

THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

THE FANTASY OF VICTORIAN CROSS-DRESSING

By

STACEY G. ABBOTT

A thesis submitted to the
Department of English
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Degree Awarded:
Spring Semester, 2004

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of Stacey G. Abbott defended on March 19, 2004.

Barry Faulk
Professor Directing Thesis

John Fenstermaker
Committee Member

Hunt Hawkins
Committee Member

Approved:

Bruce Boehrer, Director of Graduate Studies, English Department

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
1. REFELCTIONS OF IMPERIALISM AND GENDER IN <i>MARY BARTON</i> AND <i>TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES</i>	11
2. CLASS AND THE FUNCTIONS OF CRIMINALITY IN <i>GREAT</i> <i>EXPECTATIONS</i> AND SHERLOCK HOLMES	23
3. HEART OF DARKNESS AND HEART OF ENGLAND: IMPERIALISM IN <i>JANE EYRE</i> AND <i>HEART OF DARKNESS</i>	35
CONCLUSION	47
BIBLIOGRAPHY	50
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	54

ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the manner in which imperialism affected race, gender, and class in Victorian England. In Victorian literature, the different periods of imperialism are evident within the literature—early imperialism literature shows how the English were aware of imperialism, but also how it was considered to be an issue usually outside of England, and New imperialism literature shows how England became extremely involved in world affairs. The two stages also exhibit varying degrees of imperialism and conquering both inside the country of England and outside. In order to cope with this issue, many people cross-dressed (dressed, thought, or behaved) in a manner that was not consistent with their own gender, class, or race. Using theory from Anne McClintock as a springboard, I link global imperialism to the internal need within England to control its own people. I trace this phenomenon through early imperialism works Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, and Dickens's *Great Expectations*, and New imperialism works Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and several of Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mysteries.

INTRODUCTION

The Victorian age was an incredible time of land expansion, technological growth, and was also when England established itself as a ruler of the world. Today, in popular view, this period is glossed over with a focus on the lives of the aristocracy: vague images of fancy dresses, petticoats, and top hats; strict manners; and ample leisure time. But, in fact, there was a great deal more going on than well-dressed people going for walks in the park. Social unrest seemed to mark the period from beginning to end—from the appalling conditions of the poor in the industrial towns to the fight for women’s independence and right to vote to even England’s territories with revolts in Jamaica and India. For many, the Victorian age was anything but peace and tranquility.

A great deal of this unrest comes from the Victorian practices of British imperialism and colonialism. In modern times, these are two distinct terms, with no one without the other, and, for the purposes of this thesis, I will be using the term imperialism more. While today imperialism seems to refer more to political and economic domination, expansion, and power, colonialism refers more to either an addition of land to the empire to be settled by colonists or to be exploited for the land’s resources (including its people) (Young 27, 19). While colonialism seems to fall underneath the umbrella of imperialism, imperialism refers to the ideology behind the expansion of several major European countries during this time, including England, which is what this thesis is focused on. In control of colonies over more than a quarter of the known earth, England ruled the world...and thought it had every right to do so. With the help of the British navy, the Empire became a world-dominating power, whose ideal was held long after Britain lost a great deal of its power to rebellions, lack of trade, and loss of control.

From about 1830-1870, imperialism¹ was present in English society, but there wasn’t a great urgency or desire to conquer other countries associated with it. English citizens were aware of the other colonies their own country possessed, and politicians actually chose to take a non-aggressive approach to acquiring other colonies and preferred to concern themselves with the ones England already possessed. Colonization was mostly used as a form of population control and a way to export “undesirables” from the British mainland (Young 22). British citizens were aware of the “dark races” and had “[r]acist theories of history...well before the development of social Darwinism” (Brantlinger 21). “New Imperialism” was put into motion around 1870 or so, and suddenly a rivalry to hold the most land and most valuable areas began to heat up. Facing competition from Germany, Belgium, the United States, and others,

¹ I’ll refer to this period of imperialism as “old imperialism,” as opposed to “new imperialism.”

England quickly began to make it a priority to assimilate new lands, especially in Africa. Imperialism at this point can be explained in terms of Social Darwinism, whereby “merely...occupying or controlling most of the globe,...the European nations had demonstrated that they were the fittest to survive,” and the other nations/races were lumped together as being the weaker (Watt 80). Also, it was believed that “the dominance of the white races was itself the result of biological superiority” and was a quantifiable scientific phenomenon, instead of being a mere prejudice (Watt 80, Mitchell 276). Imperialism, for all the negative points we see now, was then seen as a “good” and patriotic thing for British society to promote and support. The popular mythology of imperialism was fueled by the heroic stories of missionaries and explorers and was so ingrained that May 24 was declared “Empire Day” (Mitchell 273-74). Imperialism would create “a new British national identity that would encompass all people of Anglo-Saxon descent scattered all over the world” (Young 35). Kitzan mentions that in the British Victorian imagination, the British empire was very large—larger than what actually existed; it was also non-urban and “full of space” and the “exuberances and the extremes of nature” (3). In spite of the appreciation and fascination that the Victorians had with these new and strange places, they believed Britain was always the most moral and correct place on the globe. They saw their government, legal system, science, and religion to be superior to anywhere else in the world, and colonized peoples were expected to take on British ideals, practices, and beliefs in order to stop being “primitive” and to become “civilized.” Young agrees with this, where the “idea of imperialism, and the notion of a civilizing mission, presupposed racial superiority, for the fundamental difference between civilization and savagery that justified and required the civilizing mission assumed a basic differentiation between white and non-white races...(32-3).

Socially, Victorians had a strong sense of duty, work, and morality. They believed that a person could move up in life due to hard work and determination, and whatever problems arose in their path should be welcomed as challenges to be conquered. Hard work itself was seen as a moral virtue, and “idle hands” were thought to be wasting time when they could be doing something useful. “Respectable” people had clean clothes, a clean home, and were polite, honest, and thrifty (Mitchell 259-264). Both men and women had their own roles to play to be the ideal (although this ideal was rarely achieved). The nuclear family, consisting of a working father, a stay-at-home mother, and children, was idealized at this time, especially by the middle class (Mitchell 141). A good gentleman had good manners, was independent, and would follow the moral and correct path. Family men had legal and economic authority over the family, while it was thought that if a woman fulfilled her part correctly as the moral voice of the family, teacher of the children, and Christian model for the community, she could keep her husband from wanting to leave the house for comfort elsewhere (Mitchell 266).

One of the factions of the Anglican Church, the evangelicals, helped inspire another trait that spread to much of Victorian society—that of reform. They “performed works of charity both as a moral obligation and as a means of bringing other people to Christ” (Mitchell 252). Believing that they had the means

to liberate society of sin by doing good works on earth, evangelicals helped to abolish slavery, establish institutions for the mentally and physically disabled, establish schools, and raise money for many different humanitarian causes (Mitchell 252). Missionary work was very strongly supported in order to help civilize foreign societies and to spread the word of God. Women were instrumental in using their abilities, time, and effort to help these causes achieve their success (Mitchell 256). However, these reformations didn't always have positive results.

While it was thought that anyone who did not follow these prevailing beliefs of the day, which included "Duty, Restraint and Work," were not good, true English people, the ideology is more complex than that: those that were different, based on class, race, and even sex, were considered to be open for reform by those in power (Watt 85). I believe that imperialism is closely related to the Victorian desire to reform, or at least is an aftereffect of imperialism², as far as the need goes to reform a foreign people. How is a "foreign people" defined? Anything not male, not white, and not upper class, as is shown by the imperialistic language in the literature of this era. Indeed, many of the attitudes of the day seemed to be turned to "conquering" those of the lower class, including women, by keeping them in their "rightful" place through laws and social norms. This type of "internal" imperialism (defined as imperialism existing within the country of England itself) is prevalent throughout much of Victorian literature and stretches through the entire Victorian period, right alongside "external" imperialism (defined as a country, such as England, conquering another country and exploiting their resources and people).

The function of cross-dressing is a point that I would like to explore and develop more in certain characters in each chapter and connect to imperialism. Cross-dressing can be defined as where a person dresses, behaves, or thinks in the manner of a person in a different station of life, gender, or race other than their own. Part of this phenomenon includes "passing," in which a person tries to "pass" as a race other than their own. Cross-dressing is a "historical phenomenon," and has its roots in the early modern era when the sumptuary laws were enacted (McClintock 174). These laws called for a person to be visibly recognized by what social rank they were from by wearing certain types and colors of clothing, and the laws became a way to enforce the "policing of social boundaries" (McClintock 174). This policing could be a forefather of the Victorian need to reform, and indeed, the obsession with dress was carried over into the Victorian period—for one to dress according to their class meant that they understood and acknowledged their station in life. If a person dressed or appeared as one of a different class/race/gender they were born into, considered doing so, or, in the case of class, did not come about this dress or appearance by acceptable means (such as inheritance, marriage, or hard, productive work that would allow an upward movement in the social scale), they were indulging in seditious or rebellious behavior and were even considered a possible threat to society. And yet this phenomenon still occurred.

² Brantlinger picks up on this, as well, saying that imperialism "served as a reservoir of utopian images and alternatives that helped energize reform impulses at home" (28).

One specific example of cross-dressing is the relationship between Arthur Munby and Hannah Cullwick (McClintock 133,137). Munby was a lawyer who enlisted the services of Cullwick, a housemaid, and proceeded to have a clandestine love affair with her. Both indulged in cross-dressing and fetishes. While cross-dressing usually refers to someone dressing up as a person of the opposite sex, Munby and Cullwick took this a great deal further—for instance, Munby photographed Cullwick cross-dressed in many different ways, such as an upper class lady, a farm woman, an angel, a man, and a male African slave. McClintock stresses that Munby was not merely taking advantage of Cullwick, but both indulged in various desires—both Munby and Cullwick got something out of their experiences with cross-dressing and fetish. The fantasy of cross-dressing appeared to satisfy them in a way that keeping strictly to race, class, and gender lines did not. Munby enjoyed the illusion that he had complete control over Cullwick, and Cullwick both enjoyed indulging Munby in his illusions and also breaking societal illusions by masquerading as both an upper class lady and a maid (McClintock 180).

While external imperialism and internal imperialism existed in different physical spaces, both were in a symbiotic relationship with each other, and this relationship in turn created a rigid structure and ideology of class, gender, and race within the English Empire. Although there was the sense that everyone had a “proper place” in English society, this ideology in function was not so clear cut, as the cross-dressing that occurred throughout the entire Victorian era could be seen as a reaction and rebellion against the constraints that imperialism placed upon the strict structures of gender, class, and race, with different results depending on the form of imperialism in place at the time. In what I will call “Early” imperialism novels, this rebellion is usually very subtly marked—the categories of gender, class, and race are tested, but is usually only allowed through socially acceptable means (such as marriage, hard work, or inheritance). Cross-dressing is usually acted out in order to achieve upward social mobility. In what I will call the “Later” imperialism novels, the rebellion is more evident because the lines between race, class, and gender become a bit more indistinct and uncertain—cross-dressing seems a bit more recurrent or at least seems to take place more blatantly in both socially acceptable and unacceptable ways. Those that cross-dressed crossed the lines of race, class, or gender, or even a combination of two of those categories (such as class and gender). Cross-dressing was more prevalent in the Later imperialism era because England was changing, being exposed to more and more different cultures, languages, and people; the emerging of the middle class; and new technology. In the midst of all this new information and knowledge, lines of structure began to blur. At this point, cross-dressing was not necessarily acted out in order to achieve upward social mobility, but in order to adapt to society by socially moving up *or* down or even staying at the same level.

Central to my argument is the thesis of Anne McClintock’s *Imperial Leather*, who contends that “imperialism and the invention of race were fundamental aspects of Western, industrial modernity” and the “invention” of races was essential “not only to the self-definition of the middle class but also to

the policing of the 'dangerous' classes: the working class, the Irish, Jews, prostitutes, feminist, gays and lesbians, criminals, the militant crowd and so on" (McClintock 5). She mentions how women were considered to be undeveloped, immature, and pre-evolutionary beings, and how they were more or less children for the fully developed man to preside over. "Race" was a term used in many different ways during this time—"sometimes as synonymous with 'species,' sometimes with 'culture,' sometimes with 'nation,' sometimes to denote biological ethnicity or sub-groups within national groupings: the English 'race' compared, say, with the 'Irish' race" (McClintock 52). Social classes began to be increasingly referred to as "races," and the undesirable "races" were seen as having some inherent biological "degeneration of mind and body" and "could thus be cordoned off as biological and 'contagious,' rather than as social groups" (McClintock 48). In an echo of Social Darwinism, many believed that "[p]overty and social distress were figured as biological flaws, an organic pathology in the body politic that posed a chronic threat to the riches, health and power of the 'imperial race'" (McClintock 48). Alongside with the poor and other ethnicities, white women were also seen to be one of these biological "flaws," "akin in physiognomy to black people and apes" (McClintock 54). In sum, all women, those of the lower classes, and those of races other than white seemed to be lumped together in the eyes of white men—not necessarily were they all on equal level, but all were fair game to be controlled.

McClintock's takes her argument only so far in the realm of literature³, and I've only found partial arguments that address ideas of internal colonialism and apply it to literature. I intend to use McClintock's argument as a springboard to take a closer look at specific texts throughout the period because I feel that there is more to this issue than simply focusing upon women and imperialism, race and imperialism, or class and imperialism; it involves all three—race, class, and gender—and how they relate to imperialism to create a more complete picture of this period. In light of the strong relationships between these three categories, it is difficult to try to separate one from the other without at least acknowledging and discussing the relation to the other. To try to separate them into completely different categories without acknowledging the others does not give a comprehensive depiction of Victorian society—there always seems to be a part of the puzzle missing. To look at this through literature makes a great deal of sense—literature always has reflections of a society's thoughts within it. Spivak says that the "role of literature in the production of cultural representation should not be ignored," and, in reading Victorian literature, I wish to look beyond the obvious to show how those that usually didn't have a voice coped and reacted to strong imperialist ideology within Victorian society by cross-dressing (269). Gallagher believes that, as with all other aspects of English cultural life, "narrative fiction, especially the novel, underwent basic changes whenever it became a part of the discourse over industrialism," and I believe it is important to choose a broad range of texts from the early and late Victorian period, written by and about both men and women, to show exactly how pervasive and persistent the ideas of

³ She studies some literature, such as Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, but also focuses a great deal on Victorian photographs, advertisements, and propaganda.

imperialism, both types, are within the literature of this time, as well as the subtle differences between fiction written during Early imperialism and Late imperialism (xi).

The literature I will focus on includes Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*; Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*; Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "A Scandal in Bohemia," "The Speckled Band," and "The Man With the Twisted Lip;" Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*; and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The chapters are laid out according to a shared subject and different dates in the period. Linking earlier texts with later ones will help to prove my point that while the presence of imperialism in the texts share many qualities and these qualities do not change very much, there were differences between the stages and times of Victorian imperialism. One chapter each will focus on women, class, or race, and each will discuss and connect the presence of all three categories (which are usually not thought of together) in order to show the enveloping presence of imperialism and the reaction of cross-dressing.

Mary Barton and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* both involve young women going through changes within their own class and the manner in which they deal with those changes. *Mary Barton*, whose main character is a young, lower class woman of the same name, discusses dangers of certain ways of cross-dressing to young women, such as prostitution and not accepting their station, and also discusses the failures of the government to help the poor in England who were in dire need at that time. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* showcases internal imperialism by portraying the exploits of Tess, also a young woman of the lower classes, and the many complications of the functionality of ancestry in a world where wealth is no longer judged by property and the problems of cross-dressing by moving and marrying into different class spheres. The two novels discuss at great length the social and physical difficulties, such as the tenuous hold they had on respectability and their strange dual status within society, that a woman faced during this period.

This strange and dual social status of British women during the Victorian period has been well established by many historians. The stereotypical Victorian middle-class woman had

her dreamy torpor was ruffled only by hysterical ailments, swooning spells and a plague of obstructive servants. Frigid, neurasthenic and ornamental; wilting in the airless hothouse of Victorian domesticity; fretfully preoccupied by trifles; given to irrationality and hysteria; languishing in ennui; incapable of constancy, decision or stature (McClintock 160).

On the one hand, women were fragile "nonentities"—they had few legal rights, and it was believed they needed to be "protected" from the harsh realities of the real world. Men would go away from the home to work in the factory or the like, while the women stayed at home and kept to their home sphere. Women had the reputation of being in need of protection and shelter because they were believed to be so weak and frail.

Several things led to the ideology of women's fragility. One of the most obvious reasons for weakness and frailty was the demand of beauty of the times. Women were encouraged not to laugh in order to prevent wrinkles, ate arsenic

for a “frail appearance,” wore gloves with cold cream to bed for soft, white hands, and bathed frequently (Haller and Haller 143). According to many physicians, the worst beauty problem was the corset. Doctors deplored the use of these, though that didn’t seem to stop the popularity of them. Corsets contributed to a multitude of problems, including lung problems (many women would lace the corset so tightly that it would nearly cause their lungs to overlap), childbirth and menstruation problems, and fatigue (Haller and Haller 144). Another reason for women’s fragility involves the health standards of the time. Some people believed that since women were supposed to be delicate, strong appetites and energy was not “ladylike,” so they were encouraged to eat little (Mitchell 189). A woman was supposed to give the best food to men and boys in the family, often not taking any herself, and her nutrition suffered as a consequence. A common complaint from women of all classes was feeling tired, and some were found to be severely anemic due to a lack of foods with iron, either due to availability or custom. Women usually ate chicken or fish because red meat was thought to be a “masculine” food (Mitchell 190-91). Toward the end of the century, it was realized that exercise contributed to a healthy lifestyle. Women were then supposed to possess energy and “vigor,” but this ideal still clashed with the old one that a woman should be delicate (Mitchell 192).

A woman’s “frailty” also affected another aspect of her life: her education. Many physicians were convinced that women could not handle college work, as it would cause them to have a nervous breakdown. Too much work would not bode well for women, as was evidenced by their smaller brain weight. One doctor surveyed 187 girls in high school—one hundred thirty-seven of them complained frequently of headache problems, which he took as “evidence...of their inability to cope with the complexities of intellectual life beyond a minimum level” (Haller and Haller 37).

Women were also discouraged from exercise. They were to avoid too much excitement, “stimulating reading,” and an inappropriate diet (Haller and Haller 35). Though they could get outdoor exercise, horseback and bicycle riding were not accepted. Much rest was always prescribed, and women were even warned against excessive bridge playing. The introduction of the bicycle for exercise and recreation in the late 1800s was seen as a miracle from physicians who were against the corset and an indecent machine by many of the public. Much scandal was caused by the change in women’s wardrobe (higher skirts, etc.), the concern over women masturbating while riding, and the worry as to whether or not women could handle the rigorous exercise (Haller and Haller 36).

Society viewed marriage as a woman’s natural and inevitable role in that “it satisfied her instinctual needs, preserved the species, provided appropriate duties, and protected her from the shocks and dangers of the rude, competitive world” (Mitchell 266). It was ideally the culmination of womanhood that determined her class, economic situation, duties, place of residence...and kept her from having any legal rights at all (Mitchell 267). Whatever income, property, or rights that they had before marriage disappeared after marriage. They also had no rights or custody over their children. A deed of settlement, similar to today’s prenuptial agreement, could set aside money that could be kept

independent from the husband in case he died or went bankrupt. Divorce was extremely difficult to obtain and women were usually extremely ashamed to have had to go through one (Mitchell 103-06).

On the other hand, women had the important job of maintaining the home “sphere” and providing an atmosphere of comfort for the husband and children. According to Haller and Haller, women rejected their role as sexual beings in order to receive “personal freedom” (102). Gordon agrees with this, in that “women promoted the notion of female purity as a means of empowerment, allowing them to claim a moral superiority to men (8). Women believed that they were “less lustful than men,” and that they could use their “powerlessness” to gain power (for women’s rights, rights in the home, etc.) (Gordon 9). However, women also faced problems with their sexuality they tried to deny: they feared sex due to lack of sex education, restrictions against birth control, and the problems of conception and childbirth. Though cutting sex off in their lives gave many women the freedom they desired in the “home circle,” it also led to many women becoming psychologically affected: many became “frigid” in their marriages, leading to the high incidence of hysterics and poor health (Haller and Haller 102). The good woman/bad woman (Madonna/whore) dichotomy was created: “[w]orking-class women were figured as biologically driven to lechery and excess; upper class women were naturally indifferent to the deliriums of the flesh...The Victorian splitting of women into whores and Madonnas, nuns and prostitutes has its origins, then, not in universal archetypes, but in the class structure of the household” (McClintock 86-7). There were those who followed the path of life as the nurturer of the home and those who veered from this path; for proper Englishwomen, there were no other pleasant alternatives, regardless of class or situation.

Great Expectations and the Sherlock Holmes short stories are, for the most part, “city stories” that work with young men in London. *Great Expectations* tells a story of a young man of the lower classes who comes into the “great expectations” that a benefactor has allowed him. After being exposed to the treatment of those in Newgate and to the newly emerging middle class, he valiantly tries to cross-dress and learn the manners and etiquette of the upper class (as well as to win the heart of an upper class woman), only to find his hopes dashed when he discovers a mere criminal backs his finances. The Sherlock Holmes stories follow the mysteries that Holmes finds himself involved in during the latter part of the Victorian period. The stories show a theme of the dangers of living abroad and of those who are from abroad. Some of them focus on the lower class and the incongruity between it and the middle/upper classes (as shown by cross-dressing), while another focuses on *the woman*, Irene Adler—the only woman to foil Holmes (while she was cross-dressed as a man, no less). Both *Great Expectations* and the Sherlock Holmes mysteries show a great spectrum of the lifestyles and people of all the different classes, from the very poor to the very rich, and portray the difficulty and unease, socially speaking, of moving from one class to another.

The attitudes toward women and their “separateness” from the public world can also be linked to how Victorians viewed the lower classes as being of a

different type race from the other classes. It was thought that women had completely different needs and desires (or lack of desires) from men, and it was also thought that the upper and middle classes had the same types of differences from the poor. For example, people of the upper class believed that the working class could handle more physical labor and hardships than they could, although, of course, their health would eventually be ruined “from long hours, poor nutrition, and the physical stress of beginning full-time employment before their bodies had matured” (Mitchell 190). Indeed, many believed, when it was realized that people from the lower classes were shorter than those from the upper class, that this was “an inherited (‘racial’) difference rather than a consequence of nutrition” and a lack of protein and fat (Mitchell 122). Interestingly, the poor also seemed to have a dual status like women. Public attitudes towards the poor vacillated from extreme to the other: at one point in the period, Victorians felt that the poor were morally suspect, while at a later point, the poor were to be pitied and assisted (Himmelfarb 11). Indeed, one opinion never seems to be very far from the other—Himmelfarb states that many Victorians felt the compassionate need to “contribute to the moral improvement of the poor—[or] at the very least, that it [the poor] not have a deleterious moral effect” upon the upper classes (7).

Jane Eyre and *Heart of Darkness* both focus on the conditions and consequences of internal and external imperialism, as well as race. *Jane Eyre* involves Jane, a poor orphan girl who becomes educated and is eventually employed as a working governess, which was an emerging field of service for women during the period. After turning down the opportunity to work as a missionary’s wife in India, she marries above her station to an upper class gentleman. The story portrays a great deal of cross-dressing, race and otherwise, from Jane moving through several different classes to the Creole Bertha moving down the evolutionary chart into an animal. The majority of *Heart of Darkness* is located in Africa and takes a close look at the effects and pointlessness of “foreign” (i.e. non-English) imperialism through English eyes. It touches on the distinct differences between the strength and savagery of the African Queen and the frailty and uselessness of the well-off European Intended. Kurtz is the ultimate cross-dresser in this story since he has “gone native” and turned into a “savage” due to his stay in the Congo. The two stories discuss race in terms of nationality, physical color, and class.

As mentioned above, race was a complicated term to define during this era, to say the least. Mitchell suggests that in the early Victorian period, race was used to define anyone that the English felt they were better than (such as the Irish and the French) (276). Later, studies in anthropology and biology strove to prove differences of race through physical and mental characteristics. Facial and body shape, color, hair, etc., along with phrenology (the study of the shape and bumps of the human head), somehow led to the conclusion that the “Anglo-Saxon race” was the most evolved in humanity. It was also thought, especially with Robert Knox’s *Races of Men: A Fragment*, that each race can be categorized and each one can remain “pure and separate, unalterable and distinct from all other” (Meyer 15). This attitude “could lead to a parental feeling of responsibility for the health, education, and supervision of others—yet it was a

clear and abiding racism that grew from a deep-seated assumption of superiority” (Mitchell 276).

Omnipresent over all the stories are the insinuations of superiority, power, and control by a few over a great many others. Imperialism was not something that existed wholly and away from England: its philosophy influenced government decisions, education, charity, crime, religion, the economy, and the arts—including, of course, literature. In short, imperialism saturated the structure of England. Gender, class, and race have lines that run throughout all of these stories and show the effects of this ubiquitous ideology, as well as the ways of rebellion, through cross-dressing, against it.

CHAPTER ONE

REFLECTIONS OF IMPERIALISM AND GENDER IN *MARY BARTON* AND *TESS OF THE D'UBERVILLES*

Written decades apart, Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848) and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) appear at first glance to not have a great deal in common. *Mary Barton* is well known as one of the most descriptive and graphic social protest novels of the period, and *Tess* considers the role of class in the new age of modernism. However, it is through the female main characters that a clear picture of imperialism, internal and external, Early and Later, becomes clear, as well as the effects of imperialism upon class, race, and especially gender. Cross-dressing occurs in both novels, but the stage of imperialism seems to affect the specific ways and the frequency that this occurs.

Both novels situate themselves very clearly in their imperialistic stage by the representation of places and people outside of England. The external imperialism in both novels is represented almost vaguely by the "colonies." The colonies represent two conflicting things—fear of the unknown and escape from the present life (whether that is as a mental fantasy or as a literal escape to another country). In *Mary Barton*, Will's stories of mermaids and flying fish and Job's foreign specimens, such as the scorpion, lend color and inspiration to an otherwise dreary existence as Manchester's poor. The slight conflict between Will and Job concerning the existence of certain creatures shows the diverging ways people of the time looked upon the unknown—some see it through their imagination, and others see it in a more modern way through science. In this instance, foreign places seem to denote adventure and discovery. When Mary goes to Liverpool to save Jem, it becomes clearer that the novel takes place during Early imperialism. In the scenes at the docks, it is evident that England is a part of the global community. Although Mary has been aware of England's colonies and, especially through Will and Job, has been exposed to some strange alien wonders, she is impressed by the number and size of the ships in port that are not protecting England at the moment, "but telling of the distant lands, spicy or frozen, that sent to that mighty mart for their comforts or their luxuries" (Gaskell 280). The entire scene is foreign, strange, and frightening to Mary—"[t]he cries of the sailors, the variety of languages used by the passers-by, and the entire novelty of the sight compared with anything which Mary had ever seen...made her feel most helpless and forlorn" (Gaskell 280). She even refers to the sailors as a "new *race* of men," since she had never been exposed to any before (Gaskell 280, my emphasis). By the end of the novel, though, Mary, along with Jem and Mrs. Wilson, become a part of this new race, go to Canada in order

escape the prejudice against Jem in the job market, and make a new life. Interestingly, Mary's experience could be compared to the ordinary English person's knowledge of imperialism and the colonies through the Victorian period: Mary is at first aware of, but not very touched by, foreign influence, then she becomes more aware by the atmosphere in Liverpool, and then she herself becomes a colonist to become anonymous in Canada.

Tess, as the Later imperialism novel, has an even stronger external imperialist presence. As geographical places, the "colonies" are exhibited throughout the novel and refer to Australia, Brazil, the United States, or Canada. The purpose of Angel's presence at the Crick's farm is to learn farming, dairy, and sheep-herding in order to practice them in "the Colonies, America, or at home" (Hardy 92). Both Tess and Angel see the colonies as a place of escape. Tess believes that as long as the two of them "go away, a very long distance, hundreds of miles from these parts," such as "[o]n an Australian upland or Texan plain," then "no ghost of the past [will] reach there" (Hardy 163, 191). Angel also sees the colonies in this manner. When he is exposed to advertisements for farming in Brazil, and since "[l]and was offered there on exceptionally advantageous terms," Brazil somewhat attracted him as a new idea (Hardy 204). He assumes that if Tess lives with him there, the change of scenery and customs would make her more socially acceptable. While he didn't initially plan to go to Brazil, "in a fit of desperation," he went since "the Brazilian movement among the English agriculturists having by chance coincided with his desire to escape from his past experience" (Hardy 267). While this plan of escape and anonymity works for Mary Barton and Jem and gives them a happy ending, in the time of Later imperialism, the colonies are not always seen as safe havens, and it is not so easy for the characters in *Tess* to escape to or survive in them.

In fact, these foreign paradises show more of their dark side and difficulties in *Tess* than in *Mary Barton*—Mary's flight and new life in Canada is barely touched upon, and it is assumed that she lives "happily ever after." In *Tess*, before Angel even left for Brazil, he had heard "discouraging reports of some farm-labourers who had emigrated thither and returned home within the twelve months" (Hardy 208). Indeed, Hardy seems to lay some blame on the Brazilian government. Angel is apparently like many of the other "agricultural labourers who had come out to the country in his wake, dazzled by representations of easy independence, [and] had suffered, died, and wasted away" (Hardy 267). He has so many bad experiences in Brazil that he gives up on the idea of farming there. By the time he returns to England, the effects of the trip have affected Angel mentally and physically because he looks like a "skeleton" and as if he had aged twenty years (Hardy 290).

The extremes of Angel and Tess's situations (and temperature) are apparent, since she "thought of her husband in some vague warm clime on the other side of the globe, while she was here in the cold" at the farm in Flintcomb-Ash (Hardy 217). While working in the fields one day, Marian and Tess see "strange birds from behind the north pole" (Hardy 226). These birds are oddly silent and are

gaunt spectral creatures with tragical eyes—eyes which had witnessed scenes of cataclysmal horror in accessible polar regions, of a magnitude such as no human being had ever conceived, in curdling temperatures that no man could endure; which had beheld the crash of icebergs and the slide of snow-hills by the shooting light of the Aurora; been half blinded by the whirl of colossal storms and terraqueous distortions; and retain the expression of feather that such scenes had engendered (Hardy 226).

After describing the horrors and hardship that Tess has to go through in Flintcomb-Ash, it pales in comparison to foreign lands of the “tragical” birds. It’s almost as if the lands are beyond comprehension and, therefore, dangerous to humankind. And yet these birds have come to roost for a while in England—yet another foreign country. Tess has no wish to travel to foreign lands—she travels in England only to stay away from those that know her and to find work. Perhaps Tess’s working in the fields can be seen as her own attempt to try to colonize the land. Indeed, the way that she moves around a great deal, emigrating from town to town, and the way that Hardy describes each area she goes to as being distinctly different in location, physical description, people’s accents, etc. is all like moving to different countries. Unlike Mary who emigrates to create a new and happy life, Tess still winds up unhappy wherever she goes, and the narrator seems to reinforce the idea that “foreign-ness” should not be experienced and that straying from home only brings misery.

The parents of both Mary and Tess play very important roles in their lives and also help to show the effects of class upon gender. For Mary, who entered her teenage/vulnerable years without a mother, John Barton serves as a way to show the tragedy and humanity of the poor. The narrator makes sure to point out that many of the poor, John Barton included, are out of work not because they are lazy, but because they can’t get work. In fact, John will not take charity because he is able to work. Special attention is given to Barton and the conditions around him in order to focus on his downward spiral to desperate murderer and opium addict. He was “slightly made” with a “wan, colourless face,” and “there was almost a stunted look about him”⁴ (Gaskell 3). The sickness and death of his coworker Davenport is incorporated into the story to show that such things as the closing of mills had extremely detrimental effects on individuals and their families. The incident also shows Barton’s humanity, practicality, and willingness to help others since he feeds the mother “with the useful skill of a working man” (Gaskell 56). Unfortunately, Barton’s condition gets worse. A petition is sent to the government and is struck down because the masters think little of the poor—“[n]o one thought of treating the workmen as brethren and friends, and openly, clearly, as appealing to reasonable men” (Gaskell 174). Barton starts to have mental problems, begins to use opium, and even once abused Mary. He has lost his hope in the idea that change will occur, complains a great deal about the upper class, and even makes references to the upper class using the lower class as slaves. As someone who has led a hard life and even seen other die because they cannot offer proper medical care, he is angered by “those who wore finer clothes, and eat better food, and had more

⁴ perhaps an allusion to the poor being a different race—see intro.

money in their pockets, kept him at arm's length, and cared not whether his heart was sorry or glad; whether he lived or died—whether he was bound for heaven or hell” (Gaskell 372). The conflict is that John cannot function within his own class (i.e. live without pain and suffering), but he will also not cross-dress in any way to get a job or money. It is under these circumstances that Mary wished to rescue her father from by marrying Harry Carson and thereby moving them up in class to be more comfortable.

Gaskell tries to show the state of the different classes, especially the poor, in mid-1800s in Manchester. She describes the poor, such as John Barton, with dignity to raise sympathy for them and to show how they are just regular people who deserve a break. *Mary Barton* highlights the Victorian obsession with dirt a great deal, but Gaskell makes it clear that the poor are not responsible for their dirtiness, which was an important point to get across since “many Victorians considered the omnipresent coincidence of filth and poverty evidence that the poor chose to be dirty” (Freeland 802). Indeed, a great deal of social reform, both in charity and other, more forceful ways, was directed towards the poor to help “clean them up” both physically and morally, even though they could not help their conditions, (such as how people got arrested for emptying chamber pots into the streets) (Freeland 805). McClintock links the Victorian need for further rigid gender roles and the fear of “racial contamination” with the poor— “[c]ertainly the sanitation syndromes were in part genuine attempts to combat the ‘diseases of poverty,’ but they also served more deeply to rationalize and ritualize the policing of boundaries between the Victorian ruling elite and the ‘contagious’ classes, both in the imperial metropolises and in the colonies” (47). Freeland argues it was radical of Gaskell to suggest that a dirty person doesn’t necessarily mean that they are morally corrupt and/or a criminal and that dirt can be a sign of being in the proper place in the home and of being humble (810). McClintock further links the dirt obsession to both class and race and concludes that due to influence from prejudice toward the Irish,

...*domestic degeneracy* [where the home and its family are dirty, unkempt, etc.] was widely used to mediate the manifold contradictions in imperial hierarchy—not only with respect to the Irish but also to the other ‘white negroes’: Jews, prostitutes, the working-class, domestic workers, and so on, where skin color as a marker of power was imprecise and inadequate (53).

The clash between the classes and dirt is exemplified in the comparison between Jem and Harry. Jem serves as a foil to Harry, since Jem is working class (and is usually presented as physically dirty) and Harry is middle class (and is presented as clean). There are several recurring incidents about the discrepancy between Jem’s appearance and his actions. The narrator presents Jem as a heroic man, who saves two men in the factory fire, especially since he is able to fight “animal instinct of self-preservation” and not drop one of the “helpless, inanimate” men he rescued (Gaskell 49). Harry, it can be assumed, as the lazy son of a rich man, wouldn’t have been so brave. Also, it never occurs to Harry to look beyond Jem’s appearance. He is convinced that it would be “impossible” that Mary could love Jem over him since “[n]o woman with eyes

could choose the one when the other wooed,” and it “was Hyperion to a Satyr” (Gaskell 169). To play off of this idea of comparing mythological species, McClintock discusses Engel’s ideas that the lower class was a new “degenerate race” completely apart from the upper class (43). Harry believes he is of a better class, is better looking, and is the better man. During their confrontation, Harry tries to leave Jem, but “Jem put his black, working right hand upon his arm to detain him. The haughty young man shook it off, and with his glove pretended to brush away the *sooty contamination* that might be left upon his light great-coat sleeve” (Gaskell 170, my emphasis). It is as if Harry thinks of Jem (and perhaps of the poor in general) as a disease. At Jem’s trial, it is supposed to be apparent to all “that the handsome, bright, gay, rich young gentleman must have been beloved in preference to the serious, almost stern-looking smith, who had to toil for his daily bread” (Gaskell 312).

In *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, Tess’s parents dream of being rich, since John Durbeyfield is a mere peddler, and a lazy one at that. At the beginning of the story, the beautiful outdoors where Tess had been frolicking and dancing serves as a somber contrast to the “yellow melancholy of this one-candled spectacle [i.e. her home]” (Hardy 11). The parson tells John about his lineage and that he is “the lineal representative of the ancient and knightly family of the d’Urbervilles” and that “if knighthood were hereditary like a baronetcy...[he] would be Sir John now” (Hardy 1, 2). Durbeyfield remembers that at home he has a “wold silver spoon, and a wold graven seal,” but the family, though it used to be rich, is now “extinct” and holds no land, houses, or seats (Hardy 2). Durbeyfield says that “here have I been knocking about year after year from pillar to post as if I was no more than the commonest feller in the parish” (Hardy 2). A recurring theme in the novel is that the Durbeyfields/d’Urbervilles *are* as common as everyone else in the parish. Durbeyfield lets his ego get the better of him and now says that he is a part of the “noble race,” in spite of the fact that the parson says that “[t]here are several families among the cottagers of this county of almost equal lustre (Hardy 3). Tess, on the other hand, sees “many of the hills and fields I see once belonged to my father’s people,” but she realizes that “other hills and fields belonged to Retty’s people, and perhaps others to Marian’s, so that I don’t value it particularly” (Hardy 148). Tess does not have the veneration for her ancestors as her parents do and believes them to be “useless” and holds “no admiration for them now” (Hardy 80). Ancestry is a great factor in the novel because of its association with money, property, and privilege. Tess’s parent’s think it’s a brilliant idea to send Tess to supposed relatives in order to win their favor and, hopefully, borrow some money.⁵ This is the first point where Tess is expected by others to cross-dress—however, she would rather work for money than beg from a stranger. The joke about the supposed relatives is that the Stoke-d’Urbervilles, of which Alec is a part of, are even not related to the

⁵ Hardy seems to have a different opinion of the poor from Gaskell. He portrays them as lazy, drunk, sick, and not in need/worthy of social help. In general, the poor seem to be a lost cause. In addition to Tess’s parents, in Trantridge, the other villagers spend Saturday night drinking and sleeping on Sunday. They are supposed to be at church, but instead are lazy drunks.

d'Urbervilles at all. The whole situation is wrong, ridiculous, and doomed from the start.

Hardy includes many of the folk beliefs, events, and superstitions that were prevalent in Tess's life, and yet even in these, class is still a factor in some way, and these beliefs are somehow marks of the uncivilized. Joan, Tess's mother, has many superstitious beliefs, such as how the *Compleat Fortune-Teller* can't stay in the house overnight. Tess herself experiences a plethora of "ill-omens," such as how Angel never danced with her the first time they saw each other and how she pricked herself with a rose after leaving Alec's (Hardy 150). After a while, Tess starts to "admit the fatalistic convictions common to field-folk and those who associate more extensively with natural phenomena," and more bad omens occur to Tess (Hardy 159). A rooster crows on her and Angel's wedding day, they wind up honeymooning in her old ancestral manor, and she is told about the d'Urberville coach and the murder in the family. There is a general theme that Tess is more pagan and attuned to nature than everyone else, and that she is "out of step with society, not nature" (Rogers 307). Although the general belief of the characters in the novel is that these beliefs are silly, unsubstantiated, and coarse, Tess certainly does come to a bad ending.

The Clares, Angel's family, serve to give an important view as to how the middle class sees the poor. According to Felix, Angel's brother, it would be a disgrace to be "[d]ancing in public with a troop of country hoydens" (Hardy 9). His parents want him to marry a lady. Angel tells them Tess "*is a lady...in feeling and nature*" (Hardy 128). He thinks it's more practical to get a woman that can do domestic/farming chores than an "accomplished" lady (he refers to getting a wife of his own class as "a drawing-room wax figure"), and his parents want the exact opposite for him (Hardy 121). After deciding not to join the ministry, Angel decides he hates "[t]he material distinctions of rank and wealth" (Hardy 91). He is surprised that he likes "country-folk" and that they aren't a bunch of country bumpkins—he finds them interesting, unique, and unusual. He thinks Tess is a "daughter of the soil," but doesn't see her as being a lower class member (Hardy 100). Angel, in turn, interests Tess because

[i]t was true that he was at present *out of his class*...He did not milk cows because he was obliged to milk cows, but because he was learning how to be a rich and prosperous dairyman, landowner, agriculturalist, and breeder of cattle. He would become an American or Australian Abraham, commanding like a monarch his flocks and his herds, his spotted and his ring-straked, his menservants and his maids (Hardy 98, my emphasis).

Tess finds it odd that he is not a clergyman like the other men in his family—Angel is as much of a (class) mystery as Tess is to him (Hardy 98).

Both Mary and Tess begin in their stories as innocent girls. By the end of their stories, both women have their innocence and purity called into question. Mary's inexperience and pride make her the target of Harry Carson and also encourages her to test class restrictions by trying to marry Harry. As in many Early imperialism novels, Mary does not have a great deal of choice regarding how she moves up (or down) in classes—she and her father move downward to "dirt poor" as their money runs out, or she could marry Harry and become middle

class. Unlike her father, Mary has no aversion to becoming a part of the middle class. Although she is poor, she foolishly believes that she can use her beauty to help her become a lady and, unacceptably for a girl in her class, flirts with Harry. She intends to marry him and is “ambitious” about moving up the class ladder, not only for her comfort, but her father’s. For a great deal of their relationship, Mary fully assumes that Carson has “honourable intentions” to marry her (Gaskell 128). Harry claims to be “infatuated by her” but sees her almost as if she were incapable of higher thinking. He believes that “[t]here was something of keen practical shrewdness about her, which contrasted very bewitchingly with the simple, foolish, unworldly ideas” from her romance novels (Gaskell 74). While Jem has a higher opinion of Mary, believing that she is “a lady by right of nature...; in movement, grace, and spirit,” he wants to protect Mary “[e]ven if she were [a flirt], the more reason for there to be some one to protect her; poor *faulty* darling” (Gaskell 160, 169, my emphasis). Both he and Harry think of her and treat her as if she was a smart child. Unlike Jem, however, Harry isn’t very serious about Mary, or at least he isn’t serious enough to marry her, and he has no intention of allowing her to climb the social ladder. Mary finally realizes that she cannot break the class restrictions when she recognizes that Harry had no problem with “ruin[ing] a poor girl” (Gaskell 131).

John, Mary’s father, hates the aristocracy due to his experiences with them and strongly opposes the idea of Mary ever cross-dressing and becoming a member of the upper class and in turn (what he believes to be) a useless woman. When Esther says that she may make a lady out of Mary, he declares ‘Thou’d best not put that nonsense i’ th’ girl’s head I can tell thee; I’d rather see her earning her bread by the sweat of her brow, as the Bible tells her she should do, ay, though she never got butter to her bread, than be like a do-nothing lady, worrying shopmen all morning, and screeching at her pianny all afternoon, and going to bed without having done a good turn to any on of God’s creature but herself’ (Gaskell 6).

These ideas are exemplified in Mrs. Carson, a stereotypical Victorian woman. The narrator discusses how Mrs. Carson usually doesn’t feel well when there is no “excitement” occurring and that she usually “indulg[es] in a head-ache” (Gaskell 194). According to the narrator, this “was but the natural consequence of the state of mental and bodily idleness in which she was placed. Without education enough to value the resources of wealth and leisure, she was so circumstanced as to command both” (Gaskell 194). The narrator goes on to comment how it would have helped Mrs. Carson greatly to do some housework and gotten some air without fancy, unnecessary clothes and a closed-in carriage. She has been “[r]obbed of her productive labor [and is fit] only for an ornamental place in society...” (McClintock 160).

Like *Mary Barton*, the focus of *Tess* is upon a young woman and her conflicting innocence and sexuality. Tess, unlike, Mary, has no wish to cross-dress and move up in class. At the beginning of the novel, one gets the impression that she wishes her parents were more reliable workers (and less drunk), but she doesn’t have the fantasies that Mary does about having a rich man whisk her off her feet. By not being able to fit into one class very well, Tess

seems to be testing the structure and boundaries of class. However, in what marks this novel as a Later imperialism novel, Tess moves through not just one or two classes, but through many different classes. Several people in her life, in different ways, force her to move up and down the class ladder. In the later Victorian period, a person seems to be able to move more easily within a certain set of classes (such as from respectable poor to lower middle class). I've already discussed how her parents try to manipulate her into marrying a rich "relative." Some of these people include the eligible men in her life. She is caught between the expectations of two different men—one wants her unconditionally to be as pure as a woman can be and the other is convinced that she is a temptress who lives to torment him. To Angel, Tess "was so modest, so expressive, she had looked so soft in her thin white gown that he felt he had acted stupidly" to have not asked her to dance (Hardy 10). She was a beautiful girl, "...but to almost everybody she was a fine and picturesque country girl, and no more" (Hardy 8). Although she is described as "[s]imple," Tess is smart, likes to work, and seems to be in charge of her family (Hardy 27). An underlying theme in the novel is that money corrupts, and Tess is the exemplar of the new generation or perhaps the "New Woman"—she never wants any part of the money or fanfare that comes with money through marriage. Yet Hardy's descriptions repeatedly focus on Tess's class and class background—at one point, she looks "foreign" and "unsophisticated" in a "print gown of no date or fashion" (Hardy 146). Even though Tess will have nothing to do with money or changes in class, Hardy's constant centering on both seem to suggest that there is no escaping either one, which is what Tess would prefer to do.

Alec sees Tess very differently from Angel. When she first meets Alec, his description warns that he is a dangerous character—he has an "almost swarthy complexion," a "gentleman's face" "[d]espite the touches of barbarism in his contours," and smoke from his pipe gives off a "blue narcotic haze," implying that he may be insane or at least unstable (Hardy 28, 30). Alec seems surprised that Tess fights off his advances and tells her that she is "mighty sensitive for a cottage girl" (Hardy 41). He apparently expects her to be a willing recipient of his advances simply because she's from the country. Alec, unfortunately, also uses every double standard in the book to blame Tess for raping her. First, he tells Tess that all women say no, but they don't mean it, and then he blames Tess's parents for not telling her about "life" and how men try to take advantage of women (Hardy 247). He talks about how Angel rejected Tess and says, "That's just like you women. Your mind is enslaved to his" (Hardy 252). He accuses Tess of dressing in a sexy manner when she is described as her most ugly in Flintcomb-Ash—"you field-girls should never wear those bonnets if you wish to keep out of danger" (Hardy 259). He sees Tess as a seductress since he makes Tess swear that she will never tempt him with her "charms or ways" (Hardy 244). He tells her that she caused him to lose his faith and that since she is "the cause of my backsliding," she "should be willing to share it, and leave that mule you call husband forever" (Hardy 260). The culminating point that shows how much of a villain Alec is is when he wants to marry her although she is already married. Tess's mind may be enslaved to Angels', but, to her, Alec, and Angel, her body is

enslaved to Alec. Indeed, Tess's body "becomes a marker of female trickery,...deceit, and conquest" (Murphy 83). Eventually, Tess has "[y]et a consciousness that in a physical sense this man alone was her husband seemed to weigh on her more and more," and she eventually cross-dresses and becomes a type of prostitute to Alec in order to help out her destitute family (Hardy 282).

While Alec is obsessed with Tess's body, Angel is obsessed over Tess's lineage. In fact, "Tess's virginity...becomes coupled in his mind with her lost aristocracy" (Rogers 307). Initially, Angel seems to equate her lineage and class with her purity—when he meets her and gets to know her, she is as a perfect angel to him. He sees Tess as even more pure than he previously believed when he finds out that she comes from an old distinguished family. At first, it weighed heavily on his mind that he wanted to marry a poor country girl. But he believed that by "giving up all ambition to win a wife with social standing, with fortune, with knowledge of the world, I should secure rustic innocence" (Hardy 186). He says that he hates "the aristocratic principle of blood before everything" and believes "that as reasoners the only pedigrees we ought to respect are those spiritual ones of the wise and virtuous, without regard to corporeal paternity" (Hardy 148). However, once he finds out that Mary is a d'Urberville, he romanticizes it and is now "glad to know you to be descended exclusively from the long-suffering, dumb, unrecorded rank-and-file of the English nation, and not from the self-seeking few who made themselves powerful at the expense of others" (Hardy 148). The narrator comments that "[p]erhaps Tess's lineage had more value for himself than for anybody in the world besides" (Hardy 165).

Unfortunately, even though Angel tells Tess about the conniving woman he got mixed up with in London (which is an equivalent of what happened to her—a person of the opposite sex taking advantage of the other), he can't forgive her for her rape. When he finds out that Tess was raped, suddenly she is no longer a pure angel, and her lineage and class is sullied in his eyes. Although she forgives him for essentially the same crime, now he says he's loved "[a]nother woman in your shape," implying that she's like Eve or Satan/the serpent (Hardy 179). While looking at the portraits of Mary's family in the d'Urberville manor house, Angel now sees "[s]inister design lurked in the woman's features, a concentrated purpose of revenge on the opposite sex—so it seemed to him then" (Hardy 184). Angel believes that the d'Urberville women are out to get men, and it runs in the family. Not only does he see her as some sort of evil Eve, but he also sees her class status as a mark of her inherent flaws and lack of purity and seems to blame her for the class cross-dressing that he encouraged her into [marrying him]. He believes that with "[d]ifferent societies [there are] different manners" and calls her "an unapprehending peasant woman" (Hardy 182). Now he holds her lineage against her—"I cannot help associating your decline as a family with this other fact—of your want of firmness. Decrepit families imply decrepit will, decrepit conduct...Here was I thinking you a new-sprung child of nature: there were you, the belated seedling of an effete aristocracy" (Hardy 182). He tells Tess that she is "childish—unformed—crude" (Hardy 187). Tess, to her credit, finally defends herself and says, "I am only a peasant by position, not by nature" (Hardy 182). But still, he believes that Alec is

“your husband in Nature, and not I”—so in his eyes, sex makes two people married in Nature, whether or not it was given in consent or not (Hardy 190). The narrator is sure to point out “the true sin lies less in the act than in willing one’s own fall,” but Angel will not see this (Auerbach 40). Even the narrator comments that Angel is still “the slave to custom and conventionality when surprised back into his early teachings” (Hardy 208).

As for Tess herself, when she leaves Angel, she is much more aware of herself as a woman and as a lower class citizen. At this point, Tess is without any money and is at the very bottom of the lower class ladder. Because she is ashamed that Angel has left her, she avoids all rich people and society, and she’s treated much differently now that she has to dress poorer. She is forced to take “rough work” at Flintcomb-Ash because there is nothing else (Hardy 220). When she becomes desperate enough for money, Tess goes to visit her in-laws. She doesn’t feel very comfortable doing this with people that she is only related to by law, “and yet nothing essential, in nature or emotion, divided her from them: in pains, pleasure, thoughts, birth, death, and after death, they were the same” (Hardy 234). In the end, though, Tess decides not to speak to them, partly because she was embarrassed and partly because she didn’t want to embarrass them (and indirectly embarrass Clare).

It is not until after his experiences in Brazil that Angel sees the failure of the d’Urberville line as a lesson of morals to learn from and sees “dignity” in the family resemblance instead of “sinister design” (Hardy 269). However, after Alec is killed, Angel still repetitively focuses on Tess’s ancestry and wonders “what obscure strain in the d’Urberville blood had led to this aberration, if it were an aberration. There momentarily flashed through his mind that the family tradition of the coach and murder might have arisen because the d’Urbervilles had been known to do these things” (Hardy 304). Now he believes that Tess’s misfortune—and perhaps mental illness—was hereditary. Tess follows the pattern of the “Fallen Woman” to the end. Her purity ruined forever, along with her murder of Alec, she must complete the tragedy and die. Auerbach’s argument of the way that “her economic identity in a patriarchal society is not allowed to infect a good one” rings true in more ways than one—Angel winds up marrying Tess’s sister, Liza-Lu, still a d’Urberville, but a more “pure” soul than Tess (Hardy 33).

Both novels give glaring examples of the problems that occur when a person indulges in a bit of cross-dressing. In *Tess*, Angel, a gentleman, masquerades as a milkman. He is “out of his class” (Hardy 98). He acts as if he is in a lower class during his training, without actually being apart of that class. Angel has his own room, doesn’t seem to fraternize with the other men, and always seems to keep his own space. The narrator calls him a “superior milker,” even though he is superior only in class, not in talent for milking (Hardy 88). Angel is a type of outcast from his own class. Actually, Angel doesn’t seem to quite fit in any class. He’s rejected the route presented to him by his family to go into the ministry and continue to be in the middle class, and they resent him for it. When he comes home after spending time at the dairy, he thinks different, acts different, looks different, and it is commented that “[a] prig would have said that

he had lost culture, and a prude that he had become coarse” (Hardy 124). Some of this incongruity with class cross-dressing can also be seen with Tess and how she doesn’t feel comfortable when Angel tries to make her into a lady after finding out her family history. Tess is uneasy to act as if she is something she is not—she has difficulty fitting in with the different classes, as well. She is not a lady, nor is she “coarse.” Angel seems to want to turn her into someone she isn’t and tells her to now call herself “Mistress Teresa d’Urberville,” instead of Durbeyfield (Hardy 149). The narrator tells of Angel’s plans for Tess and how he could teach her and that, plus her lineage, would impress his parents, but this “was a pretty lover’s dream, if no more” (Hardy 165). When Angel puts on the Clare family jewels, Tess asks, “They are not fit for me are they?” (Hardy 173). And Angel still considers her a poor woman, right to the end of the novel. When he finally finds her in Sandbourne, he wonders where she is, “a cottage girl,...amidst all this wealth and fashion?” (Hardy 296).

Another example of this type of this problem of class cross-dressing is in the character of Esther, Mrs. Barton’s sister. Esther was a factory girl, and factory girls are described as being “independent”—it can be inferred from this that independence in a woman makes her susceptible to getting into trouble (Gaskell 3). Esther spent the money she made in the factory on clothes. John believes this to be very frivolous of her and tells her it will lead to her becoming a prostitute (Gaskell 5). He also finds offensive that she is not happy in her own class and tries to dress “better” than she is. Valverde argues that clothing “played a key role in the moral regulation of working-class women” (169). Esther functions as the moral lesson of the story—while she does for a short time succeed in cross-dressing up in class, it isn’t permanent, and she eventually becomes a prostitute, as John predicted, and becomes addicted to alcohol. John even blames Esther for his wife’s death. Even though Esther goes through the process of getting rid of her finery, “she cannot leave her moral stain behind” (Valverde 171). It was actually thought that women became prostitutes due to “their love of finery” (Valverde 176). Valverde touches on McClintock’s idea of class cross-dressing when she says that “finery” is defined as something that is “too showy,” too “cheap,” or it is on a woman who “was herself a cheap imitation of upper-class womanhood” (169). Many times this type of dress implied “moral ruin,” as well as “economic ruin” (Valverde 170). This certainly occurs to Esther, and it is implied that this may have also happened to Mary if Esther had not warned her. When Mary must go to work, John doesn’t want her to work in the factories, nor “go out to service” because he “considered domestic servitude as a species of slavery” (Gaskell 21). He also probably didn’t want her to receive backlash from testing class restrictions and wind up like Esther. This issue of clothing and prostitution also appears in *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, where Tess finally comes into moral ruin when she joins Alec in Sandbourne. It’s implied that she’s become a type of prostitute to him, since when Angel sees her, she’s dressed in a gown of expensive cashmere.

Interestingly, the Carsons in *Mary Barton* actually do succeed in crossing class barriers. Both John and Mr. Carson were on the same class level before Mr. Carson moved up in class and began owning factories. On one hand, Mr.

Carson could be commended for succeeding in society and making a better life for his family. Social Darwinism hadn't been created yet, but it does correspond with the prevalent idea of how a man should work hard and provide well for his family. This isn't even addressed in the story—the Carsons are simply rich, or at least well-off, and there is little indication of the hard work anyone in the family performs (Mr. Carson oversees his business and is mostly shown as a man who isn't really willing to care about his workers as long as they help him make money, Harry flirts with girls, the daughters go to parties, and Mrs. Carson, as mentioned above, laments in bed). However, while the family is financially well-off, the actual family relationships of the family seem a bit dysfunctional compared to the closeness seen in Gaskell's portrayals of the poorer families—while Mr. Carson, Harry, and the youngest daughter seems to get along well enough, Mr. and Mrs. Carson are rarely seen together, and instead of being close to her daughters, it is declared that Mrs. Carson's maid was “much more a companion to her than her highly educated daughters” (Gaskell 201). If the Carsons are examples of what happens when people become rich, Gaskell may be making a sly remark at how money corrupts, and people are better off in their own classes.

The two novels, though from different periods, exhibit a great deal of imperialism both outside England and within it. They both show a great deal of description and sensitivity to the state of the poor, but in different ways—Gaskell uses more sentimentalism to draw the audience into the story, and Hardy takes a more matter-of-fact approach which is almost shocking in its directness. Both Mary and Tess are “corrected” a great deal for their behavior as women and as citizens of the lower class, and their respective societies move onward without change. Although Mary gets the happy ending, she must move to another country and become an expatriate to do so, and not a great deal actually changes on the social level. She tries to break out of class restrictions by using her gender to move up in class, but the novel seems to show that if a woman conforms to society's expectations concerning class, there will be a happy ending. By rejecting Harry and loving Jem, Mary stays in her proper station and becomes a respectable woman, unlike her aunt Esther. Spirituality aside, this coincides with the Victorian trait of seeing social problems in England on an individual level instead of a larger scale. Carson has changed, but how many other factory owners would still treat their workers the same? Tess, on the other hand, has no desire to test class restrictions, especially by using her gender, and the novel seems to show that there is no stability or gain in any of the classes. As the “fallen woman,” she is perpetually punished for a mistake that she didn't make. Believing herself to be beyond reformation, she is constantly pushed to be reformed by those around her. She refuses to be and is thus an outcast in society and labeled an “impure” woman. Because “‘justice’ was done” in hanging Tess and Angel coupling with Liza-Lu, the cycle in her society does not change and simply goes on after Tess, the aberrant, is dead (Hardy 314). In spite of doing what she could as a woman to survive, she is ultimately punished by society for finally regaining agency over her life by killing Alec.

CHAPTER TWO

CLASS AND THE FUNCTIONS OF CRIMINALITY IN *GREAT EXPECTATIONS* AND SHERLOCK HOLMES

Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861) and Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mystery stories (1892-1905) both deal with class and the physical locations of class, and with both natives of England and foreigners, who rebel against the status quo of their day in some fashion. The stories focus extensively on criminals and crime, what constitutes a criminal, the consequences of being a criminal, and how this relates to class. While gender and race are discussed, the two can be to be linked back to social position. Cross-dressing is very present in the two works, but it is clear that the lines between race, class, and gender become more and more blurred by the time one reaches the Holmes mysteries in the late Victorian (imperialistic) period.

Great Expectations shows a cast of characters from all classes and the diversity of those classes. Dickens takes many assumptions of the day about class and turns them on their head, such as how the rich are supposed to be good, and the poor are all supposed to be worthless criminals. *Great Expectations* runs along these lines, seeing as how wealthy Miss Havisham is a bitter, almost evil old woman, and Joe is the epitome of dignity though he is not well off. Pip's life runs through a huge spectrum of class positions, first being poor, then coming into money to become a gentleman, then finally settling in the middle while working for a trade company and doing "very well" (Dickens 499). The beginning of the story takes place in the marshes, where he is a poor orphan being "brought up by hand" by his sister. His uncle by marriage, Joe, is described almost as a big dumb animal—"a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going, foolish, dear fellow—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness" (Dickens 44).

Pip's first brushes with the elite and first compulsions to rebel against his class come during his visits to Miss Havisham's. Estella, Miss Havisham's adopted daughter, calls Pip a "common labouring-boy" (Dickens 95). She continues to make fun of Pip since he calls the knaves of the deck "Jacks," and says he has "coarse hands" and "thick boots" (Dickens 95). Her contempt for him was so strong that Pip "caught it" as if it were some kind of disease (Dickens

95). After being exposed to Miss Havisham and Estella, Pip begins to feel embarrassed about his current station in life. He believes that everything at home, in the marshes, is “coarse and common,” and there is a conflict between “plain contented Joe, and...restlessly aspiring discontented me” (Dickens 140-41). Pip feels ashamed after meeting Estella, and “deeply resolving that I was a common labouring-boy...that I was much more ignorant than I had considered myself last night, and generally that I was in a low-lived bad way” (Dickens 100). He starts to become more self-conscious of himself and wishes “Joe had been rather more genteelly brought up, and then I should have been so too” (Dickens 97). Although Joe encourages him that in order to be “oncommon” first, you must be “common” and that everyone must work their way up from common, Pip is not comforted by this (Dickens 105). To test the rules of class of the day, he decides to “make Joe less ignorant and common, that he might be worthier of my society and less open to Estella’s reproach,” especially since Joe embarrassed him at Miss Havisham’s (Dickens 142).

When Jaggers informs Pip that he is to become a “gentleman—in a word, as a young fellow of great expectations,” Pip is able to put his mental rebellion into action by moving up in class even though he hasn’t quite come into his expectations yet. From the start, Pip tries his best to set himself away from his original background, his family, and his acquaintances by changing his physical appearance and arrogant demeanor. Pip doesn’t want to show off his new clothes to the townspeople, since they will make an ordeal over it and make it “such a coarse and common business” (Dickens 177). He thinks of the “poor creatures” in church and begins to create “a plan in outline for bestowing a dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding, a pint of ale, and a gallon of condescension, upon everybody in the village” (Dickens 178). He believes that he is better than the other villagers and “henceforth I was for London and greatness: not for smith’s work in general” (Dickens 179). Even Joe is not safe from Pip’s delusions of grandeur: he wishes Joe were smarter so that “he had been better qualified for a rise in station” (Dickens 180). He angers Biddy when he tells her that Joe is “backward” in his “learning and manners” (Dickens 180). He then accuses Biddy of being “envious...and grudging...of my rise in fortune” (Dickens 181). When Pip leaves to go to London, he wants to walk alone to the carriage so that he doesn’t feel so inconspicuous (in his new clothes) next to Joe. Even though Joe and Biddy mean good luck by throwing old shoes at him, “it would have never done to have had an old shoe thrown after the coach, in sight of all of the High-street” (Dickens 191). In short, Pip did his best to class cross-dress, more or less sever his ties to the marsh, and to forget that he was ever a part of that level of society. One thing that probably encourages Pip to act in this manner is the way people treat him differently now that he has the promise of being a gentleman of means. When Pip goes to tell Miss Havisham, Sarah Pocket is there, as well, and is obviously jealous and annoyed at his luck. Mr. Trabb, the tailor, immediately changes his demeanor to one more respectful once Pip tells him about his property, and Pumblechook now forces Pip to shake hands with him instead of spitting out multiplication tables (Dickens 182-3).

Pip at this point moves from the marshes to London and truly goes into training to be a gentleman. Amusingly, Pip is not terribly impressed by London's "beauty": "We Britons had at that time particularly settled that it was treasonable to doubt our having and our being the best of everything: otherwise, while I was scared by the immensity of London, I think I might have had some faint doubts whether it was not ugly, crooked, narrow, and dirty" (Dickens 193). In a strange introduction to the variety of London's classes, he continues to get mixed impressions of the city when he finds Newgate prison and holds a brief tour with a drunk and filthy minister of justice of the gallows, the whipping post, and the "Debtors' Door" (Dickens 196). Pip continues to get odd impressions when he sees the parade of strange clients Jagger has (poor men, women, and Jews) and how he treats them (with contempt and total control). When Wemmick cheerfully tells Pip that he "may get cheated, robbed, and murdered, in London," Pip decides that London is "decidedly overrated" (Dickens 202, 205).

There are many instances that highlight the need the upper classes had to separate themselves from the poor. Pip and those around him in London seem to have similar views as to trying to contain the poor away from themselves. Wemmick and his home Walworth are a symbol of the division between city and country, work and home—literally symbolized by the drawbridge and the self-sufficiency of the house in case of siege. Perhaps this is the way that Wemmick distances himself not only from his work, but also the people that he's exposed to in his work. Similarly, to separate himself from work, Jagger washes his hands, which could possibly be a way of "cleaning" the "dirt" from his clients off. It's interesting that the first memory Pip recalls concerning Jagger is his scented hands (Dickens 241). There are several points where Pip muses on how his life seems to be full of encounters with crime and the dregs of the lower class. Before a visit with Estella, he wishes he hadn't gone to Newgate since its taint might affect her—he feels "contaminated"—and proceeds to "beat the prison dust off my feet as I sauntered to and fro, and I shook it out of my dress, and I exhaled its air from my lungs" (Dickens 292).

In spite of his great desire to become a gentleman, Pip never seems quite successful at class cross-dressing. Herbert, Pip's roommate and friend, is a gentleman, albeit a financially poor one. He helps Pip out with his eating manners, such as how to hold a spoon, how not to hold a glass, and what to do with a napkin. But in spite of new table manners, Pip begins to have trouble reconciling his new expectations and breaking out of his original class with his actions. He never quite seems to leave the "lowness" of his background behind him. Estella mentions to him that since he is now rich (or expecting to be), he must find new friends, since "what was fit company for you once, would be quite unfit company for you now" (Dickens 266). Pip takes this advice to heart when Joe comes to London to see him. He doesn't want to see Joe and would, in fact, pay money to keep him away. When Joe arrives, Pip notes that Joe is still able to keep "dignity" in his fancy clothes, as silly as he looks in them (Dickens 253). Once Joe tells him that he belongs in the forge and in the marshes, not as a fancy man in London, Pip eventually seems to realize that he may be right. Later, Pip says that "[a]s I had grown accustomed to my expectations, I had

insensibly begun to notice their effect upon myself and those around me. Their influence on my own character, I disguised from my recognition as much as possible, but I knew very well that it was not all good” (Dickens 299). He begins to spend money unwisely. He realizes that he’s leading Herbert astray, such as by the two of them joining the Finches of the Grove, a gentlemen’s club full of men whose company they don’t even enjoy. As far as money and being in debt, “[t]here was a gay fiction among us that we were constantly enjoying ourselves, and a skeleton truth that we never did” (Dickens 302). By class cross-dressing, Pip realizes that he keeps trying to put himself into state of living that he doesn’t belong in.

Class is also extremely apparent and important in the Sherlock Holmes stories. Sherlock Holmes’s clients and contacts are from all walks of life—young and old, rich and poor, and even different religions. In “A Study in Scarlet,” Watson observes a “fashionable dressed” young woman, a “seedy” Jew peddler, a “slipshod elderly woman,” an older gentleman, and a “railway porter in his velveteen uniform” (Doyle 27, *Major Stories*). Holmes himself, of course, is the master detective to which all other mystery-solvers are measured against. Holmes’s detective skills and “analysis of identity” was “made easier by the fact that class status was coded by distinctive styles of speech, dress, and body language” of the period (Jann 59). What Jann calls Holmes’s “coding” “operates differently for different classes, in ways that tacitly justify the greater power and privilege of the higher classes over the lower ones” (59). Unsurprisingly, the negative and almost ridiculous ways in which the lower classes are presented “echoes a pattern common to the late Victorian imagination, which associated the poor with dirt, animality, and pollution, and linked manual laborers and servants metaphorically as well as literally to their socially and physically ‘low’ work” (Jann 61). The Holmes mysteries correspond with the great public support of “New Imperialism” and support of British nationalism. Criminality was linked to an “identifiable foreignness of the suspect’s body” and its importance and prevalence is obvious, as it was associated with national security, as well as physiology and nationality (Thomas 659).

Holmes is a scientist and perpetual student. He has no official job, and he doesn’t take payment (though he does take gifts), so it is assumed that he has some other type of income, such as an inheritance. Holmes is “depicted as a thinker, not a worker, someone whose only ‘business’ is to know what others do not” (Jann 65). Unlike Pip, who is also so hyperaware of his class position and struggling to improve it, Holmes does not easily fall into any class—he is not poor, he isn’t properly middle class (since he doesn’t receive an income for his work), yet he is not really rich. Holmes can also disguise himself into the lower classes. Jann comments that Holmes’s “skill at counterfeiting himself” is “subject to none” and that he is “the master of the signs of class and vocation” (65). Unlike the England portrayed in *Great Expectations*, class holds a strange double standard in the Later imperialism era. On one hand, class is more rigid than ever, as evidenced by Holmes’ use of “scientific” coding. And yet on the other hand, class is more unstable than ever in that it is possible for a person to class cross-dress and fool all those around them.

With this in mind, it is interesting that an entire story is dedicated to Holmes catching a man for impersonating a member of the lower class—a “crime” Holmes himself frequently engages in. In this later part of the Victorian period, it seems that it becomes easier and more common for a person to cross-dress. In “The Man With the Twisted Lip,” Holmes tells Watson the story of Neville St. Clair, a well-off man who has disappeared. Hugh Boone is the last person to have seen him, and he is a “professional beggar” and has a “hideous face” (Doyle 120, *Major Stories*). Boone also sports “[a] shock of orange hair, a pale face disfigured by a horrible scar, which, by its contraction, has turned up the outer edge of his upper lip, a bull-dog chin, and a pair of very penetrating dark eyes” (Doyle 120, *Major Stories*). He is literally a “dirty scoundrel,” since it was difficult “to make him wash his hands, and his face is black as a tinker’s” (Doyle 128, *Major Stories*). Boone is presented as some kind of circus freak and almost as entertainment. However, when Holmes peels off Boone’s beggar mask, he leaves “a pale, sad-faced, refined-looking man, black-haired and smooth-skinned...” (Doyle 129, *Major Stories*). Apparently, St. Clair made so much money as a beggar for a newspaper story he wrote that he decided to do it full-time—“It was a long fight between my pride and the money, but the dollars won at last” (Doyle 131, *Major Stories*). In spite of the disturbing implications of this “disorderly selfishness” and its implications of social chaos, St. Clair more or less gets away with a slap on the wrist by promising Holmes and the policeman not to do it again (Knight 372). His cross-dressing as a member of the middle class to a member of the lower class “is always less threatening than its opposite...because no real social power is at risk” (Jann 66). St. Clair recognizes that his action were “bad” because he didn’t work for his money, and he cross-dressed. Holmes, however, completely fools Watson when he was dressed as an opium addict at the beginning of the story in an attempt to try and find St. Clair, and he is not sanctioned at all. In fact, Watson is amazed and shocked that Holmes fooled him and everyone else so completely. It certainly is questionable that “the fact that a change of clothing and a little makeup can transform the genteel Neville St. Clair into the completely convincing street beggar Hugh Boone raises questions about whether social superiority really rests on anything more intrinsic than appearance...isn’t really addressed and is left unanswerable” (Jann 66). Jaffe mentions that profession can even function as a type of disguise or mask, and both St. Clair and Holmes fulfill this idea—both are pretending to be someone other than they are not for the sake of their profession (97). In a period and environment where anyone could be someone other than they appear to be, Holmes is indeed a genius to be able to distinguish the many “signs of class and vocation.” Yet, as is later discussed, disguises can fool even Holmes.

In *Great Expectations*, Magwitch, a convict sentenced to live as a colonist and never return to England, is the character that represents the very lowest class and is seen for a great deal of the story as someone of a different race. Pip first encounters him on the marshes. The convict escapes from the “Hulks,” or prison ships, and “people are put there because they murder, and because they rob, and forge, and do all sorts of bad” (Dickens 50, 51). Even by the marshes’

humble standards, Magwitch is seen as barely human. Pip notices “a decided similarity between the dog’s way of eating and the man’s” (Dickens 55). He continually looks at the criminal as if he were a dog...rather the same way that Estella looks at him. Described in detail later in the novel, Magwitch is dressed “roughly; like a voyager by sea...[H]e had long grey hair [and]...his age was about sixty. [H]e was a muscular man, strong on his legs, and...he was browned and hardened by exposure to weather” (Dickens 341). In the marshes, he has the ague or the “shivers” (Dickens 54). In spite of this less than human impression, Pip and Joe show pity towards him. Sympathy is generated for him, since he’s out on the cold marsh and starving to death—the audience is led to almost feel glad that Pip has stolen (from his own family) just to help him out—and no human deserves to be in that kind of condition. Indeed, the criminal tells him, “You’d be but a fierce young hound indeed, if at your time of life you could help to hunt a wretched warmint, hunted as near death and dunghill as this poor wretched warmint is!” (Dickens 55). Joe tells the criminal, when he confesses to “stealing” their food, that “we wouldn’t have you starved to death for it [stealing], poor miserable fellow-creatur” (Dickens 76).

In England, criminals such as Magwitch were looked down upon as the lowest of the low classes, and certainly as if they were a different race. Later in the novel, Pip and Herbert have nothing but contempt and horror when they run into a group of prisoners being transported at the Blue Boar. The prisoners are “a degraded and vile sight” (Dickens 256). Pip’s language almost makes them non-human: “The great numbers on their backs, as if they were street doors; their coarse mangy ungainly outer surface, *as if they were lower animals*; their ironed legs, apologetically garlanded with pocket-handkerchiefs; and the way in which all present looked at them and kept from them; made them (as Herbert had said) a most disagreeable and degraded spectacle” (Dickens 257, my emphasis). Pip also complains about the smell of the convicts. Ironically, at this point Pip’s class transformation is, from all outward appearances, complete—he isn’t recognized by the convict Compeyson since he “was not only so changed in the course of nature, but so differently dressed and so differently circumstanced, that it was not likely he could have known me without accidental help” (Dickens 259).

Magwitch has a sad history of being taken advantage of and being made a victim. Compeyson tricked Magwitch so much that “that man got me into such nets as made me his black slave” (Dickens 374). He got a longer prison term than Compeyson due to appearances between them—the jury thought that Compeyson looks more reputable. From this, Magwitch is sentenced to exile for life in Australia. Since Britain was creating a population that could not be sustained by its resources, it was considered the correct thing to do to export “undesirables” from England and, at the same time, establish “new colonies with which the mother country could develop trade” (Young 22). A person convicted to death could often have their sentence changed into a “sentence of transportation” for a set amount of years (usually seven or fourteen) (Mitchell 99)⁶. As a citizen of Australia, Magwitch rebels and tests the limits of class in

⁶ These colonists were first sent to penal settlements in America, then to Australia around 1788 after America declared independence. Men usually did hard labor (clearing roads, etc.),

Australia, succeeds, and becomes rich. He employs himself as “ a sheep-farmer, stock-breeder, other trades besides, away in the new world...many a thousand mile of stormy water off from this...I’ve done wonderfully well...no man has done nigh as well as me. I’m famous for it” (Dickens 344).

Yet his successes mean nothing in the eyes of mainstream Victorian culture. Those who had lived in Australia, home of many penal colonies, were probably not held in great esteem by the English people. In the period of old imperialism, class was still in many ways very rigid. Since Magwitch was once a criminal (and exiled), he will always be a criminal, regardless of any other deeds, good or otherwise, that he has carried out. Certainly Pip, still in his newfound riches and arrogance, follows through with this belief. He finds out that Magwitch is his benefactor and instead of feeling grateful, indebted, or even curious at how this stranger helped him rise in class with his money, “[t]he abhorrence in which I held the man, the dread I had of him, the repugnance with which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he had been some terrible *beast*” (Dickens 346, my emphasis). He believes that “his hand might be stained with blood” and feels awful that “it was for the convict, guilty of I knew not what crimes, and liable to be taken out of those rooms where I sat thinking, and hanged at the Old Bailey door, that I had deserted Joe” (Dickens 348-9). There is a sense that Pip thinks he could somehow “catch” Magwitch’s poorness and criminality as if it were some type of disease. Magwitch, after all these years, is still described as a mere animal—“He ate in a ravenous way that was very disagreeable, and all his actions were uncouth, noisy, and greedy. Some of his teeth had failed him since I saw him eat on the marshes, and as he turned his food in his mouth and turned his head sideways to bring his strongest fangs to bear upon it, he looked terribly like a hungry old dog” (Dickens 355).

At first, all Pip can do is continue to stereotype Magwitch and obsess about how different he is from “proper society.” When Magwitch gets his new clothes, Pip comments that “[t]he more I dressed him and the better I dressed him, the more he looked like the slouching fugitive on the marshes” (Dickens 361). In his actions, Magwitch is “Prisoner, Felon, Bondsman, plain as plain could be” (Dickens 362). Pip is so distressed by the fact he has to walk around with a lowly criminal, he considers “enlist[ing] for India as a private soldier” (Dickens 362). Herbert believes the same as Pip and can’t stand to sit in the same chair Magwitch has occupied and thinks he’s “a man of a desperate and fierce character” (Dickens 367). As for Magwitch, he has “no perception of the possibility of my finding any fault with my good fortune” and is oblivious to Pip and Herbert’s distaste towards him (Dickens 364). In fact, Magwitch is obsessed with making a gentleman out of Pip. Far from being the hardened evil beast Pip and Herbert believe him to be, he wishes to repay Pip for being kind to him so

while women cooked and cleaned for other prisoners, guards, and government officials. Children were also transported and were schooled and taught a trade. Immigrants eventually moved to Australia by choice, and it no longer was just a penal colony. When the prisoner’s sentences were up, they could return to England, but had to find a way to pay their own fare. In 1857, this type of sentencing was finally eliminated (Mitchell 99-100).

many years ago and try to make him a successful gentleman of means. He believes that money and money alone will pave the way for Pip's success, going so far as to say, referring to women, "[t]hey shall be yourn, dear boy, if money can buy 'em" (Dickens 347).

It is not until Pip goes through the trials of getting Magwitch safely out of the country that his

repugnance to him had all melted away, and in the hunted wounded shackled creature who held my hand in his, I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously, towards me with great constancy through a series of years. I only saw in him a much better man than I had been to Joe (Dickens 467).

When Magwitch is dying, he tells Pip it wouldn't do for a "gentleman" to be seen with a convict, but Pip, realizing finally that Magwitch is a good person, refuses to leave him. He is the only one to stay with Magwitch, who to the outside world is still a mere criminal.

In *Great Expectations*, it continues to go against Magwitch that he had lived in such a wild, uncivilized country as Australia. Several of the Holmes stories strongly emphasize the negativity of living abroad and the influences that has upon a person, as well. Certainly in Holmes' time, there was a growing suspicion of other countries and how their influence might corrupt the moral and proper living of England. Throughout the stories, there are hints from the narrator that going abroad—outside of England—is detrimental to a person, and many of the foreigners shown in the stories are portrayed as criminals or buffoons. In "A Study in Scarlet," the first Holmes story, we learn of Watson's history⁷. From the first story, Watson sets the tone with his strong negative opinions about being abroad as an Army doctor and serving in the Indian wars. He claims that going to India brought "nothing but misfortune and disaster," especially since he had been shot (Doyle 17). The Ghazis are "murderous," and enteric fever was "that curse of our Indian possessions" (Doyle 17). While Pip describes London as merely "overrated," at the height of Later imperialism, Watson describes it as a "great cesspool into which all the loungers and idlers of the Empire are irresistibly drained" (Doyle 18).

In "The Speckled Band," Doyle continues to directly show the "dangerous effects of contamination by colonial experience" (Kestner 91). Helen Stoner comes to Holmes for help concerning her stepfather, Dr. Grimesby Roylott. The Roylotts used to be very rich, but Roylott has wasted the money away, except for the house and some land. He is the focal point for the negative effects of imperialism. He went to Calcutta, but beat his "native butler to death...[and] suffered a long term of imprisonment, and afterwards returned to England a morose and disappointed man" (Doyle 155, *Major Stories*). He lets "gypsies" use his land, whom Helen calls "vagabonds" (Doyle 155, *Major Stories*). Roylott also "has a passion...for Indian animals" and lets a cheetah and a baboon run loose on the property (Doyle 156, *Major Stories*). The animals seem to be a symbol for chaos/foreign influence running amuck on English soil, and this is intensified when the baboon is described as being a "hideous and distorted child" (Doyle

⁷ "Scarlet" is in itself an interesting tale that involves a lost colony of England—America.

169, *Major Stories*). Helen says that “[v]iolence of temper approaching to mania has been hereditary in the men of the family,” and she thinks that it was worsened “by his long residence in the tropics” (Doyle 155, *Major Stories*). Roylott exhibits “both aristocratic squandering and lower-class shiftlessness” in contrast to Holmes, who exhibits hard-working middle class values (Hennessy and Mohan 391). He pays a visit to Holmes himself, and “[h]is costume was a peculiar mixture of the professional and of the agricultural,” implying that he was not of either world and didn’t belong in either world (Doyle 161, *Major Stories*). Indeed, the two men are in great contrast with the other: “the colonial, eastern, aristocratic model of Roylott, and the idle-class gentlemanly nature of Holmes and Watson” (Kestner 91). Ironically, Roylott kills and is killed by a “swamp adder...the deadliest snake in India” (Doyle 171, *Major Stories*). It is interesting that there is more to this story than simply racial matters:

Roylott’s violence is associated causally with the East, its enactment in relation to three significant figures—the colonial servant, the white daughter, and the village blacksmith he assaults—constructs him in opposition to a series of ‘others’ arranged along race, gender, and class lines (Hennessy and Mohan 392).

However, Holmes’ narration “downplay[s]” the “connections among imperial domination, patriarchal control, and class privilege” (Hennessy and Mohan 392).

Concerning the women of the two texts, a recurring issue in both is agency, and this issue can be read in an imperial context—who has control, who believes they have control, and who is doing the controlling. As Dickens has turned many class assumptions on their heads, he does the same with control. Pip’s sister is the controller of her household, not Joe or even Pip, the males of the family. Pip and Joe are “fellow-sufferers” from the continuous temper and wrath of Mrs. Joe (Dickens 44). Joe’s innocence is exemplified when he tries to convince Pip that his sister is a good woman. He sees the sister like his mother, “a woman drudging and slaving and breaking her honest hart and never getting no peace in her mortal days” (Dickens 85). Mrs. Joe continuously overreacts—when Miss Havisham wants Pip to bring Joe with him and bring the indentured papers, Pip tells Joe and his sister and she throws a tantrum. There are imperial implications even while she verbally abuses both Pip and Joe:

she threw a candlestick at Joe, burst into a loud sobbing, got out the dustpan—which was always a very bad sign—put on her coarse apron, and began cleaning up to a terrible extent. Not satisfied with a dry cleaning, she took to a pail and scrubbing-brush, and cleaned us out of house and home...and then she asked Joe why he hadn’t married a Negress Slave at once? (Dickens 132).

Mrs. Pocket in *Great Expectations* probably believes, as a middle class wife and mother, that she is the controller. She’s obsessed with her lineage—her father brought her up “as one who in the nature of things must marry a title, and who was to be guarded from the acquisition of plebeian domestic knowledge” (Dickens 220). The idiocy of Mrs. Pocket, which harkens back to Mrs. Carson in *Mary Barton*, is shown in many ways. She is absentminded, is not able to manage her kids at all (Pip remarks that she looks at them as if she “didn’t quite

know what to make of them”), allows the baby play with nutcrackers, etc. (Dickens 223). She is easily flattered and defends the cook by saying, “the cook has always been a very nice respectful woman, and said in the most natural manner when she came to look after the situation, that she felt I was born to be a Duchess” (Dickens 227). She is merely fit for “an ornamental place in society,” and her behavior and

her dreamy torpor was ruffled only by hysterical ailments, swooning spells and a plague of obstructive servants. Frigid, neurasthenic and ornamental; wilting in the airless hothouse of Victorian domesticity; fretfully preoccupied by trifles; given to irrationality and hysteria; languishing in ennui; incapable of constancy, decision or stature

is all stereotypical of the Victorian middle class woman (McClintock 160). Mr. Pocket is, of all things, a “lecturer on domestic economy, and his treatises on the management of children and servants were considered the very best text-books on those themes”—which is ironic since both he and his wife can’t handle either (Dickens 299). Both Mrs. Pocket, with no education or knowledge, and Mr. Pocket with only book knowledge, are useless. Pip wonders who on earth is actually in charge of the house since “[b]oth Mr. And Mrs. Pocket had such a noticeable air of being in somebody else’s hands, that I wondered who really was in possession of the house and let them live there, until I found this unknown power to be the servants” (Dickens 221). Instead of the household being ruled by either the man or the woman, here is it ruled by the servants.

Concerning Miss Havisham and Estella, the traditional roles of the controller and the controllee are reversed again. Miss Havisham is “an immensely rich and grim lady who lived in a large and dismal house barricaded against robbers, and who led a life of seclusion” (Dickens 87). At the beginning of the novel, Estella, Miss Havisham’s adopted daughter is about Pip’s age, and is “beautiful and self-possessed; and she was as scornful of me as if she had been one-and-twenty, and a queen” (Dickens 92). Miss Havisham looks like a “wax-work” and “skeleton,” also as a “Witch” (Dickens 93, 119). Miss Havisham says of Estella, “I adopted her to be loved. I bred her and educated her, to be loved...” all the while making it sound as if love was the furthest thing from her mind (Dickens 269). Later, Pip sees that “Estella was set to wreak Miss Havisham’s revenge on men,” but mistakenly thinks that he is betrothed to Estella and romantically believes Miss Havisham “reserved it for me to restore the desolate house, admit the sunshine into the dark rooms, set the clocks a going and the cold hearths a blazing, tear down the cobwebs, destroy the vermin—in short, do all the shining deeds of the young Knight of romance, and marry the Princess” (Dickens 329, 261). Unfortunately, Miss Havisham has no such idea and tells Estella that she “can break his [Pip’s] heart” (Dickens 95). In a way, Miss Havisham has colonized Estella, originally a poor orphan, in order to shape her and use her to cause revenge. Estella says to her, “I am what you have made me. Take all the praise, take all the blame; take all the success, take all the failure; in short, take me” (Dickens 331). Miss Havisham thinks Estella is cold and heartless, especially after she has “loved” Estella so much. Estella says, “Mother by adoption, I have said that I owe everything to you. All I possess

is freely yours. All that you have given me, is at your command to have again. Beyond that, I have nothing” (Dickens 331). Chillingly, Estella presents herself like a conquered country, and yet in the way that she is able to hurt Miss Havisham, it is clear that she is the controller of the two.

In “A Scandal in Bohemia,” Holmes is confronted with problems concerning different classes, as well as the opposite sex. As in several instances in *Great Expectations*, a woman holds the control in this story. The King of Bohemia comes to Holmes with a problem: Irene Adler, an American opera singer living in London, is holding an incriminating photograph of the King and herself. The King is worried about it due to his impeding marriage and the fact that his fiancée is “the very soul of delicacy”(Doyle 40, *Major Stories*). He describes Adler as some type of she-male, with “a soul of steel” and “the face of the most beautiful of women, and the mind of the most resolute of men” (Doyle 40, *Major Stories*). The audience is led to question the King’s opinion, however, considering that he is dressed “rich with a richness which would, in England, be looked upon as akin to bad taste,” he gave “the impression of barbaric opulence,” and his facial features were “suggestive of resolution pushed to the length of obstinacy” (Doyle 36-37, *Major Stories*). The fact that he is foreign and his fashion faux pas denotes that he is a bit stupid.

Adler herself is more difficult to typecast than the King. Jann points out that “...she fits the stock character of the ‘adventuress,’ as the king calls her—not quite a prostitute, but definitely not respectable” and “[h]er very social marginality increases the damage she could do to the king’s reputation” (Doyle 112-13, *Major Stories*). Holmes does not perceive her to be very much of a threat—he notes that she is “a lovely woman, with a face that a man might die for” (Doyle 43, *Major Stories*). To find the photograph, he uses his knowledge of coding and treats the situation as an equation with variables to be filled in, as usual. He believes “[w]omen are naturally secretive, and they like to do their own secreting,” therefore, the picture must be in her house (Doyle 46, *Major Stories*). He decides to create a fire alarm, since during a fire a woman’s “instinct is at once to rush to the thing which she values most. It is a perfectly overpowering impulse...” (Doyle 49, *Major Stories*)

To put the plan into action, Holmes class cross-dresses again. He dresses up as a drunken groom to get some information on Adler (Holmes says that among stablemen, “[b]e one of them, and you will know all that there is to know”), and again as a clergyman with the skill of the best actor—Watson says that he actually seems to become the character since he plays the part so well (Doyle 42, *Major Stories*). After Adler inadvertently shows Holmes where the photo is, he and Watson go home, but Adler is one step ahead of them, and it is here that Holmes’ coding fails. She pays Holmes a visit cross dressed as a man, and he has no clue that it is she. In her letter to Holmes, she says she “often take[s] advantage of the freedom which it [cross-dressing] gives” (Doyle 51, *Major Stories*). Indeed, “[h]er usurpation of male dress allows her to enjoy male freedoms, like roaming the London streets alone, and her escape with the incriminating photograph is a direct revenge on Holmes for manipulating her into revealing what he wanted to know...” (Jann 113).

Holmes now has a newfound respect for Adler, although he is a bit embarrassed that she bested him. Further disparaging the King, the King comments, "I wish she had been of my own station! What a queen she would have made!" and "What a woman—oh, what a woman!...Is it not a pity she was not on my level?" (Doyle 50, 52, *Major Stories*). Holmes catches the irony of this—Adler *is* above his level, and he defends her: "From what I have seen of the lady, she seems, indeed, to be on a very different level to Your Majesty" (Doyle 52, *Major Stories*). Holmes keeps her photograph, yet Watson notes "...the best plans of Mr. Sherlock Homes were beaten by a woman's wit. He used to make merry over the cleverness of women, but I have not heard him do it of late. And when he speaks of Irene Adler, or when he refers to her photograph, it is always under the honourable title of *the woman*" (Doyle 52, *Major Stories*). Kestner sums up the issue by stating "[t]he 'scandal' in *A Scandal in Bohemia* is not that the monarchy of Bohemia is dethroned but that Holmes, the rationalist and male hero, is challenged, deceived and conquered by a woman" (Kestner 78).

Great Expectations and the Sherlock Holmes mysteries both end typically in terms of the outcome of cross-dressing and what type of imperialism was occurring at the time of the stories. At the end of *Great Expectations*, Pip finally settles his money problems to get Herbert his partnership and borrows money from Joe. He joins Herbert and works for Clarriker and Co. in the Eastern branch (still vague)—though not rich, "we had a good name, and worked for our profits, and did very well," and manages to pay back Joe (Dickens 499). Allingham notes "All too common are in ...Pip's Thames...are the false-witted...Pumblechooks, imperceptive fools whose evaluations of others are based solely on such superficial attributes such as dress, wealth, and social status, all of which mask or disguise rather than enhance the truth that lies underneath (449). Pip finally learns the truth in this and ceases to rebel against his class and cross-dress. As for Sherlock Holmes, after years of battling criminality and class cross-dressing, he is now known as the most famous detective of all time. He made a living out of coding and evaluating others based on "dress, wealth, and social status," as well as using it to his own advantage. In late Victorian and Edwardian England, cross-dressing becomes more acceptable in certain venues and situations, especially in order to get the job done and protects home and country against foreign influences and corruption.

CHAPTER THREE

HEART OF DARKNESS AND HEART OF ENGLAND: IMPERIALISM IN *JANE EYRE* AND *HEART OF DARKNESS*

Looking at both Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the pervasiveness of imperialism throughout the entire Victorian period, as well as the differences between the stages of imperialism, is clear. *Jane Eyre* shows that imperialism is very much a part of English culture, and *Heart of Darkness* shows its spread in the world. Imperialism in these stories affects all of the characters, and the lines between race, class, and gender become more and more blurred from *Jane Eyre* to *Heart of Darkness*. The novels discuss women, lower classes, and especially other races than white, both those located in "civilized" countries and those in the savage wilderness, and their reactions and rebellions to the institutions of imperialism and colonization. However, the divergence between the novels is in the perspectives—one shows an awareness of other countries and an Early imperialist perspective from within England, and the other shows the direct consequence of Later imperialism in one of those countries. *Jane Eyre* shows imperialism through Jane's eyes (from the inside of England to the outside of the world), while *Heart of Darkness* does this in the opposite manner (from the outside world to the inside of England and Europe).

For all the appreciation that the Victorians saw in the new and strange places discovered at the beginning of the period, they believed Britain was always the most moral and correct place on the globe. The French suffer a great deal of slurs in *Jane Eyre*—the French teacher at Lowood, Madame Pierrot, is "harsh and grotesque" (Brontë 57). Jane comments that she would speak with Sophie, Adele's French maid, "and sometimes I asked her questions about her native country; but she was not of a descriptive or narrative turn, and generally gave such vapid and confused answers as were calculated rather to check than encourage inquiry" (Brontë 117). She finds that Adele's chatteriness "...betrayed in her a superficiality of character, inherited probably from her mother, hardly congenial to an English mind" (Brontë 150). Later in the novel when Jane rejects Rochester, she is glad that she is not "a slave in a fool's paradise at Marseilles" with Rochester; she is happy that she is "a village-schoolmistress, free and honest, in a breezy mountain nook in the healthy heart of England" (Brontë 352). Jane seems to think that one can only be healthy and of sound, moral mind in the country of England.

Rochester also makes several derogatory remarks toward the French. When he recognized the officer that Celine was cheating on him with, he stopped

being jealous, for “[a] woman who could betray me for such a rival was not worth contending for: she deserved only scorn...” (Bronte 149). When Celine and the officer begin to insult and make fun of him, he finds that they don’t have the “energy and wit” to really say anything biting, “but they insulted me as coarsely as they could in their little way...” (Bronte 149). Of course, although they only insulted him “coarsely,” that did not stop him from shooting the officer in a duel-like manner. Rochester also “rescues” Adele: when he heard “...that she [Adele] was quite destitute, I e’en took the poor thing out of the slime and mud of Paris, and transplanted it here, to grow up clean in the wholesome soil of an English country garden” (Bronte 150).

Other countries are also not exempt from ridicule. Kitzan notes that the West Indies were a source of unease in the British Empire, due to its rebellions, strict laws, and prevalence of slavery (31). Rochester almost kills himself over Bertha until “[a] fresh wind from Europe” blows away the gross tropical-ness of Jamaica and encourages him to go back to England (Bronte 304). The West Indies now out of the question for finding a good wife, he roves about Europe searching for one, but finds his Italian mistress “unprincipled and violent,” and the German was “heavy, mindless, unimpressible” (Bronte 307). He comes to the conclusion that “[h]iring a mistress is the next worse thing to buying a slave: both are often by nature, and always by position, inferior: and to live familiarly with inferiors is degrading” (Bronte 307).

In *Heart of Darkness*, imperialistic attitudes towards other countries are also prevalent within the story. At this point in the late Victorian era, imperialism is at its height, and, as seen through Conrad, there are now questions as to the righteousness of it. Marlowe seems to be affected with the British imagination that Kitzan refers⁸ to and wishes to explore the dark, blank spots on the African map. However, while *Jane Eyre* shows the “successful” version of imperialism (i.e. British is best) and contrasts England to other countries, Marlowe relates the failure and inability of imperialism to actually bring anything to a positive end. When he reaches Africa, he describes seeing the Africans: they dig “vast, artificial” holes that serve no purpose, they die slow deaths from overwork, being “nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation lying confusedly in the greenish gloom” (Conrad 20). Over and over, as Marlowe sees the depressing effects of imperialism, his reaction is “I don’t know,” as if he cannot even comprehend a meaning, let alone an answer, to the atrocities around him. Kitzan proposes that Africa is called the Dark Continent not for its unexplored areas, but “because so many of its practices could not bear the light of day” (23).

Jane Eyre is interesting in that, for a great deal of the novel, it does not use an outside (of England) source to give evidence of imperialism as much as it uses its main, English, female character. The strong ties between class and imperialism in England are shown in Jane. She is seen to be the colonized “other” of the Reed family. Due to her low class, there is a great deal of colonialist language that surrounds her, and she is continually testing her limits as a poor relation. John refers to her as a “bad animal” and forces her to address him as “Mister Reed” (Bronte 21). In fact, Jane accuses John of being

⁸ See Thesis introduction.

“like a slave-driver...[and] like the Roman emperors” (Bronte 23). She is later told that she is “less than a servant” and that since she will never have money, “it is...[her] place to be humble, and to try to make...[herself] agreeable” to the Reeds (Bronte 24-5). Later in the novel at Rochester’s, Blanche Ingram comments that she is a student of physiognomy and that in Jane she sees “all the faults of her class” (Bronte 180).

Indeed, the poor in the book are almost seen like a separate people and race from the respectable middle-class and aristocracy of Victorian society. For example, when Jane was a young girl, she comments that children do not see “respectable poverty,” but only “ragged clothes, scanty food, fireless grates, rude manners, and debasing vices: poverty for me was synonymous with degradation” (Bronte 36). She admits that she “was not heroic enough to purchase liberty [from the Reeds] at the price of caste” (Bronte 36). Lowood is referred to as an “institution” for charity cases. It is very telling that when Mr. Brocklehurst is recounting how his daughter commented of the girls at Lowood that they were “quiet and plain,” and they “are almost like poor people’s children! And...they looked at my dress and mama’s, as if they had never seen a silk gown before,” (Bronte 45). Mrs. Reed comments that “[t]his is the state of things I quite approve,” happy that there is such a line of demarcation between her and the poorer women (Bronte 45). Lowood was to present to the girls “plain fare, simple attire, unsophisticated accommodation, hardy and active habits” (Bronte 45). The irony is that their “plain fare” was sometimes insubstantial fare, the simple attire was ugly and uncomfortable, the accommodation was drafty and badly suited to the weather, and activity was usually dampened by the weather. Brocklehurst thinks the girls are being spoiled (and having their souls ruined!) when they are given extra food after theirs is served burnt, when they wear more clothes than is absolutely necessary, when their clothing is ridden with holes (and he won’t allow extra material or needles), and when they wear their hair in topknots. His speech about Jane in front of the entire school shows that he believes he is doing these girls a favor, in order to keep their minds and souls pure. Although Brocklehurst’s penny-pinching ways eventually come to light, many of the girls had to die from disease before the institution’s poor state was discovered.

Admittedly, class doesn’t seem as apparent in *Heart of Darkness*, due mainly to the fact that a great deal of the novel takes place in the Congo. But it is interesting that in the instances when the class structure in Europe is revealed, it seems a bit “foreign” and removed from reality. Kurtz’s Intended is of a high class. She meets Marlowe in a “lofty” drawing room, with long window, a great deal of furniture, a huge fireplace, and a grand piano (Conrad 72). Marlowe describes the room as being contained, as well as being a sepulcher, almost as if the woman never gets out into the real world. Indeed, Marlowe mentions that women are out of the world and that they should “stay in that beautiful world of their own lest ours [men’s] gets worse” (Conrad 49). He goes on to say that the Intended was completely out of the men’s world, the world of imperialism.⁹

⁹ The Queen, on the other hand, seems to be in a category all her own. While in her society, she’s a leader, but in Victorian society, she is simply a threatening savage.

Race and the issues associated with it are clearly shown in the two novels. This begins right away in *Jane Eyre* when Jane, as a young, poor child, yells at Mrs. Reed, and her voice turns “savage” (Bronte 48). Jane realizes when she calms down that she had done wrong in letting her “passion” get away with her. Indeed, the problems with non-white (as in English white) peoples were that they had far too much “passion,” laziness, immorality, and too little intelligence and “correct” manners.

Bertha is the fascinating racial “other” in *Jane Eyre*, and again is seen in the perspective of looking from England to foreign lands—the only way we see Bertha in the West Indies is through Rochester’s eyes. Partly seen as a passionate madwoman and partly as a vengeful wife, she is portrayed in an extremely animalistic light (rather like *Great Expectations’* Magwitch). There are a great many racial slurs directed at her, but even so, it is unclear whether she is black or white. David points out that, as a “Creole,” Bertha could either be of European or African origination. Whatever her ethnicity, she is definitely described as an “other” outside the regular society and in a negative manner. David points out that “the ideal Victorian woman of empire (*Jane Eyre*) is always...an object constructed by powerful ideas of racial superiority and class difference...” (85-6). I would also say that the worst case scenario of a Victorian woman, Bertha, also fits this description.

According to Rochester’s very objective account, “Bertha Mason is mad; and she came of a mad family;--idiots and maniacs through three generations! Her mother, the Creole, was both a mad woman and a drunkard!” (Bronte 289). I find it interesting to note that while Bertha’s brother Richard is, well, a man, Rochester makes a point to emphasize that their mother was Creole (non-English) and that madness comes from the mother.

His story of how he was tricked into marrying Bertha for money is telling. Rochester’s father informed him that “Miss Mason was the boast of Spanish Town for her beauty: and this was no lie. I found her a fine woman, in the style of Blanch Ingram; tall, dark, and majestic” (Bronte 301). (It is interesting that he compares her to Blanche...) He also says that “[h]er family wished to secure me, because I was of a good race; and so did she...” (Bronte 301). “Good race” undoubtedly refers to his English-ness. The derogatory reference to those of Spanish decent is here, as well, since Bertha seduces him, and her family tricks him (although his family helps in that regard, as well).

Jane first sees Bertha when Bertha takes her (Jane’s) veil, puts it on, then allows Jane to see her “fearful and ghastly” features, including “a discoloured face—it was a savage face. I wish I could forget the roll of the red eyes and the fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments!” (Bronte 281). To be more detailed, the face was “purple: the lips were swelled and dark; the brow furrowed; the black eyebrows wildly raised over the blood-shot eyes” (Bronte 281). Not only is Bertha a frightening savage, but also she (or is Bertha an “it” by this point?) reminds Jane of a supernatural being—the vampire.

Later in the novel, Bertha is further given bestial characteristics. Rochester reveals that he was “already bound to a bad, mad, and embruted partner!” (Bronte 289). When Jane sees Bertha in the attic, she wonders

whether Bertha is “beast or human being,” since “one could not, a first sight, tell: it groveled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing; and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face” (Bronte 289-290). She is a “clothed hyena” (Bronte 290). Rochester and Jane both continuously refer to her “red eyes,” as if she were some sort of demon.

In contrast, the Queen, the female other in *Heart of Darkness*, is a much nobler sight. She seems to physically be like many Amazons portrayed in Victorian adventure fiction. She is draped in cloth, “jingle[s]” from her ornaments, and wears much ivory (Conrad 60). Unlike the very beastlike Bertha, she holds her head high. Her hair is almost war-like, “done in the shape of a helmet” (Conrad 60). She is also richly adorned with brass bracelets, makeup on her “tawny cheek,” and many necklaces of glass beads—“bizarre things, charms, gifts of witch-men, that hung about her, glittered and trembled at every step” (Conrad 60). She is so stately and inspires such awe and fright that the entire jungle is silent at her appearance, and Marlowe even comments that she looks like the jungle’s soul. While the Queen is incredibly different from Bertha, she is still a “savage” and very far from the Victorian woman ideal.

Plasa suggests Jane’s various run-ins with Bertha shows “patriarchal and colonial oppression” which Jane fails to see (75). Looking at how imperialism treats women, in general, is what ties together what I’ve already stated about women and class, and women and race. Because of imperialistic ideals, the female must be “conquered” and rendered submissive, regardless of race or class (or perhaps *because* of it, due to the blurring of these lines). In order to get a better idea of how women are affected by imperialism, perhaps a spectrum of women in both *Jane Eyre* and *Heart of Darkness* should be drawn. I have already mentioned one end of the spectrum—the “other,” “uncivilized” women, Bertha and the Queen. Both novels also have an “angel of the house” character. In *Jane Eyre*, the figure that fits this is Helen Burns. Completely different from the coquettes Blanche Ingram and Miss Oliver, Helen is the sacrificial lamb of the novel. Unlike Jane, who is constantly testing the rules of convention placed before her at Lowood, Helen is an angel. When Jane first sees her punished, she wonders how Helen can look so “composed, though grave” (Bronte 62). When Jane corners Helen about her calm behavior, Helen gives her a long speech about how one must turn the other cheek, and that only “[h]eathens and savage tribes hold” that one should retaliate against those that hurt them (Bronte 67). Helen, in fact, seems to be “playing” missionary with Jane, while ironically at the same time, it is the strict Miss Scatcherd who perpetually tries to “reform” and “correct” Helen’s errant ways. When Helen is dying of tuberculosis, she mentions that she has no one to miss her and that “[b]y dying young I shall escape great sufferings” (Bronte 90). Jane marvels at Helen’s ability to have an answer to all of her questions about faith, and she successfully encourages—and reforms—Jane to learn more about her faith. Unfortunately, Helen, as reformer and reformee, dies before the first quarter of the book is over.

While angelic Helen’s tragic death generates sympathy for her, there is very little generated in Conrad’s portrayal of the Intended in *Heart of Darkness*.

Mongia argues that the women in *Heart of Darkness* aren't really characters except in how they relate to men:

[n]ot active participants in adventure narratives, women are nevertheless the sites upon which the anxieties of late Victorian and Edwardian England are played out. The feminine...[is] always associated with what is weak but also of the threatening or seductive...Native women become allegories of geographical regions, themselves represented as feminine, which are penetrated by male sojourners. White women reflect domestic spaces which are fragile, beautiful, and removed from the active world of men (120-21).

This removal is seen with the Intended, who seems to have a weird blindness about Kurtz, and, thus, imperialism. Indeed, Kurtz has drawn a picture of the Intended “draped and blindfolded carrying a lighted torch” (Conrad 27). As I’ve mentioned above, the Intended is oblivious, unaware of the reality going on outside in the men’s world. Marlowe also gets a bit annoyed with the Intended at the end of the novel, when she claims to have known “know” Kurtz and when she dramatically claims “[w]hat a loss to me—to us...[t]o the world” Kurtz’s death has caused (Conrad 74). Marlowe mentions, “It’s queer how out of touch with truth women are! They live in a world of their own and there had never been anything like it and never can be. It is too beautiful altogether, and if they were to set it up it would go to pieces before the first sunset” (Conrad 16). This is probably why he lies to the Intended and tells her the last thing Kurtz uttered was her name—he didn’t want to shatter her fragile reality¹⁰. It is interesting that Marlowe has all these ideas about women and their fragile realities when he lies to them and allows those false realities to continue.

Marlowe also refers to his “excellent” aunt, another woman who seems to live in a dream world previously described. She was right in the middle of the “rush of all that humbug,” or imperialism, and seems to think that she is an expert on it. She tells Marlowe to concentrate on “weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways” (Conrad 16). She further demonstrates how far from the real world she is by telling Marlowe “to wear flannel, be sure to write often, and so on...”, as if he were going on a trip to the English countryside (Conrad 16).

Watt makes an interesting case that Conrad is only being misogynistic with certain classes of women. He points out that when Conrad is making his disparaging remarks toward women, he is not referring to the old women in the office of the Company, but to the Intended, his aunt, and “the womenfolk of his audience” (Watt 83). Indeed, the old women seem to see right through Marlowe¹¹. But because many Victorian women are given a “leisure role” in society, full of “philanthropic idealism,” “bourgeois society has in effect excluded them from discovering reality” (Watt 84). Marlowe’s aunt has “bought into the rhetoric of empire, but the words are divorced from the reality that Marlow suspects, and then comes to know in his journey to the center of Africa” (Robbins 235).

¹⁰ Imperialism brought out all the excesses in Kurtz and the Intended will never know the truth about the man she was in love with.

¹¹ See later in the chapter.

Another connection with imperialism previously not discussed in this thesis is how religion and imperialism also affected the women and race in the two novels. Certainly with religion in the equation, reform once again comes into play. In *Jane Eyre*, St. John is determined to become a missionary. He believes "...that no service degrades which can better our race. I hold that the more arid and unreclaimed the soil where the Christian labourer's task of tillage is appointed him—the scantier the meed his toil brings—the higher the honour" (Bronte 347). While England is a "healthy" place to be, as Jane calls it, everywhere else seems to be the place to go to either live slovenly, become ill, or to die. Also, while there are those like St. John who believe being a missionary is a noble and necessary cause, others believe he is "throwing a valuable life away" by wanting to go to India (Bronte 362). It would be laying "his genius out to wither, and his strength to waste, under a tropical sun" (Bronte 364).

Bronte continues to make sure that the perspective of imperialism is shown from the inside of England to the outside world as Jane considers what her role would be in the foreign country of India. There are some references to foreign belief systems, such as sati, the practice that Indian women follow (and some still do follow) where they burn themselves alive on their husband's funeral pyre. It also seems that in not loving her, yet making her his wife, St. John is making Jane a type of slave or only using her as something to sacrifice. St. John says that God will not accept "a mutilated sacrifice" (Bronte 397). Someone mentions that Jane would be "grilled alive in Calcutta" (Bronte 405). Jane comments that "...if I go to India, I go to premature death" (Bronte 395), and that "If I *do* make the sacrifice he urges, I will make it absolutely: I will throw all *on the altar*—heart, vitals, the entire victim" (Bronte 395, my emphasis). I agree that Jane exhibits the "ideology of female sacrifice for empire" (David 85).

There's a great deal of disturbing imperialist language around Jane. Rochester debates whether he should "play the master and be stern, or the friend and be benignant" toward Jane (Bronte 310). He calls himself the "[c]onquerer of the house" (Bronte 313). When Jane first meets Rochester: "I should have been afraid to touch a horse when alone, but when [he] told [me] to do it, I was disposed to obey" (Bronte 122). At the end of the story, Jane tells Rochester: "All my heart is yours, sir: it belongs to you..." (Bronte 433).

It is in the character of St. John where the imperialist language is very apparent. Both he and Rochester are harsh "masters" to Jane to the point where she questions her own existence. Jane even mentions that during her and Rochester's last argument, that though she was distressed, she "still possessed" her own soul (Bronte 313). Although St. John is described as a "fair creature," he seems infinitely darker—a worse "master" than Rochester. While Rochester has his fits of melancholy and temper, St. John seems to be the worse soul-sucker, for lack of a better term. He wants Jane to sacrifice herself completely—he wants her to go to school when the weather was bad (where she refused to complain to keep from annoying him), to make her learn Hindustani (while Jane hates it, he "was not a man to be lightly refused"), to force her to be only serious around him ("I fell under a freezing spell. When he said 'go,' I went; 'come,' I came; 'do this,' I did it. But I did not love my servitude: I wished, many a time,

he had continued to neglect me”), and only wants Jane as his helper (“...you are formed for labour, not for love...*I claim you*”) (Bronte 388, 389, 393, my emphasis). He tries to intimidate her by saying that she isn’t refusing him, but God; he also calls her “violent, unfeminine, and untrue” (Bronte 402). Still, Jane refuses him and will not yield to him.

So, there is a spectrum of women in both books—the white angels of the house (which perhaps Jane can eventually fit into) and the savage racial “other” women...However, there are problems with the way the “savage” women are portrayed that disrupts this spectrum and keeps things from being too black and white. Bertha’s “madness,” seems a little too calculated and vindictive to be completely insane. Her machinations are directed entirely toward Rochester, Richard, or Jane, not to just anyone who crosses her path (notice Mrs. Poole never gets injured). She sets fire to Rochester’s bed, stabs Richard, and rips Jane’s veil in two and stomps on the pieces. Bertha seems to be capable enough of knowing that Richard and Rochester were responsible for her incarceration and of feeling jealousy over Rochester to threaten Jane. When Jane hears how Bertha set fire to her chambers, the teller comments that “...she was like as if she knew somehow how matters had gone on, and had a spite at her” (Bronte 416). One has to wonder, how insane was Bertha? While through her actions one cannot wholly call her “sane,” one has to wonder how much her race and sex had to do with Rochester’s brilliant idea to lock her up in an attic. Meyer links Jane to other races that have been influenced by British imperialism and to oppression through Bertha’s “metaphorical role” (26). Through Bertha’s role, it can be seen that British imperialism has been “damaging” to both the West Indies and India,

[b]ut the novel then kills Bertha off in order to establish its uneasily utopian ending in which class and gender oppression have been erased from its fictive world. The ending of the novel reveals an uneasiness about the dehumanizing figurative use to which it has put people of non-white races, as Bertha’s specter in several forms haunts the novel’s otherwise utopian conclusion (Meyer 26).

These complications with women are also found in *Heart of Darkness*. When Marlowe is in the company office to get his physical, he notices two older women knitting in the room who are receptionists. One of them seemed to know all about them [the other men in the room] and about me too. An eerie feeling came over me. She seemed uncanny and fateful. Often far away there I thought of these two, guarding the door of Darkness, knitting black wool as for a warm pall, on introducing, introducing continuously to the unknown, the other scrutinizing the cheery and foolish faces with unconcerned old eyes (Conrad 14).

As those that guard the door of Darkness (truth?), Marlowe may be making a reference to the Cerberus, who guards the gates of hell. In that light, these harmless old ladies take on a decidedly more sinister tone.

The savage Queen is also presented in a complicated manner. She cannot simply be described as a wild beast the way Bertha can. The Queen is “wild and gorgeous,” “proud,” “savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent,”

“ominous and stately” “unswerving steadiness,” and “barbarous and superb” (Conrad 67). She is “the absolute Other: the racial, gendered, geographic and savage Other to Marlow’s white, male, European civilised self” (Robbins 236).” Everything about her is radically “other” to what “...Marlow [and the Victorians] expects of femininity. The Mistress has an air of dignity and command—there’s no feminine cringing, no lowering of the eyes in the gestures expected of Western womanly modesty. Her adornments emphasis power...” (Robbins 237). There is a xenophobia “of any of the ‘dark’ colonized places on the globe, inherited in what seemed to be a subliminal conspiracy between ‘strange’ races and the (eternal) feminine” (Gilbert and Gubar 40, *No Man’s Land*). Indeed, “[b]y describing the woman in terms of wilderness, Marlow transfers its evil qualities to her, and she becomes the personification of the spirit of the jungle...” (Singh 271). The Queen exhibits this strange air of fascination and terror (horror?) for the Europeans, although mostly terror. It’s amusing that Robbins notes if the sailor had tried to shoot her, “his response would have been an ‘un-manning’ since proper men, within their codes of masculinity, never offer violence women (237).

Cross-dressing is present in both novels. Rochester cross-dresses several times as persons of different races, as well as a woman. While having houseguests at Thornfield, a game of charades ensues. He first dresses up in “oriental fashion,” “in shawls, with a turban on his head. His dark eyes and swarth skin and Paynim features suited the costume exactly: he looked the very model of an eastern emir” (Bronte 186). Later, in another scene, Jane recognizes Rochester dressed as a criminal, though he has a “begrimed face,...disordered dress,...[a] desperate and scowling countenance,...[and] rough, bristling hair [that] might well have disguised him” (Bronte 187). Interestingly, instead of thinking that Rochester is incorrect in dressing as a desperate lawbreaker, Blanche thinks that he looks good—“Nothing could be more becoming to your complexion than that ruffian’s rouge” (Bronte 187). On another day while Rochester feigns his absence, he dresses up as an old, fortune-telling gypsy and looks like “[a] shockingly ugly old creature...almost as black as a crock,” and like a “tinkler” and a “rough one” (Bronte 194-95). Jane is the only one who recognizes him by his ring and then realizes that he is the gypsy. Referring to his cross-dressing, she has mixed feelings, saying “[W]hat a strange idea!” and that it “was not right,” but she doesn’t really chastise him (Bronte 204). While the cross-dressing is a bit odd to Jane, it is still acceptable since it was “in fun,” and Rochester certainly had no thoughts to actually become what he dressed up as.

Certainly Jane herself cross-dresses in multiple ways. To herself, she will always be “plain Jane,” but in her life, she moves up and down the social ladder at dizzying speed: from orphan, to charity school, charge to governess, to outcast, to teacher, (almost) to missionary’s wife, to Rochester’s wife. Considering the many notches in the social ladder Jane has occupied, one would think that she would hold sympathy with all classes, especially the poor. However, in an imperialist dimension of this cross-dressing issue, David argues that Jane is both the colonizer and the colonized, or, as she puts it, the

disciplinary governess and the disciplined governess. On one hand, Jane certainly has what can be seen as her feminist moments. She believes that [w]omen are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer..." and that "[i]t is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex (Bronte 116-7).

However, there are certainly suggestions that *she* becomes a colonizer, such as when she sees Mrs. Reed again after successfully becoming a governess—she feels “a determination to subdue her—to be her mistress in spite both of her nature and her will” (Bronte 231). McClintock states that due to the “privileges of race,” women were oftentimes given power over the “colonized,” which probably includes both over those of other races and classes, and that “[a]s such, white women were not the hapless onlookers of empire but were ambiguously complicit both as colonizers and colonized, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting” (6).

McClintock’s statement fits Jane since she also functions as a colonizer/moralizer, such as with the poor students at her school in Morton. St. John thinks the position is degrading and that it will be a waste of her “sentiments,” and, indeed, she finds some of the students “are unmannered, rough, intractable, as well as ignorant; but others are docile, have a wish to learn, and evince a disposition that pleases me” (Bronte 348, 351). Jane hates teaching there, although some eventually become “as decent, respectable, modest, and well-informed young women as could be found in the ranks of the British peasantry” (Bronte 380). Instead of rebelling, as one would imagine, and holding sympathy and respect for these children, she barely can bring herself to hope for anything but failure in them. It is ironic and a sign of the circle of imperialism and its hold on all classes/genders/races that she becomes the colonizer after she herself was colonized. However, I would argue that Jane’s new power revolves around a certain sphere—not necessarily the private sphere—that she is allowed to work in, and I would further argue that she is more of the disciplined governess because men still hold more power over women in this imperialistic system.

Kurtz is the racial cross-dresser in *Heart of Darkness* by “going native” not in the sense of adapting to a new culture, but in the sense that he has betrayed “the ideals of the civilization he is supposedly importing from Europe” (Brantlinger 193). Marlowe finds out a great deal of information about him as he sails through the Congo to find him. The General Manager describes Kurtz as being “a prodigy,” “a special being,” and “an emissary of pity, and science, and progress, and devil knows what else” (Conrad 28). Kurtz has “collected, bartered, swindled, or stolen” more ivory than all the other agents (Conrad 48). He was a musician, painter, writer, orator, but even his relative “could not tell me what he had been—exactly. He was a universal genius” (Conrad 71). Kurtz was educated a bit in England, his mother was “half-English, his father was half-

French” and “his sympathies were in the right place” (Conrad 50). Complications regarding race come into the picture when Marlowe comments that “[a]ll Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz” and also that he [Kurtz] wrote a report for the “International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs” (Conrad 50). The report begins by suggesting whites present themselves to Africans as gods, and ends with “Exterminate all the brutes!” (Conrad 50-1). Marlowe wishes to find him simply to hear his voice and his gifted manner of communicating.

Brantlinger discusses how the character of Kurtz was based on several men who had gone native and how disturbing Victorians found the phenomenon of a person going native, forsaking civilization, and giving into their primitive instincts (193-94). When Marlowe finally finds Kurtz, Kurtz is everything and nothing what he expected. It is clear that Kurtz is now a changed man and has become extremely influenced by his occupation in the wilderness. He is very possessive and imperialistic when he speaks about “My Intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my...” (Conrad 49). Marlowe says he wants to know what Kurtz belongs to and “how many powers of darkness claimed him for their own,” since he “had taken a high seat amongst the devils of the land—I mean literally” (Conrad 49). He worries that Kurtz’s “nerves went wrong and caused him to preside at certain midnight dances ending with unspeakable rites, which...were offered up to him,” and indeed that Kurtz would “forget himself amongst these people [the natives]” (Conrad 50, 56). It is mentioned several times that Kurtz had “no restraint” and that “something was wanting in him” (Conrad 51, 57). Singh points out that “[a]ccording to Marlow the colonizers became psychologically depraved because, being cut off from the norms of civilization, they turned to the lawless jungle,” or even worse, they were able to explore in the jungle “the utterly savage state of being that existed before civilization tamed the unconscious with its absolute desire for egotistic self-fulfillment by means of moral restraints...” (270). Marlowe says that there was no need for the brutality of putting heads on the posts of the station and adds that “[t]he wilderness had found him [Kurtz] out early, and had taken on him a terrible vengeance for the fantastic invasion” (Conrad 57). Marlow declares,

I tried to break the spell, the heavy mute spell of the wilderness that seemed to draw him to its pitiless breast by the awakening of forgotten and brutal instincts, but the memory of gratified and monstrous passions. This alone, I was convinced, had driven him out to the edge of the forest, to the bush, towards the gleam of fires, the throb of drums, the drone of weird incantations; this alone had beguiled his unlawful soul beyond the bounds of permitted aspirations (Conrad 65).

Kurtz was intelligent, “[b]ut his soul was mad. Being alone in the wilderness, it had looked within itself and, by Heavens, I tell you, it had gone mad” (Conrad 65). Kurtz is “so far gone” to Marlowe that he claims that “[h]is was an impenetrable darkness” (Conrad 68). It is because of this that “Marlow uses the unknown, remote, and primitive Africa as a symbol for an evil and primeval force...,” more or less as a hell (Singh 271).

As a man who went “native,” it is clear that Kurtz has rebelled, but what has he rebelled against? Brantlinger argues that Kurtz disgusts Marlow because

he has gone native not only in the sense of adapting to another country's culture, but

he betrays the ideals of the civilization he is supposedly importing from Europe. Conrad does not debunk the myth of the Dark Continent: Africa is the location of his hell on earth. But at the center of that hell is Kurtz, the would-be civilizer, the embodiment of Europe's highest and noblest values, radiating darkness (193).

On the other hand, Singh believes that Kurtz's behavior "can be seen as a rejection of the materialism of the West in favor of a simpler and more honest way of life. Certainly from the point of view of the African tribesman Kurtz has done nothing abominable in recognizing the virtues of his way of life" (276).

Interestingly, Singh takes this further, that

[t]he problem with Kurtz, which Marlow doesn't realize, is not that Kurtz went native, but that he did not go native enough, for Kurtz perverted the customs of the tribe, making them a means to a deplorable end—namely, keeping the ivory flowing and colonialism a profitable venture for his employers—and he never assumed the positive virtues of the tribe. Thus the adoption of the tribal way of life is the wrong symbol for Kurtz's depravity. Marlow picks it because he does not differentiate between tribal customs and evil practices (277).

He believes that Kurtz's statement of "Exterminate all the brutes" refers to Europeans, since "[g]iven that Kurtz became one with an African tribe and learned to understand the meaning of their customs, his words may be taken to mean that the only way Africa could develop would be if the real brutes or savages, the colonizers, were removed" (Singh 277).

Both *Jane Eyre* and *Heart of Darkness* show, within the language of their texts, the pervasiveness of the ideology of imperialism and its connection to class, gender, and race, but they show this pervasiveness in different perspectives. Imperialism is presented through the descriptions of India, the Congo, Europe, and England, as well as through the many characters it affected. But while Jane's cross-dressing allows her within certain constraints to function and establish herself in an imperialistic society, Kurtz's is seen as the ruin of a great mind. In *Jane Eyre*, there is still a sense of nobility in the sacrifice of being a missionary or adventurer and taming the savages. By the time of *Heart of Darkness*, this sense has dissolved into futility and despair.

CONCLUSION

The characters in the six novels addressed in this thesis cross-dressed in reaction and rebellion to the stringent gender, class, and race lines Victorian society had in place due to imperialism. Indeed, many of the characters felt the need to cross-dress in order to adapt or even survive in their changing, imperialistic society. Early imperialism novels showed cross-dressing in usually more subtle ways, but certainly still present. Successful, permanent cross-dressing was achieved by accepted avenues such as marriage and hard work (both leading from a change from a lower class to a higher one). Later imperialism novels show that circumstances under cross-dressing were more widespread and accepted. The lines between what was acceptable and unacceptable and between race, gender, and class were also blurrier and less certain. To some extent or another, during Early and Later imperialism, the characters all cross-dressed, albeit in different forms and degrees and resulting in different consequences.

In *Mary Barton*, an Early imperialism novel, Mary and her father are poor, hungry, and either unable to get work or worked to the bone for little money. Mary cross-dresses when she tries to marry above her class in order to improve her and her father's life financially and socially. While it was possible for a woman to do this respectably at this time, Gaskell makes it clear that it would not be in Mary's best interest to do so (especially since Harry was not respectable or honorable, her father hated those of the upper classes, she would miss out on Jem who was a good man from her own class, etc.). Esther tries to do something similar when she attempts to marry a soldier, but again Gaskell seems to be warning against this, since Esther has a child out of wedlock and becomes a prostitute and an alcoholic. The child from the relationship even dies, further pushing the idea that nothing fruitful and lasting comes from an improper union. The only upward movement in class and cross-dressing that occurs to and succeeds for Mary is when she marries Jem and moves to a new country. Even then, she has only married into what Himmelfarb calls the "respectable" poor, or what I would call the "stable" poor, since Jem has a more secure profession than John Barton did (9).

In *Great Expectations*, written thirteen years after *Mary Barton*, cross-dressing still doesn't work well. The majority of the novel addresses Pip's desire to cross-dress and his actions as a cross-dresser to become a member of the upper class. Regardless of these desires and actions, however, Pip still does not succeed in his efforts—he simply is not able to completely disengage himself from his poor past, due to Joe's presence in his life, Estella's comments of how he must find new and more appropriate acquaintances for his class, etc. Magwitch serves as Pip's chief reminder that he cannot ever truly be a member

of the upper class. Pip does not feel it is right to continue to take Magwitch's money since Magwitch is a criminal, regardless of how Magwitch wants to financially help him. Ironically, it is through his adventures with Magwitch that Pip finally decides to truly let go of his wishes to be a man of leisure and resolves to make his living honestly through hard work. He moves to the East, and, with no thought of cross-dressing, becomes a member of the working middle class.

Jane Eyre, although written in the same year as *Mary Barton*, ironically shows some of the most blatant cross-dressing. Rochester deliberately cross-dresses into different classes, races and genders than his own, but he does so only in games and in jest. In the charades game, it was apparent that all the participants dress as "other" than they are. His stint as a female gypsy is deviant (Jane wonders why on earth he did such a thing), but it also shows Rochester's dark and satirical sense of humor. Both instances seem to focus on Jane's impressions that he is different and eccentric from other people in his class. Jane isn't quite as obvious a cross-dresser as Rochester. She is in a strange class position herself—as an orphan, she is not part of the "rough" poor, and barely qualifies as "respectable" poor as a governess/teacher (Himmelfarb 9). She is very aware of her own class and station, and, while for a great deal of the novel she was in love with Rochester, she didn't realistically believe that she could marry him. Jane cross-dresses when she goes to school and gets enough training to be a governess. Through this, she can get a job and rise above her poor orphan status. She continues to cross-dress when teaching to the students in Morton—she thinks lowly of them and acts like they are beneath her, conveniently forgetting that she was once a burdensome orphan. By the end of the novel, she acceptably moves up in class due to her inheritance, and later, her marriage.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles, a Later imperialism novel, is marked by Tess's lack of desire to cross-dress and the desire of everyone around her to make her cross-dress into multiple classes and sub-classes for their own needs. Although Tess is happy in the position that she's in and is satisfied to work hard and reap the rewards she deserves, that doesn't stop her parents, Alec, or Angel from causing her position to fluctuate from being poor to respectable poor to middle class to "rough" poor to mistress (Himmelfarb 9). There are many similarities between Tess and Jane Eyre in that men in both novels try to clothe, bejewel, etc. them into a higher class that they do not feel comfortable with. Cross-dressing affects everyone in novel, yet no one profits from it. Tess's parents never get rich, Angel is unable to work with his lower class wife, Alec cannot be a minister *or* have Tess as his wife or mistress (and is in fact killed by Tess over his forcing her to cross-dress), and Tess, of course, is ultimately hanged. What is it that distinguishes this from *Jane Eyre*? For one, there is the fact that at different points of the novel, cross-dressing is successful, if only for a little while (Angel is accepted at the dairy for months, Tess is accepted as Angel's middle class wife, if only for a day, etc.). And, at the very end, Angel winds up marrying Liza-Lu, Tess's sister, and this matter is given no great scrutiny. Hardy seems to treat this as if it were the natural result of Tess's death, whereas with Tess, half the book revolves around Tess's inadequacies to be a member of the middle

class and Angel's romantic dreams of forming her into a member of the middle class. This instance at the end of the novel seems to send the message that it is easier to cross-dress than Tess or Angel really imagined...

Sherlock Holmes, who stars in a collection of Later imperialism stories, both cross-dresses and deals with those that cross-dress. He cross-dresses often in order to gain information for his cases and to catch a criminal. Other less respectable characters cross-dress, as well—St. Clair, the beggar cum middle class gentleman and Irene, a gender cross-dresser. Certainly within the Holmes stories the lines of acceptable cross-dressing beings to blur. Doyle writes the stories so that it is obvious to the audience that it is wrong to dress as a beggar and make a great deal of money without working and that it's wrong and a bit disturbing to dress as a gender a person is not, regardless of whether or not it gives them "freedom," as Adler describes it. But there is no question as to whether or not Holmes is right or wrong for cross-dressing himself, for pretending to be someone in a class and occupation he is not, and tricking other people to get information.

In *Heart of Darkness*, the last Later imperialism novel I work with, Kurtz cross-dresses by becoming a part of the culture he was exploiting in Africa. The story highlights the dual, opposing sides to his personality: while being in European civilization, he is the product of Europe, engaged to the Intended, and known to be a multi-talented genius of some sort. While in the Congo, he becomes "savage" as a part of the tribe, uses a great deal of brutality, has the Queen as his mistress, and becomes, as Marlowe sees him, "dark." Originally seen by many as a great prodigy, Kurtz seems to turn away—or perhaps more toward, depending on how one looks at it—the culture he left behind. Seen as a god by the natives, Kurtz is able to control them, extract great amounts of ivory, and survive in the jungle as the "darkness" begins to take him over. "Dark" or not, he successfully cross-dresses and finds a place for himself in African society until he is forcibly removed from it.

The conditions of gender, class, and race that led all these characters to cross-dress can be led back to how imperialism affected so many things both inside and out of England. The pervasiveness of these conditions and cross-dressing leads one to believe that they lasted throughout the entire Victorian period in varying degrees, but they truly seemed to be more common in the Later imperialism period due to the changes that occurred in Victorian society up to and during that time. While in the Early imperialism novels, the characters cross-dress in order to better their lives, in the Later imperialism novels/stories, the characters (some of them holding higher positions in society than in the Earlier novels) cross-dress to adapt to changes in English/European society. Somehow, instead of the strict lines of race, class, and gender holding and in spite of a new resurging need to hold onto all that was proper and English, the lines relaxed. In Later imperialism, the fantasy of cross-dressing altered along with the reality of the changes in society, and these changes did not vary greatly until the transformations that occurred with the outbreak of World War I.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allingham, Philip V. "Patterns of Deception in Huckleberry Finn and Great Expectations." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*. 46: 4, 1992. 447-472.
- Auerbach, Nina. "The Rise of the Fallen Woman." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. 35:1, 1980. 29-52.
- Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. 1848. Boston: Bedford Books, 1996.
- Brantlinger, Patrick. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988.
- Cohen, Monica F. *Professional Domesticity in the Victorian Novel: Women, Work and Home*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.
- Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. 1899. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1988.
- David, Deirdre. *Rule Britannia: Women, Empire, and Victorian Writing*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1995.
- Davis, Lance E. and Robert A. Huttenback. *Mammon and the Pursuit of Empire: The Political Economy of British Imperialism, 1860-1912*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986.
- Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations*. 1861. Peterborough: Broadview Literary Press, 1998.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *Famous Tales of Sherlock Holmes*. 1887. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1958.
- . "The Man With the Twisted Lip." *Sherlock Holmes: The Major Stories With Contemporary Critical Essays*. Ed. John A. Hodgson. Boston: Bedford Books, 1994.
- . "A Scandal in Bohemia." *Sherlock Holmes: The Major Stories With Contemporary Critical Essays*. Ed. John A. Hodgson. Boston: Bedford Books, 1994.

- . "The Speckled Band." *Sherlock Holmes: The Major Stories With Contemporary Critical Essays*. Ed. John A. Hodgson. Boston: Bedford Books, 1994.
- Fieldhouse, D. K. *The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Survey From the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1965.
- Freeland, Nataalka. "The Politics of Dirt in *Mary Barton* and *Ruth*." *Studies in English Literature*. 42: 4, 2002. 799-818.
- Gallagher, Catherine. *The Industrial Reformation of English Fiction: Social Discourse and Narrative Form, 1832-1867*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth. *Mary Barton*. 1848. New York: The Century Company, 1906.
- Hardy, Thomas. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. 1891. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1991.
- Hennessy, Romemary and Rajeswari Mohan. "The Speckled Band:" the Construction of Woman in a Popular Text of Empire." Ed. John A. Hodgson. Boston: Bedford Books, 1994. 389-401.
- Himmelfarb, Gertrude. *Poverty and Compassion: The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians*. New York: Knoph Inc., 1991.
- Ingham, Patricia. *The Language of Gender and Class: Transformation in the Victorian Novel*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Jaffe, Audrey. "Detecting the Beggar: Arthur Conan Doyle, Henry Mayhew, and 'The Man With the Twisted Lip.'" *Representations*. 0:31, Special Issue: The Margins of Identity in Nineteenth-Century England, 1990. 96-117.
- Jann, Rosemary. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: Detecting Social Order*. New York: Twain Publishers, 1995.
- . "Sherlock Holmes Codes the Social Body." *English Literary History*. 57:3, 1990. 685-708. Judd, Denis. *The Victorian Empire: A Pictorial History*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970.
- Kestner, Joseph A. *Sherlock's Men: Masculinity, Conan Doyle, and Cultural History*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1997.
- Kitzan, Laurence. *Victorian Writers and the Image of Empire: The Rose-Colored Vision*. Westport: Greenwood, 2001.

- Knight, Stephen. "The Case of the Great Detective." *Sherlock Holmes: the Major Stories with Contemporary Critical Essays*. Ed. John A. Hodgson. Boston: Bedford Books, 1994. 368-380.
- Kucich, John and Dianne F. Sadoff, eds. *Victorian Afterlife*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.
- McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Mitchell, Sally. *Daily Life in Victorian England*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996.
- Meyer, Susan. *Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996.
- Mongia, Padmini. "Empire, Narrative and the Feminine in *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness*." *Under Postcolonial Eyes: Joseph Conrad After Empire*. Eds. Gail Fincham and Myrtle Hooper. Rondebosch: UCT Press, 1996. 120-132.
- Murphy, Patricia. *Time is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender, and the New Woman*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001.
- Plasa, Carl. *Textual Politics from Slavery to Postcolonialism: Race and Identification*. New York: St. Martin's, 2000.
- Renk, Kathleen J. *Caribbean Shadows and Victorian Ghosts*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999.
- Robbins, Ruth. *Literary Feminisms*. New York: St. Martin's, 2000.
- Theismeyer, Lynn. "Imperial Fictions and Nonfictions: The Subversion of Sources in Mary Kingsley and Joseph Conrad." *Transforming Genres: New Approaches to British Fiction of the 1890s*. Nikki Lee Manos and Meri-Jane Rochelson, eds. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. 155-172.
- Thomas, Ronald R. "The Fingerprint of the Foreigner: Colonizing the Criminal Body in 1890s Detective Fiction and Criminal Anthropology." *English Literary History*. 61: 3, 1994. 655-683.
- Watt, Ian. "*Heart of Darkness* and Nineteenth-Century Thought." *Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House, 1991. 77-89.

Young, Robert J. C. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*. Oxford:
Blackwell Publishers, 2001.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Stacey G. Abbott was born in Birmingham, Alabama. She received her B.A. at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and her M.A. from Florida State University, where she was also a Teaching Assistant. She hopes to pursue a career in education.