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Henry James

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6 Henry James

Sarah B. Daugherty

The prevailing interest in cultural criticism has increased the scope, as well as the number, of James studies. Adeline Tintner's latest book exemplifies the trend away from the search for James's literary sources and toward the exploration of his influence on contemporary novelists and filmmakers. Traditionalists may worry about straying too far afield, since adaptations (such as Iain Softley's film of *The Wings of the Dove*) deviate markedly from the original texts. Potentially, however, by examining these adaptations we can learn a great deal about James's fiction and its reception by today's readers, including our students. In another useful development, analyses of James's relations to his own milieu have become more subtle. In the past, revisionists have exaggerated his involvement in mass culture; but this year John Carlos Rowe and Richard Salmon have written nicely balanced accounts of his desire for, and resistance to, popularity. Queer theory has likewise yielded more nuanced results, notably Hugh Stevens's admirable book on James and sexuality. Also valuable are the essays in *The Cambridge Companion to Henry James*, ed. Jonathan Freedman (see *AmLS* 1997, pp. 109–10), which remains the best collection for general readers.

i Bibliography, Editions, Reference Works, Biographical Studies

"Adeline Tintner's Collection of Henry James Letters and Archival Material at the New York Public Library" (*HJR* 19: 80–90), by Pierre A. Walker and Steven H. Jobe, catalogs this donation of 130 letters by James (only 13 of which have been published) and related correspondence by family and friends, including William James and Henry Sr.

In "James's Hand and Gosse's Tail: Henry James's Letters and the Status of Evidence" (*HJR* 19: 72–79) Pierre A. Walker and Greg W.

Zacharias explain why *The Complete Letters of Henry James*, to be published by the University of Nebraska Press beginning in 2001, will be a plain-text edition reproducing the letters as posted. A clear-text version (such as Rayburn S. Moore's volume of James-Gosse letters) obscures some significant anomalies. In 1894, for example, James began "I hope this will be in time to put my hand" before concluding the sentence with "a little salt on your tail before you fly away." But the evidence, note the authors, leaves ample room for debate on the subject of James's homoeroticism.

Arthur Sherbo's *Henry James in the Periodicals* (Locust Hill, 1997) collects reviews and essays from rare journals, most of them unlisted in standard bibliographies. This small volume is a treasury of witticisms, such as H. L. Mencken's comparison of James to "a biologist who devoted his whole life to a meticulous and even furious study of the wings of butterflies."

Several texts are designed for college and graduate courses. A new edition of *Hawthorne* (Cornell, 1997) includes a brief but thoughtful foreword by Dan McCall emphasizing the romancer's influence on James's later fiction. *Documents of American Realism and Naturalism*, ed. Donald Pizer (So. Ill.), reprints "The Art of Fiction" with a preface noting James's "aesthetic of creativity." The section "Modern Academic Criticism, 1951-1995" incorporates critiques by Lionel Trilling, Alfred Habegger, Eric J. Sundquist, Amy Kaplan, and Kenneth W. Warren.

A Reader's Guide to the Short Stories of Henry James, by Christina E. Albers (Hall, 1997), both prints 112 selections from Leon Edel's *Collected Tales* and prefaces each with a discussion of its publication history, circumstances of composition, relation to other works, and interpretation by critics. These synopses are useful; but Albers excludes the longer tales (e.g., "The Turn of the Screw") and several shorter ones deemed too famous for brief commentary (e.g., "Daisy Miller" and "The Pupil"). *The Turn of the Screw* and *What Maisie Knew*, ed. Neil Cornwell and Maggie Malone (St. Martin's), is a casebook collecting interpretations of the past 20 years as well as a previously unpublished essay by Ronald Knowles. The two stories, say the editors, are linked by their indeterminacy; hence, their appeal to "those working at the cutting edge of critical theory."

Wendy Graham's "Bringing It All Back Home: Henry James and the Mother-Complex" (*ArQ* 54, i: 27-64) contributes to the long tradition of Freudian biographical studies. According to Graham, James suffered

less from homosexual panic than from disappointment in his mother's love, the precipitating event being the weaning shock he experienced when Mary James had to attend to Henry Senior during his nervous breakdown. This account of family history is speculative, to say the least; but Graham offers a provocative rereading of *The Princess Casamassima* to support her claim that James could neither "capitulate to heterosexual convention" nor fearlessly explore homosexual themes.

James's encounters with British writers (Eliot, Dickens, Trollope, Browning, and Wells) are described by R. W. B. Lewis in "Henry James: The Victorian Scene," pp. 83–98 in Wm. Roger Louis, ed., *More Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics, and Culture in Britain* (Texas). James's memoirs were often more favorable than his critiques of novels and poems—although, as Lewis reminds us, his autobiographies were partly fictional. Janice J. Kirkland's "Henry James and the Darwins of Ridgemount" (*HJR* 19: 91–93) documents the novelist's friendship with William Darwin, the oldest of Charles's sons, and his American-born wife Sara (Sedgwick). It also corrects an error in Edel's *Henry James Letters*; since Sara Darwin died in 1902, the recipient of a letter dated 15 March 1910 must have been her niece Sara Norton.

Two essayists offer contrasting descriptions of James's sense of place. Kate Fullbrook in "Henry James and the Analeptic of Place" (*Symbiosis* 1 [1997]: 187–99) argues that for James this sense served as "a restorative remedy against the psychological terrors of the void." But whereas *English Hours* (1905) displays "the inwardness of his relation to England," *The American Scene* (1907) ends with his isolation. John Landau cautions against such dichotomies, however, in "James's Home Ground," pp. 257–67 in *Homes and Homelessness*. Unlike his British predecessors James tried to construct a "home" in an art of fiction couched in architectural metaphors; but the fiction itself forestalls "any normative notion of home as a place of comfort or containment" and frustrates critics seeking foundations in the writer's experience.

ii Sources, Influences, Adaptations

Studies of influence dominate this section, the most comprehensive being *Henry James's Legacy: The Afterlife of His Figure and Fiction* by Adeline R. Tintner (LSU). The initial chapters deal with the representations of James—often parodic or satirical—by his male and female contemporaries. (Wharton's "The Eyes," for example, depicts "a cold-

blooded homosexual surrounded by young acolytes off whom he feeds.”) A longer section on James’s legacy discusses more complex appropriations, including those by such unlikely heirs as Hemingway, Sylvia Plath, and Philip Roth. A final chapter is devoted to Leon Edel’s biography, a literary text in itself. Tintner’s discussions are enhanced by delightful illustrations, from a rare photograph of James and his bicycle to the cover of a Banana Republic catalog featuring expatriate cultural figures. A footnote is provided by Tintner in an article with an incongruous title: “Henry James’s Fiction ‘Swallowed, Digested, and Assimilated’: A Strong ‘Whiff’ of Henry James in 1997’s *Overflow*” (*HJR* 19: 255–63). Here she documents Jamesian allusions in fiction by Louis Auchincloss, Anita Brookner, and Thomas Caplan.

James plays a key role in a much more controversial study, Michael Moon’s *A Small Boy and Others: Initiation and Imitation in American Culture from Henry James to Andy Warhol* (Duke), which presents James’s career as a paradigm for later artists tapping into “the powers of queer performativity.” Moon’s biographical interpretations (like his reading of “The Pupil,” incorporated in the first chapter) may inspire skepticism, especially insofar as they depend on puns and wordplay. (Did James’s description of the Yiddish theater as “Queer, clumsy, wasteful” reflect an anxious response to its homoeroticism?) But Moon successfully demonstrates that James was more radical, yet more representative, than Oscar Wilde precisely because he refused to quarantine his gay characters. And the second chapter of the book (“Initiation into Style: In the Memory Palace of Henry James”) is a provocative discussion of the paintings in the Louvre that may have given James a “foretaste” of his “queer so-called inward life.”

Several essays deal with individual works by James, recording their political and psychological reverberations. In “*The Princess Casamassima* and Tennyson’s *The Princess*” (*HJR* 19: 183–88) Jane Benardete notes multiple allusions to the poem, whose idealistic protagonist creates harmony despite gender and class differences. Ultimately, however, James’s novel critiques Victorian politics, suggesting the failure of conservative sentimentality. William Veeder’s “James and Fame Enduring” (*HJR* 19: 264–78) treats “The Aspern Papers” as an influence on Carlos Fuentes’s novella *Aura* (1962). Like many of today’s Gothic filmmakers, the two writers play on “male fear of the all-powerful mother.” Beth A. Boehm’s “A Postmodern Turn of *The Turn of the Screw*” (*HJR* 19: 245–54) summarizes Hilary Bailey’s *Miles and Flora* (1997). James’s ambiguous

ghosts, argues Boehm, are more “postmodern” than Bailey’s literal ones—and more effective in supporting a critique of Victorian repression. Adeline R. Tintner’s “Eleven Ways of Looking at Henry James’ *The Ambassadors*” (*AB Bookman’s Weekly* 102: 65–68) discusses contemporary reworkings of the novel, notably Douglas Hobbie’s *This Time Next Year* (1998). “National Identity in Yokomitsu’s *Ryoshu* and James’s *The Ambassadors*” by Masayuki Akiyama (*CLS* 35: 125–31) is a study of parallels, since the protagonist of the Japanese novel (*The Sadness of Travel*, 1948), like Strether, achieves a renewed sense of identity as a result of his journey abroad.

Reviews of Jamesian films have become a popular form of metacriticism. In “A Henry James Filmography” (*HJR* 19: 296–306) J. Sarah Koch provides a chronological list of adaptations as a prelude to the creation of an even more comprehensive international catalog. Philip Horne’s “The James Gang” (*Sight & Sound*, i: 16–19) reviews several of these films as well as “free variations” and productions such as Martin Scorsese’s *The Age of Innocence* (1993)—a case, argues Horne, of improvement on Wharton’s novel through a Jamesian attention to point of view. But the majority of critics, including Horne, prefer the subtleties of James’s fiction to the more overt sexual emphases of recent films. In “That’s No Lady . . . She’s a Post-Structuralist” (*Quadrant* 41, xi [1997]: 31–33) Juliet M. J. Peers joins the negative reviewers of Jane Campion’s *The Portrait of a Lady*, which neglects the original Osmond’s “life-denying lack of virility” and turns Isabel’s progress into “a flight from machismo.” Likewise, Louis Menand’s “Not Getting the Lesson of the Master” (*NYRB* 4 Dec. 1997: 19–20) is somewhat critical of Agnieszka Holland’s *Washington Square* and antagonistic toward Iain Softley’s *The Wings of the Dove*: “once you posit an atmosphere of relative lubricity, most of the tension in the story disappears.” Two essays contrast Campion’s *Portrait* with Softley’s more popular *Wings*. In “Ambassadors from an Imaginary ‘Elsewhere’: Cinematic Convention and the Jamesian Sensibility” (*HJR* 19: 279–85) Alan Nadel treats *Portrait* as a critique of mainstream gender bias but *Wings* as a literalization reasserting Densher’s masculine authority. In “‘Intimate Disarray’: The Henry James Movies” (*HJR* 19: 286–95) Dianne F. Sadoff describes Campion’s production as “an art film that encodes its own artfulness,” unlike Softley’s translation of a complex narrative into romance and melodrama.

Michael Halliwell’s “Henry James and Opera” (*HJR* 19: 307–16) notes that the fiction has also inspired at least ten operatic productions in the

past 40 years. Despite the affinities between opera and Jamesian melodrama, adaptation presents a challenge because the pivotal role of victim shifts from one character to another.

iii Critical Books

Hugh Stevens's *Henry James and Sexuality* (Cambridge) is notable for its judicious treatment of a complex, overworked subject. For James, argues Stevens, sexuality was more a function of performance than an essential category, although the critiques advanced by his fiction sometimes anticipate the identity politics of today's queer theorists. Stevens begins with chapters on *The Wings of the Dove* and *The Golden Bowl*, novels that seem to affirm heterosexual love yet also dramatize the "latent antagonism of the sexes." He then discusses *Roderick Hudson*, *The Bostonians*, and *The Princess Casamassima*, in which the privileging of heterosexual relations precipitates tragedy. Finally, he treats the later short fiction, which balances the anxiety experienced by "poor sensitive gentlemen" with "a camp affirmation of erotic possibilities." Stevens wisely emphasizes the writing rather than the life, since James's fiction is demonstrably more interesting than his private affairs or his homophobic response to Oscar Wilde.

A second new book, John Carlos Rowe's *The Other Henry James* (Duke), is broader in theoretical scope but narrower in its focus on texts discussed less often than the major ones. The "other" James, says Rowe, is more vulnerable, sociable, and teachable than the modernist master of Percy Lubbock and his followers. Rowe is most persuasive in recording James's defensive reactions to social change (especially his negative representations of feminists) and less so in arguing that James aspired to the "alterity, foreignness, and modernity" embodied in Miriam Rooth and other cosmopolitan figures. Particularly in his chapter on *The American*, Rowe seems to neglect the rhetoric of the fiction, which invites sympathy with naive protagonists against their worldly rivals. But Rowe demonstrates the comparative flexibility of the later James, and he makes a strong case for teaching some neglected novels and stories (e.g., *The Tragic Muse* and "In the Cage") instead of adhering to the conventional favorites.

Adré Marshall's *The Turn of the Mind: Constituting Consciousness in Henry James* (Fairleigh Dickinson) exemplifies the formalist approach regarded as old-fashioned by Rowe and other political critics. In analyz-

ing *Roderick Hudson*, *The Portrait of a Lady*, and *The Golden Bowl* Marshall uses the model proposed by Dorrit Cohn, which distinguishes narrated monologue (“a character’s mental discourse in the guise of the narrator’s discourse”) from analysis and interior monologue. Marshall’s readings are unsurprising, since she expresses the usual preference for James’s later, more “figural” style. But this volume may be useful to students who need instruction in the craft of fiction.

iv Criticism: General Essays

Contributions in this category likewise reflect the dual influence of gender theory and cultural studies. Lynda Zwinger’s “Henry James Returned” (*ArQ* 53, iv [1997]: 1–6) serves as an editor’s introduction to a special issue of the journal, titled “Henry James: Out of the Lap of the Actual.” For Zwinger, *The Turn of the Screw* and “The Pupil” are paradigmatic explorations of the “border territories . . . between those other fictions, heterosexuality and homosexuality.” In the same issue, Eric Haralson’s “Iron Henry, or James Goes to War” (pp. 39–59) traces the author’s durable interest in military life. Although he envied the direct experience of soldiers and officers, his fiction projects ambivalence or even (in the case of “Owen Wingrave”) hostility to war fever paralleling that of Howells’s “Editha.” In a related article, “Scar Texts: Tracing the Marks of Jamesian Masculinity” (pp. 61–82), Susan M. Griffin documents the author’s fascination with the figure of the wounded man. Whereas the early tales undermine the notion that wounds are a means of achieving manhood, “The Beast in the Jungle” and “The Jolly Corner” present protagonists whose unscarred bodies symbolize their failure to participate, even imaginatively, in the construction of masculinity.

Griffin has edited a special issue of *HJR* (19, iii) devoted to the author’s “vexed relations with popularity.” A cautionary introduction is provided by Richard Salmon in “Henry James, Popular Culture, and Cultural Theory” (pp. 211–18). Perceptively, Salmon warns against recasting James as “an exemplary postmodern *bricoleur*, picking and mixing ‘high’ and ‘low’ cultural styles.” More than many theorists, James himself was aware of the class privilege enabling him to cross boundaries and of the contradictions inherent in these efforts.

Such paradoxes have provoked new discussions of particular texts and their audiences. Salmon’s “Appealing to the Crowd: Henry James and the Science of Popularity” (*Mosaic* 30, ii [1997]: 53–68) deals with the

divergent imperatives sustained by his writings of the 1890s. Whereas the plays seem designed for mass consumption, the tales appear to consecrate the distance between the solitary artist and vulgar readers. But these texts resist “the logic of bifurcation,” even as they exemplify it. Melanie Dawson’s “The Literature of Reassessment: James’s *Collier’s* Fiction” (*HJR* 19: 230–38) discusses four tales—most famously, *The Turn of the Screw*—published in the magazine from 1898 through 1900. The editors wanted to infuse a “literary flavor” into popular writing, yet these stories equally challenge such distinctions.

In “The Note/Notion of Europe: Henry James and the Gendered Landscape of Heritage Tourism” (*Symbiosis* 2: 225–40) Deborah L. Parsons explicates the writer’s ironic responses to the dichotomy between “mere tourists” (American women) and world “travellers” (cosmopolitan men). Although *The Portrait of a Lady* and *The Ambassadors* dramatize the futility of elitist ideals, James himself was hardly free from social and gender bias: he asserted his superiority by making Maria Gostrey fall in love with her client and then shelving her, like a used guidebook. A more democratic James is the subject of two essays by Marc Bousquet. “Inter-subjective Epistemologies: Private Theater and Henry James” (*ArQ* 53, iv [1997]: 83–114) draws parallels between James’s fiction and popular theatricals in that both efface Cartesian distinctions between observers and performers. “The Siren Beyond the Self: Henry James and the Popular Arts of the MacKaye Family” (*HJR* 19: 219–29) refers to the author’s acquaintance with Percy MacKaye, who regarded participatory theater as “a ritual of democratic religion.” Unlike the self-conscious liberals portrayed in Meredith Willson’s *The Music Man*, the later James, argues Bousquet, was “increasingly free of the embarrassment of participation.” The analogy is provocative, yet Salmon’s caveat seems relevant here.

“Henry James: A Discussion with Cynthia Ozick, Sheldon Novick, and Susan M. Griffin” (*HJR* 19: 317–27) transcribes a radio interview by Eleanor Wachtel and concludes the issue on “Popular James.” Topics include the sexual tension in *The Wings of the Dove* (highlighted in Softley’s film), the “moral realism” of James’s fiction, and Novick’s controversial biography.

v Criticism: Individual Novels

Two essays on *The American* emphasize its contradictions. In “*The American’s* Double-Cross” (*ArQ* 53, iv [1997]: 147–60) Sheila Teahan de-

constructs the dichotomy between realism and romance. The romantic Bellegardes become “realistic” when they suddenly reject Newman; and Newman, conversely, “crosses over into a Bellegardian world of fixity and closure” when he repeats his renunciation of revenge. Likewise, the Preface effaces distinctions between inaccessible knowledge and its potentially infinite deferral. Lee Clark Mitchell’s “A Marriage of Opposites: Oxymorons, Ethics, and James’s *The American*” (*HJR* 19: 1–16) deals more specifically with Newman’s and Claire’s inability to accept contradiction. She lapses into silence, while he rejects the oxymorons that made her interesting in favor of sharp binary oppositions. Unlike Teahan, however, Mitchell argues that the novel registers James’s own defeat, since the conclusion lacks “moral resonance” despite its formal neatness.

Marcus Klein’s “*Washington Square*, or Downtown with Henry James” (*ArQ* 53, iv [1997]: 7–21) discusses the novelist’s memories of the New York theater and of the cosmopolitan crowds beyond his neighborhood. Morris Townsend, who personifies “the disorder come from charming downtown,” knows the weakness of “a defensively organized gentry society.”

The Portrait of a Lady is the subject of three contextual studies. In “The Gendered Politics of the Gaze: Henry James and George Eliot” (*Mosaic* 30, i [1997]: 39–54) Patricia E. Johnson draws on film theory to contrast the novel with *Middlemarch*. Unlike Dorothea (who is seen from multiple perspectives), Isabel is “possessed . . . by the collective male gaze: her individual destiny transforms her into a part of the art and architecture of Rome.” But Scott F. Stoddart considers *Portrait* as a rejoinder to 19th-century domestic fiction in “The ‘Muddle’ of Step-Parenting: Reconstructing Domestic Harmony in James and Forster,” pp. 115–47 in Andrea O’Reilly Herrera et al., eds., *Family Matters in the British and American Novel* (Bowling Green, 1997). Like Margaret Wilcox of *Howards End* (a novel bearing traces of Jamesian influence) Isabel steps into a “ready-made” family and eventually discovers a communal ethic as an alternative to patriarchy. In yet another context, the novel’s focus on Isabel’s freedom seems almost old-fashioned—or so argues Peter Messent in “*The Portrait of a Lady* and *The House of Mirth*: A Barthesian Reading,” pp. 162–203 in his *New Readings of the American Novel*. Analyzing the initial paragraphs of the novels, Messent contrasts James’s retention of Isabel as “a type of gold standard” with Wharton’s representation of the social and financial constraints on women.

The Bostonians remains a key text for James’s political critics. The

author's progressive tendencies are noted in Caroline Field Levander's "Bawdy Talk: The Politics of Women's Public Speech in Henry James's *The Bostonians* and Sarah J. Hale's *The Lectress*," pp. 12–34 in her *Voices of the Nation*. Both texts, argues Levander, critique essentialist models of speech that discouraged women from public discourse—though Verena is eventually silenced by Basil. From other perspectives, James's stance appears defensive or even reactionary. David Kramer's "Masculine Rivalry in *The Bostonians*: Henry James and the Rhetoric of 'Newspaper Making'" (*HJR* 19: 139–47) treats the novel as a response to Charles Dana, who contrasted the virility of the journalist with the effeminate softness of the artist. James's newsmen are unflatteringly portrayed, the inference being that the penetrating novelist is the true social historian. Thomas F. Bertonneau's "Like Hypatia Before the Mob: Desire, Resentment, and Sacrifice in *The Bostonians* (An Anthropoetics)" (*NCF* 53: 56–90) interprets this reference according to the theories of anthropologists René Girard and Eric L. Gans. Unlike Hypatia, the fifth-century neo-Platonist, Olive survives the mob; and Verena and Basil's desire for each other delivers her, as well as them, from the "immolatory unreason" of resentment. This is a spirited defense of James's conservatism—though it downplays the irony in his treatment of Basil.

In "*The Princess Casamassima*: 'a dirty intellectual fog'" (*HJR* 19: 53–71) Collin Meissner interprets the novel as a parable of hermeneutic failure, with Hyacinth succumbing to the aestheticism that James himself repudiated. Readers may contrast this article with Wendy Graham's Freudian study, which presents Hyacinth as a figure much closer to James.

The Spoils of Poynton is also the subject of contrasting essays. In "Alchemy and Appreciation: The Spoiling of the Real in Henry James's *The Spoils of Poynton*" (*SNNTS* 30: 35–49) Kurt M. Koenigsberger reads the narrative as a Lacanian fable concerning the victory of aesthetic production over material reality. The final conflagration symbolizes "Fleda's freedom to signify her own desire" and her liberation from vulgarity. More persuasively, in my view, Christopher Stuart cautions against such optimistic readings in "*The Spoils of Poynton*:" "what can you call it . . . if it ain't really saved?"' (*HJR* 19: 166–82). Stuart regards this as a work of James's "treacherous years," during which he had to confront his own fear that "civilization has no immortalizing powers" and make a transition to his later theme that living life passionately is preferable to abiding by convention.

Tessa Hadley's "*What Maisie Knew*: Elders and Betters in Henry

James" (*English* 186 [1997]: 215–24) treats this text, too, as a transitional novel, though not an entirely successful one. Hadley applauds the novel's challenge to adult authority but criticizes its conclusion and its gender stereotypes ("voracious women and weak men").

A witty, informal reading of *The Ambassadors* is Francis Murphy's "Poor Strether," pp. 240–48 in *Under Criticism*. The novel moves from broad to ironic comedy as Strether acknowledges his own limitations and those of Woollett, yet has no choice but to return home. An analysis of his transformation from ambassador to "decentered tourist" is Hana Wirth-Nesher's "If This Is Liberty, It Must Be Paris: Landmarks and Home in *The Ambassadors*," pp. 243–56 in *Homes and Homelessness*. Whereas Paris resembles the United States (and Madame de Vionnet is metaphorically represented as the Statue of Liberty), the tropes of America become Europeanized in the mind of the "returning observer."

The Wings of the Dove continues to pose hermeneutic challenges. In "The Jamesian Thing: *The Wings of the Dove* and the Ethics of Mourning" (*ArQ* 53, iv [1997]: 115–46) Kenneth Reinhard argues that James's real subject is a "recurrent 'hole' in representation that demands an ethical response." Invoking J. Hillis Miller, Reinhard critiques both Densher's romanticism, which liquidates Milly's alterity by allegorizing it, and Kate's realism, which forecloses it from symbolic articulation. A more skeptical view is taken by Michael Reid in "The Repressing of the Journalistic in *The Wings of the Dove*" (*HJR* 19: 239–44), which argues that the text bears traces of James's own bad conscience. As Kate employs Densher in her plot to gain wealth, so James uses him to transform "a brutally naturalistic novel" into a more popular, genteel "novel of sentiment."

Jennifer Travis's "The Cost of Feeling: Emotional Injury in Henry James's *The Golden Bowl*" (*MFS* 44: 837–64) is a New Historicist reading in the context of legal theory, which in the later 19th century extended to the mind the protection once confined to the body. But James's fictional world is filled with irony: efforts to prevent pain actually cause it, and "manipulative politics" prove to be "an illusory means of damage control."

vi Criticism: Shorter Fiction

David Southward's "Flirtations in Early James" (*NCF* 52: 490–516) draws useful analogies between courtship, as understood by women, and

interpretation, as understood by the author. The tales of the 1860s (notably "A Tragedy of Error" and "A Most Extraordinary Case") foreshadow the later fiction, in that James is "unwilling to organize the reader's emotional experience with any certainty." In "Henry James's Two-Part Magazine Stories and 'Daisy Miller'" (*HJR* 19: 126–38) Michael Lund examines the famous tale in the context of seven earlier ones featuring a puzzling subject studied by a limited observer. Magazine readers were often bemused by Part II of the stories, which involved reinterpretation rather than standard plot development. Arthur C. Danto's "The Future of the Madonna" (*HJR* 19: 113–25) analyzes "The Madonna of the Future" to illustrate the differences between 19th- and 20th-century concepts of art history. Whereas James sympathized with Theobald's romantic aspirations, the sculptures of the cat-and-monkey artist presage postmodern appropriations of old masterpieces. Danto's essay also introduces a limited edition of the tale (Arion Press) illustrated with photogravures of "Ape and Cat" sculptures by contemporary artist Jim Dine. In "Henry James's Dalliance with the Newspaper World" (*HJR* 19: 36–52) Charles Johanningsmeier examines two stories of 1884, "Pandora" and "Georgina's Reasons," published in the *New York Sun* and nine other newspapers. He finds James's treatment of unconventional American women "too descriptive, analytical, and nuanced" for a popular audience with moralistic expectations.

The Aspern Papers has proved susceptible to feminist readings. To Tessa Hadley in "The Aspern Papers: Henry James's 'Editorial Heart'" (*CQ* 26 [1997]: 314–24) the tale is "a very *funny* story about the ignominies of literary discipleship," the women's kitchen being the antithesis of the narrator's "bogus temple of art ideal." Some parallels between James and female novelists are drawn by Susan V. Donaldson in her chapter "Sentimentalism versus Professionalism: Augusta J. Evans and Henry James," pp. 1–19 in *Competing Voices*. Despite his critical disdain for such novels as Evans's *St. Elmo*, in his own tale James represents Tita and Juliana's advantage over the would-be editor who wrongly assumes that Aspern is "not a women's poet." Jeanne Campbell Reesman's "'The Deepest Depths of the Artificial': Attacking Women and Reality in 'The Aspern Papers'" (*HJR* 19: 148–65) is an even more ironic reading of the story as a defense of "a relational model for knowledge" at odds with the narrator's efforts to gain control. James reverses the Lacanian paradigm in that the female body represents literal truth whereas the male body remains undefinable.

Conventional interpretations of "The Lesson of the Master" are challenged by Leland S. Person in "Reading Sexuality: The Object Lesson of James's Master" (*ArQ* 53, iv [1997]: 23–37). Arguing against those who typecast St. George as either the savior or the betrayer of young Overt, Person sees a third alternative—"a transgressive homoeroticism with the power to sponsor a transgressive aestheticism." In "Ghosts and the Nature of Death in Literature: Henry James' 'Sir Edmund Orme'" (*ALR* 31, i: 60–74) Arthur A. Brown defines the key issue as whether "the privilege of an artistic consciousness" entails the loss of human relationships. Since "love stands on the side of real being" rather than ghosts, interpreters drawn into the characters' story "must finally learn when to stop reading." In "A Kodak Refraction of Henry James's 'The Real Thing'" (*JAmS* 32: 447–62) Peter Rawlings notes the author's distrust of popular photography. Although the Monarchs and the narrator are frustrated by "vulgar reality," the story itself achieves a kind of victory over visual media and illustrates James's preference for deferral of meaning rather than representation.

James's ambivalent response to homosexual scandal is the subject of Ronald Knowles's "'The Hideous Obscure': *The Turn of the Screw* and Oscar Wilde," pp. 164–78 in Neil Cornwall and Maggie Malone, eds., *The Turn of the Screw* and *What Maisie Knew* (St. Martin's). Despite its overt demonization of transgression, the tale covertly locates evil in the Victorian values of the governess. A more fatalistic Freudian view of societal repression is presented in a densely written essay by David Wagenknecht, "Here's Looking at You, Peter Quint: 'The Turn of the Screw,' Freud's 'Dora,' and the Aesthetics of Hysteria" (*AI* 55: 423–58). On one level the tale attacks homophobia and may even represent James's "coded lamentation" over the suppression of his own sexuality. But the alternative to "normative heterosexuality" is hysteria, which entails a devastating loss of connection between literal and symbolic meaning.

A relatively cheerful, conventional James reemerges in Tony Tanner's "Sex and Narrative" (*Symbiosis* 1 [1997]: 210–17), which treats "The Story in It" as a paradigmatic tale. Since adultery is a source of narrative interest, the plot develops this "French" theme, while also revealing that "unsatisfied passion can be a life—and there may be a better story in it."

"The Beast in the Jungle" continues to fascinate critics with a taste for more somber meanings. Joyce Wexler's "Speaking Out: Dialogue and the Literary Unconscious" (*Style* 31 [1997]: 118–33) includes a stylistic analysis supporting James Mellard's Lacanian reading, according to which

Marcher is a latent homosexual fixated in an imaginary identification with May. In "Henry James and Immortality: 'The Beast in the Jungle' and 'Is There a Life After Death?'" (*CLQ* 34: 243–52) Arthur A. Brown notes the apparent contradiction between the story and the later essay, which affirms the possibility of continued life—at least for the artist. Brown speculates that writing the tale may have strengthened James's faith in his own consciousness: to "figure and represent" Marcher's tragedy "leads to a way out of it." The most original interpretation, challenging readings of the story as a fable at Marcher's expense, is Gert Buelens's "In Possession of a Secret: Rhythms of Mastery and Surrender in 'The Beast in the Jungle'" (*HJR* 19: 17–35). Citing Leo Bersani, Buelens argues that Marcher and May each strive to gain power by constructing a secret narrative, yet each of them sometimes acquiesces to the power exercised by the other. In the end, a chiasmus occurs as May forces Marcher to reenact her desire and relive the April afternoon from her perspective.

Ursula Brumm's "A Place Revisited: The House at *The Jolly Corner*" (*Connotations* 7 [1997–98]: 194–202) examines this story in the context of William James's psychological theories, which distinguish between a self-conscious "I" and a more material and social "me." Though temporarily haunted after acquiring the trappings of an American self, Brydon is likely to emulate James by returning to England—and probably rejecting marriage.

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