departure; and it is like looking on the necessity of death.” (222)

Thus, Jane is a changeling, not a fairy like the Lady of the Moor in *Blackwood's Magazine*. The human half of her nature would die if she were to lose that human communion and escape to Faery.

Finally, Rochester recaps this manifestation of Jane's fairy power when he sees her the next morning. Rochester states: “[S]prite or salamander... I have seen what a fire-spirit you can be when you are indignant. You glowed in the cool moonlight last night, when you mutinied against fate, and claimed your rank as my equal. Janet, by-the-by, it was you who made me the offer.” (23) Rochester identifies Jane as a fire spirit who can defy fate, name herself, and claim the man she loves. Most important, it was Jane's power that drove the action during Rochester's “Midsummer Night's Eve” proposal; he is not the Oberon directing the activity here. Jane's active role in all the transactions of the night sets Brontë's changeling heroine apart. This fairy

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<sup>58</sup> See Gibson (359-60).

resembles the active hero, and it makes Jane's *bildungsroman* distinctive among nineteenth-century women's narratives.

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After the proposal, Rochester couples Jane's fairy title, Janet, with the title Jane Rochester: "Soon to be Jane Rochester... in four weeks, Janet, not a day more" (227). This elicits a physical response from Jane; she blushes and then blanches (227). In the garden, Rochester's recognition of Jane's complete changeling nature led her to accept his proposal. However, Rochester's fairy references immediately following the proposal reflect the emerging Victorian fairy; he states:

"for nature, at least, has stamped her patent of nobility on this brow, Jane; and I will clasp the bracelets on these fine wrists, and load these fairy-like fingers with rings.... You are a beauty, in my eyes; and a beauty just after the desire of my heart, - delicate and aerial." (227)

According to Brown, Victorian men idealized and infantilized women with the fairy lore they developed (4).<sup>59</sup> This Victorian fairy also resonates with the "Beauty and the Beast" plots that run throughout the novel because it emphasizes the importance of Jane's physical appearance.

However, the pre-Victorian fairy that developed in the North-Country could not bear to be dressed up in new clothes; according to Lofthouse, it was one of the ways that a fairy could be identified (Lofthouse 24). Thus, Jane's intense discomfort at Rochester's insistence on dressing her up reflects the influence of this specific pre-Victorian tradition (227-37). Jane explains to Rochester that the imposition of the ideals of beauty and domesticity will destroy the dynamic woman he loves: "And then you won't know me, sir; and I shall not be your Jane Eyre any longer..." (228). Critics such as Pyrhonen have psychoanalyzed this quote; they have argued that

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<sup>59</sup> In *Angel and the Demon*, Auerbach claims that this Victorian fairy is another manifestation of the typological Angel in the House (65).



Jane is afraid of sexual union with Rochester.<sup>60</sup> However, what is being interpreted as a psychosexual code may also be read as a fairy-lore trope; Jane is adhering to her changeling identity. This identity is not threatened by sex; unlike a fairytale princess, the fairy bride's power is not diminished by her marriage or union with a man. What the fairy cannot abide is transgression against her fairy nature.<sup>61</sup>

Brontë was not alone in recognizing the fairy bride's unique power within marriage. Although the pre-Victorian fairy was a literary figure lost to later authors, Victorian folklorists such as Charles de Kay and David MacRitchie continued to study it, according to Silver in "'East of the Sun and West of the Moon': Victorians and Fairy-brides." These folklorists believed that pre-Victorian fairy lore reflected an ancient matriarchal society; they recognized that it did not conform to Victorian patriarchal values (Silver 287-88). Although *Jane Eyre* was written decades before folklorists began theorizing on the metaphoric or cultural significance of the fairy bride, it is apparent that Brontë tapped into a tradition that had the potential to communicate a counter-culture message of feminine power.<sup>62</sup>

When Jane brings Rochester back to a recognition of her pre-Victorian changeling identity, she is no longer uncomfortable around him. She rejects Rochester's efforts to dress her in gaudy and expensive clothes (235-37). Then, in the evening, Jane has Rochester sing to her (239-40). The song articulates all the female stereotypes that the changeling heroine resists; and afterwards, Jane voices this resistance (240-41). Her words effectually change Rochester's mind, affirming that he recognizes Jane as a powerful and independent being. Instead of trying to own

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<sup>60</sup> See *Bluebeard Gothic* (2010).

<sup>61</sup> See Gibson. Again, a modification of this fairy-bride trope is included in the story about Mary Burnett in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

<sup>62</sup> Silver further examines the way British folklorists struggled with the powerful pre-Victorian fairy bride, exposing their own cultural biases. Most folklorists were concerned with tracing the evolution of society from an ancient matriarchy to a Victorian patriarchy (Silver 285-86). I am not suggesting the actual existence of an ancient matriarchy; rather, my intention is to explore the potential power of this fairy lore for Brontë and her readers.

her with the stereotypical “honeyed terms” (241) of endearment, he resumes calling her “‘malicious elf,’ ‘sprite,’ ‘changeling,’ etc.” (241).

In the conversation where Jane reaffirms her pre-Victorian changeling identity, she particularly repulses the self-effacing tragic end of the female ideal in Rochester’s song; she declares that she will not die with her lover like that woman (239). She is not the Angel in the House, or the self-sacrificing Beauty. Moreover, Jane’s statement to Rochester is a stark contrast to the heroine in Brontë’s early “Beauty and the Beast” tale, “The Spell.” In “The Spell,” Zamorna claims that the beauty should die with the beast. Mary, the Beauty in “The Spell,” accepts this inevitable end, embracing this traditional female narrative (“The Spell” 66). Thus, Jane overcomes the conventions that governed the heroines in Brontë’s juvenilia.

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Brontë’s escapist juvenilia includes the fantastic, but it does not include fairies, despite the established fact that fairy lore was an important part of her childhood. The lack is worth addressing. The stories written by both Branwell and Charlotte Brontë are primarily set in the imaginary realm of Angria; it is an imaginary kingdom located on the West African coast; the capital city sits on the delta of the River Niger (Alexander xvi). Their sultry world is ruled by the four Chief Genii (“The Foundling” 103). The exotic location could explain the general absence of fairies and presence of genii that the Brontës associated with the experiences of local, daily life.

The only exception to this is Brontë’s early short story, “The Foundling.” This tale opens in “that part of merry England called Derbyshire” (3); when the foundling character, Sydney, is introduced in a British garden, he is immediately associated with fairies or the “fairish” (4).<sup>63</sup> It

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<sup>63</sup> It may be significant that “fairish,” which is used in “The Foundling,” is the term for fairy used in Haworth dialect; Gérin specifically associates it with Tabby (38).

is later revealed that this foundling is in fact a changeling, with a human father and a fairy mother. This story establishes Brontë's understanding of the changeling as a half-human, half-fairy character. Sydney's parents were separated when the mortal lover transgressed his fairy wife's laws; this plot point demonstrates Brontë's awareness of the fairy bride tradition ("The Foundling" 107-11).<sup>64</sup> However, once the foundling reaches Angria, genii become the ruling spirits ("The Foundling" 103-04). This further suggests that the absence of fairy lore in Brontë's juvenilia is linked to her association of fairies with her local North-Country environment.

Although fairy lore is absent in Brontë's early writing, there is a wide range of fairytale allusions. However, the "Beauty and the Beast" tale is treated most extensively; her novella *The Spell* (1836) is dominated by "Beauty and the Beast" tropes. In *The Spell*, the heroine Mary is married to an enchanted husband, Zamorna.<sup>65</sup> Although he is not literally transformed into a beast when he is cursed by the Quaker from Hell, his violent temper and erratic behavior make him a monster who is impossible to endure. Mary is a beauty who conforms to nineteenth-century ideals of feminine domesticity. She is described as a "sweeter Madonna than ... that celestial image" (45). Her stated goal in life is to lift Zamorna's curse through her angelic, domestic ministrations. In a letter to her family, Mary writes:

Certain inconsistencies in the Duke's [Zamorna's] conduct that at times puzzle me most painfully. Since our marriage it has been my constant study, the business of my life, to watch the unfolding of his strange character, to read his heart, to become acquainted with all his antipathies that I might avoid them, and all his inclinations that I might continually follow them.... It was natural for me then, when I become the wife of one whom I loved so inexpressibly as Zamorna, to exert every effort to please him. (*The Spell* 35)

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<sup>64</sup> In "The Human-Fairy Marriage," H. N. Gibson lists the essential features of a fairy-human marriage. These include the fairy bride's rules, which her mortal husband must not transgress.

<sup>65</sup> Similarities between Brontë's characters Zamorna (the primary hero in all her juvenilia) and Rochester in *Jane Eyre* are widely recognized. Gérin claims that this similarity demonstrates Brontë's fascination with this Byronic model of masculinity (130).

Despite her good intentions, Mary endangers her lover. Like Psyche in the Classical ATU 425 tale “Psyche and Cupid,” Mary’s curiosity about the beast-like Zamorna exacerbates his curse and threatens his life. Mary states: “I saw that Zamorna was wasted, weary, and wan. The curse, then, had fallen on him, and I was the cause.” (52) However, Zamorna is magically redeemed by the combined sacrifice of Mary and Mina Laury (75-77). Like the Beast in Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont’s “Beauty and the Beast,” Zamorna is restored to health and sanity with a single word: “ransomed” (74).

Brontë’s access to these two versions of “Beauty and the Beast” is overdetermined. The tale of “Cupid and Psyche” is published in Apuleius’ *The Golden Ass* in the second century. According to Jerry Griswold in *The Meanings of “Beauty and the Beast”* (2004), the Latin text of “Cupid and Pysche” was translated into English by William Adlington in 1566 (70). Translations of this text circulated throughout Great Britain, and the text was widely accessible and influential (Griswold 15, 72). It is unlikely that Brontë would have been unaware of this Classical tale. Beaumont even makes an allusion to it in her story when she refers to the restored Beast as “more beautiful than the God of Love” (Griswold 70). However, Griswold claims that it is Beaumont’s “Beauty and the Beast” which is “generally considered to be the definitive and most influential one” (27) in the Western tradition. Beaumont translated the tale into English in 1759 and published it in London; it remained widely available during Brontë’s lifetime (Griswold 27).<sup>66</sup>

Beaumont’s Beauty is characterized by her sacrificial behavior. For example, she turns down suitors so that she can remain with her father and care for him. When the family loses their

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<sup>66</sup> Maria Tatar supports this assertion in her “Introduction: Beauty and the Beast” in *The Classic Fairy Tales* (1999).

fortune, Beauty keeps house for them all (Beaumont 32-33).<sup>67</sup> Her domestic martyrdom culminates in her decision to sacrifice herself to the Beast as his captive to save her father (Beaumont 35-36). Finally, she sacrifices herself in marriage to the Beast, accepting him despite his hideous appearance (Beaumont 41). According to Maria Tatar's "Introduction to 'Beauty and the Beast'" in *Classic Fairy Tales* (1998): "Beauty's virtues, as her story makes clear, stem from a willingness to sacrifice herself" (26).

In *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion*, Zipes briefly explores the popular "Beauty and the Beast" tales as indoctrinating narratives. He states:

The mark of beauty for a female is to be found in her submission, obedience, humility, industry, and patience.... Moreover, as the configurations were developed individually in each 'beauty and the beast' tale in relation to the civilizing process, it became clear that the female character could only assume her 'civil' form if she were willing to sacrifice herself for a beastlike male. By denying herself, she could obtain what all women supposedly wanted and want – namely marriage in the form of male domination. (41)

Brontë recognizes the impossibility of this cultural ideal as she attempts to work it out in her juvenilia; Brontë runs her beloved hero Zamorna through a string of Beauties. Her literary experiments with the "Beauty and the Beast" narrative seem to lead her to the conclusion that the sacrificial Beauty is not sufficiently powerful to redeem the Beast. In *The Spell* she doubles the power of the Beauty, using both Mary and Mina Laury to redeem the hero, but even this falls flat. The slavish infatuation that these two women have with their beast is dismissed as silly and pathetic:

[T]hen again she was the doomed slave of infatuation, devoted, stricken, absorbed in one idea, finding a kind of strange pleasure in bearing the burden and carrying the yoke of him whose fascinations fettered her so strongly. The end of her being, the pride of her life seemed to consist in laboring, drudging for Zamorna. He grasped her hand and smiled upon her most sweetly, and said something.... *That*, I dare say, repaid the silly girl a hundredfold. (76)

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<sup>67</sup> I am using the English version of Beaumont's "Beauty and the Beast" published in Maria Tatar's *Classic Fairy Tales* (1998) throughout this text.

It is not until *Jane Eyre* that Brontë is able to create a powerful heroine who can work out her own happy ending without sacrificing her dignity. By overcoming this devotion to the hero and the domestic sphere, Brontë creates a distinctly heroic female character. Moreover, the heroic changeling resists the traditional narrative of the domestic Beauty without slipping into the demonization of the powerful Bertha. This is what sets *Jane Eyre* apart from nineteenth-century narratives about women and inspires a distinctive literary microcosm.

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Jane's changeling nature is strangely suppressed immediately before and during her wedding; she has been unable to write her name on her trunks because she feels estranged from the name Mrs. Rochester (242). It is as if she instinctively sensed that this identity does not correspond with her nature. Throughout the wedding ceremony and the meeting with Bertha, Jane exhibits little interior dialogue because the changeling nature within her is not active (253-54, 257-59). After taking off her wedding dress, Jane describes the day: "till now I had only heard, seen, moved – followed up and down where I was led or dragged – watched events rush on events, disclosure open beyond disclosure: but *now*, I *thought*" (259-60). When Jane finally thinks about the events of the day, the fullness of her changeling nature exerts itself. In fact, she is frightened by the potency of this interior spirit, which commands her to leave Rochester and Thornfield immediately (261-62).

Jane wrestles with the internal judge who condemns her to a life apart from Rochester. She describes this struggle in physical terms: "I stopped my ears... I wrestled.... Conscience, turned tyrant held passion by the throat.... With that arm of iron... thrust her down" (261). It may be argued that this conscience is merely the product of Jane's strict patriarchal religious upbringing at Lowood. In fact, she once refers to her conscience as "he" (261). However, this

tyrant conscience is also acting in line with Jane's fairy nature and with the tradition of fairy brides. A fairy bride cannot remain with a mortal husband who has transgressed against her laws, as demonstrated in "The Foundling."<sup>68</sup> Moreover, Jane's departure is encouraged by the feminine incarnation of the moon (281). The fairy side of Jane's changeling nature manifests itself powerfully in the moonlight throughout the novel. Thus, the appearance of the moon at this critical juncture can be trusted as an indicator that Jane's fairy nature is active.

Although the moon encourages Jane to flee, it is a resolution she makes within herself and maintains despite supreme internal crisis and external, physical crisis (261-62, 278-79, 279-80). Jane has no external helpers who enable her to leave Rochester. In fact, she pleads with the internal voice: "Let another help me!" (261). The voice responds: "No; you shall tear yourself away, none shall help you" (261). This sets *Jane Eyre* apart from the Cinderella tradition that critics have associated with this novel. The Cinderella tale is characterized by the heroine who has magical helpers. As a changeling, Jane has power within her; hers does not come from external helpers.

Brontë emphasizes both sides of Jane's changeling nature in her departure from Rochester. The fairy nature corresponds with the spiritual side of Jane: she must renounce Rochester as her idol (278). The fairy cannot compromise its spiritual laws. However, Jane maintains her love for Rochester (267); this sets her apart from the capricious fairy brides who leave their lovers in an angry huff (Gibson 358). In the crisis of losing her, Rochester defines what it is about Jane that attracts him: her inner, changeling nature. In their turbulent interview after the aborted wedding, Rochester concludes that Jane must come to him willingly; he cannot force her to be his wife or lover (280). However, Jane does not leave Rochester simply because he allows her to do so. Rather, she leaves because her changeling nature asserts itself at this

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<sup>68</sup> See Gibson (358).

critical juncture in the plot. Fairy brides maintain their freedom and mobility even after their marriages (Gibson 358). This is a stark contrast to the fates of typical Victorian wives, as later Victorian folklorists noted (Silver 287-88).<sup>69</sup>

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Jane's retreat to the moors after her marriage is another fairy-bride trope. According to Carol Kubicki's dissertation *Moors and Myths* (1995), the moors were an unlikely haven for a young woman, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century (1).<sup>70</sup> Yet Jane runs to the moors at a time when most young women would have run home, after her hope of a life with Rochester is shattered. The fact that she ends up at a place called "Moor House" (300) is especially suggestive; through this house, the moors do become home. Although people shunned the moors, they were an acknowledged haven for fairies in North-Country fairy lore.

Like a fairy, Jane finds spiritual sustenance on the moors. She seeks both comfort of "the universal mother, Nature" (284) and the "might and strength of God" (285), merging fairy lore and traditional Christianity, as Tabby did in her stories to the Brontë children.<sup>71</sup> However, as a changeling with human needs, Jane cannot hide forever beneath the moors like the fairy folk: "What a still, hot, perfect day! What a golden desert this spreading moor! Everywhere sunshine. I wished I could live in it and on it.... But I was a human being, and had a human being's wants." (286) Balancing the human and fairy sides of her nature, Jane seeks human companionship connected with the moors at Moor House.

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<sup>69</sup> *Jane Eyre's* transatlantic progeny embrace her larger-than-life changeling, but they repeatedly attempt to alleviate the tension between its nationalistic stakes and its resistance to patriarchal norms. Transatlantic authors seek a fairytale paradigm that reflects American values and fits within traditional gender hierarchies, preparing the heroine for the domestic sphere.

<sup>70</sup> According to Kubicki, Charlotte and Emily Brontë's treatment of the moors changed the perception of this inhospitable region in Great Britain. Prior to these novels, travel writers were universally negative in their treatment of the moors; however, after the publication of *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, Victorian writers began to depict the moorland "as a place of freedom and spiritual fulfillment" (1).

<sup>71</sup> See Gérin (38-39).



Mary and Diana Rivers, Jane's long-lost cousins, live in Moor House with their brother St. John Rivers. The deep and immediate bond that forms between Jane, Mary, and Diana is explicitly linked with the moors. Like Jane, they blossomed in proximity to the moors: "The air of the moors, the freedom of home, the dawn of prosperity, acted on Diana and Mary's spirits like some life-giving elixir" (347).

St. John Rivers also has a connection to the moors, but it is very different than the love shared by Diana, Mary, and Jane. St. John's "strange love" (353) of the moors parallels his "strange love" of Jane; she states: "He seemed in communion with the genius of the haunt: with his eyes he bade farewell to something.... Strange words of a strange love! An austere patriot's passion for his fatherland!" (353) In this passage, Jane recognizes the power of St. John's connection with the moors. However, it is a power and a connection she cannot understand. His power is contrary to hers; it suppresses her power: "I felt as if an awful charm was framing round and gathering over me: I trembled to hear some fatal word spoken which would at once declare and rivet the spell" (353-54). This premonition of oppression becomes concrete when St. John kisses her: his kisses "were a seal affixed to my fetters" (350-51). His kisses are a reversal of the fairytale trope; kisses traditionally free the enchanted from evils spells; they do not bind and repress.<sup>72</sup>

Jane senses the fairy side of her changeling nature waning and dying beneath St. John's power:

As for me, I daily wished more to please [St. John]: but to do so, I felt daily more and more that I must disown half my nature, stifle half my faculties, wrest my tastes from their original bent, force myself to the adoption of pursuits for which I had no natural vocation (351).

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<sup>72</sup> Although Rochester forcibly kisses Jane after she tells him that she will leave him, his kiss does not repress Jane or her power (278-80). Even Rochester recognizes that he cannot change Jane's will through physical force, whereas St. John's physical kisses seem to exert spiritual power over Jane, bending her will to his.

Moreover, St. John finds “a certain charm” (351) in his repression of Jane’s power. Thus, through fairy-lore tropes, St. John is portrayed an actively malevolent power in Jane’s life.

Although Jane spends an increasing amount of time with St. John, she does not enjoy it; he chafes and irritates. She states: “I am not happy at his side, not near him, nor with him” (391). Her reaction to St. John has precedence in fairy lore, particularly collections such as Crocker’s “Irish Fairy Legends,” discussed earlier. Fairy power can be suppressed by a myriad objects. Just as holy water, salt, iron, and steam engines repress fairies and drive them underground, St. John’s adverse presence suppresses the independent fairy side of Jane’s changeling nature. Furthermore, the Royal Horticultural Society claims that St John’s wort, also called Devil chase or Devil’s scourge, was used to ward off evil, including fairies.<sup>73</sup>

St. John must suppress Jane’s fairy nature because he adheres to the Miltonic spiritual hierarchy that characterizes Brontë’s juvenilia: “He for God only, she for God in him” (*Paradise Lost* 4.299). This spiritual hierarchy has no place for the spiritually independent changeling who controls her own destiny and addresses the Divinity directly. The Miltonic spiritual hierarchy is explicit in St. John’s proposal to Jane. She does not hear the spiritual call he hears (355), and he asks her to hear God through him (354). In “The Spell,” the heroine Mary is condemned for her violation of this spiritual hierarchy (65). By contrast, Jane upbraids herself for her weakness in failing to resist St. John completely when he proposed to her: “and I, like a fool, never thought of

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<sup>73</sup> St. John embodies the spiritual powers of death and darkness first articulated by Mr. Brocklehurst in the novel. The thematic connection between these two figures may be used to explain why St. John functions as an anti-fairy spiritual power. According to Gérin, Mr. Brocklehurst is overtly modeled on Reverend William Carus Wilson, Vicar of Tunstall, Trustee of Cowan Bridge School, which Charlotte Brontë and her older sisters attended together (2). Both Rev. Wilson and his fictional double, Mr. Brocklehurst, ban fairy tales in their respective establishments and attempt to replace them with their own didactic religious stories. This was a common practice in the early half of the nineteenth century. In *Forbidden Journeys*, Auerbach and Knoephlmacher state: “In the 1840s and 50s, rigid didacticism had held children’s fiction in thrall” (2). Gérin states that Wilson’s stories, published in *The Children’s Friends*, typically glorify the death of good, innocent children; they reflect Wilson’s philosophy: “Rather dead than in danger of committing sin” (Gérin 13). Brontë ascribes this theory to Mr. Brocklehurst and embeds it in St. John Rivers’ preaching (108, 310). Jane states: “I was sure St. John Rivers – pure-lived, conscientious, zealous as he was – had not yet found the peace of God which passeth all understanding” (310).

resisting him – I could not resist him” (352). This dynamic reversal in expectations is significant; Brontë uses Jane and her changeling nature to overturn the spiritual hierarchy that suppressed the beautiful, fairytale heroines of her juvenilia.

Jane not only believes she should resist St. John, she succeeds in doing so. She overcomes St. John’s spiritual power in an overt display of her own fairy power. When Jane feels herself succumbing to St. John’s apocalyptic vision, she states that his power is “in ascendancy” (353).<sup>74</sup> However, in the moonlight on the edge of the moors there is a dramatic power reversal, emphasized by the repetition of the term ascendancy. Jane states: “It was *my* time to assume ascendancy. *My* powers were in play, and in force” (370 italics original). Instead of hearing God through St. John, Jane addresses the “Mighty Spirit” (370) directly and in her own way. Again, Jane’s spiritual triumph is a combination of fairy lore and Christianity. On the moonlit moors, the spiritual powers of St. John cannot match those of the fairy within Jane, and St. John is forced to obey her. He must leave her when she commands him to go (370). However, it is not St. John’s subordination to Jane, but her control over herself that is most significant. Jane is able to return to see Rochester because she returns as a complete master of her changeling self.<sup>75</sup>

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Jane’s return to Rochester at Ferndean is steeped in fairytale motifs and impelled by fairy power. Jane’s fairy power is still in ascendancy; the impetus that began on the moonlit moors carries her through to Rochester’s study at Ferndean. The uninhibited expression of Jane’s fairy nature in her reunion with Rochester is a stark contrast to the suppression Jane experiences with

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<sup>74</sup> When St. John proposes on the moors, his proposal is accompanied by an apocalyptic description of the missionary’s role as a soldier enlisted under the banner of an infallible Captain (353-55).

<sup>75</sup> Although the changeling’s spiritual power is contrasted with the spiritual passivity of other characters, such as Blanche Ingram and Bertha Rochester, these characters are not Jane’s spiritual adversaries. Brontë is not attempting to set up a new female spiritual dichotomy, like that of the Angel and Fallen Angel. Instead, the changeling battles the spiritual powers of death and darkness, which are first embodied in Mr. Brocklehurst and revived in the figure of St. John. Jane’s standoff with St. John in the moonlit moors affirms her authority.

St. John. When Jane is with Rochester, she revels in the fullness of her changeling character. As a part of this self recognition, Jane knows she has the power to rehumanize Rochester.

Jane's rehumanization of Rochester is a reversal of some of the most prominent literary versions of "Beauty and the Beast" in the nineteenth century. Beginning with Beaumont's eighteenth-century "Beauty and the Beast," these tales were intentionally written to reconcile young women to the custom of arranged marriages and "brace them for an alliance that required them to efface their own desires and to submit to the will of a 'monster'" (Tatar 28). By contrast, Jane does not efface her nature to rehumanize Rochester; rather, Jane is able to exercise the full extent of her powers with Rochester. It is Jane's power that changes the story.

But in his countenance I saw a change... that reminded me of some wronged and fettered wild beast or bird... The caged eagle, whose gold-ringed eyes cruelty has extinguished, might look as looked that sightless Samson.

And reader, do you think I feared him in his blind ferocity? – if you do, you little know me. A soft hope blent [sic] with my sorrow that soon I should dare to drop a kiss on that brow of rock, and on those lips so sternly sealed beneath it. (379)

Jane's direct address to the reader draws attention to the power dynamic expressed here. Rochester is a powerful beast, but Jane is more powerful. Her return to him is characterized by a complete assurance of her own powers. If Jane's changeling nature has been in question throughout the novel, Brontë makes it undeniable in the conclusion. The metaphor of the changeling is explicit in Jane's reunion with Rochester. Rochester calls her "my fairy" (384) and repeatedly refers to her fairy powers, but when he asks if she is human, she affirms it (385). As a changeling, Jane is both fairy and human. This changeling nature must be fully expressed at the end of the novel because it is the power of the changeling that creates the happy ending and rehumanizes the beast.

Rochester states: "You mocking changeling – fairy born and human-bred! You make me feel as I have not felt these twelve months. If Saul could have had you for his David, the evil

spirit would have been exorcised without the aid of a harp.” (386) The biblical David needed an external aid, a harp; Rochester recognizes that the changeling heroine’s power comes from within herself. Moreover, this fairy connection is something that Jane has always shared with Rochester. He evokes it. In fact, she makes a fairy parallel between them: she is a fairy, and he is a fairy beast, the brownie (385).

Rochester’s identity as a cursed beast is the trope that most clearly identifies the plot of *Jane Eyre* as a “Beauty and the Beast” tale. Rochester claims that he had been an innocent young man who has been “cursed” (120) and turned into a beast (116). Following the fairy-tale tradition of bestial grooms, when Rochester meets Jane he tells her that he has spent the last decade searching for a beautiful young woman whose love will break his curse (125). In *The Folktale* (1977), Stith Thompson claims that “Beauty and the Beast” tales vary widely in their explanations of why the husband is a beast, but they all converge on the final points of marriage and disenchantment: the beast is disenchanted or redeemed by the sacrificial girl who agrees to marry him (Thompson 98). Although Griswold’s definition of the “Beauty and the Beast” tale is relatively loose and flexible in *The Meanings of Beauty and the Beast* (2004), he also insists on the presence of a beast-like lover in need of rehumanization (16).

Using the structuralism of Stith Thompson and Vladimir Propp, Griswold argues that Western “Beauty and the Beast” tales typically divide into five acts. The prince’s transformation is addressed in act one, and it is often the work of a malevolent female (Griswold 116). Bertha, Rochester’s mad wife is the malevolent power who initially curses him. Pyhrönen makes similar claims; she states: “Bertha holds this Bluebeard [Rochester] in thrall and hinders him from fully assuming the position of a gentleman and landed proprietor” (32). She further argues that marriage with Bertha is the action that transforms and dehumanizes him: “marriage turns him

into the object filling the void in Bertha” (33). Although Pyrhönen places this curse within the context of the Bluebeard tale, it also works within the “Beauty and the Beast” reading of *Jane Eyre*.<sup>76</sup> It may be argued that it is not Bertha but Rochester’s family’s greed that entraps him. However, throughout the novel this blame is deflected onto the Creole Bertha, fulfilling the fairy trope with nationalistic stakes. Rochester is cursed by a distinctly foreign female.

In *Beauty and the Beast: Visions and Revisions of an Old Tale* (1989), Betsy Hearne breaks down the Aarne-Thompson analysis of the ATU 425 tale. The tale falls within the section “Supernatural or enchanted husband [wife] or other relative” and follows a typical plot progression: 1. The Monster as Husband 2. Disenchantment of the Husband Attempted 3. Loss of the Husband 4. Recovery and Disenchantment of the Husband (Hearne 9-10). A modification of this plot structure governs the progression of Brontë’s novel.<sup>77</sup> Thus, while a range of fairytale elements are included in the text, the plot progression of *Jane Eyre* follows the typical “Beauty and the Beast” tale. The narrative is changed by the transformation of the heroine and the inclusion of fairy lore.

Although Rochester tells Jane he wanted a “good and intelligent woman” (273) to break Bertha’s curse and rehumanize him, he looked for nothing more than externally beautiful women throughout his wild wanderings on the Continent after his marriage (272). The women he chose to be his mistresses demonstrate that he had subscribed to the theory that a beautiful woman could transform him back into a man like Zamorna in Brontë’s juvenilia.<sup>78</sup> However, after nearly a decade of searching, Rochester failed to find the sacrificial beauty who could rehumanize him in the Western “Beauty and the Beast” tradition. Thus, Rochester returned to Thornfield bitter,

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<sup>76</sup> In fact, the Bluebeard tale is listed as a ATU 425 variation; thus “Bluebeard” is structurally similar to “Beauty and the Beast.”

<sup>77</sup> Sullivan notes the relationship of fairy tales to the plot, but does not specifically link it with “Beauty and the Beast.” Rather, she sees the plot generally linked with an amalgamation of fairytale paradigms (61-62).

<sup>78</sup> The relationship between Rochester and Zamorna has been widely noted.

disillusioned, and suspicious of all womankind (275). At this point in Rochester's life, Jane meets him on the road. Her first impression of him connects him with the fairy beast, Gytrash (97). The Gytrash is a recurring association in the text, but Rochester is also connected with other beasts, including dragons (124), the leviathan (125), and a brownie (385) throughout the novel.<sup>79</sup>

Although Rochester was not looking for a changeling to save him, he immediately acknowledges Jane for what she is, and he knows that this local changeling has the power to rehumanize him (276). Jane provides an alternative to the traditional Beauty in her relationship with Rochester. Brontë conveys this to the reader by contrasting Jane with Celine Varens, the first foreign Beauty Rochester sought in his quest for rehumanization (125-27). Rochester had hoped that Celine's love and beauty would redeem him (125). She encouraged this belief, flattering him with the declaration that he had become handsome to her (123). By contrast, Jane is not beautiful, and she refuses to flatter Rochester (232, 115). However, Jane does have the power to make Rochester handsome.

Brontë deliberately works out the changeling's role in the "Beauty and the Beast" plot. Rochester assumes that Jane's power to save him is specific to her fairy nature when he asks her to change his appearance: "Tell me now, fairy as you are, - can't you give me a charm... to make me a handsome man?" (215). Jane's response demonstrates that she knows that the power to

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<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, Rochester's characterization as the traditional beast-groom can account for the tensions Seelye identifies in his analysis of *Jane Eyre* as an incestuous Cinderella tale. Seelye claims that Rochester's age and the power he exercises in his relationship with Jane reflect his identity as the "king-who-loves-his-daughter" (Seelye 25) in the ATU 510B tale. However, the beast-groom in "Beauty and the Beast" tales, like Mdm. Beaumont's, the beast is also older and more powerful than his bride. Even the hints of filial devotion Seelye identifies in Jane's attraction to Rochester are common aspects of the ATU 425 tale, according to Maria Tatar in *Classic Fairy Tales*. Beauty's romantic love for the Beast is often conflated with friendship and filial love (Tatar 26-27). Griswold's analysis of popular "Beauty and the Beast" tales also confirms this assertion (51). Griswold further suggests that Beaumont's popular heroine exhibits an oedipal complex which is displaced onto the Beast (89-91). Although my reading does not favor the psychoanalytic approach, that approach has been an inherent part of fairytale readings of *Jane Eyre* since Gilbert and Gubar.

rehumanize Rochester lies in her combined changeling nature: “It would be past the power of magic, sir.’ And in thought I added, ‘A loving eye is all the charm you needed: to such you are handsome enough’” (215). Like the heroine in Perrault’s ATU 425 tale, “Ricky of the Tuft,” Jane no longer sees Rochester as ugly because she loves him: “And was Mr. Rochester now ugly in my eyes? No, reader. Gratitude, and many associations, all pleasurable and genial, made his face the object I best liked to see” (129). Although Jane does not verbalize this analysis of beauty out loud, Rochester seems to read her “unspoken thoughts” (215). Gradually, Brontë transforms her beast groom and his fairytale expectations through his contact with the changeling heroine. However, the path to Rochester’s rehumanization is protracted because Rochester must redeem himself and atone for his sins before Jane can fully restore him.

Brontë offers Jane a more complex role than that of a good fairy or that of the self-effacing Beauty that characterizes didactic eighteenth- and nineteenth-century “Beauty and the Beast” tales. Although Jane helps Rochester on several occasions, Brontë does not allow the changeling heroine to confuse the desire to be active and helpful with her romantic attraction to Rochester. Jane recognizes a marriage should be a partnership, a relationship between equals. She explicitly rejects the idea that one spouse can redeem another when Rochester asks her if a man is justified in seeking out a relationship with someone who can save him:

A wanderer’s repose or a sinner’s reformation should never depend on a fellow-creature. Men and women die; philosophers falter in wisdom, and Christians in goodness: if any one you know has suffered and erred, let him look higher than his equals for strength to amend, and solace to heal. (192)

Jane holds Rochester at least partially responsible for his own fall and restoration. This is one of the most obvious amalgamations of the fairy-bride tradition with the “Beauty and the Beast” plot in *Jane Eyre*. This amalgamation keeps *Jane Eyre* from fully slipping into a class of tales that depends upon a sacrificial, passive Beauty to redeem the Beast. The equality of Jane’s match



with Rochester also has nationalistic resonance; only the British changeling can redeem the enchanted British hero.

Like many beast-grooms in ATU 425 tales, Rochester's fall is two-fold.<sup>80</sup> Although he is initially cursed by his marriage to the mad Bertha, he falls again when he loses Jane. Through the distinction between these two falls, Brontë allows Jane to fulfill the fairytale role of Rochester's rehumanizer without violating the integrity of her changeling heroine who cannot abide transgression. Rochester must accept responsibility for the curse of a bad marriage with all its moral and legal ramifications. However, once he does so, Rochester becomes the sort of cursed and maimed lover that Jane can rehumanize.<sup>81</sup>

The neighborhood around Thornfield recognizes that Rochester's second fall, his loss of Jane, transforms him into a beast. When Jane returns looking for Rochester, the innkeeper at Rochester Arms describes this transformation: "he grew savage – quite savage on his disappointment: he never was a wild man, but he got dangerous after he lost her [Jane]" (376). Jane's language at their reunion cements this identity for Rochester; she calls him a "brownie" (385) with a "shaggy black mane" (385). She also identifies him with the Babylonian king who was transformed into a beast in the biblical account of Daniel; Jane states:

"It is time some one undertook to rehumanize you... for I see you are being metamorphosed into a lion, or something of that sort. You have 'a faux air' of Nebuchadnezzar in the fields about you, that is certain: your hair reminds me of eagle's feather; whether your nails are grown like bird's claws or not, I have not yet noticed." (384)

Thus, Rochester is truly a helpless fairy tale beast-groom from the ATU 425 tale when Jane is reunited with him at Ferndean.

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<sup>80</sup> Thompson comments on this tendency in *The Folktale* (98-99). Moreover, Griswold describes tendency in popular tales with which Brontë was likely familiar.

<sup>81</sup> This twofold fall is ignored by Seelye, who dismisses the "Beauty and the Beast" paradigm in favor of a Cinderella reading because he claims that the "Beauty and the Beast tale is resolved in the first half of the novel (24).

Brontë also emphasizes Jane's active, deliberate role in Rochester's transformation by having Jane break the narrative flow and address the reader directly: "And, reader, do you think I feared him in his blind ferocity? – if you do, you little know me" (379). At Ferndean, both Rochester and Jane recognize that the changeling replaces the traditional Beauty in their romance; only the "mocking changeling" (386) can "accost" (379) Rochester and exorcise his demons. Jane's direct address to the reader draws attention to the power dynamic expressed here. Rochester is a powerful beast, but Jane is more powerful. Her return to him is characterized by a complete assurance of her own powers. Furthermore, this power has strong regional associations; only the local woman has this extraordinary power. The *bildungsroman* has the potential to be a nationalistic narrative: this heroic, larger-than-life figure could carry a message with national stakes. Brontë strips away these fantastic associations in her final novel, excising the fairy lore and its nationalistic resonance.

### **Death of the Fairy Heroine and a Search for the New Eve in *Villette***

In her final novel, Brontë responds to *Jane Eyre*, entering back into the growing literary microcosm forming around her debut novel. *Villette* critiques the changeling heroine and the fairytale plot of *Jane Eyre*. However, this critique does not challenge the literary significance of the fairy tale and fairy lore allusions. Rather, Brontë identifies the motifs that enable her to generate a heroic female character in her first novel. She rejects the fantastic, larger-than-life associations of her first changeling heroine and instead attempts to construct an unremarkable female example. Moreover, Brontë's response to *Jane Eyre* highlights the significance of the fantastic female *bildungsroman* for the community of women writers that developed around the novel.

Scholars since Gilbert and Gubar typically agree that the fairytale motifs in *Jane Eyre* are ultimately disempowering for the heroine. Karen Rowe, Maria Tatar, and John Seelye do not explore the fairytale plot in the novel beyond the aborted wedding in the chapel near Thornfield. It seems that this scholarly dismissal of *Jane Eyre*'s fairytale allusions has led to a widespread indifference to the treatment of fairy tales in Brontë's final novel, *Villette* (1853). This section follows the concluding arc of Brontë's artistic career from her celebration of the fairy to her ultimate dismissal of the fairy or changeling figure as an ideal heroic example of womanhood.

In *Jane Eyre*, the changeling heroine represents a female ideal. As a figure drawn from Brontë's experience with pre-Victorian fairy lore, Jane Eyre could modify the standard "Beauty and the Beast" plot that Brontë had been working through in her juvenilia for over a decade. This heroic female character challenged gender norms and the typical domestic narrative for women. In *Villette*, the fairy figure Pauline Mary Home becomes a foil for the fallible human protagonist, Lucy Snowe. By contrasting Lucy Snowe with Polly Home, Brontë successfully excises the fairy from her representation of heroic womanhood. This section explores the role of the fairy and the human heroine in *Villette*, and then it analyzes the significance of this shift in Brontë's portrayal of womanhood. It situates Brontë's use of the supernatural in current discussions about the novel's ambiguity and narrative voice.

In "Corpse Hording: Control and the Female Body in 'Bluebeard', 'Schalken and the Painter', and *Villette*" (2011), Katherine Kim explores the refracted and inverted "Bluebeard" motifs in *Villette*. Although I am not interested in Brontë's treatment of the "Bluebeard" fairy tale, Kim's article is useful to this analysis because it confirms the absence of scholarly discourse on fairy tales in Brontë's final novel (407-08). Following Kim's mode of inquiry, this section examines the deliberate eradication of the changeling heroine, tracing the trajectory and

evolution of Brontë's notion about the ideal heroic woman. Kim is not interested in the development of female characters, but she recognizes the complexities and subtleties in Brontë's use of fairy tales. Like Kim, I conclude that Brontë's manipulation of fairy lore in her final novel is not simply an inversion of her earlier stance. Brontë refracts and problematizes the changeling heroine of *Jane Eyre* and invites the reader to consider a wider range of implications that this character has as a metaphor for womanhood and a champion of the female *bildungsroman*. Thus, this section's treatment of fairy tales in *Villette* extends conversations about the novel's ambiguity in a different vein. Kim puts Brontë in conversation with Irish author Sheridan LeFanu, arguing that *Villette* is a part of a larger historical moment: mid-century literary macabre. I explore Brontë's connection with a different community, since I argue that her treatment of fairy tales also reflects a trend among women writers.

For recent scholars, the discussion of Lucy's ambiguous narrative voice begins with Gilbert and Gubar. In "The Buried Life of Lucy Snowe" from *Madwoman in the Attic*, Gilbert and Gubar claim that the protagonist and narrator Lucy Snowe is unreliable and deliberately misleading because of her suppressed psychosexual desires. They argue that Lucy is a double for Brontë and her own thwarted and suppressed romantic desires (439). In "The Reflecting Reader in *Villette*" (1983), Brenda Silver challenges Gilbert and Gubar. She argues that Lucy "is, in fact, a self-consciously reliable narrator of unusual circumstances whose narrative choices ask her 'readers' to perceive her on her own terms" (91).<sup>82</sup> The apparent misdirection in the novel stems from the fact that Lucy's narration is directed at two types of readers: those who accept dominant Victorian mores and those who recognize, like Lucy, the "disparity between social expectations and reality for women" (Silver 94). The perceived gaps in Lucy's tale are directed at these reflective readers, inviting them to recognize the incongruity of traditional plots and the actual

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<sup>82</sup> Silver, Brenda. "The Reflecting Reader in *Villette*," *The Voyage In*. 1983.

experiences of women (Silver 110-11). In “*Possibilities of Hidden Things*”: *Narrative Transgressions in Victorian Fictional Autobiographies* (1996), Hsiao-Hung Lee also explores fractured narrative voices in *Villette*, but he views it as a deconstructive act that anticipates Michel Foucault’s writings. Lucy Snowe’s narration produces a type of “discourse of unreason” that breaks free of patriarchal norms and expectations, enabling readers to do likewise within the space of the text (85-94). Thus, in different ways, both Silver and Lee conclude that *Villette*’s narrative choices enable the potential reader to temporarily challenge patriarchal norms. However, this challenge is ambiguous because of its dependence upon the reader’s scrutiny and discernment. In *Voice and the Victorian Storyteller* (2005), Ivan Kreilkamp extends the argument of scholars like Silver and Lee beyond the relationship of the ambiguous protagonist with an individual discerning reader. He argues that *Villette*’s fractured narrative voice generates a shared interiority for an emerging mass readership (123). Like Silver, Kreilkamp begins analyzing the way in which *Villette* negotiates power by questioning the simple equation of speech and empowerment: “is silence always powerlessness, speech always power?” (142).

What none of these scholars have addressed in their discussions of the novel’s ambiguity is that Brontë’s social critique would have been particularly ambivalent for a mid-nineteenth century audience because it does not meet readerly expectations generated by the nineteenth-century novel of purpose. The novel of purpose is a literary designation that developed in the middle of the nineteenth century. In *The Novel of Purpose*, Claybaugh traces the term to David Masson’s study of the novel, *British Novelists and Their Styles* (1859) (31). Claybaugh describes the novel of purpose and its place in social thought:

The novel of purpose ... took its conception of purposefulness from reform. As a consequence, nineteenth-century novels were written, published, read, and reviewed according to expectations learned from social reform. Like reformist writings, the novel of purpose was understood to act on its readers – and, through

its readers, the word.... Where the novel had earlier been at best dismissed as frivolous, at worst condemned as sinful, it was now understood to be actively working for the social good. (7)

Claybaugh places *Jane Eyre* firmly in this literary category along with Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848) (85-87). *Jane Eyre*'s fairytale plot emphasizes its sense of purposefulness because popular Western fairy tales are commonly understood to be a genre imbued with social and moral messages that can act upon the reader.<sup>83</sup> *Villette* is more ambiguous; its purpose is not apparent, and its narrative is at odds with Victorian mores. By excising fairy lore and fairytale allusions in *Villette*, Brontë magnifies the genre shift in her final novel. Both readerly responses to and scholarly critiques of *Villette* have struggled with this shift; statements about Brontë's ambiguity are all based on assumptions established by the novel of purpose. These expectations have further obscured Brontë's competing messages about female stereotypes and the final triumph of Lucy's ordinary existence.

Although Brontë did not view *Villette* as reflecting the Victorian reading public or as participating in a "discourse of unreason," she was aware that her final novel was distinctive, both in the context of her own work and in the context of women's literature. In a series of letters, Brontë obliquely positions *Villette* as a novel that was unlike anything she had previously written, particularly *Jane Eyre*. Gaskell's biography of Brontë includes the letter Brontë sent to her publisher, Mr. Smith, along with the first section of her manuscript, requesting that this final novel be published anonymously: "I should be most thankful for the sheltering shadow of an incognito. I seem to dread the advertisements – the large-lettered 'Currer Bell's New Novel,' or 'New Work, by the Author of Jane Eyre.'" (412) This request implies that Brontë wants to avoid comparisons because it will evoke expectations among her readers; Brontë anticipates the

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<sup>83</sup> In *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion* (1989), Jack Zipes sums up this popular perception of the genre: "fairy tales operate ideologically to indoctrinate children so that they will conform to dominant social standards" (18).

responses of her readers to her dramatic genre shift with its lack of fairytale motifs and fairytale endings. In a later letter to her publisher, she contrasts her novel with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, stating that she cannot write a book in that style; she insists that "it is of no use trying" (Gaskell 412) to write about moral or philosophical issues like Stowe. In a letter to Gaskell herself, Brontë contrasts *Villette* with both *Jane Eyre* and Gaskell's forthcoming novel, *Ruth* (1853), another social novel (Gaskell 421). From these contrasts, Brontë positions *Villette* as distinct from the novel of purpose, epitomized by Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Ruth* (Gaskell 410-18). Thus, even before the novel's publication, Brontë articulated her awareness of this novel's break with tradition, a subject that has continued to intrigue scholars.

Although Brontë recognized the genre shift in her final novel, her letters about *Villette* suggest that she perceived the distinctive nature of this novel to lie primarily in the narrative gap between Lucy Snowe and Polly Home, rather than in the narrator's voice or ambiguity (Gaskell 417-18). Between November and December of 1852, Brontë exchanged a series of letters with her publisher in which she compares and contrasts her characters, anticipating readers' responses: "It is not pleasant, and it will probably be found as unwelcome to the reader, as it was, in a sense, compulsory upon the writer" (Gaskell 417-18). She describes Lucy as "morbid and weak" (Gaskell 415) but she claims it is a realistic response to her situation: "her character sets up no pretensions to unmixed strength, and anybody living her life would necessarily become morbid" (Gaskell 415). By contrast, Polly is "the most beautiful" (Gaskell 418), but Brontë considers the character weak "the fault lies in its wanting the germ of the *real* – in its being purely imaginary" (Gaskell 418). Brontë recognizes that her readers will struggle with the drastic contrast between the ideal and the ordinary. Both Polly and the "curled darling" (Gaskell 413) Dr. John Graham Bretton repeat the fairytale narrative expectations of novels such as *Jane Eyre*;

these are expectations which Lucy will not meet. This section brings Brontë's critique into the current scholarly conversation by examining her fractured message through the separation of the fairy figure and the heroine. Through her letters, Brontë has an extended discussion of these characters, but she hardly mentions the narrative voice or style, features which have been the focus of a wide body of scholarship on *Villette*. These letters suggest that Brontë imagined this gap between her characters would be the most important aspect of her message. More specifically, Brontë implies that she intended to use this gap between her characters to address her composite audience: the discerning readers and the general public with their fairy tale expectations. The distinction between the fairy figure and the heroine allows Brontë to potentially reach both readerships simultaneously.

Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon* and David Sandner's *Critical Discourses of the Fantastic, 1712-1831* (2011) are particularly useful to my analysis of Brontë's treatment of the supernatural in her final novel, especially to her construction of women and the fairytale expectations traditionally applied to women's lives. In *Woman and the Demon*, Auerbach identifies the way in which women were frequently banished to supernatural extremes in the Victorian imagination. Auerbach also gestures towards the consequences of this imaginative structure: it denies women a stable, human identity in Victorian art and the cultural imagination. Instead, female characters oscillated from one supernatural extreme to another, and these characters carry with them unattainable ideals for women. Her analysis of literature and artwork by Victorian men demonstrates that the angelic stereotype proves nearly impossible to maintain, even in fiction. Thus, female characters run the gamut of magical and monstrous creatures: "Excluded as woman is from 'normative' maleness, she seems less an alien than man in the nonhuman range of the universe. Men are less her brothers than is the spectrum of creation's



mutants.” (Auerbach 66) She argues that the “serpent with a ‘lady visage’” (93), is frequently used to reflect female spirituality in Victorian art and literature. She supports her assertions with an assortment of Pre-Raphaelite paintings as well as book illustrations and allusions in poetry. While this particular female serpent was popularized in Christian iconography before the nineteenth century, during the Victorian era it moved outside the garden and became a representation of woman’s anomalous place in the spiritual world and her inability to claim a fully human identity (Auerbach 91-94).

Auerbach claims that this treatment of female stereotypes reflects “the theological urge to inaugurate a new mythos” (105); the female divine is “animated by a longing ... for transcendence” (104). By contrast, men remain firmly fixed in their earth-bound, human identities (104-05). Despite the acknowledged social consequences of the unrealistic expectations of female characters and Victorian women, *Woman and the Demon* concludes that the Victorian celebration and exaltation of women inspired the proliferation of supernatural stereotypes:

An answer to this resonant question that is truer to the Victorian vision of our artists might be: woman is not frailer than man is, but stronger and more powerful; her nature is broadly demonic rather than fallibly human; she must ‘lead in the black art’ because by definition, woman is an angel (108).

My argument modifies Auerbach’s claim by using Sandner’s recent theories about the fantastic. While writers and artists, particularly women writers, whom Auerbach does not analyze, may have sought to inaugurate a new mythos with a larger-than-life, heroic example of womanhood, this search is problematized and defined by its “endlessly deferred claims” (Sandner 4). Just as Romantic “poems of transcendence perform a deferred desire” (4), the search for a new feminine mythos is a performance of deferred desire:

The performance itself fascinates, even as it endlessly fails to achieve coherence; by implication, the fantastic's illusory status, its impossibility, acknowledged by its very definition, could be regarded not as a failure to achieve the coherence of 'reality' but as a vital performance of the deferment of the (perhaps illusory) coherence of reality (Sandner 4).

The search for a feminine mythos in nineteenth-century literature is another performance of deferred desire: the urge to generate a new mythic symbol of womanhood continues to goad women writers throughout the nineteenth century because it can never be definitively concluded. It may be argued that *Jane Eyre* was a celebration of this performance while *Villette* is a recognition of the limitations of this performance and the impossibility of fulfilling the desire to escape reality. The fractured narrative voice of the fallible human, Lucy Snowe, whose own happiness is ultimately deferred by means of a pause and silence rather than announced, is an overt narrative performance of such a deferral. Lucy pauses at the end of her narrative just short of declaring M. Paul Emmanuel's death. She turns the narrative away from this climactic moment and instead explains the pause as a silence that allows optimistic readers to continue hoping that she attains a fairytale marriage and happy ending. By addressing the reader and drawing attention to the pause, Lucy creates an overt performance of deferment, implying that mythic and fairytale paradigms can only be achieved in the illusory space of fiction while the lived existence of an ordinary woman is perpetually postponed. Through *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*, Brontë demonstrates that the perpetual search for a feminine mythos can be enjoyed as a journey within a narrative but not a coherent reality. Brontë's novels initiate a discourse among women writers on the open-ended literary quest to represent the experiences of womanhood.

*Jane Eyre* primarily juxtaposes the changeling heroine with two female stereotypes: the angel and the fallen angel. The changeling heroine breaks this dichotomy and, paradoxically, reclaims a human middle ground for womanhood. In *Woman and the Demon*, Auerbach

describes the cultural imaginary that Brontë is attempting to navigate: “According to its [the Victorian era’s] governing imaginative convention, women exist only as spiritual extremes: there is no human norm of womanhood, for she has no home on earth, but only among divine and demonic essences. This imaginative scheme does not believe in a human woman.” (64) *Villette* seems to reflect a more nuanced understanding of this Victorian literary context. Instead of confronting female dichotomies, Lucy Snowe is surrounded by myriad female foils, like a woman in a house of mirrors, each reflecting a stereotype that is contrasted with the refracted and fractured heroine herself.

Thus, Polly Home is only one of the many female foils featured in Brontë’s final novel. However, Polly is a figure that invites further scrutiny because of her extended treatment in the narrative; as a child, Polly lives with Lucy in Mrs. Bretton’s house, and as an adult she later meets Lucy again in Labassecour, *Villette*. Furthermore, Brontë dwells on the comparison between Polly and Lucy in the letters she exchanged with her publisher, Mr. Smith.<sup>84</sup> These letters position Polly as both the ideal Victorian woman, or the “prize of life’s lottery” (Gaskell 413), and the “weakest character in the book” (Gaskell 418).

Through the perplexities and weaknesses of Polly’s character, Brontë seems to recognize the futility of the changeling as a heroic female character. By contrast, the evasive observer, Lucy Snowe, obliquely claims human identity by her fallibilities. Scholars since Gilbert and Gubar have noted Lucy’s tendency to turn the reader’s attention away from herself at critical moments in the narrative, beginning with the opening scene: “Instead of participating in the life of the Brettons, Lucy watches it. The appearance of another child – visitor emphasizes her ironic detachment.” (403) While her name is symbolic of her frigidity, as Brontë asserts in a letter to her publishers, Lucy herself is not particularly symbolic of anything, although she seems to

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<sup>84</sup> Gaskell includes these letters in *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*.

represent a real woman.<sup>85</sup> Thus, the critique of female characters, which is embedded in *Villette*, anticipates feminists after Derrida who demonstrate that a symbol is inadequate for expressing humanity.

Moreover, Lucy is a representation of womanhood that ends in an unresolved silence, a pause. According to Gaskell's biography, Brontë intended to fully articulate the unglamorous existence of the single, human woman but found herself thwarted. *Villette* concludes: "Here pause: pause at once. There is enough said." (Brontë 496) Gaskell claims this conclusion was a compromise. Brontë decided that Paul Emanuel would die and leave Lucy alone, but her father, Patrick Brontë wanted the novel to have a fairytale-like happy ending:

I may mention what she told me; that Mr. Brontë was anxious that her new tale should end well, as he disliked novels which left a melancholy impression upon the mind; and he requested her to make her hero and heroine (like the heroes and heroines in fairytales) 'marry, and live happily ever after.' But the idea of M. Paul Emanuel's death at sea was stamped on her imagination, till it assumed the distinct force of reality; and she could no more alter her fictitious ending than if they had been facts which she was relating. All she could do in compliance with her father's wish was so to veil the fate in oracular words, as to leave it to the character and discernment of her readers to interpret her meaning. (Gaskell 414)

While modern readers may clearly understand Brontë's intentions, apparently some of Brontë's original audience considered this conclusion relatively vague. Lucy's interrupted and unfinished narrative can be contrasted with that of her fairy-like foil Pauline Mary Home, or Polly, who receives a modified but definitive fairytale life and happy ending. While *Villette* demonstrates that Brontë, like her literary descendants, is drawn back to *Jane Eyre* with its fairytale-like mimetic unity, it seems that Brontë returns to deliberately fracture and undermine that fairytale,

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<sup>85</sup> In a letter to Williams on 6 November 1852, Brontë states: "As to the name of the heroine, I can hardly express what subtlety (sic) of thought made me decide upon giving her a cold name; but, at first, I called her 'Lucy Snowe' (spelt with an 'e'); which Snowe I afterwards changed to 'Frost.' Subsequently, I rather regretted the change, and wished it 'Snowe' again. ... A *cold* name she must have; partly, perhaps, on the '*lucus a non lucendo*' principle – partly on that of the 'fitness of things', for she has about her an external coldness" (Gaskell 415).

particularly for the discerning reader.<sup>86</sup> She concludes with a pause in which the reader can imagine the hope of a happy ending or accept the continuation of life without romantic love. However, it may also be argued that through this pause, Brontë keeps the quest for a representation of the experiences of womanhood alive and in flux.

The characters of Polly and Lucy are a pair of contrasting Eves seeking Paradise in a world controlled by capricious Fate. Apparently writing in response to her publisher's criticism, Brontë defends the weakness of her narrator:

You say that [Lucy Snowe] may be thought morbid and weak, unless the history of her life be more fully given. I consider that she *is* both morbid and weak at times; her character sets up no pretensions to unmixed strength, and anybody living her life would necessarily become morbid. It was no impetus of healthy feeling which urged her to the confessional, for instance; it was the semi-delirium of solitary grief and sickness. (Gaskell 415)

Brontë's assessment of Lucy Snowe's weaknesses may be contrasted with her critique of Polly Home:

I greatly apprehend, however, that the weakest character in the book is the one I aimed at making the most beautiful; and if this be the case, the fault lies in its wanting the germ of the *real* – in its being purely imaginary. I felt that this character lacked substance; I fear the reader will feel the same. Union with it resembles too much the fate of Ixion, who was mated with a cloud. The childhood of Pauline is, however, I think, pretty well imagined.... (Gaskell 418).

Brontë recognizes the artificial aesthetic that readers expected for female characters.

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<sup>86</sup> In *Why Fairy Tales Stick* (2006), Jack Zipes revises and revisits his earlier theories about the function and evolution of fairy tales (xii); however, he also explores a relatively new theory, which he calls "Memetics and the Epidemiological Approach" (2). Zipes defines memetics using Richard Dawkins' theory of the meme: "The theory of memetics generally maintains that a meme is an informational pattern contained in a human brain (or in artifacts such as books or pictures) and stored in its memory, capable of being copied to another individual's brain that will store it and replicate it" (4). Zipes claims that fairytales are good examples of memes, reducing culture to "informational pattern[s]" (4) that can easily be remembered and transmitted (5). While Zipes admits that the biological implications of this theory are inconclusive and simplistic, the social and psychological ramifications of memes are injured. Memes are capable of fulfilling a cultural need to keep particular information alive and relevant (7). I would further argue that the mimetic unity of the fairytale makes it particularly attractive for writers and readers. Not only is it compact, it contains socially desirable ideas.

Bronte repeatedly identifies the character of Polly as an elf, a changeling, a fairy, and a fairy queen.<sup>87</sup> However, Brontë's characterization of Polly demonstrates that the fairy has evolved into another supernatural stereotype for the Victorian woman. *Villette* represents Polly as the Victorian fairy who is a sexualized variation of the angel in the house: an enchanting domestic ideal that functions as a fascinating object of the male gaze, but lacks even a suggestion of the moral substance of angels. As John Ruskin implies in his Slade lecture "Fairyland" (1893), the fairy is nothing more or less than a fulfillment of male fantasies; Ruskin states: "a man can't always *do* as he likes, but he can always *fancy* what he likes." Although Ruskin's statement reflects the end of an era, this male-dominated fantasy was already being created in literature, theater, and visual arts during the 1850s. According to Jeremy Maas in "Victorian Fairy Paintings" (2001), the tableaux in dramas and paintings celebrated highly sexualized pre-pubescent women (14-18). The pedophilic tendencies inherent in these images have also been widely noted (Maas 17-18). In the "Introduction" to *Fairies in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature* (2001), Nicola Bown claims that the most prominent Victorian representations of fairies were created by men; thus the stereotype that evolved was dominated by male fantasies (4).

Even the influential women who wrote about fairies in the Victorian era were largely unable to escape the limits imposed on these types. Fairies remain infantilized, and they objectify women, like Jean Ingelow's fairy queen Mopsa, who remains a perpetual child and who could fit in a man's waistcoat pocket.<sup>88</sup> As Mopsa fades from the male hero's mind, he absently wonders what other fairies may have lived in other men's waistcoat pockets (Ingelow 314). Thus, Ingelow's fairy remains a sexualized object carried by men in their secret interior spaces; it is an

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<sup>87</sup> See *Villette* (27, 274-76, 280-81, 299-301, 303, 428-29, 456).

<sup>88</sup> In "Fairy Writing and Writers" (2001), Stella Beddoe claims that Jean Ingelow's novel *Mopsa the Fairy* (1869) is one of the most significant treatments of fairy lore by a woman in the Victorian era (30).

image with vaguely pedophilic undertones that echo the tensions in mainstream Victorian fairy art. Mopsa is a stark contrast with the powerful and verbal female figure of pre-Victorian fairy lore.<sup>89</sup> Similarly, Maas claims that fairy paintings do not reflect the alternative social order and gender hierarchy imagined in pre-Victorian fairy lore.<sup>90</sup> Rather, fairies became projections of Victorian desires for sexually available women, particularly young women. If the Victorian era created the modern concept of children as distinctive, emphasizing the taboo of sexual interest and activity around children, then Victorian fairy lore created a socially acceptable outlet for doubly taboo sexual desires.<sup>91</sup>

Lucy Snowe's fairy foil reflects the Victorian stereotype. Polly is an infantilized character whose power is channeled into her appearance and domestic activities. Although she has a happy fate, Brontë belabors the fact that Polly does nothing to merit her happiness; she does not have the power to arrange her own happy ending. Moreover, Polly's fate and her identity are completely subsumed by the male characters who surround her. She performs her role as a domestic object of male desire without seeking any independent self-realization.

Polly looks like a fairy; it is one of the first things that Lucy notices when they meet again in *Villette*: "but between the candles, and before the glass, appeared something dressing itself – an airy, fairy thing – small, slight, white – a winter sprite" (274). In this description, Polly is dehumanized; the fairy is a thing, an object. Through Lucy's description, Brontë demonstrates that the Victorian fairy does not function to rehumanize women. However, Lucy is not the primary observer of Polly; Polly performs her fairy identity for Dr. John Graham Bretton at the

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<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, Ingelow's infantilized fairy resembles the late-Victorian fairies in texts such as Dora Shorter's "The Fairy Changeling" (1898) and Harriet Spofford's *The Fairy Changeling: A Flower and Fairy Play* (1911).

<sup>90</sup> See Silver (84-86).

<sup>91</sup> In *Ventures into Childhood* (1998), U.C. Knoepfelmacher makes similar observations about the pedophilic undertones embedded in late-Victorian fairy tales and children stories, epitomized by the works of Lewis Carroll and John Ruskin (6-13).

dinner where they are all reunited as adults, beginning with a dance: ““And is that a Scotch reel you are dancing, you Highland fairy?” asked her father. ‘Mrs. Bretton, there will be a green ring growing up in the middle of your kitchen shortly. I would not answer for her being quite canine: she is a strange little mortal.’” (280). Lucy observes that Graham is mesmerized by the dance: “Dr. John had not been unobservant of the fairy’s dance; he had watched it, and he had liked it. To say nothing of the softness and beauty of the movements... for it set *him* at ease: again she seemed a child for him – again, almost his playmate.” (281) John seems to be engaging in the voyeuristic fancy that Ruskin describes; his interest is almost pedophilic in nature.

Polly continues the performance, drinking October ale from Graham’s tankard and exchanging witty comments with him(280-83). Lucy concludes her observation of the couple with the statement: “She did not again yield to any effervescence of glee; the infantine sparkle was exhaled for the night: she was soft, thoughtful, and docile. ... I saw he [Graham] hardly knew how to blend together in his ideas the dancing fairy and delicate dame” (283). Like any performance, this one is marked by temporality. Polly’s performance of the fairy is a stark contrast to the essentialist treatment of Jane Eyre’s fairy identity. Brontë integrates the fairy into the most important aspects of Jane Eyre’s character: fairy associations are most prominent when the heroine matures or reveals something important about her inner nature. By contrast, Polly performs her fairy identity when she is seducing Graham. However, she does not embrace this persona in her private, mature moments (371-73). Furthermore, Brontë emphasizes the idea that the fairy is an infantilizing role in *Villette*; Graham is intrigued by Polly’s irreconcilable roles as child and woman. He does not seem troubled by the incongruity and absurdity of such a performance. Lucy’s observation of Polly’s performance and Graham’s response is a moment of



narrative ambiguity that invites what Brenda Silver terms the “discerning reader” (94) to evaluate this female stereotype.

Polly’s performance makes her the object of the male gaze. Lucy points out that Graham does not know how to deal with “his ideas” (283) about Polly. He is not struggling to understand Polly as an individual; rather, he is trying to reconcile his own fantasies and projections about the woman performing for him. Although Polly’s performance is for Graham, it is significant that her father is the first to observe and comment upon it. The transfer of observation in this passage foreshadows the transfer of control and voyeuristic rights to this object that occurs when Mr. Home gives Polly up to Graham; Mr. Home states: ““Be married, Polly! Espouse the red whiskers. Cease to be a daughter; go and be a wife!”” (432) The emotional exchange of “the little treasure” (429), Polly, is the only trial that she undergoes throughout the course of the novel. Brontë emphasizes the idea that Polly is a beautiful object being exchanged between two men through Lucy’s repetition of Mr. Home’s phrase: “The door opened – his ‘little treasure’ came in. She was dressed, so to speak, in evening beauty” (430). It is significant that Polly retreats to her room, while Lucy argues with Mr. Home about allowing Polly to marry her beloved Graham (426-29). Polly does not secure her own desires; she remains an objectified figure without agency.

Polly also demonstrates the domestication of the Victorian fairy. Her name is her first association with the domestic sphere: Pauline Mary Home. As with the heroine, it may be assumed that this name is symbolic. In fact, Lucy pauses to comment on the name after introducing Polly’s family: “Mrs. Home (Home it seems was the name) had...” (6). Furthermore, the idea of home is constructed as a patriarchal space when it is connected to Polly because it is associated with Polly’s father: Home is his family name and Polly’s home revolves around him.

Once Graham proposes, Polly claims that this domestic space can be expanded to include both men: “‘Papa, I love you both,’ said she; ‘I can take care of both of you. I need not send Graham away – he can live here; he will be no inconvenience.’” (434) Her home is unlike other domestic spaces in the novel, which are primarily associated with women: the home of Mrs. Bretton and the boarding school of Madame Beck. Polly is devoted to her father, from the time that she was a child (2-3) and her marriage functions as a homosocial union of men; she plaits their locks together and binds them with one of her own. Lucy claims this amulet made peace between Mr. Home and Graham: “She was become a bond to both, an influence over each, a mutual concord. From them she drew her happiness, and what she borrowed, she, with interest, gave back.” (436)

Although Polly functions as a catalyst for this union, Brontë makes it clear that Polly is not responsible for her own happiness: “In short, I do but speak the truth when I say that these two lives of Graham and Paulina were blessed, like that of Jacob’s favoured son, with ‘blessings of Heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies under.’ It was so, for God saw that it was good.” (437) Lucy tells Polly that she believes her happiness with Graham is both the result of a fortunate star and of God’s perfect will. Thus, Brontë extends the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination to the earthly existence of her characters: “I think it is deemed good that you two should live in peace and be happy – not as angels, but as few are happy amongst mortals. Some lives *are* thus blessed: it is God’s will: it is the attesting trace and lingering evidence of Eden.” (377). Lucy translates Polly’s happy ending into a return to the past: a return to Eden. Lucy also claims “Pauline loved the Past” (290). Thus, the fairy foil becomes a relic of a lost Paradise and a lost childhood that ordinary mortals cannot reclaim. Yet it is a stereotype and a goal that women attempt to attain. However, Brontë’s critique is implicit; Lucy does not explicitly condemn Polly. Brontë’s treatment of the fairy character is another layer in the ambiguity of the narrative.

While the fairytale couple are destined to live in the lost Eden, they also have strong nationalistic connections; Graham and Polly reflect British nationalistic hopes. Graham is particularly identified as the golden descendent of heroic Saxon kings from the past (16, 98). Polly's father is a distant relation of Graham's father, and Lucy claims that he embodies good British values (7-8). Polly resembles her good father rather than her foreign, unprincipled mother, making her a fitting mate for the Saxon-like Graham (6). Even her Victorian fairy performance contains national echoes: she is described as a "Highland fairy" doing a Scottish dance (280). By contrast, Lucy is a more cosmopolitan figure; she chooses to live abroad and she falls in love with a foreign, Catholic professor.<sup>92</sup> Thus, Brontë continues to link fairy lore with overt expressions of nationalism and regionalism, excising both from her heroine in *Villette*. The regional and nationalistic stakes of Brontë's first changeling heroine seem to be displaced onto Polly and treated ambivalently by Lucy.

Finally, the fairy is too weak to live outside the paradise she is destined to inhabit. The only time that Polly leaves the domestic sphere, in the course of the narrative, is to attend a play with her father (261-65). Polly loses hold of her father, and she is trampled on as playgoers flee a fire on the stage (261). She differs from Lucy, who has the strength to make her way through the crush of bodies at the theater without any aid; Lucy is strong enough to stand alone (261). When Mr. Home compares Polly and Lucy, he claims that his daughter is not strong enough to survive on her own; she cannot even leave the domestic sphere long enough to attend school (284-89). Polly reiterates her own dependent existence in other terms; she claims she would die without

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<sup>92</sup> The anti-Catholic sentiments in *Villette* have been examined by critics of the novel since its publication. Micael Clarke summarizes the history of *Villette*'s anti-Catholic reception in "Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, Mid-Victorian Anti-Catholicism, and the Turn to Secularism" (2011). Clarke argues that the novel offers an "open-ended conclusion" (986) rather than the narrow anti-Papist reading that has typically been assigned to *Villette*. Building on Clarke's argument, it seems clear that the character Lucy Snowe is relatively tolerant, especially when she is contrasted with characters such as Polly and even Jane Eyre. Whatever Brontë's overarching message about Catholicism may be, Lucy may be characterized as catholic, especially through her romance with M. Paul Emmanuel.

Graham (29). Polly exists in relationship to the men who surround her in the domestic sphere. Her identity is subsumed in theirs.

By contrast, Lucy is the woman who is able to live. Mr. Home states:

“When I had time to consider Lucy’s manner and aspect, which was not often, I saw she was one who had to guard and not be guarded; to act and not be served; and this lot has, I imagined, helped her to an experience for which, if she live long enough to realize its full benefit, she may yet bless Providence.” (286)

Her life is not a happy fairy tale, but neither is it tragic. Many scholars, including Kreilkamp, have argued, Lucy represents mundane existence. They have not recognized that while Lucy’s life is not glamorized, her unidealized existence is a hardy existence; this makes her a stark contrast to her sheltered fairy foil. Lucy is the woman who has the ability to survive in the real world; as flawed and broken as she is, Lucy is the only viable example of womanhood. By surviving, Lucy challenges readers to redefine a good life – a life to be thankful for, defying limitations and current claims that Lucy is merely mundane.

Speaking of herself, Lucy states, “I find no reason why I should be of the few favoured. I believe in some blending of hope and sunshine sweetening the worst lots.” (361) Furthermore, Lucy does enjoy a moment of sunshine – a brief interlude in her own Eden:

We walked back to the Rue Fossette by moonlight – such moonlight as fell on Eden – shining through the shades of the Great Garden, and haply gliding a path glorious, for a step divine – a Presence nameless. Once in their lives some men and women go back to these first fresh days of our great Sire and Mother – taste that grand morning’s dew – bathe in its sunrise. (491)

Unlike Polly’s Edenic existence, Lucy only enjoys a brief moment in Paradise. It is significant that she describes herself strolling through the Great Garden rather than living in it. Happiness is a transitory experience in life, not a permanent dwelling place. After M. Paul Emmanuel asked Lucy to marry him and set her up as a Directress of her own school, Lucy enjoyed the best years of her life: “Reader, they were the three happiest years of my life” (493). The heroine’s direct

address to the reader here at the conclusion of *Villette* parallels Jane Eyre's direct address in the conclusion of Brontë's first novel: "Reader, I married him" (395). Lucy's momentary Eden contrasts the happy ending enjoyed by both of Brontë's fairy-like heroines. Lucy's loss ultimately suggests that neither the fairy nor fairytale expectations of domestic bliss are attainable examples of a woman's experiences and, thus, unsatisfactory heroic female characters. Furthermore, the absence of Paul Emmanuel allows Lucy to retain her own identity; she is not subsumed into a male's identity. By contrast, even in her letters, Brontë characterizes Polly as a prize for the ideal hero, rather than an independent woman. Although Brontë recognizes Lucy's weaknesses, she imagines this character as an independent individual: "If Lucy marries anybody, it must be the Professor – a man in whom there is much to forgive, much to 'put up with'. But I am not leniently disposed towards Miss Frost; from the beginning, I never meant to appoint her lines in pleasant places." (Gaskell 414). Lucy's interlude in Paradise ends with an ice storm and a pause. Lucy refuses to state definitively that M. Paul's ship sank; instead she says:

Here pause: pause at once. There is enough said. Trouble no quiet, kind heart; leave sunny imaginations hope. Let it be theirs to conceive the delight of joy born again fresh out of great terror, the rapture of rescue from peril, the wondrous reprieve from dread, the fruition of return. Let them picture union and a happy succeeding life. (496)

Although Brontë did not originally intend to conclude with an indefinite statement, this pause is powerful. Through this pause, Lucy exposes the performance of deferred desire inherent in the fairy tale; the hope of happily-ever-after. This is also one of the most prominent examples of Brontë's appeal to a dual readership. She overtly allows the complacent Victorian reader to continue embracing unrealistic expectations, while simultaneously allowing the discerning reader to recognize the truth that life continues after the fairy tale ends; as Lucy stated earlier: "I was not dead" (460). The conjunction of fairy tales and Victorian readerly expectations is one of the

primary reasons that Brontë's ambiguous and ambivalent narrator can ultimately be effective. Lucy's fractured narrative voice, her refusal to definitively conclude her own romance, is a stark contrast with her conventional treatment of Polly's happy ending. Lucy does not just speak to two types of readers; she offers two different stories. However, only one ending is hardy enough to resist death. Although Lucy is not a larger-than-life character, it may be argued that this hardy female protagonist also offers a heroic alternative to the typical domestic heroine. The changeling in *Jane Eyre* is a hero rather than a domestic heroine because she is not primarily concerned with attaining domestic bliss. Fairy lore functions to amplify Jane's personal characterization, not just advance the domestic plot. However, the changeling does eventually achieve domestic bliss. Lucy resists that narrative entirely. While it is not glamorous, it may be a truly heroic feat, both for Brontë and her fallible character.

### **Conclusion**

The heroic changeling in *Jane Eyre* is more than an appealing stereotype; her narrative allows Brontë to experiment with female voice and agency. By granting the changeling heroine in *Jane Eyre* the verbal acuity of North-Country and Irish pre-Victorian fairies, Brontë creates a heroine with a powerful voice, a characteristic previously limited to her male characters and male personae, even in her juvenilia. *Jane Eyre* is Brontë's first text fully narrated by a female voice. In *The Brontës: A Life in Letters*, Barker notes that Brontë seems to write most freely in letters signed with her male pseudonym Currer Bell, suggesting that she herself struggled with inhibitions when writing as a woman. The authority of the male narrative voice is not simply a trope of Brontë's fiction. Gaskell emphasizes this struggle in her biography in an attempt to feminize Brontë. By claiming that Brontë struggled to balance her roles as a woman and author Gaskell seeks sympathy from readers and critics who judged Brontë's work as unfeminine (271-

72). However, Brontë's letters demonstrate that she did struggle with her identity as a woman writer. Occasionally, Brontë even makes a distinction between herself and Currer Bell, addressing her pseudonym as a separate, male figure (Gaskell 321).<sup>93</sup> Through the fairy lore invested in the changeling heroine, Brontë created a heroine who overcame her own fears: an ideal of female strength for women writers and readers.

A nationalistic message is inherent in *Jane Eyre*, not only through the demonization of the Creole Bertha, but also through the regional fairy lore that empowers the heroine. Thus, *Jane Eyre* becomes a nationalistic female *bildungsroman*. This nationalism is not particularly apparent in the narrative of the expatriate Lucy Snowe. By excising fairy lore in *Villette*, Brontë generates a more cosmopolitan novel. *Jane Eyre*'s transatlantic literary descendants implicitly respond to the nationalism of the heroic female *bildungsroman* as well as the powerful protagonists and her fairytale plot. The arc of Brontë's literary career begins with her masterful performance of deferred desire through a changeling heroine who succeeds in navigating the "Beauty and the Beast" plot of *Jane Eyre*.

However, this powerful figure does not endure in Brontë's work or in that of her literary progeny, beginning with *Villette*. Brontë deliberately strips away the fairy lore associations from the heroine Lucy Snowe. Instead of creating another changeling heroine, the changeling becomes a foil for the very human heroine. Brontë foregrounds Polly's performance of fairy identity and confronts the discerning reader with the insufficiencies of this stereotype. Brontë's dismissal of fairy tales and the ideal fairytale heroine is a part of her deliberate resistance to societal norms through the hardy Lucy Snowe, who lives beyond the hopes of a happily-ever-after, offering a different model for heroic womanhood.

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<sup>93</sup> Gaskell includes a letter from Brontë to G.H. Lewes dated 1 November 1849, where Brontë states: "I wish all reviewers believed 'Currer Bell' to be a man; they would be more just to him."

Following Brontë's own example, women writers on both sides of the Atlantic recognize *Jane Eyre* as distinctive, and they respond to the fairy tales and fairy lore embedded in the novel, but they consistently seek new paradigms to represent the experiences of womanhood rather than reviving the changeling heroine with her distinctive fairy lore. *Jane Eyre*'s literary descendants may be situated with the paradigm constructed by Brontë's first and last novels. Women writers responding to the heroic Jane Eyre and her fairytale plot either attempt to create new figures to continue Jane's performance or demonstrate the fluidity and instability of an elevated heroic female protagonist. The changeling inspires writers, but it does not endure. The next chapter explores the literary responses generated by the transatlantic community of women writers that developed around *Jane Eyre*.

Gaskell's biography suggests some reasons for the resistance in Lucy's narrative to Victorian norms and patriarchal pressures. Brontë was determined to kill off M. Paul Emanuel but softened the conclusion with "oracular words" (Gaskell 414) because, according to Gaskell her father, Patrick Brontë, believed novels should end happily. In the biography, Gaskell feels the need to explain Brontë's refusal to embrace her father's wishes and her commitment to her artistic vision. However, Brontë's letters at that time articulate her independence; she neither fears the critique of men nor feels the pressure to conform. She did not need to lean on the excuse of artistic license. In a letter to her publisher, Brontë blatantly states that she is unlikely to change anything in *Villette* in response to their criticism (Gaskell 413).<sup>94</sup> In the context provided by Brontë's letters, Gaskell's anecdote about Brontë and her father suggests that Brontë was in fact using silence to obscure the fairytale expectations of patriarchal society. For the conventional Victorian reader, this conclusion is frustrating because it refuses either to fulfill the fairy tale or to transform the failed fairy tale into a tragedy. The discerning reader may embrace

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<sup>94</sup> Internal evidence suggests that this undated letter was written in November, 1852.



this resistance to traditional plot structures as an emerging narrative style that resonates with Brontë's new model for womanhood. By liberating Lucy from fairytale expectations, Brontë implies the necessity of freeing women's lives from these unattainable ideals.

### CHAPTER 3: NEGOTIATING THE TRANSATLANTIC PARADIGM FOR WOMANHOOD

Women writers on both sides of the Atlantic were inspired by *Jane Eyre*'s heroine and its heroic female *bildungsroman*. These authors were especially attracted to this novel because of the mythology that Brontë uses to raise her heroine's rather ordinary domestic existence to legendary status. She created a female *bildungsroman* that rivals the typical heroic narrative with a male protagonist. While Brontë's literary progeny attempt to replicate her female *bildungsroman*, they seek new mythic and fairytale paradigms for their heroines.

Chapter four examines the mainstream literary descendants of *Jane Eyre* as well as the recently discovered unpublished manuscript of a novel written by a fugitive slave. Both European and American literary responses to *Jane Eyre* have been recognized in scholarship, but the transatlantic community of women writers that developed around this novel has never been examined in a single study. The purpose of this comparative analysis is to create a cohesive transatlantic picture of this literary microcosm. European transatlantic descendants of *Jane Eyre* in the Victorian Era use a broad amalgamation of Classical and Catholic allusions, particularly *Aurora Leigh* (1856) by Elizabeth Barrett Browning. By contrast, the U.S. novel *The Wide, Wide World* (1850) by Susan Warner and the Canadian novel *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) by L. M. Montgomery both develop an American Cinderella paradigm. These North American authors transform the Cinderella story to generate an American mythology for women that includes nationalistic undertones; the transatlantic comparison of *Jane Eyre*'s literary descendants highlights this distinctive American trend. However, Hannah Crafts, the fugitive slave who wrote *The Bondwoman's Narrative* (ca1850), does not embrace the Cinderella paradigms featured in white, middle-class American responses to *Jane Eyre*, nor does she construct a nationalistic female *bildungsroman*. The gap between Crafts's novel and the mainstream white progeny of

*Jane Eyre* demonstrates the socioeconomic and racial politics involved in the American Cinderella paradigm. The broader literary and cultural significance of Cinderella readings will be explored in the final chapter.

*Jane Eyre*'s Victorian British descendants, particularly *Aurora Leigh*, feature heavy reliance on Classical mythology, Catholic hagiography, and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) in order to generate a new heroic female with a new mythology. Thus, the feminine mythos generated in Barrett Browning's text seeks to appropriate or rehabilitate the two primary mythoi of the Western tradition for women. The plot of *Aurora Leigh* echoes *Jane Eyre*: the heroine rejects the domineering suitor in order to maintain her personal integrity, but she is reunited with him after he is blinded by a fire that destroys the ancestral home. This similarity was discussed by Barrett Browning as well as by her Victorian readers.<sup>95</sup> Thus, this novel-like poem reiterates Brontë's plot but attempts to generate a new mythos for the heroine because both Classical and Catholic paradigms are insufficient. This insufficiency is demonstrated in the compound image of the heroine's mother as both Madonna and Medusa, which suggests that the inherited mythic symbols of women produce ambiguity for the female reader (1.128-73). The narrative continues to reproduce this ambiguity through the Classical and Catholic allusions that permeate the text. However, both the form and the narrative of *Aurora Leigh* respond to Milton's *Paradise Lost* in a focused and coherent manner. Barrett Browning's epic-length blank-verse poem resembles the unrhymed blank verse form of the great English epic, and her female characters clearly offer an alternative to Milton's fallen Eve.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> In the article "Aurora Leigh and Jane Eyre," Holloway explores the relationship between these two texts at length. It includes Barrett Browning's letters discussing *Jane Eyre* as well as letters she received from friends like Mrs. Anna Johnson noting the connection between the two works (Holloway 129).

<sup>96</sup> Like Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1874) responds to *Jane Eyre*'s heroic female *bildungsroman* with an extended treatment of Classical mythology and hagiography. Although *Middlemarch* initially celebrates the Madonna figure, the novel ultimately undermines the search for a new feminine mythos. Like the impossible *Key to All Mythologies* that cannot be written, Eliot demonstrates the impossibility of generating a

By contrast, the published American descendants of *Jane Eyre* demonstrate more focused attention on developing a single mythic American narrative for women based on the popular Cinderella fairy tale. The U.S. novel *The Wide, Wide World* and Canadian novel *Anne of Green Gables* use a modified Cinderella tale that reflects the fairytale paradigm described in Jane Yolen's "American Cinderella." Warner and Montgomery apply Cinderella motifs to a female *bildungsroman* that loosely resembles or responds to *Jane Eyre*.<sup>97</sup> Although several notable scholars, including Claybaugh, have commented on the fact that the published transatlantic responses to *Jane Eyre* are limited to texts aimed at young readers rather than adults, I am only marginally concerned with this shift in audience. Instead, I am concerned with the ideological shifts that occurred as *Jane Eyre*'s transatlantic progeny continued Brontë's search for a myth or figure to represent womanhood. Nationalistic pressures are particularly apparent in these modified American Cinderella tales, suggesting that American preferences for this fairytale paradigm reflect larger cultural trends; this transatlantic analysis of *Jane Eyre*'s literary descendants foregrounds these national and regional distinctions, which will be further analyzed in the final chapter.

Hannah Crafts's unpublished manuscript, *The Bondswoman's Narrative*, demonstrates the limitations of the American Cinderella paradigm, which is entirely absent from Crafts's response to *Jane Eyre*.<sup>98</sup> Crafts's novel also extends Claybaugh's theories about the influence of American readers on British texts; as Daniel Hack states, exploring Crafts's appropriation of *Jane Eyre*

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mythology for understanding women. Thus, this novel repeats the evolution of ideas in Brontë's work: it moves through a wide range of mythological associations and concludes with mundane human existence.

<sup>97</sup> Both *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables* have been identified as the literary progeny of *Jane Eyre* by scholars since Alexander Cowie's landmark *The Rise of the American Novel* (1948). Cowie, rather satirically, positions *Jane Eyre* as a central American narrative for women throughout the nineteenth century. He claims that all sentimental novels by women are variations of Brontë's debut novel (Cowie 416). In "Remarkable and Winning" "A Hundred Years of American Heroines" (1989), Gillian Avery argues that these two texts specifically mark out an era of literary responses to *Jane Eyre*, demonstrating the significance of this pairing of American texts.

<sup>98</sup> This is the correct spelling of the novel's title. It is also referred to as *The Bondswoman's Narrative* in recent scholarship.

reveals how “each needs the other if we are to understand as fully as possible *either* a text’s intrinsic features *or* its cultural impact” (730).<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, the broader American context of this analysis also extends current theories about *The Bondwoman’s Narrative*. Crafts’s distinctive treatment of *Jane Eyre* illustrates both the flexibility and limitations of Brontë’s heroic changeling; Crafts models her fugitive slave heroine on Brontë’s white governess. Crafts recognizes the similar struggles of disempowered women as well as the distinctive dehumanization created by the institution of slavery. By analyzing both the similarities and distinctions between a fugitive slave and her white transatlantic counterparts, Crafts engages in the multifaceted transatlantic discourses surrounding *Jane Eyre* in ways that anticipate postcolonial criticism. Despite Crafts’s dynamic critique, scholarship on Brontë’s American progeny has remained segregated; it focuses on either the works of mainstream white authors or non-white authors.

In *Jane Eyre’s American Daughters* (2005), John Seelye argues that the characterization of Susan Warner’s *The Wide, Wide World* (1849) as a Cinderella tale is “too obvious to discuss” (128). He primarily bases this assertion on the novel’s rise-tale plot: an orphaned girl who is redeemed by her final ascent into polite society (Seelye 128). However, the Cinderella motifs in Warner’s novel exceed the narrative structure. Like the traditional Cinderella, Warner’s heroine, Ellen Montgomery, undergoes a series of trials that prepare her for marriage. Moreover, Ellen remains a relatively passive figure in arranging this marriage; in fact, the marriage itself is only tacked onto the novel as an afterthought in the revised edition published in 1850. Finally, the role of Ellen’s dying mother resembles the role of the returning dead mother in the traditional Cinderella tale; Ellen’s mother remains an active influence throughout Ellen’s life, enabling the

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<sup>99</sup> See Daniel Hack, “Close Reading at a Distance: The African Americanization of *Bleak House*” (2008).

heroine to become a marriageable young woman. This chapter expands Seelye's argument by giving the Cinderella tale in Warner's novel a more thorough examination.

Seelye provides important context for this chapter. Warner's Cinderella allusions become significant in conjunction with the other American literary descendants of *Jane Eyre*, including extremely popular novels such as Martha Finley's *Elsie Dinsmore*, Frances Hodgson's *The Secret Garden*, and Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*, all of which are explored by Seelye.<sup>100</sup> The plethora of Cinderella allusions across a range of novels that either resemble or directly respond to Brontë's *Jane Eyre* suggests that this is a meaningful fairytale paradigm, but Seelye does not explore the significance of it. Moreover, the American novels identified by Seelye also demonstrate the evolution of an American Cinderella tale. This analysis puts the novels of Warner and Montgomery in the broader cultural context of popular American Cinderella stories published anonymously in *Harper's New Monthly* and *The Atlantic Monthly* between the 1850s and 1880s: "Cinderella – Not A Fairy Tale" (1856) and "A New Cinderella" (1883) from *Harper's* and "A Modern Cinderella" (1860) from *The Atlantic* (see Appendices A, B and C).<sup>101</sup> While fairy tales in general did not proliferate in American literary culture as they did in Great Britain, Cinderella stories did accumulate in American texts. Moreover, a distinctive American Cinderella paradigm developed that differed from British and Continental traditions.

The American Cinderella stories published in *Harpers* and *The Atlantic* all negotiate aspects of class, materialism, and the American self-rise ethic within the context of the domestic sphere. For example, "A New Cinderella" is a simple rise tale. The protagonist, Susie, is a beautiful girl who works as a fashion model and lives at the Home for Working-Girls (765). She

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<sup>100</sup> See *Jane Eyre's American Daughters* (2005) (10-11, 119-218)

<sup>101</sup> None of these stories have an identified author, but "A New Cinderella" is attributed to a writer working under the name A Working Girl.

is banished from the Home for attending a ball, which is against the Board's rules, but the loving Mr. Abbott marries her because of her goodness to him. "A New Cinderella" uses the fairy tale genre to resist or sublimate religious moralism: the materialistic Susie is the sympathetic heroine who is rewarded with domestic bliss while her pious foil, Effie, hemorrhages and dies ignobly and the moralistic Board of the Working-Girls' Home is condemned as hypocritical (769-70).

The tension between religious moralism and materialistic good fortune is present to varying degrees in all the overt Cinderella stories published in the popular magazines analyzed here. This suggests that the fairy tale genre evoked by the Cinderella tag had literary and cultural significance. It allowed American authors to subtly challenge or directly undermine moral didacticism and celebrate materialism and the social rise this materialism enables. Furthermore, Cinderella is the only overt American fairy tale featured in these popular American periodicals.<sup>102</sup> There is a "Beauty and the Beast" tale published in *The Atlantic*, but it is set outside the United States and it stars an exoticized foreign heroine.<sup>103</sup> This chapter contextualizes the novels of Warner and Montgomery within this evolving American narrative paradigm for women, and the following chapter explores the cultural and literary significance of the American Cinderella, particularly in its relationship to the transatlantic literary microcosm that evolved around *Jane Eyre*.

Jane Yolen's analysis of the American Cinderella story in "American Cinderella" (1977) is useful to this study; her essay was reproduced in *Cinderella: A Casebook* (1988), edited by Alan Dundes. Dundes claims that Cinderella, the ATU 510 tale, is one of the most popular in Western society: "The tale of Cinderella is one of the best-known stories in the Western world,

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<sup>102</sup> In fact, a search of all the periodicals in the Library of Congress database *The Nineteenth Century in Print* only produced five explicit Cinderella tales and two "Beauty and the Beast" tales. There may be other stories that model fairytale plots and motifs in these periodicals, but they do not specifically evoke popular fairy tales in their text or in their titles.

<sup>103</sup> "Beauty and the Beast," *The Atlantic Monthly* (1866): 17.99. 13-39.

and its popularity has continued unabated into the twentieth century” (vii). Yolen repeats Dundes’ assertion; however, she claims that the traditional ATU 510 tale evolved dramatically when it came to the United States, where it was amalgamated with the American dream of rising from rags to riches.<sup>104</sup> However, the traditional ATU 510 tale is not a simple rise tale; rather, Cinderella is the story of a return to riches. Yolen states:

“Cinderella” is *not* a story of rags to riches, but rather riches recovered; *not* poor girl into princess but rather rich girl (or princess) rescued from improper or wicked enslavement; not suffering Griselda enduring but shrewd and practical girl persevering and winning a share of the power. It is really a story that is about “the stripping away of the disguise that conceals the soul from the eyes of others....” (296)

Yolen claims that the ATU 510 heroine is particularly watered-down in American versions of the tale: “America’s Cinderella has been a coy, helpless dreamer, a ‘nice’ girl who awaits her rescue with patience and a song” (297).

Although Yolen is particularly interested in the way Walt Disney’s animated film *Cinderella* influenced the American perception of this tale, she catalogues nineteenth-century American versions that contributed to this transformation, including an oral Appalachian tale “Rush Cape” (299-300). By the 1870s, popular American adaptations of Cinderella were simple rise tales with passive heroines; Yolen states: “Endings were changed, innards cleaned up, and good triumphed with very loud huzzahs. Cinderella is the weepy, sentimentalized pretty girl incapable of helping herself.” (300) Yolen denounces these changes, claiming that “The mass-market American ‘Cinderellas’ have presented the majority of American children with the wrong dream” (303). This chapter does not make moral judgments about the American transformation of this tale. However, it does recognize the simple reality of this specific transatlantic shift as well as the nationalistic pressures inherent in this fairytale paradigm. Yolen’s definition of the

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<sup>104</sup> This vague definition is clearly the one scholars like Seelye embrace; this scholarly use of the American Cinderella paradigm will be explored at length in the next chapter.



American Cinderella as well as her summary of the traditional ATU 510 tale are especially useful for this analysis of Warner and Montgomery's novels; Yolen states: "the common incidents recognized by folklorists are these: an ill-treated though rich and worthy heroine in Cinders-disguise; the aid of a dance/festival/church scene where the heroine comes in radiant display; recognition through a token" (Yolen 298). Both Warner and Montgomery incorporate these elements into their novels to provide their heroines with happy endings that have distinctive nationalistic undertones. Warner's Cinderella offers the U.S. reader the vindication of the white American immigrant as lost nobility. Conversely, Montgomery celebrates the birthright of the white, middle-class "born Canadian" (Montgomery 15) Cinderella. In both novels, it may be argued that this happiness is awarded to the "sentimentalized pretty girl" (Yolen 300) who has limited ability to help herself. Yolen does not examine the distinctive tension between didactic moralism and the celebration of American materialism exhibited in the Cinderella stories published in popular magazines such as *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*. This is especially significant for Warner's sentimental novel, which was lauded by contemporaries for its portrayal of "real religion."<sup>105</sup>

Moreover, the American Cinderella is a narrative paradigm that rejects the heroic female modeled in *Jane Eyre*. It may be argued that the American Cinderella in *Jane Eyre's* American progeny is nothing more than the typical domestic narrative of sentimental American literature, which focuses on the domestication of the heroine. In *The Rise of the American Novel* (1948), Alexander Cowie satirically argued that the scribbling women who dominated nineteenth-century print culture were reproducing variations of *Jane Eyre* in both their domestic plots and their imperiled heroines (Cowie 415-17). Although Cowie's disdain for the sentimental novel has

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<sup>105</sup> In 1852, anthologist John Hart claimed that *The Wide, Wide World* was the only novel "in which real religion, at least as understood by evangelical Christians is exhibited in truth." Jana Argersinger cites this in "Family Embraces: The Unholy Kiss and Authorial Relations in *The Wide, Wide World*" (2002) (252).

been challenged by feminist rehabilitation of this narrative tradition, his characterization of the sentimental plot has endured. Scholars, including Gillian Avery in “‘Remarkable and Winning’: A Hundred Years of American Heroines” (1989), elide the fairy tale resonance and connotations of Warner’s plot particularly, calling it a “storybook” (10) plot with “storybook heroines” (10).

Although the American Cinderella is undoubtedly linked with the sentimental narrative, it is also a distinctive American literary microcosm that evolved in nineteenth century women’s literature. This chapter does a close reading of the fairy tale narrative in Warner and Montgomery’s novels and the final chapter concludes with an analysis of the broader cultural and political stakes in American Cinderella paradigms, furthering current conversations about the construction of national identity in *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables*. Through Cinderella allusions, Brontë’s American descendants from Warner to Montgomery attempt to generate their own larger-than-life heroines that resemble Jane Eyre. Like Brontë’s changeling, these heroines and their *bildungsromans* have inherent nationalistic stakes. However, the fairy tale and fantastic tropes in these American novels function to domesticate the heroine and transform her into the ideal inhabitant of the domestic sphere. Thus, the American Cinderella transmutes the heroic female back into the traditional domestic heroine. Recognizable American responses to *Jane Eyre* proliferate, but the heroic changeling is repeatedly eradicated. This chapter highlights this shift.

The American Cinderella is more than a descriptive standard; it models Claybaugh’s transatlantic theory with its combination of imagined and material networks (15). Claybaugh claims that American publishers were more powerful and more numerous than British publishing houses; they controlled the material market and produced a massive American readership (Claybaugh 16-20). Yolen claims that mass production of American Cinderella tales have

infiltrated “a majority of American homes while the classic heroines sit unread in old volumes on library shelves” (297). Thus, the American Cinderella is also an integral part of the transatlantic theory in this chapter.

The theoretical frame for the transatlanticism in this chapter is based upon the work of Claybaugh. Claybaugh’s theory can be contrasted with more simplistic transatlantic theories presented by scholars like Weisbuch, who argues that Great Britain simply dominated transatlantic cultural exchanges, creating oedipal-like anxiety for American authors in *The Atlantic Double-Cross*: “I find enmity the keynote of Anglo-American literary relations in the mid-nineteenth century” (xviii). Weisbuch bases his claims on an analysis of popular male authors, but he suggests that this tendency would be amplified among women writers (xx). By contrast, Claybaugh describes the transatlantic literary exchange as both material and ideological in *The Novel of Purpose*; she includes the exchange of bodies across the Atlantic in her analysis (2-3, 21-30). Through this complex exchange, Claybaugh argues that influence flowed both ways across the Atlantic (16). The transatlantic literary progeny of *Jane Eyre* provides a distinctive microcosm for the intricacies of the transatlantic community of women writers. Responses to *Jane Eyre* both support and expand Claybaugh’s construction of transatlantic literary influence, laying the groundwork for examining the expanding cultural influence of the American literary community in the transatlantic world. In the literary microcosm surrounding *Jane Eyre*, the material influence of American authors and American publishing houses impacts transatlantic interpretations of Brontë’s original novel. The circulation of pirated copies of *Jane Eyre* as well as the proliferation of American literary responses will be explored here.

This chapter concludes with an examination of the recently discovered, unpublished manuscript, *The Bondwoman’s Narrative* (ca. 1850), by Hannah Crafts. This is the first novel

written by an escaped female slave in the United States. Critics have commented on the way Crafts's text borrows large amounts of material from other popular novels, primarily Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (1852) and *Jane Eyre*. However, Daniel Hack has also identified the influence of *Villette* in the final chapter of Crafts's novel. While Crafts's response to Brontë has been analyzed, her novel has never been contextualized within the transatlantic community of women writers that developed around *Jane Eyre*. However, Crafts responds to and challenges this entire community in *The Bondwoman's Narrative*, not just Brontë's debut novel. More specifically, Crafts identifies the exploitation inherent in the materialism of the American Cinderella paradigm and recognizes the impossibility of this fairy tale dream for non-white women. Crafts also adds a new layer of complexity to discussions of nationalism in *Jane Eyre*'s transatlantic progeny.

This chapter also contextualizes its analysis of *Aurora Leigh*, *The Wide, Wide World*, *Anne of Green Gables*, and *The Bondwoman's Narrative* in scholarly discussions of the individual novels. "*Jane Eyre and Aurora Leigh*" (1977) by Julia Holloway provides a useful context for comparisons of these two texts. According to Holloway, the similarities between *Jane Eyre* and *Aurora Leigh* were acknowledged and discussed by Barrett Browning, her peers, and readers. For example, Holloway summarizes author Anna Johnson's concern about the similar fates of Barrett Browning's hero, Romney Leigh, and Brontë's hero, Rochester (129-30). Holloway also documents Barrett Browning's continued interest in Brontë and her fiction. As early as 1848, one year after the publication of *Jane Eyre*, Barrett Browning was requesting information about the novel, and she was seeking a copy of the text from her home in Florence (Holloway 127-28). She ultimately obtained one "which was certainly of the American pirated form" (Holloway 127). Barrett Browning was also intrigued by the mystery of Currer Bell's

gender and identity (Holloway 128-29). Holloway concludes that Barrett Browning's notable and sustained interest in Brontë as well as the plot similarities between *Aurora Leigh* and *Jane Eyre* make Barrett Browning's poem-novel a meaningful literary response to Brontë's debut novel (Holloway 129).

Sarah Brown's "*Paradise Lost and Aurora Leigh*" (1997) examines one of the central mythic paradigms in Barrett Browning's novel. Brown claims that "The tensions within *Aurora Leigh*, the way the poem's ostensibly measured plea on behalf of women seems to conceal hints of a more inflammatory view lurking beneath its surface are mirrored in the poem's slippery relationship with *Paradise Lost*" (724). Brown places Barrett Browning's response to Milton in the context of Barrett Browning's overt search for mother figures; she quotes the poet's well-known lament: "I look everywhere for grandmothers, and see none" (Brown 725). Throughout the article, Brown obliquely follows the psychological implications that Barrett Browning's search for female examples influenced her reaction to Milton. For example, Brown argues that through writing *Aurora Leigh*, Barrett Browning moves from "poetic anxiety" (Brown 728) about Milton to "poetic control" (Brown 728) of her own text. Brown further claims that this control demonstrates Barrett Browning's acceptance of her distinctive "feminine niche" (Brown 728) in the literary world.

Brown also contextualizes Barrett Browning's response to *Paradise Lost* with that of other women writers:

The importance of Milton as a poet against whom later female writers, such as Charlotte Brontë and Mary Shelley, reacted, subverting his supposed misrepresentation of woman through the character of Eve, has been widely discussed. But although *Aurora Leigh* can be seen as a paradigmatic female riposte to *Paradise Lost*, this aspect of the poem has been strangely neglected by Barrett Browning's critics. (Brown 725)

Brown positions Barrett Browning closer to Brontë than to Shelley. She claims that the symbolic castration of Romney Leigh challenges patriarchal authority, but it is less radical than Shelley's "overt questioning of divine authority" (Brown 735). Furthermore, since the publication of "*Paradise Lost* and *Aurora Leigh*," Joyce Zonana has also explored connections between these two texts in "'The Embodied Muse': Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* and Feminist Poetics" (1989). In fact, this relationship between Milton and Barrett Browning has become an important facet of *Aurora Leigh* scholarship, according to Zonana (244-45).

Finally, Brown claims that a "parallel conflict is played out between the two heroines, Eve and Aurora" (Brown 729). She argues that Aurora reverses Eve's fall and humiliation: "Barrett Browning gives her heroine the traits which in Eve led to the Fall, and shows them to be the precise qualities which enable Aurora to achieve fulfillment as both poet and woman, binding her and Romney together rather than driving them further apart" (Brown 734). This chapter uses Brown's article to enter into the continuing discussion surrounding *Aurora Leigh* and *Paradise Lost*, especially Brown's claim that Aurora is a second Eve who redeems Milton's broken heroine.<sup>106</sup>

Unlike European responses to *Jane Eyre*, the American novels analyzed here have not elicited extensive scholarly attention, although they have been gaining interest recently.<sup>107</sup> *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables* are included in this analysis because of their overwhelming popularity, and the manuscript *The Bondwoman's Narrative* offers a distinctive perspective on these transatlantic narratives. Seelye's *Jane Eyre's American Daughters* provides context for both Warner and Montgomery.

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<sup>106</sup> I do not embrace the psychological implications of Brown's argument.

<sup>107</sup> The L.M. Montgomery Institute was founded in 1993, though it did not receive steady funding until 2000. Since its establishment, *Anne of Green Gables* has been gaining greater recognition in literary scholarship.

Amy Kaplan's "Manifest Domesticity" (1998) examines the nationalistic discourses within Warner's novel and situates them in broader American cultural trends. Kaplan's conjunction of domestic and nationalistic ideologies is particularly useful to this analysis because it acknowledges the racial limits of these ideologies, which will be expanded upon in this analysis. Kaplan claims that the heroine's struggles in *The Wide, Wide World* model the American Revolution in miniature and reflect a distinctly northeaster American ethos (589-600). However, like many scholars evaluating Warner's nationalistic stakes, Kaplan divorces Warner from her transatlantic roots.<sup>108</sup> In "Religious Transnationalism in the American Renaissance: Susan Warner's *Wide, Wide World*" (2003), John Rowe calls for a "new cultural history of the transnational ambitions" (56) of the novel and its nineteenth century Presbyterian doctrines. Similarly, this dissertation puts Warner's nationalism in a transatlantic literary context, examining the development of *Jane Eyre*'s heroic female *bildungsroman*.

Jana Argersinger's "Family Embraces: The Unholy Kiss and Authorial Relations in *The Wide, Wide World*" (2002) is also important for this analysis, particularly her treatment of religious tensions in Warner's novel, which has been known for its propagation of conservative, Protestant religious doctrines. I argue that these tensions resonate with the distinctive American Cinderella featured in popular American periodicals, like *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*. Furthermore, Argersinger documents Warner's access to *Blackwood's Magazine* (255); this periodical was an important source of fairy lore for Brontë. Although Argersinger studiously avoids the word fairy tale in her article, she demonstrates Warner's connection with this narrative tradition.

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<sup>108</sup> Warner's nationalism has been examined by Isabelle White in "Anti-Individualism, Authority, and Identity: Susan Warner's Contradictions in *The Wide, Wide World*" (1990) and Susanne Ashworth's "Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World*, Conduct Literature, and Protocols of Female Reading in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America" (2000). White and Ashworth also divorce Warner's nationalism from its transatlantic context.

*L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture* (1999), edited by Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly, explores *Anne of Green Gables*' distinctly Canadian context and the significance of this novel to Canadian culture. Among other things, the background and book history that Gammel and Epperly provide confirms that Yolen's American Cinderella paradigm is not limited to the United States. They demonstrate that the rags-to-riches rise tale in *Anne of Green Gables* had lasting cultural significance: "The power of self-transformation emerges strongly in Anne Shirley's story, and this power does not lead only to romantic escapism and the maintenance of the status quo" (11). Moreover, they argue, this hope of rising from rags to riches has inspired notable Canadian women, including prime minister Kim Campbell (Gammel and Epperly 11-12). This chapter relies upon the context that Gammel and Epperly provide to analyze the broader cultural impact of Montgomery's novel and its American Cinderella paradigm.

Finally, Daniel Hack's "Close Reading at a Distance: The African Americanization of *Bleak House*" (2008) and Catherine Keyser's "Jane Eyre, Bondwoman: Hannah Crafts's Rethinking of Charlotte Brontë" (2004) document and contextualize the relationship between *The Bondwoman's Narrative* and *Jane Eyre*. Hack is primarily interested in analyzing the "uses to which *Bleak House* was put by antebellum African Americans and abolitionists – as well as their opponents – help us to map the contours of this underexplored transatlantic, interracial encounter" (730). However, Hack briefly considers the relationship between *Jane Eyre* and *The Bondwoman's Narrative* as well. More significant for this chapter, Hack provides a transatlantic model for understanding Crafts's transformation of British texts, demonstrating a mutual relationship between mainstream British texts and the African-American literary community in the United States. By contrast, Keyser makes a thorough exploration of the relationship between the two novels, but her transatlantic model is not as complex as Hack's model. Keyser identifies



similarities in both plot and purpose; she states: “In both *Jane Eyre* and *The Bondswoman’s Narrative*, the construction of autobiography negates the dehumanizing rhetoric used to deny the heroines’ rationality” (88). She also argues the heroines are ultimately similar: “Hannah and Jane mirror one another in contentment as well as tribulation, sisters in their quest for liberty, rationality, and even romantic fulfillment” (Keyser 102). These two articles are useful for this chapter’s analysis of Crafts, which will extend current arguments about this novel by placing it in conversation with mainstream white readers’ responses to *Jane Eyre*. While the similarities between Crafts’s and Brontë’s novels have been highlighted by scholars, I argue that the differences between these novels comprise a distinctive commentary on the limitations of the white, middle-class examples of women in nineteenth-century literature. Using Hack’s complex transatlantic paradigm, I position Crafts as a member of the transatlantic community of women writers. Crafts asserts her right to respond to *Jane Eyre* along with other women through the act of writing. However, Crafts’ presence in this community is always incomplete because this novel was not published in the nineteenth century and it never circulated among Crafts’s contemporaries.

The Cinderella allusions in mainstream American novels have actually shaped the way in which scholars interpret *Jane Eyre*. Despite the lack of identifiable Cinderella motifs in *Jane Eyre*, American scholars since Gilbert and Gubar have insisted that Cinderella is the most significant fairytale paradigm in Brontë’s novel. These assumptions reflect Claybaugh’s claim that power in the transatlantic world was “dispersed” (Claybaugh 16) between British authors and American readers; Claybaugh argues that the cultural power of British authors and reviewers was balanced by U.S. material power as American readership and publishing houses expanded throughout the nineteenth century (16). Cinderella readings of *Jane Eyre* seem to demonstrate

the overwhelming influence of American readers, projecting American responses to Brontë's novel back onto the original; this will be examined more fully in the final chapter.

The transatlantic networks that developed around *Jane Eyre* began with Brontë's own response to her debut novel. Brontë excises the fairy-like heroine and fairytale expectations of *Jane Eyre* in her final novel, *Villette*. Neither do the fairy tales and fairy lore survive intact in *Jane Eyre*'s most prominent Victorian literary descendants: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), and Hannah Crafts's *The Bondswoman's Narrative* (ca 1850). These four texts are certainly not the only works of literature that were influenced by *Jane Eyre*, but these are some of the most discussed examples written by women. Moreover, all four of these texts attempt to replace Brontë's fairytale allusions in unique and distinctive ways. These authors are all searching for a female mythology for their female *bildungsromans*: a new larger-than-life representation of womanhood. It may be argued that this perpetual search continues Brontë's performance of deferred desire; no satisfactory figure or narrative can be found to represent women's experiences in a lasting manner. Perpetual deferment offers the reader two distinctive possibilities: it may allow readers to temporarily imagine a different existence for women or it may simply reinforce impossible stereotypes that distort women's claim to humanity. For *Jane Eyre* and her literary progeny, deferred desire performs both of these functions.

Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* recycles the plot from *Jane Eyre*, rectifying the upwards mobility that Barrett Browning objected to in Brontë's novel: the genteel Aurora Leigh marries her cousin, Romney Leigh.<sup>109</sup> In many ways, Aurora Leigh is a larger-than-life heroic female who receives a fairytale ending that closely parallels *Jane Eyre*: Aurora is reunited with

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<sup>109</sup> On 18 February 1850, Barrett Browning condemned the unequal romance between Jane and Rochester as "half savage and half freethinking" (Holloway 128).

her lost lover, Romney, who has been blinded by a fire, and they decide to marry and live happily ever after (Barrett Browning 9.573-964). Although Barrett Browning borrows Brontë's narrative, she does not revive the changeling heroine. The poet-heroine Aurora Leigh seeks out new mothers, ultimately seeking to write a new Eve to replace Milton's flawed first mother from *Paradise Lost*. The nine-book free-verse narrative self-consciously reflects Milton's epic free-verse poem. However, the mythic allusions in *Aurora Leigh* do not simply fit the female protagonist into the domestic sphere. Thus, Barrett Browning generates her own heroic example of womanhood that resembles Brontë's changeling.

Barrett Browning coins the phrase "mother-want" (1.40) to describe the Aurora Leigh's heroic quest to find an ideal feminine archetype: "I felt a mother-want about the world,/ And still went seeking..." (1.40-41). Although the heroine is an optimistic woman and poet, she seems to generate an ambiguous conglomeration of images (archetypes) of women. This is especially apparent in the amalgamation of female images with her mother's post-mortem portrait that are sublime and ambiguous:

For hours I sate and stared [at the painting]....  
 ...That way went my thoughts  
 When wandering beyond sight. And as I grew  
 In years, I mixed, confused, unconsciously,  
 Whatever I last read or heard or dreamed,  
 Abhorrent, admirable, beautiful,  
 Pathetic, or ghastly, or grotesque,  
 With still that face... which did not therefore change,  
 But kept the mystic level of all forms  
 Hates, fears, and admirations, was by turns  
 Ghost, fiend, and angel, fairy, witch, and sprite,  
 A dauntless Muse who eyes a dreadful Fate,  
 A loving Psyche who loses sight of Love,  
 A still Medusa with mild milky brows  
 All curdled and all clothed upon with snakes  
 Whose slime falls fast as sweat will; or anon  
 Our Lady of the Passion, stabbed with swords  
 Where the Babe sucked; or Lamia in her first

Moonlighted pallor, ere she shrunk and blinked  
 And shuddering wriggled down to the unclean;  
 Or my own mother, leaving her last smile  
 In her last kiss upon the baby-mouth  
 My father pushed down on the bed for that, –  
 Or my dead mother, without smile or kiss,  
 Buried at Florence. All which images,  
 Concentrated on the picture, glassed themselves  
 Before my meditative childhood, as  
 The incoherencies of change and death  
 Are represented fully, mixed and merged,  
 In the smooth fair mystery of perpetual Life. (1.143, 145-73)

This passage begins with non-specific references to the supernatural (1.154), and then it oscillates between Classical and Catholic references, emphasizing the Classic allusions (1.155-61). It concludes with the heroine recognizing this portrait beneath her supernatural projections is merely her dead mother. Like scales in an etude, these catalogues of shifting archetypal figures fill the poem. Aurora Leigh is surrounded by the ever-changing woman/monster (6.1180-90) or virgin/whore (5.763-69). Like the heroine's initial contemplation of her dead mother's painting, these lists of female archetypes do not lead to a stable metaphor or myth for womanhood; they remain "incoherence's of change" (1.171) for the heroine and the reader. Moreover, the catalogues imply an exhaustion of Classical mythology and hagiography for female examples. It is significant that these allusions function to generate a catholic female model rather than a particularly nationalistic heroine.

In Book One, the poet moves from her memories of her dead mother to her learned English father and his unsatisfying books; she has no satisfying literary examples of womanhood in books written and taught by men (1.185-98). Her father can only offer her "all the ignorance of men" (1.190). Beginning in Book Two, the poet endeavors to create her own examples through writing; she composes a book of poems that model her life experiences (2.433-97). Like a child, this collection of poetry initially lives inside of her (8.271). Through this book, Aurora

becomes the example she has been seeking; the poet-heroine fills the mother-want she felt in the world. Women particularly embrace her poetry, quoting her works and emulating her; in fact, Kate Ward has her portrait taken with a copy of Aurora's book (7.570-610).<sup>110</sup>

Aurora also writes another book: the poet-heroine is the fictional author of the epic-like free-verse narrative *Aurora Leigh*. She writes in first person and repeatedly addresses the reader as the author, especially in the first book: "I, writing thus.... I write" (1.9, 29). Throughout *Aurora Leigh*, Aurora positions herself as a new female archetype: poet heroine. However, she also models herself as a new Eve, the heroine that Milton damns in *Paradise Lost*. Allusions to *Paradise Lost* are myriad; Barrett Browning's epic, free-verse poem parallels Milton's free-verse epic. Aurora frequently references either Milton or the Biblical creation story. For example, Book One concludes with the statement: "In the beginning when God called all good,/Even then was evil near us, it is writ;/But we indeed who call things good and fair,/The evil is upon us while we speak;/Deliver us from evil, let us pray." (1.1141-45) Book Two opens with another reference to the creation story: "Times followed one another. Came a morn" (2.1). The Genesis account of creation repeats the benediction "And God saw that it was good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 18, 21, 25, 31) as well as the phrase "There was evening and there was morning, the ... day" (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). Both of these statements recur several times in the first chapter of Genesis. These allusions would have been apparent to Barrett Browning's readers. However, the most significant reference to *Paradise Lost* is the poet-heroine herself: Aurora is identified as a new "Eve" (Barrett Browning 2.159). At the conclusion of the narrative, Aurora stands with Romney looking toward the New Jerusalem and "the first foundations of that new, near Day" (9.956). Aurora's vision of future glory is a stark contrast to Eve's expulsion from the Garden.

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<sup>110</sup> Kate Ward is a minor character introduced in a lengthy letter that Aurora receives from a friend. She parallels the American Kate Fields. In *Aurora Leigh*, Kate Ward is the wife of Vincent Carrington, Barrett Browning's friend.

Thus, Aurora replaces the first-mother of the Judeo-Christian tradition by writing *Aurora Leigh*. Barrett Browning's new Eve only becomes a symbol for womanhood when she leaves the world behind and looks forward to eternal bliss. Through this visionary moment, the poet-heroine resembles the post-mortem portrait of her mother, which she transformed through her own projections of supernatural female figures.

Not only does Barrett Browning look for a new example for women, she also attempts to break the negative pattern of the femme fatale who destroys the hero. In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, it may be argued that Eve is a femme fatale who damns the hero and the entire human race; she is also aligned with the serpent Satan (10.867). By contrast, Romney Leigh, the male protagonist in *Aurora Leigh*, is not destroyed by a serpent woman, the Lamia-like Lady Waldemar (7.145-47), but by a man he was trying to help: William Erle. William Erle is living at Romney Leigh's family estate; he causes the fire that blinds the hero (9.548-61). William Erle is described as both a "woodland boar" (9.553) and a serpent-like (9.555) villain who laughs at Romney's loss of sight (5.559). Thus, Barrett Browning establishes a new pattern of destructive men rather than damning women.

Barrett Browning's response to the rise tale in *Jane Eyre* is a significant part of her search for a new mythos and a new Eve. Barrett Browning vehemently objects to a lowly governess overstepping class boundaries by marrying a noble man above her station in *Jane Eyre* (Holloway 128). The thwarted marriage between Marian and Romney is supposed to represent the futility of such romances; not only does Romney fail to aid Marian, he is mocked and nearly mobbed by his guests after Marian stands him up at the altar (Barrett Browning 4.793-934). Barrett Browning rejects the American rise tale identified by Yolen and embraces the traditional European fairytale rise formula. However, it may be argued that Aurora Leigh's friendship with

Marian replaces the failed romance; thus, Barrett Browning unintentionally creates a powerful female homosocial bonds that cross class boundaries (7.248-50). Jane studiously avoids such friendships, finding women beneath her station, like her working-class students in the Morton mill town, “quite torpid... hopelessly dull” (Brontë 322). These working-class students are a sharp contrast to the Rivers sisters, who are beneficiaries and Jane’s blood relatives; only these relations are suitable female companions for the heroine. In her attempt to restore a traditional European rise tale to her narrative, Barrett Browning opens up new possibilities for female homosocial bonds that cross classes and which heterosexual romance cannot countenance.

The conclusion of *Aurora Leigh* could also be interpreted as another example of the open-ended literary quest to represent womanhood. Both Aurora and Romney embrace a glorious but unseen, future: “He stood... and fed his blind, majestic eyes/Upon the thought of perfect noon: and when/I saw his soul saw, - ‘Jasper first,’ I said,/‘And second, sapphire; third, chalcedony;/The rest in order, - last, an amethyst.’” (Barrett Browning 9.958, 960-64) Barrett Browning creates a new Eve to fill the mother-want she feels in the world, but this heroine cannot actually live in that world. Aurora envisions her future in a new Paradise, not on earth; this vision models deferred desire. As Brown argues, Barrett Browning makes “peace with her precursor” (Brown 739), Milton, by allowing Aurora to triumph through “the traits which in Eve led to the Fall” (Brown 734). The conclusion Barrett Browning provides for her new Eve positions *Aurora Leigh* somewhere between Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. Aurora’s vision of Paradise combines the optimism of Jane’s fairytale ending with the pause in Lucy’s narrative. Aurora’s happiness is a journey rather than a destination. Thus Barrett Browning continues the search for an example to represent womanhood, creating a dialogue with Brontë’s novels. It may be argued that *Aurora Leigh* takes an ambiguous stances on this perpetual search for a heroic

female model, both celebrating the new Eve and recognizing the impossibility of the literary quest for a stable example of womanhood. No typological character can definitively escape the ever-changing image of woman first illustrated by the portrait of Aurora's dead mother. It is a Holy Grail that can be glimpsed but never grasped by human hands.

Similar to her treatment of the ideal heroine, the nationalistic undertones in Barrett Browning's heroic female *bildungsroman* may also be situated somewhere between *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*. Aurora is identified as a "transatlantic girl" (5.837): an embodiment of European transatlanticism. Barrett Browning does not attempt to limit this international figure with a single, nationalistic ideology; she resembles the expatriate Lucy more than the changeling heroine with her regional fairy lore and strong regional sympathies.

It is significant that both Barrett Browning and Brontë respond to *Jane Eyre* by creating new Eves; American responses to *Jane Eyre* used a dramatically different paradigm. Susan Warner's popular novel *The Wide, Wide World* (1850) establishes the Cinderella paradigm for *Jane Eyre*'s American descendants. The heroine, Ellen Montgomery, is a good, pious, and self-sacrificing; she is especially devoted to her dying mother: "Ellen had plenty of faults, but amidst them all love to her mother was the strongest feeling her heart knew" (Warner 13). Warner's good and excessively passive heroine is a part of a distinctly American Cinderella paradigm described by Yolen (297). Ellen is conscious of duty (Warner 15-16, 39-40), religious and pious (15, 25, 38-39), and self-sacrificing (13). Ellen receives help in her trials because of her dying, pious mother's influence. She is a good, passive heroine who achieves her happy ending through the aid of helpers. However, for the traditional European Cinderella heroine, these helpers are implicitly linked with her devotion to her dead mother, according to Yolen; this link with the dead mother is not emphasized in the American version (Yolen 298-99).



For example, Ellen's first crisis, a struggle in the cloth shop, concludes with an old gentleman helping her and sending her a gift (Warner 48-55). This unnamed gentleman returns to aid Ellen's mother; his aid is as inexplicable as the magic of a supernatural helper (Warner 226-27). Ellen is befriended by another old gentleman who leads her to accept her Savior because she has lost her benevolent mother (Warner 69-82).<sup>111</sup> Moreover, like the supernatural helper in fairy tales, this man returns to Ellen in a dream (Warner 269). Ellen's material needs, what she requires to become an educated, accomplished, and a proper lady, are primarily bestowed by benevolent older men. For example, she receives Brownie the horse from Mr. Marshman (Warner 373-76), and she receives money for her trip to Scotland from Mr. Humphrey (496-97).<sup>112</sup> The material emphasis here resonates with the materialism of the American Cinderella published in *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*.

American Cinderellas such as Elsie in "Cinderella-Not A Fairy Tale" and Susie in "A New Cinderella" from *Harper's* are not merely concerned with material necessities, they are rewarded for their materialism. In fact, Susie revels in materialism and material pleasure, and the author invites readers to share that pleasure vicariously: "Saw you ever Beauty dressing for a ball? The most indifferent and ascetic soul can not look on the transforming process without some degree of interest" (767). By contrast, the wicked step-mother figure who runs the Working-Girls' Home, Mrs. Van Brunt, embodies prohibition: "[she] had not one memory [of pleasure] left to soften bitter denial, haughty prohibition, and strictest surveillance" (770). Materialism is an inherent part of the Cinderella rise tale, and American Cinderellas capitalize upon this, reversing the Evangelical Protestant ethic of self-denial.

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<sup>111</sup>Warner explicitly makes the death of Ellen's mother the catalyst for her salvation: "Then Ellen, can you not see love of your Heavenly Father in this trial? ... he has taken your dear mother, and sent you away where you will have no one to look to but him" (70).

<sup>112</sup> Ellen is also aided by women, but their support is emotional, not material. Miss Timmins helps Ellen because she is good and motherless (Warner 83-88). Mrs. Furbes helps Ellen because she is motherless (Warner 90-92).

Ellen's repressive Aunt Fortune in *The Wide, Wide World* resembles the hypocritical Mrs. Van Brunt. She is demonized for denying Ellen material comforts, like the lacy white socks that Aunt Fortune dyes brown so that they will be easier to wash (Warner 108-10) and the money she takes from Ellen's mail (Warner 146, 488-92). Furthermore, Ellen is not condemned for enjoying and using the material benefits she receives from her helpers. Rather, learning to properly use these gifts enables Ellen's rise to gentility. In the beginning of the novel, Ellen's mother, Mrs. Montgomery, teaches her that she must learn to purchase and care for things in order to grow into a woman. It is one of the last lessons that Ellen's godly mother teaches her. This materialism positions *The Wide, Wide World* within the American Cinderella tradition and creates internal tensions with Warner's religious message. In fact, this tension is especially prominent in the scene where Mrs. Montgomery takes Ellen to purchase a Bible and instead they shop for a writing desk. Warner describes every item that they purchase for Ellen's writing kit, including the multicolored wax for seals (31-38). Thus, Warner allows her reader to revel in materialism, she does not simply acknowledge it.

The supernatural aspects of Ellen's material and emotional helpers is also significant because it is a characteristic of the Cinderella tale. Alice Humphreys is a spiritual helper who comes and ministers to Ellen because she is motherless (Warner 148-56). Alice's personal spirituality is amplified by her evangelizing; she reiterates the message about the Savior and points Ellen towards Christ as a heavenly helper: "Nothing is too bad for him to mend. Have you asked *his* help, Ellen?" (Warner 150). The triune Christian God is simply divided into two persons in *The Wide, Wide World*: God the father and judge and Jesus Christ the savior and helper (297, 344, 349). There is no Holy Spirit, no internalized spiritual power to support the heroine. She cannot pray to the Mighty Spirit "in [her] way – a different way... effective in its

own fashion” (Brontë 370). Thus, Ellen lacks the spiritual strength of her predecessor, Jane Eyre. In Warner’s novel this Helper God replaces the figure of the traditional magical helper. Like the magical helper in a fairytale, Christ is only the helper of those who do good (Warner 389). It is this divine helper that makes Ellen a fit bride for her Prince Charming, John Humphrey (Warner 559). In fact, in a discussion with Ellen, John merges the Christian Helper God with the fairytale tradition. As Ellen thinks about God and death, John watches her and says that the look on her face reminds him of “some old fairy story... in which the fountains of the sweet and bitter waters of life were said to stand very near each other” (Warner 405). Thus, Ellen’s sweet and bitter thoughts about death and God become a fairytale that provides a happy eternity as well as a good life on earth. The fairy tale allows writers in the American Cinderella tradition to repackage Christian values in a culturally acceptable manner. It is a subtle repackaging, but it transforms the Christian God into a supernatural enabler of American materialism and a supporter of the American self-rise ethic, which would otherwise clash with Protestant ideals of self-denial.

Ellen’s angelic look is a product of her religion, as well as the change wrought in her by the Divine Helper (Warner 559). This religious appearance pleases John and convinces him of her fitness for marriage. Like a traditional fairytale princess, Ellen’s fitness, her internal qualities and goodness, are determined by her external appearance:

Ellen’s eyes were bent on the floor. The expression of her face touched and pleased him greatly; it was precisely what he wished to see. Without having the least shadow of sorrow upon it, there was in all its lines that singular mixture of gravity and sweetness that is never seen but where religion and discipline have done their work well; the writing of the wisdom that looks soberly, and the love that looks kindly, on all things. ... Ellen at the moment had escaped from the company and the noisy sounds of the performer at her side; and while her eye was curiously tracing out the pattern of the carpet, her mind was resting itself in one of the verses she had been reading that same evening. (559)

Furthermore, John blatantly states that ladies' hearts are shown in their dress, reducing women to fairytale characters (Warner 480)., like the Cinderella heroine, who is typically recognized as worthy by a visible token such as shoes.

Like the Cinderella heroine in both American and traditional Cinderella tale, Ellen is confronted with a step-mother figure: Ellen's aunt, Fortune Montgomery. Aunt Fortune compares herself with a stepmother and identifies herself with the unloved surrogate mother figure (Warner 178). Aunt Fortune forces to Ellen to engage in the drudgery of housework. She learns spinning (418), gardening (482) and housekeeping (353-72, 454-59), all the traditional domestic tasks of fairytale heroines; however, Ellen's passive acceptance of these domestic trials resembles Yolen's American Cinderella, rather than the typical ATU 510 heroine (Yolen 297-300). Aunt Fortune is further anchored to her role as the wicked stepmother when she steals money from Ellen and Ellen's father, withholding Ellen's letters and her noble birthright (Warner 488-92). Aunt Fortune is ultimately punished and tamed through her marriage to Van Brunt (Warner 485-88).<sup>113</sup>

Although Warner's heroine is clearly an American Cinderella, *The Wide, Wide World* embraces a traditional ATU 510 rise plot: both Ellen and John Humphrey, her Prince Charming, are raised to the level of nobility. They both travel to Europe, where they receive this inheritance (Warner 473, 483). Like nobility in fairytales, their nobility is innate and visually apparent (558). Furthermore, the Humphreys' British heritage brings the first direct fairytale references to Ellen in her New England township (280). The nobility of the hero and heroine anchor Warner's novel in a European fairytale tradition. As Yolen argues, the most prominent European fairytale collections rarely allow characters to escape class boundaries; rise tales like Cinderella typically

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<sup>113</sup>Aunt Fortune is jealous of Van Brunt's attention to Ellen (Warner 340). This jealousy emphasizes the incestuous ATU 510B undertone in the novel.

begin with the material and social denigration of a noble hero who regains his rightful position at the conclusion of the story (Yolen 296).

Furthermore, the love and attention of Ellen's noble Scottish family resemble the oppressive and inappropriate love of the ATU 510B Cinderella tale. This incestuous tale was not popular in the "cleaned up" (Yolen 300) Cinderella tales that were popularized in America. Ellen's Scottish family controls and owns her; one of the most significant aspects of this control is through kissing (Warner 504-05). Incestuous tensions are heightened by the family's jealousy of John Humphrey, Ellen's romantic interest (510). This conflict becomes particularly apparent in a conversation that Ellen has with a tutor in Scotland: "'But Mr. Lindsay opposite? – I have called him my father – I have given myself to him,' she thought; – 'but I gave myself to somebody else first – I can't undo that – and I never will!'" (520) Thus, Warner's American Cinderella finds herself in a distinctly European plot, torn between the inappropriate love of her father figure and her lover. In fact, she uses the same phrase to describe her relationship to her Uncle Lindsay and John Humphrey: giving herself. Finally, the "consummation" of Ellen's relationship with John has incestuous undertones – their marriage is only illustrated by their return to the Humphreys' parsonage and Ellen taking up residence in the room of John's dead sister, Alice (571). Alice is Ellen's second dead-mother figure – through her death, she paves the way for Ellen's future as a sister-like wife for John. Alice establishes this by making Ellen promise to "take [her] place" (342), perpetuating the ATU 510B allusions in the novel.

Like Cinderella at the ball, Ellen comes out in society at a Christmas party. On the ride to the party, John refers to her as the fairytale figure "Mother Bunch" who needs a footman to get into the sleigh (Warner 280). The host, Mr. Marshman, recognizes Ellen as the "greatest stranger in the company" (283). Much attention is given to Ellen's borrowed moccasins, like Cinderella's

slippers (279-82). Yolen argues that slippers are an especially important motif in American Cinderella tales (Yolen 298).<sup>114</sup> The slipper looms larger in the American Cinderellas printed in *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*, particularly "A Modern Cinderella," in which the self-effacing Cinderella heroine, Nell, throws her shoe down a road to bring good luck to her Prince Charming, John Lord (431). The shoe is returned to her in the dramatic conclusion. John makes an extended connection between Nell and Cinderella, claiming that she is the ideal fit for him as a wife and a homemaker (439-40). Like Nell, Ellen is not simply recognized by a token; her admirable moral behavior elevates her at the Christmas party in front of John, and he admits his attraction to her (Warner 294-95).<sup>115</sup>

Although John Humphrey is a demanding hero, he is still characterized as faultless and therefore a "Prince Charming" figure. He is especially charming in the conclusion, where he wins over Ellen's arrogant and monopolizing material relatives, the Lindsays (Warner 570-79). While Ellen has several faults early in the novel, by the conclusion she is confirmed as innately and naturally good. Moreover, this goodness is visually apparent. Ellen's elevation to nobility further confirms her innate value to the reader. It also makes her a suitable mate for John Humphrey, who has likewise been elevated in class and material wealth. Like the traditional Cinderella heroine, Ellen undergoes a series of trials.<sup>116</sup> Her accomplishment of these trials is

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<sup>114</sup> In *Transforming the Cinderella Dream*, Huang Mei argues that the/a heroine's "eventual 'recognition by means of a shoe'" (2), or other identifying object, is one of the most important traits of the Cinderella story.

<sup>115</sup> All the Cinderellas in *Harper's* and *The Atlantic* model this, particularly Nell in "A Modern Cinderella"; she is introduced as "one of that meek sisterhood who, thinking humbly of themselves, believe they are honored by being spent in the service of less conscientious souls" (426).

<sup>116</sup> Ellen's trials begin with her trip to the market in the first chapter, where she starts to acquire the skills of a homemaker by purchasing good material for a dress, aided by the mysterious gentleman who demands that the shopkeeper attend to Ellen's needs (48-53). These trials intensify during her stay with Aunt Fortune, who tests Ellen's domestic skills as well as her patience until she is finally dubbed "Miss Housekeeper" (364). In Great Britain, the Lindsays submit Ellen to a series of academic and social tests, which conclude with her education in Edinburgh (511). Ellen demonstrates her intellectual refinement in true patriotic fashion where she argues with her Uncle Lindsay, claiming that George Washington is superior to European military heroes (515-17). These tests demonstrate Ellen's nobility while confirming her American identity. Finally John tests Ellen before he offers for her, forcing her to demonstrate her submission to his authority (563). John states: "Perhaps I shall try you in two or

frequently, if not always, attributed to the aid of her quasi-magical helpers. Thus, Ellen becomes an increasingly passive heroine as the novel progresses; this marks her as a distinctly American Cinderella. In the final chapters, she is especially passive; she does not pursue John. Instead, she waits silently, allowing him to pursue and arrange her marriage. However, Ellen's marriage to the noble John Humphrey is a restoration of her rightful status, like the traditional ATU 510 heroine described by Yolen.

Thus, *The Wide, Wide World* is a modified Cinderella story: Warner places an American Cinderella in a traditional ATU 510 and ATU 510B plot. The heroine, Ellen, meets all the criteria for an American Cinderella heroine. The fairytale allusions in the novel fit her for the domestic sphere, transforming her into the typical Victorian domestic heroine. She is a good, pious, self-sacrificing girl who is devoted to her dying mother (Warner 13) and then to her dying mother-surrogate, Alice (Warner 432). These dying mothers enable and arrange Ellen's future, including her marriage to Prince Charming, John Humphrey. Ellen is surrounded by a plethora of supernatural or extraordinary helpers who enable Ellen's happy ending; they give her material happiness, salvation, maturation, social elevation, and marriage. These helpers enable Ellen's relatively passive achievement of material, social, and romantic comfort. There is a potentially pernicious national mythology implied in this novel as well: deserving white immigrants are entitled to success because they are descendent from lost and forgotten European nobility. Although neither slavery nor manifest destiny is addressed in this text, Warner feeds the myth of white privilege and entitlement through an Americanized fairytale paradigm.

The Cinderella paradigm that dominates Warner's novel follows the dominant European pattern Yolen describes: Cinderella is not a simple rise tale of a poor girl into a princess but of a

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three things, Ellie" (563) and she responds "Oh, it would make me so happy – so much happier – if I could be doing something to please you" (563), proving she has become the ideal submissive woman who is ready for matrimony.

rich girl rescued from wrongful enslavement; it is the story of a deserving noble girl revealed (296). Warner's heroine is a European noble who is wrongfully held in the United States by her wicked Aunt Fortune; although she rises out of her misfortune through myriad helpers and travels to Europe to receive her birthright, she remains a patriotic American who eventually finds her happily-ever-after in the United States.<sup>117</sup> This sets Warner apart from the American Cinderellas in popular periodicals, which exhibit a simple rise tale. In the "Afterword" (1987) to Warner's novel, Jane Tompkins states: "*The Wide, Wide World* is the Ur-text of the nineteenth-century United States. More than any other book of its time, it embodies, uncompromisingly, the values of the Victorian era." (585) Tompkins' observation resonates with this discussion of the distinctly American Cinderella paradigm embedded in the novel. The relatively static and stereotypical Cinderella generated by Warner reflects an attempt to create a heroic female *bildungsroman* with a strong nationalistic message. Later American descendants of *Jane Eyre* evolve the Cinderella paradigms and nationalistic message, including Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*.

*Anne of Green Gables* is an important text in this discussion because of the way it concludes an era of American Cinderella-like Victorian novels for young women. Warner started work on *The Wide, Wide World* in 1848, a year after the publication of Brontë's first novel; this novel is one of the earliest transatlantic responses to *Jane Eyre*. Seelye claims that Warner's reaction to Brontë is especially apparent in the latter half of the text (Seelye 93-94). Thus, Warner's use of the Cinderella paradigm in 1850 marks the beginning of an era. Montgomery, on the other hand, is following half a century of American responses to *Jane Eyre* with their embedded Cinderella tales when she publishes in 1908. *Anne of Green Gables* negotiates this

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<sup>117</sup> Even when she is in Europe with the Lindsays, Ellen remains a staunch patriot by defending the superiority of American liberty and military heroes (Warner 515).



American tradition, both using it and pushing away from it. In fact, the romance of Montgomery's heroine is not arranged by an external helper, an essential motif of the Cinderella tale.

Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) is the story of a redheaded orphan girl and her maturation in a staid, middle-class Canadian town on Prince Edward Island where she lives with Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert. Anne's life is narrated as a series of comic scrapes and incidents through which Anne is stripped of her temper and her excessive romanticism; all while her red hair darkens to auburn. Anne's mantra is: "I never make the same mistake twice" (Montgomery 237), so it could be said that this novel is a catalogue of all of Anne's mistakes. The novel concludes with Anne's acceptance of her thoroughly middle-class identity; she indefinitely postpones her dream of a college education to remain at Green Gables with her handsome and charming foe-turned-friend, Gilbert Blythe (240-45).

Shortly after Anne is introduced to the narrative, she is referred to as a "freckled witch" (Montgomery 19). The metaphor or handle of "witch" is the only other name or title that Anne consistently receives throughout the text. It is used both to describe Anne's distinctive personality and her spiritual state (200).<sup>118</sup> However, Montgomery does not present the witch as an alternative example of womanhood. Instead, Montgomery embraces the American Cinderella paradigm described by Yolen: "America's Cinderella has been a coy, helpless dreamer, a 'nice' girl who awaits her rescue with patience and a song" (297). Anne is the "nice" dreamer who rises from rags to riches, embracing a Canadian form of the American dream, although it may be argued that Anne's fiery temper resists the passive American model.

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<sup>118</sup> There are fairy and fairytale references in *Anne of Green Gables*, but they are most frequently associated with, and integrated into, nature (79, 80-81, 132, 141). Montgomery does not emulate *Jane Eyre's* fairy lore; they are also dismissed as something distinctly childish (135, 136, 199).

According to Irene Gammel and Elizabeth and Epperly's *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture* (1999), Montgomery defines the ideal Canadian identity: Canadian-born, educated, middle-class (rural, landowning farmers) in *Anne of Green Gables* (Gammel and Epperly 6-8). This is the identity, class, and station that Anne comes from, and it is the identity she ultimately returns to as an adult. She rejects and disdains the chance to be anything higher or lower; she does not envy the wealthy Americans who vacation on Prince Edward Island (Montgomery 218-19). However, *Anne of Green Gables* is not simply a story of "riches recovered" (Yolen 296) since her educated parents were impoverished (Montgomery 38). Thus, *Anne of Green Gables* is an amalgamation of the American rags to riches featured in American periodicals and the traditional Cinderella rise formula adjusted for the Canadian middle-class landowning farmer, just as Montgomery's heroine is an amalgamation of American and traditional ATU 510 heroines.

Like Ellen, Anne may be characterized as a Cinderella heroine because she is haunted by magical objects and helpers, particularly Matthew Cuthbert.<sup>119</sup> Matthew is a mother-like substitute who aids Anne with gifts and advice, allowing her to be recognized as a worthy heroine when she appears in public. He possesses all the essential traits of Cinderella's helpers according to Yolen (298). To begin with, Matthew wants to keep Anne, enabling her American-style rise from rags to riches (Montgomery 31, 220-21). He gives Anne gifts, including dresses with puffed sleeves (160-63) and a pearl necklace (212-14); these material tokens are like the magical objects in traditional Cinderella tales that mark the heroine and declare her identity. Matthew is also the voice of wisdom when Anne is trying to find her path in life (184). He provides for her education at Queens, which allows her to make her way in the world (195).

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<sup>119</sup> Matthew allows Anne to become the ideal: an educated, middle-class, Canadian who is fit to be married to Gilbert Blythe.

After his death, Anne plants his mother's roses on his grave and tends them (236), like the traditional Cinderella heroine in Perrault's popular tale who tends plants on her dead mother's grave. Thus, Matthew replaces the traditional helper; he fills the role, but he does so without magic. Montgomery anchors her Cinderella tale firmly in the material world. Her materialism and modified treatment of the supernatural position this narrative as the culmination of half a century of American Cinderella tales, in which luck and good fortune work alongside Providence to enable the heroine's rise.

Anne also has other helpers, including the rich Aunt Josephine Barry, who provides Anne with slippers for the dance (Montgomery 163). As stated previously, slippers are particularly important to the American Cinderella paradigm (Yolen 298).<sup>120</sup> These slippers, like the pearls and puffed sleeves Anne receives from Matthew, allow her to make "radiant" (Yolen 298) public appearances at events, including Miss Stacy's play (Montgomery 162-65) and the Hotel-Concert (212-19). Moreover, Anne's appearance and performance justify her rise and gains her the admiration of the community in Avonlea. The conversation between Matthew, Marilla, and Miss Barry at Anne's graduation (when she won the Avery scholarship) illustrates the significance of Anne's public success:

"Reckon you're glad we kept her, Marilla?" whispered Matthew, speaking for the first time since he had entered the hall, when Anne had finished her essay.

"It's not the first time I've been glad," retorted Marilla. "You do like to rub things in, Matthew Cuthbert."

Miss Barry, who was sitting behind them, leaned forward and poked Marilla in the back with her parasol.

"Aren't you proud of that Anne-girl? I am," she said. (230)

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<sup>120</sup> Yolen's claim is reinforced in the works of American scholars, such as Huang Mei. In *Transforming the Cinderella Dream: From Frances Burney to Charlotte Brontë* (1990), Huang's definition of Cinderella hinges upon the "ill-treated heroine and her eventual recognition by means of a shoe" (2). This will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

Montgomery's amalgamation of the American and traditional Cinderella rise tale demands that the heroine merit her elevation; Anne's success demonstrates her worth.<sup>121</sup> This also constructs Anne as a larger-than-life heroine despite Montgomery's regional realism.

Although it may be argued that the emotional and hot-tempered Anne pushes against the model of the passive American Cinderella, Montgomery still claims Anne is an ideal: "Marilla had almost begun to despair of ever fashioning this waif of the world into her model little girl of demure manners and prim deportment. Neither would she have believed that she really liked Anne much better as she was." (145) Moreover, Anne grows more passive and socially graceful as the narrative progresses (245). As the wealthy Miss Barry states: "That Anne-girl improves all the time" (227). She even curbs her academic aspirations to fit the ideal middle-class woman. As Rachel Lynn states, too much education "unfits them for woman's true sphere" (231). Most important, Anne becomes a fit partner for the Prince Charming, Gilbert Blythe, the best-looking young man in Avonlea (226). Her education, her language, and her social status all approach his social and academic standing (226). Anne's romance with Gilbert both embraces the Cinderella tradition and pushes against it. Although Marilla encourages this romance, no helper directly enables their union (Montgomery 238, 245).

Warner and Montgomery bookend the American Cinderella responses to *Jane Eyre*. Warner introduces the passive American heroine described by Yolen, but Warner uses a traditional European rise formula. By contrast, Montgomery uses a Cinderella heroine who is more active. Anne resembles the more powerful heroine that Yolen associates with European and Asian Cinderella tales (Yolen 296-97). It is significant that both of these immensely popular American responses to *Jane Eyre* continue the search for a larger-than-life representation of

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<sup>121</sup> Miss Stacy is another more practical helper who enables Anne's rise through education (Montgomery 166, 194-95).

womanhood and they both embrace a modified Cinderella paradigm and the domesticated Cinderella heroine. This suggests that Yolen's assessment of the American Cinderella is accurate: the story of rags to riches "is part of the American creed, recited subvocally along with the pledge of allegiance" (296). Furthermore, it may be argued that this American attempt to secure a single, stable female example creates a stereotype that limits the relatively fluid literary quest featured in *Jane Eyre's* literary progeny, like *Aurora Leigh*. The Cinderella paradigm and the female *bildungsroman* become an integral part American attempts to create a national mythology in these popular novels written by women with larger-than-life heroines.

However, the American Cinderella is not a monolithic ideology; the nationalistic undertones in *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables* are drastically different. Warner creates a narrative in which white Americans in the United States are entitled to happiness because they are descended from European nobility. By contrast, Montgomery celebrates the myth of a native Canadian identity that is white and English speaking. Anne's right to the Cuthberts' investment in her life and her future is predetermined by her ethnicity. Although her parents did not leave her money, they endowed her with a middle-class, white, English-speaking Canadian heritage that enables her rise. Before Anne arrived at Green Gables, Marilla defended the Cuthberts' decision to adopt a child, stating: "Nova Scotia is right close to the Island. It isn't as if we were getting him from England or the States. He can't be much different from ourselves" (Montgomery 13). Anne's worth is initially based on an ideal of cohesive Canadian identity. Marilla goes to great lengths to establish the distinctive worth of Canadian identity by contrasting it with British, American, and Australian identity (11-15). The derogatory labels that Marilla applies to these outsiders as well as to French-Canadians functions to create an English-speaking Canadian ideal for the reader and distance the "born Canadian" (13) Anne from the

undesirable “others.” Despite her awkwardness and lack of material resources, Anne fulfills this ideal, which makes her a worthwhile investment for the middle-class Cuthberts. Thus, this Americanized fairy tale reflects a national dream, but it was a dream that was limited to middle-class white Americans.

The racial limits of the Cinderella paradigm are emphasized in Hannah Crafts’s *The Bondwoman’s Narrative*. Crafts’s novel is clearly a literary descendent of Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*; scholars like Keyser have noted that the two novels share the same plot and that Crafts lifts passages from *Jane Eyre* as well as *Bleak House* (87-88). *The Bondwoman’s Narrative* is the *bildungsroman* of a fugitive slave named Hannah Crafts.<sup>122</sup> Hannah’s life and the trials that she endures resemble Jane Eyre’s, as Keyser demonstrates:

A little girl, “shy and reserved,” steals away from the play of other children to hide and read her book. As a young woman, she lives on a wealthy estate where mysterious laughter can be heard in the halls and the creaking of a tree lends an ominous feeling of dream. Because of a dark secret that destroys the romantic hopes of the estate’s master, the young woman is forced to flee her erstwhile home. She finds herself a temporary sanctuary among loving companions, but because of an untenable marriage proposal, she must once again run away. Ultimately she lives happily ever after. The above outline of Charlotte Brontë’s famous fiction autobiography, *Jane Eyre* (1847), also provides a synopsis of *The Bondwoman’s Narrative*, a fictional autobiography written in the 1850s by an African American woman who called herself “Hannah Crafts.” (Keyser 87)

Hannah’s story begins on the estate Lindendale, where she is a light-skinned slave raised in the manor house. As in *Jane Eyre*, the master is a man old enough to be her father, but that is likely because he is her father. Her mother was sold off before Hannah knew her. The master’s new wife is another woman who has passed for white, but is actually the daughter of a slave woman. Hannah and the woman run away together, but the woman who was raised white is too weak to make the journey, and they are eventually caught and returned to slavery. Moreover, it is the

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<sup>122</sup> Hannah Crafts is both the name of the heroine and the pseudonym of the author. In this dissertation, the character will be referred to as Hannah and the author will be identified as Crafts.

institution of slavery, not just a forced marriage, the makes it impossible for Hannah to remain in any of the places she is taken. When her final mistress, Mrs. Wheeler, sends her to the fields to be the “wife” of a field hand, Hannah disguises herself as a boy and escapes to the North. When she finally settles down in a free African-American community in New Jersey, she becomes a teacher, marries the preacher, and is reunited with her lost mother.

According to Henry Gates, Hannah Crafts’s *The Bondwoman’s Narrative* is the first novel by an enslaved woman (xii). The title page of the manuscript reads:

*The Bondwoman’s Narrative*

By Hannah Crafts

Fugitive Slave

Written after 1850, and the ratification of the Fugitive Slave Law, Crafts’s claim is particularly significant. Crafts’s identity as a fugitive slave creates a division between her and her free Northern audience, both black and white. As a fugitive slave, Crafts cannot even embrace a limited, segregated version of the American dream; she cannot enjoy the rags-to-riches hope of the American Cinderella. She is perpetually in danger of being returned to slavery. Thus, unlike other American literary descendants of *Jane Eyre*, Crafts does not create a Cinderella tale. Crafts’s heroine has no magical helpers, no simple advancement through her hard work, and no reward for passivity or acceptance. In fact, Crafts exposes the exploitation that enables white Americans to perform the fairy tale with its fancy Cinderella-like dress ball. After preparing the Lindendale mansion for the master’s bridal party, Hannah reflects on the inequalities of white fairytale expectations: “We thought our master must be a very great man to have so much wealth at his command, but it never occurred to us to inquire whose sweat and blood and unpaid labor had contributed to produce it” (Crafts 14). Thus, Crafts undermines the American Cinderella

paradigm. She demonstrates that in the absence of supernatural helpers, the performance of fairy tales depends upon exploitation. Crafts recognizes that *Jane Eyre's* American progeny create larger-than-life narratives for women, which magnifies the exploitation inherent in the American domestic fairy tale. Moreover, her critique of the Cinderella-like ball suggests that *The Bondwoman's Narrative* responds to the entire literary community that developed around *Jane Eyre*, not just Brontë's debut novel. Crafts undermines the nationalistic American Cinderella and its assumptions of white privilege. The woman dancing at the ball in Crafts's novel does not deserve to be there because she is the good recipient of benevolent aid; rather, it is an unmerited privilege she receives because everyone assumes that she is white.

Crafts's indictment of American fairytale expectations is echoed in her indictment of antebellum U.S. government. After describing the death of a slave mother and her child, Crafts turns away from Hannah's narrative and addresses the heads of state who have allowed the institution of slavery to continue:

Dead, your Excellency, the President of this Republic. Dead, gave senators who grow eloquent over pensions and army wrongs. Dead ministers of religion, who prate because poor men without a moment[']s leisure on other days presume to read the newspaper on Sunday, yet who wink at, or approve laws that occasion such scenes as this. (178)

Crafts's direct address here has precedent in *Jane Eyre*; Brontë addresses the reader directly when the Jane's happiness is finally achieved: "Reader, I married him" (Brontë 395). It is a moment of long-awaited fulfillment for both Jane and the reader, who has become invested Jane's journey with its fairytale expectations. The contrast between these two passages could not be more pronounced: Crafts addresses her reader with the impossibility of fairytale expectations for anyone who is not white and privileged. Crafts's indictment is designed to convict readers and undermine nationalistic assumptions.



Despite Crafts's powerful critique of U.S. government, her heroine settles in a free African-American community in New Jersey. Hannah does not become an expatriate who flees the slave-holding U.S. for a new haven, unlike African-American characters in popular novels such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851).<sup>123</sup> Crafts challenges nationalistic narratives, but she still accepts the potential happiness for her heroine within the U.S. Crafts implicitly embraces the potential peaceful coexistence of African-Americans with white Americans in a racially diverse nation, a concept that authors like Stowe could not conceptualize.

As Keyser argues, *The Bondwoman's Narrative* is more than a simple response to *Jane Eyre*:

In acknowledging such a connection between *Jane Eyre* and *The Bondwoman's Narrative*, one can recognize in Crafts's work a canny critical reading of *Jane Eyre* that anticipates the postcolonial and racial focus central to contemporary critical understanding of that novel (Keyser 87-88).

By contextualizing Crafts's unpublished manuscript with the white, middle-class responses to *Jane Eyre*, this argument, presented by Keyser, can be amplified. Crafts's critical response to *Jane Eyre* is one of the primary reasons that her novel stands apart from other American progeny of Brontë's novel. Unlike Warner and Montgomery, Crafts interrogates the white imperialist assumptions of Brontë's female *bildungsroman*, and in doing so, she also challenges the perpetually deferred search for a symbol or paradigm to represent womanhood. Through recognizable reappropriations of novels by and about middle-class white women, Crafts demonstrates both the continuity and distinctiveness of her situation as a fugitive slave in the United States.

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<sup>123</sup> Stowe sends the majority of her non-white characters to live outside the U.S. in Canada, Liberia, Africa, and the Caribbean (384-408). She puts racist national sentiments in the mouths of characters like George, who takes his family to Canada and then decides to move to Liberia because he cannot sympathize with white Americans, even though his father was white (392-94). Stowe's racist nationalism still serves as a stark contrast to Crafts's (rather ambivalent) acceptance of a racially diverse United States. It is likely that Crafts was familiar with this remarkably popular novel; it sold more copies than any book in the world during the nineteenth century besides the Bible.

Although Crafts does not embrace fairy tales in her novel, her treatment of the mystical, mythic, and supernatural is distinctive. It is an important part of her construction of an ideal heroine. Orthodox evangelical Christianity empowers the heroine. Hannah's Christian beliefs uphold her emotionally and spiritually, especially when her enslaved condition is announced or negotiated. Whenever slavery threatens to nullify or deny Hannah her humanity within the narrative, Crafts affirms Hannah's humanity with faith in the Christian God. For example, this is particularly apparent when the slave trader Mr. Saddler and the despicable Mr. Trappe negotiate Hannah's sale (Crafts 101-10). Mr. Trappe tells Hannah her identity and role as a slave must govern her life: "never for a moment forget that submission and obedience must be the Alpha and Omega of all your actions" (108). Hannah resists this dehumanization with her own faith:

Though this advice was probably well adapted to one in my condition, that is if I could have forgotten God, truth, honor, and my own soul; it was manifestly not given with any kind intention. [Trappe] loved to prove? Nor probe? the human heart to its inmost depths, and watch the manifestations of its living agony. He wished to vary the modes of my mental torture, and to make me realize that in both soul and body I was indeed a slave. (108)

Thus, Hannah interrogates the way religion is appropriated to enforce slavery, and she repeatedly reclaims this power for herself. For example, at the conclusion of her conversation with Trappe, Hannah states:

Saying this he really seemed pleased, but miserable as I was, helpless, almost hopeless and a slave I felt that my condition for eternity if not for time, was preferable to his, and that I would not even for the blessed boon of freedom change places with him; since even freedom without God and religion would be barren possession. (109)

The God Hannah professes is remarkably different from the Helper God in *The Wide, Wide World*. He does not magically provide Hannah with a happy ending; she must secure that herself. Rather, Hannah's faith assures her of her own humanity and enables her to keep slavery from stealing her soul.

Since this is a faith that Hannah is not supposed to practice, it is also an act of individuality and defiance. Initially, Uncle Siah and Aunt Hetty teach Hannah to read the Bible, and they are all punished for it (Crafts 7-13). The slave trader Saddler also objects to slaves learning and practicing religion; he claims that morals make slaves less tractable (105). Crafts reinforces Hannah's resistance through religion.<sup>124</sup> Crafts's recognition of spiritual or supernatural exploitation here parallels her recognition of material exploitation. This exploitation is what definitively undermines the potential for fairytale expectations. Crafts emphasizes the fact that in a world devoid of magical helpers, fairy tales are achieved for the privileged few at the expense of others. There is no magic formula to produce a happy ending.

Despite the abundance of spiritual references in this novel, there is no attempt to generate a distinctly feminine mythos. Crafts asserts a universal humanity, not a distinctive female identity. In fact, Hannah suppresses or denies her female identity, her sexuality and maternity, throughout the narrative. She decides not to marry or have children: "I had spurned domestic ties not because my heart was hard, but because it was my unalterable resolution never to entail slavery on any human being" (Crafts 206-07). This decision is ultimately what drives her to escape. When her last mistress, Mrs. Wheeler, punishes her by sending her to work in the fields and become the wife of a field slave, Hannah runs away. Hannah states:

But when [Mrs. Wheeler] sought to force me into a compulsory union with a man whom I could only hate and despise it seemed that rebellion would be a virtue, that duty to myself and my God actually required it, and that whatever accidents or misfortunes might attend my flight nothing could be worse than what threatened my stay. (206)

Hannah endures slavery until it impinges upon her distinctly female body; she flees from the dual threat of rape and procreation. Her suppression and protection of herself as a female slave

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<sup>124</sup> Crafts also merges superstition, or a heightened spiritual awareness, with orthodox evangelical Christianity. It grants Hannah superior insight; she can perceive things that the privileged whites around her cannot understand (Crafts 17-21).

culminates in her assuming a male costume and fleeing to the North (210). Her disguise is so convincing that even Jacob, the other runaway slave she encounters, never learns her secret: “Jacob and myself traveled many days together, but strange to say he had not penetrated my disguise. He learned to love me, however, as a younger brother.” (224) The dual vulnerability of Hannah’s body may be read as a critique of *Jane Eyre* and the white, middle-class responses to Brontë’s novel. Although Keyser claims Hannah’s thoughts about love and marriage parallel Jane’s, there is a distinctive gap in their philosophies (Keyser 101-02). While Brontë’s heroine is initially threatened by an illegitimate union with Rochester, the threat is resolved by the death of Bertha. After the fire at Thornfield, Jane can marry Rochester and raise a family with him. By contrast, maternity is a perpetual threat to Hannah because her children will be born into slavery. This threat cannot be resolved for a fugitive slave as long as slavery is practiced in the U.S., because according to U.S. law, a slave woman’s children “serve according to the condition of their mother.”<sup>125</sup>

After drawing heavily from *Jane Eyre* and *Bleak House* throughout the body of her text, Crafts shifts to Brontë’s *Villette* in her conclusion. Crafts generates a female identity and life without maternity for her heroine. Hannah’s spirituality and social status are affirmed by her minister husband (Crafts 238-39). The free African-American community she lives in offers her friends, mother, school, and a lover; however, there are still no children (Crafts 238-39). In the novel, Hannah states that she practiced celibacy as a slave to prevent her children from inheriting her enslavement (206-07). However, her decision to remain childless after escaping suggests

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<sup>125</sup> In 1662, the colony of Virginia passed legislation stating: “WHEREAS some doubts have arisen whether children got by any Englishman upon a Negro woman should be slave or free, *Be it therefore enacted and declared by this present grand assembly*, that all children borne in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother, *And* that if any christian shall committ ffornication with a Negro man or woman, hee or shee soe offending shall pay double the ffines imposed by the former act. [sic]” According to the *Law Library of Congress*, similar laws soon governed U.S. slavery.

that, despite her personal contentment, she still does not want her children to inherit her condition as second-class citizens in the United States.<sup>126</sup> Thus, Crafts's novel ends with the same quiet as Brontë's somber *Villette*. Hack also notes this similarity, though he does not speculate on the significance of this shift.

Keyser recognizes the importance of the plot similarities between *Jane Eyre* and *The Bondwoman's Narrative*. Crafts allows the "native female" (Keyser 87) to enjoy the "autobiography of self-formation" (Keyser 87) that has been central to the imperialist construction of Western identity. However, Crafts also recognizes the gaps between this middle-class white narrative and Hannah's potential life experiences. She cannot fully share the happy ending of *Jane Eyre* and her white progeny. She has no fairytale expectations, no magic helpers. Nor does she seek a myth or symbol to represent womanhood. Crafts is not interested in defining what is distinctive about women; rather, she is concerned with demonstrating the humanity of her heroine.

The plethora of responses to Brontë's heroic female *bildungsroman* suggests that the transatlantic community of women writers was driven by a cultural desire for heroines that elevate the existence of women. However, the wide material circulation of this text is also a significant factor in its pervasive influence. In fact, the circulation of Brontë's novel models Claybaugh's transatlantic print culture: "U.S. publishing houses were increasingly more powerful [than British publishing houses]" (16). Moreover, the lack of international copyright made it cheaper to pirate and publish British novels than American ones (Claybaugh 16-20). From Barrett Browning's letters, it seems likely that she read one of the pirated editions, as did Brontë's American readers (Holloway 128). Seelye claims both Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre* and

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<sup>126</sup> There is another possible interpretation for Hannah's continued lack of children that lies on the title page. Hannah Crafts will never be able to escape the threat of slavery or her identity as a fugitive slave.

Elizabeth Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë* were published and circulated throughout the United States (19-21). First-hand accounts from the 1840s and 1850s describe Brontë's novel running through mill communities "like an epidemic" (Seelye 19). Seelye documents Warner's access to the text, but it may be assumed that anyone interested in women's fiction had access. Henry Gates has even posited how the fugitive slave Hannah Crafts gained access to Brontë's novels. In the "Introduction" to *The Bondswoman's Narrative*, Gates suggests that Hannah Crafts is the pseudonym of a former "female, mulatto, a slave of John Hill Wheeler's, and autodidact" (lxxii), and it has been confirmed that Wheeler's library had a copy of *Jane Eyre* and a collection of Brontë's complete works (Gates 326-331).

The material circulation of Brontë's first novel enabled a wide body of transatlantic responses. Letters and journals suggest that the availability and prevalence of this novel in American communities, such as the New England mill communities, contributes to the American tendency to identify with *Jane Eyre*. In America, white middle-class women consistently responded to *Jane Eyre* with novels that included modified American Cinderella paradigms. The persistence of this fairy tale complicates the pattern of deferred desire in the search for a symbol to represent women and their experiences in *Jane Eyre* and her literary progeny. It suggests that American authors suspended this perpetual search and embraced a single mythology, which they persistently attempted to work through in fiction. Yolen offers an explanation for the initial transformation of Cinderella, and this explanation may also shed light on this paradigm's repeated use: the passive heroine and the simple rise tale resonated with wider cultural desires in the United States and Canada. Americans wanted to embrace incompatible ideals about women as creatures who are both passive and hardworking, but outside the realm of the "default" Victorian human, who is always male.

It is significant that neither Barrett Browning nor Crafts uses Cinderella motifs: thus, the Cinderella paradigm has limited importance for the female *bildungsroman* that appeals to white middle-class American readers whom it reflects. In fact, Barrett Browning vehemently objected to the marriage of a lowly governess and a nobleman. She rectifies this “flaw” through the marriage of two cousins. For Crafts, the fairy tale is not feasible. Hannah cannot afford to be a passive American Cinderella, nor can she depend upon the aid of magic helpers and special tokens to secure her future. She recognizes that these dreams can only be sustained through exploitation. Moreover, as a fugitive slave, Hannah cannot fully embrace her female identity: maternity is a threat to her. Both Hannah and her children could be returned to slavery because of the passage of the Fugitive Slave Laws.

The variety of responses to *Jane Eyre* demonstrate that this novel and its changeling heroine do not offer a definitive model or mythology for womanhood because the changeling does not live on, something Brontë herself recognizes in *Villette*. This search cannot be completed; it remains a conscious or unconscious performance of deferment. *Jane Eyre*'s literary descendants perpetually seek a symbol to represent reality. These novels attempt to fulfill the same cultural desire in a wide range of different ways. The female *bildungsroman* is important to constructing cultural identity. The nationalistic ideological undertones incorporated into transatlantic responses to *Jane Eyre* suggest that, like the traditional heroic *bildungsroman*, the female *bildungsroman* is important to the construction of cultural identity, not just the construction of women. These distinctive nationalistic pressures also demonstrate the regional and cultural limits of transatlantic readings of *Jane Eyre*. These limits become even more meaningful when American scholars begin analyzing *Jane Eyre*; this will be explored in the final chapter. Current paradigms of transatlanticism recognize the flow of influence across both sides

of the Atlantic, privileging British cultural power and American material wealth. The transatlantic community that developed around Brontë's novel in the nineteenth century models these dynamics, but it evolved beyond these boundaries, particularly through the medium of twentieth and twenty-first century criticism. As American scholarship on Brontë's novel, developed, the prevalence and popularity of American responses to *Jane Eyre* began to exert cultural influence; this expansion of the transatlantic community will be explored in the next chapter.



#### CHAPTER 4: CONCENTRIC CIRCLES OF WOMEN WRITERS

The nineteenth-century transatlantic community that grew up around Brontë's novel models current theories of transatlanticism, which assume that British culture dominated the exchange. However, twentieth- and twenty-first-century literary and scholarly responses to *Jane Eyre* demand a new transatlantic paradigm, one which recognizes the effects of American cultural influence, particularly through interpretations of the fairytale plot. This chapter explores the cultural significance of these American responses to *Jane Eyre* and the way in which these responses have affected the transatlantic paradigm of this distinctive microcosm. I argue that American material influence expands into cultural influence. The plethora of American responses to *Jane Eyre* in the nineteenth century influenced critical and literary interpretations of the novel, leading to consistent critical readings of *Jane Eyre* as a Cinderella tale.

The transatlantic microcosm that developed around *Jane Eyre* invested the novel with overlapping cultural messages. These exaggerated cultural responses generated a sort of mythic status for the novel in its transatlantic context. While the Brontë myth and the distinctive effects of *Jane Eyre* have been explored, the specific transatlantic context of the myth has not been developed. This chapter examines the cultural significance of American investment in *Jane Eyre* and possible explanations for the novel's imagined and projected international meanings.

More specifically, *Jane Eyre* became mired in narratives of nineteenth century American identity formation. It was absorbed into the parallel tradition of male and female rise tales, related to American individualism and the self-rise ethic. The male narrative tradition has been dominated by stories like Horatio Alger's while the American Cinderella tale has been used to describe the female narrative tradition. The Cinderella tag became especially popular for a wide range of female rise tales in the middle of the century when a variety of "Cinderella" adaptations

began appearing in popular magazines.<sup>127</sup> The self-made man described in novels like Alger's was important to Presidential myths, but the American Cinderella could not be attached to a similar American icon. I argue that this is why *Jane Eyre* and Brontë were especially attractive to an American audience looking for an example of this national ideal.

Elisa Tamarkin is one of the critics who explores the paradoxical relationship of Americans with Great Britain in the nineteenth century; she offers a good basis for this examination of the cultural aspects of *Jane Eyre*'s transatlantic context. In *Anglophilia* (2008), Tamarkin examines the ways in which nineteenth-century Americans constructed their own idealized concept of England; Tamarkin calls it "the fantasy of England" (xxxiii). She claims that this American construction of England allowed Americans to work out their national identity in an imaginary setting:

American Anglophilia [was]... a devotion that provided not so much a place where antebellum Americans found release from the burdens of their own nationality, but where their "Americanness" was lived in other languages of national expression. The England that was especially attractive to Americans was also especially mysterious, and its effects were almost entirely the product of the dedication it inspired.... Anglophilia... tells a story of English culture and society that is rooted in the character of English life but, finally, an expression of the anxieties and wishes of someplace else. (xxiv)

Tamarkin uses the 1860 U.S. tour of Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales, as a microcosm for her study (3). Based upon Albert's intense popularity and pervasive media coverage, Tamarkin theorizes that Americans used this visit to escape the oncoming Civil War as well as to express their own American identity.

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<sup>127</sup> In "America's Cinderella" (1977), Jane Yolen claims that the American Cinderella narrative developed when the story was reprinted in "prestigious" (299) magazines for children. She particularly attributes G.B. Bartlett's "Giant Picture Book" (1881) published in *St. Nicholas Magazine* with the creation of the "spun-sugar caricature" (297) of hardier European and Asian Cinderellas. The American Cinderella also appeared in popular magazines for adults, such as *Harper's* and *The Atlantic*. These Cinderella stories for adults not only meet the standards described by Yolen, they also develop a more extensive nationalistic paradigm, particularly in their celebration of materialism and their explicitly American settings. Moreover, this chapter explores the larger literary traditions surround the American Cinderella.

Prince Albert was the first British royal to tour the United States; he arrived shortly before the American Civil War broke out. He was received by crowds of at least thirty thousand at each stop in his tour and entertained with balls, state dinners, and military marches (Tamarkin 3). Contact with the prince was fetishized; women bribed their way into his room to “touch him curiously” (Tamarkin 4). However, the frenzy incited by the Prince’s arrival was not confined to private spaces. Newspapers like the *Chicago Tribune* describe the American’s wild reaction to the prince at public events: “you saw so many squealing gala ladies stumbling out of their ball gowns trying to press the royal flesh” (Tamarkin 4). Public reactions to the Prince were reinforced by media coverage. Popular periodicals like *Harper’s Weekly* registered the Prince’s movement “with extreme fidelity” (Tamarkin 4). More significantly “no item was too slight for the national record and ... no one would even ask why, at the point of disunion, the American public would need to know that the prince departed from the Bay of Portland on ‘a fine day, but cold’” (Tamarkin 5). Thus, Tamarkin suggests that American interest in Prince Albert at the beginning of the Civil War was an avoidance technique.

However, Tamarkin is more interested in the way in which the Prince’s visit enabled a near-theatrical production of American identity. Newspapers like *The New York Daily Tribune* characterize U.S. responses to the Prince as particularly American; the enthusiasm of the crowds greeting the Prince “fitly typified the capacities of the people for a self-government founded on the immutable laws of human sympathy.”<sup>128</sup> In another place, American reactions to Prince Albert are described as “democratic” (Tamarkin 12), implying that there is something distinctly nationalistic in American responses to the British Prince. This nationalistic enactment of American identity suggests that American affinity for Prince Albert was more than simply a

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<sup>128</sup> Excerpted from “Reception of the Prince of Wales – a Democratic Jubilee – New York Out of Doors,” *New York Daily Tribune*, October 12, 1860. Referenced by Tamarkin in *Anglophilia* (13).

distraction from war; it was an exercise in nationalism on the eve of national conflict (Tamarkin 18).

*Anglophilia* demonstrates the counter-intuitive uses of British culture in nineteenth-century America: expressions of love for Prince Albert are interpreted as expressions of distinctly American culture. The complexity of imagined Anglo-American relations described by Tamarkin provides a comparison for my study of *Jane Eyre*'s transatlantic progeny. I argue that the appropriation of *Jane Eyre* as an expression of American ideals is another example of imagined Anglo-American affinities. Although *Jane Eyre* is a British novel, Americans had an emotional and nationalistic investment in both Brontë and her novel that is comparable to the American investment in Prince Albert's 1860 tour of the United States. However, Prince Albert retained his distinctly British identity; he was embraced as an international other against whom Americans could define their own national identity. By contrast, *Jane Eyre* and her creator are simultaneously embraced as symbols of British and American culture because American readers interpret Jane Eyre's rise tale as a female representation of the American individualism. The appropriation of *Jane Eyre* as a distinctly American narrative was counter-intuitive, but it was part of a broader cultural moment.

In "Anti-Individualism, Authority, and Identity: Susan Warner's Contradictions in *The Wide, Wide World*" (1990), Isabelle White claims that Warner "became implicated in the very individualism and materialism against which she argued" (31). White states that the domesticity and evangelical Christianity in Warner's novel are at odds with the individualism and materialism that the novel unintentionally supports (32). I demonstrate that the Cinderella fairy tale enables this apparent contradiction, allowing women writers in the sentimental novel tradition to embrace a nationalistic narrative that was otherwise inaccessible.

The term *individualism* emerged in the late 1820s, but the concept of the individual's rights was established by the political philosophies of Hobbes and Locke and incorporated into early American political thought. In *The Myth of American Individualism* (1994), Barry Shain further argues that American localism and regionalism contributed to international perceptions of Americans as individualistic. Shain states:

There is good reason to believe that America's highly localist communalism (religious, social, and political) must have appeared in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as bordering on anarchical or atomistic when compared to centrally administered European religious establishments and nation-states.... In other words, America's powerful localism probably fostered illusions that came to be described, largely pejoratively, as individualistic. ... Over time, what begins as a misperception can become a myth, especially if it accords with the political interests of dominant elites. (84)

While the label of individualism may have initially been applied as a misperception, the myth was embraced and developed by Americans, who already felt the "autonomous sense of the individual" (Shain 85) was inherent in American politics. Shain's insight may further explain the appeal of *Jane Eyre* with its vivid regionalism to an American audience.

The individualism of the young liberal democratic state was heavily influenced by emerging capitalism, especially by the mid-nineteenth century; it is this specific conjunction of political and economic forces that shapes the distinctive nature of American individualism. Alexis de Tocqueville is one of the prominent European commentators who notes the distinctive nature of this American ideal in the 1830s.<sup>129</sup> While de Tocqueville's critique of American individualism is largely negative, American authors like William James embrace individualism as an essentially American value.<sup>130</sup> *Blackwell's Encyclopedia of Political Thought* (2000)

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<sup>129</sup> In *Democracy in America* (1835), Tocqueville criticizes American individualism as self-serving and socially destructive.

<sup>130</sup> In *Reconstructing Individualism: a Pragmatic Tradition from Emerson to Ellison* (2012), James Albrecht describes the complex history of individualism in American thought. Albrecht cites James and Mills as prime examples of American investment in this ideal (127-32). For example, James states: "the individualistic view..."

summarizes the values and ideals associated with American individualism: “Individualism [became a] ... catchword for free enterprise, limited government, personal freedom and the attitudes, forms of behavior and aspirations held to sustain these. One influential version of this usage was Herbert Hoover’s campaign speech celebrating ‘rugged individualism’.” (240) This is distinctive from British and European individualism, which stressed “the Romantic ideal of individuality” (*Blackwell’s* 240) or English liberalism and “the sterling qualities of self-reliant Englishmen” (240). Thus, American individualism is marked by its specific political and economic context: the development of the young Republic and the growth of market capitalism.<sup>131</sup> The materialism of the American Cinderella resonates with the capitalistic stakes in American individualism.

This chapter focuses on the gendered narrative that developed out of American individualism and the way that *Jane Eyre* became incorporated into this bifurcated narrative tradition. In *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (1990), Gillian Brown explores the way the domestic narrative was incorporated into individualism in the works of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville in the 1850s. These two, often incompatible, ideologies of domesticity and individualism merged in literature as well as in cultural practices, including reform movements. Brown describes the purpose of her study: “It is the organizing premise of this book that nineteenth-century American individualism

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means many good things: e.g. Genuine novelty; order being *won*, paid for; the smaller system the truer; man [is greater than] home [is greater than] state or church; anti-slavery in all ways; toleration – respect of others; democracy – good systems can always be described in individualistic terms” (Albrecht).

<sup>131</sup>American individualism scholars often emphasize the tension between political and economic forces in this definition. Albrecht claims that “many view individualism as morally and politically suspect [because this ideology has been]... inescapably complicit with the liberal-capitalist status quo.... Through an exaggerated emphasis on individual merit and responsibility, individualism can ignore or minimize social conditions that perpetuate inequalities of wealth and opportunity while, in political terms, engraining a laissez-faire bias against public efforts at reform that might create the conditions for a more widespread individual liberty.” (1)

takes on its peculiarly ‘individualistic’ properties as domesticity inflects it with values of interiority, privacy, and psychology” (1).

Brown’s definition of individualism within its highly gendered historic context is useful for this study: the rise of the liberal democratic state and the burgeoning market economy generated the “possessive” nature of the individualism” (2) associated with nineteenth-century American culture. This material and political reality created gendered tensions in the ideology of individualism: only men could fully engage in the democratic workings of the state and the market economy. American literature in the nineteenth-century frequently depicted the struggle of the individual as a battle between masculine freedom and the civilizing feminine force: “the runaway Huck Finn versus the ‘sivilizing’ Widow Douglas” (5). In this paradigm, the domestic sphere becomes a limitation and boundary that inhibits the individual’s expression of his own identity. However, Brown works within a tradition of feminist reinterpretations of this dichotomy, recognizing the domestic figure’s ability to rebel within the domestic sphere, challenging the male-dominated economic and legal systems (6).

Brown provides the basis for my analysis of the female rise tale that resonates with nineteenth-century American individualism. The rise tale is a specific narrative that developed out of this broader trend: the rise tale taps into the values of free enterprise and personal freedom associated with individualism in the United States. Furthermore, like the narrative tradition examined by Brown, this rise tale is gendered. The American Cinderella tale is a rise tale for women that parallels the story of the self-made man in nineteenth-century American literature. “Domestic individualism” is a phrase that Brown coins to describe a paradoxical expression of American individualism within the domestic sphere (Brown 1). However, this is not a new concept; authors and critics alike have used the Cinderella tag to describe a conjunction of

individualism in the American female rise tale since the nineteenth century. This chapter analyzes the cultural stakes in this tale and the American appropriation of Brontë and her novel *Jane Eyre*.

In *The Fictional Republic: Horatio Alger and American Political Discourse* (1994), Carol Nackenoff provides a compelling analysis for the self-made-man rise tale, which is a useful contrast for the female American rise tale explored in this dissertation. Nackenoff claims that the author Horatio Alger became a symbol for the values associated with the characters of his juvenile fiction:

The way in which the Alger story is formulated and the nature of its promises seem to have captured the imagination. Alger heroes are part of our language of discourse about social mobility and economic opportunity, about determination, self-reliance, and success. They are symbols for individual initiative, permeability of economic and social hierarchies, opportunities, and honest dealing. “Horatio Alger” is shorthand for someone who has risen through the ranks – the self-made man, against the odds.” (3-4)

Although Alger’s life and his stories have been “debunked, maligned, and lampooned” (4), he continues to have enduring symbolic status in American literature and culture. His wildly popular stories for boys created a myth about the capitalist order emerging in the United States during the Gilded Age. His rags-to-riches rise tales “universalized aspirations that few could reasonably hope to attain” (Nackenoff 6) by constructing capitalism as an unbounded opportunity for economic and social rise through hard work. Through these stories, Alger infuses later-nineteenth-century America with fairytale potential (Nackenoff 7). Hope and fiction are merged with just enough fact to appeal to an audience adjusting to the economic changes of the new republic (Nackenoff 10-11).

This analysis of Alger’s rise tales for young boys is useful because it addresses the cultural significance of the narrative: it imbues the capitalist economy with the fairytale dream.



Nackenoff also identifies the political investment in Alger's rise tales. She claims that the basic rise plot is an allegory for the young republic, and each individual hero's triumph is a triumph for the nation:

Alger's most frequent central character is a boy from fourteen to sixteen years old who is thrust into a new environment, almost always the city. The story is a rite of passage from boyhood to manhood during which the youth must undergo many trials. The completion of the passage yields a young adult whose virtue is firm; the adolescent of the Republic attains manhood. (34)

Alger was not alone in his belief that the fate of the Republic depended upon the morality of its youth (Nackenoff 38-39). Self-help manuals for young people migrating to the city abounded during mid-nineteenth century (Nackenoff 39-40). The values Alger instilled in his heroes resonated with the values that Americans believed necessary to the survival of the state, especially as young people migrated to cities and industrial centers after the Civil War (Nackenoff 42).<sup>132</sup>

What Nackenoff does not explore is the way in which the self-made ethic of Alger's narratives is reenacted in founding myths for both the Democratic and Republican parties in the early- and mid-nineteenth century. Both Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln modeled the self-made-man myth for American culture, establishing the self-made ethic as a foundational American value. This chapter explores the connection between the male-centered self-made narrative and the American Cinderella story for young women, as well as the transatlantic impact of this American myth in the microcosm of *Jane Eyre* and her transatlantic descendants.

I argue that *Jane Eyre* had the cultural potential to merge with an American myth like Lincoln's because the novel and its author already had a powerful mythic aura in transatlantic

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<sup>132</sup> In "Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World*, Conduct Literature, and Protocols of Female Reading in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America," Susanne Ashworth draws similar connections between Warner's novel and conduct books for women. This suggests a stronger cultural parallel between the American Cinderella and self-rise narratives such as Alger's (142-43).

culture. In *The Brontë Myth* (2003), Lucasta Miller analyzes the many faces of the mythic Charlotte Brontë. The complex, multifaceted life of this popular author provides concrete material for a range of biographical interpretations. This chapter examines the multifaceted interpretations of Brontë's heroine, Jane Eyre. As a character, Jane Eyre is not as dynamic as her living creator, but she has become an object of projections and interpretations similar to the way Brontë has been regarded.

Miller explores the way in which the Brontë sisters accrued cultural caché in the collective consciousness (xiii). Miller does not specify which collective consciousness she is analyzing. She primarily relies upon British material but occasionally explores American involvement in the development of the Brontë myth. This chapter expands on Miller's work by examining the transatlantic development of the Brontë mythology. Miller's definition of the slow cultural process of mythologizing is useful to this study:

Even a true story can become a myth by being endlessly repeated and woven into culture. To call an event in history mythic does not necessarily denigrate its reality or truth value. But it does acknowledge the penumbra of emotional, aesthetic, and ideological resonance which have clustered around it. (xiii)

Myths are stories that have multifaceted cultural resonance. According to Miller, stories about the Brontës fit this definition; I argue that *Jane Eyre* fits this definition as well.

The Brontës were enmeshed in a transatlantic community of women writers that was both literal and imagined. It is a wide-ranging community that could be diagrammed with a series of concentric and interconnected circles that ripple outwards to embrace an ever-growing body of women writers. The concrete ties between these women writers were created through the circulation of texts as well as letters. The circulation of Brontë's novel, established in the previous chapter, brought her work into contact with a wide range of writers, both men and women. This led to personal correspondence between Brontë and other authors. Although she

famously exchanged a couple of letters with Alfred Lord Tennyson, she only maintained steady correspondence with women writers like Elizabeth Gaskell.<sup>133</sup> Brontë also began to read the works of other contemporary women writers after publishing *Jane Eyre* (Gaskell 340). Prior to the publication of *Jane Eyre*, Brontë's access to the contemporary literature, particularly the works of other women writers, was limited (Gaskell 328-29).

Brontë's own position on being a woman writer was complex and often conflicted. In her Preface to the second edition of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte Brontë defended the sisters' vaguely male pseudonyms:

Averse to personal publicity, we veiled our own names under those of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell; the ambiguous choice being dictated by a sort of conscientious scruple at assuming Christian names positively masculine, while we did not like to declare ourselves women, because — without at that time suspecting that our mode of writing and thinking was not what is called 'feminine' — we had a vague impression that authoresses are liable to be looked on with prejudice; we had noticed how critics sometimes use for their chastisement the weapon of personality, and for their reward, a flattery, which is not true praise.

In her correspondence with other authors and critics Brontë is much bolder. She argued vigorously throughout her entire career for her right to be read and judged as an author regardless of gender. Gaskell includes a letter Brontë sent on 19 January 1850 to G.H. Lewes, a critic who posted a review that critiqued Brontë's work based upon her gender rather than the quality of her writing:

My dear Sir, — I will tell you why I was so hurt by that review in the "Edinburgh"; not because its criticism was keen or its blame sometimes severe; not because its praise was stinted (for, indeed, I think you give me quite as much praise as I deserve), but because after I had said earnestly that I wished critics would judge me as an *author*, not as a woman, you so roughly — I even thought so cruelly — handled the question of sex. (Gaskell 334)

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<sup>133</sup> The only men that Brontë maintained a steady correspondence with were her editors, not male authors. Although she does exchange letters with a series of critics, including G.H. Lewes.

Gaskell excuses Brontë's sharp critique by stating that her health was poor (334-35). However, this response to Lewes is not out of character for Brontë whenever she wrote under the cover of a male pseudonym. If anything, Brontë is more insistent on her right to be judged apart from gender in her earlier correspondence with Lewes. In a letter dated 1 November 1849, Brontë states: "I wish you did not think me a woman. I wish all reviewers believed 'Currer Bell' to be a man; they would be more just to him" (Gaskell 321). In *The Brontës: A Life in Letters* (1998), Juliet Barker notes the dramatic impact Brontë's pseudonym had on her letter writing, both professionally and personally. Barker notes that Brontë's male pseudonym enabled her to flirt more freely with young and handsome George Smith:

Personal acquaintance irrevocably altered [Charlotte's relationship with George Smith] from one of rather formal mutual respect to one of teasing affection which frequently spilled over into flirtation. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of this change is that, the more flirtatious the correspondence, the more firmly Charlotte clung to her persona as 'Currer Bell'. It is as if the male pseudonym freed her from the conventions which would normally attach to an interchange of letters between an unmarried man and a single woman, allowing her to say things she would never have dared to say to his face. (Barker xx)

Gérin also notes this tendency in Brontë's juvenilia: adopting a male pseudonym in her early work allowed her "complete license" (88). Through male pseudonyms like Captain Tree and Charles Wellington, the self-conscious Brontë could use language and ideas that she could not otherwise articulate.<sup>134</sup>

Despite Brontë's consistent demand to be respected as an author regardless of gender, Brontë also thought about her work within the context of a transatlantic community of women

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<sup>134</sup> In the "Introduction" to *The Brontës Tales of Glass Town, Angria, and Gondal* (2010), Christine Alexander claims that the Brontë juvenilia is distinctive. Alexander states: "The Brontë juvenilia provide the richest record we have of youthful literary activity: a fascinating uncensored world where the young writer can create a parallel political and social space, experiment with adult relationships, test genre technique, and experience the power of the author and editor" (xiv). Furthermore, the uncensored power of these early works evoked a similar response from contemporaries like Gaskell. Although Gaskell treats the juvenilia in a subdued manner in her biography of Brontë, her letter to publisher George Smith conveys her excitement; she claims: "they are the wildest & most incoherent things" (Alexander xiv).

writers, especially as her relationship with other women authors developed. The material exchange of texts and letters with women writers led Brontë to position her work within a distinctly female literary context, even as she continued to argue for the right to be judged as a writer apart from gender. For example, Brontë's ongoing argument with Lewes in 1849 and 1850 coincides with her letters to her editors and to Elizabeth Gaskell, in which she positions her writing among other women writers (Gaskell 322-23). In this correspondence she triangulated her writing with authors like Stowe and Gaskell (Gaskell 405-15).

This literary community was a part of a larger, imagined community that surrounded Brontë and her work; connections between Brontë and her transatlantic audience exceeded the material exchange of texts. According to Seelye's *Jane Eyre's American Daughters* (2005), Brontë's biography was as popular and widely circulated as her first novel (19-21). Through the juxtaposition of the biography and the novel, the author and her heroine frequently collapsed into a mythic figure in the minds of readers and writers. Brontë's audience continued to embrace this myth long after Brontë's death; thus, an imagined community was formed.<sup>135</sup>

Evidence of this imagined community is nowhere more evident than in the letters exchanged between Mary Anne Evans (i.e. George Eliot) and Harriet Beecher Stowe. The relationship between these two writers has been documented and explored in *The Madwoman in the Attic*. However, it has not been explored as a part of the distinctive transatlantic web that evolved around Brontë. In one letter to Evans, Stowe writes about a ghostly visit from Brontë. Stowe claims that Charlotte Brontë came to sit in her kitchen and discuss Emily Brontë's

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<sup>135</sup> Imagined connections between authors and their audience were not uncommon. In *Ruth Hall* (1854), Fanny Ferns' writer heroine, a character constructed from Ferns' experiences, received marriage proposals from ardent readers. However, the imagined transatlantic community surrounding Brontë is distinctive because of the way it functioned to generate a specifically American attachment to the British author.

work.<sup>136</sup> Although Brontë was aware of Stowe's fiction, and apparently Stowe was aware of Brontë's work, there is no evidence that the two authors ever corresponded with each other during their lifetime. Thus, Stowe's claim that Brontë would visit her in her American home after death seems particularly bizarre, unless it is contextualized with an imagined transatlantic community of women writers that coalesced into a distinctive transatlantic microcosm around *Jane Eyre* and its author.

This clairvoyant encounter has been analyzed by several scholars. Miller claims: "This experience can be interpreted as an unconscious expression of the deep-seated emotional need shared by many women writers of the period to identify themselves with a female literary tradition" (98). Clairvoyant connections with Brontë proliferated in the late nineteenth century (Miller 97). What Miller does not note is the extent to which notable clairvoyant contact with Charlotte Brontë was an American phenomenon.<sup>137</sup> There may have been an equal number of British and American clairvoyants claiming to contact Brontë, but the most notable séances are American. This suggests that there was a nationalistic stake in imagined connections between Brontë and her American readership that exceeds the "emotional need" to find a female literary tradition.

Evans' response to Stowe's visit with Brontë's spirit is collected in *The George Eliot Letters*. It demonstrates more than skepticism about the supernatural; Evans particularly questions Brontë's interest in the American Stowe, whom Brontë had never met in person:

*Your experience with the planchette is amazing; but that the words which you found it to have written were dictated by the spirit of Charlotte Brontë is to me*

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<sup>136</sup> Miller recounts this clairvoyant encounter in *The Brontë Myth* (98); Beecher and Bennett also summarize it in *Special Relationships* (3).

<sup>137</sup> American pilgrimages to Haworth and American acquisition of Brontë relics is also distinctive (Miller 99-108). For example, American Charles Hale fetishized Charlotte Brontë's relics; he stole a pane and a piece of wood from her window to create a frame for a picture of the moors surrounding Haworth. He wanted to see the moors as Brontë did in life (Miller 99-101).

(whether rightly or not) so enormously improbable, that I could only accept it if every condition were laid bare, and every other explanation demonstrated to be impossible. If it were another spirit aping Charlotte Brontë – if here and there at rare spots and among people of certain temperament, or even at many spots and among people of all temperaments, tricky spirits are liable to rise as a sort of earth-bubbles.... I must frankly confess I that I have but a feeble interest in these doings.... (208)<sup>138</sup>

Evans' response highlights that Stowe's imagined connection with Brontë was unexpected and distinctive. Evans was surprised by Stowe's belief in a reciprocal relationship between herself and Brontë, not simply the fact that Stowe had participated in a séance. Stowe's clairvoyant conversation with the British author is predicated on the assumption that this affinity is reciprocated by Brontë, an idea that the British Evans finds especially difficult to accept.

As stated previously, American readers identified with both the heroine Jane Eyre and her creator, particularly because these two figures collapsed into a single mythic woman (Seelye 19-21). I would like to suggest that this identification evolved into an imagined relationship through which Brontë and her novel were appropriated by American culture, just as William Shakespeare was lauded as the greatest American playwright in the mid-nineteenth century. According to Lawrence Levine's "William Shakespeare and the American People: A Study in Cultural Transformation" (1984), Shakespeare was the most performed playwright in nineteenth-century American culture (34-36). James Fenimore Cooper called Shakespeare "the great author of America" (Levine 40), suggesting Shakespeare's was more than popular; his work shaped American culture and consciousness. The symbolic rendering of Shakespeare's face on the St. Charles Theater (1843) "depicted Shakespeare in a halo of light being borne aloft on the wings of the American eagle" (Levine 42); the portrait resembles Presidential portraits. This American appropriation of British culture might be called reverse colonization, or what Tamarkin calls "colonial vicariousness" (xxv). I argue that Brontë was another larger-than-life British literary

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<sup>138</sup> "GE to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, Redhill, [24] June 1872."

figure appropriated by the American public, and like Shakespeare, she took on counter-intuitive nationalistic significance for her American audience.

The American appropriation of *Jane Eyre* involved a projection of American values back onto Brontë's British novel, particularly the American Cinderella tale. The American Cinderella tale rose to new heights during the nineteenth century when the rise tale became an important part of Presidential lore. The first Democratic and the first Republican Presidents perpetuated myths about their own rises to power as self-made men. These gendered rise myths became staples of American nationalistic lore.

The rise tale of the self-made man in Alger's fiction has a fairly simple plot: "Alger's fictional heroes started poor and finished rich.... Adventure stories for boys and large pots of gold at the end of the adventure were mere fantasies." (Nackenoff 6) Alger's heroes face a gamut of foils that juxtapose natural and artificial values: "Solid, plain virtues are opposed to fancy and artificial manners and social pretense" (Nackenoff 8). By adhering to these simple, natural virtues, the hero is rewarded with riches and social status. In this way, it resembles the simplified American Cinderella plot. In fact, Nackenoff notes the similarities between Alger's narrative formula and "the conventions of the classic fairy tales" (7).

The self-made man is one aspect or facet of American individualism, specifically generated by the combined influence of emerging capitalism and the political discourses of the young republic. In fact, the self-made man is often figured as a champion of this new sociopolitical order (Nackenoff 34). Furthermore, it is an ideal that American presidents tapped to create their public personas. According to Kenneth Winkle "Abraham Lincoln: Self-Made Man" (2000), the label of the "self-made man" was coined in 1832 by Henry Clay (5). However, the development of the self-made ethic is closely tied to the "Jacksonian Boom" as well as the



distinctly American individualism that flourished in the nineteenth century (Winkle 4); thus, Jackson's association with this American ideal.

In the 1828 election, which Andrew Jackson won against the incumbent John Quincy Adams, Jackson positioned himself as a man of the people who rose from humble beginnings. Jackson and his supporters used Jackson's status as a self-made man to defend Jackson against a wide range of attacks. For example, Adams claims that Jackson's military record and his violent past make him unfit for office. On 29 January 1828, the *Raleigh Register* contained an article describing Jackson's violent threats against a Senator. The "Coffin Handbill" is more explicit; it describes Jackson's execution of militia men during the War of 1812.<sup>139</sup> Jackson does not directly refute these claims; instead, he transforms his military service into a connection with the common man and builds his myth as a self-made man. The "Address of the Republican General Committee of Young Men of the City and County of New York, Friendly to the Election of General Andrew Jackson" (1828) states:

Does [Jackson] belong to a body of men possessing a distinct and different interest from the mass of the community? Happily for our country, such a character is here unknown. Every soldier is a citizen, and every citizen may be said to be a soldier.... And who are the militia but the People themselves? (13)

The speaker goes on to claim that after his military service, Jackson "returned to [his] farm and mingled long since with the mass of citizens" (13), continually emphasizing Jackson's association with the common man.

This speech frequently references Jackson's reliance upon the "support of his fellow-citizens" (14). It is a phrase that reappears throughout Jackson's 1828 campaign and afterwards, including an invitation to a ball in the new president's honor:

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<sup>139</sup> Binns, John. *Some Account of some of the Bloody Deeds of General Jackson*. Circa 1828, Philadelphia. General Negative Collection, North Carolina State Archives.

In honor of the election of our distinguished fellow-citizen General Andrew Jackson, to the Presidency of the United States, you are respectfully invited to attend a ball in Nashville, to be given at Mr. Edwardson's Hotel on the 23rd December (see Appendix D).

By contrast, Adams' elevated social status and cultural refinement were used against him in the 1828 campaign. According to Kerwin Swint's *Mudslingers* (2006), even Adams' private purchase of a billiards table became fodder for derision and proof of his elitist tendencies (219-20). Despite the similar financial and social status of Adams and Jackson by the time of the 1828 campaign, Jackson maintained the persona of a common man in touch with rural farmers and the working classes because of his humble origins.

Jackson's identity as a self-made man continued to grow long after he left office. In fact, Abraham Lincoln comments on Jackson's legacy. He derides the enduring power of Jackson's mythic status as a "man of the people" in his speech to the Senate on 27 July 1848. Lincoln claims that the Democratic Party had run all its presidential races since 1828 on General Jackson's coattails: "Like a horde of hungry ticks you have stuck to the tail of the Hermitage lion to the end of his life; and you are still sticking to it, and drawing a loathsome sustenance from it, after he is dead" (Lincoln 6). Ironically, Lincoln crafts a political persona that resembles Jackson's and endures just as long. In fact, Lincoln epitomizes the 'self-made man' of the mid-nineteenth century through the myth he constructed for himself as a man who rises from the humble beginnings and remains connected to the common citizen despite his rise in status and political power.

In his first campaign for political office, Lincoln began fashioning this myth. His 1860 biographer, John Scripps recorded Lincoln's claim: "I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life" (27). Thus, Lincoln's rise tale resembles Jackson's; although he was campaigning for office, which would raise his social and political status, he claimed that he had

not lost touch with his humble beginnings. Furthermore, by clinging to his identity as a common man, Lincoln modeled the natural values and lack of pretention showcased in Alger's contemporary stories.<sup>140</sup> Although Alger's name has become associated with a young boy who "started poor and finished rich" (Nackenoff 6), his heroes typically end their rise in a modest, middle-class life: "Alger's world is filled with small shopkeepers, mercantile establishments, and white-collar workers. Rarely to the boys attain extraordinary wealth." (Nackenoff 6). This is an image that self-made presidents like Jackson and Lincoln deliberately attempted to cultivate: men who rose through their own efforts but remained connected with the common man.

Winkle summarizes five decades of scholarship the rise and fall of Lincoln's mythic status as a self-made man, stating:

Americans revere Abraham Lincoln as perhaps the nation's quintessential self-made man. His remarkable struggle to overcome humble beginnings and achieve the pinnacle of success remains one of the most cherished themes within the Lincoln legend and, indeed, within all of American history. An astute mythmaker, Lincoln himself nurtured this tradition of humble origins to accentuate his own rise from obscurity to distinction. Throughout his life, Lincoln disparaged his own parentage and childhood rather than romanticizing them. In fact, Lincoln self-consciously grounded his entire political career within the context of a personal triumph over inherited adversity. (1)

However, twentieth- and twenty-first-century historians have challenged the self-made ethic that Lincoln embraced. His family was not wealthy, but neither were they as humble as he portrayed them (Winkle 1-3). For example, in *The Log Cabin Myth* (1984) Edward Pessen dismisses the "log cabin myth" incorporated into Lincoln's personal rise tale (24-25, 91-92). Moreover, Lincoln married into one of the most powerful families in Illinois, which facilitated his success (Winkle 2). Thus, Lincoln's rise resembles a Cinderella rise narrative: he marries into money. However, he constructs the persona of a self-made man for himself instead, downplaying or

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<sup>140</sup> Alger began publishing fiction in the late 1850s, just before Lincoln's campaign for President. Thus, Alger would not have influenced Lincoln's development self-made rise tale, but he was contemporary for Lincoln's national audience during his campaign for the presidency.

ignoring the importance of his wife's political and financial connections. Lincoln's status as a self-made man exaggerated both his success and his personal stakes in his own rise, whereas the American Cinderella tale is more passive.

Several presidents rose from humble beginnings; however, the rise myths that Jackson and Lincoln construct for themselves are particularly meaningful. Jackson was the first candidate from the Democratic Party to be elected president and Lincoln was the first candidate from the Republican Party to be elected president. Thus, Jackson and Lincoln are founding figures in American politics for the current bipartisan system, and their rise tales are incorporated into that founding lore. Furthermore, these presidential rise tales tap into other nationalistic ideologies, like American individualism. The self-made man is the individual who uses personal freedom and self-rule to rise socially and economically. In fact, it may be argued that the self-made ethic in Jackson and Lincoln's presidential myths elide the tensions inherent in American individualism: personal freedom and self-rule vs. communal responsibility. Tocqueville addressed the negative potential of individualism in *Democracy in America* (1835).<sup>141</sup> However, in presidential rise tales, the individual channels that self-interest into becoming a public servant, enabling Americans to embrace the self-made ethic and American individualism as nationalistic ideologies despite the inherent tensions within these systems.

Lincoln's rejection of the Cinderella tale in favor of the self-made-man narrative demonstrates the entrenched gendered bifurcation of the American rise narrative. However, the American Cinderella tale shares the nationalistic stakes invested in its parallel male narrative. Like the self-made man, the American Cinderella fulfills the American rise dream. The *Merriam Webster Dictionary* defines "Cinderella" as "a: one suffering undeserved neglect; b: one

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<sup>141</sup> According to *Blackwell's Encyclopedia of Political Theory* (2010), Tocqueville continues to be an influential writer with contemporary critics (240).

suddenly lifted from obscurity to honor or significance.” This definition stresses the rise tale aspects of Cinderella, which is also prominently featured in the American Cinderellas in popular periodicals such as *Harper’s* and *The Atlantic*. These popular American Cinderella stories for mainstream audiences began appearing in the 1850s. Their publication roughly coincides with the publication of Alger’s rise tales, suggesting that this is not an isolated literary phenomenon.

Furthermore, the rise tale associations of the American Cinderella evolve into a broader cultural metaphor. American allusions to Cinderella emphasize the rise dream. For example, in both U.S. and Canadian sports, Cinderella or “Cinderella story” is a term used to describe a team that exceeds expectations in a tournament. This reference was first used by NBA commentators in 1939 but gained widespread acceptance in sports coverage by 1950 according to the *ESPN College Basketball Encyclopedia* (2009) (28). By contrast, Cinderella is a pejorative term for sports commentators in the United Kingdom (*ESPN* 28). This resonates with the increasingly negative connotations of the term “Cinderella” in the *OED*. After 1896, the usage of this term is primarily negative or critical; Cinderella is “applied allusively to a cinder-woman, scullery-maid, etc.; also, a neglected or despised member, partner, or the like” (*OED Online*). The definition does not reference the rise of this figure; instead, it emphasizes her initial poverty. These negative connotations are emphasized in later nineteenth century British Cinderella illustrations according to Bonnie Cullen’s survey in “For Whom the Shoe Fits: Cinderella in the Hands of Victorian Writers and Illustrators” (2003). For example, later Victorian British illustrators emphasize the deformity of the ugly step-sisters and Cinderella’s godmother is occasionally depicted as a witch (Cullen 63-65). Cinderella herself is used to parody suffragettes and other negative models of womanhood in British culture (Cullen 72-73). This demonstrates the

distinctive American investment in Cinderella as a rise tale as well as the persistence of this cultural idea.

The American Cinderella was particularly attractive to a nineteenth-century audience because it modified the rise tale to fit Victorian gender norms. Although self-made men like Lincoln and Jefferson both minimize aspects of their own rise by claiming that they were still in touch with the common man, they do not attribute their rise to anyone except themselves. Lincoln particularly disregards the aid of his wife and her family's money and connection. By contrast, the American Cinderella is not the sole author of her own success.

The centrality of the Cinderella motif in *Jane Eyre*'s American progeny has already been established. *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables* bookend decades of American Cinderella tales written in response to Brontë's novel. They represent the evolving nationalistic stakes in this fairytale paradigm for mainstream, white American readers. The heroines, Ellen Montgomery and Anne Shirley, develop into larger-than-life cultural ideals of womanhood. They triumph over a series of obstacles, including economic hardship, and they are eventually rewarded with marriage to Prince Charming. However, Ellen and Anne do not achieve success on their own; despite their hard work, both heroines are aided by a series of helpers. This outside aid feminizes the rise of these American Cinderellas, allowing them to overcome obscurity and financial difficulty without the trait of masculine ambition, which is why men like Lincoln rejected this paradigm in favor of the self-made man. Furthermore, the American Cinderella tale confines women's happily-ever-after to the domestic sphere, just as Alger's tales condition white boys to become hard-working members of the relatively unpretentious middle class.<sup>142</sup> Both of

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<sup>142</sup> Nackenoff points out that Alger's heroes are white boys. He does not offer the same rise tale to any nonwhite characters (9).

these paradigms channel the self-rise ethic to socially acceptable ends. Thus, the American Cinderella offers a rise tale that does not threaten established gender hierarchies.

The Cinderella fairytale paradigm also enables American authors to revel in materialism. This is particularly significant for women writers like Warner and Montgomery who were working within the sentimental novel tradition, a genre that generally espoused the ideologies of domesticity and Evangelical Christianity and inherently resisted nationalistic ideologies of individualism and materialism.<sup>143</sup> However, materialism is a staple of the Cinderella tradition, particularly the American Cinderellas examined here. The heroines in “A New Cinderella,” Cinderella – Not A Fairy Tale,” and “A Modern Cinderella” are all concerned with material gain. In fact, the rise of each Cinderella heroine is dependent upon her ability to obtain and manipulate material goods. Moreover, these American Cinderella tales do not apologize for the materialism of the heroines, suggesting the fairytale paradigm allowed writers to elide the expectations of self-denial for sentimental heroines. By incorporating the American Cinderella paradigm into the sentimental narrative tradition, *Jane Eyre*'s American descendants can celebrate the materialism of the self-rise ethic in a culturally acceptable manner.

The cultural influence of these readings in the transatlantic literary microcosm surrounding *Jane Eyre* becomes apparent in twentieth-century critical interpretations of Brontë's novel. The way in which Brontë exerted influence on an ever-widening community of women writers has already been explored in previous chapters. The influence of these writers on each other and interpretations of *Jane Eyre* is not as apparent (and perhaps largely inaccessible). However, it may be argued that recent American critics read *Jane Eyre* through the interpretive lens generated by nineteenth-century American responses. Although *Jane Eyre* does not fit the American Cinderella model, primarily because of her lack of significant external helpers and her

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<sup>143</sup> White makes similar claims (31-32).

beast-like lover, this novel has consistently been read as a Cinderella tale by American critics. The persistence of this interpretation in American scholarship may be explained by the Cinderella tale embedded in American responses to *Jane Eyre*. Novels like *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables* have conditioned American readers to view *Jane Eyre* as another incarnation of the American Cinderella.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar particularly discuss the influence of their own experiences with English literature on their construction of the new women and literature course at Indiana University and the subsequent compilation of Norton's *Women in Literature* anthology. In "*Jane Eyre* and the Secrets of Furious Lovemaking" (1998), Gilbert remembers incorporating novels that had influenced her as a young girl; she states: "in my daily professional life I frequently found myself reflecting with considerable intellectual passion on books that in my personal life I'd lately been exploring more naively [with my nine-year-old daughter]" (352). Placing experience at the center of scholarship opens the door to interrogating American scholarship on *Jane Eyre* as a twentieth-century reader history (Gilbert 353-54). These responses demonstrate that the imagined transatlantic community surrounding *Jane Eyre* has not been entirely lost. While American scholars do not attempt to access Brontë through a clairvoyant, they continue to treat *Jane Eyre* as a purveyor of distinctly American cultural values, even though they do not seem to recognize the nationalistic character of their own interpretations. Although critics have resuscitated *Jane Eyre*'s historical context, due in large part to the extensive number of biographies on Brontë, American scholars persistently view *Jane Eyre*'s fairytale association through a distinctly American lens.

While the national stakes in the rise tale of the self-made man are widely accepted, the nationalistic underpinnings of the parallel rise tale for women are not as apparent to scholars or



the general public.<sup>144</sup> Huang Mei's *Transforming the Cinderella Dream: From Frances Burney to Charlotte Brontë* (1990) attests to the overwhelming national prevalence of Cinderella. Huang frames her text with her personal encounter with Western culture; she recognizes that her American colleagues have a different mythic or legendary background, which she eventually connects with the Cinderella tale:

I joined the Graduate English Program of Rutgers University in 1983, being one of the thousands of Chinese students who have carried on their studies in Western universities after China recently reopened its "door" to the world. Immersed for the first time in a very alien environment, I became increasingly self-conscious about my Chinese mental makeup. I was struck by the overwhelming way that the mythical, legendary, and religious elements have dominated a nation's literary imagination, through people's semi-instinctive choices in such things as vocabulary, image, metaphor, archetype, and narrative pattern. (vii)

After identifying Cinderella as the narrative pattern that dominates the Western literary imagination, Huang notes the flexibility of Cinderella allusions: "[Cinderella is] one of the most convenient tags to categorize a heroine and her 'story'" (1) in Western literature.<sup>145</sup>

Huang discovers that the precise definition of a Cinderella tale is illusive. She highlights the cultural differences between Chinese ATU 510 tales and the Western Cinderella. The archetypal Cinderella in extremely popular Chinese folktales like "The Legend of the White Snake" is powerful, beautiful, and courageous (vii – viii). By contrast, she claims the Western "Cinderella" is an indefinite tale with a relatively weak heroine (vii-xi, 1-3). Frequent allusions to the Cinderella tale in both fiction and criticism assume the reader's prior knowledge of the tale and offer "no further definition of the term 'Cinderella'" (Huang 2). Huang claims that there are

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<sup>144</sup> The persistence of the American Cinderella tale is evident in articles and speeches from the 2012 presidential campaign. It was applied to candidates as well as their political platforms. For example, Richard Michael writes an article about the "Cinderella Presidential Hopefuls" and Michelle Obama reference the Cinderella fairy tale in her speech before the Democratic Convention in September 2012.

<sup>145</sup> Huang claims that Cinderella functions as a complex ideological tool in Western culture: it simultaneously romanticizes female submission (and domination) and it celebrates Protestant individualism (25). I modify Huang's claims about Cinderella: while a wide range of Western texts simultaneously romanticize the subordination of women, they also celebrate Protestant values and champion the individual. American texts particularly codify these values as part of the Cinderella dream.

only two features essential to Western Cinderella tales: a virtuous heroine who is persecuted and a slipper (2). The nebulous nature of Cinderella tales that Huang encounters is what makes this narrative pattern a catch-all for American thought and culture. I argue that Huang applies the indefinite and simplified American Cinderella to her interpretations of Western culture and literature. The Cinderella paradigm she is introduced to at Rutgers University is the American Cinderella identified by Jane Yolen in “American Cinderella” (and discussed in the previous chapter). Thus, Huang’s close reading of British novels may offer greater insights into American fairytale paradigms and traditions than into the British texts she analyzes.

While Huang’s examination of Cinderella is based on her contact with American culture, she does not recognize the distinctly American paradigm at work in Cinderella interpretations of British novels like *Jane Eyre*. Moreover, she is not alone in this oversight. The consistent projection of the American Cinderella onto *Jane Eyre* in scholarship and the cultural motivations behind these readings have gone unanalyzed. I believe they demonstrate a subtle shift in nineteenth-century transatlantic cultural influence. Scholarly readings of *Jane Eyre* as a Cinderella tale are the product of American literary responses to *Jane Eyre* published in the nineteenth century,<sup>146</sup> which consistently reconstruct the American Cinderella tale. The plethora of American responses has influenced American interpretations of the British novel; America’s material influence in transatlantic exchanges, identified by Amanda Claybaugh in *The Novel of Purpose* (2010), eventually becomes cultural influence within the microcosm of *Jane Eyre* and her transatlantic progeny.

The Cinderella interpretation of *Jane Eyre* was first popularized by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in “A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane’s Progress,” from *The Madwoman in*

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<sup>146</sup> The published American literary progeny of *Jane Eyre* are distinct from the unpublished manuscript of Hannah Crafts.

*the Attic* (1979); critics such as John Seelye, Micael Clarke, and Huang have recently contributed to this particular reading.<sup>147</sup> Cinderella interpretations of *Jane Eyre* presume the reader's familiarity with the fairy tale and base their analysis on an indefinite cultural myth.<sup>148</sup> Cinderella readings of *Jane Eyre* generally make several claims: Jane Eyre is a Cinderella character who rises out of poverty, she marries a disgruntled Prince Charming, Rochester, the heroine is aided by a fairy godmother, and the couple lives happily ever after. These readings begin with Jane Eyre's identification as Cinderella. Gilbert and Gubar alternately label her a "sullen" (342), "wailing" (358), and an "outcast Cinderella" (363). They claim that Jane Eyre's humble social status and her passivity are character traits she shares with the typical "Victorian Cinderella" (343), while her assertive actions deviate from her fairytale typology (343). Similarly, Clarke identifies Jane Eyre's menial work and abuse as characteristic of the traditional Cinderella: "Clearly Jane Eyre is the classic Cinderella: poor, despised, and mistreated" (Clarke 698). As Huang points out, the Cinderella is reduced to a virtuous, persecuted heroine. Moreover, this Cinderella is characterized by a simple rise from poverty to wealth. In these interpretations, Jane models the persecuted heroine who may take part in the American female rise tale.<sup>149</sup>

In "Cinderella" readings of the novel, Rochester is identified as a variation of the traditional Prince Charming. Gilbert and Gubar emphasize the presence and role of Prince Charming in *Jane Eyre* (351). They claim that "Cinderella's prince [is] a middle-aged warrior" (351) and identify the parallel fairytale power dynamics: "master/servant, prince/Cinderella"

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<sup>147</sup> According to Lori Lefkowitz in *The Character of Beauty in the Victorian Novel*, the Cinderella reading of *Jane Eyre* was popularized by *Madwoman and the Attic* (152), even though it was previously proposed by Paula Sullivan in "Fairy Tale Elements in *Jane Eyre*" (1978) and Charles Burkhart in *Charlotte Brontë: A Psychosexual Study of Her Novels* (1973). Similarly, Huang, Seelye, and Clarke all reference the foundational work of Gilbert and Gubar in their Cinderella readings.

<sup>148</sup> Huang makes similar observations about the indistinct Western Cinderella tale.

<sup>149</sup> In "*Jane Eyre* and the Secrets of Furious Lovemaking" (1998), Gilbert remembers "devouring nineteenth-century novels, especially such female-authored standards" (351). Thus, Gilbert and Gubar most probably grew up with *Jane Eyre*'s American progeny, including (but not limited to) novels like *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables*.

(368). Seelye characterizes him as the “master” (75) Prince Charming, claiming that he appears in three of Brontë’s novels: *The Professor* (Seelye 74), *Jane Eyre* (75), and *Villette* (75). Clarke also claims that Rochester is a version of Prince Charming: “Like Cinderella, Jane Eyre runs away from the too-powerful prince” (705). Identifying Rochester as Prince Charming rather than a Beast who must be rehumanized transforms the reader’s perception of Jane’s agency. Rochester becomes a prize and an ideal reward rather than a character who needs Jane as much or more than she needs him. This interpretive shift aligns *Jane Eyre* with her American progeny, particularly *The Wide, Wide World* with its domineering Prince Charming.

Jane Eyre’s family structure is interpreted as another Cinderella motif, with Mrs. Reed as the wicked stepmother (Seelye 24; Huang 105-106). Clarke analyzes how all the female members of the Reed family represent different female complexes that resonate with the archetypal women in the Grimms’ “Aschenputtel” (704-05). Gilbert and Gubar connect the Cinderella familial dynamics in *Jane Eyre* with those in other Victorian novels, arguing that *Jane Eyre* is a part of a Victorian Cinderella tradition (343). These Victorian associations are not only anachronistic for the pre-Victorian fairy lore and fairytale traditions that informed Brontë in the isolated Haworth parsonage, they also elide the nationalistic stakes in these critical readings. By classifying *Jane Eyre* as a Victorian Cinderella tale, these critics imply that the Cinderella tradition in their interpretations is a universal Victorian tradition rather than a distinctly Americanized version.

Finally, the fairy godmother figure frequently identified in Cinderella interpretations of the novel is Miss Maria Temple (Seelye 24; Gilbert and Gubar 345). It is significant that these scholars refer to this figure as the “fairy godmother” rather than the dead mother or supernatural helper who traditionally aids the heroine of an ATU 510 tale. Furthermore, identifying the fairy

godmother necessarily demonstrates the passivity and weakness of the Cinderella figure in these readings. For example, Gilbert and Gubar contrast the power of Miss Temple with the frustration of the heroine (345). Seelye also highlights Jane's dependence on Miss Temple (24). This is a relatively forced interpretation; neither Miss Temple nor any of the other characters fulfill the supernatural helper motif of the traditional ATU 510 because they do not enable Jane's romance or marriage. In fact, Miss Temple leaves Jane's life before Jane meets Mr. Rochester; this interpretation of her as a fairy godmother or any sort of traditional ATU 510 helper simply does not fit. By emphasizing Jane's dependence upon a fairy godmother, American critics attempt to constrain Brontë's novel using the relatively passive American Cinderella paradigm, although these critics fail to recognize the national bias in this interpretation. This resonates with the feminizing narrative that Gaskell constructed for *Jane Eyre's* creator, Brontë.

Although Seelye mentions the maternal ghosts in *Jane Eyre* (88), and Gilbert and Gubar identify the sisters in Moor House as embodiments of the "Great Mother" (364), only Clarke actually analyzes the dead mother as an important archetype in the traditional Cinderella tale (697-98). All other Cinderella interpretations of *Jane Eyre* privilege Perrault's tale, which centers on the fairy godmother rather than a dead mother as the heroine's supernatural helper. Clarke argues that *Jane Eyre* reflects the dual image of motherhood in the Grimms' fairy tale; this provides the novel with a complex message about femininity (703). Like the fairy godmother, the figure of the dead mother ultimately functions as a character who limits the power of the heroine in Cinderella readings of *Jane Eyre*. However, the prevalence of fairy godmothers rather than returning dead mothers in critical interpretations suggests a distinctly

American bias. Although Ellen in *The Wide, Wide World* is aided by various symbolic reincarnations of her mother, American Cinderella tales favor fairy godmothers.<sup>150</sup>

Cinderella interpretations primarily rely on the identification of characters, but other motifs are also included. For example, the rise-tale sequence of Cinderella is assumed to be present, but it is not analyzed. Seelye alludes to this convention in his “Introduction;” it is one of the reasons he classifies *Jane Eyre* as a 510 tale type:

For one thing, [*Jane Eyre* was]... dependent in part on patterns adapted from the fairytales that had been the author’s favorite reading as a child.... Chief among those tales was the story of Cinderella, with its marvelous transformations leading to marriage with a prince and the privileged life that rank and wealth can bring, a plot attractive to young women on the threshold of marriage themselves. (Seelye 9)

While Seelye implies that Cinderella was Brontë’s favorite fairy tale, he offers no evidence for this claim. His assumptions about the author’s preference for this story are based upon his reading of *Jane Eyre* as a Cinderella narrative. Once again, this demonstrates a desire to force *Jane Eyre* into a Cinderella reading. Clarke and Gilbert and Gubar also imply that the heroine’s acquisition of wealth and social status is a significant Cinderella trope (Clarke 697; Gilbert and Gubar 369-71). The rise tale remains a vague assumption in these interpretations, attempting to force *Jane Eyre* into the simplified rise of the American Cinderella. Critics’ failure to recognize that the simple rise tale is distinctly American suggests they are not aware they are working within a specific American tradition.

The happy ending of *Jane Eyre* is interpreted as another Cinderella motif in the novel. Seelye states: “So everyone will live happily ever after, and is that not how fairy stories are supposed to end?” (Seelye 61). He also claims that the novel concludes with the happy service of Eros (88). Gilbert and Gubar argue that the happy ending is not only a fairytale motif, but a

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<sup>150</sup> This may also suggest that critical readings of *Jane Eyre* as a Cinderella tale have been influenced by Walt Disney’s *Cinderella* and its lovable fairy godmother.

message of hope: “This, she says – this marriage of true minds at Ferndean – this is the way.... It is at least an emblem of hope. Certainly Charlotte Brontë was never again to indulge in quite such an optimistic imagining.” (Gilbert and Gubar 371). Clarke argues that Cinderella generates the happy ending of *Jane Eyre* through a fusion of traditional domestic and mythic themes: “An examination of Brontë’s use of the Cinderella tale in *Jane Eyre* points to the latter conclusion: *Jane Eyre* fuses the domestic to the mythical” (695). While the meaning of the happy ending varies in the different analyses, the significance of the ending as a fairytale motif remains constant. Moreover, all of these scholars imply that this happy ending is a weakness – it demonstrates the limited power of the fairytale tradition in the novel.<sup>151</sup>

These scholars not only presume that *Jane Eyre* has Cinderella motifs, they claim that Cinderella is the primary fairytale narrative in the novel. Although they make a single allusion to “Red Riding Hood” (Gilbert and Gubar 344) and mention the “mythic Bluebeard” (354), they do not refer to any other fairy tales. Seelye also makes repeated assertions that *Jane Eyre* is a Cinderella tale (23, 49, 65) and that this tale is “chief” (Seelye 9) among the fairytale patterns Brontë used. Clarke recognizes a wider range of fairytale and folklore influences in her article, but she only examines the importance of the specific connection with the Grimms’ “Aschenputtel” (695).<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> See Gilbert and Gubar 371, Seelye 88, and Clarke 707. Seelye’s Cinderella interpretation of *Jane Eyre* is distinct because he explores the possibility of a variation which he refers to as the “Catsfur” or “Donkeyskin” reading – he analyzes *Jane Eyre* as an incestuous Cinderella tale (10, 25). Seelye supports his interpretation with biographical explanations, claiming that Charlotte Brontë’s feelings for her cold father Patrick and her fiery brother Branwell were conflicted (26). He further argues that her romantic interest in Professor Heger is another manifestation of her incestuous desires (72). For Seelye, the love between the young Jane Eyre and the older Rochester reflects the “deeply private perverseness” (66) of the traditional ATU 510B tale. Seelye states that even Rochester’s mutilation is a variation of an ATU 510B motif where the Cinderella figure is physically disfigured because of her father’s desire for her (34).

<sup>152</sup> Aschenputtel is literally translated: ash girl. It is the title of the Cinderella tale in the Grimms’ *Kinderhausmädchen*.

Scholarly blindness to the significance of other prominent fairy tale and fairy lore traditions within *Jane Eyre* demonstrates the enduring power of the American Cinderella paradigm in American interpretations of this novel. These interpretations originated in nineteenth-century responses to Brontë's novel. Furthermore, it may be inferred that the Cinderella paradigm associated with *Jane Eyre* continues to have nationalistic and emotional significance for American scholars. Otherwise, fairytale readings of *Jane Eyre* would not struggle to confine the novel to a simplified Cinderella tale; instead, scholars would look for the rich range of fairytale motifs that Brontë actually embraces. Insistence upon Cinderella readings suggests the scholars are being influenced by something besides the text alone. While the myth of the self-made man can be associated with historical figures like Jackson and Lincoln, the Cinderella paradigm does not have notable cultural examples. Perhaps because it is not a myth that an individual can easily construct for herself: it requires more than hard work – it requires external helpers and a Prince Charming. The mythic status of *Jane Eyre* and Brontë, demonstrated by Miller, may partially explain why scholars have tried to hang the American Cinderella paradigm on this work.

Brontë fashioned a heroic female *bildungsroman* and infused it with regional folklore and fairy lore, which created a story for women that had both mythic and nationalistic significance. This novel became a template and inspired responses across the transatlantic world. *Jane Eyre*'s literary progeny attempt to reproduce the novel's larger-than-life heroine with varying degrees of nationalistic resonance. However, American readers were not content with simply responding to Brontë's novel; they attempted to appropriate it, projecting American paradigms onto the novel. Furthermore, the underlying assumption behind this appropriation is that of a reciprocal relationship between Brontë and her American readers, expressed explicitly in Stowe's popular



clairvoyant encounter with the British author. However, Brontë's novel did have significant, if unintentional, cultural resonance for American readers. The regionalism of *Jane Eyre* resembles American regionalism, which has been associated with the rise of American individualism. The heroic female *bildungsroman* with its strong fairytale associations was particularly attractive to an American audience conditioned by the self-rise ethic of founding national myths and popular fiction, a national myth that has strong fairytale undertones. Furthermore, Gaskell's deliberate feminization of Brontë's life merged with the novel in the American imagination, so *Jane Eyre* had the potential to be a more feminized narrative, fulfilling the American need for a female rise tale.

The responses of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Hannah Crafts particularly demonstrate the limits of American readings; neither Barrett Browning nor Crafts include a Cinderella paradigm in their respective texts. This is particularly apparent in Crafts's *The Bondswoman's Narrative*, which recognizes the white, middle-class stakes in the Cinderella paradigm. Her novel demonstrates that the white fairy tale in the United States rests upon exploitation of nonwhite labor. While Crafts responds to the heroic female *bildungsroman*, she does not share the fairytale expectations of her white counterparts, which are a social impossibility for a nonwhite woman. In fact, Crafts challenges these Cinderella narratives with insights that anticipate post-colonial criticism.

These critical interpretations of *Jane Eyre* demonstrate that American readers project the American Cinderella paradigm onto Brontë's novel. Attempts to force *Jane Eyre* into the model set by her American progeny suggests that American readers continue to assume, perhaps unconsciously, an affinity between Brontë and American writers and their novels like *The Wide, Wide World* and *Anne of Green Gables*. Thus, it may be argued that the imagined transatlantic

community surrounding *Jane Eyre* still influences the American cultural imagination. Moreover, the need to have American values validated by Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is significant. It is not enough for American readers to have the Cinderella paradigm perpetuated in American literature, they must confirm its presence at the center of the transatlantic microcosm. *Jane Eyre* resembles the presidential portrait of Shakespeare at St. Charles Theater, positioned at the center of a distinctly American cultural institution.

This American cultural investment in *Jane Eyre* demands an expanded transatlantic paradigm. The extensive circulation of *Jane Eyre* and Brontë's nineteenth-century biographies materially facilitated the novel's broad transatlantic audience. This audience responded with a plethora of Cinderella-centered responses, conditioning American readers and critics to interpret *Jane Eyre* as a Cinderella tale. Thus, the material influence of nineteenth-century American publishing houses and readers is transformed into cultural influence in critical interpretations of *Jane Eyre*.

While the cultural allure of an imagined England may be part of American investment in *Jane Eyre*, this novel also fills a perceived cultural gap. The nationalistic narrative of the self-made man was validated by the myths of Jackson and Lincoln. The corresponding American Cinderella tale lacked a significant or popular embodiment. The American Cinderella was a figure that existed only in fiction. Unlike the myth of the self-made man, which could be constructed by downplaying the role that others played in an individual's social and economic rise, the American Cinderella demands a series of external helpers as well as the existence of a Prince Charming. A woman could not simply construct this myth for herself; it had to be facilitated by a range of ideal helpers as well as an ideal husband. However, the combined mythic status of Brontë and her heroine, Jane Eyre, presented an opportunity for Americans to

attach an attractive Cinderella paradigm to a prestigious figure. Thus *Jane Eyre* was appropriated by nineteenth-century American readers, and it is a legacy that continues to have cultural and critical resonance.

## APPENDIX A

Transcript of "Cinderella – Not A Fairy Tale" *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (1856):12.70.

501- 507. *Web*. Retrieved from Library of Congress database *The Nineteenth Century In Print* 20

February 2013.

CINDERELLA. NOT A FAIRY TALE. IT was an artists studio; not a very extensive or elegant one, for our artist, like the mass of his brethren, had no superabundance of this worlds goods. His studio was very much like a hundred others a long, narrow room, with a broad window at one end, and a skylight above; a crimson carpet, something faded, on the floor, a few chairs and couches of the same soft color; and the usual quantum of sketches, studies, and unframed pictures on the walls, and half-finished paintings on the easels. It differed from most artists studios in this thing, though that every where throughout the length and breadth of the room you saw the evidences of a womans neatness and taste. There was no dust upon the loose piles of drawings, no cobwebs clinging to the few busts and statuettes that ornamented the room; and though books and papers and sketches seemed to lie around in picturesque carelessness, there was, nevertheless, a method in their very disarrangement. It was very evident that no clumsy janitor, or porter, had the care of that room; but a womans hand and not an Irish Biddys either gave to it its aspect of bright, cheerful neatness and comfort. For an undeniable proof; not very far from the easel sat a pretty little sewing-chair, and a footstool covered with fanciful embroidery beside it; moreover, a small foot, dressed in the neatest of slippers, was at that very time crushing down the worsted roses and hearts-ease of the little ottoman; and in the chair sat just the tidiest, bonniest little lady-housekeeper that ever flourished a duster or jingled a bunch of keys. Such bright, cheerful brown eyes she had, such neatly-arranged, shining brown hair, such a clear, healthful complexion and rosy smiling lips! That bright face and trim little figure made a picture in themselves not out of place in the artists studio; and so he seemed to think himself as he turned round from his easel and watched her silently for a moment. Her hands were busy with some sort of white work, not whiter, though, than the swift little fingers flying over it, and her head bent slightly, caught the sunshine on her smooth hair. She was a pretty little picture, pleasant to look at, and yet not what the artist wanted,

after all. Maggie, he exclaimed, suddenly, as he arrived at this conclusion, I want a model Do you? Maggie looked up saucily; well, if you want a model of a good housekeeper, a neat seamstress, and the best sister in the world, you wouldnt far to look, brother Willie! Im at your service. Hold your tongue, Vanity! the young man answered. Ive looked for such a model till I despair of finding it, and now Im looking for just her wouldnt Cinderella. That stupid Cinderella! You wouldnt got at that again? Maggie exclaimed. Talk about a womans fickleness I wonder how many times youve said first you would, and then you wouldnt finish that picture! Oh, you immaculate lords of creation! Dont be saucy, Maggie; its constant association with you, I suppose, that makes me unstable in all my ways. But now Im quite determined to finish this Cinderella that is, if I can find a model for my heroine. Thats the only reason why I wouldnt finished it long ago I cant find or invent a face that pleases me for her. Why, wont I do? Maggie asked demurely. You nonsense! Youre altogether too happy and contented-looking, and entirely too well dressed. But I have a dress equal to any thing Cinderella ever wore, and I could put you on the most miserable face in the world! Maggie said, laughing. I think I see you! her brother answered. No, Miss Maggie, Ill paint you for a little Mabel in the woods Look only, said another, At her little gown of blue, At the kerchief pinned about her head, And her tiny little shoe! But I must look farther for my Cinderella. She must have a cloud of golden curls no such smooth, brown braids as yours and tender violet eyes, sorrowful and wistful, yet with a childish eagerness in them. Figure, half a woman half a child; face, a dream of tender, saddened, sorrowful loveliness. Hear the President of the National Academy! Maggie cried gaily. Was ever such

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Cinderella pictured? My most eloquent and

poetical President, success to your search for her!

Im going to look for her now, said the artist. Good-by, Miss Maggie, and have my pallet all ready for me when I come back with her.

Mr. Wilson-Barstow, Prospective President of the National Academy, as Maggie saucily styled him, donned his hat and warm over-coats he spoke, and feeling comfortably protected against the sharp north wind that was careering about the streetspeeping under thin shawls, and searching shabby, out-at-elbow great-coats, for a good place to bitestarted out for a walk. He had no particular object in view, unless exercise, maybe; but he felt too idle to paint that morning, and had, besides, a sort of romantic idea of hunting up a Cinderella for his favorite picture. It was one begun a long time ago a simple thing, Cinderella, and her god-mother fitting her up for the ball. But the artist had made it a sort of pet for his leisure hours, painting on it at intervals only, and laying it aside as often as duty or fancy led to something else. It was finished now, all but the figure of the heroine, and this had been painted in and painted out a number of times, for he never could satisfy himself with his labor. I-Ic could not give expression to his idea, and nowhere could he see such a face as he wanted.

Maggie made great fun of the Cinderella, and his high-flown ideas, as she called them, about it. She called him foolish to care so much for such a baby-picture, and in her heart thought it a shame that he should waste his geniuswhich Maggie, proud little woman! Considered unrivaled upon any thing so silly as a fairy tale. But Wilson Barstow, true and earnest artist though he was, was not at all ashamed of using his pencil in illustration of the sweet old story; and he knew that could he finish his own picture according to his original concdption, it would be, if one of the simplest, nevertheless one of the most graceful and charming that he had ever created.

He drew his coat closely up about his ears as he trod briskly over the snowy pavement; for that keen north wind was most impertinently curious, and if fingers or ears chanced to be uncovered, or a bit of neck or throat unprotected by the wrappings, he was sure to be prying around them with his frosty stinging breath. Our artist had no mind to make further acquaintance with the inquisitive blusterer, so he strode along with hands buried in the deep

pockets of his coat, and its spacious collar muffling throat and ears, pitying heartily, as he enjoyed the comfort of his own warm garments, every one else less fortunate than himself. – And of these he saw enough; one need not go far in the streets of New York of a winters day to look for unfortunates. They stand at every corner, cold, hungry, and miserable; and we pass them by crying, God pity them I when if we would but pity them more ourselves there would be little need for such a prayer. But Wilson Barstow was not one of that stamp, and though he had no more dollars than artists usually have, his hands came out of his pockets more than once that morning in answer to some sorrowful plea for charity.

He had almost forgotten his picture in other thoughts wakened by the sight of the want and suffering round him, and was wandering on in altogether too abstracted a manner for a busy city-street, pondering vaguely some grand plan for making all these poor wretches comfortable and happy. In the midst of his reveries he was suddenly interrupted by finding himself coming in collision with somebody else apparently as self-absorbed as himself. It was a young girl, and a very fair one toothe artist saw that in his hasty glimpse of her face as she hurried on, blushing at his apologies for the accident. He turned round involuntarily to look after her, for that one glance made him want to see more. She was hurrying on at a quick pace, and suddenly obeying an impulse, which he did not stop to define, Wilson fors9ok his own course, and followed after the girl. She was very plainly, even scantily dressed for the severity of the weather; her clean-looking but too thin shawl seemed more suitable for an April day than for mid-winter, and her dress, of some cotton fabric, did not at all answer Wilsons ideas of warmth and comfort.

So young and girlish-looking she was too, her figure so slender and delicate; and the wind, as it met her, rudely blew backward from her face a cluster of soft bright curls of the very golden hue that the artist wished for his picture. My Cinderella I was the thought that flashed into his mind, as his quick eye caught the glitter of the golden curls before they were hastily drawn back again and prisoned under the coarse straw bonnet. And with a new interest he continued to follow her, wondering who and what she was, and what was the object of her cold walk; and wishing he could get a closer view of the face, that oiie glimpse of which had so fascinated him. So he followed her for many a square down

the long busy thoroughfare; she keeping the same swift pace, never turning or stopping, and Wilson laughing at himself for his eager pursuit of a stranger. I wonder what Maggie would say, he thought; how she would laugh at me for following a poor shop-girl in the street! No matter though, the girl really has beautiful hair, and I am curious to see where she goes. I hope she will come to a terminus pretty soon, though, for being a lazy man, this sort of walking is rather too exciting!

Perhaps she divined Mr. –Wilson Barstow's wishes, for just at this point of his soliloquy the young girl paused before the door of a large clothing establishment, and went in. Wilson waited a minute or two outside, and then followed her in, apologizing to himself for his impertinence by suddenly feeling the need of a new vest, or cravat, or something else, he 175ouldn

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exactly know what. And so while he stood turning over indiscriminate articles and pretending to be very hard to please, his eyes were in reality covertly searching the room for the young girl. She had vanished into private regions, but the young man determined to wait for her reappearance, even at the risk of being considered a very troublesome customer. It was not long, however, before she came forward again to the front of the store, and the artist had a full view of a fair young face, as delicate and lovely as any his own imagination had ever pictured to him. A pure, wild-rose complexion, wavy tresses of soft golden-brown hair, large liquid eyes so heavily fringed that you scarce could guess their color, made up a face of such rare beauty that our artist almost forgot his gentlemanly politeness in his long and eager gaze.

She never saw him, however she was paying. More heed to her employers words than any strangers looks; and Wilson Barstow stood near enough to them both to hear those words, and mark the effect they produced: I am very sorry, the merchant was saying, very sorry indeed, Miss Haven, but we are obliged to do it. The times are so hard, and we have so large a quantity of stock on hand, that we must part with some of our work-people. We must make a reduction in our expenses, or give up the business. But I hope you will not be

long out of employment, and if I hear of any thing promising I will certainly let you know. Good morning, Miss.

The merchant's words and manner were not only respectful, but really kind and 175ouldn't 175d-inc~: Wilson –B arstow felt as if he should have knocked him down on the spot had they been otherwise, for the look of mute despair that settled upon the listener's features stirred a host of passionate emotions in his bosom. Very pale the young face grew, and the drooping lashes fell still lower, as if to hide fast-gathering tears, while she heard the words that shut her out from her only means of subsistence; and the merchant himself, accustomed as he was to such things, hurried away from her, unable to bear the sight of that girlish face in its sad despair.

So she left the store without a word; and the artist, hastily paying for something which he did not want, followed speedily after her, now determined never to leave the pursuit till he knew more about the young girl whose sorrow, as well as her beauty and delicacy, so excited his interest and compassion. It was a long walk, through side streets and narrow alleys, where the snow lay in huge dirty piles, and the wind swept sharply by, as if mocking the poverty and desolation in its way. But the artist followed on, with an earnest purpose, wherever the young girl went. He kept a little distance back, that she might not know herself followed, and feel alarmed; but she never looked behind her, and unnoticed he was able to watch her till he saw her enter the house which seemed to be her home. It was an humble little two-story house, with a poverty-stricken look and yet a sort of respectability too. Wilson fancied it a cheap boarding-house, for there was a bit of paper with Rooms to Let stuck upon the door. For the moment he felt tempted to go in, on a plea of looking at the rooms, and so perhaps have another view of the girl; but a better plan occurred to him suddenly, and he hurried off again in a homeward line, to put it in speedy operation.

Well, brother Willie, wheres the Cinderella? Maggie asked gayly, flourishing pallet and paint-brushes before her brother as he entered the studio. I've prepared an extra quantity of cerulean blue for you; for if you paint her from life this cold day, she will infallibly have a blue nose as well as blue eyes

Quit your nonsense, Maggie! was her brother's complimentary answer, and go put on your bonnet and cloak. I want you to take

a walk with me.

Now? This cold day, Willie? What ever do you want of me

To take a walk with m~e, I told you.

But where? To find a Cinderella ?

No, only to call on her. Ive already found her for myself.

What nonsense, brother Willie! Youre not in earnest, Maggie exclaimed, puzzled, yet half convinced by her brothers gravity. But he answered, quite seriously,

I never was more so, Maggie; run and get ready, and Ill tell you all about it. So Maggie knew he meant to be minded, and hurried up stairs to make swift work of her dressing. She appeared again in a few minutes, all ready, and found herself in the street with Wilson presently, without having any sort of idea of where she was to go or what to do.

Youre so ridiculous, Willie I she said, half pettishly. Why 176ouldn't you tell me about it without starting me off in this harum-scarum fashion? I declare Im not half dressed, and if Im to call on a lady I wonder what shell think of me

I 176ould think shell 176ouldn't176 your dress, Maggie, any way, Wilson answered, smiling, as he looked down at his sisters handsome cloak and furs and fine merino dress. Shes no grand lady; only a poor shop-girl out of employment, and I want you to give her some work to do.

Then we might as well go home again, if thats all, said Maggie, half crossly. Thats just such a foolish errand as one might expect from you, Willie! Where in the world am I to find work for a shop-girl out of employment, when I 176ouldn' enough to keep myself busy ?

Can she make me some shirts, or something ?

Yes, of course, if you expect to live as long as the Patriarchs! For you are the possessor of more now than you can wear out in an ordinary lifethanks to my industry

Then I wish von were- not so ridiculon ly

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Industrious, Wilson said, laughing; for we Dont scold, Willie, I know I kept you an must find some work for this girl. Just listen abominable time, she exclaimed, eagerly; but to me, Maggie. I 176ouldn't help it indeed. She is

perfectly

And so he went on to tell her the whole story charming, Willie; I never sow any body so of his walk that morning, of his meeting the lovely; and oh, I cried so when she told me all young girl, the little scene at the clothing-store, the trouble she has had I

and his following her to her home. Maggie Maggies face was all in a glow, and her listened with interest, and though she laughed brown eye-lashes were wet still with her tears.

At Wilsons enthusiastic description of her beau-Wilson forgot his impatience in his eagerness ty, and called him disinterested champion of to hear her story, and Maggie went on:

unprotected females, her womans sympathy Well, shes a lady, Willie, every bit of her!

Wa~ excited, and she was as eager as her brother Any hody might know that who only looked at to carry help and comfort to the young stranger, her. I never saw such an exquisite face; and only

Ill see what I can do, Willie, she said, to think of her having to sew in a shop to sup- thoughtfully. Youve a great way of tearing port herself! She never shall again, I declare, up your shirts for paint-rags, you know, and and I almost told her so. If nothing better perhaps she might as well make you some for than that can be found for Elsie haven to do, that special purpose. She shall stay at our house and do nothing

You may thank your bonnet for saving Is that her nameElsie Haven ? Wilson your ears, sauce-box I Wilson answered ,gayly; asked.

They would surely get pulled if they were not Yes; 176ould it sweet? It just suits her

so well covered. But here we are nowthis is though. She told me all about herself. I got the very house. You go in, Maggie, and Ill walk so interested from the first that I made her tell about outside till you finish your business. Me every thing, and so the time slipped by be-

Well, but what am I to do? I 176ould at all fore I knew it.

Know, Maggie asked. This is a foolish er- It 176ouldn get along so fast for me ! said rand, after all, Willie. Wilson; but go on and tell me. What did

Dont make it so by talking nonsense, Mag- she have to say for herself?

Gie. What you are to do is to ring the bell in Well, it 176ould such a very long story after all, the first place, and ask for Miss HavenI heard but pitiful enough. She was an orphan, and her her name, fortunately. Then, Miss Haven hay-

brother took care of her just as you take care  
 lug appeared, ask her if she will please to con- of me,  
 Willie, and supported them both by  
 sider herself engaged for an indefinite time at writing  
 for the magazines. He published a  
 No. 20 Blank Street, to make paint-rags and volume  
 of poems too, but they did not sell;  
 pillow-cases for Miss Barstow and then he had to  
 work so hard, and sit up

And Ginderellas for Air. Barstow ! Mag- so late at  
 night, to pay for the printing of them,  
 gie retorted. Till at last he grew blind! Then they had  
 a

Exactly; thats the whole performance! Terrible time;  
 he was ill for so long, and not

Go ahead, Maggie ! And Wilson Barstow able to do  
 any thing at all, and all their money  
 pulled the rickety old bell for his sister, then melted  
 away, and they got in debt for board  
 ran down the steps again, and commenced his and  
 medicine and every thing and in the midst  
 promenade up and down the narrow pavement, of it  
 all her brother died. Since then she has

He saw the door opened, and his sister admit- been  
 quite alone in the world she says; for she  
 ted; but he took many a tarn backward and has  
 neither friends nor relatives to care for her;  
 forward before the little boarding-house, and and it  
 almost broke my heart to hear her tell  
 grew as impatient as so good-natured a person all the  
 bitter struggles she has had for one long  
 could, before that door was opened again to let year  
 to earn an honest livelihood. With no  
 her out, money and no protectorsher very beauty and

What in the world can she be thinking of refinement  
 making her more liable to insult  
 to keep me here in the cold such an outrageous and  
 hardship just imagine, Willie, all she  
 time ? he exclaimed testily, as for the seventh mnst  
 have suffered !

time he passed the door without seeing Maggie. He  
 could imagine it, better perhaps than Mag-  
 Upois my word, she must have found Miss gie even;  
 and she knew by his quick grasp of  
 Haven an interesting companion; but I 177ould her  
 hand, and sudden close drawing of her to  
 know that she need forget my existence en- his side,  
 as if to shield her from the bare idea of  
 tirely. Such a fate, how keen were the interest and sym-

He had half a mind to ring the bell and in- pathy  
 excited in his mind. But he only said,  
 quire for her, when the door opened at last, and Poor  
 child ! and Maggie went on:  
 little Maggie appeared. Miss Haven came out Ive  
 engaged her to come to us to-morrow

with her, and Wilson at a little distance saw the  
 forjust as you said, Williean indefinite time.

Two girls shaking hands as warmly as if they had I  
 told her to give up her room at her boarding-  
 known each other always. Be sure to come house,  
 and not trouble herself to look out for  
 to-morrow, he heard Maggie say; and I will, another  
 just yet. Some people would say it  
 indeed, was answered in a sweet, womanly was an  
 imprudent thing to do, to take a stran-  
 voice. Then the door was shut, and his sister ger into  
 the family so; I would have said so  
 ran down to meet him. Myself yesterday; but I can  
 not look into that

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girls face and doubt her, to save my life. So  
 I know I am right.

Of course you are ! was her brothers hearty  
 comment, as you always are when you follow  
 the lead of your own little heart. PoQr child!  
 She will not be desolate any longer if she wins  
 yon for a sister, Maggie.

For a sister! Pretty good, Willie ! Mag-  
 gie cried, saucily. But I 177ouldn promise so  
 far as that. Thats a relationship that can only  
 be established by your agency !

Pshaw! 177ould be a goose, child, Wilson  
 answered hastily; hut the color mounted up to  
 his brown cheek nevertheless, for he was boy  
 enough for blushes still. Did you say any  
 thing about the Cinderella ?

Cinderella! Nonsense! Of course I 177ouldn.  
 Do you suppose I had nothing else to talk about  
 but you and your baby pictures ?

They had reached the door of their own  
 house, and Maggie ran in hastily and sprang  
 up stairs to escape from her brother as she  
 flung out this saucy speech. He shook his  
 hand at her with a promise to pay her for  
 that ; but Maggie laughed as she thought of  
 the fib she had told him. For she hod told the  
 young stranger the whole history of the Cinder-  
 ella, and how through the thought of it her  
 brother had first been led to notice herself in  
 the streetenlarging, in a sisterly way, as she  
 told her story, upon that brothers manifold per-  
 fections. She had smiled inly as she watched  
 the wild rose on Elsie's cheek flush into a proper  
 carnation when she told her bow the artist had  
 followed her so eagerly, and how vivid an im-  
 pression her delicate beauty had made upon  
 him. And in her own heart she thought as



she gazed upon the fair young faceso sweet an index of the pure soul withinthat she would be glad if that impression were deepened sato an emotion which should last forever. So fully had Maggies impulsive little heart been won! Certainly they were not worldly-wise people, this hero and heroine of mine; and doubtless more than one of my readers have set them down as of the Simpleton family. However, for my part I am glad this same family is not altogether extinct yet!

A stream of sunshine, brighter tha old \ inter shows every day, poured in at the broad window of Wilsons studio next morning, lighting up with a special glow the picture on the easel. The shrewd, Pswlcish face of the little godmother with her pretty fantastic dress; the huge pumpkin-coach, with its steeds and out-riders of rats and mice; the interior of the rude 178ouldn' picture by itself in its graphic detail of domestic lifeall stood out vividly in the strong light. There was but one thing wanting to its perfection; and the Cinderella that should have been in the picture seemed unaccountably to have stepped out of it, and to be standing before it now. Maggie herself could not but confess, as she looked at Elsie standing in the sunlight, her golden hair dropping in soft clusters over her cheeks, and her face lighted now with a look of eagerness and interest as she gazed at the charming picture, that she was the very ideal that her brother wanted.

And Elsie herself was persuaded to think so, through Maggies strong representations; for the young girls shyness needed a deal of such urging before she gave consent to sit as a model before the artist. It was hard to get her to look up when she should, and assume the proper expression of eagerness, half-childish, half-womanly, which Cinderella may be supposed to have worn, watching the preparations for that dearly anticipated ball. The long sunny fringes would droop over those shy eyes of hers, and the bashful color burn in her cheeks, whenever she encountered Wilsons gaze; and as, of course, he was obliged to look at her often enoughelse how could he paint her ?you may imagine that the picture made slow progress to completion. Maggie laughed to herself as, day after day, she saw how few touches had been added to the Cinderella, while nevertheless the sittings were by no means shortened; she laughed to herself whenbeing called out of the studio sometimes for household dutiesshe would come back and find Wilsons

pallet laid aside entirely, and he turned round from his painting, neglecting it altogether, while he talked animatedly with Miss Elsie. True, her work was not put by; her fingers flew up and down the seams as rapidly as ever, and she did not make much answer to any thing the artist said. But Maggie noted the signs of the times in the glow of pleasure that would so often steal over her fair face, and the light that flashed and softened so gloriously in her eyes sometimesa light born of emotions which the girl herself had not yet begun to recognize.

Maggie laughed, but she kept all her merri-ment to herself. She would not interfere to mar what her womans eyes told her well enough needed no help from her. She did not even say one saucy thing to Wilson, and for this self-control we must give her infinite credit. The mischievous words bnrned upon her tongue many a time, but she let them cool oft and he, far-seeing man! Thought only how very guarded and circumspect he had been, that even Maggies quick eyes could not see the influence that was daily gaining stronger upon his heart.

There was seif-abuegation too, as well as self-control in the little sisters heart. She had been first in all things hitherto with this dearly beloved brother of hers; no love before, not even a young mans proud ambition had come between her and the tenderness which he had always lavished upon her. It required no small magnanimity to see another, and that other a stranger till so recently, set before her; to feel herself gradually declining from the throne which she had occupied so long, and an inter-loper crowned queen of hearts in her place. Maggie was a brave, unselfish little woman, though, and she choked down resolutely the few bitter feelings that sprung up at firstgiv

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Ing up her whole heart to a desire for the accomplishment of that on which she now saw her brothers happiness was depending.

She had grown to love Elsie very dearly too: The childas she always called her, though Elsies sunny curls overtopped Maggies brown head by several incheshad won her own place in the sisters heart as well as the brothers. Who could help loving her, so childlike in her simplicity and purity, yet so earnest and womanly through the hard discipline which had

so early been her experience of life. Maggie listened to her almost reverentially sometimes, when in her gentle way she gave expression to the faith that had sustained her when the dreariest night was closing round her; and Wilson, who listened by stealth to these twilight conversations of the girls for Elsie herself rarely spoke in his presence used to watch the golden head as the light faded away from it, and the beautiful face that was such a fitting son-mirror for her, and think he should paint her for a St. Cecilia or a Madonna rather than the too earthly Cinderella, the summit of whose happiness was a hall-dress and a night of gaiety!

However, the Cinderella came to a terminus by-and-by: the last touch had been bestowed, the last gleam upon the soft, bright hair, the last sweet rose-tinge to the young face. The picture stood completed, and very charming in its unique simplicity.

It is very lovely, said Maggie, and the likeness is perfect. They were all three standing before it one afternoon, and the sunset rays were lingering round it, shedding a special halo upon the Cinderella's golden hair and beautiful face. The likeness was perfect indeed, even to the half-wistful, half-eager expression on the faces of both. But the eagerness faded presently away from Elsie's eyes, and only the wistful, sorrowful look remained, quivering upon her lips and drooping her long eyelashes. She turned away from the picture silently, and sat down busily to her work. Wilson was strangely silent too, for him, and Maggie watched him holding a book in his hand which he did not read, with a half-wondering, half-fearful expectation in her heart. She got up quietly by-and-by, and stole out of the room, for the stillness was growing oppressive to her, and some presentiment told her that they two were sufficient for themselves now, and heart to heart would speak soon, needing no mediation from her.

The studio was breathlessly still for minutes after she had left. Elsie's head dropped very low, and her needle flew with a blind speed through her work; she thought those heart-beats throbbing so wildly, thronging so tumultuously that they almost exhausted her breath, must be resounding through the room as audibly as they echoed in her own ears. She did not know that another heart near her was beating as strongly, fluttering as timidly as her own. For Wilson Barstew was young still, unsophisticated in worldly wisdom, and this first strong

love of his life, stirred and bewildered him as if he had been a timid maiden.

He laid his book down presently, and went over to the couch where the young girl sat. She did not shrink from him as he took a seat by her, though it was the first time he had ever done so; but her face grew white, and her hand trembled so that she could not guide the needle. It was all in vain that she called herself weak and foolish, and struggled to regain calmness and self-possession; the fluttering pulses would not be still, and she could only sit powerless and trembling, awaiting her destiny.

Elsie never had called her so before, and now the low-spoken word thrilled to her heart, and sent the blood in a vivid rush to her cheeks again. Don't you know what I want to say to you?

How could she answer the eager, passionate question? She could not speak, she could not look up, for heavier and heavier drooped the lids over those sweet eyes, and great tears filled them, and sobs swelled up to her throat. The only utterance she could find for this blissful dream of love, and joy, and happiness which seemed too sudden, too strange, too wonderful for any reality.

Don't you know that I love you, Elsie? and his hand prisoned in a close grasp the little one lying powerless before him. Then growing bolder, for it was not withdrawn: Does not your own heart answer to the love I offer you fully, freely? Tell me, Elsie I he pleaded. And there is little need to tell how the pleading was answered so to his own satisfaction, that not words and looks merely, but tenderest caresses set soon the seal to this compact of hearts.

I won't pretend to say where Maggie was during this little episode! I only know she came in by-and-by with a most sedate step and demure look, and held up her hands with a well-feigned start of astonishment and virtuous indignation as she beheld the position of affairs. What that position was I leave the curious to guess, and the initiated to imagine. Elsie started up, blushing like a thousand roses, but Wilson drew her back firmly to her place by his side, and met Maggie's saucy looks with a very determined glance, in which all the independence and manhood of Wilson Barstew, Esq., was made fully significant.

So! It was the model of a wife you wanted, Willie? I congratulate you upon the success of your Cinderella.

Thank you, Maggie, your approbation is all

we want to make it entirely satisfactory.

Oh, Maggie ! it was Elsie, all tearful and crimson, who spoke now; but Maggie cut short the humble, deprecating words with a shower of kisses, as she threw her arms round the young girl.

My dear child, I'm perfectly willing! You 180ouldn' be afraid of me! If you are so silly as to love that man, and fancy you can manage

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him, why I 180ouldn' the least objection in life. Only I give you warning, you will have your small hands full to keep him in subjection

I'm not afraid I Elsie cried, laughing through her tears, but oh, Maggie ! and then the foolish little head went down again with a sob upon Maggies shoulder.

Well, what is it? What in the world are you crying for ?

Because I'm so happy, I suppose, Elsie half sobbed; it is terribly like a dream though, Maggie, and I 180ould at all deserve such happiness

Of course not; you're not half good enough for him, you foolish child. He seems to be satisfied though, so I wouldn't distress myself!

But to marry me, Maggie poor, and friendless, and homeless.

Nonsense! I never thought you could be so ungrateful, Elsie, to call yourself poor ~when you have his love, friendless while I am near you, homeless in this house !

Good, Maggie ! Wilson cried, gayly. You shall have a kiss for that, little woman. And his arms circled the two girls as they stood together, in a glad loving caress, which Maggie returned heartily, and Elsie submitted to with shy, blushing grace.

Well! They were a very happy trio in the studio that evening; but my paper is quite too precious to be wasted with accounts of all the fond and foolish things that were said among them, and there's little need to prolong the limits of this story. Every body knows how the Cinderella, by Wilson Barstow, N.A. was one of the charms of that year's 180ouldn'tion. Every body lavished epithets of dainty, graceful, piquant, unique, upon it, and every one lingered in delight over the spirituelle loveliness of the fair maiden. But every body 180ouldn know, as I happened to, the private history of that same Cinderella, nor that the 180outtable original of it was to be seen in that graceful girlish figure who promenaded the rooms leaning upon Mr. Wilson Barstow's arm, but who so persistently kept her veil down, to the chagrin of sundry curious ladies who felt more interest than they acknowledged in Mr. Wilson Barstow's female companions.

But Wilson used to say that the Cinderella was his happiest inspiration not the less so because his cash receipts for it paid all the expenses of a most charming little bridal tour that summer! A bridal tour by-the-way, in which Maggie, invincible little woman! Found her double, and discovered, greatly to her own astonishment, that there was another man in the world besides Brother Willie.

## APPENDIX B

Transcript of "A New Cinderella" *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (1883): 66.395. 765-70.

*Web.* Retrieved from the Library of Congress database *The Nineteenth Century In Print* 20

February 2013. Attributed to "A Working Girl."

A NEW CINDERELLA. TO one accustomed to the moral atmosphere of the Home, there were signs of a gathering of the clans; but so vague, delicate, impalpable, were the tokens that whenever Miss Scattergood imagined she held a clew, she found it as elusive as the Irishmans flea when you put your finger on it, its not there. Somethins goin on, said the baffled virgin, officially known as the Matron somethins goin on, and if I catch em at it, Ill bring every one of them before the Board, and well see if that wont settle em. For treason and plottin and plannin, give me a house full of women They did not look like such arch traitors as they gathered round the board at tea-time, and partook of the plain, often scant, fare set before them, and approved of by the Committee on Household Affairs. Sixty girls, all young, for none were admitted who were over twenty-two, very weary-looking most of them, with that pathetic look which grinding labor leaves on youthful faces, some indifferent, some bright, many prettysixty, fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. What was wrong with their Home? They broke the rules continually; violated the hours for rising and retiring, for going out and coming in; bought candles when the gas was turned off at ten; stole the bread that was for breakfast, or the cake for lunch, when the bill of fare was shorter than a hungry girl could exist on; waited up for comrades who were belated, and let them into the house by an unbolted window when it was no longer possible to get possession of the front-door key. In short, theres 181ouldn't they aint up to, except courtin, and that they have to do outside, if they do it at all. This Home for Working-Girls, and its branches, though not wholly a charitable institution, as each inmate paid her board, was under the auspices of many good people who had given much time and thought, and even some money, to insure its proper management. They had made their rules of solid granite, if that would help any, so that the general code was rather reformatory and penitential than otherwise. But plainly something was still amiss with these troublesome girls. They would go to bed any time in preference to attending the little prayer-

meetings that had been arranged expressly for their spiritual welfare. The Board had allowed, after a long and exhaustive study, and a serious viewing of the matter in all its lights, that each of the girls might have one gentleman caller one evening during the week, but strictly prohibited such visitors on Sundays. The callers, however, seemed shy of the long bare parlor, uncarpeted, desolate, and of the fifty-nine damsels they did not come to see, and especially of the acidulous smile of Miss Scattergood, and clung to the traditional Sunday night with a tenacity which no prohibition, reprimand, disgrace, or dismissal affected in the least. To be sure, they dare not approach the house, but Sunday afternoons or evenings saw the Home forsaken of its daughters; they would glide out, ostensibly to church, or to take tea with some one, and steal back, after night-fall, like so many Bo-Peeps without their sheep. Dancing inside or out was forbidden: indeed, what was not forbidden? Yet tonight Susie was dressing for a ball! Visiting each others rooms, too, was not allowed; but six girls, nevertheless, admitted to the secret and the toilet, were all together in a chamber so small that, as Beckie said, If you walk in, you must back out, for you cant turn around. This was Effles room, and she lay in the little bed, with the brilliant color on her cheeks, and the fever-bright eyes, and the sharp cough that told her companions she would never rise again. She lay alone through the long, long days of her three months illness, and wearied for the night to comethe night that brought the girls to her bedside with little gifts, and whispered secrets, and news of the outside world in which she had once taken part. Effle wants to see Susie get dressed, so, girls, if two of you will be kind enough to take the two chairs, and two of you stand in the closet, the other two can sit on the edge of the bed. This, said brisk Beckie, is the only accommodation our limited space allows. Nell, you can stand in the doorway, and hum The Campbells are coming in case the enemy surprises us. The visitors will please disappear into the closet and under the bed if we are attacked, and hold their breath till the dangers over. Lucky thing the Board has not regu

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Lated the breathingits a wonder they  
182ouldn said Nell.

Oh! Theyd have made a rule for that  
too, said Beckie, only they knew well  
enough that after you had obeyed all  
they did make, the little desire to breathe  
youd have left 182ouldn worth regulating.

We know it is wrong, Effie; we know  
its all wrong, but when your ship comes  
in youll build us a Home, wont you,  
dear ? said Susie, and allow us to  
dance ?

Effie was to have money after a while,  
when a dead fathers executors turned  
honest, and some great railroad was built  
somewhere, and bonds matured, and many  
other things happened that Effie did not  
understand, but when she did get the  
money it was all to be spent on the girls.  
Such a Home, Susie !such a Home!  
Lights in all the windows, so that you  
could see it far off at night. Every room  
bright and warm. Every chair an easy-  
chair. Books everywhere, and pictures,  
and no rules except mother rules 1

Ah, there was the key-note! Was there  
ever a Home for girls deserving of the  
name in which the motherly element  
could be safely ignored, and the govern-  
ment carried on by step – mothers breath  
or sourest celibacy?

Why not sanction song, with praise for  
her who sang sweetest? Why not the  
dance, relaxing the limbs cramped and  
stiffened by labor? Why might they not  
laugh aloud, and exchange their experi-  
ences of the day, and rove at will, with  
linked arms, through the house, since all  
day they were silent, assiduous, bound  
with chains to the iron wheels of In-  
dustry?

The night cometh wherein no man  
can work.

Alas! Even that is not the most sorrow-  
ful thing!

Do you blame them very much when  
at the very dreary entrance of this  
Home, freedom and mirth, beauty and  
joy, and all that sweetens life after a day  
of incessant and unremitting toil, must  
be shaken like dust from the feet, and

she who entered here left hope behind?  
Of what avail was it that the Matron,  
lynx-eyed and cat-footed, kept watch and  
ward? Sixty pairs of bright eyes, light  
feet, and quick hands, with the nimble  
wit of combined numbers against her fast-  
withering powers, overmatched her many  
a time. So Susie, who scorned a lie, and  
grieved and fretted in her bondage, must  
eat the fair Dead Sea apples, since no  
more wholesome fare was provided for  
her; would suck poison, if sweet, rather  
than go honeyless to bed; break rules of  
granite, defy disgrace and danger, and  
clutch with desperate hands a bright-  
winged hour, though honor and self-re-  
spect were crushed in the grasping.  
Susie was old Steinmetzs model;  
Fashions bondmaid, not her daughter.  
She toiled from early dawn till blackest  
darkness covered the earthor would you  
call it worse than toil, this business of be-  
ing a model? To stand, or walk to and  
fro, or turn round thousands upon thou-  
sands of times under a glaring skylight,  
that buyers, mostly men from the South,  
East, and West, might admire or 182ouldn't182  
or condemn the draping and fitting and  
style of the costly mantles and wraps  
which they came to purchase. Not only  
to never see the sun, but to have the very  
seasons reversed. In summers swelter-  
ing heat to wear the prescribed dress of  
black cashmere, and stand muffled to the  
neck in velvet, plush, wool, or fur, and  
soft wadded satin that would have glad-  
dened the~ heart of a Russian. In win-  
ters deadly chill to show the scarfs of  
gossamer and trailing robes of lace and  
lawn. Perhaps you think none but a bold  
gypsy would undertake to fill a position  
like this? They applied, certainly; but  
ah! Where will you find keener eyes than  
were here to inspect, measure, and pass  
the applicants? Modesty, good-breeding,  
and grace were as essential and as much  
a matter of business as height and shape  
and personal beauty. If forty women  
stood before this grim tribunal with but  
one modest mien among them, there was  
never any mistake or difficulty in finding  
its possessor. To know whether a gar-  
ment would take, it was necessary to  
see it worn as a belle would wear it; to  
prove its perfection, perfections self must  
wear it with ease; to enhance its beauty,

beauty must stand draped in it.

For these requisites Susie received her wages weekly and was thankful. The continual presence of the firm protected her from rude remarks or undue familiarity. She stood silent ever, statuesque, looking steadily before her, hearing and seeing only the duty of the hour. Dreading nothing from these hurried men of business, who, however much they might have been inclined to trifle or amuse them-

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selves, had as little time as opportunity. With the keen instinct of a sensitive soul she had learned to know that there was comparative safety in her exposed position, calling as it did on the generosity and gallantry of the men around her. Because bold admirers might intrude or rude salesmen insult, they were more strictly warned away from forbidden ground. Even Charley, who had invited her to the ball, seldom spoke to her during business hours, and so solitary was she in the crowded salesroom that in three years she had made but a single friend, not counting Charley, who was simply an admirer, neither friend nor lover.

When not engaged in trying ~ which was but seldom, she took her work of tacking on tassels or making bows to a little table near the window of old Abbotts den. Old Abbott was the book-keeper in Steinmetz and Co. s private office. There were dozens of others, upstairs and down; but lie, forever at his desk in an inner room, to or from which there was no going save past the firms own tribunal, reminded her of a prisoner of state. Untiring, but hopeless; faithful, but unpraised and unrewarded; not yet thirty, but with the grayness of premature age creeping over him, and clinging like a burr to his very name; friendless, but ever gentle and friendly to her what was there wrong with the man?

Oh, you see, said Charley, in one of their homeward walks, he comes of a good family, Abbott does. He appropriated some of the firms money about ten years ago, and was caught at it, too; he had done it to keep his father out of some

financial difficulty, and bungled it somehow, for Steinmetz is like a steel-trap. They had all the evidence they wanted to put him in jail, besides his own confession, but they re-instated him in the office on his fathers account at half-price; for he 183ouldn't get work anywhere else after that. His father died soon after they say it killed him and Abbott lives alone with his mother. Steinmetz works him like a slave, too. Why, he does the work of three men; for in importation season they keep him till twelve o'clock at night, and give him Sunday work besides. I pity him often. The boys have a joke that he is chained by the leg to his desk. He might be, for all we know, since no one is allowed in his room except the firm.

Poor, poor fellow ! said Susie.

He had sinned and suffered, and after years of humiliating service he encountered strange faces or new hands about the place with peculiar horror. In a day or two they always learned his story, and he could see their knowledge of his crime so plainly in the look of wonder or curiosity with which they afterward regarded him that he shrank from it as he might have shrunk from heated iron. When Susie first came he waited in an agony of apprehension for the changed expression with which the frank eyes would rest on his, till he could scarcely work for thinking of it. He longed to rush from his den and declare himself a felon that he might end this miserable suspense. But day after day passed and he saw no glance that stung him into bitter remembrance. It was spring-time, and one morning Susie brought a handful of arbutus, fragrant and fresh, which she had bought in passing the market.

Wont you have a spray, Mr. Abbott ? she said, brightly. Indeed, I almost bought it for you. I do love it so, for it grows so good and sweet underneath all the withered leaves; and then lie understood that she knew, and he would have kissed the hand that held the flowers, had it been possible. However, with Steinmetz, senior and junior, bearing down upon them, he simply bowed his thanks, cherished the spray in water, and ere it withered pressed it in his pocket-book with day and date. Poor old Abbott!

Saw you ever Beauty dressing for a ball? The most indifferent and ascetic soul can not look on the transforming process without some degree of interest. The homely seed to the scarlet blossom, the rough bulb to the fair lily, the gray chrysalis to the gorgeous wings, are not more wonderful in their way than this magic by which a woman rises from the kitchens smoke, the hearths ashes, the November-browed life of every day, and flits away, a goddess in a rainbow-tinted robe, this head of May with April mood, a creature too bright, alas! If not

too good,  
For human natures daily food.

Did not each girl feel, as Susie was stripped of her black garment, that for her too the future held a similar beautiful possibility? It was simply rehearsal for all but Effie, and for her too the change had its 184ouldn'

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Cance. They would all in turn, except her, steal away to theatre or concert, moonlight rowing or sleigh – ride, and come back to be admitted by some faithful comrade who kept watch, well aware that she would some time need a like service. Peril, danger, certain dismissal following detection, enhanced forbidden pleasures, and surrounding Susies slender figure as she stood at the foot of the bed, they decked her with as much devotion as if she were a princess and they her maids of honor. They unbraided the raven hair; fastened it in shining waves upon the shapely head, and powdered it with diamond-dust till it glistened like frost in the moonlight. How well they knew how to tone down the too-glowing cheek, these cunning artists! Nor were flowers and the old lace (a comrades only heirloom), and the bangles and bracelets of gold, wanting. Each girl had brought her best, to be accepted or rejected as Susies taste decided. When at last they lifted the white robe over her shoulders, and gave it the thousand nameless touches with which women complete a toilet, Susie, the bondmaid, had disappeared,

and Aphrodite, indeed, seemed risen from the sea.

It reminds me of Cinderella, said ]Beckie.

It reminds me of the 184ouldn't184d184n said Effie.

For an instant they were silent, conscience-stricken.

Let never maiden think, however fair,  
She is not fairer in new clothes than old,

quoted Nell, gayly. You look like an angel, Susie !

I feel like a fallen one! Cold chills run down my back, and theres a stone on my heart !

Somebodys walking over your grave, they say, when you feel so.

What nonsense ! said Susie, with a quick glance at Effie. Of what is it the sign, then, when you wake in the morning glad, and 184ould know what about ?

Its a sign, said Effie, that some bird is fledging that will sing for you; some flower budding that will bloom for you; some friend a little nearer who will love you; the sun shining and the grass growing in some fair spot where our lines shall be cast in pleasant places, of which the morning joy is but the faint foreshadowing

Or would you say, said Beckie, who hated the guilty feeling that somehow crept over them in Effies presence, as old Scrooge did, It may be a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, or something wrong with your digestion ? It was Beckie, too, who could always arouse Susie s rebellious spirit. Some of the Committee should see you now, you darling, said she. If they had Nannie up before them for wearing a wrapper faced with crimson, and rated Helen not so much for extravagance as for the white dress fit for Saratoga or Newport, to what a state of petrification would you reduce them! A working-girl in gloss of satin and glimmer of pearl !

If Helen designs and makes as well as earns her own dress, and Nannie loves red, is that a sin, or even anybodys business!

Dont curl your lip at me, dear; Im not one of the managers, said Beckie. If the powers that regulate us even in

our choice of a morning beverage, and allow us a glass of water, a mug of milk, or a cup of tea, but not the tea and water, or the milk and the water, or the tea and milk together if these powers take to regulating the color of our clothes as well, what are you going to do about it ?

Love and crave the thing forbidden, of course, said Susie.

Like a true daughter of Eve; but 185ould forget the flaming sword, my dear.

I shall not forget it, when I brave it to-night for only a glimpse of that paradise of which I never was an inhabitant; but shall I not smell of a rose through a fence I

If I did not hate punning Id say that was a cause of offense. But, my dear Cinderella, were I your godmother for an hour to-night, do you know what revenge Id like to take on these incapables who rule us with a rod of iron ?

Incapable! Said Nell. Did not one of them for whom I sewed to-day ask me to make a hem an inch wide, and then say, Show me, please, how wide is an inch ?

Well, Id go to this Artists Ball, since Charley says all the tone in town will be there, and Id strip these grand dames by magic of every stitch of clothes, of their jewels, their pleasures, and set them in the midst of the raw material, until they had learned how to value the services of Cinderella and others of her ilk.

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You savage!

I would, indeed, continued Beckie, and laugh to see them with their shoes all gone to bundles of leather, their shining silk to cocoons, their flannel to fleece, their linen to flax, their cambric to cotton, their jewelry to unburnished lumps of ore! What a sight that would be! And how many millions of years do you suppose theyd sit shivering there before theyd be able to produce anything from such chaos ?

The Campbells are coming, lils Nell at the door, and closing it behind her she saunters leisurely through the corridor

to meet the approaching Matron on her round of inspection. She delays her with a request, and then, refused, seeks her own room. In Effles there is a rushing as of leaves stirred by the autumn wind, a fluttering as of wings, a breathless flurry, and then all is still. Effle sleeping and Beckie calmly reading are all that meet her gaze as she softly opens the door; but were her ears as sharp as her eyes she must almost, they thought, have heard the throbbing of those muffled hearts in the closet and under the bed. She hears nothing, however, and passes on.

Their work done, they had now to contrive a way to get Susie, in such a dress, unseen from the house; once out, all was well, for Charley would be waiting near at hand with the carriage in the whirling snow-storm. Perilous work to run the gauntlet of fifty pairs of eyes, and, worst of all, to pass the Matrons door!

You will draw this gossamer cloak over your fine feathers, my bird-of-paradise, said Beckie, and youll look as black as any crow. I will precede you to the door of the fair Scattergood and draw her attention to my nervous and exhausted condition, superinduced by my exertions as tire-woman, though I shall not mention it. She so dearly loves to give me a bitter dose that I think she will really go over to the medicine closet to get it for me herself, and while I ensnare her into the infirmary, do you make your escape. Mind, if you are taken alive, I shall not know you.

To fly along the dim corridor and down the stairs with bated breath and beating heart, to step a-tiptoe past the room whence the fiery-eyed and pitiless dragon might issue, to glide unnoticed through the lower hall, and never pause till portal and steps and pavement were left behind this was the work of a few minutes, yet it seemed like an age of torturing dread.

Once in the carriage, where Charley sat, impatiently expectant, hope revived and strength returned. She would not spoil one instant of the precious and dear-bought hours by forebodings of evil.

In the ball-room at last, she felt as one might who had fallen asleep a slave, scourged and beaten with stripes, and waked to find herself a queen. She walked like one uplifted with the sense



of wings, in that nervous state of exaltation which the unaccustomed intoxication of flowers and flashing lights, music and perfume, produced in her whirling brain. The past offered her but memories of hopeless servitude, the future brought only despair, but by the light of this so beautiful present she would warm herself, though to-morrow she must cover her head with its ashes; to-night she would sprinkle with wine and wreath with roses this twoedged sword called Pleasure, though to-morrow it pierced her to the heart!

Not until she found herself, an hour past midnight, again within the walls of her prison, did the reaction come. Darkness, to her always gloomy and depressing, seemed horrible by contrast with the scene of enchantment from which she had torn herself. She durst not speak a word to Beckie, who had waited and watched for her. Accustomed as they were to groping their way unlighted, to-night she shook with vague terrors, and the very blackness of the grave seemed yawning to swallow her; she fancied a pitfall at every wavering step, and grasping her companions hand tightly within her frozen fingers, together they silently made their way to the upper corridor. Safe at last! She had gone and returned unseen and unmissed. But listen! They had made no sound, aroused no sleeper: what could they hear but the quiet breathing or the soft murmuring of the slumbering household? Nay, piercing, shrill, a voice at her very ear startled the silence of the night: Susie!

And her name rang through the darkness as if it had fallen from some distant star. Then at their very feet low moaning that curdled the blood in their veins, a rustling as of ghostly wings, a rising form in the darkness, before which they stood appalled, speechless, cold outstretched hands that grasped them with the touch

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Of death, and around them the suffocating blackness of the night.

Merciful Heaven! What can it be?  
and Susie wildly strove to release her

hands from the chill fingers that held hers like a vise.

Efileonly Effie.

Poor, poor child! said Susie, as she held the lifeless form to her heart, where have you been? Cold and wet so wet. Feel her night dress, Beckie; it is wet with something from neck to foot.

With her life-blood, alas! She had had a hemorrhage while alone, and rising to seek help, had fainted in the corridor at Susies feet.

Dont whisper anymore, Beckie; rouse them up, and get a light. Dear God, do not let her die in my arms till she can see our faces once more

Alight! An hour ago she had light and to spare, and now not one gleam for the dying one whose breath came so icy cold on her cheek, and whose blood was staining the snowy dress and trickling in heavy drops to the floor.

Thank Heaven for this candle which disobedience had ever ready for emergency, and by whose flickering beam they carried her most tenderly to bed, and saw, awe-struck, that the end indeed had come. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon them; their heart is sore pained and withered like grass. Weeping they fall on their knees beside the bed, unconscious that in the doorway stands the astonished Matron with her lamp.

Pray, Susie, pray!

How could she pray in that dress, and with her throat as dry as summers dust? How dare she refuse to pray, when in a few moments Effie would be beyond the sound of her voice?

Now God be merciful to me a sinner! Look with Thine eyes of infinite pity on this our sister who is passing to that house of many mansions, not built with hands, eternal in the heavensto a Home where the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, and there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, nor of the moon; for the Lord God Himself shall lighten it, and He shall be with them, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.

And so comforted, Effie departed from these shadows to greet the dawning of a

brighter day.

Of the twenty-five ladies who composed the Board of Managers, who so sternly inflexible as the President, Mrs. Paul Van Brunt?

So many years had elapsed since Sully had painted her portrait as a slender belle in her first ball dress of priceless lace, with lovely arms and snowy bosom bare, that she had forgotten, in carrying her present portly weight, the bounding blood and fiery impulses of her youth. She had danced, and sung, and feasted, and spent the glorious hours of her spring-tide to so little purpose that for the young creatures in this Home she had not one memory left to soften bitter denial, haughty prohibition, and strictest surveillance. So they sat, with her at their head, these~twenty-five wise ones, and discussed Susies case, which, true to her word, the Matron had laid before them. They passed their judgment on her boldness, her disobedience, her contumacy. That these were the general characteristics of her class there was no doubt. That leniency only fostered insubordination, and mercy nursed the viper of ingratitude, were ~x-

ioms that their system had proved a hundred times; and to the end that an example might be set, that the thoughtlessness of youth might be rebuked, the lusts of the flesh crucified, and the pomps and vanities of this wicked world removed afar from the inmates of this Home, it was resolved that this girl Susie be requested to go from under its roof and seek a home elsewhere. Elsewhere? Ah, where?

Fast-falling tears dropped in her lap as she sat, the day after her dismissal, under old Abbots window, and faster still they fell when, stooping to pick up the tiny note that fluttered to her feet, she read. These words:

That you should weep, who brought to me the relief of the first merciful thought my sin had found in ten years of expiation, is like the bitterness of death! I entreat you, let me help you. If underneath the withered leaves of my life you look, you will find there the fragrant flowers of hope renewed and faith strengthened by your sweet charity. Grateful remembrance, faithful friendship, my Home, and more if you will accept it, are, as I am, yours ever,  
ABBOTT.

## APPENDIX C

Transcript of "A Modern Cinderella" *The Atlantic Monthly* (1860): 6.36. 425-41. *Web*. Retrieved

from the Library of Congress database *The Nineteenth Century in Print* on 20 February 2013.

A MODERN CINDERELLA: OR, THE LITTLE OLD SHOE. HOW IT WAS LOST. AMONG green New England hills stood an ancient house, many-gabled, mossy-roofed, and quaintly built, but picturesque and pleasant to the eye for a brook ran babbling through the orchard that encompassed it about, a garden-plot stretched upward to the whispering birches on the slope, and patriarchal elms stood sentinel upon the lawn, as they had stood almost a century ago, when the Revolution rolled that way and found them young. One summer morning, when the air was full of country sounds, of mowers in the meadow, blackbirds by the brook, and the low of kine upon the hill-side, the old house wore its cheeriest aspect, and a certain humble history began. Nan! Yes, Di. And a head, brown-locked, blue-eyed, soft-featured, looked in at the open door in answer to the call. Just bring me the third volume of Wilhelm Meister, there's a dear. It's hardly worth while to rouse such a restless ghost as I, when I'm once fairly laid. As she spoke, Di pushed up her black braids, thumped the pillow of the couch where she was lying, and with eager eyes went down the last page of her book. Nan! Yes, Laura, replied the girl, coming back with the third volume for the literary cormorant, who took it with a nod, still too intent upon the Confessions of a Fair Saint to remember the failings of a certain plain sinner. Don't forget the Italian cream for dinner. I depend upon it for its being the only thing fit for me this hot weather. And Laura, the cool blonde, disposed the folds of her white gown more gracefully about her, and touched up the eyebrow of the Minerva she was drawing. Little daughter! Yes, father. Let me have plenty of clean collars in my bag, for I must go at three and some of you bring me a glass of cider in about an hour I shall be in the lower garden. The old man went away into his imaginary paradise, and Nan into that domestic purgatory on a summer day, the kitchen. There were vines about the windows, sunshine on the floor, and order everywhere but it was haunted by a cookino--stove, that family altar whence such varied incense rises to appease the appetite of household gods, before which such dire incantations are pronounced to ease the wrath and

woe of the priestess of the fire, and about which often linger saddest memories of wasted temper, time, and toil.

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426 A Jiliodern (Jtnderelta. [October, iNan was tired, having risen with the birdshurried, having many cares those happy little housewives never know, and disappointed in a hope that hourly dwindled, peaked, and pined. She was too young to make the anxious lines upon her forehead seem at home there, too patient to be 188ouldn't with the labor others should have shared, too light of heart to be pent up when earth and sky were keeping a blithe holiday. But she was one of that meek sisterhood who, thinking humbly of themselves, believe they are honored by being spent in the service of less conscientious souls, whose careless thanks seem quite reward enough.

To and fro she went, silent and diligent, giving the grace of willingness to every humble or distasteful task the day had brought her; but some malPrnant sprite seemed to have taken possession of her kingdom, for rebellion broke out everywhere. The kettles would boil over most obstreperously, the mutton refused to cook with the meek alacrity to be expected from the nature of a sheep, the stove, with unnecessary warmth of temper, would glow like a fiery furnace, the irons would scorch, the linens would dry, and spirits would fail, though patience never.

Nan tugged on, growing hotter and wearier, more hurried and more hopeless, till at last the crisis came; for in one fell moment she tore her gown, burnt her hand, and smutched the collar she was preparing to finish in the most unexceptionable style. Then, if she had been a nervous woman, she would have scolded being a gentle girl, she only lifted up her voice and wept.

Behold, she watereth her linen with salt tears, and bewaileth herself because of much tribulation. But, lo! Help cometh from afar: a strong man bringeth lettuce wherewith to stay her, plucketh berries to comfort her withal, and clasheth cymbals that she may dance for joy.

The voice came from the porch, and, with her hope fulfilled, Nan looked up to greet John Lord, the house-friend, who stood there with a basket on his arm and as she saw his honest eyes, kind lips, and helpful hands, the girl thought this plain young man the comeliest, most web come sight she had beheld that day.

How good of you, to come through all this heat, and not to laugh at my despair! She said, looking up like a grateful child, as she led him in.

I only obeyed orders, Nan; for a certain dear old lady had a motherly presentiment that you had got into a domestic whirlpool, and sent me as a sort of life-preserver. So I took the basket of consolation, and came to fold my feet upon the carpet of contentment in the tent of friendship.

As he spoke, John gave his own gift in his mother's name, and bestowed himself in the wide window-seat, where morning-glories nodded at him, and the old butternut sent pleasant shadows dancing to and fro.

His advent, like that of Orpheus in Hades, seemed to soothe all unpropitious powers with a sudden spell. The fire began to slacken, the kettles began to lull, the meat began to cook, the irons began to cool, the clothes began to behave, the spirits began to rise, and the collar was finished off with most triumphant success. John watched the change, and though a lord of creation, abased himself to take compassion on the weaker vessel, and was seized with a great desire to lighten the homely tasks that tried her strength of body and soul. He took a comprehensive glance about the room then, extracting a dish from the closet, proceeded to imbue his hands in the strawberries' blood.

Oh, John, you wouldn't do that; I shall have time when I've turned the meat, made the pudding, and done these things. See, I'm getting on finely now

you're a judge of such matters; wouldn't that be nice?

As she spoke, Nan offered the polished absurdity for inspection with innocent pride.

Oh that I were a collar, to sit upon that hand!~ sighed John, adding, ar

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gumentatively, As to the berry question, I might answer it with a gem from Dr. Watts, relative to Satan and idle bands, but will merely say, that, as a matter of public safety, you'd better leave me alone; for such is the destructiveness of my nature, that I shall certainly eat something hurtful, break something valuable, or sit upon something crushable, unless you let me concentrate my energies by knocking off these young fellows' hats, and preparing them for their doom.

Looking at the matter in a charitable light, Nan consented, and went cheerfully on with her work, wondering how she could have thought ironing an infliction, and been so ungrateful for the blessings of her lot.

Where's Sally? Asked John, looking vainly for the energetic functionary who usually pervaded that region like a domestic police-woman, a terror to cats, dogs, and men.

She has gone to her cousin's funeral, and won't be back till Monday. There seems to be a great fatality among her relations; for one dies, or comes to grief in some way, about once a month. But I wouldn't blame poor Sally for wanting to get away from this place now and then. I think I could find it in my heart to murder an imaginary friend or two, if I had to stay here long.

And Nan laughed so blithely, it was a pleasure to hear her.

Where's Di? Asked John, seized with a most unmasculine curiosity all at once.

She is in Germany with Wilhelm Meister; but though lost to sight, to memory (I fear; for I was just thinking, as I did her things, how clever she is

to like all kinds of books that I 190ould understand at all, and to write things that make me cry with pride and delight. Yes, shes a talented dear, though she hardly knows a needle from a crowbar, and will make herself one great blot some of these days, when the divine afflatus descends upon her, Im afraid. And Nan rubbed away with sisterly zeal at Dis forlorn hose and inky pocket-handkerchiefs.

Where is Laura? Proceeded the inquisitor.

Well, I might say that she was in Italy; for she is copying some fine thing of Raphaels, or Michel Angelos, or some great creatures or other; and she looks so picturesque in her pretty gown, sittin before her easel, that it s really a sight to behold, and Ive peeped two or three times to see how she gcts on.

And Nan bestirred herself to prepare the dish wherewith her picturesque sister desired to prolong her artistic existence.

Where is your father? John asked again, checking off each answer with a nod and a little frown.

He is down in the garden, deep in some plan about melons, the beginning of which seems to consist in stamping the first proposition in Euclid all over the bed, and then poking a few seeds into the middle of each. Why, bless the dear man! I forgot it was time for the cider. Wouldnt you like to take it to him, John? Hed love to consult you; and the lane is so cool, it does ones heart good to look at it.

John glanced from the steamy kitchen to the shadowy path, and answered with a sudden assumption of immense industry,

I 190ouldn't possibly go, Nan, Ive so much on my hands. Youll have to do it yourself. Mr. Robert of Lincoln has something for your private ear; and the lane is so cool, it will do ones heart good to see you in it. Give my reards. To your father, and, in the words of Little Mabels mother, with slight variations, Tell the dear old body  
This day I cannot run  
For the pots are boiling over  
And the mutton 190ould done.

I will; but please, J9hn, go in to the

girls and be comfortable; for I 190ould like to leave you here, said Nan.

You insinuate that I should pick at the pudding or invade the cream, do you? Ungrateful girl, leave me! And, with melodramatic sternness, John extin

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guished her in his broad-brimmed hat, and offered the glass like a poisoned goblet.

Nan took it, and went smiling away. But the lane mi,ht have been the Desert of Sahara, for all she knew of it; and she would have passed her father as unconcernedly as if he had been an apple-tree, had he not called out,

Stand and deliver, little woman!

She obeyed the venerable highwayman, and followed him to and fro, listen-in,~ to his plans and directions with a mute attention that quite won his heart.

That hop-pole is really an ornament now, Nan; this sage-bed needs weeding, thats good work for you girls and, now I think of it, youd better water the lettuce in the cool of the evening, after Im gone.

To all of which remarks Nan gave her assent; though the hop-pole took the likeness of a tall figure she had seen in the porch, the sage-bed, curiously enough, suggested a strawberry ditto, the lettuce vividly reminded her of certain vegetable productions a basket had brought, and the bob-o-link only sung in his cheeriest voice, Go home ,go home! He is there!

She found John he having made a freemason of himself, by assuming her little apron meditating over the partially spread table, lost in amaze at its desolate appearance; one half its proper paraphernalia having been forgotten, and the other half put on awry. Nan laughed till the tears ran over her cheeks, and John was gratified at the efficacy of his treatment; for her face had brought a whole harvest of sunshine from the garden, and all her cares seemed to have been lost in ~he windings of the lane.

Nan, are you in hysterics? Cried Di,

appearing, book in hand. John, you absurd man, what are you doing?

Im helpin the maid of all work, please marm. And John dropped a curtsy with his limited apron.

Di looked ruffled, for the merry words were a covert reproach; and with her usual energy of manner and freedom of speech she tossed Wilhelm out of the window, exclaiming, irefully, Thats always the way; Im never where I ought to be, and never think of anything till its too late; but its all Goethes fault. What does he write books full of smart Phillinas and interesting Meisters for? How can I be expected to remember that Sally s away, and people must eat, when Im hearing the Harper and little Mignon? John, how dare you come here and do my work, instead of shaking me and telling me to do it myself? Take that toasted child away, and fan her like a Chinese mandarin, while I dish up this dreadful dinner.

John and Nan fled like chaff before the wind, while Di, full of remorseful zeal, charged at the kettles, and wrenched off the potatoes jackets, as if she were revengefully pulling her own hair. Laura had a vague intention of going to assist but, getting lost among the lights and shadows of Minervas helmet, forgot to appear till dinner had been evoked from chaos and peace was restored.

At three oclock, Di performed the coronation-ceremony with her fathers best hat; Laura re-tied his old-fashioned neckcloth, and arran,~ ed his white locks with an eye to saintly effect; Nan appeared with a beautifully written sermon, and suspicious ink-stains on the fingers that slipped it into his pocket; John attached himself to the bag; and the patriarch was escorted to the door of his tent with the triumphal procession which usually attended his out-goings and in-comings. Having kissed the female portion of his tribe, he ascended the venerable chariot, which received him with audible lamentation, as its rheumatic joints swayed to and fro.

Good-bye, my dears! I shall be back early on Monday morning; s~ take care of yourselves, and he sure you all go and hear Mr. Emerboy preach to-morrow. My

regards to your mother, John. Come, Solon!

But Solon merely cocked one ear, and remained a fixed fact for long experi

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ence had induced the philosophic heast to take for his motto the Yankee maxim, Be sure youre right, then go ahead! He knew things were not right therefore he did not go ahead.

Oh, hy-the-way, girls, 191ould forget to pay Tommy Mullein for bringing up the cow: he expects it to-night. And, Di, 191ould sit up till daylight, nor let Laura stay out in the dew. Now, I believe, Im off. Come, Solon!

But Solon only cocked the other ear, gently agitated his mortified tail, as premonitory symptoms of departure, and never stirred a hoof, heing well aware that it always took three comes to make a go.

Bless me! Ive forgotten my spectacles. They are probably shut up in that volume of Herbert on my table. Very awkward to find myself without them ten miles away. Thank you, John. Dont neglect to water the lettuce, Nan, and 191ould overwork yourself, my little Martha. Come 2

At this juncture, Solon suddenly went off, like Mrs. Gamp, in a sort of walking swoon, apparently deaf and blind to all mundane matters, except the refreshments awaiting him ten miles away; and the benign old pastor disappeared, humming Hebron to the creaking accompaniment of the bulgy chaise.

Laura retired to take her siesta; Nan made a small carboaaroo of herself by sharpening her sisters crayons, and Di, as a sort of penance for past sins, tried her patience over a piece of knitting, in which she soon originated a somewhat remarkable pattern, by droppin,, every third stitch, and seaming ad libitum. If John had been a gentlemanly creature, with refined tastes, he would have elevated his feet and made a nuisance of himself hy indulging in a weed; hut being only an uncultivated youth, with a

rustic regard for~ pure air and woman-kind in general, he kept his head uppermost, and talked like a man, instead of smoking like a chimney.

It will probably be six months before I sit here again, tangling your threads and maltreating your needles, Nan. How glad you must feel to hear it ! he said, looking up from a thoughtful examination of the hard-working little citizens of the Industrial Community settled in Nans work-hasket.

No, Im very sorry; for I like to see you coming and going as you used to, years ago, and I miss you very much when you are gone, John, answered truthful Nan, whittling away in a sadly wasteful manner, as her thoughts flew back to the happy times when a little lad rode a little lass in the hig wheelbarrow, and never spilt his load, when two brown heads bobbed daily side by side to school, and the favorite play was Babes in the Wood, with Di for a somewhat 192ouldn' robin to cover the small martyrs with any vegetable substance that lay at hand. Nan sighed, as she thought of these things, and John regarded the battered thimble on his fingertip with increased benignity of aspect as he heard the sound.

When are you going to make your fortune, John, and get out of that disagreeable hardware concern? Demanded Di, pausing after an exciting round, and looking almost as much exhausted as if it had been a veritable pugilistic encounter.

I intend to make it by plunging still deeper into that disagreeable hardware concern; for, next year, if the world keeps rolling, and John Lord is alive, he will become a partner, and then and then

The color sprang up into the young mans cheek, his eyes looked out with a sudden shine, and his hand seemed involuntarily to close, as if he saw and seized some invisible delight.

What will happen then, John? Asked Nan, with a wondering glance.

Ill tell you in a year, Nan, wait till then. And Johns stron~ hand unclosed, as if the desired good were not to be his yet.

Di looked at him, with a knitting-nee-

dle stuck into her hair, saying, like a sarcastic unicorn,

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I really thought you had a soul above pots and kettles, but I see you 192ouldn'; and I beg your pardon for the injustice I have done you.

Not a whit disturbed, John smiled, as if at some mighty pleasant fancy of his own, as he replied,

Thank you, Di; and as a further proof of the utter depravity of my nature, let me tell you that I have the greatest possible respect for those articles of ironmongery. Some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent in their society; some of my pleasantest associations are connected with them; some of my best lessons have come to me from among them; and when my fortune is made, I intend to show my gratitude by taking three flat-irons rampant for my coat of arms.

Nan laughed merrily, as she looked at the burns on her hand; but Di elevated the most prominent feature of her brown countenance, and sighed despondingly, Dear, dear, what a disappointing world this is! I no sooner build a nice castle in Spain, and settle a smart young knight therein, than down it comes about my ears; and the ungrateful youth, who might fight dragons, if he chose, insists on quenching his energies in a saucepan, and making a Saint Lawrence of himself by wasting his life on a series of cridirons. Ab, if I were only a man, I would do something better than that, and prove that heroes are not all dead yet. But, instead of that, im only a woman, and must sit rasping my temper with absurdities like this. And Di wrestled with her knitting as if it were Fate, and she were paying off the grudge she owed it.

John leaned toward her, saying, with a look that made his plain face handsome,

Di, my father began the world as I begin it, and left it the richer for the useful years he spent here, as I hope I may leave it some half-century hence. His

memory makes that dingy shop a pleasant place to me; for there he made an honest name, led an honest life, and bequeathed. To me his reverence for honest work. That is a sort of hardware, Di, that no rust can corrupt, and which will always prove a better fortune than any your knights can achieve with sword and shield. I think I am not quite a clod, or quite without some aspirations above money-getting; for I sincerely desire that courage which makes daily life heroic by self-denial and cheerfulness of heart; I am eager to conquer my own rebellious nature, and earn the confidence of innocent and up right souls; I have a great ambition to become as good a man and leave as green a memory behind me as old John Lord.

Di winked violently, and seamed five times in perfect silence; but quiet Nan had the gift of knowing when to speak, and by a timely word saved her sister from a thunder-shower and her stocking from destruction.

John, have you seen Philip since you wrote about your last meeting with him?

The question was for John, but the soothing tone was for Di, who gratefully accepted it, and perked up again with speed.

Yes; and I meant to have told you about it, answered John, plunging into the subject at once. I saw him a few days before I came home, and found him more disconsolate than ever, just ready to go to the Devil, as he forcibly expressed himself. I consoled the poor lad as ~vell as I could, telling him his wisest plan was to defer his proposed expedition, and go on as steadily as he had begun there-by proving the injustice of your fathers prediction concerning his want of perseverance, and the sincerity of his affection. I told him the change in Lauras health and spirits was silently working in his favor, and that a few more months of persistent endeavor would conquer your fathers prejudice against him, and make him a stronger man for the trial and the pain. I read him bits about Laura from your own and Dis letters, and he went away at last as patient as Jacob, ready to serve another seven years for his beloved Rachel.

God bless you for it, John ! cried a

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Fervent voice; and, looking up, they saw the cold, listless Laura transformed into a tender girl, all aglow with love and longing, as she dropped her mask, and showed a living countenance eloquent with the first passion and softened by the first grief of her life.

John rose involuntarily in the presence of an innocent nature whose sorrow needed no interpreter to him. The girl read sympathy in his brotherly regard, and found comfort in the friendly voice that asked, half playfully, half seriously, Shall I tell him that he is not forgotten, even for an Apollo? That Laura the artist has not conquered Laura the woman? And predict that the good daughter will yet prove the happy wife ?

With a gesture full of energy, Laura tore her Minerva from top to bottom, while two great tears rolled down the cheeks grown wan with hope deferred.

Tell him I believe all things, ho1)C all things, and that I never can forget.

Nan went to her and held her fast, leaving the prints of two loving, but grimy hands upon her shoulders; Di looked on approvingly, for, though rather stony-hearted regarding the cause, she fully appreciated the effect; and John, turning to the window, received the commendations of a robin swaying on an elm-bough with sunshine on its ruddy breast.

The clock struck five, and John declared that he must go; for, being an old-fashioned soul, he fancied that his mother had a better right to his last hour than any youn,,er woman in the land, always remembering that she was a widow, and he her only son.

Nan ran away to wash her hands, and came back with the appearance of one who had washed her face also: and so she had; but there was a difference in the water.

Play Im your father, girls, and remember it will be six months before that John will trouble you again.

With which preface the young man kissed his former playfellows as heartily as the



boy had been wont to do, when stern parents banished him to distant schools, and three little maids bemoaned his fate. But times were changed now; for Di grew alarmingly rigid during the ceremony; Laura received the salute like a grateful queen; and Nan returned it with heart and eyes and tender lips, making such an improvement on the childish fashion of the thing, that John was moved to support his paternal character by softly echoing her father's words, Take care of yourself, my little Martha.

Then they all streamed after him along the garden-path, with the endless messages and warnings girls are so prone to give and the young man, with a great softness at his heart, went away, as many another John has gone, feeling better for the companionship of innocent maidenhood, and stronger to wrestle with temptation, to wait and hope and work.

Lets throw a shoe after him for luck, as dear old Mrs. Gummage did after David and the willin Barkis! Quick, Nan! You always have old shoes on; toss one, and shout, Good luck! Cried Di, with one of her eccentric inspirations.

Nan tore off her shoe, and threw it far along the dusty road, with a sudden longing to become that auspicious article of apparel, that the omen might not fail.

Looking backward from the hill-top, John answered the meek shout cheerily, and took in the group with a lingering glance: Laura in the shadow of the elms, Di perched on the fence, and Nan leaning far over the gate with her hand above her eyes and the sunshine touching her brown hair with its old. Tie waved his hat and turned away; but the music seemed to die out of the blackbirds song, and in all the summer landscape his eye saw nothing but the little figure at the gate.

Bless and save us! Heres a flock of people coming; my hair is in a toss, and Nans without her shoe; run! Fly, girls! Or the Philistines will be upon us! Cried Di, tumbling off her perch in sudden alarm.

Three agitated young ladies, with flying draperies and countenances of mingled mirth and dismay, might have been seen precipitating themselves into a re

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spectable mansion with unbecoming haste but the squirrels were the only witnesses of this vision of sudden flight, and being used to ground-and-lofty tumbling, couldnt mind it.

When the pedestrians passed, the door was decorously closed, and no one visible but a young man, who snatched something out of the road, and marched away again, whistling with more vigor of tone than accuracy of tune, Only that, and nothing more.

110W IT WAS FOUND.

SUMMER ripened into autumn, and something fairer than

Sweet-peas and mignonette  
In Annies garden grew.

Her nature was the counterpart of the hill-side grove, where as a child she had read her fairy tales, and now as a woman turned the first pages of a more wonderful legend still. Lifted above the many-gabled roof yet not cut off from the echo of human speech, the little grove seemed a green sanctuary, fringed about with violets, and full of summer melody and bloom. Gentle creatures haunted it, and there was none to make afraid; wood-pigeons cooed and crickets chirped their shrill roundelays, anemones and lady-ferns looked up from the moss that kissed the wanderers feet. Warm airs were all afloat, full of vernal odors for the grateful sense, silvery hitches shimmered like spirits of the wood, larches gave their green tassels to the wind, and pines made airy music sweet and solemn, as they stood looking heavenward through veils of summer sunshine or shrouds of wintry snow. Nan never felt alone now in this charmed wood; for when she came into its precincts, once so full of solitude, all things seemed to wear one shape, familiar eyes looked at her from the violets in the grass, familiar words sounded in the whisper of the leaves, and she grew conscious that

an unseen influence filled the air with new delights, and touched earth and sky with a beauty never seen before. Slowly these May-flowers huddled in her maiden heart, rosily they bloomed, and silently they waited till some lover of such lowly herbs should catch their fresh aroma, should hush away the fallen leaves, and lift them to the sun.

Though the eldest of the three, she had long been overtopped by the more aspiring maids. But though she meekly yielded the reins of government, whenever they chose to drive, they were soon restored to her again; for Di fell into literature, and Laura into love. Thus engrossed, these two forgot many duties which even blue-stockings and innomortos are expected to perform, and slowly all the homely humdrum cares that housewives know became Nans daily life, and she accepted it without a thought of discontent. Noiseless and cheerful as the sunshine, she went to and fro, doing the tasks that mothers do, but without a mother's sweet reward, holding fast the numberless slight threads that bind a household tenderly together, and making each day a beautiful success.

Di, being tired of running, riding, climbing, and boating, decided at last to let her body rest and put her equally active mind through what classical collegians term a course of sprouts. Having undertaken to read and know everything, she devoted herself to the task with great energy, going from Sue to Swedenborg with perfect impartiality, and having different authors as children have sundry distempers, being fractious while they lasted, but all the better for them when once over. Carlyle appeared like scarlet-fever, and raged violently for a time; for, being anything but a passive bucket, Di became prophetic with Mahomet, belligerent with Cromwell, and made the French Revolution a yentable Reign of Terror to her family. Goethe and Schiller alternated like fever and ague; Mephistopheles became her hero, Joan of Arc her model, and she turned her black eyes red over Egmont and Wallenstein. A mild attack of Emerson followed, during which she

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was lost in a fog, and her sisters rejoiced inwardly when she emerged informing them that

The Sphinx was drowsy,  
Her wings were furled.

Poor Di was floundering slowly to her proper place; but she splashed up a good deal of foam by getting out of her depth, and rather exhausted herself by trying to drink the ocean dry.

Laura, after the midsummer nights dream that often comes to girls of seventeen, woke up to find that youth and love were no match for age and common sense. Philip had been flying about the world like a thistle-down for five-and-twenty years, generous – hearted, frank, and kind, but with never an idea of the serious side of life in his handsome head. Great, therefore, were the wrath and dismay of the enamored thistle-down, when the father of his love mildly objected to seeing her begin the world in a balloon with a very tender but very inexperienced aeronaut for a guide.

Laura is too young to play house yet, and you are too unstable to assume the part of lord and master, Philip. Go and prove that you have prudence, patience, energy, and enterprise, and I will give you my girl, but not before. I must seem cruel, that I may be truly kind; believe this, and let a little pain lead you to great happiness, or show you where you would have made a bitter blunder.

The lovers listened, owned the truth of the old man's words, bewailed their fate, and yielded, Laura for love of her father, Philip for love of her. He went away to build a firm foundation for his castle in the air, and Laura retired into an invisible convent, where she cast off the world, and regarded her sympathizing sisters through a grate of superior knowledge and unsharable grief. Like a devout nun, she worshipped St. Philip, and firmly believed in his miraculous powers. She fancied that her woes set her apart from common cares, and slowly fell

into a dreamy state, professing no inter  
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est in any mundane matter, but the art that first attracted Philip. Crayons, bread – crusts, and gray paper became glorified in Lauras eyes; and her one pleasure was to sit pale and still before her easel, day after day, filling her portfolios with the faces he had once admired. Her sisters observed that every Bacchus, Piping Faun, or Dying Gladiator bore some likeness to a comely countenance that heathen god or hero never owned; and seeing this, they privately rejoiced that she had found such solace for her grief.

Mrs. Lords keen eye had read a certain newly written page in her sons heart, his first chapter of that romance, begun in Paradise, whose interest never flags, whose beauty never fades, whose end can never come till Love lies dead. With womanly skill she divined the secret, with motherly discretion she counselled patience, and her son accepted her advice, feeling, that, like many a healthful herb, its worth lay in its bitterness.

Love like a man, John, not like a boy, and learn to know yourself before you take a womans happiness into your keeping. You and Nan have known each other all your lives; yet, till this last visit, you never thought you loved her more than any other childish friend. It is too soon to say the words so often spoken hastily, so hard to be recalled. Go back to your work, dear, for another year; think of Nan in the light of this new hope; compare her with comelier, gayer girls; and by absence prove the truth of your belief. Then, if distance only makes her dearer, if time only strengthens your affection, and no doubt of your own worthiness disturbs you, come back and offer her what any woman should be glad to take, my boys true heart.

John smiled at the motherly pride of her words, but answered with a wistful look.

It seems very long to wait, mother. If I could just ask her for a word of hope, I could be very patient then.

Ah, my dear, better bear one year of

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impatience now than a lifetime of regret hereafter. Nan is happy; why disturb her by a word which will bring the tender cares and troubles that come soon enough to such conscientious creatures as herself? If she loves you, time will prove it; therefore let the new affection spring and ripen as your early friendship has done, and it will be all the stronger for a summers growth. Philip was rash, and has to bear his trial now, and Laura shares it with him. Be more generous, John; make your trial, bear your doubts alone, and give Nan the happiness without the pain. Promise me this, dear, promise me to hope and wait.

The young mans eye kindled, and in his heart there rose a better chivalry, a truer valor, than any Dis knights had ever known.

Ill try, mother, was all he said; but she was satisfied, for John seldom tried in vain.

Oh, girls, how splendid you are! It does my heart good to see my handsome sisters in their best array, cried Nan, one mild October night, as she put the last touches to certain airy raiment fashioned by her own 196ouldn't hands, and then fell back to survey the grand effect.

Di and Laura were preparing to assist at an event of the season, and Nan, with her own locks fallen on her shoulders, for want of sundry combs promoted to her sisters heads, and her dress in unwonted disorder, for lack of the many pins extracted in exciting crises of the toilet, hovered like an affectionate bee about two very full-blown flowers.

Laura looks like a cool Undine, with the ivy-wreaths in her shinin~ hair; and Di has illuminated herself to such an extent .with those scarlet leaves, that I 196ould know what great creature she resembles most said Nan, beaming with sisterly ad-196ouldn't196.

Like Juno, Zenobia, and Cleopatra simmered into one, with a touch of Xan-

tippe by way of spice. But, to my eye, the finest woman of the three is the dishevelled young person embracing the bed-post; for she stays at home herself, and gives her time and taste to making homely people fine, which is a waste of good material, and an imposition on the public.

As Di spoke, both the fashion-plates looked affectionately at the gray-gowned figure; but, being works of art, they were obliged to nip their feelings in the bud, and reserve their caresses till they returned to common life.

Put on your bonnet, and well leave you at Mrs. Lord's on our way. It will do you good, Nan; and perhaps there may be news from John, added Di, as she bore down upon the door like a man-of-war under full sail.

Or from Philip, sighed Laura, with a wistful look.

Whereupon Nan persuaded herself that her strong inclination to sit down was owing to want of exercise, and the heaviness of her eyelids a freak of imagination; so, speedily smoothing her ruffled plumage, she ran down to tell her father of the new arrangement.

Go, my dear, by all means. I shall be writing; and you will be lonely, if you stay. But I must see my girls; for I caught glimpses of certain surprising phantoms flitting by the door. Nan led the way, and the two pyramids revolved before him with the rigidity of lay-figures, much to the good man's edification; for with his fatherly pleasure there was mingled much mild wonderment at the amplitude of array.

Yes, I see my geese are really swans, though there is such a cloud between us that I feel a long way off; and hardly know them. But this little daughter is always available, always my cricket on the hearth.

As he spoke, her father drew Nan closer, kissed her tranquil face, and smiled content.

Well, if ever I see pictures, I see em now, and I declare to goodness its as interestin as play-actin, every bit. Miss Di, with all them boughs in her head, looks like the Queen of Sheby, when she went a-visitin Whats-his-name; and

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if Miss Laura ant as sweet as a lally-barster figger, I should like to know what is.

In her enthusiasm, Sally ouldn't about the girls, flourishing her milk-pan like a modern Miriam about to sound her timbrel for excess of joy.

Laughing merrily, the two Mont Blanes bestowed themselves in the family ark, Nan hopped up beside Patrick, and Solomon, roused from his lawful slumbers, morosely trundled them away. But, looking backward with a last Good night! Nan saw her father still standing at the door with smiling countenance, and the moonlight fallin' like a benediction on his silver hair.

Betsey shall go up the hill with you, my dear, and heres a basket of eggs for your father. Give him my love, and be sure you let me know the next time he is poorly, Mrs. Lord said, when her guest rose to depart, after an hour of pleasant chat.

But Nan never got the gift; for, to her great dismay, her hostess dropped the basket with a crash, and flew across the room to meet a tall shape pausing in the shadow of the door. There was no need to ask who the new-comer was; for, even in his mother's arms, John looked over her shoulder with an eager nod to Nan, who stood among the ruins with never a sign of weariness in her face, nor the memory of a care at her heart, for they all went out when John came in.

Now tell us how and why and when you came. Take off your coat, my dear! And here are the old slippers. Why ouldn you let us know you were coming so soon? How have you been? And what makes you so late to-night? Betsey, you ouldn' put on your bonnet. And oh, my dear boy, have you been to supper yet?

Mrs. Lord was a quiet soul, and her flood of questions was purred softly in her son's ear; for, being a woman, she must talk, and, being a mother, must pet the one delight of her life, and make a

little festival when the lord of the manor came home. A whole drove of fatted calves were metaphorically killed, and a banquet appeared with speed.

John was not one of those romantic heroes who can go through three volumes of hairbreadth escapes without the faintest hint of that blessed institution, dinner; therefore, like Lady Leatherbridge, he partook copiously of everything, while the two women beamed over each mouthful with an interest that enhanced its flavor, and urged upon him cold meat and cheese, pickles and pie, as if dyspepsia and nightmare were among the lost arts.

Then he opened his budget of news and fed them.

I was coming next month, according to custom; but Philip fell upon and so tempted me, that I was driven to sacrifice myself to the cause of friendship, and up we came to-night. He would not let me come here till we had seen your father, Nan; for the poor lad was pining for Laura, and hoped his good behavior for the past year would satisfy his judge and secure his recall. We had a fine talk with your father; and, upon my life, Phil seemed to have received the gift of tongues, for he made a most eloquent plea, which I've stored away for future use, I assure you. The dear old gentleman was very kind, told Phil he was satisfied with the success of his probation, that he should see Laura when he liked, and, if all went well, should receive his reward in the spring. It must be a delightful sensation to know you have made a fellow-creature as happy as those words made Phil to-night.

John paused, and looked musingly at the matronly tea-pot, as if he saw a wondrous future in its shine.

Nan twinkled off the drops that rose at the thought of Laura's joy, and said, with grateful warmth,

You say nothing of your own share in the making of that happiness, John but we know it, for Philip has told Laura in his letters all that you have been to him, and I am sure there was other eloquence beside his own before father grant-

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ed all you say he has. Oh, John, I thank you very much for this!

Mrs. Lord beamed a whole midsummer of delight upon her son, as she saw the pleasure these words gave him, though he answered simply,

I only tried to be a brother to him, Nan; for he has been most kind to me.

Yes, I said my little say to-night, and gave my testimony in behalf of the prisoner at the bar, a most merciful judge pronounced his sentence, and he rushed straight to Mrs. Leighs to tell Laura the blissful news. Just imagine the scene when he appears, and how I will open her wicked eyes and enjoy the spectacle of the 1980s' lover, the bride-elect's tears, the stir, and the romance of the thing. She'll cry over it to-night, and caricature it to-morrow.

And John led the laugh at the picture he had conjured up, to turn the thoughts of Dis dangerous sister from himself.

At ten Nan retired into the depths of her old bonnet with a far different face from the one she brought out of it, and John, resuming his hat, mounted guard.

Dont stay late, remember, John!

And in Mrs. Lord's voice there was a warning tone that her son interpreted aright.

I'll not forget, mother.

And he kept his word; for though Philip's happiness floated temptingly before him, and the little figure at his side had never seemed so dear, he ignored the bland winds, the tender night, and set a seal upon his lips, thinking manfully within himself; I see many signs of promise in her happy face; but I will wait and hope a little longer for her sake.

Where is father, Sally? Asked Nan, as that functionary appeared, blinking owlishly, but utterly repudiating the idea of sleep.

He went down the garden, miss, when the gentlemen cleared, hem a little flustered by the goings on. Shall I fetch him in? asked Sally, as irreverently as if her master were a bag of meal.

No, we will go ourselves. And slowly the two paced down the leaf-strewn walk. Fields of yellow grain were waving on

the hill-side, and sere corn-blades rustled in the wind, from the orchard came the scent of ripening fruit, and all the garden-plots lay ready to yield up their humble offerings to their masters hand. But in the silence of the night a greater Reaper had passed by, gathering in the harvest of a righteous life, and leaving only tender memories for the gleaners who had come so late.

The old man sat in the shadow of the tree his own hands planted; its fruitful boughs shone ruddily, and its leaves still whispered the low lullaby that hushed him to his rest.

How fast he sleeps! Poor father!  
I should have come before and made it pleasant for him.

As she spoke, Nan lifted up the head bent down upon his breast, and kissed his pallid cheek.

Oh, John, this is not sleep !

Yes, dear, the happiest he will ever know.

For a moment the shadows flickered over three white faces and the silence deepened solemnly. Then John reverently bore the pale shape in, and Nan dropped down beside it, saying, with a rain of grateful tears,

He kissed me when I went, and said a last good night

For an hour steps went to and fro about her, many voices whispered near her, and 199ouldn't bands touched the beloved clay she held so fast; but one by one the busy feet passed out, one by one the voices died away, and human skill proved vain. Then Mrs. Lord drew the orphan to the shelter of her arms, soothing her with the mute solace of that motherly embrace.

Nan, Nan! Heres Philip! Come and see

The happy call rei~choed through the house, and Nan spran0 up as if her time for grief were past.

I must tell them. Oh, my poor girls, how will they bear it ?they have known so little sorrow!

But there was no need for her to speak;

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other lips had spared her th~ hard task. For, as she stirred to meet them, a sharp cry rent the air, steps rang upon the stairs, and two wild-eyed creatures came into the hush of that familiar room, for the first time meeting with no welcome from their fathers voice.

~Tit,h one impulse, Di and Laura fled to Nan, and the sisters clung together in a silent embrace, far more eloquent than words. John took his mother by the hand, and led her from the room, closing the door upon the sacredness of grief.

Yes, we are poorer than we thought; hut when everything is settled, we shall get on very well. We can let a part of this great house, and live quietly together until spring; then Laura will be married, and Di can go on their travels with them, as Philip wishes her to do. We shall be cared for; so never fear for us, John.

Nan said this, as her friend parted from her a week later, after the saddest holiday he had ever known.

And what becomes of you, Nan? He asked, watching the patient eyes that smiled when others would have wept.

I shall stay in the dear old house; for no other place would seem like home to me. I shall find some little child to love and care for, and be quite happy till. The girls come back and want me.

John nodded wisely, as he listened, and went away prophesying within 199ouldn't She shall find something more than a child to love; and, God willing, shall be very happy till the girls come home and cannot have her.

Nans plan was carried into effect. Slowly the divided waters closed again, and the three fell back into their old life. But the touch of sorrow drew them closer; and, though invisible, a beloved presence still moved among them, a familiar voice still spoke to them in the silence of their softened hearts. Thus the soil was made ready, and in the depth of winter the good seed was sown, was watered with many tears, and soon sprang up green with the promise of a harvest for their after years.

Di and Laura consoled themselves with their favorite employments, unconscious that Nan was growing paler, thinner, and

more silent, as the weeks went by, till one day she dropped quietly before them, and it suddenly became manifest that she was utterly worn out with many cares and the secret suffering of a tender heart bereft of the paternal love which had been its strength and stay.

Im only tired, dear girls. Dont be troubled, for I shall be up to-morrow, she said cheerily, as she looked into the anxious faces bending over her.

But the weariness was of many months growth, and it was weeks before that to-morrow came.

Laura installed herself as nurse, and her devotion was repaid four-fold; for, sitting at her sisters bedside, she learned a finer art than that she had left. Her eye grew clear to see the beauty of a seW-denying life, and in the depths of Inans meek nature she found the strong, sweet virtues that made her what she was.

Then remembering that these womanly attributes were a brides best dowry, Laura gave herself to their attainment, that she might become to another household the blessing Nan had been to her own; and turning from the worship of the goddess Beauty, she gave her hand to that humbler and more human teacher, Duty, learning her lessons with a willing heart, for Philips sake.

Di corked her inkstand, locked her bookcase, and went at housework as if it were a five-barred gate; of course she missed the leap, but scrambled bravely through, and appeared much soboa~ed by the exercise. Sally had departed to sit under a vine and fig-tree of her own, so Di had undisputed sway; but if dish-pans and dusters had tongues, direful would have, been the history of that crusade against frost and fire, indolence and inexperience. But they were dumb, and Di scorned to complain, though her struggles were pathetic to behold, and her sisters went through a series of messes equal to a course of Prince Benreddins pep-

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of doors; for, unlike her favorite heroines in satin and tears, or helmet and shield, Di met her fate in a big checked apron and dust-cap, wonderful to see; yet she wielded her broom as stoutly as Moll Pitcher shouldered her gun, and marched to her daily martyrdom in the kitchen with as heroic a heart as the Maid of Orleans took to her stake.

Mind won the victory over matter in the end, and Di was better all her days for the tribulations and the triumphs of that time; for she drowned her idle fancies in her wash-tub, made burnt-offerings of selfishness and pride, and learned the worth of self-denial, as she sang with happy voice among the pots and kettles of her conquered realm.

Nan thought of John, and in the stillness of her sleepless nights prayed Ileaven to keep him safe, and make her worthy to receive and strong enough to bear the blessedness or pain of love.

Snow fell without, and keen winds howled among the leafless elms, but herbs of grace were blooming beautifully in the sunshine of sincere endeavor, and this dreariest season proved the most fruitful of the year; for love taught Laura, labor chastened Di, and patience fitted Nan for the blessing of her life.

Nature, that stillest, yet most diligent of housewives, began at last that spring-cleanincr which she makes so pleasant that none find the heart to grumble as they do when other matrons set their premises a-dust. Her haudmaids, wind and rain and sun, swept, washed, and garnished busily, green carpets were unroll~l, apple-boughs were hung with draperies of bloom, and dandelions, pet nurslings of the year, came out to play upon the swar(l.

From the South returned that opera troupe whose manager is never in despair, whose tenor never sulks, whose prima donna never fails, and in the orchard bond fide matin~es were held, to which buttercups and clovers crowded in their prettiest spring hats, and verdant young blades twinkled their dewy br-gnettes, as they bowed and made way for the floral belles.

May was bidding June good-morrow, and the roses were just dreaming that it was almost time to wake, when John came

again into the quiet room which now seemed the Eden that contained his Eve. Of course there was a jubilee; but something seemed to have befallen the whole group, for never had they all appeared in such odd frames of mind. John was restless, and wore an excited look, most unlike his usual serenity of aspect.

Nan the cheerful had fallen into a well of silence and was not to be extracted by any hydraulic power, though she smiled like the June sky over her head. Dis peculiarities were out in full force, and she looked as if she would go off like a torpedo, at a touch; but through all her moods there was a half-triumphant, half-remorseful expression in the glance she fixed on John. And Laura, once so silent, now sang like a blackbird, as she flitted to and fro; but her fitful song was always, Philip, my king.

John felt that there had come a change upon the three, and silently divined whose unconscious influence had wrought the miracle. The embargo was off his tongue, and he was in a fever to ask that question which brings a flutter to the stoutest heart; but though the man had come, the hour had not. So, by way of steadying his nerves, he paced the room, pausing often to take notes of his companions, and each pause seemed to increase his wonder and content.

He looked at Nan. She was in her usual place, the ri-id little chair she loved, because it once was large enough to hold a curly-headed playmate and herself. The old work-basket was at her side, and the battered thimble busily at work; but her lips wore a smile they had never worn before, the color of the unblown roses touched her cheek, and her down-cast eyes were full of light.

He looked at Di. The inevitable book was on her knee, but its leaves were uncut; the strong-minded knob of hair still asserted its supremacy aloft upon her

the expression of her brown countenance had grown softer, her tongue had found a curb, and in her hand lay a card with Potts, Kettel, & Co. inscribed thereon, which she regarded with never a scornful word for the Co.

He looked at Laura. She was before her easel, as of old; hut the pale nun had given place to a blooming girl, who sang at her work, which was no prim Pallas, hut a Clytie turning her human face to meet the sun.

John, what are you thinking of? He stirred as if Dis voice had disturbed his fancy at some pleasant pastime, but answered ~y~ith his usual sincerity, I was thinking of a certain dear old fairy tale called Cinderella.

Oh! Said Di; and her Oh was a most impressive monosyllable. I see the meaning of your smile now; and though the application of the story is not very complimentary to all parties concerned, it is very just and very true.

She paused a moment, then went on with softened voice and earnest mien You think I am a blind and selfish creature. So I am, but not so blind and selfish as I have been; for many tears have cleared my eyes, and much sincere regret has made me humbler than I was. I have found a better book than any fathers library can give me, and I have read it with a love and admiration that grew stronger as I turned the leaves. Henceforth I take it for my guide and gospel, and, looking back upon the selfish and neglectful past, can only say, Heaven bless your dear heart, Nan!

Laura echoed Dis last words; for, with eyes as full of tenderness, she looked down upon the sister she had lately learned to know, saying, warmly,

Yes, Heaven bless your dear heart, Nan! I never can forget all you have been to me; and when I am far away with Philip, there will always be one countenance more beautiful to me than any pictured face I may discover, there will be one place more dear to me than Rome. The face will be yours, Nan, always so patient, always so serene; and the dearer place will be this home of ours, which you have made so pleasant to me all these years by kindnesses as numberless and noiseless as the drops of dew.

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head, and the triangular jacket still adorned her shoulders in defiance of all fashions, past, present, or to come; hut



Dear girls, what have I ever done,  
that you should love me so? Cried Nan,  
with happy wonderment, as the tall heads,  
black and golden, bent to meet the lowly  
brown one, and her sisters mute lips an-  
swered her.

Then Laura looked up, saying, play-  
fully,

Here are the good and wicked sis-  
ters ; where shall we find the Prince?

There! Cried Di, pointing to John;  
and then her secret went off like a rock-  
et; for, with her old impetuosity, she  
said,

I have found you out, John, and am  
ashamed to look you in the face, remem-  
bering the past. Girls, you know, when  
father died, John sent us money, which  
he said Mr. Owen had long owed us and  
had paid at last? It was a kind lie, John,  
and a generous thing to do; for we need-  
ed it, but never would have taken it as a  
gift. I know you meant that we should  
never find this out; but yesterday I met  
Mr. Owen returning from the West, and  
when I thanked him for a piece of justice  
we had not expected of him, he gruffly  
told me he had never paid the debt, nev-  
er meant to pay it, for it was outlawed,  
and we could not claim a farthing. John,  
I have laughed at you, thought you stu-  
pid, treated you unkindly; but I know  
you now, and never shall forget the les-  
son you have taught me. I am proud  
as Lucifer, but I ask you to forgive me,  
and I seal my real repentance so and  
so.

With tragic countenance, Di rushed  
across the room, threw both arms about  
the astonished young mans neck and  
dropped an energetic kiss upon his cheek.  
There was a momentary silence; for Di  
finely illustrated her strong-minded theo-  
ries by crying like the weakest of her  
sex. Laura, with the ruling passion

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strong in death, still tried to draw, but  
broke her pet crayon, and endowed her  
Clytie with a supplementary orb, owing  
to the dimness of her own. And Nan sat  
with drooping eyes, that shone upon her

work, thinking with tender pride,  
They know him now, and love him  
for his generous heart.

Di spoke first, rallying to her colors,  
though a little daunted by her loss of  
self-control.

Dont laugh~, John, I 202ouldn't help  
it; and 202ould think Im not sincere, for  
I am,I am; and I will prove it by  
growing good enough to be your friend.  
That debt must all be paid, and I shall  
do it; for Ill turn my books and pen to  
some account, and write stories full of  
dear old souls like you and Nan; and  
some one, I know, will like and buy them,  
though they are not works of Shak-  
speare. Ive thought of this before, have  
felt I had the power in me; now I have  
the motive, and now Ill do it.

If Di had proposed to translate the  
Koran, or build a new Saint Pauls, there  
would have been many chances of suc-  
cess; for, once moved, her will, like a bat-  
tering-ram, would knock down the obsta-  
cles her wits could not surmount. John  
believed in her most heartily, and show-  
ed it, as he answered, looking into her  
resolute face,

I know you will, and yet make us  
very proud of our Chaos, Di. Let the  
money lie, and when you have made a  
fortune, Ill claim it with enormous inter-  
est; but, believe me, I feel already doub-  
ly repaid by the esteem so generously  
confessed, so cordially bestowed, and can  
only say, as we used to years ago,  
Now lets forgive and so forget.

But proud Di would not let him add  
to her obligation, even by returning her  
impetuous salute; she slipped away, and,  
shaking off the last drops, answered with  
a curious mixture of old freedom and  
new respect,

No more sentiment, please, John.

We know each other now; and when I  
find a fi-iend, I never let him go. We  
have smoked the pipe of peace; so let us  
go back to our wigwams and bury the  
feud. Where were we when I lost my  
head? And what were we talking about?

Cinderella and the Prince.

As he spoke, Johns eye kindled, and,  
turning, he looked down at Nan, who  
sat diligently ornamenting with micro-  
scopic stitches a great patch going on, the  
wrong side out.

Yes, so we were; and now taking  
 pussy for the godmother, the characters  
 of the story are well personated, all  
 but the slipper, said Di, laughing, as  
 she thought of the many times they had  
 played it together years ago.

A sudden movement stirred Johns  
 frame, a sudden purpose shone in his  
 countenance, and a sudden change befell  
 his voice, as he said, prod~icing from some  
 hiding-place a little worn-out shoe,  
 I can supply the slipper ;who will  
 try it first?

Dis black eyes opened wide, as they  
 fell on the familiar object; then her ro-  
 mance-loving nature saw the whole plot  
 of that drama which needs but two to  
 act it. A great delight flushed up into  
 her face, as she promptly took her cue,  
 saying,

No need for us to try it, Laura; for  
 it 203ouldn't fit us, if our feet were as small  
 as Chinese dolls; our parts are played  
 out; therefore Exeunt wicked sisters to  
 the music of the wedding-bells. And  
 pouncing upon the dismayed artist, she  
 swept her out and closed the door with  
 a triumphant bang.

John went to Nan, and, dropping on  
 his knee as reverently as the herald of  
 the fairy tale, he asked, still smiling, but  
 with lips grown tremulous,  
 Will Cinderella try the little shoe,  
 and if it fits go with the Prince?

But Nan only covered up her face,  
 weeping happy tears, while all the weary  
 work strayed down upon the floor, as if it  
 knew her holiday had come.

John drew the hidden face still closer,  
 and while she listened to his eager words,  
 Nan heard the beating of the strong mans  
 heart, and knew it spoke the truth.

Nan, I promised mother to be silent

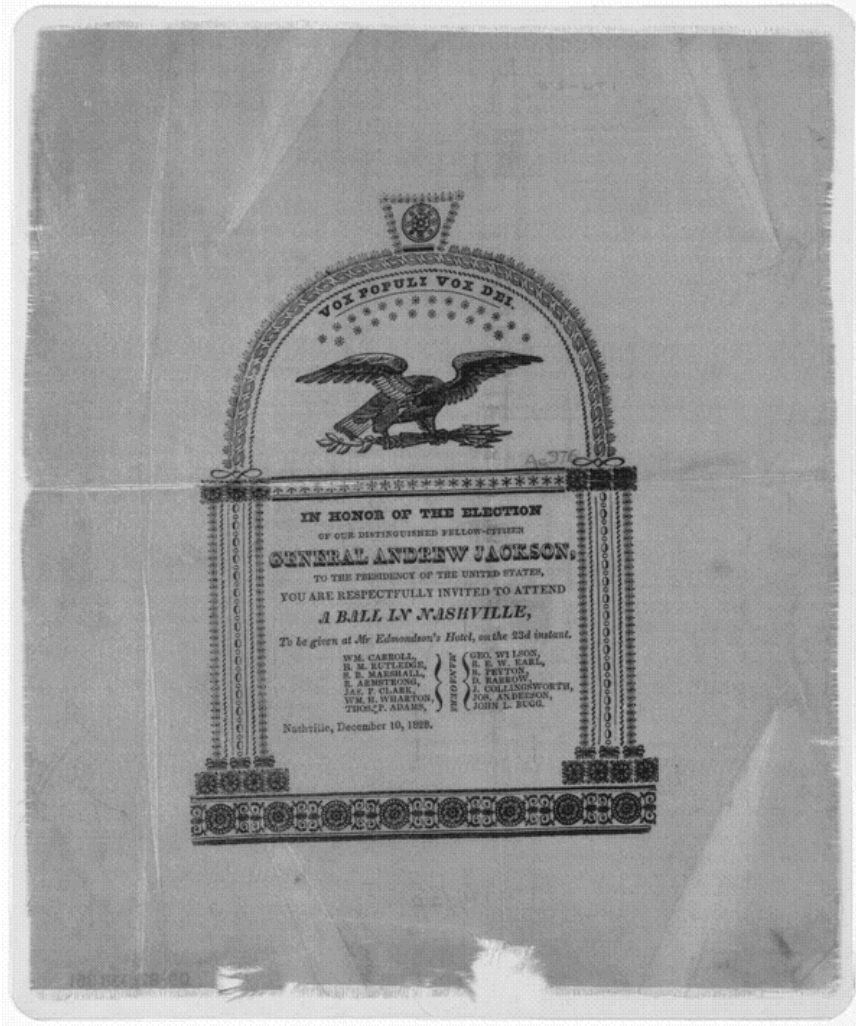
[View page 441](#)

till I was sure I loved you wholly, sure  
 that the knowledge would give no pain  
 when I should tell it, as I am trying to  
 tell it now. This little shoe has been  
 my comforter through this long year, and  
 I have kept it as other lovers keep their  
 fairer favors. It has been a talisman  
 more eloquent to me than flower or ring  
 for, when I saw how worn it was, I al-  
 ways thought of the willing feet that  
 came and went for others comfort all  
 day long; when I saw the little bow you  
 tied, I always thought of the hands so  
 diligent in serving any one who knew a  
 want or felt a pain; and when I recalled  
 the gentle creature who had worn it last,  
 I always saw her patient, tender, and  
 devout, and tried to grow more wor-  
 thy of her, that I might one day dare to  
 ask if she would walk beside me all my  
 life and he my angel in the house.  
 Will you, dear? Believe me, you shall  
 never know a weariness or grief I have  
 the power to shield you from.  
 Then Nan, as simple in her love as in  
 her life, laid her arms about his neck,  
 her happy face against his own, and an-  
 swered softly, Oh, John, I never can he sad or tir-  
 ed any more!

## APPENDIX D

Invitation to a ball celebrating General Andrew Jackson's election, 10 December 1828.

“In honor of the election of our distinguished fellow-citizen General Andrew Jackson, to the presidency of the United States, you are respectfully invited to attend a ball in Nashville ... Nashville, December 10, 1828.”



Printed on satin. Printed Ephemera Collection; Portfolio 174, Folder 20.

DIGITAL ID: rbpe 17402000 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.rbc/rbpe.17402000>.

Retrieved from the Library of Congress database *The Making of America*. December 2012.

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**ABSTRACT*****JANE EYRE* AND HER TRANSATLANTIC LITERARY DESCENDANTS: THE HEROIC FEMALE *BILDUNGSROMAN* AND CONSTRUCTIONS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY**

by

**ABIGAIL RUTH HEINIGER****May 2013****Advisor:** Dr. Anca Vlasopolos**Major:** English**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

This dissertation examines the role of fairy tales and fairy lore across the arc of Charlotte Brontë's career from *Jane Eyre* (1847) to *Villette* (1853) in order to demonstrate the evolution of the heroic female *bildungsroman* in Brontë's work. This distinctive narrative paradigm, the heroic female *bildungsroman*, is incorporated into a perpetual search for a mythology to define womanhood, which ripples out from *Jane Eyre*'s literary descendants written by women, both in Great Britain, Continental Europe and across the Atlantic, in the United States and Canada. Expanding upon the theory of transatlantic literary exchange modeled by Amanda Claybaugh in *The Novel of Purpose: Literature and Social Reform in the Anglo-American World* (2007), I demonstrate the ideological influence of *Jane Eyre* and the reciprocal influence of American literary responses on interpretation of Charlotte Brontë's work.

The fairytale allusions and, more particularly, the fairy heroine figure featured in *Jane Eyre* are excised from Brontë's final novel, *Villette* (1851). Nor do they survive intact in *Jane Eyre*'s other literary descendants: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), and Hannah Crafts's *The Bondswoman's Narrative* (ca 1850). These four texts are certainly not the

only works of literature that were influenced by *Jane Eyre*; however, these are some of the most prominent examples of literature written by women that are currently being posited as literary descendants of Brontë's debut novel.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, all four of these texts attempt to replace Brontë's fairytale allusions in unique and distinctive ways; these authors all model the search for a female mythology, which persists into the twentieth-first century.<sup>154</sup> Moreover, like Brontë's fairy heroine, the larger-than-life heroines in her literary progeny are invested with a range of regional and national associations that generate nationalistic messages.

Chapter One functions as an introduction to my main argument as well as an overview of my critical approach. It particularly outlines the distinctive transatlantic microcosm that develops around *Jane Eyre* as well as the Cinderella paradigm projected back onto Brontë's novel by American authors and readers. Chapter Two covers the arc of Brontë's career; it explores the dominant fairytale paradigms in *Jane Eyre* and identifies the role of the fairy lore in constructing the heroic Jane Eyre. This chapter demonstrates the connections between the heroic changeling<sup>155</sup> and the local, pre-Victorian fairy lore. The argument relies heavily on primary source material from Haworth and Yorkshire as well as periodicals that the Brontë family read. It concludes by demonstrating how fairytale material in *Villette* is excised.

Chapter Three explores the transatlantic community of women writers in which Brontë was immersed. It begins with the ideological or imaginary transatlantic exchange between Great

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<sup>153</sup> Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) is a notable pastiche of *Jane Eyre*.

<sup>154</sup> It may be argued that *Jane Eyre*'s legacy continue well into the twenty-first century with novels like Diane Setterfield's *The Thirteenth Tale* (2006). In *Bluebeard Gothic: Jane Eyre and Its Progeny* (2010), Heta Pyrhönen analyzes Setterfield and other twentieth- and twenty-first-century adaptations of *Jane Eyre*, emphasizing the contradictions and tensions of the "Bluebeard" fairytale embedded in Brontë's novel. However, Pyrhönen claims that this novel "undoubtedly belongs squarely to Britain's national heritage" (11). She does not recognize the transatlantic literary impact.

<sup>155</sup> A changeling is a foundling who is half human, half fairy, particularly in Charlotte Brontë's fiction. In "The Foundling," a story from Brontë's juvenilia, the half human, half fairy character Sydney is identified as a changeling. In "Faery and the Beast" (2006), I posit that *Jane Eyre* is a changeling heroine and argue that through the changeling and its fairy lore tradition, Charlotte Brontë creates a heroine strong enough to break out of the established female dichotomy of angels and fallen angels. This dissertation is only tangentially related to "Faery and the Beast," however it does rely upon the previously established changeling identity of *Jane Eyre*.

Britain and the United States discussed by Amanda Claybaugh in *The Novel of Purpose* (2007). It also explores the role that Elizabeth Gaskell's biography *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* played in generating a transatlantic mythology that linked Brontë's life with her texts. Finally, this chapter examines the mainstream literary descendants of *Jane Eyre*. It identifies the heavy reliance on classical mythological allusions to generate a female mythology in the British descendants of *Jane Eyre* in the Victorian Era, particularly *Aurora Leigh*. It also examines Canadian novel *Anne of Green Gables* and U.S. novel *The Wide, Wide World* and the American Cinderella paradigm that these novels develop. I argue that the "Beauty and the Beast" and fairy bride allusions in *Jane Eyre* resonated with the cultural traditions of Brontë's British audience while Cinderella reflects nineteenth-century American ideals.

Chapter Three concludes with an examination of the recently discovered, unpublished manuscript, *The Bondswoman's Narrative* (ca. 1850), by Hannah Crafts.<sup>156</sup> This is the first novel written by an escaped female slave in the United States. Recent scholarship on Crafts has commented on the way her text borrows large amounts of material from other popular novels, primarily Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* (1852) and *Jane Eyre*; critics have even identified the influence of *Villette* in the final chapter of Crafts's novel. The treatment of *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* in *The Bondswoman's Narrative* is a distinctive addition to current scholarship on Brontë's literary progeny, which has focused exclusively on white authors. Furthermore, this close reading of *The Bondswoman's Narrative* is the first to put this novel in conversation with the network of mainstream authors that developed around *Jane Eyre*. Unlike white American women writers, Crafts's repositioning of *Jane Eyre* does not rely upon Cinderella allusions; rather, she

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<sup>156</sup> This is the correct spelling of the novel's title. It is also referred to as *The Bondswoman's Narrative* in recent scholarship.

creates a heroic female *bildungsroman* that undermines this American narrative paradigm, demonstrating that the white fairytale expectations are founded upon exploitation.

Finally, Chapter Four analyzes the cultural significance of transatlantic responses to *Jane Eyre*. Brontë's novel was incorporated into an American narrative culture. In fact, I argue that American readers project the nineteenth-century American self-rise ethic onto *Jane Eyre*, placing it at the center of a distinctly nationalistic tradition. More specifically, *Jane Eyre* became mired in narratives of nineteenth-century American identity formation. It was absorbed into the parallel tradition of male and female rise tales, related to American individualism and the self-rise ethic. The male narrative tradition has been dominated in the popular imagination by novels like Horatio Alger's, while the American Cinderella became the term to describe the female narrative tradition.



**AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT**

Abigail Heiniger is a Ph.D. Candidate in the English Department at Wayne State University. She Received a M.A. in English Literature from the University of Louisville in August 2009 and a M.A. in Humanities with concentrations in Literature and Art History from the University of Louisville in May 2008. Her research interests include nineteenth-century transatlantic women writers and nineteenth-century material culture. She lives and works in Detroit, Michigan, teaching literature and composition courses at Wayne State University.