Interrogating Rusticism:

Extrapolitan Collisions between Rural and Urban Cultures in Nineteenth-Century Literature

by

Max Hohner

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Dan Bivona, Chair
Marlene Tromp
Melissa Free

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ABSTRACT

Interrogating Rusticism utilizes concepts from postcolonial theory and studies in cosmopolitanism to examine the relationship between the country and the city in nineteenth-century Britain. The project considers the way in which rural people, places, and cultures were depicted in popular literature and introduces two new terms that help inform one's understanding of rural and urban interaction. "Rusticism" refers to a discourse reminiscent of Orientalism that creates an "us and them" dichotomy through characterizations that essentialize rural experience and cast it as distinct from urban living. "Extrapolitanism" evokes a cultural practice similar to rooted cosmopolitanism that entails traveling back and forth between the country and the city, engaging in both urban and rural cultural practices, and not committing oneself solely to the social and political causes of either the country or the city. Because rusticist stereotypes regarding rural life, such as the notion that rural labourers possess an energy and love for their work but are also uneducated and backward, have persisted into the twenty-first century, studying the more nuanced, less-rusticist aspects of rural life in nineteenth-century Britain is an often overlooked, but still very important, endeavor. *Interrogating Rusticism* closely examines literature by authors known for imbuing their works with rusticist portrayals of country life, and seeks to illuminate how, in addition to perpetuating rusticist discourse, those authors also cultivate an extrapolitan type of mindset when they do depict more nuanced aspects of rural life.

Each chapter follows a similar methodological approach that involves looking at a specific rusticist notion, the binary distinctions that help construct it, the historical

background that contributed to its rise, a critically overlooked work that informed the writing process of a commonly studied piece, and how the commonly studied piece challenges the rusticist notion by revealing that the binary distinctions actually inform one another. *Interrogating Rusticism* helps elucidate often overlooked aspects of rural life in nineteenth-century Britain that can and should inform rural and urban interaction today as long-held stereotypes regarding rural life still persist and the world becomes increasingly more urban.

This project is dedicated to Munna Hohner because without her patience, love, support, dedication, encouragement, knowledge, ideas, prayers, and constructive criticism it would not have been possible.

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Introduction –

A Lazy Tour of the Country and the City: Reapproaching Rural and Urban Interaction in the Nineteenth Century

The Distinctly Altered Countryside of Nineteenth-Century England

Throughout the nineteenth century, rural communities in Great Britain experienced formerly unprecedented levels of economic, social, and cultural change that helped shape contemporaneous and future discourses regarding rural life by bringing urbanites and country dwellers into more frequent contact than ever before. If one takes a train, today, from London through the South of England or North toward the Scottish highlands, one will see that much of Britain is still rural. However, due to the sweeping changes of the nineteenth century, the rural communities of Britain lack the bustling populations, prominent economies, and political influence they once possessed. Changes brought about by events such as the frequent enclosure of once common land throughout the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, and the Great Depression of 1873-96 contributed to a substantial amount of emigration from the country to the city as country dwellers relocated to find work. Rural and urban interaction in the nineteenth century was further intensified by the numerous urbanites who visited the countryside for holidays, high days, and as tourists. The notion of a pastoral, idyllic countryside often attracted urban visitors to rural England. This pastoral vision of the countryside was often reemphasized, as well as critiqued and challenged, when the country experienced economic depression and subsequent desertion by its inhabitants. Rural England had frequently been the subject of British writers prior to the

immense changes of the nineteenth century, but the Victorian period produced a significant body of literature that informed public perception of the countryside by perpetuating essentialist images, ideas, and views of rural life that still persist today.

A number of engaging articles and book chapters have been published in recent years that explore literary depictions of rural life from the nineteenth century[1], but a book-length study has not appeared since Raymond Williams's seminal 1973 work *The Country and the City*. Williams thoroughly examines the history, development, and perpetuation in literature of common cultural perceptions regarding English rural life, but Williams also leaves his work in a nascent state. One aspect of rural and urban interaction that Williams does not explore as fully is the ability of literature to challenge, critique, and subvert common cultural perceptions of rural life. Furthermore, a number of critical methodologies have emerged since 1973 that are helpful for understanding how nineteenth-century authors subvert common assumptions regarding the countryside. Two specific ideas that are very helpful include Edward W. Said's theory of Orientalism and Kwame Anthony Appiah's concept of "rooted cosmopolitanism." While the connections between rural and urban interaction in nineteenth century Britain, Orientalism, and "rooted cosmopolitanism," may not be immediately clear, the countryside, like the East, was often portrayed in a monolithic way. Drawing on concepts such as Orientalism and "rooted cosmopolitanism" when looking closely at depictions of rural life from nineteenth-century British literature can help reveal previously overlooked portrayals of

[1] See, for instance, Karen Sayer, "Slaves and Infanticide in the Heart of Darkest England: Representations of Children in the Victorian Countryside" (1995), Mark Freeman, "The Agricultural Labourer and the 'Hodge' Stereotype, C. 1850-1914" (2001), and Genevieve Abravanel, "Hardy's Transatlantic Wessex: Constructing the Local in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*" (2005).

the countryside, which include features such as rural communities that are not pastoral but beset by the conflict and strife of modernity, and are more varied, nuanced, and diverse than most depictions. Through their variety, nuance, and diversity, these portrayals enable writers to challenge monolithic constructions of the countryside. In the course of *Interrogating Rusticism*, I argue that George Eliot, Charles Dickens, Richard Jefferies, and Thomas Hardy accomplish this feat.

Rusticism and Orientalism

Two unique processes, one that produces knowledge regarding the countryside and another one that enables the introduction of more diverse and varied knowledge, share many similarities with Orientalism and "rooted cosmopolitanism," respectively. The first of these two practices, "rusticism," is the process through which knowledge regarding rural people, places, and cultures[2] is produced in order to justify the oppression of the countryside and its inhabitants via characterizations that essentialize both rural and urban experience by contrasting the two and casting rural life in a more negative light. I have chosen the term "rusticism" because "rustic" is employed frequently throughout the nineteenth century and, as Patricia Ingham points out, becomes "a somewhat derogatory term when applied to people rather than landscape" (190). In addition to producing knowledge and characterizing people, places, and cultures as monolithic, "rusticism" also resembles Orientalism in that both can be considered Foucauldian discourses, create "us

[2] I do not intend to evoke Matthew Arnold's definition of the term "culture," which describes a project of striving for perfection, but, rather, Christopher Herbert's. According to Herbert, "culture is not "a society's beliefs, customs, moral values, and so forth, added together: it is the wholeness that their coexistence somehow creates or makes manifest" (*Culture and Anomie* 5). So, with my use of the term "culture," I mean to refer to an entity that encompasses a group of people, as well as their beliefs, values, and customs, rather than a practice or social project.

and them" dichotomies, involve the idealization of othered cultures, and entail the subjectification and economic oppression of those othered cultures. Said explicitly identifies Orientalism as a Foucauldian discourse and describes Orientalism as "a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience" (*Orientalism* 1). Orientalism provides accounts, depictions, and portrayals of life in the East that are composed by Westerners but eventually accrue both institutional and popular authority, thus producing knowledge. This hegemonic knowledge disperses culturally and begins to inform public perception, making the knowledge part of a Foucauldian discourse. By drawing distinctions between the East and the West and ascribing negative connotations to the East, this knowledge creates an "us and them" dichotomy.

Although *The Country and The City* predates *Orientalism* by five years, Williams describes a process very similar to Orientalism when using the term "persuasive cultural history" to discuss the treatment of the English countryside in literary, philosophical, and historical texts. The "persuasive culture history" discussed by Williams involves the production of knowledge, could be considered an example of Foucauldian discourse even though Williams does not directly identify it as one, and helps mark the country as distinct from the city. Williams posits that, because he grew up in a remote rural village near the Welsh border, "it is ironic to remember that it was only after I came [to the city] that I heard, from townsmen [and] academics, an influential version of what country life, [and] country literature, really meant: a prepared and persuasive cultural history" (6). The "townsmen" and "academics" provide popular and institutional authority, respectively,

and Williams learns when he travels to the city not only what "townsmen" and "academics" think of the countryside but also that this urban perspective is highly "influential." By introducing the term rusticism, I mean not only to identify a Foucauldian discourse that produces hegemonic knowledge but also to expand on Williams's concept of "persuasive cultural history" by more thoroughly emphasizing the "us and them" dichotomy that so often characterizes rural and urban interaction in the nineteenth century. Many of the negative connotations that are ascribed to the countryside as a means of establishing this dichotomy resemble the deleterious inferences deployed by Orientalism, such as wild, primitive, exotic, savage, barbaric, ignorant, simplistic, uncivilized, superstitious, infantile, and animalistic. Nuanced and varied depictions of the countryside can challenge rusticism's monolithic characterization, but these nuanced and varied depictions often emerge when authors illuminate the interplay of seemingly opposite categories, such as primitive and civilized, on which the construction of rusticist notions is dependent.

One central rusticist notion is the idealized vision of a pastoral[3] countryside that inspires many urbanites to visit the country and resembles the idealization of the East in Orientalism. Although the knowledge produced by both rusticism and Orientalism denigrates the people, places, and cultures it describes, that knowledge is produced from

[3] Throughout *Interrogating Rusticism*, I use pastoral as an adjective to describe the way the countryside was often, and still is, characterized in literature, art, and other media: as a peaceful, tranquil place that exists outside of time because it is untouched by the chaos, conflict, and strife of modernity. Williams thoroughly discusses the historical tradition of describing the countryside in this manner (13-34). I use idyllic as a synonym for pastoral to avoid repetition and refer to pastoral and idyllic portrayals of the countryside as idealized and romanticized because these portrayals do not allow for variety, nuance, and diversity.

texts composed by individuals who possess a fascination, a love, and, in some cases, even an obsessive passion, for their subject matter. Idealized depictions of the East are not necessarily pastoral, and the English countryside is idealized to a much greater extent in rusticism than the East in Orientalism; nevertheless, the processes through which both places are idealized resemble each other. Said argues that, "We read the novel as the realization of a great cumulative process, [. . .] on the one hand, surveillance and control over [the Orient]; on the other, love for and fascinated attention to its every detail. The overlap between the political hold of the one and the aesthetic and psychological pleasure of the other is made possible by British imperialism itself" (*Culture and Imperialism* 161). Westerners, according to Said, draw psychological pleasure from fantasizing about an Orientalized version of the East that casts Easterners as naive beings who live more backward lives, as if they exist in an earlier time, than their modern, civilized counterparts. This process occurs when British imperialism brings Easterners and Westerners into contact. Similarly, the economic depression of the countryside leads to greater interaction between urbanites and country dwellers, thus further enabling the idealization of the countryside. While simultaneously denigrating and idealizing a group of cultures initially seems contradictory, the overlap of the two makes sense when one considers the patronization that is part of Orientalism. Westerners see themselves as superior to Easterners but idealize the primitive and exotic qualities they assume to be part of an inferior existence. A degree of condescension also emerges when Westerners live vicariously through highly imaginative accounts of Easterners who are not troubled or restrained by the complexities and intricacies of modern civilization.

The idealization of the English countryside draws on similar characterizations. According to Karen Sayer, "The [English] countryside was supposed to possess a timeless quality, to be morally superior to the city, and to be untouched by capitalism and industry" (12). As the urban parts of Great Britain expanded and became more and more urban during the nineteenth century, the practice of idealizing the countryside became even more appealing than it ever was before to urbanites living in the throes of modernity. Just as the Orient afforded Westerners the opportunity to fantasize about a more primitive way of life, the countryside offered urbanites the fantasy of escaping from the rush, busyness, and moral corruption of the city. With the expansion of the British Empire, London came to be seen as the modern, progressive, enlightened center of the empire that encapsulated the peak of civilization. Thus, many urbanites possessed an outlook similar to one of the many beliefs Said claims most Westerners hold by viewing the country as both inferior to the city and a place that offers an exotic escape from the burdens, constraints, and complications placed on one by living a more modern, advanced, and civilized life.

This view was, of course, made possible by an ever-expanding empire that featured London as its center. Robin Gilmour recognizes a "double movement of national consciousness" that combines a "drive outwards" to extend the empire and a "drive inward" to uncover an "*essential* rural England" (232, 184, emphasis added). Thus, rusticism and Orientalism are joined by more than just thematic connections; the two processes directly influence one another. Williams even acknowledges that "In the imperialist phase of [England's] history the nature of the rural economy" transformed

because “dependence on a domestic agriculture dwindled to very low proportions” (2). The significant increase in the import of colonial goods that occurred as part of imperial expansion led to less demand for domestic agricultural products and, subsequently, poverty, ruin, and migration to the cities for many farmers. Imperial expansion is partly responsible for the economic depression of the countryside in the nineteenth century. This economic depression threatened the stability of long-held notions regarding the countryside and, when coupled with the demands of a rapidly expanding and urbanizing empire, caused many urbanites to idealize the assumed simplicity of an idyllic, pastoral countryside.

An idealized, pastoral countryside stands out as one of the most central rusticist notions because it provides the basis for the monolithic view of the countryside that was predominant throughout the nineteenth century. A plethora of stereotypes abound regarding the countryside but they all tend to hearken back to the idea of the countryside as a pastoral place. Rusticism and Orientalism can once again be seen as similar because they both relegate their subject matter to monolithic conceptions. Said posits that the discourse of Orientalism is “based mainly upon the assumption that” the Orient is “monolithic and unchanging and therefore marketable by ‘experts’ for powerful domestic political interests” (*Orientalism* 345). As with rusticism, numerous stereotypes about the Orient circulate culturally, but one of those stereotypes casts the Orient as monolithic and unchanging so that the West can continually be defined as more advanced, modern, civilized, and progressive than the backward, primitive East. Correspondingly, Williams contrasts the “historically varied experience” of the countryside with the popular, more

monolithic perception. According to Williams, "Even the idea of the village, which seems simple, shows in actual history a wide variation: as to size and character, and internally in its variation between dispersed and nuclear settlements," but, "In and through these differences, all the same, certain images and associations persist" (1-2). Despite the various facets and nuances of rural life in Britain, popular images, notions, and views, such as a pastoral countryside, continue to prevail and fail to change with time. Williams goes on to posit that the purpose of *The Country and the City* is to "describe and analyse [these prevailing images], to see them in relation to the historically varied experience" (2). One purpose of *Interrogating Rusticism* is to expand on Williams's goal of elucidating how rusticist notions are constructed by illustrating how those constructions fail to hold up when scrutinized by nineteenth-century novelists.

One major difference between my approach to rusticism and Said's focus in *Orientalism* is the attention I pay to critiques of and challenges to rusticism. Said has come under scrutiny for what many considered the limitations of the way he characterized Orientalism. In Said's work, numerous critics have found and critiqued the lack of methods for challenging Orientalist discourse, Said falling victim to the same kind of dichotomous thinking he intended to critique and clearly stated was not his intention, and the dearth of examples that help explain what constitutes the "real" Orient, as opposed to the one imagined by Orientalist discourse. Nevertheless, Said helped inspire scholars to revisit characterizations of the Middle East, which led to the emergence of a vast array of profound scholarship, particularly in the field of postcolonial studies. Another aspect of the purpose of *Interrogating Rusticism* is, in a manner somewhat

reminiscent of Said, to reinvigorate scholarly interest in rural and urban interaction during the nineteenth century, which, despite a few exceptions, has been grossly neglected since Williams published *The Country and the City* in 1973. However, I do intend to avoid many of the pitfall that Said fell victim to. For this reason, I focus heavily on how monolithic portrayals of the countryside can be critiqued rather than on debating what constitutes the "real" English countryside. Rusticist notions have persisted for centuries, so, determining what constitutes the "real" countryside is a nearly impossible task, which is why I propose seeking out more varied, nuanced, and diverse depictions that challenge or contradict common rusticist perceptions.

Questions that may come to mind for many readers likely revolve around the need to expand on Williams's work by bringing the concept of Orientalism from postcolonial theory[4] into the discussion because the economic depression of the countryside makes Williams's Marxist-based approach a very logical method for examining the relationship between the country and the city in nineteenth-century England. Economic and class-based analyses play an important role in postcolonial theory, particularly in the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, because the economic oppression of colonial subjects was an integral part of imperialism, but, one still might wonder, why go beyond class and economic concerns and bring Orientalist discourse into the discussion? The Marxist

[4] Postcolonial theory is a vast, broad, diverse field of inquiry that incorporates a wide variety of perspectives, approaches, and methodologies. Said's discussion of Orientalism is helpful to understanding how certain notions, such as the idealized vision of a pastoral countryside, came to dominate public perception of the countryside, but Orientalist discourse is just one aspect of postcolonial theory that can be helpful to better understanding the relationship between the country and the city in nineteenth-century England. See, for instance, Lauren Watson's discussion of mimicry in Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1860-61).

notion that “those who control the means of production define the world” certainly applies to the relationship between the country and the city. Karl Marx himself may not have been opposed to the economic oppression of the countryside because he supported Britain’s colonization of India, which, according to Marx, blew up India’s “economical basis, and thus produced [. . .] the only social revolution ever heard of in Asia” (Par. 10). However, Williams is best known for helping elucidate how certain principles derived from Marx’s work, such as looking closely at class structures, economic-based power relations, the plight of marginalized individuals, and popular historical and cultural movements, can be useful to academic inquiries in the field of literary studies. While William’s Marxist-based approach illuminates how urban interest in lower-priced colonial imports oppressed the countryside through the downfall of the rural economy in the nineteenth century, bringing Orientalism into the discussion helps establish how rusticism others rural people, places, and cultures.

Elizabeth Gaskell’s *North and South* (1854) is one nineteenth-century novel that illustrates both the value of Williams’s Marxist-based approach and why Orientalism, in addition to William’s Marxist-based approach, is crucial to the study of rural and urban interaction. The protagonist, Margaret Hale, relocates from her rural home in the South of England to a northern industrial town where she helps mediate the tension between two distinct classes of individuals, factory workers and the factory master John Thornton, through the impact of her relationship with Thornton. Margaret represents the values of communal belonging and compassion typically attributed to rural England while Thornton embodies the diligent and rational perspective often associated with modern

industry. In general, the dichotomy is also mapped onto gender. The female protagonist, Margaret, is more sensitive, caring, and compassionate, while the main male character, Thornton, takes a more hardened approach by initially focusing more on the demands of production than the needs of the human labourers. Margaret and Thornton begin the novel in conflict, like Thornton and his workers, but eventually move beyond preconceived notions and learn from each other how to become stronger individuals by incorporating the other's perspective into their worldview. Margaret inspires Thornton to begin to communicate with his workers and Margaret gains enough knowledge of business and finance from Thornton to manage her family's affairs after her father passes way. The thorough blending of rural and urban perspectives, as well as female and male ones, which is exemplified by Margaret and Thornton's union, counters the dichotomous thinking of rusticism, which typically only incorporates rural perspectives to a very limited extent. That type of interpretation is made possible by closely studying rusticism and its parallels Orientalism, which is necessary to recognize how rusticism both others country dwellers and constructs the preconceived notions that initially put individuals such as Margaret and Thornton at odds.

The interpenetration of assumed distinctions that is emphasized by individuals such as Margaret and Thornton poses an intense challenge to rusticism, and that type of challenge often leads to the inclusion of varied, nuanced, and diverse depictions of the countryside in literature. So, in a century when rusticist thinking dominated public perception of the countryside, why would authors such as Gaskell, Eliot, Dickens, Jefferies, and Hardy challenge rusticist dichotomies and include nuanced depictions of

country life in their novels? To answer that question, I turn to "extrapolitanism," which is the second of the two processes crucial to examining rural and urban interaction in the nineteenth century and the practice that inspires many writers to challenge rusticism. Rusticism and "extrapolitanism" can both be considered practices because they both involve people taking action, such as traveling to the countryside, interacting with rural people, and writing about rural experiences, as well as processes because they both produce specific results, such as the production of different types of knowledge. Because of the "us and them" dichotomy constructed by rusticism, the effects of rusticism are primarily negative; however, "extrapolitanism," allows for both positive and negative effects.

Extrapolitanism and Rooted Cosmopolitanism

Just as rusticism resembles Orientalism, "extrapolitanism" shares many parallels with the concept of cosmopolitanism. Amanda Anderson, in her book *The Powers of Distance: Cosmopolitanism and the Cultivation of Detachment*, argues that the notion of detachment can be understood in a positive way if one practices detachment from any one society in order to embrace the beliefs, values, and customs of multiple societies. Anderson posits that a cosmopolitan form of detachment involves "reflective distance from one's original or primary cultural affiliations, a broad understanding of other cultures and customs, and belief in universal humanity [or the belief that similar morals and values among individuals override distinctions of nationality]" (63). My use of the term detachment throughout *Interrogating Rusticism* reflects Anderson's definition. According to Anderson, nineteenth-century writers such as Charlotte Brontë and

Matthew Arnold, as well as Eliot and Dickens, practiced cosmopolitan detachment. By introducing the term "extrapolitanism," I mean to describe a form of cosmopolitan detachment that involves remaining open to the beliefs, values, and customs of both rural and urban communities. "Extrapolitanism" can be defined as traveling back and forth between the country and the city, engaging in both urban and rural cultural practices, and not committing oneself solely to the social and political causes of either the country or the city. In choosing the term "extrapolitanism," I intend for the root "extra," which is a combining form of "beyond," to refer to a way of life that "exists beyond the city." I have chosen the root "extra" in response to an urban preference alluded to by the structure of the term cosmopolitanism. Martha Nussbaum, who helped reinvigorate scholarly interest in cosmopolitanism beginning in the 1990s, defines cosmopolitanism as "becoming a subject of the world" (15). However, the term cosmopolitanism consists of the roots "cosmo" and "polis," which are combining forms of "world" and "city" respectively. Perhaps the phrase "becoming a subject of the universal city" more accurately describes cosmopolitanism than "becoming a subject of the world."

The urban preference of cosmopolitanism goes beyond the structure of the word. While philosophical discussion of cosmopolitanism dates back to Ancient Greece, the instances of renewed interest in cosmopolitanism that emerged in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries were primarily urban developments that grew out of "the increasing rise of capitalism and world-wide trade and its theoretical reflections" as well as "the reality of ever expanding empires whose reach extended across the globe" ("Cosmopolitanism" par. 16). Furthermore, one should also keep in mind that rural

communities are often associated with the concept of *Gemeinschaft* from the work of German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies, which refers to a type of imaginary, very close-knit community filled with strong mutual bonds. These powerful communal ties, which many consider to be an integral part of rural society, are frequently viewed in great contrast to the premise of universal citizenship on which cosmopolitanism is based. However, this level of communal connection is an ideal and imaginary rusticist notion that cannot be located in any historical example. Appiah speaks to the urban bias that often plays a role in cosmopolitanism by stating that "celebrations of the 'cosmopolitan' can suggest an unpleasant posture of superiority toward the putative provincial. You imagine a Comme des Garçons – clad sophisticate with a platinum frequent-flyer card regarding, with kindly condescension, a ruddy-faced farmer in workman's overalls. And you wince" (*Cosmopolitanism* xiii). While not every country dweller may endorse cosmopolitanism, the idea that rural life nurtures an anti-cosmopolitan outlook is problematic. In response to the structure of the word "cosmopolitanism" the reemergence of cosmopolitanism as an urban development, and the assumption that rural life is intrinsically opposed to cosmopolitan ideals, I have developed the term extrapolitanism to refer to a cosmopolitan-type of outlook that lacks an urban bias.

Beyond an urban bias, the concept of cosmopolitanism possesses the potential to foster other forms of dichotomous thinking, particularly with regard to the distinction between openly belonging to one nation-state or becoming a subject of the world. Appiah offers the concept of "rooted cosmopolitanism" as an alternative to conceptualizing cosmopolitanism in dichotomous ways. According to Appiah, when adopting a "rooted

cosmopolitan" view one can "entertain the possibility of a world in which *everyone* is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of his or her own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different, places that are home to other, different, people" ("Cosmopolitan Patriots" 91, emphasis in original). Cosmopolitanism is a nebulous concept and the act of becoming cosmopolitan takes many forms. The form of cosmopolitanism that extrapolitanism most closely resembles is rooted cosmopolitanism.

Rooted cosmopolitanism is an important concept because it helps mediate debates regarding nationhood. For instance, critics such as Benedict Anderson view belonging to a nation in a positive light, while scholars such as Nussbaum and Amanda Anderson adopt the opposite stance. Benedict Anderson posits that the nation "is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (6, emphasis in original). Mutual bonds between members of a nation possess the potential to yield positive results, depending on the strength of the bond, when they enable the nation's members to support and aid one another. Bonds that are too strong, though, can lead to the type of nationalism that is deplored by Nussbaum and Amanda Anderson. Regenia Gangier provides an excellent example of this balance when she claims that "Nations come into being because they select [. . .] a national type that inspires imitation, and they flourish when, through tolerant discussion, they allow for freedom and choice" (8). The idea of a national type inspiring imitation allows for both positive and negative results, but the hypothetical example provided by Gangier signals

an instance of rooted cosmopolitanism where individuals clearly belong to a nation but possess enough freedom and choice to perhaps also be open to what the beliefs and values of other nations have to offer. Belonging to a nation and displaying detachment can both help cultivate capable, responsible, caring global subjects, especially when the two endeavors are combined, but, when pursued to an extreme, either one can lead to disastrous consequences, such as militant national pride in the case of the former and complete isolation from helpful individuals with regard to the latter. This is what makes Appiah's proposal for participating in both so compelling.

Following Appiah's line of thought, other critics, such as James Buzard and John McBratney, have addressed the value of rooted cosmopolitanism as a cultural practice. Buzard even opens the door for an idea such as extrapolitanism to emerge when he points out two limitations of Said's work. The first is blotting out "completely all those fine differentiations (of class, of region, of religion, and so forth) observable *within* the imperial nation," and, second, "regarding 'England' or 'Britain' (or even 'the West') as one unanimous whole, poised against the whole it coercively constructs of its 'Other'" (Buzard 43). Although Said addresses different facets of the West, such as French, British, and American Orientalism, Said's discussion of discourse is, as Buzard explains, somewhat limited. In examining how the West defines itself against its other, the East, Said establishes a mode of inquiry that is very helpful because it reveals a vast array of information that scholars did not possess before but that also, intrinsically, tends toward dichotomous thinking. What Buzard proposes is not a critique of Said, but, rather, the suggestion that scholars expand on Said's work by looking more closely at the nuances,

such as divisions of class, region, and religion within the two substantial entities that Said juxtaposes. By exploring the interactions between nineteenth-century rural and urban cultures, *Interrogating Rusticism* certainly runs the risk of significantly lapsing into the type of dichotomous thinking reminiscent of Said. However, in *The Country and the City*, Williams thoroughly outlines the long, literary history of urban authors writing about the countryside, and thus clears much of the same type of ground that Said clears in *Orientalism*. My intention with *Interrogating Rusticism* is to expand on William's work, by looking at important distinctions within the country and the city, such as the division between rich and poor, in a manner reminiscent of how Buzard suggests expanding on Said's work.

McBratney is one of the many scholars who has expanded on Said's work in this manner by introducing the "Janus-faced cosmopolitan," which is one of a number of slight variations on the rooted cosmopolitan that also include the cosmopolitan patriot, partial cosmopolitan, and reluctant cosmopolitan. I propose including the extrapolitan in this grouping of forms of rooted cosmopolitanism because each variation adds a slight but important nuance to studies in cosmopolitanism. According to McBratney, what the "Janus-faced cosmopolitan" adds is to "combine, in a single reading, the strengths of Said's more outer-oriented and Buzard's more inner-directed approaches: the geopolitical comprehensiveness of the former and the fine-grained sensitivity to national cultural particularities of the latter" ("Reluctant Cosmopolitanism" 531). The combination of comprehensiveness and sensitivity to nuance that McBratney suggest can also be useful when examining rural and urban interaction. For instance, the division between rich and

poor is prominent in both the country and the city, but the tension between rural and urban cultures transcends debates over class boundaries when the urban elite look down on the gentry. As yet another form of rooted or partial cosmopolitanism, extrapolitanism helps highlight, in addition to divisions of class, region, and religion, two more specific facets of the Western world, the country and the city as unique groupings of cultures, that have often been critically overlooked.

One significant question regarding cosmopolitanism involves the extent that the cosmopolitan should interfere with the affairs of other cultures. Interference can render helpful aid but also persist to an extreme where the allegedly cosmopolitan interference begins to resemble imperialism, which is a cultural practice so dependent on nationalism that most types of cosmopolitans are staunchly opposed to it. Lauren M.E. Goodlad contends that interference should occur to the extent that it remains helpful because, "while cosmopolitan ethics turn out to be bound up in geopolitical awareness, the geopolitical aesthetic turns out to dream of a redemptive cosmopolitan ethics" (407). Striking a balance between non-interference and extreme interference appears to be the key, but achieving that balance is incredibly precarious. In the nineteenth century, the question of interference versus non-interference usually manifests in discussions of sympathy, which is an important, but widely debated concept, for Victorians. The major authors I study throughout *Interrogating Rusticism* each take a different stance regarding sympathy. Sympathy is a pleasurable experience for Eliot because extending charity to people in need of help while still maintaining a certain level of detachment can be very rewarding. Dickens is more ambivalent toward sympathy because extending charity leads

to someone else accepting charity, which implies self-interest and thereby clashes with the Victorian value of disinterest. However, Dickens greatly values and displays the ability to empathize and identify with othered individuals, such as the rural and urban poor. Hardy embraces the ability to identify with the other to such a great extent that sympathy, which is pleasurable for Eliot, becomes utterly painful for Hardy as the characters in his novels feel the anguish of others. The attitudes toward sympathy displayed by these authors reveal varying intentions when they work to challenge aspects of rusticism. Eliot focuses on the plight of whole communities whereas Dickens turns his attention more toward individual experience and Hardy emphasizes sheer survival in a harsh, tragic, unforgiving world plagued by rural poverty.

Extrapolitanism makes possible the critiques of rusticism cast by Eliot, Dickens, and Hardy. Each of these authors traveled back and forth between the country and the city and experienced unique interactions with rural cultures that impacted their writing. With so many different forms of cosmopolitanism emerging in critical discussions, extrapolitanism fills a specific role. While critics such as Appiah, Buzard, and McBratney, among others, have noted the limitations of conceptualizing cosmopolitanism solely as detachment from a specific community and called for expanding definitions of cosmopolitanism, a thorough discussion on how rural perspectives can contribute to the global community has yet to emerge. Although rusticism leads to mainly negative consequences, extrapolitanism possesses the potential to yield both positive and negative effects. While not being a subject of the country or the city leads to disastrous results for individuals such as Jude Fawley, the eponymous

protagonist of Thomas Hardy's final novel, *Jude the Obscure* (1895), extrapolitanism also enables critiques of rusticism[5]. Although rusticism and extrapolitanism are both practices that people can take part in and processes that produce results, one can also cultivate a rusticist or extrapolitan mindset through one's attitude toward rural life without ever leaving one's home. Along these lines, extrapolitanism can also function as a theoretical approach when critics cultivate an extrapolitan mindset by reexamining rural and urban interaction in nineteenth-century literature. In detaching oneself from identifying solely as a subject of the country or the city, one possesses the potential to embrace the nuanced values and beliefs unique to rural life that are often overlooked and disregarded by the homogenizing overtures of rusticism. Eliot, Dickens, and even Hardy each help bring to light aspects of rural life that, when diffused out into the larger world beyond the countryside, produce positive outcomes. The extrapolitan experiences of Eliot, Dickens, and Hardy are what influence each author to critique rusticism by elucidating the interplay of assumed distinctions crucial to the perpetuation of rusticist constructs. This process is what helps to bring to light often overlooked and helpful facets of rural cultures.

Eliot, Dickens, Jefferies, and Hardy

The primary goal of *Interrogating Rusticism* is to revisit commonly studied literary works from the nineteenth century, including Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859), Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-65), and *Jude the Obscure*, with an extrapolitan

[5] The terms rusticism and extrapolitanism were not used by any nineteenth-century author, though the concepts were widely pervasive. Throughout *Interrogating Rusticism*, I use these terms to refer to rusticist- and extrapolitan-types of thoughts and actions.

mindset in order to elucidate subtle ways in which texts formerly thought to advance rusticist types of views actually challenge rusticism. An important secondary goal is to investigate how critically overlooked works, such as Eliot's travel memoir "Recollections of Ilfracombe" (1856), Dickens's dramatized travel narrative *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* (1857), and Richard Jefferies's 1885 novel *After London*, inform the writing processes behind more major texts and contribute to the critiques of rusticism present in those major works. Rural and urban interaction in the nineteenth century is a broad, nebulous topic, though, so a few comments should be made about the selection of authors and texts. Eliot, Dickens, and Hardy are three of the most well-known and widely-studied novelists from the nineteenth century and they share a unique relationship with both the country and the city. Jefferies is a lesser-known writer, but one of the most prominent authors, especially during the nineteenth century, to deal extensively and almost exclusively with rural life and issues. Because Jefferies and Hardy wrote in the late nineteenth century when the effects of the Great Depression were widespread and well-known, I chose to include both of them. However, some readers may inquire about the inclusion of mid-nineteenth-century authors such as Eliot and Dickens since the effects of the Great Depression did not become well-known until the late nineteenth century when they had become too pervasive to be ignored and spread to the gentry. The rural working class, though, had struggled in poverty for much longer, causing the countryside to be filled with class conflict, tension, and strife well before knowledge of rural poverty entered public perception. William Cobbett notes the prevalence of rural poverty as early as 1821 in *Rural Rides* when he comments that "This place presents another proof of the

truth of my old observations: *rich land* and *poor labourers*" (147, emphasis in original). So, including mid-nineteenth-century writers, especially Eliot, helps illuminate how certain authors honed in on the plight of rural workers before the effects of the Great Depression were well-known.

I focus primarily on Victorian authors, the rural poor, and the relationship between London and rural communities located within England; these choices may initially seem somewhat limiting because rusticism existed well before and long after the Victorian period and affected all classes of people in the countryside throughout the British Isles. The impact of rusticism is so pervasive that a thorough study cannot be conducted in one book-length project. This is yet another reason why Williams's outstanding work from *The Country and the City* should be expanded on and why another important secondary goal of *Interrogating Rusticism* is to open new avenues of inquiry regarding rural and urban interaction in Great Britian. I have chosen authors who help reveal many intricacies of rural life, rusticism, and extrapolitanism with a desire for my readings to open the door for the emergence of other new readings and analyses of rural and urban interaction. Beyond the authors, texts, time periods, and locations on which I focus, numerous other examples invite the kinds of readings I conduct throughout *Interrogating Rusticism*. For instance, late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century poets such as Robert Burns, John Clare, and James Hogg focus on the plight of the rural working class. Jane Austen, in novels such as *Mansfield Park* (1814), addresses the tension between the urban elite and the gentry when the Crawford siblings travel from London to the countryside and wreak havoc with their villainous immorality. Austen is

responsible for setting the primary tone for literary depictions of rural life prior to Dickens's work. Issues related to rusticism not only appear prior to the Victorian period but also persist well after it and emerge in the works of authors such as D.H. Lawrence, E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, and Evelyn Waugh.

In addition to other writers, other types of cities and settings, which I also do not explore fully, are worth pursuing in other projects focused on rusticism. The industrial cities of Northern England, such as Manchester, were considered centers of industry and perceived very differently from London, the modern, progressive, enlightened, urban center of the empire. Gaskell's *North and South* once again proves to be an excellent example. The union of Margaret and Thornton at the novel's close represents the intertwining of rural and urban values, but Thornton's urban values differ from those of a Londoner. Tensions between all different types of individuals, including not just factory masters and workers but also gentry and the new class of self-made business owners and operators as well as the gentry and the London elite, actually appear in *North and South*. Margaret's mother belongs to the urban elite and her family feels that she marries down in wedding Margaret's father. Mrs. Hale expresses her disdain for rural settings when she complains that the air in the South of England is too "damp and relaxing" and thus not good for her health (24). Thus, *North and South* is a novel that can be very helpful to better understanding rural and urban interaction in the nineteenth century, and it should be thoroughly examined in another project.

Beyond England, the other countries of the British Isles also offer opportunities for productive readings regarding the relationship between rural and urban communities.

For example, Robert Louis Stevenson's 1888 novel *The Master of Ballantrae* focuses on the tension between two brothers, Scottish noblemen, who are drawn to the opposing sides of various conflicts, such as the Jacobite Rising of 1745, as well as various locations throughout the world, including France, India, and the US. Jason Marc Harris explains that, "undercutting assumptions of British authority, *The Master of Ballantrae* displays the conflicted cultural core of the British Empire – divided between the familiar rationalism of England and the exotic supernaturalism of not only India, but Scotland as well" (382-83). Country dwellers, like colonial others and the people of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, were often viewed as primitive, backward, and ignorant, for supposedly superstitious beliefs. Although the scope of rural and urban interactions in Great Britain does not afford me the opportunity to fully examine pre- and post-Victorian works, issues pertaining to the gentry, portrayals of northern manufacturing towns, and literature from Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, I do touch on topics related to these people and places when possible, hope to revisit them much more thoroughly in a later project, and hope that my work opens door for other scholars, critics, and readers to explore them.

My methodology in each chapter focuses on three layers of the critique each author poses to rusticism. Each novelist addresses a specific rusticist concept that gained cultural popularity through the assumed distinction between two categories. Because one of my goals is to uncover aspects of rural life that have been long neglected or overlooked by modern critics, I include a brief historical section at the beginning of every chapter that examines newspaper articles, legal documents, and other similar types of texts to help elucidate how the particular rusticist concept the author focuses on became a

common cultural perception. I intentionally chose popular authors who are known for typically operating from an urban perspective, professing a preference for urban cultures, or, at least, perpetuating rusticist ideas. So, when examining the first layer of the author's critique, I look to significant interactions that the author shared with a rural culture and that inspired the author to challenge rusticism. Then I turn my attention to the process the author utilizes to illustrate the interpenetration of the seemingly opposite categories on which the primary rusticist concept from the chapter is dependent. This process generally relies on some type of recurring motif, trope, or image, which I also discuss in detail, to help reveal and emphasize the interpenetration. Finally, I address the various, nuanced aspects of rural life that are brought to the reader's attention via the author's critique. These nuanced aspects of rural life become intertwined with facets of the urban world to form a synthesis of the seemingly opposite categories and produce a new idea, construct, or notion that directly counters the rusticist concept initially addressed by the author and subsequently critiques rusticism's monolithic vision of the countryside.

Because an idealized, pastoral rural world serves as the basis for rusticism's monolithic vision of the countryside, I focus on this particular rusticist construct in Chapter 1. Many urbanites believe that, prior to the effects of the Great Depression, the countryside experienced a "Golden Age." Eliot challenges this notion in *Adam Bede*, which is set at the turn of the eighteenth century, when members of the local farming community from the novel's primary setting, Hayslope, discuss how the blockades of the Napoleonic Wars benefit the farming community by keeping imported grain out of the country and domestic prices high. This discussion evokes the Corn Laws, which were

passed to keep domestic grain prices high following the Napoleonic Wars but were eventually repealed to make food more affordable. The repeal of the Corn Laws made food more affordable throughout Great Britain by allowing the import of foreign grain, which, over time eventually led to rural poverty and the Great Depression. So, I begin Chapter 1 by discussing the history and context of the Corn Laws. The idea that economic prosperity could only exist in the countryside during times of war or when the price of domestic grain was too high to benefit all of England challenges the notion of a rural "Golden Age." Rural communities are typically cast as pastoral locales untouched by the effects of modernity when one fantasizes about a rural "Golden Age," so Eliot expands on her critique of rusticism by initially presenting Hayslope as a pre-modern, pastoral community and then undermining that vision. Despite growing up in a rural village similar to Hayslope, Eliot spent most of her life in London and other urban sites, so critics tend to concur that she displays an urban perspective in her novels despite setting the majority of her novels in rural locations. However, Eliot visited the rural community present at the sea-side town of Ilfracombe in 1856 and documented this excursion in the travel memoir "Recollections of Ilfracombe." I argue that Eliot's experiences at Ilfracombe exposed her to the nuances and potential of rural cultures and subsequently inspired her to cast a subtle critique of rusticism in *Adam Bede*.

Eliot expands on the initial critique of rusticism that she presents by evoking the Napoleonic Wars, and, subsequently, the Corn Laws, when she introduces class conflict and other examples of modernity, such as a degree of autonomy not typically associated with seemingly pre-modern, rural communities, to Hayslope. The primary figure

representative of modernity is the traveling, female preacher Dinah Morris. Eliot utilizes the theme of travel to reveal the interplay of pre-modern and modern when Hayslope's various inhabitants briefly leave the close-knit community at different junctures to roam about the countryside, though none of them travel as extensively and frequently as Dinah. Her autonomy clashes with the closely-knit Hayslope community, but the lack of autonomy in Hayslope eventually leads to the downfall of the infanticidal milkmaid Hetty Sorrel. Hetty's downfall reveals not only the flaws in the tightly-knit, imbalanced, quasi-feudal class structure of Haylsope, but also that complete detachment from any community can be just as catastrophic. Adam Bede greatly values the seemingly strong mutual bonds of the Hayslope community, but his eventual union with Dinah represents a synthesis of pre-modern and modern traits in the form of a balance between total lack of autonomy and complete detachment that the inhabitants of Hayslope greatly need in order for the village to survive the harsh transition to modernity. Rae Greiner's concept of "sympathetic detachment" accurately describes the balance between dependence and independence that benefits Hayslope.

In Chapter 2, I turn my attention to the rusticist notion that rural workers are highly animalistic beings. Rural and urban tensions over this particular rusticist construct were exacerbated following the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859 and subsequent Victorian apprehension to the idea of being placed on the evolutionary tree with nonhuman animals. The idea of rural workers as animalistic beings hearkens back to an idealized, pastoral vision of the countryside because urbanites envisioned a hearty rural working class that behaved like beasts of burden. I begin Chapter 2 by

examining the impact of *Origin of the Species* and then explore Dickens's relationship with rural England and the thorough challenge he poses in *Our Mutual Friend* to the rusticist construction of country dwellers as beasts of burden. As the most influential author of the nineteenth century aside from Austen, Dickens is known for helping inspire a shift in novel-writing from primarily rural settings to mainly urban ones, and for introducing highly moral, urban characters, whereas Austen generally associated moral superiority with the gentry. Dickens took a walking tour of the countryside with Wilkie Collins in the summer of 1857, though, and the two co-authored a dramatized account of their travels, *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices*, for *Household Words*. The rural walking tour of 1857 occurred at time when Dickens, the married celebrity known for his public support of traditional family values, experienced immense inner turmoil because he met and fell in love with Ellen Ternan. Throughout the walking tour, the conflicted Dickens meets and begins to identify with a number of othered rural figures, such as a mental patient and several individuals who exhibit highly animalistic behavior. I contend that Dickens's encounters on the walking tour lead him to begin to appreciate and even embrace the nuances of rural cultures and to critique, in *Our Mutual Friend*, the rusticist notion that behaving like a nonhuman animal carries only negative connotations or an air of inferiority.

In *Our Mutual Friend*, the female protagonist Lizzie Hexam initially belongs to a group of waterside characters that Dickens labels "birds of prey" because they scavenge the urban Thames for objects of value. Lizzie travels from the city to the country, works at a paper mill in a rural village for nearly a year, and displays bird-like attributes all

throughout the novel. She eventually uses her animalistic instinct and strength, as well as her superior bird-like vision, to rescue her lover, Eugene Wrayburn, from drowning in a rural tract of the Thames. In rescuing Eugene, Lizzie affirms the incontrovertible value of the human person by behaving like a nonhuman animal. Thus Dickens illustrates the interplay of human and nonhuman. In the 1860s, Victorians met the competitive aspect of natural selection with great apprehension but tended to overlook the cooperative side. Lizzie's rescue of Eugene demonstrates mutual aid because the rescue benefits both Lizzie and Eugene when Eugene survives the attempt on his life and restores Lizzie's honor. Petr Kropotkin posits that "mutual aid" often manifests in rural communities (64). Before traveling to the countryside, Lizzie tried to survive the harsh conditions of London on her own, so one can conclude that her inclination toward cooperation is a trait she embraces during her stay at the remote Oxfordshire village. A common trope of the visual culture of the nineteenth century involved depicting nonhuman animals locked in competitive combat. Dickens includes numerous examples of this type of visual culture, such as elaborate taxidermy scenes that depict this type of combat, throughout *Our Mutual Friend*, to contrast, and consequently, highlight Lizzie's cooperative, but still animalistic behavior. By imbuing Lizzie with a mixture of human and nonhuman attributes in *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens challenges the rusticist construction of nonhuman animals as beasts of burden.

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the effects of the Great Depression became too widespread and pervasive to ignore, so writers and politicians strove to restore, reemphasize, and maintain an idealized, pastoral vision of the countryside. Their

focus on emphasizing the male rural worker as a hearty, highly masculine figure is the rusticist concept that I address in Chapter 3. I begin by looking at the Representation of the People Act 1884, which was promoted as an effort to extend the vote to male country dwellers but mainly included the gentry and tenant farmers while excluding rural workers. The construction of the male rural worker as a hearty, highly masculine individual is ultimately an effort to preserve rusticist notions regarding an impoverished countryside that was being deserted by its inhabitants. Richard Jefferies and Thomas Hardy both came from the South of England, which was an area thoroughly devastated by the Great Depression. Both writers are known for their depictions of rural life, but these depictions, especially for Jefferies and Hardy in his earlier work, perpetuate rusticist notions. Toward the end of their novel writing careers, Jefferies and Hardy both take exception to the endeavor of perpetuating rusticist notions, and challenge the construction of the male rural worker as a hearty, highly masculine figure. By engaging this highly masculine construction, Hardy and Jefferies both ruminate on how the countryside can survive economic depression and the transition to modernity. In *After London*, a cataclysmic event destroys London and causes England to revert to a woodland, feudal society, but the protagonist of the novel, Felix Aquila, is consistently emasculated by his peers when they outperform him in physical activities valued by the community. In making Felix the protagonist and a character with whom readers sympathize, Jefferies initially gestures to the interplay of what were culturally considered masculine and feminine traits at the time, but Jefferies eventually abandons this approach when Felix finally feels empowered by becoming the leader of a tribe of shepherds who

live outside the norms of the woodland feudal society. By capitulating to rusticist conceptions of rural masculinity at the conclusion to *After London*, Jefferies fails to provide a nuanced answer to the question of how the countryside will survive economic depression and the onset of modernity.

Hardy takes a similar approach in *Jude the Obscure* when Jude refuses to mercilessly slaughter nonhuman animals and is thus emasculated because he fails to perform his duties as a rural labourer. Both Jefferies and Hardy draw on the image of Hodge, which was a stereotypical characterization of rural workers similar in effect to Sambo or Paddy, when elucidating the interplay of masculine and feminine traits. Both writers challenge hearty, highly masculine constructions of Hodge and recast Hodge, so to speak, in Felix and Jude as a critique of rusticism. Hardy maintains his critique of rusticism through to the conclusion of *Jude the Obscure*, though, and I propose that Hardy, who both read and met Jefferies, directly engages *After London* by developing a similar protagonist but not capitulating to rusticism and providing an alternative proposal for the survival of the countryside. In the late nineteenth century, as the notion of hearty male rule workers was continually being reemphasized, many Victorians felt that urban development had a feminizing effect on men. While Jude fails to survive fails to survive the harsh environment of an impoverished countryside, both of the novel's main female characters, Sue Bridehead and Arabella Donn, do survive because they possess both masculine and feminine traits. Thus Hardy concludes that the fate of the countryside rests in the hands of women, not men, because, with the advent of the New Woman figure in

the late nineteenth century, women could more readily embrace an androgynous-type of existence than men.

Eliot, Dickens, and Hardy all challenge rusticism's characterization of the countryside as monolithic, and, in doing so, illustrate that prominent nineteenth-century novelists possessed the potential to be aware of the tensions between rural and urban cultures and the plight of the rural poor. The concepts of rusticism and extrapolitanism provide readers with new approaches for studying rural and urban interaction in the nineteenth century that can help uncover previously overlooked or neglected aspects of rural life. This is the primary purpose of *Interrogating Rusticism*.

Chapter 1 –

"Observations not vitiated by a foregone conclusion": Pre-modern, Modern, and Eliot's "Fuller" Relationship with the English Countryside in *Adam Bede*

George Eliot and Rusticism

I begin with George Eliot because the majority of her novels take place during the first half of the nineteenth century, and *Adam Bede*, in particular, is set at the turn of the eighteenth century, which is a time many rusticists consider to be pastoral and idyllic for the countryside. This idealized, pastoral vision serves as the basis for rusticism's monolithic characterization of the countryside, so, examining both how rusticists construct that pastoral vision and how Eliot dismantles it, when coupled together, represent an important first step for my project.

Eliot presents a conundrum for studying the relationship between the country and the city in nineteenth-century England because of the way her background impacts her portrayals of the countryside. Eliot was born in the rural county of Warwickshire, but, as John Rignall points out, "it is from the perspective of a widely-read, well-travelled, polyglot metropolitan intellectual that she looks" at "the provincial world of her origins" (192). Understanding her relationship with rusticism becomes complicated because Eliot's novels mainly take place in rural settings but her perspective as an author is generally thought to be a metropolitan one (Henry 22-64). Raymond Williams makes the argument that Eliot's depictions of rural life are based more on what urban readers expect to see than her own interactions with rural cultures (170). Rignall echoes Williams's sentiment in proclaiming that Eliot's "Metropolitanism is one of language and perspective rather than subject matter, and she writes for those who are as distant from

the rural world as she is now" (192). The goal of the present chapter is to challenge the view held by critics such as Rignall and Williams, who claim that Eliot's portrayals of the countryside mainly cater to the expectations of urban readers. Eliot, in her dynamic relationship with the countryside, does fall into the trap of perpetuating rusticism; however, she also challenges rusticism at numerous points. One example is her first novel, *Adam Bede*, in which Eliot tries to impart to readers, in her own words, a "fuller" and "more precious" understanding of the countryside (566). I argue that Eliot critiques rusticism by presenting a highly nuanced depiction of a rural community called Hayslope in *Adam Bede*.

What Eliot specifically challenges in *Adam Bede* is the rusticist impulse to view the countryside as a pastoral, idyllic, pre-modern place prior to the Great Depression of 1873-96. Eliot critiques this impulse by elucidating how the seemingly opposite social categories of pre-modern and modern actually inform one another. With my use of the term pre-modern, I intend to denote the type of rural community that rusticists consider pastoral, idyllic, peaceful, tranquil, unchanged by the passage of time, and untouched by the effects of modernity. When using the term modern, I mean to reference the conflict, turmoil, chaos, rush and busyness that rusticists often associate with modernization and industrialization but not with pastoral, rural England. What Eliot provides for readers in *Adam Bede* is a rural community that seems pre-modern at the outset of the novel, but, by its conclusion, has started to slowly experience the influx of modernity and embodies the qualities of both the modern and pre-modern characterizations. The narrative of *Adam Bede*, which begins in 1799 and concludes in 1807, enables Eliot to evoke the period rusticists often considered a "Golden Age" or pre-modern, pastoral time for the

countryside. I use the terms pastoral and idyllic interchangeably to refer to viewing the countryside in a fantastical and rusticist way that is too obviously structured by the outsider, non-rural observer. Forms of discourse, such as gossip, stereotypes, and fantasies, lead to the production of knowledge when ideas they generate gain cultural popularity. Pastoral fantasies of the countryside arose, in part, because the Napoleonic Wars were, economically speaking, a relatively comfortable time for rural England. Even though the rural districts were losing their youth to the war effort, they remained prosperous economically because blockades kept the price of domestic grains high and guaranteed profits for farmers (Lerner 74-75). After the Wars ended, the Corn Laws were passed to keep prices high, but these were repealed in 1846, which, after an influx of cheap American grain drove prices down, eventually led to years of economic depression in the countryside.

Through the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, Eliot establishes conflict between pre-modern and modern in *Adam Bede* by presenting her urban readership with a novel that is set sixty years in the past and focuses on a preindustrial village. Eliot's choice to illustrate the interpenetration of pre-modern and modern in *Adam Bede* indicates that she possesses a dialectical outlook on history. At the time Eliot composed *Adam Bede*, competing views of history with regard to the advent of modernity existed in Victorian culture. While many Victorians considered modernity a positive development, prominent writers, such as Thomas Carlyle, Benjamin Disraeli, and Alfred Tennyson, valued the social bonds from feudal communities of the past because these bonds contrasted the anomic, contractual relationships of 1850s England. Both approaches perpetuate rusticism in different ways. The highly positive view of modernity often casts rural

communities from England's past as inferior to their more modern, urban counterparts, while the Victorian idealization of medievalism celebrates the inaccurate, pastoral vision of rural England. Eliot's perspective on history is more dialectical than either of the two views just outlined because the conflict that she establishes between pre-modern and modern in *Adam Bede* eventually gives way to a synthesis of pre-modern and modern traits in her final portrayal of Hayslope[1].

The pre-modern and modern qualities that emerge in Eliot's final depiction of Hayslope derive from her efforts to reconcile the appeal of the personal bonds from feudal society with the autonomy provided by anomic, contractual relationships. Eliot holds the ability to feel sympathy for other beings in the highest regard, and considers the personal relationships of rural communities, which can engender sympathy, one of the finest features of rural England. However, the lack of autonomy in Hayslope, where everyone knows each other's name, leads to the seduction, abandonment, and downfall of the infanticidal milkmaid Hetty Sorrel. Moreover, in a quasi-feudal society, such as Hayslope, members of the gentry who own land, tenant farmers who rent land from the gentry, and rural workers who cultivate that land all depend on each other for economic viability. In more modern urban societies, such as 1850s London, where one can live for years without meeting one's neighbors, the illusion of autonomy exists. However, this degree of autonomy can also prevent one from obtaining much needed help and aid. Because of the benefits and drawbacks to the ways Victorians conceived of both pre-modern and modern communities, the societal structure of an exemplary community for

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[1] My argument contrasts the view of critics such as Forest Pyle and J. Hillis Miller who explore Haylsope in-depth and argue that Eliot shows a preference for more modern communities (5; 33).

Eliot would be based on a balance between communal dependence and complete independence and autonomy from any community. In the course of the present chapter, I illustrate how a relatively modern, slight degree of independence and autonomy emerges for the Hayslope villagers at the close of *Adam Bede*, which enables Eliot to critique the rusticist characterization of rural communities as entirely pre-modern sites.

Eliot utilizes the traveling Methodist preacher Dinah Morris to establish that modern traits appear in Hayslope because Dinah is depicted as the character that can help build a bridge into modernity for Hayslope. Dinah is portrayed as a modern figure through her freedom to roam the countryside, ability to support herself financially, willingness to minister to the poor, decision to marry the eponymous Adam Bede for love, choice to become a wife and mother, and charisma. While Dinah's mobility and ability to support herself economically are clearly modern qualities, many twenty-first-century readers would view her other distinguishing traits as pre-modern. However, in a rural village at the turn of eighteenth century, most of Dinah's traits would seem very modern. For instance, Methodism, in the late eighteenth century, became the first religious movement to attempt to bring Christianity to the unchurched, rural working poor in England (Henry 38; Rack n.p.). Furthermore, marriages, though not still pre-arranged with a formal contract, were often negotiated by parents and guardians for reasons related to social class and finances well into the nineteenth century. So, even though marrying for love was not a new concept, it was still a somewhat radical idea as late as the mid-nineteenth century. Also, Eliot, who embraced the separate-spheres doctrine that, in the 1850s, was a relatively recent development, would consider the decision to marry and raise children reflective of this doctrine. With the onset of

modernity and urbanization the public sphere was more frequently viewed by the Victorian elite, especially males, as a contaminating realm of which women should not be a part. Finally, while Dinah's charisma seems pre-modern because a major component of her charisma is the erotic appeal of her character, Dinah does not utilize her charisma for erotic ends but rather to drive individuals to do good deeds, such as learn to read and feel sympathy for the plight of others, which fits with Victorian notions of charity and helping others. Dinah does not seem modern to twenty-first readers because she is a very Victorian woman, but, to the inhabitants of a rural village at the turn of the eighteenth century, Dinah would have appeared quite modern.

Despite the abundance of modern qualities that Dinah displays throughout *Adam Bede*, Eliot does not describe either of her two main characters as solely pre-modern or modern. For instance, when the novel opens, Adam is primarily described as a jack-of-all-trades figure reminiscent of England's past, but, later in the novel, Adam makes very modern choices, such as marrying Dinah for love, raising his class standing, and acknowledging that he views Hetty in an overly idealistic way. Similarly, when many of the Hayslope villagers, such as Bessy Cranage and her father, find Dinah's modernity disruptive, they respond by dwelling on the erotic aspects of her presence and confining their view of her to pre-modern conceptions of femininity. However, Dinah breaks this mold when she helps Hetty produce a confession that is cathartic for the rest of the village. Despite initially heightening the religious discord brewing in Hayslope, Dinah's charisma becomes the mediating aspect of her personality that, after Hetty's downfall, enables her to establish connections with the villagers, teach them to be more independent, and help build a bridge into modernity for Hayslope.

The most important aspect of Dinah's modernity is her freedom to travel because that freedom demonstrates how a balance between dependence and independence can be achieved. When roaming the countryside, Dinah displays a sympathetic connection to the inhabitants of the places she visits, such as Hayslope and Snowfield, but does not become fully bound to any one community. The affection Dinah feels for the people she meets in Hayslope and Snowfield is strong enough that she makes friends, finds work, and engages in social activities when she visits these places, but she also moves on soon enough to maintain a critical distance that allows her to evaluate her friendships and other relationships clearly, without letting powerful emotions cloud her judgment. The balance between emotional attachment and critical distance that is embodied by Dinah stands out as an example of what Rae Greiner calls "sympathetic detachment." According to Greiner, in the nineteenth-century, "Properly sympathetic understanding is both sentimental *and* detached: customary feelings and habits provide comfort and stability, even as the real remains the object of skepticism, to be viewed from a critical distance" (132, emphasis in original). Like Amanda Anderson, Greiner celebrates detachment because detachment, for Greiner, gives one the ability to step back and judge someone from a distance without prejudice, which can lead to sympathy. Dinah's ability to travel to different communities and feel a sympathetic connection to their inhabitants without becoming fully attached represents sympathetic detachment.

What appears in the final depiction of Hayslope, with Dinah as one of the community's leaders, is a synthesis of pre-modern and modern attitudes toward autonomy and mobility. Hayslope is no longer a fully pre-modern site but has not yet made the complete transition to modernity. In this sense, Haylsope resembles a

community from one of Hardy's novels more so than the type of rural setting readers typically associate with Eliot. As a turn-of-the-century village that experiences class conflict when the secret of Hetty's infanticide is revealed, the influx of modernity with Dinah's arrival, and economic prosperity only because of the Napoleonic Wars, Hayslope challenges the rusticist notion that a "Golden Age" existed in the English countryside prior to the Great Depression. Eliot's willingness to challenge rusticism emerges in part from her own travels and subsequent interactions with the rural culture present at the sea-side town of Ilfracombe during the summer of 1856, which are documented in her travel memoir "Recollections of Ilfracombe." Prior to my analysis of *Adam Bede*, I outline the pertinent historical contexts surrounding both the repeal of the Corn Laws and the late 1850s period during which Eliot composed *Adam Bede* to provide necessary background for understanding how Eliot initially establishes conflict between pre-modern and modern in the novel. I also conduct a close reading of "Recollections of Ilfracombe," along with "The Natural History of German Life," which is the treatise on realism that Eliot composed during her stay at Ilfracombe, to demonstrate the influence of Eliot's rural encounters from 1856 on the composition of *Adam Bede*, which took place between 1856 and 1859.

Establishing the Context of Eliot's Past: The Corn Laws, Their Repeal, and Its Aftermath

The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 signals what is perhaps the most important shift in the balance of power between rural and urban cultures. Following the enclosures of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the repeal of the Corn Laws contributed to the desertion of the countryside and the increase in London's population

from “just under one million to six and a half million in the course of the nineteenth century” (Rignall 190). The debate over the Corn Laws was not simply a question of rural needs versus urban needs but an unresolvable dilemma. Both the rural needs and urban needs concerned food and the ability to eat and survive. Keeping the price of domestic grain high would make food very expensive and could cause people all throughout the Empire to suffer, perhaps even starve. However, allowing the import of foreign grain to drive food prices down eventually contributed to the economic ruin of the countryside.

The Corn Laws were introduced with the Importation Act 1815 to reduce the influx of grain from overseas once the Napoleonic Wars ended and naval blockades no longer would. After the conclusion of the naval blockades of the Napoleonic Wars, “the domestic price [of grain] fell below eighty shillings a quarter [eight bushels],” and the Corn Laws were passed, thus protecting corn factors [. . .] at the expense of consumers” (Abravanel 100). Thomas Hardy’s *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) is the most well-known Victorian novel to address the repeal of the Corn Laws directly, and, according to Genevieve Abravanel, Hardy’s choice to set the novel before 1846 “marks his nostalgia for a rural farming life that seemed to some in the 1880s to have been ruined by imported wheat” (100). While *Adam Bede* is not address the Corn Laws as explicitly or directly as *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Eliot does portray the nostalgic “rural farming life” described by Abravanel through the Poysers, who rent the Hall farm, and Adam, who is a rural artisan and therefore a representative of a class whose departure for the city Hardy laments in all his novels. Martin Poyser, the leading representative for farming interests in *Adam Bede*, even mentions the impact of the blockades directly when he says “The war’s a fine thing for the country, an’ how’ll you keep up prices wi’ out it?’” (559). The

Corn Laws were the answer for many real farmers that posed the same question as Poyser. Thus, Poyser's comment evokes the economy prosperity that many assumed existed in the countryside, and did mainly because of the war effort, before the Corn Laws were repealed. The Anti-Corn Law League, which was comprised mainly of urbanites who represented Northern manufacturing interests, such as Richard Cobden and John Bright, lobbied for years to have the Corn Laws repealed because factory owners could pay their workers less if food were cheaper, and famine in Ireland eventually convinced Parliament to indeed repeal the Corn Laws with the Importation Act 1846. The repeal of the Corn Laws had four primary effects: the lowering of domestic grain prices, the loss of income for rural workers, tenant farmers, and the gentry because grain prices were lower, the growth of Great Britain's reputation as a nation that supports free trade, and the desertion of the countryside, which all contributed to diminishing the influential power of rural cultures.

The decrease of prices and the loss of revenue for farmers eventually led to the Great Depression, but many negative consequences were felt immediately after the repeal, especially in the countryside. Once restrictions were no longer placed on the import of grain, peasant farms in locations such as the Russian Empire and especially the US directly benefited. J. R. Wordie explains that, by 1850, American wheat became "fully competitive" (47). According to William Van Vugt, "For American farmers the repeal was a tremendous boon" (*Britain* 22). British farmers, though, had a very different reaction, with the agriculturalist James Finlay providing one example in his bold proclamation that "Everything here wears a gloomy aspect – what will this Free-Trade lead to? I fear our downfall is sealed" (1849). Just three short years after the repeal,

Finlay already foresees the effects of the Great Depression. Years later, well into the Depression, Hardy helps highlight the significance of Corn Law repeal in the preface to the 1895 edition of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* by claiming that "the home Corn Trade [. . .] had an importance that can hardly be realized by those accustomed to the sixpenny loaf of the present date" (3). Hardy's statement reflects the tension that emerged with Corn Law repeal, which aided many British subjects through lower food prices while simultaneously bringing great hardship to farming communities. Laurence Lerner describes the Great Depression in a similar manner, as a time of "conflict in English agriculture, when prices fell, under the influence of imported foodstuffs, especially American wheat" (74-75). Although Eliot composed *Adam Bede* well before the Depression officially began, as a well-read and perceptive individual, she could foresee, like Finlay, what the immediate effects of Corn Law repeal would eventually lead to as they slowly developed around her. Britain's dependence on imported grain changed from 2% in the 1830s to 24% in the 1860s (Ensor 116). Eliot lived through this transition and she is known for her sympathy for the rural poor especially, and that sympathy extended to farmers who experienced the forfeiture of employment and its proceeds. Eliot's sympathy for destitute farmers is made manifest through the character of Dorothea Brooke in *Middlemarch* (1871-72), who strives to improve the living conditions for the impoverished cottagers on her uncle's estate.

Despite the depletion of farm work and profits for country dwellers, the repeal of the Corn Laws held many positive outcomes for urbanites and other individuals, which illustrates the complexity of rural and urban interactions in the nineteenth-century. The Anti-Corn Law League continuously called for the Corn Laws to be repealed because

they kept food prices high. Cobden gave several reasons for why the Corn Laws should be repealed, which included "prosperity of the manufacturer," cheaper food and more regular employment, and introduction of "a new era of international fellowship and peace" through "mutually advantageous international trade" (qtd. in Briggs 314). Cobden's final point gestures to a nearly cosmopolitan ideal that advocates of free trade often cite. However, the concept of free trade was even more controversial in the nineteenth century than it is now[2]. Furthermore, the advantages Cobden lists primarily benefit urbanites, which reflects that the debate over Corn Law repeal was essentially a rural/urban conflict. Landowners and farmers would clearly benefit from higher prices, while manufacturers and industrial workers also wanted to maximize profits. If the price of food is high, factory workers must be paid more so that they can afford to eat. In a country with high poverty rates, keeping food prices low would obviously be a logical goal, but doing so through the repeal of the Corn Laws impoverished many farmers and caused strife between country dwellers and urbanites. Although Eliot's stance on the Corn Laws is not known, the sympathy she tried to extend to people from all realms of society suggest that she would have difficulty choosing a side. On divisive issues, Eliot generally strives to carve out a position in the middle, and, at the conclusion of *Adam Bede*, she presents a slowly modernizing village that has not yet suffered from the economic downfall caused by Corn Law repeal, but foreshadows that downfall through references to the ability of the Napoleonic Wars to keep domestic grain prices high.

Even after the countryside became more and more impoverished, the Corn Laws could not simply be reinstated because free trade was well received despite the greater

[2] See John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson for a thorough discussion of the relationship between anti-imperialism, imperialism, and free trade (1-15).

competition from foreign industries to which it led. Peter Alexis Gourevitch explains that the "reformed political system," which emerged with the first Reform Bill, was inextricably linked to free trade and cheap food, thus protection from the import of foreign commodities "implied an attack on all the gains realized since 1832," while "Free trade meant freedom and prosperity" (299). Even though farmers had to eat and benefited from cheaper food, this cheap food mainly benefited growing manufacturing interests, while actually hurting the more traditional farming ones. As Britain continued to grow and develop throughout the nineteenth century, many of the sweeping modifications that materialized through political reform had both positive and negative consequences, but the rate of change could not be stopped, slowed, or even altered. In novels such as *Adam Bede* and *Middlemarch*, Eliot does not attempt to oppose or promote the sweeping changes brought about by modernization, industrialization, and urbanization, but, rather, attempts to delineate the difficulty for the average person on a daily basis of grappling with such immense and rapid alterations. The effects of the Depression reveal that economic modernization significantly altered daily life in nineteenth-century rural England. Gourevitch goes on to argue that the perceived freedom and prosperity of free trade "inhibited the realization that British economic health might no longer be served by keeping her economy open to international economic forces" (299). While free trade did keep food prices low, especially in the 1850s, when Eliot composed *Adam Bede*, and the 1860s, free trade eventually caused Britain to experience, from the 1870s on, what A.E. Musson describes as "the growing influx of foreign manufactured goods," which forced British industry to "face foreign competition not only abroad but even in the home market" (227). Keeping the cost of food low seems to be a

goal to strive for, and transitioning from primary to secondary production often leads to new wealth for a nation, but that process also typically forces workers associated with primary production out of traditional jobs. The individuals most impacted by the negative results of nineteenth-century British free-trade policy were members of agrarian communities, including the gentry, tenant farmers, and farm workers. With food prices low, free trade continued to be viewed as a positive venture by the urban population, which greatly outnumbered the rural one, while the income of farmers continually decreased.

Earnings for farmers dwindled to the extent that one of the most lasting effects of Corn Law repeal manifested when tens of thousands of rural workers migrated away from the countryside. Farm labourers would often leave the country when they lost their jobs, lands, or homes. According to Van Vugt, "unprecedented numbers of British farmers emigrated to the United States at mid-century" ("Running from Ruin?" 33). Even more important to the present study than the emigration of British farmers to the US is the transplantation of many British farmers from the country to the city. Robert Ensor posits that "The 1881 census showed a decline of 92,250 in agricultural labourers since 1871, with an increase of 53,496 urban labourers. Many of these had previously been farm workers who migrated to the cities to find employment" (117). The other 40,000 or so former rural workers likely migrated to the colonies, Europe, the US, and Canada. The abandonment of the countryside by its financially-ruined inhabitants is one of two ways that the cultural landscape of Great Britain was altered in the nineteenth century in favor of urban society through the repeal of the Corn Laws. The social climate of Britain was drastically transformed economically when the positive outcomes of Corn Law repeal

primarily benefited urbanites, and ideologically when impoverished, migratory farmers were absorbed into urban locales leading to the seeming disappearance of many rural cultures. Thus, the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 marks a major shift in the balance of power between rural and urban cultures in nineteenth-century England. This shift becomes a predominant concern in *Adam Bede* when Eliot sets the novel prior to the repeal but writes from the perspective of someone who has seen its aftermath.

Establishing the Context of Eliot's Present: Infanticide, *Gemeinschaft*, and *Gesellschaft*

The shift signaled by the repeal of the Corn Laws delineates the difference between what rusticists thought to be an idyllic time for rural England compared to what was too obviously a less prosperous one, as Cobbett notes in *Rural Rides*. Eliot evokes the perceived "Golden Age" through Poyser's reference to the Napoleonic Wars, and brings pre-modern and modern into conflict via parallels between the time period and setting of *Adam Bede* and 1850s London by incorporating infanticide into the novel's plot. While mothers and fathers have been committing infanticide for centuries, infanticide became widely debated, discussed, and sensationalized in the 1850s[3]. "Moral panic" regarding infanticide broke out in the 1850s when newspapers, journals, and magazines began to be filled with reports, vivid descriptions, and images of child murder. As Laura C. Berry explains, in the late 1850s, "child-murder became a modern secret. The modernity of this secret was signaled in the vigorous publicity that surrounded it: everybody was talking about how no one was willing to talk about it" (196). Berry's description of the content from print media addressing child murder in the 1850s helps

[3] For further discussion of the infanticide plot in *Adam Bede* see Alicia Carroll, Lisa Rodensky, and Miriam Jones (168; 103; 306).

elucidate how public outcry and concern over infanticide helped bring the topic into public discourse. Jill Matus makes a similar claim to Berry when she argues that "Although the action of [*Adam Bede*] takes place at the turn of the century, the representation of the desperate, pregnant Hetty, who leaves home to have her illegitimate child in secret and then abandons it, speaks to contemporary concerns about infanticide and maternal instinct" (167-68). Publicity in the emerging newspaper culture of the mid nineteenth century helped mediate experiences that were easier to hide in the past, perhaps, because few were literate. Literacy rates were very low at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the novel is set, and remained that way until individuals such as Dinah came along and helped the poor learn to read[4].

Thus public debate over infanticide, which occurs in the novel when Hayslope learns of Hetty's actions, can be considered a specifically modern phenomenon. The evolving sensation journalism that helped make infanticide part of public discourse is more a feature of Eliot's present. As a well-read writer, Eliot encountered many of the depictions of infanticide from 1850s print media but also heard the story of Mary Voce, who was hanged for infanticide in 1802 and became the inspiration for Hetty's character, from Elizabeth Evans, Eliot's Methodist preacher aunt who witnessed Voce's execution and served as the basis for Dinah ("History of *Adam Bede*" 297). When Hetty is caught and tried, villagers such as Adam, Seth, the Poysers, Adam's teacher Bartle Massey, and local rector Adolphus Irwine, debate what should happen to Hetty, whether she should confess, who should visit her, and who is to blame for the crime, thereby making her act of infanticide a matter of public discourse and debate (459-81). Through the discussion of

[4] For further discussion of the religious context of *Adam Bede* see Daniel Siegel, Ilana M. Blumberg, and Jon Singleton (58; 543-44; 239).

the villagers, Eliot evokes the specifically modern phenomenon of public panic over infanticide.

The inclusion of infanticide in *Adam Bede* enables Eliot not only to bring the classifications of pre-modern and modern into conflict but also models of dependence and independence. Scholars have noted how the categories Eliot engages in *Adam Bede* are encapsulated by the dichotomous sociological types of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, which are usually translated as "community" and "society" respectively, were originally introduced by German philosopher Ferdinand Tönnies, and later expanded on by Max Weber. According to Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft* is exemplified by "the unity of unequal beings" while *Gesellschaft* involves "mere coexistence of people independent of each other" (46, 34). *Gemeinschaft* represents an ideal, imagined community where individuals share very close-knit bonds and work together harmoniously for the betterment of the community, while *Gesellschaft* society features more anomic, contract-based relationships. *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* are pertinent to understanding how Eliot casts a critique of rusticism in *Adam Bede* because the contrasting principles of the two sociological categories resemble the qualities of the pre-modern and modern communities juxtaposed by Eliot, especially with regard to the level of autonomy an individual experiences in each type of community. Even though *Gemeinschaft* describes an ideal and imagined community that cannot be located in any historical example, the qualities of *Gemeinschaft* community are often ascribed to preindustrial, rural England. In the pastoral fantasies of rusticist urbanites, the rural village appears as an affable, peaceful, and harmonious site because it must contrast the disarray of the *Gesellschaft* society in which the urbanite lives.

Suzanne Graver, Christine L. Kruger, and Aeron Hunt discuss the traces of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesselschaft* present in *Adam Bede*. Graver states that “The two major historical centers George Eliot chose as the settings for her fiction [the turning of the eighteenth century and the passing of the first Reform Bill in 1832, which is the backdrop for *Felix Holt* (1866) and *Middlemarch*] embody a contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*” (109). Though Graver considers the passing of the first Reform Bill rather than the repeal of the Corn Laws to be the watershed moment that marks the transition between past and present for Eliot, Graver’s point emphasizes Eliot’s focus on the juxtaposition of two time periods. Kruger and Hunt further elucidate how the inclusion of an infanticide plot enables Eliot to achieve this juxtaposition. Kruger argues that Eliot relegates Hetty’s act of infanticide to the *Gemeinschaft* sphere by claiming that “infanticide is removed to the pastoral, feminine, private, and, overwhelmingly, the natural realm” (279). On the other hand, Hunt posits that Kruger fails to “take into account the contemporary resonance of infanticide as a crime typical not - or not only - of the rural past, but of the market-saturated ‘*Gesellschaft*’ society that increasingly characterized Britain at the time Eliot was writing her novel” (82-83). Hunt goes on to argue that “infanticide in *Adam Bede* [. . .] should be understood as a specifically modern eruption at the center of a story” that expresses deep concerns regarding both *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (83). Hunt’s reading of Eliot makes the point that, through her portrayal of infanticide, Eliot critiques the structure of both pre-modern and modern communities. One goal of the present chapter is not only to elucidate that Eliot critiques those societal structures, but also to articulate that she suggests a balance between the independence of the personal relationships from *Gemeinschaft* and the anomic

associations of *Gesselschaft* could help prevent Hetty's downfall. Prior to depicting the conflict of pre-modern and modern in *Adam Bede*, Eliot experienced the clash of her own modern, urban, preconceived notions with the culture of the rural community present at Ilfracombe in June 1856.

"Recollections of Ilfracombe": Perpetuating and Challenging Rusticism

The rural settings of Eliot's novels are no doubt informed by her early years in Warwickshire, but her trip to Ilfracombe in June 1856 is another likely influence because it granted her the opportunity to interact with a rural culture after she began living in London and took place just before she started writing *Adam Bede*. Eliot chronicles her time at the sea-side town in "Recollections of Ilfracombe." Mary Ellen Bellanca posits that, in composing "Recollections of Ilfracombe," Eliot "stretched the genre" of the text, and it can be placed in any number of categories including "daily diary, naturalist's journal, travel narrative, familiar essay" ("Recollecting Nature" 20; *Daybooks of Discovery* 175). The travel narrative aspects of Eliot's memoir are most pertinent here because they emphasize Eliot's willingness to venture from London and interact with other cultures in unique settings. Bellanca goes on to explain how "Recollections of Ilfracombe" is "written in discursive paragraphs and has a beginning, middle, and end" (*Daybooks of Discovery* 175). Eliot's memoir does indeed possess these three components, and they make the journal feel more like a narrative or story, during which Eliot's perspective toward the rural culture at Ilfracombe shifts. In the beginning Eliot portrays the landscape of Ilfracombe as idyllic, and during the middle she depicts the inhabitants of Ilfracombe and their rural customs in a manner that conforms to the expectations of urban readers, but at the end Eliot challenges her pastoral vision of

Ilfracombe when she casts a critique of rusticism. Following a dialectical pattern that she employs again later in *Adam Bede*, Eliot initially projects the thesis that Ilfracombe features a pre-modern community, then she discusses aspects of modernity in Ilfracombe that are antithetical to her initial view, and eventually she describes a synthesis of pre-modern and modern qualities in Ilfracombe that challenges the rusticist assumption that all rural communities are pre-modern.

The journal opens with Eliot's idealization of certain aspects of Ilfracombe's rural setting, which she also characterizes as part of England's past. When Eliot and her partner, George Henry Lewes, first arrive, she proclaims that "the beauty of Ilfracombe burst upon us, [. . .]. On our left were gracefully sloping green hills, on our right the clustering houses, and beyond, hills with bold, rocky slides" (263). Eliot's description of the countryside surrounding Ilfracombe sounds almost like she is summarizing a scene from a pastoral painting. The hills gracefully slope so that the scene appears peaceful and inviting to all guests that want to escape into a pastoral fantasy. Even the clustering houses do not detract from the serenity of this image because just beyond them are "bold" hills with "rocky slides" that entice the more adventurous type. Since the scene lacks any manmade features aside from the small cluster of houses, viewers are transported to an earlier phase of British history before modern cityscapes had encroached to any great extent on the natural world. Eliot begins to subtly hint, though, at the slow encroachment of modernity just a paragraph later when she says, "There can hardly be an uglier town – an uglier cluster of human nests lying in the midst of beautiful hills, than Ilfracombe. The colour of the houses is the palest dingiest grey, and the lines are all rectangular and mean" (264). What once seemed beautiful is blighted by artificial structures that impose

their corrupting presence on the serenity of nature. When describing Ilfracombe both as beautiful and ugly, Eliot differentiates between the geographical location of Ilfracombe and the manmade town called Ilfracombe, respectively. While human beings typically reside in some form of dwelling, that fact disturbs the idyllic tone of Eliot's scene and pulls the reader back out of a fantasy-state. The disruptive presence of the houses at the beginning of Eliot's travel narrative implies that the text will later engage the onset of modernity more directly, and that eventually Eliot will minimize the extent to which she continues to portray rural England as idyllic.

In the middle of the travel narrative, Eliot observes a number of rural customs at Ilfracombe, which she and Lewes expect "to be considerably amused by" (269). These include "a grand maypole of coloured streamers floating among boughs of laburnum, which was hoisted on the roof of the house" and constructed by "Pretty, bright little Mrs. Ashwell, our hostess's daughter" (269-70). Eliot employs adjectives such as "grand" and describes Mrs. Ashwell as "pretty" and "bright" to show enthusiasm for rural festivities and affection for country dwellers respectively. The maypole dance may very well be the most renowned rural tradition and urban tourists and reenacters, such as Eliot in this instance, often perform rural rituals like the maypole dance with much more gusto than a rural native who has been to hundreds of maypole dances likely would. A maypole dance is portrayed in Hardy's *The Return of the Native* (1878), which is a novel known for its depiction of rural life, and the native inhabitants of the rural community at Egdon Heath do not engage in the maypole dance with the same zeal that outsiders do or that Eliot expresses in "Recollections of Ilfracombe" when she emphasizes the grand height reached by the maypole (215-24; 269).

The people and rituals Eliot portrays in "Recollections of Ilfracombe" constitute an idyllic visage, as if she wants to capture the feeling in her text that supposedly existed in the countryside before the repeal of the Corn Laws and economic depression. However, "Recollections of Ilfracombe" is not filled just with idyllic and pastoral moments. Eliot's discussion of humanity's encroachment on the natural world becomes heightened after her initial arrival. Eliot says that "In hilly districts, where houses and clusters of houses look so tiny against the huge limbs of mother Earth one cannot help thinking of man as a parasitic animal – an epizoon making his abode on the skin of the planetary organism" (264-65). In Eliot's description, humanity, with its disruptive presence, intrudes on a sacred realm and blemishes what would have otherwise been a beautifully idyllic, pastoral scene. Eliot's critique of humanity here can be perceived as an example of rusticism. She expresses disdain at finding not just beautiful hills, amiable peasants, and maypole dances, but also the blemish of modernity on an otherwise pastoral vision. Thus, the modernity of the houses is antithetical to Eliot's original thesis about the pre-modern beauty of the Ilfracombe landscape and community.

While Eliot's rusticist attitude causes her at first to be displeased when she finds that the rural scene of Ilfracombe is not entirely pristine, this perspective shifts after she spends more time in the town. Eliot becomes enraptured by the local preacher, Mr. Tugwell, and tells readers that "Mr. Tugwell's acquaintance was a real acquisition to us, not only because he was a companion and helper in zoological pursuits, but because to know him was to know of another sweet nature in the world. It is always good to know, if only in passing, a charming human being – it refreshes one like flowers, and woods, and clear brooks" (270). By comparing the freshness of Mr. Tugwell's presence with

“flowers, and woods, and clear brooks” Eliot associates a person with the beauty she normally reserves to describe landscape for the first time in “Recollections of Ilfracombe,” rather than claiming that a person has encroached on the landscape and blemished it. By helping Eliot and Lewes with the zoological studies they conduct at Ilfracombe, which ultimately become Lewes’s “Sea-Side Studies,” Tugwell stands out as a more modern individual than the peasants that helped construct the Maypole. Tugwell’s “sweet nature” makes him a “charming” person to be around, not because he is an affable peasant, but because he is someone who would be charming to associate with in almost any setting. Eliot’s description of Tugwell provides a synthesis of pre-modern and modern traits because his role of local preacher deeply connects him to the seemingly pre-modern Ilfracombe community, but his “sweet nature” is quality that transcends pre-modern and modern distinctions because it would enable him to successfully function in almost any community. Although Dinah’s character is clearly based on Elizabeth Evans, Tugwell’s “sweet nature” serves as a precursor to the mediating quality of Dinah’s charisma. Eliot’s critique of rusticism in both “Recollections of Ilfracombe” and *Adam Bede* engages the debate over what characterizes the “real” English countryside, so a discussion of Eliot’s perspective on nineteenth-century realism is helpful before exploring how Eliot expands on the critique of rusticism from “Recollections of Ilfracombe” in *Adam Bede*.

“Unvisited Tombs”: Eliot’s View of History, Fiction, and Realism

According to A.S. Byatt and Nichols Warren, Eliot used her time at Ilfracombe to compose her treatise on realism, “The Natural History of German Life,” in which Eliot reviews two works by the German journalist, novelist, and folklorist Wilhelm Heinrich

Riehl for an issue of *The Westminster* (214). The ideas Eliot expresses in "The Natural History of German Life" indicate that she would be opposed to the kind of patronization that is a key part of rusticism. Eliot claims that

> our social novelists profess to represent the people as they are, and the unreality of their representations is a grave evil. [. . .] If any man of sufficient moral and intellectual breadth, whose observations would not be vitiated by a foregone conclusion, would devote himself to studying the natural history of our social classes, especially of the small shopkeepers, artisans, and peasantry, [. . .] his work would be a valuable aid to the social and political reformer. (110-112)

Eliot's call for an author not "vitiated by a foregone conclusion" to document the lives of the rural working class is an argument against rusticism, since rusticism operates from knowledge produced mainly by the discourse itself. With her use of the term "natural history" Eliot means to imply a form of history that could counter the type of history produced by rusticism through more nuanced, and less monolithic, portrayals of the countryside. For instance, Eliot challenges the rusticist characterization of the rural worker as energetic about farm labour by positing that "no one who has seen much of actual plowmen thinks them jocund; no one who is well acquainted with the English peasantry can pronounce them merry" (109). Eliot goes on to give her own example of a rural worker, "The slow gaze, in which no sense of beauty beams, no humor twinkles, – the slow utterance, and the heavy slouching walk, remind one rather of the melancholy animal the camel, than of the sturdy countryman, with striped stocking, red waistcoat, and hat aside, who represents the traditional English peasant" (109). The disconcerting effect of Eliot's claim that a rural worker resembles a camel is not meant to criticize the

rural working class for slothfulness, but to provoke readers with an image that is anything but idyllic, and to suggest that the labour of the rural working class is tiring rather than invigorating.

The approach to realism that Eliot delineates in "The Natural History of German Life" is heavily influenced by Sir Walter Scott's view that history is self-contradictory. According to Robert L. Caserio, for Scott, "what is real or probable at one moment of history appears romantic and improbable in the next, and vice versa" (253)[5]. The notion that many twenty-first-century readers would consider Dinah's willingness to minister to the poor, decision to marry for love, choice to become a wife and mother, and her charisma pre-modern traits, while Eliot could conceive of these qualities as modern attributes, illustrates Scott's idea. In Scott's view, pre-modern and modern not only overlap, but history and fiction interpenetrate because "real" and imaginary become conflated when one juxtaposes multiple periods of history. Thus, history, which many assume is based more on fact than fantasy, and fiction, which is understood as a construction of the imagination, can reveal aspects of "reality" that would otherwise go unnoticed. The interpenetration of history and fiction is displayed in *Middlemarch* via gossip. Although gossip is generally considered unreliable, the gossip in *Middlemarch* produces knowledge about others that shapes human interaction. For instance, when Tertius Lydgate's reputation is damaged through his association with Nicholas Bulstrode, Dorothea introduces the idea that Lydgate is a fundamentally good, if flawed, individual, which the community accepts because of Dorothea's credibility (567-91). Eliot further emphasizes the interpenetration of history and fiction in the final paragraph of

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[5] For further discussion of nineteenth-century realism, see George Levine, Jan Bruck, and Greiner (4; 189-202; 3).

Middlemarch. According to the narrator, "the effect of [Dorothea's] being on those around her was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who have lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs" (640). The fictional character Dorothea influences history because the effects of the efforts of individuals like her are diffused throughout the world and eventually benefit Eliot and her readers.

Eliot's approach to realism, as articulated by "The Natural History of German Life," deems "unreality," or what she considers to be inaccurate representations of the rural working class in England, a "grave evil," but the gossip in *Middlemarch* reveals that fully understanding what characterizes the "real" English countryside is no easy or even reasonable task. If "real" and imaginary become conflated when one juxtaposes multiple time periods, as Eliot does in both *Adam Bede* and *Middlemarch*, then, elusive, highly sought after, entirely "real" depictions of the English countryside cannot be found. Salman Rushdie's commentary on writing about the past is helpful. According to Rushdie, "if [writers] do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge – which gives rise to profound uncertainties – that our physical alienation from [the past] almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming that thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands" (10). Eliot cannot look back to turn-of-the-century rural England and reconstruct the past with perfect accuracy, but tremendous insight can still be gained from her fictional depiction of Hayslope. Similarly, fantastical descriptions of the countryside produce knowledge regarding the countryside precisely because "real" and imaginary

become conflated quite easily. This production of knowledge indicates that, even though one cannot necessarily challenge rusticism by introducing a more "realistic" depiction of the countryside than is offered by rusticism, one can challenge rusticism through a portrayal of the countryside that is more nuanced and diverse than the predominant, monolithic, rusticist view. The fictional village of Hayslope may not necessarily be a more accurate depiction of rural England than what is provided by a pastoral fantasy, but, in choosing not to depict Haylsope as a pastoral, idyllic place, Eliot adds a degree of diversity to the catalogue of depictions of rural England. Furthermore, Eliot's description of the camel-like rural worker from "The Natural History of German Life" is not necessarily more "real" than rusticist depictions of the rural working class, but Eliot's description is more nuanced because she portrays a sluggish worker tired by his labour and that image contrasts the monolithic vision of a hearty rural working class. In *Adam Bede*, Eliot responds to the monolithic way in which rusticist fantasies construct the countryside as pastoral, idyllic, and pre-modern prior to the Great Depression. One could consider Eliot's anti-rusticist portrayals of the countryside in "Recollections of Ilfracombe" and *Adam Bede* "real" in the sense of the "Lacanian Real," where, according to Frederic Jameson, the "real" is what defeats desire, because these portrayals subvert rusticist fantasies of a pastoral countryside (Jameson 51).

The challenge to rusticism that occurs in *Adam Bede* follows the same dialectal pattern that Eliot employs in "Recollections of Ilfracombe," but expands on the earlier example through the complexities of a vast novel. First, Eliot establishes the thesis that Hayslope is a pre-modern site through the idealization of Adam as a jack-of-all-trades figure representative of England's past, of villagers such as Old Kester and Tom Shaft,

and the rural rituals in which they take part. Then Eliot introduces two disruptive elements, Dinah's presence and Hetty's act of infanticide, which are antithetical to the characterization of the village as pre-modern. Dinah displays many modern traits and Hetty's actions reveal the negative qualities of the village's highly dependent class structure. Finally, a synthesis of pre-modern and modern traits via a balance of dependence and independence emerges after the village is transformed by the actions of Dinah and Hetty.

Representing England's Past: Adam Bede as an Idealized Figure

From the first line of narration in *Adam Bede*, Eliot establishes that its setting is firmly rooted in the past but that all conceptions of the past are influenced by present-day perspectives. Her narrator opens the novel by stating that "With a single drop of ink for a mirror, the Egyptian sorcerer undertakes to reveal to any chance comer far-reaching visions of the past. This is what I intend to do for you reader" (61). With the adjective "far-reaching," through her use of the first person, and by addressing the reader directly, Eliot greatly distances the perspective of both writer and reader from the events about to unfold in her novel. This distancing of perspective immediately indicates that the novel straddles two time periods, both the one in which it takes place and the one in which its author and readers live. Although the events clearly take place in the past, Eliot subtly hints that their influence will not be contained to the past through her reference to an Egyptian sorcerer. By employing the metaphor of a figure from a foreign country, Eliot implies that the setting of her novel will not be confined to one location, thus foreshadowing Dinah's mobility and the changes Hayslope eventually goes through.

Eliot takes a similar approach when first discussing Adam, who is clearly a figure representative of England's past, but, like the setting, not a pure, spotless vision of the past. The narrator describes Adam as a Saxon with "jet black hair, made the more noticeable by its contrast with the light paper cap, and the keen dance of the dark eyes that shone from under strongly marked, prominent, and mobile eyebrows, [that] indicated a mixture of Celtic blood" (62). The keyword in the passage just cited is "mixture." Adam represents two racial components of England's past, the Saxon and the Celt, and Eliot could have described his lineage as pure to emphasize Adam's Englishness even more, but instead she designates his bloodline as "mixed." Here Eliot foreshadows the changes that Adam will experience, just as she hints at the eventual transformation of Hayslope in the opening passage. While Eliot's characterization of Adam as both Saxon and Celt makes him a representative Englishman, his lack of Norman blood makes him a representative of the lower class, which indicates that, when the novel begins, Adam is not one of the community's leaders. Eliot further highlights Adam's role as a representative Englishman through his name, which connects Adam to several origin narratives. The name Adam Bede refers to the first human being in Christian lore, the author of *The Ecclesiastical History of England*, and the first two letters of the English alphabet. As a representative Englishman connected to well-known origin stories, Adam embodies the pastoral past that Eliot initially idealizes in the novel. However, Adam serves originating functions in the novel as well that help usher the village into modernity, such as Dinah, the most modern woman in the text, raising children with her, and rising from the lower class to lead the village once the gentry's power becomes diminished, and Eliot hints at these coming changes through her depiction of Adam's

mixed, lower-class blood. Nothing is entirely stable or pure in what would otherwise seem to be a very fixed and rooted setting. From the first chapter of *Adam Bede*, Eliot makes clear that her novel is about the intertwining of contrasts rather than describing a specific moment and place in time.

As the narrative moves forward, Eliot begins to provide the reader with examples that root Adam in England's past through his ability to perform numerous tasks. These examples often appear in discussions Adam has with Arthur Donnithorne, the squire's grandson and Hetty's seducer, concerning Adam's occupation. At the beginning of the novel Adam works as a carpenter for Johnathan Burge, but then Arthur gives Adam the opportunity to become manager of "the Wood," the vast wooded area on the squire's estate. Although Adam's income would not be raised by accepting the position, the demands of the position would be less time consuming, and, as Arthur says, "'Adam shall have plenty of time to superintend a business of his own, which he and [his brother] Seth will carry on, and will perhaps be able to enlarge by degrees'" (318). Three different types of work that Adam can perform well are alluded to by Arthur: carpentry, managing the wood, and owning a business. Adam's ability to perform a wide variety of tasks implies that he is a jack-of-all-trades, a figure that is distinctly part of England's idealized past. With the onset of modernity and urbanization comes an enhanced and more complex division of labor, and, when Eliot is writing in the 1850s, the numerous factory workers that make up the majority of the laboring class do not each possess a vast set of skills like Adam does.

Eliot does hint at the changes Adam will undergo, though, in his discussion with Arthur. Before offering Adam the job of managing "the Wood," Arthur suggests that

Adam wed Burge's daughter Mary so that the aging Burge might be more inclined to turn control of his carpentry business over to Adam (227). Arthur says, "'I know you work for him as well as if you were working for yourself. But you would have more power than you have now, and could turn the business to better account, perhaps'" (227). Adam will not cease to be a jack-of-all-trades when he becomes a business owner because business owner is one occupation on Adam's long list of jobs, but Arthur's reasoning for why Adam should strive to assume control of Burge's business brings the concept of individual advancement into the discussion. Adam "would have more power" than he does now and "could turn the business to better account," thus Adam could improve both his own condition and the condition of the village by taking over Burge's business. Adam eventually does buy the business, with money he makes working for Arthur, after he marries Dinah, and the epilogue opens with the scene of Adam closing up his own shop for the night. However, Adam's initial resistance to change, when juxtaposed with Arthur's thoughts about the future of the village, highlights the tension between pre-modern and modern.

People as well as Landscape: Idealizing the Inhabitants of Hayslope

Eliot establishes the context of an idyllic countryside from England's past in *Adam Bede* through the romanticized portrayal of her protagonist, but she extends that romanticization to a cast of supporting characters who provide an idealized backdrop of dutiful rural workers for her narrative. The best example is Old Kester, who Eliot's narrator is not "ashamed of commemorating" because "you and I are indebted to the hard hands of such men – hands that have long ago mingled with the soil they tilled so faithfully, thriftily making the best they could of the earth's fruits, and receiving the

smallest share as their own wages" (554). Through the emotional image of Kester's hardworking hands, Eliot intends to evoke sympathy for this member of the rural working class. Such an effort certainly furthers Eliot's general goal of extending sympathy, but this description of Kester, perhaps in depicting an "unreality," contradicts the purpose she outlines in "The Natural History of German Life." The sympathy Eliot evokes for Kester stems from Kester's faithfulness in tilling the soil and willingness to sacrificially work for a very small wage while producing food that feeds the entire Empire. It, is of course, unlikely that *all* of the rural working poor in late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century England approached their labour with the faithfulness and self-sacrificial nature of Old Kester. Eliot romanticizes Kester and idealizes the past to evoke sympathy for a group of individuals with whom the urban middle class of the 1850s was unfamiliar, but, in doing so, gives readers a much more idyllic view of that group than is provided by the camel image in "The Natural History of German Life." Eliot is leavening "realism" with desire in this particular portrayal, but also perhaps providing an idealistic description that 1850s urban readers would consider a "realistic portrayal" of the hearty peasant class they imagined.

In contrast to Old Kester, Eliot provides a less idealistic portrayal of Tom Shaft, who fills the role of jester in Hayslope's quasi-feudal class structure. Eliot's narrator initially describes Shaft as "a great favourite on the farm, where he played the part of the old jester, and made up for his practical deficiencies by his success in repartee," but then goes on to say that "Tom's wit should prove to be like that of many other bygone jesters imminent in their day – rather of a temporary nature, not dealing with the deeper and more lasting relations of things" (553). Eliot's commentary on Shaft is likely meant to

critique the quasi-feudal community that the rural workers of Hayslope belong to rather than the rural workers themselves, because calling Shaft a jester evokes the medieval period when feudalism was at its height. Like many preindustrial communities, Hayslope resembles a feudal society, in this case with Martin Poyser functioning as a vassal who rents the fiefdom of the Hall Farm from his lord, Squire Donnithorne. The feudalism of Hayslope stems from the fact that the agreement between Poyser and Squire Donnithorne is based on trust, loyalty, and arguably friendship rather than merely contractual obligations. The close-knit relations between the Poysers and Donnithornes enable Hetty's seduction, though, so Eliot does not intend for the feudalism of Hayslope to be perceived as not at all positive. Eliot intentionally idealizes certain aspects of Hayslope's rural culture, such as Kester's faithful and self-sacrificial hard work, but not others, such as the feudalistic class structure embodied by Tom Shaft, because that structure enables the destructive potential of overly personal relationships within a hierarchy of economic dependence.

In addition to conventionally rural characters, Eliot also depicts well-known rural customs when establishing the context of an idyllic countryside in *Adam Bede*. These include the birthday feast held when Arthur comes of age, the harvest-supper that takes place each fall, and the harvest song that is always sung at the supper. The long harvest-supper chapter provides an extensive view of rural life as described by Eliot, delivers the recently cited descriptions of Old Kester and Tom Shaft, and features Martin Poyser's comments regarding the economic benefits of the blockades form the Napoleonic Wars. Although the harvest supper scene takes place near the close of the novel, Eliot inserts this lengthy description of rural life just before Adam and Dinah's wedding to emphasize

the way of life that will pass once that union commences. On his way home from work one night, Adam hears "the chant of 'Harvest Home!' rising and sinking like a wave. [. . .] It was enough to make Adam feel that he was in a great temple, and that the distant chant was a sacred song" (551). The narrator says that this harvest chant buoys Adam's temperament after Hetty's downfall the way a spiritual experience would because urban readers expect country dwellers to embrace rural traditions and perform rural rituals with enthusiasm and zeal. Through the idealization of Adam, many of the rural workers, and the rural rituals they take part in, Eliot establishes the thesis that Hayslope, at least initially, can be considered a pre-modern village to prepare readers for the antithesis that is to come when she eventually undermines and challenges this pastoral vision of Hayslope.

Representing Eliot's Present: Dinah Morris as a Modern, Mobile, Charismatic Figure

Eliot overshadows the pastoral and idyllic vision of Hayslope with two disruptive forces: Dinah's presence and Hetty's act of infanticide. While the ways in which Dinah's charisma, decision to marry Adam for love, and choice to become a wife and mother can be considered modern do not become clear until her wedding actually takes place near the novel's close, her charisma is what primarily makes her presence in Hayslope initially disruptive. Her other modern qualities, including her mobility as an itinerant preacher, ability to support herself financially, and willingness to minister to the poor are apparent when she first appears in the novel. One reason that Dinah's mobility stands out as a marker of modernity is because it helps disturb the novel's mythic portrayal of time. According to Josephine McDonagh, the world of the past is represented as though "it

belongs to a different order of time: natural or mythic time, shaped before the onset of chronological, regulated, and commodified time: the time of modernity" ("The Early Novels" 43). In order for time to maintain its mythic posture in *Adam Bede*, the setting of the novel would need to remain confined to the idyll world of a pre-modern English village, but, as an itinerant preacher, Dinah unsettles this static image by travelling to numerous locations, including the industrial sites of Snowfield and Leeds, and thus revealing that time is indeed not mythic in the context of the novel. McDonagh also claims that "the images of rootedness that [*Adam Bede*] presents are always undercut by associations with mobility and transfer" ("Emigration" 38). In addition to Dinah, Adam, Hetty, and Arthur, all roam the countryside and travel to different parts of England, and Hetty and Arthur even leave England.

The travels of the four main characters from *Adam Bede* make the novel a much less rooted work than critics have formerly argued, but Dinah stands out as the primary figure of modernity because, as Gillian Beer explains, Dinah "is the only person in the book who can travel freely and without disastrous consequences" (63). Hetty flees in shame and ends up being tried for child murder, while Adam searches for her only to find that his fiancé has been charged with infanticide, and Arthur falls ill during his time in the militia. Perhaps Dinah does not meet disastrous consequences while on the move because, according to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "The seriousness of [Dinah's] vocation [as a mill worker] justifies [both] her independence from her aunt's family and her geographical mobility" (141). Dinah's occupation makes her not only an independent woman but also a modern one. Wendy Parkins echoes this sentiment when she argues that Dinah can be seen as a modern woman because "As a mill worker and dissenting

preacher she embodies occupations that are outside traditional feminine roles [. . .] and her freedom of movement also distinguishes her from the matriarchs of the [Hayslope] community"(37). Dinah eventually becomes one of the matriarchs of the Hayslope community, and Eliot utilizes Dinah's eventual leadership position to help introduce modern concepts, such as the value of maintaining a certain level of autonomy, to Hayslope.

Dinah's mobility is emphasized each time Adam travels from Hayslope to Snowfield to see her because she is always out and he is never surprised by this. Just before arriving on one trip, Adam thinks, "Dinah might be out on some preaching errand, and perhaps she would have left Hetty at home," and later he tells the Poysers that "'Dinah's been gone to Leeds ever since last Friday was a fortnight'" (448). Dinah's mobility is believable, and acknowledged by the other characters, because her occupations, of itinerant preacher, mill worker in Snowfield, and Hall Farm worker in Hayslope, as well as her earnings, are clearly outlined. Considering what the narrator tells readers about Dinah's life prior to her marriage, each year, she works at a mill in the industrial city of Snowfield for part of the year and saves enough money so that she can stay with her aunt and uncle, the Poysers, in Hayslope, or travel the countryside as an itinerant preacher during other parts of the year. Dinah's ability to not only support herself financially, but also to fund her travels through her income mark her as a modern outlier when she visits the Hayslope community.

Dinah's travels back and forth from Hayslope to Snowfield and Leeds involve mediation between country and city, from farming to industrial sites, and thus demonstrate an extrapolitan aspect of her character. The rural village of Hayslope and the

industrial city of Snowfield are meant to function as opposites. They are fictional settings, but based on real places, and are located in fictional counties called Loamshire and Stonyshire that, in their references to earth and stone, evoke the contrast between working the land and toiling in a factory. The contrasting names further highlight the differences between the rural and industrial sites that Dinah visits. Hayslope is based on the real village of Ellastone, which is where Eliot's father worked as a carpenter and is located in the county of Staffordshire. In *Adam Bede*, the distance from Hayslope to Snowfield is described as only 30 miles, and while Manchester is 67 miles from Ellastone, that distance is still small enough that Eliot may very well have meant to reference Manchester or another industrial city from Greater Manchester County. Both Staffordshire and Greater Manchester are located relatively near Eliot's birthplace in Warwickshire County. While I use the term rusticism to refer to monolithic conceptions of the countryside, extrapolitanism implies physical mediation between rural and urban sites as well as metaphysical mediation between rural and urban beliefs and values. Thus, extrapolitanism can potentially lead to more varied views of the countryside that are not typically part of rusticist thought. Both Dinah and Eliot draw on their extrapolitan experiences to profess a more nuanced perspective regarding the countryside. Dinah works in an urban locale to earn enough income to support her travels to a rural setting where she not only not only engages in cultural practices, such as helping at the Hall Farm, but also strives to help the working class through her ministry, which she believes provides the best means of accomplishing that goal. Like her character, Eliot displays an extrapolitan inclination in "Recollections of Ilfracombe" when she travels from London

to the Devon Coast and gains a better insight to a rural culture through her experiences there.

In addition to her mobility, Dinah's role as a Methodist preacher also helps establish her as a figure of modernity. As Parkins states, few women occupied such a position at the turn of the eighteenth century (37). Furthermore, preaching to the poor was also a relatively new idea at that time. The missionary focus of Methodism is what distinguishes it from Anglicanism and other forms of Christianity in Great Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Dinah's efforts to convert members of the Hayslope community, and in the process teach them to read so that they can read the Bible, are not viewed in a positive way by the entire community. Just before Dinah begins her sermon in the novel's second chapter, "The Preaching," Eliot's narrator takes a moment to describe the religious tension among Dinah's audience. The narrator says,

> Some of the Methodists were resting on [benches], with their eyes closed, as if wrapt in prayer or meditation. Others chose to continue standing and had turned their faces towards the villagers with a look of melancholy compassion, which was highly amusing to Bessy Cranage, the blacksmith's buxom daughter, known to her neighbours as Chad's Bess, who wondered 'why the folks war a-mekin' face a that'ns'. (77)

Dinah's audience is clearly divided between Methodists and Anglicans, and it may also include pagans such as Old Kester, who is known for keeping "his eyes upturned to the straw knobs imitative of golden globes at the summits of the beehive ricks [. . .] in some pagan act of adoration," because many country dwellers were unchurched at the turn of the century (553). Kester's paganism and Bessy's dialect are qualities that modern, urban

readers from the 1850s would expect to find among villagers from a turn-of-the-century rural setting, as well as the urban poor in 1850s London. The 1851 census revealed for the first time, the high degree of paganism among the urban working poor, and paganism and superstition are traits often ascribed to country dwellers by rusticism, so Eliot illustrates the overlap of pre-modern, rural communities and modern, urban societies once again with the paganism of Old Kester. The religious divisions among Dinah's listeners are reinforced by the "look of melancholy compassion" that the Methodists project toward the Anglicans and pagans.

When Dinah ministers to the villagers she displays elements of charisma that thoroughly capture and hold the attention of her audience, in part because of the melodious "sound quality of [her] voice," which "is described with such adjectival intensity by the narrator that it overpowers the content of Dinah's sermon" (Schroeder 186). Furthermore, Dinah possesses a sweet, appealing, and enthralling presence that also contributes to her "impressiveness as a speaker [and] bears traces of a mesmeric inheritance" (Fritz 458). Thus, the Hayslope villagers, especially the males, are enraptured not by the message of Dinah's sermon but by the charismatic manner through which she preaches. Dinah's charisma could be considered pre-modern because, for Weber, the charismatic leader establishes a personal and emotional connection with her followers (239). Dinah's connection to her audience stems, in part, from the erotic aspect of her charisma, so, the connection is clearly emotional, but, later in the novel, Dinah's eroticism is contained by her marriage to Adam and her charisma appears more modern as the goodwill it engenders is diffused out into the Hayslope community. Even a male stranger passing through is enraptured by Dinah's sermon in "The Preaching." Eliot's

narrator states that "Hitherto the traveler had been chained to the spot against his will by the charm of Dinah's mellow treble tones, which had a variety of modulation like that of a fine instrument touched with the unconscious skill of musical instinct" (85). Dinah's "mellow treble tones" appeal to the traveler more than the content of her sermon, but are effective enough to hold his attention.

While Dinah's Methodism disrupts the seemingly serene village by heightening tensions between different religious sects, her erotic appeal also increases tensions between men, such as Seth, who fall in love with her, and women, such as Bessy, who become jealous of her. After her sermon, Dinah walks among the audience and singles out Bessy, suggesting that the young woman cares primarily about material goods. After crying out "'Ah! Poor blind child!,'" Dinah says to Bessy, "'think if it should happen to you as it once happened to a servant of God in the days of her vanity. She thought of her lace caps, and saved all her money to buy 'em, she thought nothing about how she might get a clean heart and a right spirit, she only wanted to have better lace than other girls'" (89). Because Dinah compares Bessy to an example of a sinner from the Bible, Bessy believes Dinah's judgement is filled with prejudice. Furthermore, because Dinah is walking among the crowd, the closeness of her presence is disturbing to the jealous Bessy. The potential positive effects of sympathetic detachment do not develop in this scene despite Dinah's efforts to minister to the poor. The energy of Dinah's presence and the weight of her words are both so overwhelming that

> Bessy could bear it no longer: a great terror was upon her, and wrenching her earrings from her ears, she threw them down before her, sobbing aloud. Her father Chad, frightened lest he should be "laid hold on" too, this impression on the

> rebellious Bess striking him as nothing less than a miracle, walked hastily away, and began to work at his anvil by way of reassuring himself (90).

The tension between Dinah and Bessy reaches a breaking point when Bessy feels the powerful hold of Dinah's charismatic personality upon her and responds by "wrenching her earrings from her ears" in melodramatic fashion. The idea that Chad felt Bessy was "laid hold on" illustrates the closeness of Dinah's presence in the scene.

Tensions exist between Dinah and Bessy for three reasons: because Bessy is jealous of the attention Dinah's erotic appeal garners, because Bessy feels as if she is being judged with prejudice, and because the villagers are unprepared to encounter the modernity of Dinah's mobility, economic independence, and missionary focus when she interacts with the crowd. Dinah's erotic presence threatens the stability of the Hayslope community because Dinah preaches in the public sphere where both husbands and wives watch her sermons together. The public sphere is also a realm the Victorian separate-sphere doctrine deemed unfit for women because it was associated with competition, self-interest, and economic aggression, and would contaminate their virtue (Poovey 10). Although Dinah's presence is antithetical to Eliot's thesis that Hayslope is a pastoral, idyllic, pre-modern site, the villagers become much more willing to accept Dinah's presence after she helps produce Hetty's confession, which eventually leads to the synthesis of pre-modern and modern traits in an altered Hayslope.

Hetty's Act of Infanticide: Disruption, Deracination, and Displacement

Hetty's downfall further unsettles the idyllic vision of Hayslope by making the imbalance of power between the gentry and the working class manifest. While the villagers' reactions to Dinah's preaching illustrates the religious discord present in

Hayslope, Hetty's act of infanticide highlights the tension between classes, which overlap because the gentry is Anglican while many members of the rural working class ascribe to paganism and Methodism. The quasi-feudal structure of the community brings the Poysers and Donnithornes, the family from the gentry that Arthur and his grandfather the squire belong to, into such close proximity to each other that the idea of the young men and women from each family intermingling seems almost natural, yet such intermixing would clash with societal conventions and decorum. Arthur abandons Hetty, even though he does not know she is pregnant, because "No gentleman out of a ballad could marry a farmer's niece" and the young pregnant woman is left with no recourse except to flee Hayslope in a doomed effort to prevent the affair from being discovered (201). Hetty's actions are very unsettling to both the Hayslope villagers and Eliot's readers, in part, because women were "labelled insane and locked up in madhouses for [. . .] postnatal depression" in the nineteenth century (Wallace n.p.). Eliot utilizes Hetty's choice to leave her baby in the woods to bring the tension between classes to the surface. This becomes even more apparent when Adam confronts Arthur (354-58). Even though Dinah helps Hetty confess her individual responsibility, the older patriarchal sense that the lord is responsible lives on in Adam's anger at Arthur. The imbalanced class structure of the Hayslope community becomes apparent to Adam for the first time. Adam, who was not concerned with raising his class standing prior to Hetty's downfall, eventually becomes the leader of Hayslope, perhaps because he feels he can provide stronger moral leadership than Arthur, once the gentry loses its power.

The long, arduous journey Hetty takes after fleeing Hayslope demonstrates her deracination and mobility, which Eliot utilizes to further critique the imbalanced, quasi-

feudal class structure that is revealed through Hetty's downfall. While Dinah's mobility illustrates her independence, Hetty's mobility emerges as a result of the combination of close-knit relationships, imbalanced class structure, and economic dependence in the Hayslope community. Eliot's narrator describes Hetty during her journey as "Poor wandering Hetty, with the rounded childish face, and the hard unloving despairing soul looking out of it – with the narrow heart and narrow thoughts, no room in them for any sorrows but her own and tasting that sorrow with the more intense bitterness!" (438). The description of "Poor wandering Hetty" highlights Hetty's mobility and also helps evoke sympathy in the reader for Hetty. Eliot employs a melodramatic tone with phrases such as "unloving despairing soul" and "tasting that sorrow with the more intense bitterness" to heighten the reader's sympathy for Hetty, which is heightened even further when Eliot establishes the bodily grounds for sympathy. As Hetty is wandering the countryside, not long before she abandons her baby, the narrator exclaims,

> Delicious sensation! [Hetty] had found the shelter: she groped her way, touching the prickly gorse, to the door, and pushed it open. It was an ill-smelling close place, but warm, and there was straw on the ground: Hetty sank down on the straw with a sense of escape. Tears came [. . .] and [so did] sobs of hysterical joy that she still had hold of life, that she was still on the familiar eart, with the sheep near her. (435)

Hetty is ecstatic when she discovers shelter because starvation and a lack of safe shelter continually threaten the bodies of both Hetty and her baby throughout the journey. These descriptions of physical suffering help establish the bodily grounds for sympathy. This intense sympathy for Hetty stems from Eliot's desire to critique the class structure of

Hayslope. Hetty is not necessarily the most likeable character in that she is naïve, arrogant, presumptuous, and, most importantly, unable to feel sympathy for other people. There is no room in her heart and thoughts for "any sorrows but her own." Yet, Hetty is the victim of the rural order, so Eliot generates sympathy for her during her journey to critique that order. By revealing the class tensions that lead to Hetty's act of infanticide in a turn-of-the-century village, Eliot provides a more nuanced portrayal of that village than her contemporary readers would have expected.

Although Dinah's charisma initially sparks discord in the village by bringing the religious tensions to the surface and evoking jealousy, this charisma, in conjunction with her sympathetic detachment, enables Dinah to eventually become the mediating figure the village needs. Adam and the other villagers who come to see Hetty want her to confess, but only Dinah can produce the confession through sympathetic detachment. When Dinah visits Hetty in jail, the narrator says that "The light got fainter as they stood, and when at last they sat down on the straw pallet together, their faces had become indistinct" (490). Once Hetty and Dinah can clearly see each other, a closeness between the two permeates the scene that is reminiscent of the closeness that disturbed Bessy and her father when Dinah walked among her audience after her sermon. However, the confession scene lacks the prejudicial judgment of the earlier episode because Dinah tells Hetty that "'I'm come to be with you, Hetty – not to leave you – to stay with you – to be your sister to the last'" (490). What Hetty has been searching for on her journey is a sympathetic connection to an understanding human soul, and, here, Dinah identifies with Hetty, as her sister, rather than comparing Hetty to a sinner from the Bible, and this establishes the sympathetic connection. Dinah's presence is also less threatening in the

confession scene than when she interacts with Bessy because the confession takes places in a jail cell with no one other than Dinah and Hetty present. According to the Victorian separate-sphere doctrine, the private sphere is an appropriate realm for Dinah to minister to Hetty, and, without any men present, Hetty cannot become jealous of the attention they would devote to Dinah.

Dinah does render judgment, though, and Dinah's sympathetic detachment comes to the forefront when she asks for Hetty's confession. Dinah says,

> "You believe my love and pity for you, Hetty; but if you had not let me come near you, if you wouldn't have looked at me or spoken to me, you'd have shut me out from helping you: I wouldn't have made you feel my love; I couldn't have told you what I felt for you. Don't shut God's love out in that way, by clinging to sin . . . He can't bless you while you have one falsehood in your soul; his pardoning mercy can't reach you until you open your heart to him, and say 'I have done this great wickedness; O God, save me, make me pure from sin." (492)

When Dinah compares her love to God's love she establishes a certain level of distance from Hetty who has not yet confessed and accepted God's mercy. Through that distance, Dinah is able to render judgement of Hetty when she acknowledges Hetty's sin. However, Dinah's judgment lacks prejudice because she not only compares herself to God but also to Hetty when she refers to herself as Hetty's sister. Hetty accepts Dinah's love and pity, the sympathetic connection she offers, and even her judgment because Dinah's sympathetic connection precedes her judgment, which Hetty can see is itself fueled by love. By connecting herself to both Hetty and God's love, Dinah helps shape Hetty into a much more willing recipient of God's love than Bessy and convinces Hetty

to confess and repent. The two hold hands and Hetty leans against Dinah's cheek while the narrator comments that "It was the human contact [Hetty] clung to, but she was not the less sinking into the dark gulf" (490-91). Dinah's sympathetic detachment and Hetty's subsequent attachment to Dinah enable Hetty to feel comforted by the idea that another human being cares for her. Dinah remains just detached enough that the confession scene furthers Eliot's push for a balance between dependence and independence.

Hetty's confession is also important in that Eliot utilizes Adam's grief-stricken reaction to Hetty's downfall to critique rusticist idealization of a pastoral countryside. Adam's grief does not primarily stem from despair over the fate of Hetty's infant or even the realization that his relationship with Hetty has ended, but from the revelation that Hetty has acted improperly by having a secret affair and abandoning her child. Adam does not view Hetty or her role in the tryst with Arthur objectively because he sees Hetty as a child-like figure incapable of improper behavior. Adam exclaims "'she was a child as it 'ud ha' gone t' anybody's heart to look at [. . .] *it can never be undone*. My poor Hetty . . . she can never be my sweet Hetty again . . . the prettiest thing God had made – smiling up at me . . . I thought she loved me and was good'" (467-68, emphasis in original). Adam's grief represents the futility of excessive romanticization and idealization. At first he is unable to acknowledge Hetty's actions, but eventually he admits that "*it can never be undone*" and "she can never be my sweet Hetty again." Adam struggles to accept the reality of Hetty's actions because doing so means that he must acknowledge that his view of the world is not entirely accurate. Thus, Adam's struggle parallels the difficult transition into modernity that the village will eventually

make, which entails admitting that the countryside is a harsher place than pastoral fantasies lead one to believe.

Hetty's confession not only makes the reality of her actions undeniable, but also transforms her into a responsible moral agent. According to Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, the carceral subject enjoys the illusion that he or she possesses autonomy while the invisible, disciplining methods of society help regulate behavior (293-308). People do not object to Dinah roaming the countryside, because the morality of her religious views reassures people that she would not engage in an improper tryst like Hetty. Hetty's confession, though, helps her achieve a similar status. She is still transported to a penal colony, but the knowledge that Hetty has taken responsibility for her actions is cathartic for Adam and the other villagers. Hetty becomes the type of imaginary figure discussed by Rushdie that helps Eliot straddle two time periods when Hetty's actions shatter the seemingly innocent, idealistic, and romantic notions of villagers such as Adam, Her confession and subsequent transformation into a responsible moral agent helps signal the coming of modernity as she is transported to a modern form of society where her unconventional behavior will be kept in check through discipline and surveillance. Hetty's role as a carceral subject is a key part of the reason her confession helps the village transition to modernity.

The parallels between Adam's struggle and the community's difficult transition to modernity become apparent when Adam goes to the jail to visit Hetty, who only agrees to see him after her confession. According to the narrator, "When the sad eyes met – when Hetty and Adam looked at each other, she felt the change in him too, and it seemed to strike her with fresh fear. It was the first time she had seen any being whose face seemed

to reflect the change in herself: Adam was a new image of the dreadful past and the dreadful present" (501). Hetty's downfall causes Adam to experience significant change, and to eventually abandon his overly idealistic view of the world. Adam represents the past because he is a jack-of-all-trades figure, and the present once Hetty's actions shatter his romantic illusions about her. Through Adam, Eliot evokes both England's pre-modern past and the modern time period she lived in simultaneously, and deems both periods dreadful. Eliot views the societal structure from rural communities of the past as dreadful because the combination of personal relationships and an imbalanced class structure lead to tragedy. However, the anomic relationships of Eliot's time produce a lack of sympathetic connection between individuals that would also doom Hetty. Dinah represents a middle ground between these contrasting levels of independence because Dinah enjoys a great level of autonomy while also maintaining communal attachments to both the Poysers in Hayslope and her coworkers at Snowfield. Adam may be an image of "the dreadful past and the dreadful present," but Adam's emergence as a *new* image that simultaneously represents both the past and the present implies that a synthesis of traits from the communities of the two periods is possible. That synthesis occurs when Adam and Dinah marry.

The Union of Adam and Dinah and the Emergence of a "Border Country"

Adam's marriage to Dinah stands out as the final step in the long process that leads to the synthesis of pre-modern and modern traits in Hayslope. When Adam reflects on his relationship with Dinah just before proposing to her, Eliot's narrator tells us that "Tender and deep as his love for Hetty had been – so deep that the roots of it would never be torn away – his love for Dinah was better and more precious to him; for it was the

outgrowth of that fuller life which had come to him from his acquaintance with deep sorrow" (566). Eliot's discussion of "roots" brings to mind the novel's engagement with extrapolitanism. The revelation of Hetty's crime disrupts Adam's peaceful life and uproots Adam from a stable and fixed existence. Hetty's disappearance causes Adam to move physically, to travel from Hayslope to Snowfield and throughout the countryside. Being able to grieve for Hetty and mourn her loss allows Adam to move on emotionally by pursuing a new relationship with Dinah. Furthermore, Adam's relationship with Dinah is "fuller" and "more precious" because it emerges from the loss of his sentimentality.

Adam makes a second journey to Snowfield to propose to Dinah, and, during that trip, Eliot discusses how the past and present inform one another. According to the narrator,

> What keen memories went along the road with him! He had often been to Oakbourne and back since that first journey to Snowfield, but beyond Oakbourne, the grey stone walls, the broken country, the meagre trees, seemed to be telling him afresh the story of that painful past which he knew so well by heart. But no story is the same to us after a lapse of time; or rather, we who read it are no longer the same interpreters; and Adam this morning brought with him new thoughts through that grey country – thoughts which gave an altered significance to its story of the past. (565).

Eliot makes an astute observation: we cannot tell stories about the past without adding some inflection that is inspired by our own present-day perspectives. She cannot compose a novel about a pre-modern English village without incorporating her more modern viewpoint. Adam cannot travel to Snowfield and think only of when he went there in

search of Hetty, he also must consider how his journey to propose to Dinah is both similar to and different from the earlier sojourn. The roots of his love for Hetty can never be torn away, but they do intermingle with and inform the roots of his love for Dinah to produce a new, hopeful, and more profound outlook regarding the present and future. Adam's past love for Hetty impacts his present love for Dinah, and his present love for Dinah, in turn, gives Adam new insight when reflecting on his past love. This revelation gestures to the importance of the synthesis between pre-modern and modern traits. When Adam appears, through the ordeal of Hetty's downfall, as a new image emblematic of both the past and present, Eliot suggests that the synthesis of pre-modern and modern traits is possible. Once Adam marries Dinah and begins to reflect on both the past and present, he displays *both* pre-modern and modern traits by holding a less idealistic view of the world while still remaining connected to England's past through his jack-of-all-trades role.

The union of Adam and Dinah also enables Dinah to be viewed as both pre-modern and modern in that it helps reveal how several of Dinah's seemingly pre-modern qualities, including her decision to marry Adam for love, charisma, and choice to become a wife and mother, can be considered modern in the context of the novel. First, regarding the decision to marry for love, marital matches were, for centuries, primarily based on social class and income, but, beginning with Jane Austen, nineteenth-century novelists started to depict unions formed out of love as a response to the hardships of living in a loveless marriage that only exists to fulfill societal obligations (Weeks 37-44). Eliot utilizes the term love multiple times not only when Adam contemplates his relationship with Dinah, but also when Adam and Dinah discuss their pending union to emphasize

that the two choose to wed because they love each other. The narrator explains that Adam's "*love* for Dinah was better and more precious to him" than his love for Hetty (566 emphasis added). Furthermore, Dinah says "'my soul is so knit with yours that it is but a divided life I live without you. And this moment, now you are with me, and I feel that our hearts are filled with the same *love*, I have a fulness of strength to bear and do our heavenly Father's will, that I had lost before'" (568 emphasis added). A comparison between Adam's marriage to Dinah and the potential union he could enter with Mary Burge illustrates the emphasis Eliot places on the modern value of marrying for love. When Arthur suggests that Adam wed Mary, Arthur does so not because Adam loves Mary, but because, if they did wed, Mary's father would turn his carpentry business over to Adam (227). Arthur's suggestion comes across as very pre-modern when one considers that these benefits would be the products of a marriage that is not based in love. Adam, remarkably early in the novel, views his relationship with Mary in a very modern way. According to the narrator, Hetty felt the "cold triumph of knowing that [Adam] loved her, and would not care to look at Mary Burge" (102). In choosing not to wed Mary, despite the benefits he would reap, because he does not love her, Adam displays a modern outlook on love and marriage.

Adam's decision to wed Dinah, rather than Mary, for love also shows that Adam does not feel the same need that Arthur does to adhere to Hayslope's quasi-feudal, hierarchical class structure. Marrying for love might imply marrying someone from a different position in the hierarchy, which would clash with the pre-modern social convention of marrying within one's own class. Arthur chooses to follow the social conventions of the class structure when he abandons Hetty because "No gentleman out of

a ballad could marry a farmer's niece" (201). Adam defies the class structure when he chooses not to wed Mary, who would be a great match from within his own social class, and instead marry Dinah, who is a modern outlier. In the novel's epilogue, which takes place in 1807, eight years after Hetty's confession, trial, and transportation, Eliot suggests that one way Hayslope experiences the influx of modernity is through slow changes to the class structure. Dinah expresses that Arthur has changed from "'the sickness he has undergone, as well as the years which have changed us all'" (572). Adam adds that "'[Arthur's] all sound in th' inside; it's only the fever shattered him so'" (572). Although, Arthur soon will "'be set right in his own country air,'" and his mental faculties remain intact, his body has been so changed, shattered, and damaged by the fever that he will be unable to make a full recovery (572). As a result of Arthur's illness and the scandal of his dalliance with Hetty, Arthur will not inherit the title of squire when his grandfather passes (573).

The slow changes to the class structure are further emphasized in a scene from the epilogue that implies that Adam and Dinah have become the de facto leaders of Hayslope during Arthur's absence and illness. The narrator says, "It is near the end of June, in 1807. The workshops have been shut up half an hour or more in Adam Bede's timber-yard, which used to be Jonathan Burge's, and the mellow evening light is falling on the pleasant house with the buff walls and the soft grey thatch, very much as it did when we saw Adam bringing in the keys on that June evening nine years ago" (571). The novel opens and closes with scenes that take place in Adam's carpentry shop. By returning to the setting of the shop and therefore prompting her readers to juxtapose the opening and closing scenes, Eliot highlights the changes that Dinah claims everyone in the village has

undergone since Hetty's transportation (572). Adam now owns Burge's shop and has, as Arthur claimed he would, turned "the business to better account" (571; 227). In earning enough money to buy the business, rather than wedding Mary to obtain control of it, Adam displays the modern impulses of class raising and marrying for love. Although the quasi-feudal class structure of Hayslope will not disappear overnight, or even over the course of nine years, the fact that power in Hayslope resides with a rural artisan and business owner rather than the gentry indicates that modern changes are taking root in Hayslope. Once the quasi-feudal class structure eventually disappears, individuals will enjoy more autonomy, but the intense significance Eliot places on sympathetic detachment indicates that the sympathetic bonds of the rural community should not completely disappear, even with the onset of modernity.

Not only does Adam and Dinah's union reflect the modern value of marrying for love, it also contains the disruptive threat posed by the erotic aspect of Dinah's charisma, thus making her charisma appear more helpful, diffusive, and, subsequently, modern. On Adam and Dinah's wedding day, the narrator says "The Churchyard walk was quite lined with familiar faces, many of them faces that had first looked at Dinah when she preached on the Green; and no wonder they showed this eager interest on her marriage morning, for nothing like Dinah and the history which had brought her and Adam Bede together had been known at Hayslope within the memory of man" (569). The reference to Dinah's sermon on the green enables readers to juxtapose this scene with the earlier one and realize the contrast in the villagers' attitudes toward Dinah. Although both husbands and wives attend the public ceremony, Dinah's presence no longer incites the same level of jealousy because she is now married to Adam and no longer single. Eliot's use of the

term “history” allows Eliot to communicate to her readers that fiction and history interpenetrate. Dinah functions as a precursor to *Middlemarch*’s Dorothea in that the erotic appeal of both characters drives individuals to do good deeds, and the goodwill engendered by both women diffuses out to benefit the larger community, eventually influencing history. Dorothea strives to improve the living conditions for the impoverished cottagers who reside on her uncle’s estate and helps repair Lydgate’s reputation. Dinah teaches individuals to read so that they can read the Bible, helps people learn how to minister to one another, and, most importantly, helps produce Hetty’s confession. Once the disruptive threat posed by the erotic aspect of Dinah’s charisma is contained through her marriage to Adam, she can draw on her charisma primarily to minister individuals, especially in the private sphere as she does with Hetty, and embody the modern, mid-Victorian ideal of helping those less fortunate.

One individual who has difficulty embracing Dinah’s more constant presence in Hayslope is Bessy. At the wedding ceremony, “Bessy Cranage, in hear nearest cap and frock, was crying, though she did not know exactly why; for, as her cousin Wiry Ben, who stood near her, judiciously suggested, Dinah was not going away, and if Bessy was in low spirits, the best thing for her to do was to follow Dinah’s example, and marry an honest fellow who was ready to have her” (569). While Bessy may still be jealous of Dinah or perturbed by her more lasting presence because of lingering frustration from the earlier interaction, the key difference between the wedding scene and the first encounter is the reaction of Bessy’s family members. In the first encounter, Bessy’s father Chad is also disturbed by Dinah’s presence. However, in the wedding scene, Wiry Ben’s comment to Bessy implies that he and the rest of the villagers are now ready to accept

Dinah. Wiry Ben even goes so far as to suggest that Bessy follow Dinah's example and marry.

Finally, Dinah's choice to become a wife and mother may be the aspect of her character that is most difficult for twenty-first-century readers to accept as modern because it greatly limits the mobility of the once-highly-autonomous figure, but, this choice does reflect the modern emergence of the separate-sphere doctrine, which Eliot embraced, in the mid-nineteenth century. The separate-sphere doctrine emerged because "the private sphere is a haven from the social problems that saturate the public sphere (especially for women)" (Dalley 562). As the relationships between social classes began to change in nineteenth-century England, just as they begin to in Hayslope at the end of *Adam Bede*, the separate-sphere doctrine became important. According to Mary Poovey, "Instead of being articulated upon inherited class position [. . .] virtue was increasingly articulated upon gender in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. [. . .] As superintendents of the domestic sphere, (middle-class) women were represented as protecting and, increasingly, incarnating virtue" (10). The social problems of the public sphere, as evidenced by public debate over infanticide in the 1850s, were viewed as new, modern developments in the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, the shift away from virtue being articulated upon inherited class position, which is reflected through Arthur's downfall and the decline of the gentry in *Adam Bede*, to an emphasis on the "angel in the house," was also a modern trend. So, the separate-sphere doctrine emerged as a modern response to these new changes. Despite this context, Dinah's choice to remain primarily in the private sphere after years of mobility and economic independence still seems to be an oppressive outcome until one considers that Dinah has actively chosen to give up the

option of freely roaming the countryside, which was available to her but not many women at that time, as well as the options that are available to Dinah in the private sphere. As Monica Cohen points out "it is possible to see how the Victorian separate-sphere doctrine itself, an oppressive condition from many standpoints, could have been used in good will if not always to good effect as an instrument for improving the condition of middle-class women, particularly when social reform and 'kinder' public policy programs came into vogue" (346). While Dinah certainly utilizes her public role as a preacher to spread goodwill, Dinah actually possesses the potential to exert even more influence from the private realm of her home.

As not just a wife but also a mother, Dinah can minister to her children, who can in turn spread goodwill throughout the world. So, Dinah freely chooses to teach her children in the private realm how to minister to others, rather than just choosing to minister to others herself in the public realm when that option is available. Victorian novels almost universally end with marriages, and the eventual birth of children is implied when a novel ends with a marriage. While just mentioning birth at the end of a Victorian novel often functions to restore order or emphasize themes of renewal and rebirth, Eliot uniquely devotes a significant portion of the epilogue from *Adam Bede* to describing Adam and Dinah's children, their appearance, their lifestyle, and their daily routine, so that readers can see that Dinah is teaching her children to minister to those less fortunate and spread goodwill (571-74). The physical appearances of little Lisbeth, "with pale auburn hair and grey eyes," and Addy, who is sturdy with black-hair, are related in full detail (571). Eliot also describes what the children's daily interactions with Adam, Dinah, and Seth are like (571). This much detail is not typically devoted to

children who only appear at the close of a Victorian novel, but Eliot strives to emphasize the importance of the children to the narrative arc. The children help Dinah function as a foil to the infanticidal Hetty and, by representing the continued renewal of life, indicate that history and time will continue to move forward, albeit in a dialectical manner.

Caring for her children in the private domestic realm appears does not appear to have had oppressive effects on Dinah, who has not changed much in terms of physical appearance and livelihood at the novel's close. The narrator says that "We can see [Dinah's] sweet pale face quite well now: it is scarcely at all altered – only a little further, to correspond to her more matronly figure, which still seems light and *active* enough in the plain black dress" (571, emphasis added). The potentially oppressive conditions of the private sphere have not dampened Dinah's energy, vibrancy, or livelihood. The primary change that takes place when Dinah transitions from preacher to mother is the shifting of her efforts and duties from the public to the private sphere, but, beyond this distinction, the roles are very similar. Adam, Dinah, and Seth discuss how the Methodist denomination banned women from preaching in 1803, and that Dinah has chosen to follow this dictate, but Adam makes sure to mention that "'she's not held from other sorts o' teaching'" (573). The "'other sorts o' teaching'" Adam refers to likely includes educating the young Bede children and other forms of teaching that are not as pubic as a sermon open to the whole village. Because Eliot's narrative takes place in a world where the movement of history is considered dialectical and history and fiction interpenetrate, Dinah ensures that her goodwill will spread slowly, but exponentially, to the remainder of the Hayslope community and beyond. Dinah's efforts in the private realm ultimately influence the public sphere.

The changes that Hayslope undergoes, in remembering Hetty but slowly embracing Dinah, indicate that communities can adopt qualities from both pre-modern and modern societies. For Eliot, an exemplar community involves a balance between personal and anomic relationships, just enough autonomy to avoid becoming a victim within an imbalanced class structure, and strong enough communal ties that people feel sympathetic connections to one another. Hayslope comes to resemble Eliot's vision for an exemplar community and can be considered a "border country," which is a term I borrow from Williams, who uses it to describe to describe a space transformed by class conflict and modernization, such as Hardy's fictional Wessex setting (197). Class conflict and modernization make Hardy's Wessex setting a site of tumultuous transition caught between the clutches of past and present England. Williams celebrates that state of existence, to a certain extent, and Eliot certainly does when she imbues Hayslope with qualities from both the pre-modern communities of England's past and the modern societies of her present. Thinking of a border country in this way can help us see that, as pervasive and unavoidable as rusticism is, the discourse is not all unescapable. Positive extrapolitan encounters can empower an individual to become neither completely dependent nor independent, and to embrace the qualities, beliefs, and values, from both pre-modern and modern communities. In *Adam Bede*, Dinah Morris functions as an autonomous figure that, through her sympathetic detachment, helps illustrate the interplay of pre-modern and modern. Once she and Adam become the leaders of Hayslope and the village emerges from a seemingly pastoral site to a border country, Hayslope also begins to function as an anomalous entity that mediates between the realms of pre-modern and modern. This mediation is possible because Hayslope is led by Dinah, who can spread the

goodwill of sympathetic detachment through charismatic teaching in the private realm, and Adam, who possesses a fuller, more mature, and clear-sighted outlook after the loss of his sentimentality and idealization, which has been replaced by a newfound objectivity that, when combined with his morality, virtue, work ethic, and business sense, makes Adam a natural leader.

Eliot critiques the rusticist impulse to view the countryside as pastoral, idyllic, and pre-modern in *Adam Bede* by elucidating the interpenetration of pre-modern and modern. Rusticism relegates country dwellers to the pre-modern side of the binary, and Eliot challenges that assumption when she illustrates why qualities from both pre-modern and modern societies should be included in an exemplar community. Williams claims that Eliot caters her portrayals, in what could be called a rusticist manner, of rural places and people to the expectations of urban readers. While this is certainly the case when she depicts the supporting characters from the Hayslope village or the rural festivities in Ilfracombe, most nineteenth-century authors perpetuate rusticism to some extent, and Eliot eventually critiques these portrayals. In “Recollections of Ilfracombe,” Eliot provides a pastoral depiction of the rural culture residing at the sea-side town, but she also becomes disconcerted when her idyllic visions are undermined by the encroachment of modernity. By the end of that text, though, Eliot expresses the idea that life in the English countryside is not actually idyllic. This is an idea that Eliot herself professes in “The Natural History of German Life,” the essay she worked on while at Ilfracombe, when she claims that realist novelists should not operate from foregone conclusions and provides a coarse rendering of a peasant. Following the rural encounter at Ilfracombe, Eliot presents in her first novel, *Adam Bede*, a rural culture very much like the one she

expected to encounter at Ilfracombe, but then challenges that monolithic and idyllic vision by revealing, through class conflict and modernization, a much more nuanced depiction of the rural culture in Hayslope.

Eliot, who stands out as one of the most influential novelists from nineteenth-century England, had a unique relationship with both the country and the city. Eliot certainly embraced urban cultural values, and often wrote from a metropolitan perspective, but she also evidenced a deep connection to the countryside, from her early experiences in Warwickshire and her sojourn to Ilfracombe, and this connection led her to challenge rusticism in *Adam Bede*.

The rusticist notion that Eliot challenges in *Adam Bede*, the myth of a rural "Golden Age," dominated public perception well into the late nineteenth century, has not disappeared completely, and was not widely challenged until the 1880s and 1890s when the effects of Corn Law repeal and the Great Depression became overwhelming pervasive. Eliot intentionally sets *Adam Bede* in the past, so that the narrative takes place at the height of the supposed rural "Golden Age." Jane Austen and other similar novelists contributed to the perpetuation of this idea by portraying idyllic rural settings and the gentry as often the most moral class of English people. The tradition delineated by Austen was predominant throughout English literature until the works of Charles Dickens, which often focus on urban settings and locate morality among urban characters, became tremendously popular. Even then, the shift to a greater focus on urban people and places in literature developed slowly. Dickens is the most well-known author of the nineteenth century outside of Austen, the most popular British writer from the Victorian period, the nineteenth-century author most often associated with representing

the urban perspective, and the writer considered responsible for signaling the shift from Austen and a rural focus to an urban one in British literature. However, in his later works, Dickens does profess an appreciation for the nuances of rural cultures and include subtle critiques of rusticism. In the next chapter, then, I turn my attention to Dickens in order to elucidate how this immensely popular, highly influential author, who was known for championing the city, actually challenges rusticism. Although Eliot's two most critically acclaimed works, *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda* (1876), were published after Dickens's death in 1870, I focus on Eliot in Chapter 1 and Dickens in Chapter 2 because Eliot's novel that challenges the rusticist notion of a rural "Golden Age," *Adam Bede*, takes place at the turn of the eighteenth century, and because Dickens most thoroughly challenges rusticism at the end of his career, well after the publication of *Adam Bede*.

Chapter 2 –

"Birds of a Feather": Competition, Cooperation, Taxidermy, and *Tableau Vivant* in *Our Mutual Friend*

Dickens and the City

The most popular writer during the Victorian period, Charles Dickens, is often thought of as an author who captured the nuances of nineteenth-century urban centers and championed the city. At first glance, Dickens certainly does not appear to possess a strong connection to the countryside. Novels such as *Oliver Twist* (1837-39) and *Bleak House* (1852-53) are known for their vivid depictions of London that portray both the beautiful and harrowing aspects of the city. Raymond Williams describes the transition from a heavy emphasis on rural settings and values to a more urban-centric focus in British literature, which is marked by Dickens and through which "The individual moral qualities, still sharply seen, are heard as it were collectively, in the 'roaring streets'" rather than the rural pastures or country manors (161). While Dickens's early works helped popularize the portrayal of urban settings and values in fiction, my goal in the present chapter is to elucidate how Dickens, late in his career, portrayed rural cultures as vast and varied rather than monolithic and even promoted certain rural practices, such as mutual aid. In September 1857, Dickens and Wilkie Collins took a walking tour of the English countryside, which the two authors chronicled in *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* (1857), which Collins authoring the first three installments and Dickens the final two. I argue that this trip inspired a gradual shift in Dickens's work from a predominantly rusticist attitude to a more anti-rusticist outlook.

In a somewhat paradoxical manner, Dickens begins to express this more anti-rusticist outlook late in his life as he becomes more urbanized and embraces cosmopolitanism. Amanda Anderson argues that Dickens critiques nationalism in *Little Dorrit* (1855-57), which he completed just before embarking on *The Lazy Tour*, and Christopher Herbert and John McBratney make similar claims regarding *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) and *Great Expectations* (1860-61), respectively (89; 235; "The Return and Rescue" 106; "Reluctant Cosmopolitanism" 531). As my Introduction explains, the modern resurgence of cosmopolitanism was primarily an urban development, and cosmopolitanism sometimes favors the growth of contempt for the strong communal ties that are often assumed to be such an integral part of rural life. However, I contend that Dickens's view of cosmopolitanism did not include this urban preference. Dickens embraced cosmopolitanism and a more anti-rusticist perspective simultaneously, and later in the chapter I address the connection between these two seemingly contradictory developments when I make the argument that Dickens's cosmopolitanism is closer to extrapolitanism in that it actually causes him to become more willing to acknowledge and even embrace the nuances of rural cultures.

The present chapter focuses mainly on a critique of rusticism that Dickens casts in his last completed novel, *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-65), but Dickens's final three novels reflect his shift in perspective regarding rural cultures. Several of the rusticist ideas perpetuated by early Dickens novels that are reversed or challenged in later ones include the belief emphasized in Dick Whittington narratives[1] that class transformation occurs

[1] The folk legend of Dick Whittington, which became very popular during the nineteenth century, follows the adventures of a poor, young boy from the countryside who travels to London, becomes prosperous, and is even made Lord Mayor of London three times. In

mainly in the cities, the notion from the tradition exemplified by Austen that the countryside is a restorative place where one can retreat and recuperate, and a monolithic, pastoral, idyllic vision of a beautiful countryside. These ideas are ones that Dickens grapples with all throughout his literary career. For instance, in *Oliver Twist*, the development of the eponymous character follows a Dick Whittington narrative, and, in *Bleak House*, the communal bonds of feudalistic society are idealized through Sir Leicester Dedlock's death-bed interactions with Mr. George (673-96). Dickens's altered perspective on rural cultures developed gradually, so, his first novel following *The Lazy Tour*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, focuses mainly on the urban sites of Paris and London and does not critique rusticism as thoroughly as his thorough as his final three novels. The shift to a more anti-rusticist outlook begins to appear in *Great Expectations*, Dickens's follow-up to *A Tale of Two Cities*, when Dickens makes subtle critiques of rusticism. For instance, although Pip's development in *Great Expectations* also follows a Dick Whittington plot, and Joe Gargery is a stereotypically kind, naïve, and unassuming country dweller, Pip does show a certain amount of pride in his rural upbringing when he fights Herbert Pocket (99-101).

Following *Great Expectations*, Dickens cast his two most thorough critiques of rusticism in *Our Mutual Friend* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870). *Our Mutual Friend* reverses both the gender of the protagonist and the setting from a typical Dick Whittington narrative when working-class Lizzie Hexam enables her marriage to a gentleman, Eugene Wrayburn, by saving his life in the countryside. Moreover, later in the chapter, I thoroughly explain both how Dickens's portrayal of Lizzie advances the idea of

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the nineteenth century, this story came to represent the opportunities for class raising available to young men in the city but not the country.

mutual aid and how mutual aid was typically associated with rural communities in the nineteenth century. In addition to rusticist attitudes regarding class raising and a beautiful, regenerative countryside, Dickens's final two novels also address the effects of city dwellers travelling to the country. The setting of *Edwin Drood* shifts back and forth from London to Dickens's fictional stand-in for Rochester, Cloisterham, which, although technically considered a city, is, like many rural communities, associated with Englishness and ancientness (Hohner par. 11). Urban and non-urban interaction in *Edwin Drood* leads to the contamination of Cloisterham when goods, such as opium, are imported from the colonies to London and eventually encroach on the non-urban space of Cloisterham (Tromp 41-42; Moore 85; Hohner par. 4). The contamination of Cloisterham enables Dickens to challenge the rusticist notion that the countryside is a pastoral, idyllic, beautiful place, when the non-urban space in *Edwin Drood* becomes a polluted wasteland that, while retaining some of its rural beauty, is also harrowing. Dickens's early portrayals of London are highly nuanced because he presents the duality of a city that is simultaneously both beautiful and ugly. In contrast, the rural settings in Dickens's early works lack this diversity and are most often idealized. However, when describing London in *Our Mutual Friend* and *Edwin Drood*, Dickens focuses primarily on the horrific aspects of the city and reserves the duality of a more nuanced presentation for his non-urban scenes.

In *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens critiques many of the rusticist ideas he perpetuated earlier in his career, but what Dickens most thoroughly challenges in *Our Mutual Friend*, is the rusticist impulse to other country dwellers by describing them as animalistic. With my use of the term animalistic, I mean to refer to the process whereby

authors imbue characters with distinctly nonhuman attributes, such as walking on four limbs or living in filth and waste. These characterizations usually carry negative connotations, though in some cases, especially when characters are infused with bird-like qualities, such as superior eyesight or the ability to fly, animalistic descriptions do feature positive undertones. The concept of the animalistic country dweller was an integral component of the idyllic, monolithic view of the countryside that was predominate throughout the nineteenth century, when human and nonhuman were understood as significantly disparate social categories. As simplistic beasts of burden, country dwellers could be idealized for their work ethic in a condescending way, but still considered entirely other from their urban counterparts. Lizzie's rescue of Eugene enables Dickens both to challenge the rusticist construction of the country dweller as a simplistic beast of burden and to depict the interplay of human and nonhuman, because, when rescuing Eugene, Lizzie, who has lived in the countryside for over six months at that point, is described as a nonhuman animal but she uses her animalistic instinct and energy for more than manual labor when she preserves the life of a human animal. When reading *Our Mutual Friend*, some readers may not immediately think of the stereotype of the animalistic country dweller because nonhuman animals, such as rats, cats, dogs, horses, and birds, were commonly found in the city and these creatures produced much of the waste that makes up Harmon's dust mounds and saturates the urban Thames in *Our Mutual Friend*. Nonetheless, Lizzie resides in a remote Oxfordshire village throughout the second half of the lengthy novel and her pivotal rescue of Eugene, which enables Dickens to illustrate the interplay of human and nonhuman, takes place there. Dickens could have easily set the rescue scene on the urban Thames, where much of the narrative

unfolds, but chose the countryside. Through the rural setting of the rescue scene, Dickens challenges the simplistic, animalistic characterization of country dwellers when Lizzie uses her animal attributes of superior eyesight, bird-like movement, and a scavenging mentality to rescue Eugene.

Dickens's ability to critique the stereotype of the animalistic country dweller in *Our Mutual Friend* is informed by the publication of *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. Dickens composed *Our Mutual Friend* in the post-Darwinian world of 1860s England, when Victorians engaged, more intensively than ever before, with a moral unease occasioned by the claim that both human and nonhuman animals alike vie over food and other resources in the competitive struggle of natural selection. Sigmund Freud argues that "Darwin and his supporters" dealt one of the "three great blows" to the "universal narcissism of mankind"[2] when they showed that "man was not separate from lower animals in the organic scheme of things" (Sulloway 276; Freud "A Difficulty in the Path of Psycho-Analysis" 139-43). The validity of Freud's claim becomes clear when one considers that, although nonhuman animals were an integral part of Victorian daily life and often lived in close physical proximity to human animals, the cultural distinction between human and nonhuman was an essential component of human narcissism during the Victorian period. Thus, in equating human animals with nonhuman animals by placing both on the evolutionary tree, Darwin did indeed deeply disturb human narcissism in the nineteenth century. Many critics assume that Dickens, like numerous other Victorians, met natural selection with tremendous apprehension due to his

[2] The first blow was cosmological and occurred when Coprenicus demonstrated that the Earth was not the center of the universe. The third blow was psychological and came from Freud and his followers (276).

renowned sympathy for the poor and the obvious parallels between natural selection and laissez-faire economics.[3] Many of Dickens's contemporaries, such as Henry Mayhew, Edwin Chadwick, John Ruskin, and James Greenwood, felt the hands-off approach of laissez-faire economics would not provide sufficient help for the working poor, and drew parallels between this approach and the assumption that natural selection implies the lack of an intelligent creator. Though Dickens's contemporaries employed Darwinism to engage in discussions of the working poor, I argue, and show later in the chapter through my analysis of the novel, that in *Our Mutual Friend* Dickens displays much less moral unease toward natural selection than his contemporaries while still demonstrating sympathy for the working poor, who feature prominently in the text.[4]

The concept of natural selection deeply unsettled human narcissism in the nineteenth century for two primary reasons: because of the possible threat natural selection poses to the value of human life, and because natural selection could potentially imply that human animals are self-interested creatures concerned merely with their own survival. While other cultures and generations also esteem human life, the Victorians, and Dickens in particular, continually evinced the need to reemphasize "the incontrovertible value of the human person" in literary works, such as *A Tale of Two Cities* when Carton

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[3] See Gillian Beer, George Levine, Howard W. Fulweiler, Goldie Morgentaler, Pam Morris, Adelene Buckland, and Sally Ledger for the similarities between the worlds described by both Dickens and Darwin (5; 119-176; 157-97; 50-74; 179-94; 366-78; 679-94). Although the critics who have studied the similarities between Dickens and Darwin appear to be in agreement regarding Dickens's apprehension toward natural selection, Fulweiler's analysis of *Our Mutual Friend* is the most thorough with regard to the parallels between natural selection and laissez-faire economics.

[4] For the connections between Dickens and Mayhew, see Harland S. Nelson, Harvey Peter Sucksmith, and Richard J. Dunn. On Dickens and Chadwick, see Mary Poovey. On Dickens and Ruskin, see Catherine Gallagher. On Dickens and Greenwood, see Dan Bivona and Roger B. Henkle (207-222, 345-49, 348-53; 117; 87; 10).

and Lucie rescue Darnay and Dr. Manette respectively.[5] Thus, for many Victorians, the argument that humans share an evolutionary connection to "less valuable" life forms threatened the idea that the value of the human person is incontrovertible. What makes Lizzie's rescue of Eugene such a poignant moment in Dickens's canon is that Lizzie affirms the value of human life through the rescue, but she does so by behaving like an instinctual, resourceful nonhuman animal struggling for her own survival. Eugene obviously benefits because Lizzie saves his life, but Lizzie also benefits because her subsequent marriage to Eugene raises her class standing and restores her honor.

The idea that Lizzie's rescue of Eugene could be based, at least in part, on self-interest underscores the threat natural selection posed to the Victorian delineation between disinterest and self-interest. Many Victorians esteemed disinterest over self-interest and the tension between the two stood out as a continual point of major conflict for Dickens all throughout the latter portion of his career, perhaps most markedly so at the conclusion of *Little Dorrit* when Arthur Clennam is reluctant to accept the eponymous character's help. Due to the work of evolutionary theorists who helped promote Darwin's ideas, such as Thomas Henry Huxley and Herbert Spencer, the competitive aspect of natural selection predominated public understanding of natural selection in the 1860s and unsettled Victorian notions of human narcissism by describing human animals as self-interested, rather than cooperative, beings. However, the idea that species rely on mutual aid, or cooperation, as well as competition, to survive, also appears in Darwin's work (*The Descent of Man* 154-55). In suggesting that individuals benefit by helping each other, the concept of mutual aid provides a middle ground

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[5] See John McBratney ("The Return and Rescue" 106).

between disinterest and self-interest. Interpreting Lizzie's rescue of Eugene as a self-sacrificial act is logical because Dickens often presents his readers with self-sacrificial heroines, such as Esther Summerson and Amy Dorrit. However, in the context of post-Darwinian England, one can see that Lizzie embodies the more cooperative, rather than violently competitive, side of natural selection when both she and Eugene benefit from her rescue of him. Although Dickens mainly embraces the cooperative side of natural selection in *Our Mutual Friend*, his portrayal of Lizzie can still be considered radical in the context of 1860s England since embracing natural selection to any extent involves acknowledging the similarities between human and nonhuman animals.. Dickens challenges the characterization of "rustics" as simplistic beasts of burden not by refuting that country dwellers possess animalistic traits, but by proposing, through Lizzie's character, that certain animalistic qualities, such as cooperative behavior, can be viewed in a positive way.

Before proceeding with my analysis of *Our Mutual Friend*, I outline several instances of historical context that are crucial to understanding how Dickens elucidates the interplay of human and nonhuman, and subsequently challenges rusticism, in *Our Mutual Friend*. I look at examples of both evolutionary theory and "visual culture" that Dickens drew on to create a violent, highly competitive environment in *Our Mutual Friend* that helps distinguish Lizzie as an important, cooperative outlier. Then I conduct a close reading of *The Lazy Tour* to illustrate how the events of the tour impacted Dickens's perception of rural cultures. Finally, I outline a pattern derived from Freud that I use to articulate how Lizzie embodies both human and nonhuman attributes simultaneously.

Competition and Cooperation in Evolutionary Theory

Dickens drew on several contemporaneous sources when creating the world of *Our Mutual Friend* and the characters who occupy it. Two trends from the post-Darwinian world of 1860s England that are important for understanding how Dickens delineates the interplay of human and nonhuman in *Our Mutual Friend* include evolutionary theory and "visual culture." The first is the "gladiatorial" perception of natural selection that rose to prominence when Huxley and Spencer promoted the view that competition against others, rather than just oneself or one's environment, was the defining the aspect of natural selection. This "gladiatorial" view came to dominate public perception in the 1860s and stand out as one of the main reason why Victorians who so greatly valued disinterest, helping the poor, and human life met natural selection with such reticence.

Huxley and Spencer's view is problematic in that it is somewhat narrow and overlooks the cooperative aspect of natural selection. Darwin certainly emphasized the competitive facet of natural selection in his examples, which include overpopulation, and metaphors, such as the wedge to depict one species forcing another out; however, for Darwin, competition is not the only factor that contributes to the survival of a species. For instance, in *The Descent of Man* (1871), Darwin posits that "[the ape-like progenitors of man] would have felt uneasy when separated from their comrades, for whom they would have felt some degree of love; they would have warned each other of danger, and have given *mutual aid* in attack or defence. All this implies some degree of sympathy, fidelity, and courage" (154-55, emphasis added). The concept of mutual aid suggests that individuals work together, as well as compete with each other, as a means of survival.

Huxley and Spencer chose to focus on the competitive side of natural selection, and their work was primarily responsible for informing public understanding of natural selection in the 1860s, but, since then, other scientists have promoted the cooperative side. In the 1890s, Russian evolutionary theorist Petr Kropotkin published a series of essays in the British monthly literary magazine *Nineteenth Century*, which drew attention to the idea of mutual aid and were collected in a 1902 book entitled *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. Kropotkin responded directly to Huxley and Spencer by stating that "if we [. . .] ask Nature: 'who are the fittest: those who are continually at war with each other, or those who support one another?' we at once see that those animals which acquire habits of mutual aid are undoubtedly the fittest" (12). What stands out about Kropotkin's discussion of mutual aid is the highlighting of a previously overlooked aspect of Darwinian theory and its relevance to the evolutionary process.

While the "gladiatorial" view of natural selection advanced by Huxley and Spencer still persists culturally today, scholars and scientists have noted the important role mutual aid plays in evolution. As Stephen Jay Gould points out, "Struggle does occur in many modes, and some lead to cooperation among members of a species as the best pathway to advantage for individuals" (21). Gould reminds us that natural selection involves finding the best means for survival, which is not always competition. Michael Shermer echoes Gould's thought when he explains that, since Kropotkin published *Mutual Aid*, "science has revealed that species practice both mutual struggle and mutual aid. Darwinism, properly understood, gives us a dual disposition of selfishness and selflessness, competitiveness and cooperativeness" (par. 6). In some cases competition provides the best means for survival and in other instances cooperation does so.

Drawing on Kropotkin's work to better understand Dickens's portrayal of Lizzie may initially seem problematic since Kropotkin published the essays that make up *Mutual Aid* in the 1890s. Rather than introduce a new aspect of evolutionary thinking, though, Kropotkin simply explored an overlooked aspect of Darwinian theory. As a voracious thinker, reader, and writer who clearly read Darwin, Dickens could have easily focused on the same train of thought in Darwin's writing that led Kropotkin to compose *Mutual Aid*. For example, what separates Lizzie from the other characters in *Our Mutual Friend* is her lack of competitive behavior and willingness to render aid to Eugene so that they both survive. Furthermore, Dickens emphasizes the theme of mutuality throughout *Our Mutual Friend* as he continually reveals how the lives of the novel's numerous characters are interconnected. Many of these characters compete with each other over a variety of resources, such as trinkets from the Thames and Harmon's wealth, so, Dickens makes Lizzie the focal point of *Our Mutual Friend*'s to emphasize that cooperation, rather than competition, provides the best means for survival.

Mutual aid also helps resolve the paradoxical conflict between disinterest and self-interest because, when engaged in mutual aid, individual beings help themselves while also aiding others and thus both parties benefit. Suggesting that a conflict does not actually exist between disinterest and self-interest is important for Dickens because he and Eliot do not hold the same general view of sympathy. While Eliot uses characters such as Dinah Morris and Dorothea Brooke to emphasize the importance of helping others, Dickens displays more ambivalence toward extending charity because accepting charity implies self-interest, as in the case of Clennam. If evolutionary theorists had focused more on the mutual benefits of the cooperative side of natural selection, mutual

aid could have helped assuage Victorian concerns regarding disinterest and self-interest, but natural selection, in general, would still be very unsettling for the parallels it draws between human and nonhuman animals.

Lizzie's willingness to work cooperatively manifests late in the novel, though, when she is directly confronted with the attempted murder of Eugene, as a result of the time she spends in a rural community. Lizzie struggles to survive in hostile environments throughout the novel and often responds by striking out on her own to function without aid or support from anyone else. For instance, after her father dies, Lizzie finds work, a place to live, and the opportunity to obtain an education without help. She is initially very reluctant to accept tutoring from Eugene because she is self-reliant and because spending too much time alone with a single man from a higher class standing could endanger her reputation. The pivotal turn comes when the simultaneous advances of Bradley Headstone and Eugene do indeed threaten Lizzie's honor and she flees to the countryside. Lizzie accepts the help of Jenney Wren and Mr. Riah in reaching an unnamed, remote Oxfordshire village. The elderly Jewish couple that Lizzie stays with help her find employment at the local paper mill. Lizzie then spends nearly a year in the village, during which time she is influenced by rural customs, habits, and practices, such as mutual aid, before Bradley attempts to murder Eugene.

Kropotkin associates mutual aid with rural English communities, and nineteenth-century readers of Dickens would likely make a similar connection if more thoroughly exposed to the cooperative side of natural selection. In *Mutual Aid*, Kropotkin introduces the concept of the "village-community," which is a territory "appropriated or protected by common efforts" (64). Kropotkin goes on to posit that "Even in England,

notwithstanding all the drastic measures taken against the old order of things, [the village-community] prevailed as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century" (123). One might argue that Kropotkin's mention of the early nineteenth century resembles the idealization of supposedly "pastoral" rural communities that I address in Chapter 1. However, unlike "the unity of unequal beings" from imagined *Gemeinschaft* communities, the deployment of mutual aid can actually be observed among human and nonhuman animals, and Darwin and Kropotkin both note several examples. The close-knit bonds and feudal relationships associated with rural communities would cause mutual aid to be perceived as a distinctly rural practice in the nineteenth century, though. Through Lizzie's reliance on mutual aid, Dickens critiques rusticism by championing a practice perceived-to-be-rural in origin while not overly-idealizing the countryside in the process.

Visual Culture in the Post-Darwinian World of 1860s England

When embracing the cooperative, rather than competitive, side of natural selection through Lizzie's character, Dickens draws on the concept of "visual culture." By "visual culture" I mean panoramas, dioramas, cycloramas, scientific shows, museum exhibits, taxidermy scenes, *tableaux vivants*, and other similar displays. These visual displays appeared throughout Britain during the nineteenth century and featured nonhuman animals engaged in competitive combat (Ritvo 253). As Rachel Poliquin explains, taxidermy "expressed animals in the art of living, which in the nineteenth century more often than not meant animals struggling for survival" (94). Dickens utilizes three primary types of visual culture in *Our Mutual Friend*: the taxidermy scenes from Mr. Venus's shop, vivid pictorial descriptions, such as Lizzie sailing on the Thames with

her father Gaffer, her first meeting with Bella, and her rescue of Eugene, which, due to their significance to the narrative and vivacity, can be considered frozen images or *tableaux vivants* that hold the reader's attention, and Marcus Stone's illustrations that accompanied the original serialization of the novel. *Our Mutual Friend* was the first and only collaboration between Dickens and Stone, and, because Dickens and Stone's father were close acquaintances, Dickens retained creative control over the illustrations (Schelstraete 62).

Dickens's use of visual culture in *Our Mutual Friend* helps to highlight the cooperative role Lizzie eventually embodies. Ledger's study of the relationship between science and *Our Mutual Friend* makes the important point that natural history greatly impacted Dickens, mainly through its visual components (366-68). Buckland makes a similar point by attempting to shift the discussion of science and Dickens away from comparisons to Darwin by elucidating how examples of visual culture, such as panoramas, dioramas, cycloramas, and other scientific shows, influenced Dickens's fiction (679). Scientific visual culture undoubtedly impacted Dickens, but I propose that a discussion of Dickens and visual culture does not need to shift away from comparisons to Darwin because the compelling examples of visual culture that appear *within* the text of *Our Mutual Friend* vividly display the competitive struggle of natural selection. One prominent example from Venus's shop is the pair of battling frogs that, according to Adrian Poole, are "modelled on the French bronze group of two fat toads fighting a duel which Dickens kept on his writing-desk" (809). The pairs of frogs from the novel and Dickens's writing-desk both demonstrate the trend in nineteenth-century taxidermy to emphasize the struggle *between different beings* for survival. Connor Creaney's study

that outlines the similarities between Venus and nineteenth-century taxidermist Walter Potter, also provides an example of Dickens's reliance on the visual culture of 1860s England when crafting *Our Mutual Friend* (10). These taxidermy scenes of nonhuman animals engaged in competitive combat were not unique to Dickens, but very popular throughout the nineteenth century because they were inherently dramatic. Lizzie stands out against the backdrop of these scenes, though, because she behaves in a cooperative, rather than competitive, while still nonhuman, manner.

If taxidermy provides still pictures of animals in the art of living then *tableau vivant*, which is the French term for "living picture," appropriately describes the vivid vignettes Dickens presents to readers of human animals struggling for survival. The concept of considering scenes from novels as examples of *tableaux vivants* is not an entirely new idea. As Deborah M. Vlock indicates, "One might imagine the Victorian novel as a kind of *tableau vivant*, [. . .] – that is, a story locked in place [. . .] suddenly come to life as the reading act begins," (165). *Tableau vivant* provides a useful lens for scholars because the frozen images relay encoded messages for readers that, through the process of decoding, bring the images to life. For instance, Joseph Litvack analyzes the performance of *Lovers' Vows* in *Mansfield Park*, the "Bridewell" charade from *Jane Eyre*, and the enactment of *A Winter's Tale* in *Daniel Deronda* to illustrate that each episode includes a *tableau vivant* that constitutes "a densely significant scene of instruction" for the female characters (186). Similarly, the continuation of John Harmon's lengthy charade as the invented middle-class secretary John Rokesmith in *Our Mutual Friend* evokes *Measure for Measure* and occurs as part of a plan to "instruct" Bella Wilfer by helping her mature into a caring and sympathetic person. Although the plotline

involving Harmon and Bella does not contain a specific frozen image, like the scenes cited by Litvak, the Harmon-Bella plot does illustrate the importance of theatrical performance to *Our Mutual Friend* and underscore the novel's approach of encoding messages for characters in its various examples of visual culture. Although taxidermy depicts nonhuman, rather than human, animals, taxidermy can be considered a form of *tableau vivant* in that it involves frozen images of creatures that the viewer is supposed to imagine as alive. Thus the different qualities belonging to the various forms of visual culture in *Our Mutual Friend* overlap.

The final form of visual culture that *Our Mutual Friend* introduces to readers is Stone's serial illustrations. Because Dickens retained creative control over the illustrations they reflect his vision for the novel (Schelstraete 62). Thus, my analysis of *Our Mutual Friend* includes a close examination of several of Stone's most pertinent images. Serial illustrations from nineteenth-century novels can also be considered examples of *tableau vivant*, since these images depict a frozen moment from the narrative that brings the story to life when one looks closely at the picture. Stone's illustrations, like Dickens's *tableaux vivants* and the taxidermy scenes from Venus's shop, reflect the competitive combat that art historians identify as an integral part of 1860s visual culture (Ritvo 235; Poliquin 94). Thus, by drawing on contemporaneous examples that his readers would recognize, Dickens utilizes the visual culture of *Our Mutual Friend* to help mark Lizzie, with her lack of competitiveness and eventual cooperative behavior, as an anomalous outlier and, ultimately, in her saving a life, the novel's most celebrated character.

Dickens and the Country

Our Mutual Friend is a lengthy, complex, and intricate novel filled with dozens of characters, numerous subplots, and frequent allusions to contemporaneous social debates, such as the plight of the working poor, the management of waste, conflicts and tensions between the country and the city, and especially the uproar over natural selection, but the novel's vast and varied components continuously point to the cooperative aspect of Lizzie's animalistic behavior. Dickens's portrayal of Lizzie Hexam in *Our Mutual Friend* stands out as the greatest critique of rusticism from anti-rusticist approach Dickens following the events that inspired *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices*. The actual trip took place in September 1857 and *The Lazy Tour* was serialized in *Household Words* in five installments from 3 October to 31 October 1857 then published as a book later that year. The walking tour took place just after Dickens completed *Little Dorrit* (1857), before he started a new project, and soon after Dickens met and fell in love with Ellen Ternan. Dickens eventually left his wife to be with Ternan and carried on an affair with her for the rest of his life that he tried to keep out of the public eye. *The Lazy Tour* reproduces the journey Dickens and Collins actually took but embellishes events and includes two interpolated ghost stories, one by each author. Throughout the fictionalized account, Dickens and Collins use the pseudonyms Francis Goodchild and Thomas Idle, respectively. For the actual tour, Dickens and Collins, traveled from London to Carlisle in Cumberland, to Lancaster in Lancashire, and finally to Doncaster in Yorkshire where they attended the horse races known as the St. Leger Stakes with Ternan and her family before returning to London. Dickens suggested they take the tour as a solution to problems he mentions in a letter to Collins from 29 August 1857 (423). These problems

include writer's block, the need of material for *Household Words*, and a desire to "escape from myself" (423). The idea of the tour came to Dickens when he was struggling with the conflict between his public image as a family man and his personal desire for Ternan, and the trip to the countryside provided a create outlet that helped Dickens grapple with these struggles.

Several critics have commented on how the process of composing *The Lazy Tour* enables Dickens to grapple with the struggles caused by his feelings for Ternan. According to Maria K. Bachman, "The vacationing apprentices' claim to produce only 'lazy sheets' from 'lazy notes' belies the literary anxieties that are at the center of the narrative, which is actually a sustained meditation on the often painful creative process" (xv). The creative process was a complicated and painful one specifically for Dickens in 1857 when he embarked on the walking tour with Collins because Dickens's writing made him a celebrated family man and he knew pursing a relationship with Ternan could complicate his relationship with his reading public.

The majority of the scholarship on *The Lazy Tour* also focuses on Dickens's complicated relationship with Ternan by addressing how his feelings for her influenced the interpolated ghost story he composed for the fourth installment, which is called "The Bride's Chamber" when it appears in anthologies. Harry Stone posits that "The Bride's Chamber" enables Dickens "to be both judge and judged, murderer and savior, observer and participant" (312). Dickens could express his passion and love for Ternan through the hero of "The Bride's Chamber" while also voicing and thereby partly purging his guilt over those emotions in his condemnation of the story's villain. According to Jennifer Gribble, "'The Bride's Chamber' opens up that obsession with doubleness, secret lives,

fragmented identities, that dominates the last four novels[6] [Dickens] was to write" (215). Michael Slater echoes Gribble's point when he states that "Ellen herself and Dickens's relations with her are reflected in certain leading female characters from his last novels" (78). Comparing Lizzie and Ternan is logical. In his earlier novels, Dickens crafted characters, such as Esther Summerson from *Bleak House*, who embody the Victorian ideal of the "angel in the house." As Stone explains, Dickens's first wife, Catherine Hogarth, provided the "subservience," "self-effacement," and "compliant submission" of the "angel in the house," while Ternan exemplified qualities, such as independence and autonomy, that deviated from Victorian norms (325). Similarly, Lizzie is more independent and autonomous than earlier Dickens heroines. Perhaps, later in life, Dickens found the moral qualities he once valued, and which became an integral part of his celebrity image, less appealing, both in his personal life and his literary works. By using the characters from "The Bride's Chamber" to confront and partly purge his conflicting emotions regarding Ternan, Dickens first deploys a method that would be helpful throughout the remainder of his literary career in *The Lazy Tour*, thereby making *The Lazy Tour* a pivotal work in the Dickens canon.

Learning to identify with the rural other is what helps Dickens develop this method he would use to continually grapple with his feelings for Ternan in his writing. Barbara Hardy discusses a scene from *The Lazy Tour* just before the narrative of "The Bride's Chamber" begins, where Francis Goodchild, Dickens's alias, visits a mental institution and observes a patient. According to Hardy, in the scene, "Everything is made simple, but the simplicity registers sincerity in a self-analysing act of imagination,

[6] *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1860-61), *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-65), and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870).

respecting otherness and muting sympathy" (108). The muting of sympathy enables Dickens to see beyond how he can help someone less fortune than himself to the actual parallels he shares with this less fortunate person. Faced with the choice of maintaining his reputation as a family man or pursuing a relationship with Ternan, Dickens, like the mental patient, is torn by conflicting impulses. Madness becomes a metaphor for the intensity of Dickens's inner turmoil. Developing the capacity to identify with othered individuals enables Dickens to draw parallels between himself and deeply troubled characters, such as the villainous innkeeper from "The Bride's Chamber," and, subsequently, party purge conflicting emotions. In addition to the mental patient, Dickens identifies with several other country dwellers throughout *The Lazy Tour*, and this ability to identify with the rural other impacts his later works when Dickens begins to adopt an anti-rusticist perspective. The influence of *The Lazy Tour* on Dickens's late literary endeavors is further evidenced by parallels between characters. Stone goes on to state that "The Bride's Camber," *Our Mutual Friend*, and *Edwin Drood* all "exhibit a common ontogeny: they depict blind passion escalating into murderous rage and self-destruction" (410). The blind passion and murderous rage in *Our Mutual Friend* emanate from Bradley Headstone, but set the stage for Lizzie's pivotal rescue of Eugene.

The experiences Dickens depicts in *The Lazy Tour* greatly influenced the final decade of his literary career and gave him a new appreciation for the value of rural people, places, and cultures.

In the opening installment of *The Lazy Tour*, when Dickens and Collins first arrive in Carlisle, the scene of the market is described with contempt, disparagement, and condescension. The first installment is authored by Collins but relevant here because it

both introduces and challenges common views regarding the countryside, which becomes a common trop throughout *The Lazy Tour*. The narrator says that "On market morning, Carlisle woke up amazing, and became (to the two Idle Apprentices) disagreeably and reproachfully busy" (12). The two apprentices, in their rusticist perspective and assumed "laziness," had hoped to find the English countryside peaceful, calm, regenerative, and inspirational. Instead, Goodchild and Idle find Carlisle to be "busy" like the city. The confusion between the expected serenity of the countryside and its actual business awakens both Goodchild and Idle to the encroachment of the urban upon the rural. The irony of the situation stems from the fact that the countryside would indeed eventually reenergize Dickens's literary imagination.

The narrator then goes on to describe the market scene in more detail, saying "There were its cattle market, its sheep market, and its pig market down by the river, with raw-boned and shock-headed Rob Roys hiding their Lowland dresses beneath heavy plaids, prowling in and out among the animals, and flavouring the air with fumes of whiskey" (12). What stands out about the narrator's description of the Carlisle market is the persistent presence of nonhuman animals and dehumanized rural workers. Here Dickens and Collins evoke the rusticist impulse to view the close proximity between human and nonhuman animals in a rural working environment, such as the Carlisle market, as degrading. Further stereotypes regarding the countryside emerge near the end of the first installment when Idle is injured during a mountain hike, and the rural setting is described as wild, savage, primitive, and dangerous (17-25). Thus, the first installment of *The Lazy Tour* firmly establishes Goodchild and Idle's repulsion from an animalistic, backward, and completely othered rural culture.

The first installment of *The Lazy Tour* focuses primarily on maintaining the well-established distinctions between social categories such as rural and urban, as well human and nonhuman. Subtle gestures toward the potential overlap between these categories, such as the business of urban life encroaching on the rural scene, are overshadowed by the otherness of the rural culture. However, the interpenetration of seemingly opposite categories becomes a prevailing theme in the second installment. Because of Idle's injury, he and Goodchild are introduced to the local practitioner, a Dr. Speddie who tells the first interpolated ghost story, which is titled "The Dead Hand" when it is included in anthologies. "The Dead Hand" is relevant here even though it is authored by Collins because it features the interplay of the categories of alive and dead, which becomes an important theme in the chapters Dickens authors as well as *Our Mutual Friend*. Although Dr. Speddie tells the story in Carlisle, the story itself actually takes place in Doncaster during the St. Leger Stakes, thus foreshadowing the conclusion to *The Lazy Tour* and Dickens's meeting with Ternan. Moreover, "The Dead Hand" is told entirely to Goodchild at Dr. Speddie's residence while Idle recovers in his lodgings, so even though Collins is the author of the tale, Dicken is the audience, which makes its parallels to "The Bride's Chamber" and *Our Mutual Friend* significant.

The tale involves a young friend of Dr. Speddie, Arthur Holliday, who must share his lodgings with a corpse after arriving in Doncaster too late during the week of the races to procure his own room. The "corpse" turns out to be alive and Dr. Speddie, practicing in Doncaster at the time, is called in to attend to the unfortunate individual. In its continual blurring of the distinction between alive and dead, "The Dead Hand" resembles *Our Mutual Friend*, which features Harmon posing as a secretary to maintain

the rumor of his death after a corpse from the Thames is assumed to be his. In "The Dead Hand," Dr. Speddie refers to his "dead-alive patient" as "the man whom I brought back to life", thus, this "dead-alive patient" that Speddie treats does not clearly belong to either the realms of "death" or "life" (50-56). Similarly, in *Our Mutual Friend*, Harmon, Wrayburn, the profitable corpses from the Thames, and the taxidermy animals from Mr. Venus's shop are portrayed as simultaneously both alive and dead at various points.

While the third installment of *The Lazy Tour*, which is the final chapter authored by Collins, contains only a brief conversation between Goodchild and Idle on the train from Carlisle to Lancaster, the interpenetration of seemingly opposite categories plays an even more prominent role in "The Bride's Chamber," which is the fourth installment and first one authored by Dickens, than "The Dead Hand." The events of "The Bride's Chamber" are told to Goodchild by the proprietor of the King's Arms Inn at Lancaster. The distinctions between dead and alive are again blurred in "The Bride's Chamber" when the storyteller is revealed to be a ghost (97). In the story, the King's Arms is haunted by the ghosts of several individuals, including its proprietor, the step-daughter he killed, and her lover. Stone explains how Dickens could identify both with the murderous proprietor and the heroic lover based on his guilt over his infatuation with Ternan (312). The murderous proprietor displays an unchecked desire for wealth and the heroic lover possesses an uncontrollable passion for the proprietor's step-daughter. The irrepressible desires of both the hero and the villain allude to Dickens's desire for Ternan, but both men are given the space to act on these impulses in the story when they confess their aspirations to one another, which perhaps provides a vicarious catharsis for Dickens who was never able to publicly acknowledge his relationship with Ternan. Dickens draws

heavily on the rural setting of Lancaster when crafting the narrative of "The Bride's Chamber." While staying in Lancaster, Goodchild visits both a local asylum and Lancaster Castle where criminals are hanged, and becomes fixated on the story of a man who was hanged for killing his wife just prior to the apprentices' arrival. Rural locales are known for their haunting habitations, legends, and folklore, and the lore surrounding the Lancaster asylum and Lancaster Castle helps Dickens craft the character of the murderous proprietor in "The Bride's Chamber." The rural culture at Lancaster provides Dickens with an outlet to express his conflicting emotions of love for Ternan and guilt over his love for her.

The influence of rural cultures on Dickens becomes even more apparent in the fifth and final installment of *The Lazy Tour* when Goodchild and Idle attend the Doncaster races with "the angel" and "the angel's daughters," who are supposed to represent Ternan's mother and Ternan, and her sisters, respectively (121). *The Lazy Tour* is bookended with observations of animals. However, like Lizzie, the animals depicted at the conclusion of *The Lazy Tour* simultaneously display human and nonhuman qualities. Goodchild and Idle reside in Doncaster for the course of a week before the races take place and the Gong-donkey is an apparently human drunkard that constantly disturbs the peacefulness of the setting, but is only described in nonhuman terms. After the races, Goodchild and Idle observe a brawl between the Gong-donkey and the Jackall, another figure who is neither clearly human or nonhuman (122). According to the narrator, this brawl is an "Appropriate finish to the Grand Race-Week. The Gong-donkey, captive and last trace of it, conveyed into limbo, where they cannot do better than to keep him until next Race-Week. The Jackall is wanted too, and is much looked for, over the way and up

and down. But, having had the *good fortune* to be undermost at the time of the capture, he has vanished into air" (123, emphasis added). Although the two beings initially interrupt the peace of another market scene, thus echoing the first installment, when the Gong-donkey is captured, Goodchild identifies with the Jackall, who escapes, and even feels elated at the creature's exodus.

Goodchild identifies with several othered individuals throughout the course of *The Lazy Tour*, including the simultaneously human and nonhuman figure of the Jackall, the mental patient from the Lancaster asylum, and characters from Lancaster folklore. Dickens does not just extend sympathy toward these individuals, as he often does for the working poor in his novels, Dickens *identifies* with these characters and observes parallels between their lives and his. While Dickens, and most rational individuals, would not condone murder, Dickens begins to recognize the dangerous type of passionate desire that can lead one to commit murder, and Dickens fills the character of Bradley Headstone with that animalistic, fervent desire in *Our Mutual Friend*. Bradley, like Lizzie, displays both human and nonhuman qualities. He meticulously plots Eugene's murder with the type of strategic thinking usually ascribed to human animals, but the choice to attempt to kill Eugene is fueled by violent, passionate, animalistic rage. The animalistic side of Bradley is the one that Dickens utilizes to express ambivalence toward unchecked passion and desire. The difference between Lizzie and Bradley is that Lizzie demonstrates what, for Dickens, are considered positive nonhuman qualities, such as mutual aid, and Bradley displays negative nonhuman traits, such as uncontrollable, competitive violence. The excursion to the countryside that Dickens chronicles in *The Lazy Tour* enables Dickens to recognize that human animals nonhuman animals, share

qualities that set human animals apart as other from the norms of Victorian society. This recognition causes Dickens to become more open to the nuances of rural cultures, perspectives, and values during the final decade of his career.

Soaring Above Blood, Feces, and Waste

Dickens's more nuanced understanding of rural cultures leads him to challenge rusticism in *Our Mutual Friend* through Lizzie's character. My argument regarding Lizzie is based on a pattern I derive from Sigmund Freud. Cary Wolfe argues that the most "powerful embodiment" of speciesism occurs in Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* when "the origin of humans is located in an act of 'organic repression' whereby they begin to walk upright and rise above life on the ground among blood and feces" (2). Furthermore, vision is given privilege over the other senses when Freud elucidates that the dog, in addition to being man's most faithful friend, has also become a term for abuse through two characteristics: "that it is an animal whose dominant sense is that of smell and one which has no horror of excrement" (79). While Freud is partly responsible for helping to bring to light how Darwinian theory unsettled human narcissism, Wolfe's observation makes sense in that *Civilization and Its Discontents* is the text in which, to a certain extent, Freud celebrates human achievement. What stands out, though, is that Freud attributes human achievement to the "sublimation of instinct" (Freud *Civilization and Its Discontents* 74). Through the process of sublimation, human animals transform socially unacceptable impulses, such as certain types of sexual desires, into socially acceptable actions or behavior, such as the production of art. Freud claims to borrow the concept of sublimation from the practice of alchemy, where the term sublimation refers to the act of turning waste into wealth (Yung 171). For Freud then,

even though human and nonhuman animals share many qualities, the "sublimation of instinct" is what ultimately separates human and nonhuman animals because it enables human animals to turn waste into wealth, or, as Wolfe states "to walk upright and rise above life on the ground among blood and feces [waste]."

Freud's discussion of sublimation and Wolfe's critique of it are both important to understanding how Dickens characterizes Lizzie as simultaneously human and nonhuman. Birds stand out as one type of nonhuman animal that defies the parameters set by Freud and Lizzie, who, in Dickens's words, belongs to a family of birds of prey, is consistently described with bird-like attributes. What both Freud and Wolfe overlook is a bird's superior eyesight and ability to fly, or ascend, above the "blood and feces" on the ground. A pattern emerges that outlines the ways in which birds both defy, in steps two and three, and conform, in the first and final steps, to the qualities that for Freud divide human and nonhuman animals. In the four steps birds: 1) begin life on the ground (or in a nest, but not flying) among the waste of "blood and feces" as all human and nonhuman animals do, 2) ascend above the waste found on the ground, 3) possess superior eyesight that enables them to locate prey, and 4) dive down into the waste to capture their prey. In using a pattern derived from Freud, I am obviously importing a twentieth-century concept into study of nineteenth-century English literature. I do so because the pattern is only *derived* from Freud and based on assumptions that have been commonly held about birds since at least the nineteenth century if not earlier, and is similar, if not identical, to a pattern that appears in *Our Mutual Friend*. The novel features numerous references to the acts of living among waste, ascension, following one's line of sight, and "dropping

down" (64, 90, 506, 543, 752; 13-14, 63, 98, 164, 170, 211, 266, 345, 531; 168, 566, 572).

The ability of both birds in general and the quasi-human birds of prey in *Our Mutual Friend*, specifically, to ascend above waste and then drop down into it when procuring their prey resembles sublimation because the birds transform objects from the waste into sources of sustenance. While many of the birds of prey from the novel grapple competitively among the waste for resources, Lizzie displays the ability to cooperate with others for survival when she drops into the waste to save Eugene. Lizzie's rescue of Eugene stands out as the novel's most prominent example of sublimation because the insouciant, insolent, roguish barrister becomes a better person when he marries below his class to restore Lizzie's reputation after the rescue. The idea of class raising, which is a prominent theme in Dickens's work, comes to mind. In *Our Mutual Friend*, one can ascend literally, as a bird does, or figuratively, when one is metaphorically described as a bird. One can also ascend by rising in class, but ascending or attempting to ascend by rising in class is related by Dickens both positively, as is the case with Lizzie, and negatively, as is the case with characters such as Silas Wegg. Just as Lizzie's animalism differs from Bradley's animalism and her cooperativeness contrasts the competitiveness of other characters, such as Bradley, Eugene, her father Gaffer, and Rogue Riderhood, her attempts to rise in class standing are lauded by Dickens in the text while the similar attempts of others, such as Riderhood and Wegg, are condemned by Dickens because Lizzie's efforts do not involve the suffering of others.

While some characters in *Our Mutual Friend* live among the waste, ascend, possess powerful eyesight, *or* drop down, Lizzie's narrative arc is the *only* one that

follows *all* four steps of the pattern derived from Freud. Lizzie's pattern of development begins among the waste of the Thames when she works alongside her father who scavenges the waste and its corpses for objects of use. In the hierarchy of the nineteenth-century professional world, one's occupation could be considered lowly, whether one worked in the country or the city, if the profession entailed close proximity to unsanitary conditions, waste, or nonhuman animals. When Lizzie changes professions and works at a paper mill in the countryside, she achieves a figurative ascension because she is no longer surrounded by waste, thus fulfilling step two of the pattern and demonstrating the more human side of her character. Following her figurative ascension, Lizzie possesses the excellent eyesight of step three, which enables her to locate a drowning Eugene, dive back into the Thames, and complete the fourth and final step by rejoining her nonhuman counterparts among the waste. Because Lizzie marries Eugene following the rescue, critics such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Catherine J. Golden argue that Lizzie becomes an angel in the house, despite the fact that, as Jules David Law points out, Dickens concludes the novel with the Contractor's lengthy speech rather than "any image of Lizzie herself in domestic bliss" (178; 10; 59). I elaborate on the Contractor's speech at length later to explain how it advocates for a "survival of the fittest" mentality. Dickens chooses to end the novel with this speech rather than a clear depiction of Lizzie happily married. By following a pattern similar to the one derived from Freud, Lizzie displays both human and nonhuman traits throughout *Our Mutual Friend* and enables Dickens to mount a critique of rusticism when her animalistic attributes lead to the preservation of human life in the countryside.

My analysis of *Our Mutual Friend* is structured to elucidate how the pattern of Lizzie's character development plays out in the novel. I begin by looking at her life among the waste of the urban Thames in the first stage of her narrative arch. Next, I turn my attention to a number of mirror/foil characters who help to emphasize Lizzie's uniqueness, paying particularly close attention to Bradley and Eugene, whose rivalry forces Lizzie into the countryside and second step of her pattern. Dickens utilizes the first step of Lizzie's development and the mirror/foil characters who enter her life at that time to both set the stage for and foreshadow the critique of rusticism that he mounts during the final stage of her development. I use the terms mirror and foil to refer to characters who resemble and contrast Lizzie respectively. Some characters, such as Gaffer, Mr. Venus, Pleasant Riderhood, Eugene, and Bradley, function as both a mirror and a foil simultaneously. Following my analysis of the mirror/foil characters, I examine Lizzie's figurative ascension in the country and Dickens's characterization of rural England. Dickens introduces several rusticist stereotypes when first depicting Lizzie's life in the country, such as the characterization of the countryside as a restorative site, the idea that the country is mainly beautiful, pastoral, and idyllic, and the concept that extensive rural and urban interaction leads only to the pollution of the pastoral countryside, which he later challenges. Finally, I analyze Dickens's challenge to rusticism that occurs when Lizzie uses her superior eyesight to drop down into the waste of a corrupted rural Thames and rescue Eugene.

Among the Waste

From the very outset of *Our Mutual Friend*, when Lizzie begin hers complex and arduous journey among the waste of the urban Thames, Dickens sets the stage for

Lizzie's cooperativeness to emerge by inserting examples that contrast her cooperativeness. Even before the first chapter opens, readers are treated to Stone's illustration of "The Bird of Prey" (see Figure 1). In that illustration, Lizzie rows the boat while Gaffer stares into the water. The title of the illustration refers to Gaffer, but both characters are continuously connected to the descriptive term throughout the novel since Lizzie belongs to the group of waterside characters that are evoked by the title of Book II, "Birds of a Feather." The phrase "Birds of a Feather" serves as much more than just a book title, though. It becomes a refrain that echoes the novel's theme of mutuality and suggests not only that the lives of the novel's vast and varied characters are all interconnected but that all human animals, no matter how depraved or other, share some form of commonality, and that human and nonhuman animals also share many similarities. Lizzie shares commonalities and parallels with many of the novel's characters, who function as mirrors, but these characters also function as foils to Lizzie to help her cooperativeness and subsequent challenge to rusticism stand out.

Figure 1 – "The Bird of Prey," illustrated by Marcus Stone for the serialization of *Our Mutual Friend*, 1st installment, May 1864

Because the novel opens with Lizzie and Gaffer sailing on an urban tract of the Thames, Gaffer is the first significantly important mirror/foil character that readers encounter. Gaffer is an important mirror/foil character because he is described as very animalistic, and Dickens uses the familial connection between Lizzie and Gaffer to reinforce Lizzie's animalism throughout the novel. The "Bird of Prey" descriptor attached to the opening illustration of Lizzie and Gaffer suggests numerous connotations including superior eyesight and resourcefulness. Following the line of sight for both characters in the illustration helps to reveal their intentions, which are correspondingly outlined by Dickens in the chapter. Gaffer looks into the water because he is searching for objects, such as dead bodies, he can make use of by turning a profit. Lizzie's eyes, as Dickens explains, are also well-trained, but in the opening illustration are not focused on the water (683). Instead, Lizzie gazes straight ahead at the surrounding environment and numerous other boats on the Thames. Stone places Lizzie's eyes in nearly the exact middle of the illustration and positions her head turned sideways to indicate that Lizzie is scanning the entire scene, while Gaffer's eyes point down toward the water. Gaffer's job is to hunt for objects of use in the water while Lizzie's duty is to row. While Gaffer is enmeshed in the scene, Lizzie takes everything in from a more distanced perspective and is disturbed both by the waste of the scene and Gaffer's attitude toward the usefulness of the waste. This distinction can be observed in the look of consternation that appears on Lizzie's face in the illustration and contrasts the demeanor of calm reserve displayed by Gaffer.

If one flips beyond "The Bird of Prey" illustration, one will find detailed descriptions of Lizzie and Gaffer in the opening chapter of *Our Mutual Friend* that

correspond to Stone's visual rendering of the heroine and her father. According to the narrator, "The figures in the boat were those of a strong man with ragged grizzled hair and a sun-browned face, and a dark girl of nineteen or twenty, sufficiently like him to be recognizable as his daughter" (13). The key phrase from Dickens's description of Lizzie and her father is "sufficiently like him to be recognizable as his daughter," because Lizzie is both similar to and distinct from Gaffer. Here, Lizzie "watched his face as earnestly as he watched the river. But, in the intensity of her look there was a touch of dread and horror" (13). Lizzie possesses excellent eyesight like her father, but is dismayed at the conduct of his profession. Gaffer works as a waterman, dredging the urban Thames for anything in its waste that can produce income, such as trash, garbage, or the money and other trinkets retrieved from the pockets of corpses. The narrator tells us that "there was business-like usage in his steady gaze," and "At every mooring chain and rope [. . .] his shining eyes darted a hungry look" (13, 14). What the two characters have in common is the "business-like usage" of Gaffer's "steady gaze," because Lizzie proves to be the novel's most resourceful character, thus Lizzie and Gaffer mirror each other. The juxtaposition between Lizzie's "dread and horror" and "Gaffer's hungry look," though, helps establish Gaffer as a foil to Lizzie as well. Lizzie is horrified by Gaffer's profession even if she has learned the skills of it from him and also comprehends its necessity to a certain extent. Stone's opening illustration provides a vivid *tableau vivant* that reflects the image of Lizzie struggling for her survival among the waste of the Thames that Dickens constructs with his prose in the opening chapter. The fact that the looks on Lizzie's and Gaffer's faces in the picture correspond so closely to Dickens's descriptions

of their personalities reflects how Stone and Dickens work hand and hand to produce a singular vision (Schelstraete 62).

Although brief, *Our Mutual Friend*'s opening chapter stands out because it is continually referenced by later chapters, particularly in the novel's most important chapter, which portrays Lizzie's rescue of Eugene and, in many ways, is a retelling of the first chapter. The opening chapter also first introduces readers to the novel's theme of competition when Gaffer's former partner, Rogue Riderhood, enters the scene and accuses Gaffer of trying to "get rid" of him (15-17). The competition between the two men advances to the point where Riderhood attempts to frame Gaffer for the supposed murder of Harmon, and the quarrel between Gaffer and Riderhood is followed by bouts between Eugene and Bradley as well as between Bradley and Riderhood. Lizzie's dismay at Gaffer's "hungry look" indicates that, from the beginning of the novel, she lacks the competitiveness embodied by Gaffer and many of the other male characters.

Mirrors and Foils

In addition to Gaffer, Mr. Venus, Pleasant, Eugene, and Bradley stand out as the other characters who function simultaneously as a mirror and a foil to Lizzie. These mirror/foil characters function in a manner similar to the visual culture of *Our Mutual Friend*, which Dickens uses to critique rusticism by highlighting Lizzie's inclination toward mutual aid through contrast. Venus stands out as a highly important mirror/foil character because his shop introduces the examples of taxidermy from the novel's visual culture. When lamenting Pleasant's rejection of him, Venus says to Wegg, "'And so a man climbs to the top of the tree, Mr. Wegg, only to see that there's no look-out when he's up there!'" (90). As in Freud's division, ascension and superior line of sight are

given preference. What connects Venus to Lizzie is that Pleasant initially rejects him because of his profession, which is reminiscent of how Lizzie's role as a "female waterman" places her toward the bottom of the professional hierarchy. Venus goes on to say, "'I sit here of a night surrounded by the lovely trophies of my art, and what have they done for me? Ruined me. Brought me to the pass of being informed that "she does not wish to regard herself, nor yet to be regarded, in that 'boney light!'" (90). Because Lizzie and Venus both work in close proximity to the waste of human and nonhuman corpses, both characters also belong to the lower order of human society but demonstrate sublimation when they bring corpses "to life," so to speak, by finding value in them. Ironically, Pleasant, as the daughter of Rogue Riderhood, belongs to the same "Birds of a Feather" or waterside characters grouping as Lizzie, and thus also the same lower order of human society as Lizzie and Venus. Perhaps Pleasant initially hopes to affect her own ascension by marrying up to rise in class and any union with Venus would hinder such a goal. The scenes of taxidermy from Venus's shop depict nonhuman animals competing for survival, as most taxidermy scenes did during the nineteenth century, and thus further connect him to Lizzie. These scenes help set the stage for Lizzie's cooperativeness to stand out when it emerges in the fourth book of *Our Mutual Friend*.

Stone provides an illustration, which is appropriately titled "Mr. Venus surrounded by the Trophies of his Art," to accompany the chapter in which Venus and Wegg discuss his relationship with Pleasant, and an analysis of the drawing helps illustrate the important role of taxidermy in the novel's narrative (See Figure 2). Stone's image visually relays the details of Venus's shop for readers, which include the dueling frogs, a jar containing a fetus, a stuffed bird on the mantelpiece, a stuffed monkey, and

the skeleton of "the French gentleman." Because the dueling frogs stand out as a somewhat comical piece in an otherwise dismal scene, they reflect the ubiquity of combat between nonhuman animals in Victorian visual culture.

Figure 2 – "Mr. Venus surrounded by the Trophies of his Art," illustrated by Marcus Stone for the serialization of *Our Mutual Friend*, 2nd installment, June 1864

Wegg is holding a cup of tea from Venus's saucer in the sketch, so it also brings to mind the nursery rhyme *Cock Robin*, which Wegg recalls when he "perceives a pretty little dead bird lying on the counter, with its head drooping on one side against the rim of Mr. Venus's saucer, and a long stiff wire piercing its breast" (84). The image of the dead and maimed bird lying on the counter evokes the competitive struggle between a murderous sparrow and his victim, Cock Robin. The competitive struggles between nonhuman animals in the *tableaux vivants* from Venus's shop, just like the competitive struggles between many of the novel's quasi-human characters, firmly establish that competition was considered normal behavior for nonhuman animals at the time Dickens

composed *Our Mutual Friend* so that Lizzie's cooperatives can truly stand out when Dickens uses it to challenge rusticism.

The objects surrounding Venus in Stone's illustration also indicate that Venus, like Lizzie, toils among the waste of the dead, and, like Gaffer, makes use of the dead to earn a living. The professions of Venus and Gaffer are very similar in that both men encounter and recycle both human and nonhuman bodies in their respective lines of work. Since Gaffer and Venus primarily work with corpses, beings do not necessarily suffer in their work, but both are consistently searching for objects they can make use of, which horrifies Lizzie. When Lizzie eventually does use her superior eyesight to make use of an object, it is the bloodied body of Eugene Wrayburn that Lizzie rescues and nurses back to health for Eugene's benefit as well as her own. Venus does not show the apprehension toward his profession that Lizzie does toward her father's, and Venus is even confounded that Pleasant "does not wish to regard herself [. . .] in that 'boney light!'" (90). Thus Venus functions as a foil as well as a mirror to Lizzie.

Venus does eventually ascend, though, to his desired "look-out" position because he wins the struggle for a mate and thus a slightly higher position in his community when Pleasant agrees to marry him after he pledges to no longer articulate human, female skeletons near the novel's close. Income can be still be procured through the articulation of human males and nonhuman animals, but Pleasant's concern that Venus would articulate her skeleton after her death has been alleviated. Pleasant does not necessarily seem repelled by the profession of taxidermy, but wants to maintain some autonomy, even after her death. The shift in Venus's character is best described when the narrator says that "Mr. Venus could only repeat that it was his fixed intention to betake himself to

the paths of science, [. . .] not dropping down upon his fellow-creatures until they [are] deceased, and then only to articulate them to the best of his humble ability" (572). The phrase "not dropping down upon his fellow-creature until they [are] deceased," suggest that Venus will not cause suffering to any living being as part of his profession and no longer search for resources with a "hunger" reminiscent of Gaffer. The phrase "dropping down" is continually repeated throughout the novel, usually by Boffin to refer to himself as Wegg's prey, but Dickens utilizes it in a different way with regard to Venus and Lizzie (168, 566). Dickens does not intend to describe Venus as a predator but as a resourceful animal. Venus equates his union to Pleasant with his very survival when he claims that the trophies of his art have ruined him (90). However, working as a taxidermist is also crucial to his survival because doing so provides income and, through income, other essential resources, such as food and shelter. Venus resolves the paradox of his continued survival by deciding to only cease articulating human, female skeletons. Near the novel's close, Dickens makes clear that Pleasant did not hope to rise in class when she initially rejected Venus but only to curtail the articulation of her bones. Lizzie displays resourcefulness and a knack for survival, reminiscent of Venus, when she drops back down into the waste to rescue Eugene. Dickens uses the stark similarities and differences between Venus and Lizzie to help keep Lizzie on readers' minds during the Venus-Wegg and Venus-Pleasant subplots even though Lizzie and Venus never physically cross paths.

Pleasant, like her husband, also functions as another highly important mirror/foil character because, as Riderhood's daughter, her background resembles Lizzie's. The narrator initially compares Pleasant to a dog by saying that "As some dogs have it in the blood, [. . .] Pleasant Riderhood had it in the blood, or had been trained, to regard

seamen, within certain limits, as her prey" (345). Because Dickens strives so hard to compare Lizzie to a bird, and Lizzie and Pleasant possess similar backgrounds, the dog comparison helps distinguish Lizzie from the other female character who belongs to the waterside "Birds of a Feather" grouping. Both Lizzie's and Pleasant's fathers work among the excrement and waste that floats in the Thames, but Lizzie meets such work with "dread and horror," whereas Pleasant has been trained to regard seamen as her prey, thus making her an excellent foil to draw attention to Lizzie through contradiction. Lizzie and Pleasant follow similar narrative arcs, though, because Pleasant eventually leaves the waterman occupation when she marries Venus, so Pleasant also functions as a mirror to Lizzie. The novel's theme of mutuality is furthered by Pleasant's marriage, which helps establish a literal, in addition to thematic, connection between Lizzie and Venus. Once again, both the similarities and differences between Lizzie and Pleasant help to highlight Lizzie's unique form of animalism, just as the similarities and differences between Lizzie and Venus as well as between Lizzie and Gaffer do.

Competition among Human Suitors

In addition to Gaffer, Venus, and Pleasant, both of Lizzie's suitors, Eugene and Bradley, are particularly important mirror/foil characters because Dickens uses Eugene to emphasize the theme of sublimation and Bradley as a quasi-human figure whose fervent, animalistic passion is juxtaposed with Lizzie's inclination toward mutual aid. The competiveness of both men provides great contrast to Lizzie's willingness to work cooperatively. Eugene is first presented as insouciant when he seems unconcerned with how his advances, on which he specifically says he has no intention of following through, will affect Lizzie's reputation. Sublimation is emphasized when Eugene becomes a better

person after Lizzie saves his life. Eugene's insouciant attitude is apparent in a conversation with Nicodemus Boffin, who makes a case for hard work by saying that "'there's nothing like work. Look at the bees'" (98). Eugene responds with "'I object on principle, as a two-footed creature, to being constantly referred to insects and four-footed creatures'" (98). The fact that Eugene objects to being compared to nonhuman animals provides poignant irony since he becomes enamored with a woman who eventually saves his life and is continually described with nonhuman qualities.

Eugene's reference to "four-legged creatures," like Dickens's description of Pleasant, evokes dogs, and is yet another example that illustrates the great emphasis Dickens places on the uniqueness of birds. Because the eyesight of human animals and birds is superior to that of dogs and other "four-legged creatures," one need only to follow the line sight of characters, both in the text and in Stone's illustrations, particularly "The Bird of Prey Brought Down," to discover their intentions (See Figure 3). Riderhood's intentions, which entail revenge on his former partner by ratting him out for a murder he did not commit, provide the catalyst for the pursuit, and Riderhood correspondingly stands back and takes the whole ordeal in just as a perpetrator returning to the scene of a crime might. Mr. Inspector, as a devoted representative of the law, stands directly over the body to fulfill his duty by thoroughly examining it. Eugene and Mortimer fail to maintain either Riderhood's distance, which is a sign of his guilt, or Mr. Inspector's closeness, which demonstrates his dutiful mindset, but rather, as outsiders in the waterside slums, a more neutral proximity that reminds readers that the two solicitors are enjoying a voyeuristic excursion to London's underbelly.

Figure 3 – "The Bird of Prey Brought Down," illustrated by Marcus Stone for the serialization of *Our Mutual Friend*, 5th installment, September 1864

Shifting focus to Bradley, one can see that, while Huxley and Spencer were championing the competitive side of natural selection, Dickens was working on making a case for the cooperative side in *Our Mutual Friend*. Lizzie's more ardent pursuer proves himself a poor specimen in a world governed by natural selection. By contrast, Lizzie is able to rescue Eugene because of the skills she learned from her father, which Gaffer needed to survive living along the dregs of the urban Thames. Lizzie in turn demonstrates a penchant for resourcefulness like her father but also goes a step further and displays qualities of mutual aid when she saves not only Eugene's life but also her honor by pulling his battered body from the rural Thames. Whereas, according to the narrator, Bradley "was never seen in any other dress" than his formal, black and white teacher's suit, and "there was a certain stiffness in his manner of wearing this, as if there were a

want of *adaptation* between him and it" (218, emphasis added). Though Bradley does show the ability to adapt his clothing when posing as a bargeman to stalk Eugene, he never adapts to his surroundings well enough to survive the events of the novel because Riderhood discovers Bradley's true identity and blackmails him (618).

While his competition with Eugene for Lizzie's affections could be considered necessary for what Darwin terms sexual selection, the rivalry between Bradley and Eugene ultimately proves not only unnecessary for Bradley's survival, but also detrimental to it. Darwin explains that sexual selection "depends, not on a struggle for existence, but on a struggle between the males for possession of the females; the result is not death to the unsuccessful competitor, but few or no offspring" (68). Dickens clearly read Darwin, and Dickens specifically adds the character of Miss Peecher, who is Bradley's fellow teacher and dotes on the schoolmaster, to indicate that Bradley does not pursue Lizzie solely for reproductive reasons. Yet the schoolmaster's obsession with the novel's heroine runs so deep that he equates his possession of her with his very survival in a manner more hyperbolic but not unlike Venus's confession of love for Pleasant. When professing his love to Lizzie, Bradley exclaims that "'you could draw me to fire, you could draw me to water, you could draw me to the gallows, you could draw me to any death'" (390). Because Bradley equates union with Lizzie to his very survival he could be behaving like an instinctual animal when he attempts to eradicate his rival for Lizzie's affections. If so, Bradley's instincts are misguided because his pursuit of Lizzie ultimately leads him into a fatal confrontation with Riderhood. Bradley's poor instincts, which focus on competition, draw attention to Lizzie's superior instincts, which lead her

toward cooperation, as two members of *Our Mutual Friend*'s most intriguing love triangle function as foils to one another.

Eugene is just as competitive as Bradley if not more so, though, because he goes so far as to actually incite the competition with Bradley. When Bradley confronts Eugene and asks him not to procure a tutor for Lizzie because the implications of such an action could impact her honor, Eugene responds by taunting the teacher (285). Bradley, who is already self-conscious with regard to his occupation, questions why Eugene repeatedly calls him "schoolmaster" (285). During this exchange, Eugene "Composedly smoking, [. . .] leaned an elbow on the chimneypiece, [. . .] and looked at the schoolmaster. It was a cruel look, in its cold disdain of him, as a creature of no worth" (285). In Stone's corresponding illustration, "Forming the Domestic Virtues," one can easily see how Eugene's cool demeanor contrasts Bradley's edgy disposition as Eugene leans against the fireplace, calmly smoking, and Bradley stand rigid near the door (See Figure 4). The competitiveness of the scene Dickens describes and Stone draws recalls the taxidermy *tableaux vivants* from Venus's shop. Like the frogs, Bradley and Eugene duel over Lizzie, and Bradley eventually becomes the murderous sparrow. The confrontation helps enables both men to function as foils to Lizzie because her inclination toward mutual aid eventually shines through in the countryside.

Figure 4 – “Forming the Domestic Virtues,” illustrated by Marcus Stone for the serialization of *Our Mutual Friend*, 7th installment, November 1864

An Act of Ascension in the Countryside

The duel between Eugene and Bradley for Lizzie’s affections threatens her honor and drives her into hiding in the countryside where ascension provides the crucial second step in her pattern of development. Lizzie decides to flee to the countryside after a confrontation with Bradley on the streets of London nearly turns deadly. This event marks not only the end of Volume 1, Book II, but a major turning point in the novel. Lizzie spends Volume 1 among the waste of the urban Thames and in other harrowing areas of London before and after Gaffer’s death, respectively. Throughout Volume 1, competitive behavior is the method of survival employed most frequently by characters such as Gaffer, Venus, Pleasant, Eugene, and Bradley. This backdrop helps set the stage for Lizzie to embody a more positive, cooperative vision of a quasi-human character and subsequently challenge rusticism when the setting of her narrative shifts from the city to the country in the second half of the novel. While Lizzie ascends in her class standing by marrying up through her union with Eugene at the novel’s close, she ascends further up

the professional hierarchy early in Volume 2 while working at a paper mill in the countryside. Lizzie's ascension, like Venus's ascension, is tied to her professional life. When Harmon and Bella visit Lizzie in Oxfordshire while attending Betty Higden's funeral, Lizzie tells Bella that "'the change in the grain of these hands, which were coarse, and cracked, and hard, and brown when I rowed on the river with father, [. . .] are softened and made supple by this new work as you see them now'" (519). Lizzie's profession has changed and she has figuratively ascended because she no longer works in close proximity to blood, feces, the corpses of human and nonhuman animals, and other waste. She does not feel the same "dread and horror" toward working at the paper mill as she did toward helping Gaffer dredge the urban Thames.

The visit between Lizzie and Bella in the country is important for several reasons. For instance, the visit in the country is one of only two meetings between the novel's two heroines, although the final pages indicate that they remain good friends. More importantly, Lizzie's narrative remains *literally* connected to the Harmon/Bella plotline because she and her father discover the body that is assumed to be Harmon, once again emphasizing the novel's theme of mutuality. However, Lizzie's narrative also remains *thematically* connected to the Harmon/Bella plot because both narrative arcs rely so heavily on theatrical performance. Harmon's lengthy charade indicates that Dickens certainly intended the novel to be thoroughly imbued with examples of theatrical performance. Thus, the *tableaux vivants* that contrast Lizzie's cooperativeness come to mind when one is reading the passages that focus on Harmon and Bella, even though those passages feature fewer examples of taxidermy and visual culture. Aside from a few minor subplots, the text of *Our Mutual Friend* primarily shifts between events related to

the Harmon/Bella plot or the Lizzie/Eugene/Bradley plot, so the constant presence of theatrical performance in the Harmon/Bella scenes bring the novel's visual culture to mind to keep Lizzie at the forefront of readers' thoughts all throughout the lengthy, complex novel.

During the meeting between Lizzie and Bella in the country, Dickens provides a *tableau vivant* that foreshadows the trials to come when Eugene and Bradley enter the countryside. Lizzie asks Bella "'I used once to see pictures in the fire, [. . .] to please my brother. Shall I tell you what I see down there [in the hearth] where the fire is glowing?,'" and then Lizzie tells Bella that she sees "'A heart well worth winning, and well won. A heart that, once won, goes through fire and water for the winner, and never changes, and is never daunted'" (520). The references to fire and water evoke a harsh environment that would be difficult to survive in, not unlike the one many characters from *Our Mutual Friend* face. While Lizzie claims that the heart she describes belongs to Bella, the playful banter between the two women indicates that Lizzie is the character who will actually face the trials of fire and water. Bella's trial involves accepting a husband who duped her with regard to his identity throughout their courtship, engagement, and first months of marriage while the references to fire and water recall Bradley's fiery passion for Lizzie, which foreshadow his attack on Eugene and allude to Biblical disaster imagery.

When depicting the country setting of Lizzie's new home, Dickens, draws on several rusticist notions to further set up the critique of rusticism that is soon to come. The first of these describes the countryside as a restorative or regenerative place that characters retreat to for mental or physical healing. This concept initially comes to mind when Lizzie finds refuge in the countryside, but is revisited when Eugene recovers from

Bradley's attack in the country. The second is the monolithic notion of a beautiful, pastoral, idyllic countryside bereft of corruption and impurity. When Harmon and Bella visit the country for Mrs. Higden's funeral, they gaze at the rural Thames, and "the great serene mirror of the river seemed as if it might have reproduced all it had ever reflected between those placid banks, and brought nothing to the light save what was peaceful, pastoral, and blooming" (514). Dickens does not go to the same lengths as Eliot to present the countryside as pastoral and idyllic before challenging such a notion, but he does introduce the idea to readers' minds so that his vision of the countryside can appear very nuanced, and thus less rusticist, when its more harrowing aspects are revealed. Those harrowing aspects relate to the third rusticist concept Dickens introduces and subsequently challenges, which is the idea that that extensive rural and urban interaction only leads to the contamination of an idyllic countryside. This notion comes into play when Eugene, Bradley, and Riderhood enter the countryside. Dickens shows that contamination and corruption can indeed occur when city dwellers such as Bradley and Riderhood enter the countryside, but also reveals that the countryside may not be as pure as one might think to begin with and indicates that positive results can manifest as well when Lizzie resides in the country for nearly a year and both Lizzie and the residents of the village benefit from her stay. At a time when many rural workers were deserting the countryside, Lizzie joins the workforce at the local paper mill, and her rural experiences help her grow into the type of individual that embodies mutual aid and saves Eugene's life.

Superior Eyesight and a Return to the Waste

With the stage thoroughly set for a critique of rusticism via the introduction of numerous competitive characters and several rusticist constructs, Dickens uses Lizzie's rescue of Eugene to challenge rusticism. During the rescue Lizzie reaches the final two steps in the pattern of her character development when she displays superior eyesight in her "ascendant" state to locate an objective of value and makes the instinctual choice to drop down into the waste and procure that object. The scene occurs after Eugene and Bradley have both tracked Lizzie to her hiding place in the remote rural village. Lizzie has told Eugene by the riverside that they must part ways because of the threat his affections pose to her honor, and Bradley has been stalking Eugene all day, just as Eugene once stalked Gaffer. When Lizzie hears "a sound of blows," "a faint groan, and a fall into the river," "her old bold life and habit instantly inspire[s] her" (682). Upon hearing Bradley's attack, Lizzie *instinctually* recalls the waterman skills she learned from her father and moves to action. Her superior eyesight aids in her endeavors to rescue Eugene, and the narrator makes sure to point out that fact out by saying that "A quick glance of her *practised* eye showed her, even *through* the deep dark shadow, the sculls in a rack against the red-brick garden wall" (683, emphasis added). Dickens and Stone have made clear from the first chapter that Lizzie possesses excellent vision, but the use of her ocular abilities when rescuing Eugene fits with her pattern of development.

Lizzie's rescue of Eugene is enabled by her innate instinct for survival, the skills Gaffer taught her as a child, and the actions of others, mainly Bradley's attack, which forces the rescue. Of these factors, Lizzie's connection to her father stands out as one of the main reasons why she is never described as fully human or nonhuman. From the first

chapter, Lizzie is described as "recognizable as [Gaffer's] daughter," and her narrative arc follows the pattern of ascent and descent that makes birds both distinct from and similar to four-legged creatures that dwell in the waste on the ground. Furthermore, when Lizzie sets out to rescue Eugene, the narrator refers to "A sure touch of her old practised hand, a sure step of her old practised foot" to recall the skills learned from Gaffer (683). Even in "The Number Plans," which are pre-writing notes Dickens composed to help him outline the novel, Dickens writes that the chapter where Lizzie rescues Eugene refers "Back to the opening chapter of the book, <u>strongly</u>" ("The Number Plans" 879, emphasis in original). The rescue chapter could be considered a retelling of the first chapter in many ways, only with slight variations. Once again Lizzie rows on the Thames, just in the country instead of the city, and discovers a body that could be considered dead. In the opening chapter the body is indeed dead but misconstrued as Harmon, who is "recalled to life" when his identity is eventually revealed to Bella. After the attack by Bradley, Eugene appears nearly dead, but survives thanks only to Lizzie, and emerges from the ordeal as a somewhat different man who is willing to marry below his class to restore the honor and reputation of the woman who saved his life. Eugene and Harmon parallel each other in that both men are supposedly enraptured by marital bliss after their near-death experiences but also lack the moral fortitude of typical Dickensian heroes. Thus, in the wake of Eugene's and Harmon's ambiguous "heroics," Lizzie emerges, along with Jenny Wren, as one of the novel's few truly heroic characters. Yet, even Lizzie is not a fully human Dickensian heroine. When performing the novel's most heroic act, the rescue of Eugene, Lizzie behaves like an instinctual animal fighting for her survival as well as Eugene's. Throughout the rescue scene, Dickens refers to Lizzie's "supernatural strength

and spirit" and her "main strength," both of which are reminiscent of the "wild energy" that Bradley lets loose like a crazed animal when proclaiming his love for Lizzie (684; 389).

Although Lizzie's rescue effort saves Eugene's life, thus affirming the incontrovertible value of the human person, the rescue benefits both Eugene and Lizzie. Thus Lizzie embodies the idea of mutual aid through her rescue effort, which illustrates how she and Eugene can work together. The lives of both characters are threatened in different ways and both survive by helping the other. Although Lizzie is generally willing to help others, such as her father and brother, she is very unwilling to accept help from others early in the text. Thus, before she rescues Eugene, Lizzie demonstrates the Victorian inclination to esteem disinterest over self-interest. However, after saving Eugene, Lizzie accepts his help. She also accepts the help of Jenny Wren, both when making her escape to the country and when helping Eugene recover. After Lizzie pulls Eugene from the rural Thames, Jenny's help is actually more crucial to his recovery. As Melissa Free points out, "Jenny listens to, observes, and assists Eugene with the patience that pain has taught her, easing, turning, altering, adjusting, recognizing, and soothing Eugene's pain" (271). Jenny's instrumental role in Eugene's recovery illustrates the novel's theme of mutuality and the value of mutual aid because Lizzie cannot accomplish her most important feat without Jenny's help. By accepting Jenny's help, helping herself, and helping Eugene simultaneously, Lizzie illustrates the overlap of the seemingly opposite categories of disinterest and self-interest. Furthermore, in behaving like an instinctual animal to save another life, Lizzie elucidates the interplay of human and nonhuman. The interpenetration that occurs for human and nonhuman, as well as

disinterest and self-interest, is revealed through Lizzie's reliance on mutual aid for survival. Because Lizzie was unwilling to rely on the help of others for survival before living in the countryside, and mutual aid was a concept typically associated with rural communities in the nineteenth century, it would seem that Dickens wanted readers to believe that Lizzie's inclination toward mutual aid was a trait that developed during her time in the country. Thus, in embracing mutual aid through Lizzie's character, Dickens challenges the rusticist impulse to ascribe animalistic traits to country dwellers in a negative way.

In addition to drawing on mutual aid to critique the rusticist construction of country dwellers as simplistic beasts of burden, Dickens also challenges the other notions I mention earlier in the aftermath of Lizzie's rescue of Eugene, Even though the countryside functions as a restorative site for both Lizzie and Eugene, Dickens does not simply recycle a trope deployed by earlier writers but, rather, he complicates it. Lizzie and Eugene both recover from threats to their survival in the country, but are stalked and attacked, respectively, in the countryside, so the country is not necessarily a safe haven. Furthermore, Lizzie and Eugene are both dynamic characters who emerge very changed from their rural experiences. Lizzie begins to instinctually cooperate with others for survival and, through sublimation, Eugene becomes a better person. The country initially appears as a refuge for Lizzie when her honor is threatened, but, rather than simply a place for Lizzie and Eugene to hide and recover, the novel's rural setting stands out as a location where individuals do experience change and growth as well as physical recuperation.

Furthermore, the country is shown to be not only beautiful but harrowing as well when Eugene, Bradley, and Riderhood reveal the imperfections of the *rural* Thames by further soiling it with their blood (Gilbert 94). When Bradley and Riderhood perish together after struggling in the Thames, the narrator says that "Riderhood went over into the smooth pit, backward, and Bradley Headstone upon him. When the two were found, lying under the ooze and scum behind one of the rotting gates, Riderhood's hold had relaxed, probably in falling, his eyes were staring upward. But, he was girdled still with Bradley's iron ring, and the rivets of the iron ring held tight" (781). The ooze, scum, and rotting gates that appear in this scene certainly indicate that the rural Thames is neither pastoral nor pure. Dickens is not simply reiterating the rusticist stereotype that city dwellers corrupt a pastoral countryside with their presence, because the countryside does not necessarily become corrupt when Eugene, Bradley, and Riderhood appear. The ooze, scum, and rotting gates that surround Bradley and Riderhood provide an appropriate setting for the death of the two villains, but did not arrive in the countryside with the villains. Rather, Dickens utilizes the incursion of morally problematic characters, who happen to be city dwellers, to highlight the more harrowing aspects of the countryside, such as the impure Thames, which already exist there, just as he uses Lizzie and Bella to reveal the beautiful parts of the country. The countryside of *Our Mutual Friend* is not a monolithic space, but rather a nuanced and varied site with both beautiful and harrowing qualities and, subsequently, the type of duality that characterized the London of Dickens's early works.

Through these city dwellers who help to reveal the harrowing aspects of rural space in *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens engages the theme of the incursion of city dwellers

into rural space, and, subsequently, the concept of extrapolitanism. The pervasive, mid- to late-nineteenth-century stereotype that city dwellers corrupt a pastoral countryside arose out of urban fears that any extensive rural and urban interaction could cause the negative aspects of the city, such as busyness and criminality, to corrupt the peaceful and pastoral site that enabled the urbanite's rest and recuperation when retreating there. However, for Dickens, who eventually embraced an extrapolitan view, urban intrusion into rural space leads to positive, as well as negative, results. Take for instance the two characters from *Our Mutual Friend* who reside in the country the longest: Riderhood and Lizzie. Riderhood, acting merely out of self-interest to raise his class standing no matter who suffers in the process, remains detached from any community and lives in isolation as a lock-keeper. Lizzie, though, lives in the country for nearly a year and builds bonds with the villagers with whom she interacts. Because Lizzie also returns to London with Eugene once he is fully recovered, one could argue that she demonstrates an extrapolitan inclination. She displays the type of detachment lauded by Amanda Anderson when she shares strong bonds with certain individuals, such as Bella, Jenny Wren and Mr. Riah from the city and the elderly Jewish couple and her paper mill co-workers from the country, but is not attached solely to the country or the city. Lizzie's experience when she lives in the country for a year resembles the experience Dickens describes in *The Lazy Tour*. When Dickens began to identify with rural others, he became more open to the nuances of rural cultures. Similarly, Lizzie displays a strong inclination toward mutual aid after living in the countryside. Dickens embraced cosmopolitanism late in his life and many of his late novels feature an anti-nationalist component. Cosmopolitanism involves being open to the beliefs and values of a wide variety of cultures rather than strict

allegiance to one, and, for Dickens, that openness was very extrapolitan because it included rural cultures.

The openness toward other cultures that, ideally, cosmopolitanism engenders brings to mind questions of sympathy and mediation, which are central concerns for Eliot as well as Dickens. For Eliot, extending sympathetic aid is of the utmost importance, and both Dinah Morris and Dorothea Brooke embody this value. The negative consequences of outsiders interfering too extensively with the affairs of another culture do appear, nonetheless, in Eliot's work when Dinah tries to convert Anglicans and pagans to Methodism by initially rendering prejudicial judgments of their sins in *Adam Bede*, and when "country doctor" Tertius Lydgate, due to his naïveté, misunderstands the needs and wants of the community he serves in *Middlemarch*. Once Dinah is able to minister to Hetty Sorrel, though, and, through sympathetic detachment, judge Hetty's crime without prejudice, she procures a confession from Hetty and helps mediate the tension between older ways of living and more modern overtures that plagues the village of Hayslope in *Adam Bede*.

Sympathy for Dickens, as we see when Goodchild visits the Lancaster asylum in *The Lazy Tour*, involves the ability to identify with the other more so than to extend sympathy to the other. Being able to identify with the other, particularly the rural other, leads to individual growth and change for Dickens. Dickens certainly believes in extending sympathy to a degree when doing so benefits both oneself and the other through mutual aid. However, for Dickens, sympathy should only extend so far because accepting charity can imply self-interest. For example, while Dinah helps to mediate some of the tension and conflict in Hayslope, Lizzie, in contrast, fails to mediate the

struggle between Eugene and Bradley and only saves Eugene's life after Bradley's attack. Trying to prevent the murder, if possible, could have resulted in Lizzie's injury or death. The struggle between Eugene and Bradley is one instance where non-interference stands out as the most logical and prudent course of action. Hetty's downfall in *Adam Bede* is tragic, but the end of *Our Mutual Friend* is much closer to tragedy, despite the marriages of Lizzie and Eugene, Bella and Harmon, Pleasant and Venus, and Jenny Wren and Sloppy, because Lizzie fails to mediate the conflict between Eugene and Bradley. Lizzie fails to function as a mediator because Dickens focuses more on individual growth and change in *Our Mutual Friend*, whereas Eliot addresses the development of the entire Hayslope community as an entity unto itself.

While Lizzie may not possess the same potential for mediation as Dinah, both women emphasize the incontrovertible value of the human person. Lizzie does so by saving Eugene's life and Dinah does as well by passing by her extrapolitan beliefs onto her children. Lizzie and Eugene may very well raise children because to do so would be the next logical course of action for a Victorian couple. For instance, Harmon and Bella marry earlier in the text and Bella soon gives birth to a son who is filled with energy. As Free points out, Jenny, who helps save Eugene's life, is an "intrinsic part of (pro)creation" in the text (262). Lizzie, like Dinah, displays the extrapolitan disposition to travel between the country and the city and embrace both rural and urban values. When Lizzie and Eugene do have children, Lizzie, again like Dinah, can pass her extrapolitan inclinations onto her children. Thus, another method for challenging rusticism emerges at the conclusion to both *Adam Bede* and *Our Mutual Friend* when both female protagonists possess the ability to engender an extrapolitan outlook in their children or potential

children. This method for challenging rusticism stands out as more than a subtle critique in Thomas Hardy's novel *Jude the Obscure*, which is in large part the focus of Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 –

"*Done because we are too* men*ny*": The Emasculation of the Rural Worker in *After London* and *Jude the Obscure*

The Countryside Writes Back

In the previous two chapters, I argue that Eliot and Dickens, writers recognized for championing urban values, both gain a more nuanced understanding of rural cultures through extrapolitan encounters. This understanding subsequently leads them to challenge rusticism in the seminal works *Adam Bede* (1859) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1864-65) respectively. In the final chapter, I turn to Richard Jefferies and Thomas Hardy, writers who hail from the countryside and are known for portraying rural settings and themes in their writing as well as promoting rural values (Looker and Porteous 3; Millgate 8). Despite their rural backgrounds and subject matter, Jefferies and Hardy both wrote primarily for urban publishers and readers, a process which is explained well by Karen Sayer and Raymond Williams. Sayer argues that, "using his own experience as a farmer's son, [Jefferies] wrote in London for a predominantly urban readership and effectively developed *the* dominant descriptive mode of writing on the countryside" in the 1880s (149; citing Marsh 33, emphasis in original). With regard to Hardy, Williams claims that "What have been seen as his strengths – the ballad form of narrative, the prolonged literary imitation of traditional forms of speech – seem to me mainly weaknesses. This sort of thing is what his readers were ready for: a 'tradition' rather than human beings" (204). Both Jefferies and Hardy were thought of by their urban peers as representatives of the rural perspective, but both authors nonetheless perpetuated rusticism throughout their careers. My goal in the present chapter is to elucidate one

method they both used to actually critique rusticism that has received very little critical attention: revealing the limitations in the construction of the rural worker as a highly masculine figure.

The construction of male rural workers as hearty individuals who demonstrated mastery over nature and the land reached a new level of popularity in the 1880s and 1890s. As the rural population dwindled, simultaneously, developments such as the emergence of the New Woman figure threatened traditional conceptions of masculinity (Mallett 388). Isaac Watts explains that the New Woman figure represents "the proto-feminist; the young woman who is educated, intelligent, emancipated in ideas and in morality, and who is resistant to the conventional notion that marriage and maternity should be the goal of any normal female's progress" (152). In addition to threats to traditional concepts of masculinity, such as the New Woman figure, an evolving view of the urban working class as effeminized and sickly began to take hold. The notion of the male rural worker as highly masculine was not necessarily new, but reemphasized with greater intensity than ever before to contrast the effeminized male urban worker. So, new prejudices about the urban working class were coupled with long-held ones regarding the rural working class to produce a popular image of the highly masculine, male rural worker in the 1880s and 1890s.

The form of masculinity that best characterizes this highly masculine image is described by John Tosh, who argues that the emphasis on imperial values from the 1870s onward caused expectations about manliness to coarsen, which led to the celebration of masculinity as a state of hardened physicality and readiness to war on others (192-214). At this time, the impact of the Great Depression became too widespread to be ignored

and the socially and politically influential strove to reemphasize the idea of a pastoral, idyllic countryside (Howkins 226). Concerns over the potential disappearance of the rural idyll and threats to conventional forms of masculinity are inextricably linked, because, as Eliot indicates in "The Natural History of German Life" (1856) with her description of "the *sturdy* countryman, with striped stocking, red waistcoat, and hat aside, who represents the traditional English peasant," a hearty, male peasant class is integral to the rusticist vision of a pastoral countryside (109, emphasis added). Because rural landscapes are often characterized as feminine,[1] especially in Hardy's works,[2] concerns regarding the autonomy of women could be mitigated by the imaginative construction of the male rural worker as powerful and dominant.

Writers such as Jefferies and Hardy helped further the endeavors to maintain an idyllic vision of the countryside by portraying hearty peasants, as well as rural dialects and traditions, such as Maypole dances, which urban readers expected to find in pastoral scenes. In the legislative realm, Parliament passed the Representation of the People Act 1884, which gave all men paying an annual rental of £10, or all those holding land valued at £10, the right to vote and thus extended the franchise to many of the men renting land for farming from the gentry. While extending the franchise in such a manner certainly seems like a logical way to make country men feel empowered, in the course of the present chapter, I illustrate how the Representation of the People Act 1884 did not actually grant the right to vote to a significant portion of the male, rural working class population. Perpetuating the idea of a hearty, male peasant class was more important to sustaining urbanite fantasies of a pastoral countryside than actually empowering the rural

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[1] See Annette Kolodny and Carolyn Merchant (10-70; 164-91).
[2] See Michael Irwin, Scott Rode, and Eithne Henson (171; 1717; 127).

working class. I argue that the construction of the male rural worker as a highly masculine, hearty, dominant figure is one rusticist notion that both Jefferies and Hardy do challenge because, in *After London* (1885) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895), respectively, they elucidate the interplay between the categories of masculine and feminine through male protagonists who fail to live up to late nineteenth-century standards of masculinity.

Both *After London* and *Jude the Obscure* (*Jude*) follow a plot that involves the main character being consistently emasculated in various situations. I have chosen to focus on these two novels because they are representative works that bring the tension between country and city to the forefront. Jefferies's numerous essays and novels focus almost entirely on rural locations, but *After London* is set in a post-apocalyptic future where England has reverted to a woodland feudal society following the disappearance of London. *Jude* stands out as Hardy's only novel to feature an urban setting, with the college city of Christminster representing Oxford, and the plot involves a young country dweller, who fails at many forms of rural work as well as his aspirations to earn a university education when he travels to Christminster. The woodland feudal society that appears in *After London* as an alternative to the chaos and disorder of modern cities, surprisingly, does not empower the protagonist, Felix Aquila, because he is emasculated by his brother, rival in love, and nearly all his friends and companions. The eponymous main character of *Jude*, Jude Fawley, is asked on multiple occasions to perform farm work and display mastery over nature by putting the needs of human animals before nonhuman animals, but each time he fails to do so.

A key difference between *After London* and *Jude the Obscure* stems from the novels' endings. Although Jefferies challenges the rusticist construction of the male rural

worker as highly masculine throughout *After London* with Felix's consistent emasculation, at the novel's close, Jefferies reverts to perpetuating rusticism when Felix joins a tribe of shepherds, becomes empowered by the superiority he feels over them, and builds an enclosed fortress. On the other hand, Jude is never empowered and Hardy portrays the novel's two female protagonists, Sue Bridehead and Arabella Donn, as powerful figures who experience independence and autonomy, display manly traits, and offer an alternative model, in contrast to Jude's failure, for surviving the economic depression of the countryside. Even though the novel is set in the 1840s, Hardy evokes 1890s debates regarding the fate of the countryside by depicting impoverished rural communities.

Through Jude's emasculation and the empowerment of Sue and Arabella, Hardy mounts a thorough critique of rusticism by providing an attractive blending of masculine and feminine qualities, which implies that a more androgynous, anomalous form of womanhood stands a better chance of weathering the changes wrought on the countryside during the nineteenth century, and indicates that, contrary to the prevailing rusticist belief of the 1880s and 1890s, the fate of the countryside rests in the hands of women rather than men. With this thesis in mind, Hardy's *The Mayor Casterbridge* or *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) may seem like more logical subject of analysis here. However, while those novels feature compelling female figures in Lucretta Templeman and the eponymous Tess, Sue and Arabella represent more androgynous models of femininity.[3] Both women display a certain degree of autonomy normally reserved for men, especially

[3] Later in the chapter, when providing more in-depth background on standards of femininity for the female, rural working class, I conduct a brief analysis of Tess's character to illuminate the role she plays in the debates over the fate of the countryside from the 1880s and 1890s.

Sue, who stands out as a New Woman figure. Sue demonstrates agency when she makes an incredibly difficult choice to ensure her survival and that any children she may have, while Arabella relies on the combination of her feminine charm and a masculine form of physicality to survive the harsh environment of an impoverished countryside. Pastoral portrayals of rural life often use women to represent the purity of the countryside and relegate them to the domestic realm of the dairy, leaving the more physically demanding, unclear labour in the fields and the muck for the men (Sayer 149). Hardy's depictions of Sue and, especially, Arabella, who butchers pigs, challenge this rusticist construction of pastoral femininity.

By presenting male protagonists who are consistently emasculated, both Jefferies and Hardy engage the question of how the countryside will endure economic depression and the sweeping changes of modernity. Jefferies responds by reasserting a belief in the coarse, hardened, highly physical masculinity of the male rural worker at the close of his novel. In contrast, I propose that Hardy likely read *After London* and, subsequently, crafted Sue, Arabella, and the ending of *Jude the Obscure* to provide an alternative response to answer the question of how the countryside will endure depression and change. This claim is based on my analysis of the two novels, as well as the many thematic parallels between Jefferies and Hardy that critics have noted.[4] Furthermore, Hardy was very well-read, especially with regard to rural authors and the topic of rural life, and he actually met Jefferies once at a dinner given by the publisher G. Murray Smith in 1880.[5]

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[4] See Andrew Radford, Rebecca Welshman, and Roger Ebbatson (55; 22-37; 125-41).
[5] See Thomas Hardy [under the name Florence Emily Hardy], *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy* (136).

When challenging the rusticist construction of the male rural worker as highly masculine, both Jefferies and Hardy draw on the common cultural practice of using the derogatory term "Hodge" to refer to rural workers, and subtly critique that practice. Mark Freeman explains that "Like 'Paddy,' the Irish immigrant of the famine years, and 'Sambo,' the plantation slave in the United States, Hodge became a widely-used and usually derogatory label" (172). Even though the term dates back to Chaucerian times, "it was used most regularly and most uncontestedly in the mid-nineteenth century, coinciding with the nadir of the labourers' economic fortunes" (Howkins 218; Freeman 173). According to Jan Marsh, the term is a diminution of "Roger" and was derived as "a cross between hedge (where [the rural worker] spent much of his time, especially in bad weather) and clod (the substance on his boots and in his brain)" (60). The attempts to maintain the pastoral perception of the countryside in the 1880s and 1890s led to a reappraisal of Hodge (Howkins 226). Both Jefferies, in his 1880 novel *Hodge and His Masters*, and Hardy, in the 1883 essay "The Dorsetshire Labourer," directly engage the widespread use of the Hodge stereotype to describe the male rural worker as hearty, masculine, backward, and obliviously contented. The views from *Hodge and His Masters* and "The Dorsetshire Labourer" are expanded on in *After London* and *Jude the Obscure* when Jefferies and Hardy, respectively, critique the reappraisal of Hodge from the late nineteenth century through the emasculation of their protagonists. Before proceeding with my analysis of *After London* and *Jude the Obscure*, I outline the historical context of both Hodge's reappraisal and the Representation of the People Act 1884, as well as late nineteenth-century standards of both femininity and masculinity for the rural working

class, to illustrate how rusticism constructs the male rural worker as highly masculine in the 1880s and 1890s.

Hodge and His Creators

The livelihood of people living in the English countryside was severely devastated during the nineteenth century, and examining the changing use of the Hodge stereotype throughout the nineteenth century enables one to better understand how rural workers were perceived by people who did not live in the countryside. As Freeman points out, more frequent use of the Hodge label coincided with rural poverty (173). Contemporaneous accounts from the mid-nineteenth century reflect Freeman's claim. For instance, writing in 1871, J. Dent characterizes Hodge as "unimaginative, ill-clothed, ill-educated, ill-paid, ignorant of all that is taking place beyond his own village, dissatisfied with his position and yet without energy or effort to improve it" (343-44). Moreover, Hodge was often said to possess nonhuman, animalistic traits. Unlike Dicken's portrayal of Lizzie, though, animalistic accounts of Hodge primarily carried negative connotations. In 1854, John Eddowes posits that "[rural workers] seem scarcely to know any other enjoyments than such as is common to them, and to the brute beasts which have no understanding" (12). Hardy challenges the stereotypes of both the animalistic rural worker and the highly masculine, male rural worker in *Jude the Obscure* when Jude refuses to mercilessly slaughter farm animals and instead holds their survival and comfort to be just as important as his own. Attitudes toward nonhuman animals are seen as an important gauge of not only masculinity but also urbanity. In cities such as London, nonhuman animals served primarily ornamental purposes, but on farms in the country they fulfilled more practical functions. Male rural workers were expected to possess a

hardened physicality, and butchering and slaughtering nonhuman animals occupied a key part of their daily routine because it helped ensure survival by providing both income and sustenance.[6] Animalistic descriptions of Hodge emerged, in part, because rural workers lived and labored in such close proximity to nonhuman animals.

The derogatory, animalistic characterization of Hodge that rose to prominence in the mid-nineteenth century with the onset of the Great Depression declined in popularity somewhat in the late nineteenth century, when the effects of the depression became so widespread that city dwellers began to worry about the well-being, or lack thereof, of rural workers. Alun Howkins attributes the reappraisal of the Hodge stereotype to the activities of the National Agricultural Labourers' Union (NALU) in the 1870s, panic about urban deterioration in the 1880s, and concerns over rural depopulation in the 1890s (226). Furthermore, Howkins argues that reappraisal of the term made rural workers once again representative of "timelessness and permanence," hearty work, and "Englishness" (226). While timeless and permanent do evoke less of a negative connotation than ignorant and animalistic, the Hodge of the late nineteenth century was still viewed as inferior to his urban counterpart. Moreover, the hearty, highly masculine Hodge of the 1880s and 1890s was also still described as animalistic to a certain extent since he was certainly considered a "beast of burden." As I point out in Chapter 2, the notion that human and nonhuman animals could both be placed on the evolutionary tree was unsettling to many Victorians. So, viewing Hodge as a nonhuman animal, even a dutiful, hard-working one, was incredibly condescending and othering.

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[6] I explore the implications of this argument more fully during my close reading of *Jude the Obscure*.

Freeman points out that use of the Hodge term was frequently contested in the 1880s and 1890s by commentators such as Hardy (173). In "The Dorsetshire Labourer," Hardy posits that Hodge would cease to exist if the subscriber to the stereotype spent six months in a labourer's cottage (252-54). Hardy describes Hodge as "unvarying," but the potentially extrapolitan experience of residing in a labourer's cottage for six months, and getting to know the type of individuals supposedly described by the Hodge stereotype, could provide those not from the countryside with a more nuanced and varied understanding of rural life, which is, perhaps, one reason why Hardy writes for an urban, middle-class audience. Jefferies's direct assessment of the Hodge stereotype is more complicated and difficult to untangle because it spans the lengthy, two-volume novel *Hodge and His Masters*, but Jefferies does appear less resistant to the stereotype than Hardy. For instance, while depictions of the labourer vary greatly throughout Jefferies's work, Freeman posits that his "portrayal of country life as exemplified by *Hodge and His Masters*," both "married the prejudices of the southern English [tenant] farmer to a broader conception of what the townsman wanted to read about the backward countryman" and "defined urban perceptions of rural life in the 1880s" (178). Jefferies's portrayals of rural labourers were highly influential because he was widely read. For example, 180,000 copies sold of the serialization of *Hodge and His Masters* in *The Standard* (Looker and Porteous 136).

The idea that the prejudices of tenant farmers played a role in the development of the Hodge stereotype is important to note. Bivona and Henkle ague that "Such novels as *Hodge and His Masters* (1880) reveal an obvious political preference for farmers and a hostility to the values [Jefferies] associated with the city (this sympathy for the plight of

freeholding and tenant farmers makes him less than sympathetic to the rural working class)" (150). While Jefferies's support of tenant farmers and hostility toward urban values both demonstrate allegiance to the country over the city in the political realm, the point that Bivona and Henkle make regarding Jefferies's lack of sympathy for the rural working class stands out. A significant but easy to overlook distinction should be drawn between tenant farmers, who rent farmland from the gentry, and the labourers who actually make up the majority of the rural working class and are employed by tenant farmers to work the rented farmland. Different standards of masculinity existed for each because rural workers were not only expected be more physical than tenant farmers but also more active and energetic. Rusticist characterizations of the countryside tend to emphasize an imagined, hearty peasant class that summons great enthusiasm for everything from manual labour to Maypole dances. I focus more on rural workers than tenant farmers because they most often represent the countryside in rusticist characterizations, suffered the most from the economic depression of the countryside, and Jude belongs to the rural working class. The Representation of the People Act 1884 extended the right to vote to many tenant farmers but overlooked the majority of the rural working class (Blewett 40). Jefferies's support of tenant farmers but not rural workers indicates that he celebrates a class-divided rural reality while Hardy does not. This caused Jefferies to be less resistant to widespread use of the Hodge label, which was mainly applied to rural workers.

Another reason that Jefferies was less resistant than Hardy to widespread use of the Hodge term is that he agreed, to a certain extent, with the project of maintaining the illusion of the countryside as pastoral and idyllic, which is linked to representations of

not only masculinity but also femininity. Masculine and feminine are often socially constructed as opposite categories, so, the portrayal of women in literary texts can be used to present a specific view of masculinity and vice versa. Sayer points out that the women in *Hodge* are "romantic" and "of a preindustrial, unscientific rural past" because Jefferies "uses rural women as idealised signs and metaphors for pastoral England" (149). For Jefferies, then, at least in *Hodge*, women represent England's pastoral past. Moreover, Jefferies places female characters within the context of the dairy to further emphasize the link between femininity and pastoral England.

One reason that writers such as Jefferies associated women with pastoral England is that notions such as the "angel in the house" and the separate-spheres doctrines emphasized the purity of women. Furthermore, because women are milk producers, women became associated with the dairy, another emblem of pastoral England. According to Sayer, by the 1880s, "The dairy had become a distant realm belonging to a golden age. With increased mechanisation, the dairy was no longer a part of every farmhouse, and was therefore constructed in opposition to the advance of industry as a naturally feminine sphere" (149). During the economic depression of the countryside, individuals following Jefferies's line of thinking came to associate femininity with the natural, pastoral realm. Earlier in the nineteenth century, though, the idea of a manly life in nature had persisted, and the efforts of the 1880s reappraisal of the Hodge stereotype and the passing of the Representation of the People Act 1884 worked to re-popularize that idea. Jefferies appears less resistant to the Hodge stereotype than Hardy and also seems to embrace the project of maintaining an idyllic perception of the countryside through his portrayal of women in *Hodge*. However, Jefferies does challenge the goals of

this project in *After London* with both the emasculation of his protagonist and the portrayal of Aurora Thyma, who is more well-read and independent than the women from *Hodge*. Later in the chapter, I devote a significant section of my close reading of *After London* to Aurora's character.

Jefferies, Hardy, Hodge, and Femininity

The dairy, which Jefferies utilizes in *Hodge* to evoke England's pastoral past through the latter's connection to femininity, is a setting that various nineteenth-century authors, such as Eliot in *Adam Bede* and Hardy in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, employ when exploring the tensions between country and city. According to Alicia Carroll, the Hall Farm dairy in *Adam Bede* represents a "trysting site" where women "figuratively play at the pleasures of embodied maternity. But when real human milk comes in, disastrously for the infanticidal milkmaid Hetty, the dairy and its sensuous largesse become a cruel joke" (166). Hetty flirts with both Arthur and Adam when they come to visit her at the diary and, as a milkmaid, helps cows produce the essential substance that mothers are supposed to provide for their children. However, Hetty does not realize the full social impact of her relationship with Arthur and, throughout her wanderings, is reminded by her own milk of the child she feels she cannot care for and eventually abandons. Through cruel irony, Eliot utilizes the Hall Farm dairy in *Adam Bede* as part of her critique of the imbalanced, quasi-feudal class structure that enables Hetty's downfall.

While the Hall Farm Dairy in *Adam Bede* enables Eliot to critique the rural order, Hardy's portrayal of Talbothays Dairy in *Tess* features a more direct engagement with the relationship between country and city. Carroll goes on to explain that "When Tess's own baby dies and she goes to work for Talbothays, she becomes a cog in the late-[nineteenth]

century national project to replace human milk with cow's milk" (167). Amy D'Antonio explains that, as science became more popular in the late nineteenth century, doctors, rather than mothers, came to be seen as the scientific authority on infant care and cow's milk was considered as an option for handfeeding formulas (Par. 10). This view emphasizes that women were associated with the natural, pastoral realm because the opinions of mothers were considered unscientific. The project discussed by Carroll and D'Antonio is enabled by railroad construction, which is a distinct marker of modern, urban, industrial England, and involves the rapid transport of cow's milk from rural farms to urban locations. Jessica Martell argues that *Tess* addresses the migration of not only rural products, but rural people as well, from the country to the city. According to Martell, Hardy views rural migrancy not as a "supernatural confluence of individual wills all being exercised in unison," as someone overlooking the effects of economic depression in the countryside might assume, but rather as a "feat of social and economic engineering that exerts force against a natural pattern" (64). For Hardy, rural migrancy is unnatural and "The triumph of a dominant design over nature resonates thematically throughout *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, most obviously in Alec's assault of Tess but also in Tess's choice to return to him. Her decision may appear to have been undertaken freely, but readers are urged to identify and critique the larger social forces that drive her to act against her nature" (Martell 65). These larger social forces include the loss of tenancy for Tess's family, which is emblematic of the effects of the Great Depression on the countryside that forced many rural people to migrate to the cities.

Martell's reading is important not only because it highlights Hardy's thorough engagement with the plight of late nineteenth-century rural workers but also because

Martell's interpretation underlines Tess's inability to act before she finally murders Alec, and Tess's lack of inertia distinctly contrasts the independent spirit of both Sue and Arabella in *Jude the Obscure*. Tess is not necessarily unwilling to act, but her choices are almost always influenced by external forces. Although the lives of Hetty from *Adam Bede* and Tess follow a similar narrative arc, the differences between the two characters emphasize Tess's lack of agency. Although Hetty is naïve and does not fully comprehend the social forces that impact her life, she does nonetheless willingly engage in the tryst with Arthur and choose to abandon her baby whereas Tess is raped by Alec and tries to care for her baby, who dies of natural causes. Moreover, the contrast between Tess and the two major female characters in *Jude* enables Hardy to expand on the initial stance he takes in *Tess* with regard to the relationship between gender roles and the plight of the countryside in late nineteenth-century England. While Tess is continually influenced by the forces around her, Sue resists social pressure for as long as possible. As a New Woman figure, Sue values the qualities of independence and autonomy that Tess does not display until she takes Alec's life.

Sue is described as a much more characteristically independent person than Tess, but both women are faced with forces, such as willful men and economic ruin, that dominate and control their lives. According to Martell, Tess's struggle represents the natural reluctance of rural people to embrace the rapid changes wrought on the countryside throughout the nineteenth century (64-65). Hardy portrays the struggles of both Tess and Sue to bring to light the hardships of rural communities that were often overlooked in the late nineteenth century by a predominantly urban readership. Furthermore, I concur with Martell's assessment that Tess's choice to return to Alec goes

against her character, particularly because she is repulsed by Alec after his attack on her, and is the product of larger social forces, such as her family's loss of tenancy. However, I would add that, with such an interpretation in mind, Tess's choice to kill Alec can be viewed as an instance where Tess embraces a dormant part of her character not as a murderess but as a more independent and autonomous individual, and seeks to be free from the forces constraining that independent aspect of her character. In addition to crafting *Jude the Obscure* partly to respond to questions Jefferies raises in *After London* regarding the plight of the countryside and gender roles, Hardy also uses *Jude* in order to expand on his own engagement with the connection between the country and gender in *Tess* since Sue strives throughout *Jude* for the independence that Tess demonstrates only when she murders Alec. By focusing on Sue's struggle for autonomy all throughout *Jude*, Hardy more thoroughly challenges the gender expectations for men and women of the rural working class in the 1880s and 1890s than he does in *Tess* or Jefferies does in *After London*. Some readers may argue that Sue gives up her independence when she returns to Phillotson at the novel's close. However, I contend that Sue embraces the role of wife, and potentially the role of mother, on her own terms for the first time when she returns to Phillotson and my analysis of *Jude* later in the chapter explores this point in depth.

Representing the People

The autonomy displayed by a character such as Sue Bridehead was not uncommon in the 1880s and 1890s with the advent of the New Woman figure, and the threat it posed to traditional conceptions of masculinity was combatted, in part, by the depiction of male rural workers as highly masculine figures. In addition to the reappraisal of the Hodge stereotype, the Representation of the People Act 1884 also stands out as a

major effort to characterize male rural workers as highly masculine. The 1884 Act is actually the second in a sequence of three Representation of the People acts that were passed in 1867, 1884, and 1918 to grant the right to vote to a greater portion of the British population. The intent behind each act was to give the right to vote to a different part of the population, with the 1867 Act focusing on the urban populace, the 1884 Act on rural voters, and the 1918 Act on women. Despite the intentions driving each act, all three failed to evenly extend the franchise. For instance, "the most democratic borough in 1865 had 81.92% of the adult male population on the roll, while the least democratic borough had only 11.54%. By 1884, the spread had narrowed somewhat, but was still substantial" (Aidt, Daunton, and Dutta 994). Although all three acts failed to evenly extend the franchise, the acts generally favored urban voters over rural ones. Even the 1884 Act, which focused more on the rural population, was less successful at extending the franchise to rural voters than the 1867 Act was at generating a greater number of urban voters. According to John Davis and Duncan Tanner, "the franchise extension of 1884 hardly affected the borough electorate; the 1867 Act was the real landmark for urban Britain. Immediately after the 1867 Act the total urban electorate increased by around 700,000" (307). All three "Representation of the People" acts failed to evenly extend the franchise because the acts mainly gave the vote to more property-owning-men than possessed it before, rather than women, at least until the third act, the rural and urban working classes, and young, single voters.

The Representation of the People Act 1884 did not extend the franchise to most of the rural population because, while many tenant farmers gained the right to vote, rural workers employed to actually work the rented land made up the majority of the rural

population and most did not receive the right to vote. As Ken Blewett points out, "The £10 rental requirement excluded many, particularly in the rural districts" (40). The terms of the 1884 Act stipulated that all men holding or renting land valued at £10 or more would receive the vote, so workers who were hired to tend the farmland but did not rent or own any land failed to qualify. Extending the franchise to the rural working class was widely debated, though, in the years leading up to the 1884 Act. Andrew Jones posits that "The subject of the country franchise brought forth much talk about 'Hodge the country clod,' his political nature, and the use he might make of his vote" (2.) Debates over the use "Hodge" might make of his vote led many to doubt that extending the franchise to the rural working class would be a wise decision. According to Christopher Kam, "Especially in the more rural and parochial regions, electoral competition was still viewed as lacking the decorum of an arranged (i.e., uncontested) election among local elites; there was also the stigma of losing" (515). Thus, rural and urban political interests were too disparate and urban interests too dominant for a rural working class that was thought of as uneducated, uncivilized, and backward to receive the right to vote. Although urban interests dominated the political spectrum, the fact that the gentry and many tenant farmers received the right to vote in 1884 helps elucidate that the working class all throughout Britain, in both the country and the city, were continually denied suffrage. Marc Brodie explains that "From the 1880s most male heads of household had found it relatively easy to qualify for the vote, although pauper disqualification and the vagaries of the tenement vote continued to bar the poorest from the franchise across much of Britian" (44-74). The continual denial of suffrage to the entire working class reflects that

both rural and urban workers were considered too uneducated and inferior to be worthy of the right to vote.

Another reason that all three Representation of the People acts tended to favor urban locations and populations stemmed from the notion that the rural population was impoverished, destitute, and, most importantly, dwindling, so they did not need the vote. As Jones further explains, "Publication of the 1881 census report early in 1884 opportunely provided Reform combatants with statistics of the pursuits of the people, the continued drift to the towns, and the encroachment of urban upon rural" (2). Although much of the English countryside is still rural and the parts of the country that were already urban were primarily the ones that became more urban during the nineteenth century, Jones's discussion of "encroachment of urban upon rural" reflects how urban interests dominated during the mid- and late-nineteenth century, thereby pushing rural concerns to the wayside in the political spectrum. While the effects of the Great Depression could not be easily mitigated, maintaining the public perception of the countryside as a pastoral and idyllic place was still important. Thus, even though the 1884 Act did not actually grant the right to vote to most rural workers, mainly just tenant farmers, one of the intentions behind the act was to project a vision of empowered, male rural workers to the public in nineteenth-century England. Jones states that, "many publicists chose to play the equalization of franchise between boroughs and counties as granting the *whole* agricultural community a voice" (2, emphasis in original). However, in actuality, "any accompanying redistribution of seats must work against the agricultural counties and small non-industrial boroughs, against southern England, and in favor of the mining and manufacturing districts" (Jones 2). The Representation of the People Act

1884 was presented as a victory for rural people and their concerns but actually reinforced dominant, urban interests.

Jones points out that urban interests included granting as few votes as possible to southern England, and the impetus behind this impulse was based on the belief that the effects of the Great Depression were most extensive in southwest England, the birthplace of Jefferies and Hardy. Freeman argues that "Hodge lived and worked in the south of England, where wages were lower, the rural community more fragile and the separation between employer and employee more complete. The West Country, and to a lesser extent East Anglia and southern England, was the region in which [Hodge] seemed to stand supreme" (174). In other words, the Hodge stereotype typically depicts ignorant, uncivilized rural workers, rather than members of the gentry or tenant farmers, so the term was used most widely in southwest England where the effects of the Depression were the most substantial. Furthermore, the effects of the Depression in the southwest were widely recognized. As Freeman points out, "The west was known as the region with the lowest agricultural wages and in many respects the worst conditions of labouring life to be found in the country" (174). Concern over southwest England's reputation contributed directly to the reappraisal of the Hodge stereotype and the design of the 1884 Act. George Eliot's "Recollections of Ilfracombe," which details her visit to the seaside town of Ilfracombe on the North Devon coast in southwest England, illustrates that the common view of southern, rural England as pastoral and idyllic was still popular as late as 1856. The reputation of the southwest as impoverished and destitute that emerged in the late nineteenth century obviously clashed with a pastoral view of rural England, so

Hodge was recast as a hearty, masculine figure and the 1884 Act was promoted as a boon to the impoverished rural community to help reinforce the new vision of Hodge.

The recasting of Hodge as a hearty, masculine figure was achieved, in part, by reinforcing traditional gender roles through all three Representation of the People Acts. The 1918 Act in particular, though, reinforced tradition values and gender roles. According to James McConnel, the 1918 Act "tripled the electorate (from approximately 700,000 to almost 2 million) by enfranchising all men over the age of twenty-one and women over the age of thirty who were local government electors or the wives of such" (356). The 1918 Act is typically thought of as the reform that granted suffrage to women, but one should keep in mind that the 1918 act only granted suffrage to women over 30 who were either a member or married to a member of the Local Government Register, a property owner, or a graduate voting in a University constituency. Even single men under the age of twenty-one were excluded. Despite some women being given the right to vote for the first time, the 1918 Act, like the 1867 and 1884 Acts, excluded the poorest members of both the rural and urban working classes. According to Jon Lawrence, "It is now generally accepted that the transformation of the electorate in class terms in 1918 was relatively minor, especially compared to the transformation in terms of gender and age" because the 1918 act was the first reform to give men as young as twenty-one and any women at all the right to vote (468). Duncan Tanner point out that, "it was single people, of all classes, who failed to qualify for the municipal franchise" (389). If single people of all classes were denied the right to vote, and, subsequently, political power and influence, then they might be more inclined to marry, thus reinforcing traditionally gendered expectations.

The emphasis that the Representation of the People acts place on traditionally patriarchal values and gender roles helps construct the male rural worker as highly masculine. For instance, a single, male tenant farmer renting £10 worth of land in 1884 might be more inclined to marry, and assume a traditionally patriarchal role as the dominate head of the household, if he knew doing so would help him earn the right to vote. Because the rural and working classes as well as young, single voters were continually denied suffrage from 1867 to 1918, the series of Representation of the People acts passed during that time indicates that married urban males from the middle and upper class represented Englishness in the late nineteenth century. Other individuals, such as rural and urban workers, women, and young, single men represented otherness and were pushed to the periphery of the political spectrum.

Masculinity in the Late Nineteenth Century

Specific concerns over the health and manliness of rural workers in an impoverished and destitute countryside, which led to the passing of the Representation of the People Act 1884 and the reappraisal of the Hodge stereotype, occurred as an outgrowth of more general trepidation regarding masculinity all throughout Britain in the late nineteenth century. According to Phillip Mallett, "masculinity in the later nineteenth century seemed to many writers to be under threat to an unprecedented degree. The entry of women into the white-collar labour market, changes to the laws governing the property of married women, and the arrival of the New Woman all seemed to blur gender divisions" (388). Because masculine and feminine were socially constructed as very distinct categories in the nineteenth century when concepts such as the separate spheres ideology and the "angel in the house" figure began to define genteel femininity, the

blurring of gender roles was disconcerting to many Victorians. Mallett goes on to state that "the declining birthrate, the increasing power of rival nations, and the fear of 'degeneration,' fostered an even more anxious effort to police the borders of what constituted normative masculinity" (388). One example of policing "the borders of what constituted normative masculinity" appears in the form of "assertive individuality." In addition to the changes exemplified by the New Woman and the entry of women to formerly male-dominated places of work, the effects of the Industrial Revolution "in a culture beginning the movement toward mechanized uniformity and capitalist discipline" caused men, such as Michael Henchard from Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), to display "assertive individuality" (Nemesvari 51). The compulsion to assert one's individuality in a rapidly industrializing, capitalist world that placed little emphasis on the value of unique, individual experience is one of many responses to the late nineteenth-century assault on normative masculinity. The reappraisal of the Hodge stereotype and the promotion of the Representation of the People Act 1884 as a boon to the rural population were also efforts to reestablish what constituted normative masculinity.

Jefferies and Hardy challenge these efforts when they present male protagonists who are consistently emasculated in *After London* and *Jude the Obscure*. Tosh suggests approaching masculinity in the late nineteenth century with three contexts in mind: the man at home, at work, and in association with other men (35-39). Elizabeth Langland expands on Tosh's approach, specifically in relation to Hardy, by proposing that Hardy explores masculinity through three types of relationships, "men and education, men and sexuality, [and] men and work" (375). These three types of relationships are crucial to

understanding *After London* and *Jude the Obscure*, because both male protagonists, Felix and Jude, fail to live up to the standards of masculinity for each. With regard to work, both Felix and Jude are unable to execute simple, daily tasks that men are expected to perform in the rural societies from which they come. In the sexual realm, Felix lacks the confidence to pursue Aurora, who shows an interest in him despite the class structure of the woodland feudal society to which they belong. Jude's efforts in love are consistently undermined by his occupational and educational failures. Concerning education, both men aspire to learn more than society dictates they should and subsequently meet rejection. Jude's goal to follow in the footsteps of his teacher Richard Phillotson, in particular, clashes with the expectations for a young male from the rural working class. Jane Thomas posits that "Phillotson's middle-class aspirations 'to be a university graduate, and then to be ordained' offer a more 'feminised' model of masculine subjectivity than that offered to the impressionable and emotionally deracinated Jude by the rural community of Marygreen" (138). In following Phillotson's footsteps and attempting to attend a university, Jude chooses a career path that is less masculine than the farm work he struggles to perform at home in rural Marygreen. Jude and Phillotson are both unable to attend any university at Christminster because of their rural background.

My analyses of *After London* and *Jude the Obscure* focus in-depth on the three factors outlined by Langland: work, sexuality, and education. I address Jefferies's novel first because *After London* was published earlier, does not critique rusticism as thoroughly, and leaves several unanswered questions that are pursued by Hardy. In my close reading of *After London*, I first look at the challenge Jefferies poses to rusticism

through Felix's emasculation and Aurora's independent personality. Then I turn my attention to the way Jefferies perpetuates rusticist ideas late in the novel by empowering Felix, which raises questions regarding how the countryside will survive the fallout of the Great Depression.

My approach to *Jude the Obscure* is two-fold in that I focus on Jude's relationships with both women and nonhuman animals, which are crucial to understanding the text. Hardy gives nonhuman animals a central role in *Jude the Obscure* not only because rural workers were often described as animalistic, but also because nonhuman animals were vital to the life and labour of rural workers. The novel associates butchering with masculinity because, in contrast to the male rural workers in Marygreen and Arabella's expectations for a husband, Jude continually fails at butchering nonhuman animals. When analyzing *Jude the Obscure*, I first examine Jude's marriage to Arabella, then his relationship with Sue, and finally how Sue and Arabella stand out as strikingly independent, somewhat masculine, and very autonomous, female figures. Arabella is characterized as masculine through her autonomy, hearty physicality, commitment to feed herself and indifference to the pain and suffering of other creatures, such as nonhuman animals. Although Sue lacks Arabella's indifference to other creatures and degree of physicality, she is not sickly like Jude, and possesses the heartiness and mental fortitude to survive the events of the novel. In contrast to Arabella, Jude and Sue are extremely sympathetic to the plight of other beings, which would not necessarily have been considered an effeminate trait earlier in the nineteenth century, but, by the 1870s, expectations of masculinity had greatly coarsened (Tosh 192-214). Hardy does not advocate for Arabella's brand of androgyny when she survives the events of the novel,

but, rather, Sue's, which provides an attractive middle ground between Jude's failure to thrive and Arabella's disregard for the suffering of othering creatures. Sue does not always place others' needs before her own, for instance, she is cruel to Phillotson and casts off Jude at the end of the novel, but she also displays the capacity to sympathize with others that Hardy so greatly valued.

"So Slender a Stripling": *After London*'s Critique of Late Nineteenth-Century Rusticist Standards for Masculinity

The thorough critique of rusticism that Hardy casts in *Jude the Obscure* in 1895 is, to a certain extent, indebted to the depictions of Felix Aquila and Aurora Thyma that Jefferies provides in *After London* ten years earlier. Jefferies depicts a post-apocalyptic vision of England in *After London* that is neither fully dystopian nor utopian. An unnamed cataclysmic event, which is not described in thorough detail, leads to the disappearance of London, the reversion of the English landscape to an entirely rural environment, and the appearance of a woodland feudal society. Because Jefferies's relationship to his rural birthplace was complicated by his role as a popular author read mainly by urban audiences, his portrayal of the woodland feudal society in *After London* is also complex and certainly not a one-sided endorsement of his rural roots. Williams contends that, although "A physical hatred of the noise and the rush of the city can be converted as in Jefferies'[s] *After London*, to a powerful but acrid vision of the metropolis reclaimed by the swamp" with "an active delight in trees and flowers and birds," an "unconscious extension of the values and attachments of an unjust and arbitrary society" also appears on the scene (196). Jefferies may be addressing the issues he sees with his own society, such as class and gender biases, in an anti-urban novel, but

those problems are not simply remedied by replacing one society with another. Felix, the protagonist of the novel, is very dissatisfied with the power relations in the woodland feudal society to which he initially belongs.

Criticism of *After London* tends to follow Williams's approach by addressing Jefferies's complex and ambivalent attitude toward the novel's feudalistic society. Most critics engage this topic by focusing on the concept of "hearty barbarism," which implies the idealization of the reversion to a more barbaric, simplistic, or pre-modern state of being for its heartiness. Hearty barbarism was a popular concept from the 1880s into the early decades of the twentieth century, in part, because it encapsulated the coarse, hardened physicality and heartiness that urbanites wanted to believe the male rural worker possessed. Edward Thomas, an early biographer of Jefferies, laments in 1908 that *After London* is a "bitter book" for depicting "so mean a world, full of corruption, slavery, suspicion, [and] uncertainty, instead of a hearty barbarism, after the troublesome destruction of a whole civilization" (265). Thomas's view of the novel reflects the popularity of hearty barbarism in rusticist fantasies, although works such as Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894) depict hearty barbarism in other locations, such as the colonies. Whether or not the post-apocalyptic future of *After London* is fueled by hearty barbarism is still debated by critics. For instance, Patrick Parrinder argues that *After London* revels "in the destruction of civilization and the opportunity it provides for a return to an idyllic, barbaric existence" (64). However, on the other hand, Caroline Sumpter contends that "the barbaric future in *After London* is [. . .] far from idyllic [. . .] [and] hardly suggestive of utopian romance" (316). I propose looking more closely at the ambivalence of the text because the future environment Jefferies depicts is multi-faceted

and highly nuanced. I argue that the woodland feudal society Felix initially belongs to is far from idyllic, but also that the community Felix eventually finds on his journey and becomes ruler over is much more idyllic.

After London is divided into two parts, and the first part, "The Relapse into Barbarism" contains no plot development so that it can serve mainly to provide background information on the future landscape of England. Jefferies is very thorough in the "Relapse into Barbarism" section, providing over forty pages of fictional background and context on the future environment he creates with detail reminiscent of an anthropologist. The "Relapse into Barbarism" section, though, lacks significant depictions of hearty barbarism and rarely contains any type of pastoral or idyllic scene. For example, when explaining why education plays a much smaller role in the future society than the one it replaced, the narrator states that "The reason why so many arts and sciences were lost was because, as I have previously said, most of those who were left in the country were ignorant, rude, and unlettered" (18). The countryside is often idealized for being a peaceful place with humble inhabitants representative of a simpler time and way of life. However, in using the terms "ignorant," "rude," and "unlettered" to describe the first inhabitants of the new environment that appears after London disappears, Jefferies does not indulge pastoral fantasy or idealize a simpler way of life, he criticizes a more ignorant one. Furthermore, in this passage, Jefferies begins to narrate the long history that leads to the rise of the society he eventually depicts in the main narrative of the novel. So, the "most of those who were left" are the ancient ancestors of Felix, Aurora, and the other characters that play a prominent role in *After London*'s main narrative, but Jefferies's language also indicates that "those who were left" are the few

individuals who survived the cataclysmic event that led to London's disappearance. Thus, Jefferies is referring to either the current inhabitants of the countryside in the 1880s, depending on when the event occurs since that date is not specified by Jefferies, or their direct descendants as "ignorant," "rude," and "unlettered." While depicting rural workers in such a condescending manner is certainly a rusticist impulse, Jefferies also rejects the rusticist compulsion to fantasize about an idyllic countryside in "The Relapse into Barbarism."

As the narrative of the history of the land continues, a somewhat "civilized" society eventually emerges in the wake of London's disappearance. In this narrative history, Jeffries reveals the lineage of the main characters from the novel and places great emphasis on the pursuit of knowledge. The narrator informs us that

> Now the mark of a noble is that he can read and write. When the ancients were scattered, the remnant that was left behind was, for the most part, the ignorant and the poor. But among them there was here and there a man who possessed some little education and force of mind. [. . .] These men in turn taught their children to read and write, wishing that some part of the wisdom of the ancients might be preserved. [. . .] These children, growing to manhood, took more upon them, and assumed higher authority as the past was forgotten, and the original equality of all men lost in antiquity. The small enclosed farms of their fathers became enlarged to estates, the estates became towns, and thus, by degrees, the order of the nobility was formed. As they intermarried only among themselves, they preserved a certain individuality. [. . .] all knowledge is thus retained in the possession of the nobles; they do not use it." (32-33)

The narrative history that Jefferies presents in this lengthy passage is important to understanding how the woodland feudal society that eventually appears is constructed, what qualities Jefferies values, and how he uses those values to delineate a critique of rusticism. The narrator states that "the mark of a noble is that he can read and write," so education distinguishes the nobility from less civilized individuals, such as the bushmen, in the novel's future. However, one's ability to learn and acquire knowledge is not innate but, rather, based on the powerful divisions between classes of society, because, through intermarrying, "all knowledge is thus retained in the possession of the nobles." Moreover, "they [the nobles] do not use it [knowledge]." So, the qualities that Jefferies values, knowledge, education, learning, and reading, are retained by the nobles to maintain sharp class divisions but are not valued or even used by the nobles for any purpose other than maintaining class divisions.

Jefferies utilizes the schema just outlined to cast a critique of rusticism when Felix, the protagonist, eventually appears in Part II, "Wild England," which contains the main narrative of the novel. Felix belongs to the nobility and resides on his father's estate, The House of Aquila, but, in the hierarchy of the nobility, Felix is not an appropriate match for his love interest, Aurora Thyma, who lives with her family in Thyma Castle and is supposed to marry Durand, a conventionally masculine figure, i.e. an individual from a prominent family. In contrast to other members of the nobility, Felix enjoys reading and learning. According to the narrator, "rain and mildew had spotted and stained" the pages of the books in Felix's house, "the covers had rotted away these hundred years," and "The abridgement of Roman history had been scorched by a forest fire"; "Yet, by pondering over these, Felix had, as it were, reconstructed much of the

knowledge which was the common (and therefore unvalued) possession of all when they were printed" (47). Although the books to which Felix has access have been damaged, Felix reads and ponders these, gaining knowledge and becoming educated in a manner that is not valued by much of the nobility, which is the class that dictates that physical prowess helps define masculinity in the society to which Felix belongs.

When Felix interacts with his males peers from the woodland feudal society in the novel, he is emasculated. The narrator tell us that, "Too quick to take offence where none was really intended, [Felix] fancied that many bore him ill-will who had scarcely given him a passing thought. He could not forgive the coarse jokes uttered upon his personal appearance by men of heavier build, who despised so slender a stripling" (48). Felix clearly does not fit well in a society where athletic competition and other highly masculine activities based around physical prowess are lauded over the educational pursuits he prefers. Even Felix's physical build does not conform to the masculine standards of the society. The narrator goes on to say that Felix "would rather be alone than join [the company of his male peers], and would not compete with them in any of their sports, so that, when his absence from the area was noticed, it was attributed to weakness or cowardice. These imputations stung him deeply, driving him to brood within himself" (48). Felix is emasculated by his peers, himself, and even the narrator. His peers utter "coarse jokes" about his slight build and consider him a weak coward for not participating in the physical activities that the society uses to define masculinity. Felix internalizes these interactions, takes "offence where none [or at least such great offence] was really intended," and is driven to brood within himself. Jefferies implies in such passages that Felix is well aware that he does not belong in the woodland feudal society

and starts to feel powerless as he is emasculated. Even in the third-person narration, Jefferies makes detailed distinctions between Felix's physical appearance and that of his peers to set up a critique of the society's values. Because Jefferies has used Felix's educational pursuits to condition readers to identify and sympathize with Felix, Jefferies is drawing on Felix's emasculation and feelings of powerlessness to critique the way the feudalistic society in the novel values its conventionally masculine figures. Parallels can obviously be drawn between this society and the efforts in the 1880s to recast Hodge as a highly masculine figure, thus Jefferies critiques those efforts through his portrayal of Felix.

Felix's brother Oliver stands out as the conventionally masculine figure to whom Felix is most often compared. Just as Jefferies compares Felix to his peers to emasculate him in the social realm, Jefferies also compares Felix to Oliver to emasculate Felix at home. Due to his emasculation in both the social and domestic spheres, as well as his doubts about Aurora's love for him, Felix makes the decision to leave the woodland feudal society he belongs to and set out for the more unknown parts of "Wild England." According to the narrator, Oliver "excelled in swimming, as, indeed, in every manly exercise, being as active and energetic as Felix was outwardly languid" (55). Due to Oliver's active and energetic demeanor, physical prowess, manliness, heartiness, and interest in activities valued by the society, such as hunting, swimming, rowing, and building, Felix has developed a languid attitude toward his diminutive frame, educational pursuits, and bookish personality. Even though Felix is emasculated by both himself and his peers, Jefferies focuses more on Felix's emasculation of himself and his overblown perception of society's attitude toward him to illustrate how traditionally gendered

expectations negatively impact the individual. Felix even needs Oliver's help to build the canoe Felix intends to use to leave society behind. The narrator says that "Felix chopped away slowly and deliberately; he was not a good workman. Oliver watched his progress with contempt; he could have put it into shape in half the time. Felix could draw, and design; he could invent, but he was not a practical workman, to give speedy and accurate effect to his ideas" (68). Not only does Felix fail to excel at physical sports conducted for the purposes of leisure, but also at building, hunting, and other "practical workman" activities necessary for survival in a post-apocalyptic, rural world. The canoe Felix builds does float, but suffers from some flaws in its construction that Oliver helps remedy so that the vehicle can perform at maximum capacity. The contempt Felix feels from Oliver and other masculine members of society eventually pushes him to leave.

Emasculation, Education, and Independence: *After London*'s Challenge to Late Nineteenth-Century Standards of Femininity

Before departing the feudal society completely, though, Felix stops at Thyma Castle near the beginning of the journey, where he is emasculated further by his rival in love, Durand, Aurora's father, and other conventionally masculine individuals. Felix visits Thyma Castle over a period of several days when important banquets and physical contests are being held. The narrator states that "In the afternoon there were foot-races, horse-races, and leaping competitions, and the dances about the Maypole were prolonged far into the night" (115). Jefferies references "foot-races," "horse-races," and "leaping competitions" to again highlight just how greatly the feudalistic society values physical competitiveness, and "dances about the Maypole" to accentuate the rural aspects of the society. The feudalistic aspects of the community bring to mind the Victorian idealization

of medievalism, which was prompted by Carlyle, Tennyson, Ruskin, and Morris, among other, and which is critiqued, to a certain extent, by Jeffries when the sympathetic characters of Felix and Aurora are portrayed as outcasts from this society.

We cannot assume, though, that Jefferies is championing rural life simply because the urban parts of England have been replaced with this rural community, especially since Felix finds such dissatisfaction in the community. After feeling emasculated by his peers and brother, Felix feels emasculated by his rival in love. The narrator says that, during the banquet that takes place the night Felix arrives at Thyma Castle,

> Felix, seeing [Aurora's] glance bent downwards or towards [Durand], and never all the time turned to him, not unnaturally, but too hastily, concluded that she had been dazzled by Durand and the possibility of an alliance with his profound family. He was discarded, worthless, and of no account; he had nothing but his sword; nay, he had not a sword, he was only an archer, a footman. (101)

Felix further emasculates himself by drawing on the phallic imagery of a sword in his thoughts; however, the phrases "all the time," "not unnaturally," and "too hastily" are important to keep in mind. Felix would naturally be jealous of any attention Aurora pays to Durand, but hoping that the daughter of an important baron would keep her focus on Felix, or any one person, "all the time" during a lengthy banquet is an unfair expectation. So, Felix reacts "too hastily" in his own judgment that "He was discarded, worthless, and [of] no account" to Aurora. While Felix has certainly been rejected by the feudalistic society and its highly masculine standards to a certain extent, this passage reflects, just as the earlier comment that Felix is "Too quick to take offence where none was really intended" does, that the degree of thoroughness to which Felix believes society has

rejected him is evoked, in part, by his imagination. Felix is angered and anxious about society's initial rejection of his less masculine, more bookish personality, and he broods "within himself" until he becomes convinced that he is "discarded, worthless, and [of] no account" to not only Aurora, but the entire feudalistic society.

In addition to further depicting the emasculation of Felix, Jefferies also utilizes Felix's stay at Thyma Castle and his subsequent interactions with Aurora at the Castle to challenge rusticist constructions of femininity in the late nineteenth century. Despite his hasty conclusions, Felix finds when he wakes the next morning in his room that "Aurora, whom all day he had inwardly accused of forgetting him, had placed [a manuscript] there for him with her own hands. She, too, was curious in books and fond of study" (113). Since the nobility in Jefferies's novel have completely rejected the value of reading and learning, Aurora defies the norms of her society with her educational endeavors, thus displaying a level of autonomy that clashes with expectations for gender roles in the late nineteenth century and evoking the New Woman figure. Unlike the women from *Hodge and His Maters*, Aurora is not romanticized or idealized by Jefferies, nor representative of a preindustrial, unscientific, rural past. Felix idealizes her, but Jefferies does not. Jefferies idealizes women and associates them a pastoral, rural past in *Hodge and his Masters* but critiques that characterization through his portrayal of Aurora in *After London*. The feudalistic society in *After London* resembles communities from the pastoral past Jefferies evokes in *Hodge and his Masters* through the idealization of women, so Felix's idealization of Aurora reflects the values of society. Although Jefferies utilizes both Felix and Aurora to critique this type of society, Aurora actually questions the values of the society, whereas Felix is more just frustrated that he does not fit in. Jefferies

casts Aurora as a passionate and intelligent young woman caught between the designs of her father and society and her own feelings for the unreasonable and stubborn man she loves. Both sets of conflicting pressures, to her father and Felix, are complicated by her desire to pursue knowledge and an education. Aurora becomes more representative of the contemporaneous New Woman figure, or even the future, rather than the past, which is represented by Jefferies's fictional, rural, feudalistic future.

Jefferies further challenges rusticist constructions of femininity in the late nineteenth century through Aurora's willingness to pursue a relationship with Felix in spite of her father's stipulation that she marry Durand. Felix "too hastily" reaches the conclusion that he is of "no account" to Aurora, and, on Felix's final evening at Thyma Castle, Aurora "put her arm (how warm it felt!) about his neck; he yielded stiffly and ungraciously to the pressure; she drew down his head; and kissed him. His lips touched but did not press hers; they met, but did not join. In his sullen and angry silence he would not look. She drew still nearer, and whispered his name" (118). Aurora displays an intense passion for Felix of which her father would deeply disapprove. However, Aurora does not reject her father's requirement that she marry Durand solely because she loves Felix, but also because she believes her educational endeavors are of great importance. Felix is somewhat reluctant to accept Aurora's romantic embrace because Felix's angst and anger at society's rejection of him have caused Felix to exaggerate that rejection in his mind and he lacks the confidence to truly believe that Aurora would actually choose him over Durand, even though she openly admits she would. Aurora says, "'You are all, *everything*, to me'" but Felix "broke out: he pushed her away; his petty jealousy and injured self-esteem poured out upon her" (118-119). Felix's lack of confidence and

outrage at society are so overwhelming that Aurora's deep affection for Felix actually bolsters his jealousy rather than helping mitigate it despite her sincerity.

Aurora even tries to persuade Felix to stay and not completely abandon the society in which they live. According to the narrator, "That evening, with her hope and love, with her message of trust, she almost persuaded him. He almost turned to what she had so long taught. He almost repented of that hardness of heart, that unutterable distance, as it were, between him and other men, which lay at the bottom of his proposed expedition" (123). Felix's interactions with other men should not impact his relationship with Aurora but they ultimately do, thus indicating that society's view of Felix and Felix's view of himself are both more important to Felix than that of the woman he supposedly loves, but mainly just idealizes. Felix's inability to relate to other, more "masculine" men, "that unutterable distance [. . .] between him and other men," is ultimately the reason why Felix abandons feudal society and sets out on his journey into the unexplored regions of "Wild England." The impetus behind Felix's journey reveals how Jefferies both challenges and perpetuates rusticism in *After London*. Jefferies creates a fictional future in which England has reverted to an entirely rural environment and contains many elements rusticists associate with rural England, such as a feudalistic community, pagan rituals, and hearty peasants, but presents a protagonist who is not hearty nor content with the rural, feudal society in which he lives. However, Felix's journey itself is what ultimately undermines Jefferies's challenge to rusticism because Felix searches for and eventually finds a more idyllic society where he finally feels empowered.

Imperialist Projects and Idyllic Communities: *After London*'s Perpetuation of Rusticism

Despite a relatively thorough critique of rusticism when Felix belongs to the woodland feudal society, Jefferies chooses to end his novel with a series of scenes that perpetuate rusticism. Critics tend to recognize that the novel's final moments place Felix in a position of power that he has not experienced before. Bivona and Henkle posit that "Felix's own technical knowledge [. . .] is far in advance of the people he moves among, and his innate skill in improvising solutions to military and economic problems only he completely grasps make him ultimately victorious over the savages he faces" (155). The term "savages" appropriately reflects the way Felix views many of the people he encounters on his journey, but also elucidates the imperialistic superiority Felix experiences when interacting with them. Furthermore, as Jed Mayer argues, in addition to establishing dominance over the people he encounters, Felix also becomes dominant over nature because "at the novel's conclusion, the story of the character of Sir Felix culminates in the building of an estate at a position of significant economic and military importance, thus reestablishing a kind of human dominance" (82). Felix's dominance over nature enables the protagonist of *After London* to embody the construction of the male rural worker as a highly masculine, hearty figure. While Bivona and Henkle explore issues of class and Mayer focuses on the environment, I propose examining the specifically rural concerns that emerge when Felix encounters the tribe of shepherds at the novel's close.

Jefferies's choice to refer to this group of people as "shepherds" evokes a pastoral setting, and, by joining the shepherds, Felix is able to take on the role of the masculine,

dominant figure that was denied to him in the novel's woodland feudal society. For instance, the narrator tells us that "Though familiar, of course, with the bow [the shepherds] had never seen shooting like [Felix's], nor, indeed, any archery except at short quarters. They had no other arms themselves but spears and knives" (220). Felix's skill with a bow was underappreciated in the feudal society, which placed a greater emphasis on the ability to use the much more phallic, interpersonal sword. However, Felix's bow skills are lauded by the shepherds, who, with their rudimentary spears and knives, are portrayed as less civilized and more primitive than Felix. By combining a pastoral setting with Felix's ability to finally step into a masculine role, Jefferies imbues the end of his novel with a significantly rusticist vision.

In addition to undermining his challenge to late nineteenth-century rusticist standards for masculinity, Jefferies also undercuts his critique of standards for femininity when Felix lives among the shepherds of the tribe. When interacting with the women of the tribe, Jefferies embraces the values of the society he once rejected. According to the narrator,

> Seeing one of the women cutting the boughs from a fallen tree, dead and dry, and, therefore, preferable for fuel, Felix naturally went to help her, and, taking the axe, soon made a bundle, which he carried for her. It was his duty as a noble to see that no woman, not a slave, laboured; he had been bred in that idea, and would have felt disgraced had he permitted it. The women looked on with astonishment, for in these rude tribes the labour of the women was considered valuable and appraised like that of a horse. (220)

Because women are idealized in the feudal society Felix comes from, they likely do not perform much labour, perhaps beyond milking cows, so, by helping the women of the tribe work, Felix is able to fulfill one of the chivalric duties from his former society. Because of his lack of physical prowess, Felix was likely denied this duty when living in the feudal society. Furthermore, in taking on the labor of the women, Felix is also able to replace the values of the more primitive society with his own since "in these rude tribes the labour of the women was considered valuable." Readers of *After London* might not anticipate that Felix would eventually adopt the values of the woodland feudal society as his own since he experiences such anger and angst when living in that society, but Felix does indeed embrace the values of the feudal society when he fulfills his role as a noble by alleviating the tribal women of their labor. In replacing the values of the tribe with his own, Felix takes on an imperialist project. As I outline in the introduction, rusticism shares many similarities with Orientalism, so, through the imperialism of Felix's project, Jefferies further endorses rusticism.

Felix's choice to aid the women with their labour is one of two steps that help Felix attain a position of power in the tribe. The narrator explains that

> Without any conscious design, Felix thus in one day conciliated and won the regard of the two most powerful parties in the camp, the chief and the women. By his refusing the command the chief was flattered, and his possible hostility prevented. The act of cutting the wood and carrying the bundle gave him the hearts of the women. They did not, indeed, think their labour in any degree oppressive; still, to be relieved of it was pleasing" (220).

The chief of the tribe is so impressed by Felix's abilities, which seem superior among this primitive group of people, that he offers his position to Felix, and Felix's subsequent refusal is a chivalric and honorable move that reflects his nobility and superiority. The women of the tribe, though not described in great detail, hearken back to *Hodge and His Masters* and contrast the independent, autonomous, goal-driven Aurora. Through their ability to perform manual labour, the women of the tribe possess a heartiness associated with a pre-industrial, idyllic countryside. Moreover, in relieving the women of their labour as part of his noble duty, Felix idealizes the women rather than treating them with the respect that a character such as Sue Bridehead would demand.

Once Felix's position of power is established in the tribe, he takes on a project that becomes his final major act in the novel and that clearly represents Jefferies's significant endorsement of rusticism in *After London*'s final pages. Felix decides to build a fortress and the narrator says that

> Felix's idea was to run a palisade along the margin of the brook, and up both sides of the valley to the ridge. There he would build a fort. The edges of the chalk cliffs he would connect with a palisade or a wall, and so form a complete enclosure. He mentioned his scheme to the shepherds; they did not greatly care for it, as they had always been secure without it, the rugged nature of the country not permitting horsemen to penetrate. But they were so completely under his influence that to please him they set about the work. (227)

The design of the fortress forms a "complete enclosure" so that Felix can secure and protect the position of power he has finally achieved, which could imply that Felix still suffers from some insecurity, perhaps over losing his newfound position of power,

especially since the shepherds did not see any strategic need to enclose their land before Felix's arrival. Furthermore, Jefferies's use of the term "enclosure" directly evokes the long process of "enclosure" that took place in England throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and created a landless rural working class, many of whom eventually migrated to the cities. Rusticism refers to a monolithic perception of rural people, places, and cultures that is typically negative or condescending in some way, while acts such as the Enclosure Act 1773, as well as the Importation Act 1846 and the Representation of the People Act 1884, reinforce that rusticism provided the dominant mode of understanding the countryside in the nineteenth century. With Felix building an enclosure, Jefferies further perpetuates rusticism at the close of *After London*. Although the shepherds do not see the need for an enclosure, they still help implement Felix's plans to build one because, at this point, he has become a nearly god-like figure to the shepherds, which further emphasizes Felix's superiority.

Once the enclosure is constructed, the shepherds no longer question its strategic value and Felix's superiority reaches its zenith. According to the narrator, "Felix had a sense of mastership, for in this fort he felt as if he could rule the whole country. From day to day shepherds came from the more distant parts to see the famous archer, and to admire the enclosure. Though the idea of it had never occurred to them, now they saw it they fully understood its advantages, and two other chiefs began to erect similar forts and palisades" (227). When the fort is complete, Felix feels as if "he could rule the whole country," and finally possesses the sense of masculine superiority that he previously lacked and, apparently, always longed for. Once Felix possesses this position of power, he seems to abandon his educational pursuits because Jefferies ceases to mention them,

and, in deserting the feudal society he came from, Felix relinquishes his only access to books. He now attracts attention from all over the region and the other tribes of shepherds realize the protection, shelter, and military advantage offered by these types of structures. The other tribes of shepherds even decide to build more enclosed structures, which again reflects Felix's superiority because he possesses an idea that "had never occurred" to the shepherds and helps them fully understand this "advanced technology." Because this idea is an enclosure, a symbol that represents to late nineteenth-century readers the oppression of rural people and economic depression of the countryside, Felix goes from being an emasculated figure that challenges rusticist constructions of rural workers in the late nineteenth century to Jefferies's ultimate, literary embodiment of rusticism.

The question remains then, why would Jefferies conclude the novel with a depiction of Felix that so greatly contrasts his initial description and, subsequently, perpetuates rusticism? Despite his rural origins, Jefferies, like Hardy, faced the pressure of writing primarily for London publishers and readers, and, as critics such as Sayer point out, Jefferies often perpetuated rusticist ideas, beliefs, and values, especially in *Hodge and His Masters*. However, Jefferies's primary portrayal of Felix Aquila and the inclusion of Aurora Thyma in *After London* both indicate that Jefferies was very aware of the cultural debates and perceptions surrounding the countryside in the 1880s and that, when possible, he challenged those perceptions. Moreover, Jefferies's consistent focus on Felix's emasculation and the introduction of an independent, autonomous, goal-driven, nearly New Woman type of female figure indicate that gender roles and the plight of the countryside were inextricably linked in the late nineteenth century. Because Felix does not embrace his role as an outlier and, rather, seeks out a community where he can

become more like the people who helped mark him as an outlier, Jefferies raises serious questions regarding the fate of the countryside. With the rural economy severely depressed and tens of thousands of rural workers deserting the country for the city in the late nineteenth century[7], one must wonder: how would rural cultures be impacted and what would ultimately happen to the countryside? Hardy directly answers these types of questions in *Jude the Obscure*.

Failure to Thrive: Jude's Lack of Masculinity as Negotiated by Arabella, Nonhuman Animals, and Rural Work

Like Felix Aquila, the eponymous protagonist of Thomas Hardy's final novel is consistently emasculated. The text opens in the rural village of Marygreen when Jude Fawley is only eleven years old and his piano teacher, Richard Phillotson, is leaving the village to pursue an educational career at Christminster, Hardy's fictional stand-in for Oxford. Compared to the other male members of the rural working class present at Marygreen, Phillotson's occupation and goals "offer a more 'feminised' model of masculine subjectivity" (Thomas 138). Jude decides to emulate his former teacher and dreams of someday attending one of the universities at Christminster. So, like Felix, Jude's educational pursuits set him apart from the male contemporaries in his rural community and mark him as a more feminized outlier. Expressing Jude's thoughts as young boy, the narrator says, "Growing up brought responsibilities, [Jude] found. [. . .] If he could only prevent himself growing up! He did not want to be a *man*" (16-17, emphasis added). Jude's desire to not grow up stems, in part, from not wanting to endure the pain of growing up, but also from not wanting to face the responsibilities, challenges,

[7] See Ensor, pg. 117.

and duties that adult men are tasked with. In not wanting to group and not wanting to "be a man," Jude is rejecting the masculine role society has laid out for him.

Beyond his own desire to "not be a man," Jude's emasculation occurs primarily through his inability to perform much of the rural work that is routine for his male contemporaries. At a young age, Jude is given the job of protecting Farmer Troutham's corn fields from the rooks that are often nourished by Troutham's crops. But, when the birds appear, Jude exclaims "'Poor little dears!' [. . .] 'You *shall* have some dinner – you shall. There is enough for us all. Farmer Troutham can afford to let you have some. Eat, then, my dear little birdies, and make a good meal!'" (14). Jude loses his job and is severely beaten by Troutham for his transgressions, so, in feeding the birds and furthering their survival, Jude has neglected his own well-being and even placed it in jeopardy. Self-abnegation would be considered a feminine trait in the late Victorian period, though perhaps not earlier in the nineteenth century, because of the self-sacrificial deportment expected of women once the "angel in the house" doctrine took hold.

The connection between Jude and the birds is emphasized when the narrator says that the rooks "stayed and ate, inky spots on the nut-brown soil, and Jude enjoyed their appetite. A magic thread of fellow-feeling united his own life with theirs. Puny and sorry as those lives were, they much resembled his own" (14). Hardy compares Jude to the birds to illustrate that Jude appears "Puny and sorry" when living in the rural community of Marygreen. When Jude rationalizes feeding the birds by saying "There is enough for us all" Jude acknowledges Troutham's concerns over depriving and an impoverished rural community of food and himself of income. Jude could just be a child not considering consequences, but his unwillingness to puts his needs before the needs of

other creatures is a trait that Jude carries into adulthood and that manifests when he refuses to butcher a pig slowly. The narrator tells us that "Though Farmer Troutham had just hurt him, [Jude] was a boy who could not himself bear to hurt anything. He had never brought home a nest of young birds without lying awake in misery half the night after, and often reinstating them and the nest in their original place the next morning" (15). Jude is not suicidal, but, rather, unwilling to ensure his own survival at the cost of pain and suffering caused to another creature.

With Jude's attitude toward beings, both human and nonhuman, in mind, sympathy again enters the discussion. Eliot, Dickens, and Hardy each take different stances on sympathy, but all acknowledge the importance of sympathy to interacting with others, especially disenfranchised or oppressed individuals, such as members of the rural and working classes. Eliot holds the extension of sympathy in the highest regard, but proposes that a certain level of detachment should be maintained, so that one can properly administer aid and render judgment, without prejudice, but judgement nonetheless. Dickens is more ambivalent regarding the extension of sympathy, aid, and judgment, but, following the events that inspire *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices*, recognizes the importance of identifying with the other and finding similarities between oneself and the other to understanding one's own existence and plight. Hardy takes the ability to identify with the other a step beyond Dickens to "A magic thread of fellow-feeling" that unites one's own life with the life of the other. Because this level of sympathy lacks the degree of detachment proposed by Eliot, identifying with the other becomes a painful experience for Hardy as one experiences the travail of the other.

Hardy's view of sympathy is demonstrated by Jude's interaction with the rooks when he senses their suffering and aids them, which, in turn, leads to his own suffering.

The attitudes toward sympathy held by Eliot and Dickens can be construed as positive because, for both authors, these views lead to a celebration of rural values that ultimately challenges rusticism. In illustrating how the suffering and plight of the rural worker increased throughout the nineteenth century, Hardy certainly challenges rusticism by helping bring to light numerous aspects of rural life that were neither pastoral nor idyllic. However, many readers would argue that Hardy also displays a certain level of nostalgia that idealizes rusticist constructions of rural life, and even that Hardy's view of sympathy causes him to be reconciled to the inevitable, tragic plight of the rural worker. In contrast to this view, though, I argue, and show later in the chapter, that Hardy does indeed answer the question raised by Jefferies and takes a stand on how rural people, places, and cultures can endure. Hardy proposes that, rather than a hearty, masculine, male rural worker, a nurturing, motherly, but still somewhat independent, female figure, such as Sue, will help rural ways of life persevere.

For Hardy to accomplish such a goal, he must introduce several strong-willed, independent female characters to his narrative. The first of these characters to appear in the text is Arabella Donn. After Troutham's emasculation of Jude in the professional sphere, Arabella emasculates him in the domestic realm. Jude and Arabella meet when "On a sudden something smacked him sharply in the ear, and he became aware that a soft cold substance had been flung at him," and "A glance told him it was – a piece of flesh, the characteristic part [genitals] of a barrow-pig" (32-33). Gender roles are reversed in this meeting because Arabella stands out as the aggressive and flirtatious initiator.

Arabella displays independence and autonomy by initiating the relationship with Jude. Although Arabella is clearly attracted to Jude, the use of pig genitalia taunts him in a way. Hardy describes the piece of pig flesh as a phallic "missile" and Arabella is the daughter of a pig farmer, so the "missile" she flings at Jude is an extension of her own power and potency, which subsequently indicates that she possesses the masculine aggressiveness that Jude lacks and which is necessary to initiate their dalliance. Furthermore, Arabella fires the "missile" to establish that, contrary to Victorian standards, she will assume the dominate role in her relationship with Jude.

Hardy describes Arabella as a "complete and substantial female animal" (33). While that type of description could be considered an example of the rusticist stereotype that rural workers, who toil in close proximity to nonhuman animals, behave like nonhuman animals, Hardy utilizes Arabella's animalism to allude to her masculine qualities more so than anything else. Because the highly masculine male rural worker that appeared so often in the 1880s and 1890s was also typically described as a simplistic "beast of burden," Arabella, more thoroughly than Jude or any other major male character in the novel, embodies this figure. Hardy challenges the stereotype by placing a woman, instead of a man, into the role. Arabella still retains a high degree of femininity, though, with her "round and prominent bosom, full lips, perfect teeth, and [. . .] rich complexion of a Cochin hen's egg," which are able to draw Jude's attention away from "dreams of the humaner letters" (33). The masculine and feminine attributes of Arabella's character are combined in her physical appearance because she possesses the hardened physicality to do much of the rural labour typically reserved for men while still retaining the soft feminine features that many men find attractive. Arabella utilizes both

the feminine and masculine aspects of her physicality to survive the harsh environment of an economically depressed rural community.

The reversal of standard Victorian gender roles in Jude and Arabella's relationship is mostly clearly illustrated when Jude becomes tasked with slaughtering one of the pigs they have raised because the local butcher cannot make the journey to Jude and Arabella's cottage on a wintry day. Since highly masculine rural workers were expected to demonstrate mastery over nature, Hardy continuously uses nonhuman animals to illustrate Jude's lack of conventionally masculine qualities. Arabella insists that Jude kill the pig slowly so that its blood does not spoil its meat, and, while Jude does not want to slay the animal at all, he views Arabella's approach to the job as cruel and unnecessary torture. Once Jude completes the task, the narrator reveals that "However unworkmanlike the deed, it had been mercifully done. The blood flowed out in a torrent instead of in the trickling stream [Arabella] had desired. The dying animal's cry assumed [. . .] the shriek of agony" (53-54). Since, according to Arabella, this quick mercy killing will spoil the meat, thereby costing Jude and Arabella income, Jude again places the needs of another creature above his own survival, and, in this case, above the survival of his family. This causes Jude to be emasculated by Arabella and much of the Marygreen community when their argument over Jude's butchering methods carries into the space just outside their home and is observed by onlookers (54). Jude defies the position of power in which Arabella placed herself when the relationship began, and Jude's choice to defy Arabella's authority leads directly to Arabella's decision to desert him and emigrate to Australia with her family after they sell their pig farm due to the economic woes of the countryside.

Jude and Sue: Sympathy and the Struggle to Survive

After Arabella leaves for Australia, Jude returns to his studies, moves to Christminster, and meets the second of the two strong-willed, independent female characters, his cousin Sue Bridehead. Like Arabella, Sue possesses feminine qualities, such as her "dainty" form and "liquid, untranslatable eyes, that combined, or seemed to [Jude] to combine keenness with tenderness, and mystery with both," but also masculine qualities, such as her independence, autonomy, and willingness to spend time with men in non-intimate ways (85). Regarding her masculine qualities, Sue explains that "My life has been entirely shaped by what people call a peculiarity in me. I have no fear of men, as such, nor of their books. I have mixed with them – one or two of them particularly – almost as one of their own sex'" (117). Sue, like Jude, as well as Felix and Aurora, has no fear of men's books and desires to pursue an education, which goes against societal conventions for both Jude and Sue because they hail from the rural working class. When Sue says she does not fear men and has mixed with them, she means her role was one of a friend and not a lover. This is emphasized both by the phrase "almost as one of their own sex" and the fact that Sue continually refuses the sexual advances of Jude, because she wants to maintain her independence despite her sexual attraction to him, and Phillotson, because he is physically unappealing to her, throughout the text (117; 313). Sue has no female friends and gets along better with men, which marks her as an outlier from more conventional Victorian women, and she even further defies gender conventions when she expresses that she does not wish to marry or commit to any kind of romantic and sexual relationship with a man so that she can retain her autonomy.

While Sue and Arabella share many qualities, such as independence and a more androgynous likeness, they also differ greatly. Arabella actively pursues multiple marriages, four, to be exact, and sexual relationships with men throughout the course of the text because she possesses a masculine confidence that Sue lacks and believes she can occupy the role of the dominant, masculine figure in any relationship. Furthermore, Sue shares with Jude a deep concern for the plight and suffering of other beings that Arabella clearly lacks. Sue's sympathy for other creatures emerges when she and Jude are both staying in Marygreen for their Aunt Drusilla's funeral. Jude hears the cries of a rabbit caught in a gin and mercifully kills it (169). Sue, who witnessed the killing of the rabbit, tells Jude that "'I haven't been able to sleep at all, and then I heard the rabbit, and couldn't help thinking of what it suffered, till I felt I must come down and kill it! But I am so glad you got there first . . . They ought not to be allowed to set these steel traps, ought they!'" (169). The first inclination of both Jude and Sue is to put the rabbit out of its misery, and the two certainly bond over their shared sympathy for its pain. However, Jude and Sue differ as well. Jude deeply wants to enter into a relationship with Sue, and, as a man, does not necessarily have to give up his independence to do so, whereas Sue is reluctant to marry either Jude or Phillotson so that she can maintain her autonomy.

The shared sympathy Jude and Sue possess for other beings is most often illustrated through mercy killings, such as the deaths of both the pig and the rabbit at Jude's hands. The prevalence of mercy killings in the text emphasizes its tragic tone and sets up a dichotomy between sympathy and survival. This dichotomy implies that, in order to survive in a harsh environment where resources are scarce, such as the English countryside during the Great Depression, one must place his or her own needs for

survival above sympathy for other beings. As the scene with the rabbit demonstrates, both Jude and Sue are opposed to this type of worldview. The narrator explains that the notion that "mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened [Jude's] sense of harmony [or that the world is just]" (16). Both the pig and the rabbit could help provide sustenance to the inhabitants of the impoverished countryside, but Jude would rather go hungry than see either animal suffer too greatly.

Like Felix Aquila, Jude and Sue are sympathetic, complex, tragic characters whom the reader feels compelled to follow, identify with, and trust. So one can infer that Jude and Sue's willingness to put the needs of other creatures above their own indicates that Hardy also felt a great degree of sympathy for other beings. Thus, Hardy's portrayal of the English countryside in *Jude the Obscure* as a harsh place where survival and sympathy function as opposites stands out as a scathing critique of the effects wrought on the countryside by enclosures and the Great Depression. Bivona points out how important this critique was to Hardy when he argues that "Hardy is the only late nineteenth-century writer to examine fully the disruptive effect of rapid change on traditional communities, and in so doing exposes 'a society committed to colonizing its rural lower classes as it is colonizing the dark races of the world'" (Bownas 2; quoting Bivona 93). Hardy's characters in *Jude* continue to suffer but survive. Sue and Arabella endure to the end of the text and outlast even Jude because they possess the qualities necessary for survival. The survival of both women helps Hardy challenge the rusticist construction of the male rural worker as a hearty, highly masculine figure, but Hardy primarily accomplishes this feat through Sue's character. In the world of the novel, Jude mainly represents the sympathetic side of the sympathy/survival dichotomy while Arabella embodies survival.

At the novel's close, though, when Jude fades into oblivion, Sue does what she must to survive while maintaining a degree of sympathy for other creatures without embracing the cold indifference of Arabella's instinctual animalism.

Sue, Arabella, and the Fate of the Countryside

The most brutal of the mercy killings that occur in *Jude the Obscure* takes place late in the novel and puts Sue's ability to survive to the ultimate test when Jude's son from his marriage to Arabella, who Jude and Sue have been raising, murders Jude and Sue's children and then takes his own life. Jude's first son is named Little Jude but often called Little Father Time because his melancholy nature makes him seem knowledgeable beyond his years. The deaths of Jude and Sue's children resemble the deaths of the pig and the rabbit in that Little Father Time claims to be extending mercy to the other children since they live in poverty. The day before the killings, Little Father Time pesters Sue with questions about the family's economic struggles and makes statements such as "'It would be better to be out o' the world than in it, wouldn't it?,'" "'Then if children make so much trouble, why do people have 'em?," and "'I think that whenever children be born that are not wanted they should be killed directly, before their souls come to 'em, and not allowed to grow big and walk about'" (262). Little Father Time believes that, because the children live in such impoverished conditions, he puts both them out of their misery. However, the killing of the children could be based on survival as well as sympathy. Little Father Time also asks Sue, "''Tis because of us children, too, isn't it, that you can't get a good lodging?'" and, in the note he leaves at the death scene, claims that the horrific act was "'*Done because we are too menny*'" (262-64, emphasis in original).

Thus, Little Father Time believes that, without the burden of the children, Jude and Sue will experience some economic relief.

Sue is obviously traumatized by the deaths of her children, and the horrifying event pushes her to her final and most crucial stage of character development. Despite the economic burden the children may have placed on Jude and Sue, Sue's loved her children. She goes to the gravesite when they are being buried and exclaims "'I want to see them once more. O Jude – please Jude – I want to see them! I didn't know you would let them be taken away while I was asleep! You said perhaps I should see them once more before they were screwed down; and then you didn't, but took them away! O Jude, you are cruel to me'" (269). Sue is so traumatized that Jude sends the corpses away while she is asleep, hoping that not seeing them again will ease her pain, but Sue is persistent, driven, and deeply traumatized. Her persistence in the scene at the gravesite reflects the depth of both Sue's pain and her love for her children. That love for her children is the driving force behind the perplexing, final series of decisions Sue makes over the course of the novel's remaining chapters when she decides to leave Jude and return to Phillotson.

In justifying her final series of decisions, Sue outwardly expresses an acceptance of Victorian values regarding marriage and gender roles that she has openly challenged and flaunted throughout most of the novel. For instance, in one conversation with Jude, Sue proclaims that "'An average woman is in this superior to an average man – that she never instigates, only responds'" (277). Sue describes how Victorian women were expected to behave and claims that the "average," or everyday, dutiful Victorian woman who conforms to expectations, is "superior" to, or more fortunate than, the "average"

Victorian man because, as responders rather than instigators, women have fewer choices than men and Sue believes her choice to have children out of wedlock with Jude has directly contributed to their deaths. However, while Sue outwardly expresses her concession to Victorian values, she never ceases to take action or function as an instigator. The choice to return to Phillotson is her idea and occurs on her terms. Sue makes the decision not because she believes it is the right thing to do, but because she believes she is being punished for having children out of wedlock, and wants to concede to protect herself and her future children.

When Sue returns to Phillotson, she tells him that "'My children – are dead – and it is right that they should be! I am glad – *almost*. They were sin-begotten [born out of wedlock]. They were sacrificed to teach me how to live! – their death was the first stage of my purification. That's why they have not died in vain! . . . You will take me back?'" (278, emphasis added). In claiming that her children were sin-begotten and sacrificed to teach her how to live, Sue again outwardly endorses Victorian notions of morality. The use of the word "almost," though, indicates that Sue still deeply loves her deceased children and is making choices based on that love. In asking Phillotson "You will take me back?," Sue reveals that the decision to return to him is entirely her idea and not a notion suggested by Phillotson or some other character. Numerous readers might be inclined to view Sue's return to Phillotson as the confining of a formerly independent New Woman figure to an "angel in the house" role more in line with Victorian conventions, because, as Sue says out loud, Phillotson is her true husband. However, Sue's actions belie her words. She speaks of passivity but devises and implements a very specific plan of action. In saying that the death of the children she bore with Jude out of wedlock is the "first

stage" of her "purification" process, Sue acknowledges the power of the societal pressures she has felt all throughout her rebellious life while still subtly defying them. Sue exercises her will *within* the confines of society for the first time when she returns to Phillotson because she becomes convinced that doing so is essential to her survival.

Jude, who is obviously distraught by Sue's choice, takes the opposite approach following the death of their children. Jude always believed that he and Sue should follow Victorian conventions, even after they became intimate, and get married, but he spurns societal values more than Sue ever did after the children die and Sue departs. During Jude's depression, Arabella gets him drunk and dupes him into marrying her once again. Once they are married, Jude asks for mercy and his death, although more emblematic of suicide than anything else, can be considered the final mercy killing of the novel. At one point, Jude says to Arabella, "I have been thinking of my foolish feeling about the pig you and I killed during our first marriage. I feel now that the greatest mercy that could be vouchsafed to me would be that something should serve me as I served that animal'" (303). Jude openly identifies with the animal he once spared a slow death. While death at that moment for the pig was inevitable, the way in which the pig would be killed was debatable. In comparing himself to the pig, Jude believes that he will die soon and Arabella should put him out of his misery because his suffering is so great.

In choosing to die, Jude embodies the sympathetic side of the sympathy/survival dichotomy because, for Jude, the burden of believing that the world is filled with overwhelming pain and strife outweighs any instinct for survival. Already sick, Jude achieves what he asked of Arabella by walking many miles to see Sue one last time during a rainstorm, knowing that a long walk in the heavy rain will aggravate his

condition and cause him to die even sooner. When explaining this choice to Arabella, Jude says

> "Listen to me, Arabella. You think you are the stronger; and so you are, in a physical sense, now. You could push me over like a ninepin. [. . .] But I am not so weak in another way as you think. I made up my mind that a man confined to his room by inflammation of the lungs, a fellow who had only two wishes left in the world, to see a particular woman, and then to die, could neatly accomplish those two wishes at one stroke by taking this journey in the rain. That I've done. I have seen her for the last time, and I've finished myself – put an end to a feverish life which ought never to have been begun!" (308).

Jude points out that he is physically weaker than Arabella, but does not define masculinity based on physical prowess when he makes the argument, though his determination to see Sue and his choice to end his life by doing so illustrate strength. While Jude's final journey is certainly filled with purpose and determination, because he makes the journey knowing that it will likely result in his death, Jude, unlike Sue, does not show the will to live. By contrasting Sue's will to live and Arabella's ability to thrive with Jude's desire to die, Hardy implies that Jude's final choice, as strong as it may be in certain contexts, is not strong enough to endure the hardships of rural poverty. In making Jude Fawley the male protagonist of his final novel, Hardy not only challenges the late nineteenth-century construction of the male rural worker as hearty and physically powerful but also the impetus behind it. This construction emerged out of debates over the fate of the countryside and endorses the survival side of the sympathy/survival binary. Hardy challenges this notion that rural workers must possess hardened physicality and a

lack of sympathy for others to survive in two ways. First, by placing Jude in the sympathetic, feminine role and Arabella in the masculine survival role, Hardy inverts the gender distinctions that are integral to the notion that hearty, male rural workers represent the salvation of the countryside. Second, by showing a balance of sympathetic feeling and survival instinct in Sue, Hardy offers an alternative to the dichotomous thinking that dominates discussion of the survival of the countryside in the late nineteenth century.

In contrast to Jude, Arabella fights for her survival and plans to outlast the continued economic depression of the countryside by procuring yet a fourth husband, the aged Dr. Vilbert. Anticipating Jude's death, Arabella explains to the Widow Edlin, a friend of Jude and Sue's deceased aunt, that "Weak women must provide for a rainy day. And if my poor fellow upstairs do go off – as I suppose he will soon – it's well to keep chances open. And I can't pick and choose now as I could when I was younger. And one must take the old if one can't get the young'" (316). Arabella's assessment of her situation indicates that she is very perceptive and self-aware. By mentioning a "rainy day" she evokes Jude's walk and acknowledges that she lives in harsh conditions. She knows that to survive she needs food and shelter, and, as she gets older, she will, unnecessarily and unreasonably, appear less appealing to men she could potentially marry. A younger, stronger husband would be better, at least according to societal standards, but any husband with income can certainly help procure food and shelter. Arabella is particularly adept to survive if her survival is contingent on procuring a husband since she possesses both masculine qualities, such as her assertive, confident personality, which would make her appealing to many suitors, as well as feminine traits, mainly in her appearance, which can draw in other types of suitors. While Arabella many

readers may not consider Arabella the most likeable character, her androgynous appeal defies rusticist standards for both masculinity and femininity in the late nineteenth century.

While Jude and Arabella reflect two extreme ends of a spectrum, Sue, offers an alternative approach that is more appealing than either Jude's inability to place his own needs above the needs of other creatures and Arabella's willingness to do whatever is necessary to survive. Sue still displays care for other creatures even after she acknowledges the necessity of returning to Phillotson for her survival. After Jude's final visit, Sue is emotionally distraught, and she explains to Phillotson that "'I am never going to see him anymore. He spoke of some things of the past: and it overcame me. He spoke of – the children. – But as I have said, I am glad, almost glad I mean – that they are dead, Richard. It blots out all that life of mine'" (312). Again Sue expresses that she is not glad, but "almost" glad that her children perished to spur her to outwardly endorse Victorian values while believing that doing so provides the best chance for her survival. Furthermore, in saying that the death of her children "blots out all that life of mine," Sue refers to her life with Jude as a past life, indicating she believes she has a second chance, to start over, or, possibly even, for redemption, renewal, and rebirth, which would be represented by the birth of future children. Sue makes an incredible sacrifice in surrendering the degree of autonomy she reveled in as a single woman to accept the death of her children and to move forward with her second marriage to Phillotson, rather than wallowing in self-pity like Jude.

Furthermore, she makes yet another major sacrifice when the narrator tells us that, later that night, "Placing the candlestick on the chest of drawers [Phillotson] led [Sue]

through the doorway, and lifting her bodily, kissed her. A quick look of aversion passed over her face, but clenching her teeth she uttered no cry" (313). Sue represses her physical aversion to Phillotson, which is so great that it once caused her to jump out a window, so that she can fulfill her marriages vows. Once again, what is important to remember is that *Sue has orchestrated this moment* because she believes that it is crucial not only to her survival but also to the survival of her future children. While fulfilling her marriage vows may make the arrival of future children inevitable, Hardy continuously stresses Sue's love for her children, especially after their deaths, so a logical conclusion would be that she wants to have more children. This is, perhaps, a major reason why she returns to Phillotson, since, from Sue's perspective raising future children with Jude would likely invite tragedy into their lives again. Furthermore, for Sue, bearing and raising future children could indicate that she properly grieved, while Jude never does. In returning to Phillotson, Sue believes she ensures her survival and the survival of her future children, and, in attempting to ensure the survival of her future children as well as herself, Sue demonstrates that she still cares deeply about the well-being of other creatures. Thus, Sue simultaneously occupies both sides of the sympathy/survival dichotomy and elucidates that the two categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. While the choice to be Phillotson's wife does reflect Victorian standards regarding marriage, this decision also highlights Sue's active choice to do what is necessary for her future children, so that they avoid the fate that befell her other children.

In this manner, Sue resembles Dinah Morris from *Adam Bede* and Lizzie Hexam from *Our Mutual Friend*. All three women display striking independence and autonomy but eventually marry and embrace the domestic roles of wife and mother. However, each

maintains a certain level of autonomy even once married, and that balance between dependence and independence proves necessary to survival. Characters such as Hetty Sorrel, Bradley Headstone and Jude Fawley demonstrate too great a level of dependence in their romantic relationships or attachments, and too significant a degree of independence by becoming completely rootless when those romantic connections are severed (or never fulfilled in Bradley's case), to avoid a tragic downfall. Dinah, Lizzie, and Sue each elucidate that striking a balance between two categories that were socially constructed as opposite in the nineteenth century, such as pre-modern/modern, human/nonhuman, and masculine/feminine, is necessary to challenge rusticism, and, subsequently, reveal that, through the process of finding balance, rural people, places, cultures, and ways of life can endure oppression, economic depression, and the monolithic stereotyping of rusticism. In becoming a mother or open to the possibility of doing so, each of these female characters possesses the ability to pass their beliefs and values onto their children. As the countryside was irrevocably altered during the nineteenth century by the economic ruin and subsequent migration of its working class inhabitants, and questions of the "survival" of the countryside arose, those questions circled around preserving what were considered distinctly rural ways of life. For rusticists, this often meant maintaining pastoral fantasies. Others though, such as Hardy, were concerned that the more nuanced aspects of rural life, such as mutual aid or the androgynous type of femininity displayed by Sue, would disappear, and this may very well be the case since rusticist notions, including pastoral fantasies, still persist today. Figures such as Dinah, Lizzie, and Sue represent an extrapolitan perspective that embraces the lesser known, more diverse aspects of rusticism and these women possess

the potential to help instill a similar perspective in their children. Thus, these types of motherly figures become crucial to challenging rusticism.

Sue, who is willing to make the greatest of sacrifices for her future children, illustrates that rural cultures and ways of life not only need hardened masculine physicality to endure, but also the nurturing touch of a motherly figure. Sue makes decisions that may seem suspect to some readers, but what should ultimately redeem Sue in the eyes of readers is her ability to still sympathize with other creatures as she makes difficult decisions necessary for her survival. In many respects, becoming a nurturing mother shows the greatest degree of self-sacrifice and extension of sympathy as one dies to her own needs to raise and care for other beings. Sue's decision to make these sacrifices for her *future* children, because nothing can be done for her other children at this point, emphasizes the value of human life, despite the plethora of mercy killings throughout the text, just as do the conclusions to *Adam Bede* and *Our Mutual Friend* in their own ways through Dinah's ability to help Hetty achieve redemption and Lizzie's rescue of Eugene. Through her masculine qualities, as well as her maternal ones, Sue indicates that both masculine and feminine traits are necessary for the survival of the countryside. Aurora Thyma from *After London* is not given the same due justice as Dinah Morris, Lizzie Hexam, and Sue Bridehead, but, in many ways, Hardy picks up where Jefferies left off in *After London* to provide a compelling critique of rusticism in *Jude the Obscure*.

Conclusion –

Teaching Children: Education, The Value of Human Life, and The Continued Survival of the Countryside

Two important themes emerge in my study of rural and urban interaction in the nineteenth century, which include educating future generations and the value of human life. Briefly revisiting the Corn Laws helps make clear why these two themes are so central to understanding rural and urban interaction since the unresolvable dilemma of the Corn Laws revolved around basic human needs and survival. The Corn Laws played a key role in the economic ruin of the countryside but their repeal made it possible to feed much of the working class throughout the empire. So, emphasizing the value of human life proved a logical way for many writers to respond to this unresolvable dilemma. In *Adam Bede*, tragic circumstances lead Hetty Sorrel to abandon her baby and Hetty is subsequently transported to a penal colony. Hetty's transportation enables Eliot to critique the circumstances that led to Hetty's downfall as well as emphasize the value of human life. The motherly image of Dinah Morris from the novel's epilogue stands out as a foil and alternative to the infanticidal Hetty. Hetty's actions demonstrate the end of life while Dinah's come to represent the continuation of it. Dinah can minister to her children and teach them the value of sympathetic detachment. Similarly, Lizzie Hexam embraces the value of human life when she rescues Eugene Wrayburn and a potential motherly role when she helps Jenny Wren, who is consistently identified as a mother figure throughout *Our Mutual Friend*, nurse Eugene back to health. She relies on her animalistic attributes to pull Eugene from the rural Thames, indicating that nonhuman animals survive by not only acting competitively but also cooperatively. If Lizzie and Eugene have children,

Lizzie can teach to them the importance of cooperation and mutual aid. In *Jude the Obscure*, Sue Bridehead dies to her own desires because she believes she must follow the standards of society to protect any and all of her children. If Sue and Phillotson raise children, Sue can not only instruct them to survive but also to feel sympathy for other creatures.

Sue and Jude's willingness to often put the needs of nonhuman animals before their own needs brings the value of not just human life, but all sentient life, into the discussion of rural and urban interaction and becomes emblematic of the unresolvable dilemma of the Corn Laws. Sue and Jude do not want to harm other creatures, even if harming other creatures is crucial to their well-being. Similarly, repealing the Corn Laws helped feed the majority of subjects throughout the empire but also directly contributed to the impoverishment of a vast rural population. Both examples involve sacrificing the livelihood of one group of beings for another, perhaps slightly larger group of beings. Sue does not completely resolve this paradox but does help find a balance between sympathy and survival when she returns to Phillotson at the novel's close. She ensures her survival by returning to Phillotson but gives up some, though not all, of her former values in the process.

Sue's return to Phillotson, who she really does not find appealing or desirable, and outward endorsement of Victorian values is the most extreme example of what occurs at the end of *Adam Bede*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and *Jude the Obscure*, when, in each novel, a formerly independent and autonomous woman marries and settles into a seemingly confining life of domesticity. The very standard, typically Victorian conclusions for the narrative arcs of these three female characters makes supporting my

argument that they challenge traditional, gendered expectations, even once they are married, rather difficult. However, Dinah, Lizzie, and Sue, each exercise agency when they make a clear choice to abandon their formerly autonomous ways of life, as a traveling preacher, exile in the countryside, and single woman devoted to her education and career, respectively, and enter the domestic realm. While a set of circumstances does help to bring about each choice, including Hetty's downfall, Bradley's attack on Eugene, and the death of Sue's children, all three women could choose to remain living a more independent existence. The choice, though, to raise and educate children plays an important role in the decision-making process. All three novels feature education as a prominent theme. Dinah's main goal is to evangelize and minister to people, which means *teaching* them the gospel. Lizzie saves enough money to secure an education for her younger brother and then pursues one herself following their father's death. Sue and Phillotson both study to be teachers, and Phillotson's plan, which could still take place, is for the two to open a school together. Sue could actually still pursue a career while married to Phillotson, just one that exists on his terms rather than her own. The poverty and tainted reputations of the two characters do not force them to abandon Phillotson's plan completely, but to return to the rural community of Marygreen, where they still could open the school. All three women possess the ability to educate their future children about the more autonomous approaches to life they once pursued. Dinah, Lizzie, and Sue each challenge rusticism through sympathetic detachment, mutual aid, and a more androgynous way of living, respectively, and can pass these values onto their children. All three women still challenge rusticism at the close of each novel, but do so from *within* the domestic realm that the separate-spheres doctrine deemed "decent" and

"safe" for women. All three women likely choose to marry, in part, out of their love for children, but also, in part, out of a desire to play an active role in educating their children.

In their roles as mothers or potential mothers, these three women illustrate that the education of future generations is the best method for challenging the dichotomous thinking of rusticism when the values that they can pass onto their children emerge out of a confluence of rural and urban perspectives. Eliot makes a case for sympathetic detachment in *Adam Bede* by endorsing a balance between the pre-modern communal connections of rural communities and the modern trend toward detachment in urban societies. In *Our Mutual Friend*, Dickens advocates for mutual aid when he stresses that human and nonhuman animals are much more alike than most Victorians wanted to believe. Hardy contends in *Jude the Obscure* that a combination of a manly life in nature and the effeminizing effects of the city is necessary for rural people to endure the changes wrought during the nineteenth century. Hardy's perspective highlights the main argument of my dissertation: rusticism can only be challenged through a combination of rural and urban perspectives. I take this stance because the impulse to divide rural and urban perspectives and view them not only as dissimilar but completely opposed to each other is what makes rusticist thinking so problematic. Thus, in the Introduction, I offer extrapolitansim as a way for rural and urban perspectives to be joined.

I also mention in the introduction that the study of rural and urban interaction can and should encompass a wide variety of people, cultures, authors, and texts from a whole range of places and time periods but that, due to the constraints of a reasonable scope for a project of this length, I choose to focus specifically on nineteenth-century Britain because of the sweeping changes the English countryside underwent during that period.

Logically, then, I conclude by examining the final two decades of the nineteenth century when the economic depression and working class desertion of the countryside reached its height. I also make arguments in the third chapter and this conclusion about the types of individuals who could weather those changes. So, the question remains, have distinctly rural ways of life survived? Furthermore, can distinctly rural ways life exist or is the relationship between the country and the city confluent, rather than dichotomous, enough to prevent such a possibility? The repeal of the Corn Laws shows that the survival of distinctly rural ways of life is not possible in any comprehensive kind of way. In a manner somewhat reminiscent of the postcolonial relationship between a former colony and the colonizing country, the countryside was distinctly altered, and rural and urban people, practices, and values became intermingled, to an irreversible extent during the nineteenth century. However certain rural values or practices, such as mutual aid, which are not as widely recognized as the ones promoted by rusticism, such as Maypole dances, feudalistic class structures, and harvest celebrations, and introduce a degree of diversity to discussions of the countryside, have survived. The survival of these nuanced aspects of rural life is what Sue Bridehead's sacrifice in her return to Phillotson makes possible. Sue does not just ensure her survival when she remarries Phillotson, but also that she can pass her extrapolitan values onto her children. The best challenge one can pose to rusticism is a way to mediate its effects, and that is what Dinah Morris, Lizzie Hexam, and Sue Bridehead achieve when they make it possible for future generations to learn about the diverse nuances of rural cultures.

I hope that my work throughout *Interrogating Rusticism* also makes this possible. I also hope that my work reveals that the topic of rural and urban interaction encompasses

all sorts of important issues, such as gender roles, the plight of nonhuman animals, and the effect of urbanization on the environment of the natural world. My goal is for my work throughout *Interrogating Rusticism* to inspire readers to seek out nuanced, diverse, and varied aspects of rural life when they study literature, history, philosophy, and the world around them.

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