Perspectives
Shires, Linda M.

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INTRODUCTION

1. I will interchangeably use the terms Renaissance, classical, and linear perspective.
2. Art historians may complicate such a judgment, and artists themselves may never have subscribed wholly to geometric perspective in any historical period.
3. Elkins has classified common “others” to linear perspective, including anamorphosis, reverse perspective, inverted perspective, curvilinear perspective, herringbone perspective, stereoscopic perspective, anaglyphs, hyperbolic perspective, engineering drawing, and others. Leonardo da Vinci is known for atmospheric perspective or sfumato—a technique of layering in order to create a blurring effect without lines or borders. Significantly, these “others” do not overturn linear perspective, even if troubling it (see Elkins 1994, 117, 146–53).
4. Panofsky believed perspective offered access to a world that could be known. Poststructuralist theory, whether formulated by Lacan, Foucault, Saussure, Harraway, or others, shows itself to be fascinated by and concerned by ocularcentric culture, but—as is well known—discredits an all-seeing eye as an avenue to knowing in favor of partial perspectives or situated knowledges. Theorists Damisch and Grootenboer explain perspective as a signifying system, a network that gives meaning, not a sign that means (Grootenboer 122).
5. Massey maintains that the association is never based on a close reading of Descartes. Work of the 1990s illustrated that the cogito is not conceived only in terms of a dualistic, spatial configuration or as a single, static perspective.
6. Merleau-Ponty locates a break with the disembodied viewing associated with traditional perspective with Cézanne (Merleau-Ponty, “Cézanne’s Doubt” (1992), 15; and see Jay 1993, 159). While also citing modernism as a break, James Krasner importantly notes that “it is clear that the interiority of modernist narrative can be traced to an empirical tradition shared by Darwin” (5).
7. The comments of Auerbach have been highly influential. “The Brown Stocking” opens with a lengthy quotation from To the Lighthouse (1929) to establish that “the writer as narrator of objective facts has almost completely vanished; almost

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everything stated appears by way of reflection in the consciousness of the dramatic personae” (471–72).

8. As may be clear from other sources referenced, Foucault, Debord, and Benjamin remain central to the study of perspective and modernities. For classic readings in visual culture, see Mirzoeff 1998.

9. See Mitchell 1986. The relationship of picture to word has a long history of criticism. For two modern, well-known examples from within the discipline of art history, see Alpers and Fried.

10. While critique can allow for new ideas that might shift cultural understandings and self-awareness, and make room in Raymond Williams’s terms for ‘emergent’ forms, it does not guarantee subversion of dominant norms or social change. The distinction is made, without the connection to Williams, by Slinn in 2003b, 29. A cultural critique can only be partial, for it still supports, to some degree, the very norms it exposes by virtue of the fact that it remains embedded in ideology.

11. See Didi-Huberman; Bal 1996; Elkins 1996; and Mitchell 1986, 37–40. A recent research project in the Netherlands, “The Pensive Image,” studied further the extent to which images (painting, photography, cinema, etc.) are able to philosophize on the nature of vision and on the status of their own representation. It is based on the hypothesis that “monocular models of vision such as perspective and the camera have shaped our binocular perception of the world.” Downloaded May 18, 2006 from http://www.janvaneyck.nl/0_2_3_events_info/arc_06_the_pensiveimage_symposium.html

12. See Shires.

CHAPTER 1

1. The relationship of literature to the visual arts in the nineteenth century has been extensively documented. See Praz; Tinker; Meyers; Mitchell 1977; Altick; Miller 1992; Green-Lewis; Byerly; Wolfson; Schwartz and Przybyski; Andres; Psomiades 1997. On representation, see Mitchell 1994 and Marin.

2. Carol T. Christ and John O. Jordan conclude that “the Victorians were interested in the conflict, even the competition, between objective and subjective paradigms for perception,” xxiii.


5. Bhabha 111. Thus with regard to visual culture, spectators are also the spectacle. With regard to verbal culture, readers are also the text. Shelly Vye, writing on nineteenth-century tourism, puts it this way: hybridity is “the complex intersections of cultures and subjectivities, lived neither as mimesis nor pure difference” (6). In Lacanian terms with regard to visuality, the gaze is produced from a position exterior to the subject. The look of the other outside the self, whether real or imagined, is integral to the exercise of the spectatorial gaze and yet also constitutive of a spectator’s picture of him or herself. To be seen as a viewing subject means to imagine how one would be seen viewing from the position of an other, a position that one will never occupy. Slavoj Žižek elucidates in terms of pictures: “The gaze marks the point in the object (in the picture) from which the subject
viewing it is already gazed at, i.e., it is the object that is gazing at me. . . . The gaze is, so to speak, a point at which the very frame of my view is already inscribed in the ‘content’ of the picture viewed,” as quoted by Vye 498–49, from Looking Awry 126.


10. I’m grateful to Mike Goode for his question about irony and Turner’s artistic authority.

11. As quoted in Turner, 1775–1851, 134. On critical reception of Turner’s paintings and poems, see Lindsay, 124–26, 169–72 and Wilton 68.
12. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe published Zur Farbenlehre, translated by Sir Charles Eastlake as Goethe’s Theory of Colours in 1840. Goethe had studied afterimages, retinal aftereffects from staring at the sun, and concluded that they proved the eye was not merely a passive receiver. For the eye seemed to have its own internal lights and color effects as well as those which it perceived. Moreover, he believed that colors were intrinsic aspects of material objects and not just reflected on them. This work critically influenced Eastlake’s friend Turner though members of the Royal Academy were split over the importance of color theories (see Kemp, as note 3, 298–99). Kemp notes the very different theories of seeing and reality put forward later by the influential optical scientist Hermann von Helmholtz in Handbuch der physiologischen Optik (1856–66), who was held in esteem during the second half of the nineteenth century. Helmholtz emphasizes the interpretive act of seeing over a pattern of physical stimuli, whereas Ruskin’s theory centers on a tension between visual and cerebral factors (243). See Tim Barringer 59. Crary uses Turner’s “Colour—Goethe’s Theory . . . ” to support his argument for the emergence of the embodied modern observer (1992, 141). J. Hillis Miller views the paintings as a “punning self-portrait and hyperbolic Promethean or Apollonian boast of the painter’s heliotropic power as turner [sic]” (1992, 144). Notably, when Turner was asked to explain the paintings, he is reputed to have replied to Ruskin: “red, blue and yellow”—referring to the traditional primary colors.

13. On this point, see Charles Taylor 368 and Wahrman 294, both of whom point to the broader cultural forces surrounding Romanticism—so as precisely to avoid claiming the priority of one cultural domain over another. As Wahrman puts it, a “pervasive set of intersecting concerns, theories, readings, and key terms extended far beyond the horizons of scientists and literary writers alike.”

14. Tucker (1984, 121–37) draws out the play of self against context here and gives a wonderfully nuanced reading not only of Tennyson’s first dramatic monologue but also of Browning’s “Madhouse Cells,” pendants in which “a lyric drive collects itself only to furnish the impetus for its own overthrow. In such martial arts of discrediting the lyric ‘I,’ Browning had no peer” (126), though, as Tucker shows, he had a predecessor in the Tennyson of “St. Simeon Stylites.”

15. I. Armstrong 1982, xiii. Armstrong has argued convincingly (1993, especially 13–19) for the Victorian poem as a double poem in which lyric expressivity and
dramatized observation of, reflection on, or commentary on that expressivity are in a tension and constant redefinition.

16. Among Charles Dickens’s *Sketches by Boz* (1836), we find the story (Tales, IV) of a Mr. Tuggs, a London grocer who, on a trip to Ramsgate with his family, takes an excursion to Pegwell Bay. They travel around by donkey, lunch at the hotel there known for its delicious shrimp, and explore at the bottom of the cliffs, looking at crabs, seaweed, and eels.


18. Armstrong 1993, 7. See also Johnson and Langbaum.

19. On mask lyric, see Rader 140, 141.

20. Hallam in Houghton and Stange 859.


22. A recent projection of colors onto the figures, visible during *son et lumière* summer showings, creates the sense of moving, living, breathing groups of saints emerging from deep recesses. This projection allows the exterior stone carvings to turn into live bodies in procession, as the interior wood carvings no doubt already did for Morris’s inner eye.

23. On the physicality of textual marks, see Johanna Drucker and Jerome McGann; and see Helsinger.

CHAPTER 2


2. Surtees 11. The first sonnet was published in *Catalogue of the Association for Promoting the Free Exhibition of Modern Art* (Gallery, Hyde Park Corner, 1849) 18 as part of catalog entry 368. The second sonnet, according to William Michael Rossetti, was printed on gilded paper with the first sonnet and it was attached to the frame; see the Rossetti Archive. Like Holman Hunt and John Millais, Rossetti intended to first show his painting at the spring exhibition in April at the Royal Academy, but changed his mind (perhaps, Faxon suggests, because he feared rejection by the Academy selection committee, 52). In 1864 the painting was reframed, at which time Rossetti had the two sonnets inscribed next to each other on the frame below the painting, which is how it would have been seen at the Royal Academy in 1883 and in subsequent hangings. The gold-covered paper did not turn up in the Tate Gallery when the picture arrived there. Rossetti’s sonnets on gold paper seem not to have been an isolated instance, however. James McNeill Whistler had Algernon Swinburne’s “Before the Mirror” printed on gold paper and pasted onto the frame of the painting that inspired it: the 1864 *The Little White Girl*, later also known as *Symphony in White, No. 2*. The second part of the title was added to reinforce the importance of reading the painting against mimesis as an arrangement of colors evoking a mood. (Also see chapter 3 on this set of texts in connection with Lady Hawarden’s photographs.)

3. It is important to establish this as a mobile and attentive position for the viewer/reader, who is invited by this structure of sonnet and painting to read, look, reflect, gaze, and move back and forth. Most critics engaged in a discussion of mobility and spectatorship discuss visual mobility quite narrowly in terms of a
view from modern transportation vehicles or precinematic, mechanized, moving picture displays, or a glance across a surface. In “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Benjamin contrasts the stillness with which we view a work of art with the speed of the object in film: “The painting invites the spectator to contemplation; before it the spectator can abandon himself to his associations. Before the movie he cannot do so. No sooner has his eye grasped a scene than it is already changed. It cannot be arrested” (Benjamin 240). While Benjamin’s observation may still logically hold, Rossetti’s double art and his invited viewer/reader complicate it. Nead smartly reassesses Benjamin’s assertions in a cross-media, interdisciplinary study. Despite the fact that her research focuses on the late part of the century, two points are especially germane to this discussion: the first is that cartoons from Thomas Rowlandson in 1811 to a prominent one in *Punch* in 1906 ironize the speed with which some museum goers view art exhibitions, thus compromising the association of art with slow observation and stillness. In this context, Rossetti forces the viewer not only to move, not only to use a mobile gaze, but also to slow down. Nead further argues that movement in the modern world was characterized not by uniform speed, but by “changes in speed and direction and by acceleration, arrest, and reversal” (748). We would be hard pressed to reconstruct a nineteenth-century beholder’s experience—though see Psomiades’ valuable chapter 3.

4. William Fredeman argues that the sonnet form resolves problems of paintings (quoted in Stein 199). The contradictions in the sonnets, explains Stein, “become visual arrangements of separate figures or masses, to be balanced as much as in a painting” (199). While not disagreeing with Fredeman, Stein alternatively locates integration in the consciousness of the viewer/reader, where multiple perspectives are brought together. In my view, gaps and dialogic relations in consciousness, not integration, are far more congruent with Rossetti’s work and with the Gothic grotesque.

5. Finch and Bowen describe Milton’s pair as “unavoidably locked in a condition of textual self-consciousness where, no matter how hard each tries to extricate itself from the embrace of the other, neither can stop thinking and dreaming about its companion” (5).

6. Isobel Armstrong (2006) describes the poem as a “thesaurus of optical images.” Noting that the poem draws on many lens- and mirror-based visual technologies, both old and new, Armstrong indicates that the same figure can “signify more than one optical situation.” She observes that the stereoscope, about which I will have more to say in the next chapter, intervened between the 1832 and 1842 versions of the poem. Developed by David Wheatstone in 1838, it splits and reorganizes vision to produce depth and solidity in a combined (left and right) image, unlike the flat photograph. In further experimenting with perspective in 1842, Tennyson notably also dropped from his manuscript his monster-of-the-deep poem “The Kraken,” which, although exploring views above and below the deep, perhaps remained too cut off from the plays of interpretation that Tennyson was beginning to encourage more fully. On mirrors and other nineteenth-century poems, see I. Armstrong 2008, 111–14.

7. On 21 November 1848, Rossetti titled the first version of the first sonnet “Mary’s Girlhood (For a Picture).” He later revised the sonnet for publication in the “Sonnets for Pictures” section of the 1870 Poems. The sonnets exist in revised
versions on the current Tate Gallery picture frame. A full history of production and revision can be found online in the Rossetti Archive: http://www.rossettiarchive.org/docs/s40.rap.html. Downloaded October 21, 2008.

8. Through a variety of methods, including pigment samples, X-ray, and ultraviolet fluorescence microscopy, the Tate Gallery staff has established that Rossetti bought a canvas with commercially prepared, predominantly chalk, white priming, over which he layered dense lead white with some extender. He also achieved subtle textures by combining liquid, almost watercolor-like washes with flecks of stiff white paint. Having taken account of fading, wrinkling, and stiffening, the staff imagines the purple and red to have been brighter originally. It is also important to understand how much the Pre-Raphaelites depended on Goethe’s color theory, mentioned earlier in connection with Turner’s contrary view. See Ridge et al. 80–81 and Appendix np under “The Girlhood . . .” and “Pigments”; Kemp; and Glanville 29–38.

9. During the 1830s and 1840s, facsimiles of medieval miniatures reproduced in color and pastiche illuminated books, about which Rossetti knew through friendships with collector William Burges and John Ruskin, became plentiful. Ruskin later would also speak about the revival of religious art and its importance in his 1853 lecture “Pre-Raphaelitism.” The interest in early sacred art also emerged from Anglo-Catholic Tractarians, such as Rossetti’s mother and sisters. In addition, the Brotherhood members were “presumably familiar with Anna Jameson’s Sacred and Religious Art of 1848 and Lord Lindsay’s Sketches of the History of Christian Art of 1847, reviewed by John Ruskin in the Quarterly Review in June that year” (see Treuherz 155–58). In aiming to evoke a medieval context, Rossetti reminds the nineteenth-century viewer about a relationship among the image as a devotional object, the book or manuscript leaf as a devotional object, and reading practices considered as devotional practices (A. Smith 11).

10. William Bell Scott, who saw the painting in Rossetti’s studio, comments: “He was painting in oils with water colour brushes, as thinly as in water-colour, on canvas which he had primed with white till the surface was as smooth as cardboard, and every tint remained transparent.” See Marsh 16. The compositional scheme of an enclosed interior contrasted to an exterior glimpsed through a door, window, or other separation, and figures seemingly flattened against a wall, was common among Millais, Hunt, Hughes, and others. It was done in part to abandon chiaroscuro, and it effectively cuts off movement of the viewer’s eye into space. See Landow, http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/whh/replete/finding1.html.

11. Hunt, in Marsh 315. And see Barringer. It is also important to keep in mind that “[f]ew have realized that Holman Hunt and his associates read, not the first volume of Modern Painters, which emphasized truth to nature, but the second volume, which contained Ruskin’s theories of beauty and imagination” (Landow 1977, 317).

12. See I. Armstrong 1993, chapter 1; also see Hartman 481.

13. Though my focus is different, I am in sympathy with Griselda Pollock’s 1980s wide-ranging and influential discussion of Rossetti’s images of women: “Woman as sign: psychoanalytic readings” and “Woman as sign in Pre-Raphaelite literature.” Pollock’s narrative about vision and representation is important for placing in question kinds of cultural stereotyping. Yet I think we also need to remember Rossetti’s concept of the inner standing point, put forth eloquently by

14. Steinberg responds here to an interpretation of the painting by Snyder and Cohen. They had argued, in response to John Searle, that Velázquez’s painting encourages first a misreading of perspective and then a correct secondary realization on the part of the viewer. Maintaining that multiple centers of attention are possibly intended in any painting, Steinberg suggests we resist the temptation to hierarchize and narrativize them. He argues: “[T]his is not how a picture works. If two readings are allowed, then both are effectively present and ambiguously meant” (46 fn. 4).

15. This section has been informed by Anna McCarthy’s work on ambient television. My thanks to Steven Cohan for bringing her argument to my attention.

16. In Rossetti’s sonnet “Lost on Both Sides” from 1854, later incorporated into “The House of Life,” XIC (XLIII 1870), he views each art form, the visual and the verbal, as a suitor of a woman. Suggesting that his brother composed the poem at a moment of discontent with his artistic endeavors as painter or poet, because he could not attain the union of the two modes he needed and desired, William Michael Rossetti helps us to understand the tremendous force of dual artistic claims on Rossetti. See Ainsworth, Introduction.

17. The Ditchley portrait of Elizabeth the First (1592) and productions of Titian and Giorgione, for instance, featured sonnets written onto the corners of both portrait and narrative paintings. Closer to Rossetti’s own time, J. M. W. Turner first printed lines from his poetry manuscript “Fallacies of Hope” in the exhibit catalog to accompany the viewing of his 1812 painting Snowstorm: Hannibal and his Army Crossing the Alps. Rossetti thus works in a tradition long familiar to painters.

18. Mitchell importantly notes that image and text dialectics occur not just between the arts, but within them. Writing in its graphic form is a suturing of visual and verbal; as we saw in the example of Turner, the image sometimes depicts a scene from a verbal narrative, contains words on its surface, represents a kind of text, or otherwise alludes to textuality. The example of Blake is germane to Rossetti, whom he influenced. “Neither the graphic nor the poetic aspect of Blake’s composite art,” writes Mitchell, “assumes consistent predominance: their relationship is more like an energetic rivalry: a dialogue or dialectic between vigorously independent modes of expression.” Mitchell describes the experience of conflicting aesthetic appeals in Blake’s illuminated books: two equally compelling art forms, two languages, “each clamoring for primary attention” (1977, 4).

19. McGann has two especially important comments in the Rossetti Archive regarding Rossetti’s interest in multiple perspective. The first is his elevation to importance of a sketch, “Venus surrounded by mirrors reflecting her in different view,” for Rossetti’s artistic program. A note on the sketch indicates that Rossetti had read the article on looking glasses from his copy of Smith’s 1842 Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities. McGann indicates that Rossetti’s sketch is a key to the pattern of his career: a series of nonidentical views of sacred and profane love. McGann’s second point about perspective is to highlight Rossetti’s comments about his poem “Jenny.” The infamous review-essay by Robert Buchanan (1841–1901), written under a pseudonym, Thomas Maitland, was published in the Contemporary Review, October 1871. Buchanan expanded the essay and published
it as a pamphlet in 1872 under the title *The Fleshly School of Poetry and Other Phenomena of the Day*. Rossetti responded to this attack with a rebuttal, “The Stealthy School of Criticism,” published in the *Athenaeum* of December 1871. It is here, in talking about the poem “Jenny,” that Rossetti states that he rejected a “treatment from without,” or a third-person narrative about the young man and Jenny, in favor of the dramatic monologue, which features in his handling what he refers to as an “inner standing point.”

Nor did I omit to consider how far a treatment from without might here be possible. But the motive powers of art reverse the requirement of science, and demand first of all an inner standing-point. The heart of such a mystery as this must be plucked from the very world in which it beats or bleeds; and the beauty and pity, the self-questionings and all-questionings which it brings with it, can come with full force only from the mouth of one alive to its whole appeal, such as the speaker put forward in the poem,—that is, of a young and thoughtful man of the world. To such a speaker, many half-cynical revulsions of feeling and reverie, and a recurrent presence of the impressions of beauty (however artificial) which first brought him within such a circle of influence, would be inevitable features of the dramatic relation portrayed.

Dramatization rather than narration allows the reader to hear the speaker reveal himself in spite of himself. Thus Rossetti elicits a shifting, complex set of sympathies, emotions, and criticism from the reader, actively involving her moral imagination on not only the topic of prostitution but also on class differences, gender politics, female purity, and the economics of sexual exchange. McGann states that Rossetti first mentioned the “inner standing point” years before in an unpublished note to his pastiche poem “Ave,” an early “Songs of the Art Catholic” (see McGann, Archive, Introduction).

20. See Cramer for the connection between Browning and the Pre-Raphaelites.

21. As Sharp reports in his study of Robert Browning, Rossetti had a distinctive connection to this anonymously published poem.

One day a young poet-painter came upon a copy of the book in the British Museum Library, and was at once captivated by its beauty. One of the earliest admirers of Browning’s poetry, Dante Gabriel Rossetti—for it was he—felt certain that “Pauline” could be by none other than the author of “Paracelsus.” He himself informed me that he had never heard this authorship suggested, though some one had spoken to him of a poem of remarkable promise, called “Pauline,” which he ought to read. If I remember aright, Rossetti told me that it was on the forenoon of the day when the “Burden of Nineveh” was begun, conceived rather, that he read this story of a soul by the soul’s ablest historian. So delighted was he with it, and so strong his opinion it was by Browning, that he wrote to the poet, then in Florence, for confirmation, stating at the same time that his admiration for “Pauline” had led him to transcribe the whole of it.

Browning confirmed that Rossetti had written to him and that he had responded. http://www.worldwideschool.org/library/books/hst/biography/LifeofBrown-

23. Pollock’s point about Astarte’s forward-facing engagement with the viewer is significant in reading this example of double art as cultural critique. She argues: “The dominant ideological structures within which the fetishistic regime of representation is founded are exposed and the viewer is positioned against the patriarchy” (152).

24. That Rossetti would have been attuned to such issues is clear from a note to his publisher Ellis on 27 April 1870, where he complains about the letters on the binding of the first edition of Poems.

Do you think that the British Fool, with the heaven-sent help of this stupendous diagram, aided by a few Michael-Angelesque throes of Composition (in the style of Solomon Hart’s great picture) will be able to conceive an O and something other than a balloon, and of a T as not necessarily a gallows? Do you think he can be brought to observe the precise fitting of the letters—for instance the mighty intellect by which the P is made to fill the space pretty well? And the letters curved a little into each other and the precise thickness of the letters? In short, will he copy this, or has he a soul above it?

Doughty and Wahl, II: 856.

25. For recent commentary on Rossetti’s female figures and desire: see Slinn 2003a.

CHAPTER 3

1. A narrative of historical rupture is still heard, despite efforts to complicate or silence it by Crary 1992; Jay 1993, 1996; Nead; Krauss; Gunning; and others. Victorian studies scholar Martin Hewitt argued recently in a prize-winning essay that Victorian culture writ large remained dominated by a search for truth, nurtured a hegemony of positivism, and insisted on an imperative of observation and fact collection. His narrative leads him to repeat the general assessment about photography that it “intensified pressures toward realism” (413). It is true that new technologies were often explained in terms of improving the ability to record reality (see Jay 1993, 127). This is surely but half the story—it is the story of how the Victorian upper and middle classes explained themselves and their accomplishments to themselves. How Victorians have been themselves represented is also important, and usually this reception is bifurcated. As one critic explains, the Victorians have been most commonly characterized “as positivist, imperialistic proponents of bourgeois individualism, naively (or determinedly) maintaining a belief in purely objective knowledge and absolute truth” or through their wide explorations of epistemology and interpretation, as “flawed precursors of post-structuralists” (Anger 14–15). This narrative about the nineteenth century dovetails with a much larger flawed metanarrative based in realism and temporality that dominates Western thinking and theories of narrative (see Skordili introduction). Moreover, Jonathan Loesberg was correct on October 10, 2003 on Victorialist list-serv, when he noted that even while we disavow reductive histories of art and
fictional realism and aim to make our histories more complicated, “we still retain certain aspects, assumptions and traces of those histories” (membership on Indiana listserv required; archives open).

2. William Henry Fox Talbot began trying “the art of fixing a shadow” in 1833–34 (Roberts 8). Though Louis Daguerre in France had invented processes of developing photographic plates and of fixing an image in salt, the calotype invented by Talbot meant that many prints could be made from a single negative. In 1844, he published the first photographically illustrated book, The Pencil of Nature. Despite its original connection with alchemy and the supernatural, photography was valued in time for its truth-function, both in teaching how to see and how to regard objects (Green-Lewis 25; Roberts 9, 54). Scholars have demonstrated how in science, law enforcement, medicine, the family, and many other disciplining areas, photography came to have instrumental uses (Sekula 1986, 4–70; 1987, 121; Tagg; Foucault). Victorian verbal culture, in turn, from fiction to advertising, not only received photography in terms of realism but perpetuated discourses of verisimilitude in terms of photography (see Burgin 10 and Jay 1993, 126–27).

3. Interest in a mechanical objectivity and documentation in medicine and science increased during the period, according to Daston and Galison, as a response to various (my emphasis) forms of subjectivity becoming seen “as dangerously subjective” (82). Yet nineteenth-century visual culture was as dependent on enthusiasms such as Talbot’s, as it was responsive to developing Victorian scientific discoveries. “The phenomenon which I have now briefly mentioned appears to me to partake of the character of the marvelous,” Talbot wrote in the mid-1840s, “almost as much as any fact which physical investigation has yet brought to our knowledge” (2). Kate Flint and others have argued persuasively for a visual culture in the nineteenth century concerned with the unseen as much as the seen, which “unsettled expectations concerning sight and representation” (30).

4. Art photography was pictorialist in the sense that it invoked painting and dramatic tableaux to legitimize the medium of photography in an aesthetic hierarchy. It is clear that art photography was influenced by Pre-Raphaelitism, especially for fidelity to detail, as documented in Robinson’s treatises. In other ways the two movements were not in tune, for example in some art photography’s reliance on chiaroscuro. Art photography was begun in the 1850s. Following the introduction of the dry-plate process, pictorialism became more popular in the 1880s and declined in the early years of the twentieth century. Among methods used in nineteenth-century art photography were soft focus (Julia Margaret Cameron being the chief exponent), filters and lens coatings, manipulation in the darkroom, and various printing processes. There was a link between art photography and the developing schools of Impressionism and modern art. One of the documented connections was that, through a mutual friend, Whistler saw the photographs of Hawarden (see Lawson all; Dodier 1999, 98).

5. Importantly, Robinson is a professional whose work was widely exhibited and promoted in shop windows. Hawarden was an amateur who exhibited a small selection twice in London. Yet both were highly regarded and earned medals from the Royal Photographic Society.

6. By mid-century, scientific study of the eye and light, as well as new technologies such as the stereoscope, had contributed to the challenge to monocularity. Commercially distributed in the 1840s, the stereoscope, as mentioned earlier,
questioned a single, unified point of view. For it demonstrated how seeing was actually the brain’s combining of what our eyes see slightly differently. Only in the stereoscope with mirrors, or later, lenses, could one view two photographs of the same scene or figure, accommodating different angles of vision, and get a partial depth of field. In addition, art photographers well before the 1880s or 1890s were already experimenting in ways that would alter the relationship of the observer to the image by manipulation of the print, the relationship of figure and ground, borders, lines, and figure placement within the frame, and issues of focus.

7. Twenty years before Édouard Manet, Robinson is intrigued with fixing and holding elements of a picture in place that keep threatening to drift off. According to Crary, “Manet’s In the Conservatory is . . . an attempt to reconsolidate a visual field that was in many ways being disassembled” (1995, 53); see Fried.

8. Hawarden might have found an admirer in Jacques Lacan, who contrasts tactile visuality that is obvious even to a blind man and “optical visuality or ‘atmospheric surround’ in which the viewer, no longer a surveyor, is ‘caught within the onrush of light’” (Krauss 33, as quoted in Iverson 1994, 461). He writes: “Light may travel in a straight line, but it is refracted, diffused, it floods, it fills—the eye is a sort of bowl—it flows over too . . . ” (94). Glass and steel enclosures of the mid-Victorian period, like the Crystal Palace which let in “unprecedented amounts of light,” have notably been cited as a source of the Impressionist challenge to Cartesian perspectivalism (Jay 1993, 124, citing Schivelbusch; and see I. Armstrong 2008).

9. Handy 3–4; Lukacher in Handy 42.

10. Rejlander 76–78. In 1857, over about six weeks, Rejlander created his most famous work, “The Two Ways of Life,” now in the collection of the Royal Photographic Society, a montaged print made from thirty-two negatives. Another photograph from the same year was his still disconcerting “The Head of John the Baptist in a Charger,” which appears to be a head floating in a basin, begun as part of a larger project concerning Salomé. In the 1860s, Rejlander experimented with double exposure, photographs of dreams, photomontage, and retouching. He was widely known in Britain and abroad through lecturing, publishing, and duplicates of his work, sold by book and art dealers.

11. Trained as an apprentice from the age of thirteen in all aspects of printing and engraving (Harker 6), Robinson found mentors, read Ruskin, visited and memorized the works in the National Gallery, and embarked on painting. Soon after, though, Robinson turned to the new and exciting medium of photography. He opened his first studio in Leamington Spa in 1857.

12. J. Smith 2006 notes that Rejlander in the 1860s became best known for his expression studies, promoting photography as a better medium for capturing expression than painting (217). No doubt it was this point of view that led Darwin to choose Rejlander as one of his illustrators for The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals (1872).

13. Though he had assistants put the prints together, Robinson was not careless and worked hard over the years to improve his technique to eliminate any lines or blank spaces. In one of his numerous books on his craft, Pictorial Effect in Photography being Hints on Composition and Chiaroscuro for Photographers (1869), for instance, he offers suggestions for diminishing the evidence of the “joins”: “If great care be taken to print both plates exactly alike in depth, it will be impossible to
discover the join in the finished print” (194); “When printed the picture should be carefully examined, to see if the joins may be improved or be made less visible. It will be found that, in many places, the effect can be improved and the junctions made more perfect, especially where a light comes against a dark—such as a distant landscape against the dark part of a dress—by tearing away the edge of the mask covering the dark, and supplying its place by touches of black varnish at the back of the negative; this, in printing, will cause the lines to be less defined, and the edges to soften into each other” (195): “In making a photograph of a large group, as many figures as possible should be obtained in each negative, and the position of the joins so contrived that they shall come in places where they will be least noticed, if seen at all” (196).

14. Critical attention has come to Hawarden late, in part because her photographs were donated to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, by her family only in 1939 and in part because she was an amateur. Since the 1980s, Hawarden’s photographic subject matter and technical brilliance have drawn critical notice, particularly by women. Virginia Dodier is responsible for compiling the catalogue raisonné of the 775 photographs held by the Victoria and Albert Museum.


16. Hawarden was highly favorably reviewed in terms of her technique. A review of her first show with the Photographic Society in Photographic News 7, no. 244 (February 27, 1863): 99 remarks on a highly bromized collodion and Dallmeyer’s No. 1 Triple lens that ensures the “wondrous depth of definition” (Dodier 1999, 12). In 1864 the Photographic News lauds her works as “unrivalled” and “surpassed by nothing in the exhibition.” The Photographic News 8, no. 303 (June 24): 30 (see Ramirez 4).

17. Whether or not the Victorians experienced or recognized Hawarden’s work as “about adolescence,” since the psychosocial category as such was not in currency “until some thirty years later,” is an interesting question (Silver 83). If one understands cultural moments as harboring emergent categories, however, one could suggest that Hawarden helped to instantiate the very concept of adolescence, whether named or not.

18. Julie Codell suggests that Hawarden’s photos “fit Victorian social and class eroticsm by providing images of the poor, the peasant, the child, the chivalric hero, and the damsels in distress” (479).

19. Aileen Tsui interprets Whistler’s “tactical deployment” of multiple titling of The Little White Girl (1862) “to bait and then counter the public’s taste for narrative painting” as part of his aesthetic purism and rage against ignorant critics (447).

20. While both eroticize girls, Carroll is interested in fixing prepubescent girls at an age of innocence. He affixes a photograph of Alice to “Alice’s Adventures Under Ground,” which would become Alice in Wonderland (1865). Hawarden, in contrast, photographs the transitions and blurrings of what we call adolescence, rather than arresting childhood or bemoaning/preventing achievements of maturity.

21. Carol Mavor importantly notes that Hawarden effects “an everlasting process of reduplication between mother and child, between stereoscopic images” (45). She suggests that Hawarden’s use of mirrors is not only in the service of “female
narcissism but the mirroring of the mother through the daughters.” She goes on (38ff) to argue for a reading of props, such as vases or shells or pearls, as fetishistic objects that simulate Hawarden’s and her daughters’ bodies. It seems to me that Hawarden is extremely concerned with line and shape. She piles on drapery to create forms. She selects objects that mirror or invert shapes of her daughters’ bodies, skirts, hair, and thus makes the photographs pulsate with a kind of reuplicated physicality, but my reading is not concerned with “women as ontologically fetishistic” (40). Criticized for her overly subjective responses to Hawarden, Mavor yet fastens on something essential to the work, as she draws attention both to the erotic and to the more traditional representations of Victorian girls which, in her view, address the crisis of the in-between state of the age of consent. See Silver; Codell; and Haworth-Booth for comments on Mavor’s interpretations.

22. To add to the allure of the collection, as Dodier reports (1999, 11), Hawarden did not leave many letters or a journal, she does not appear much in the written record, and her photographs were originally undated and untitled. The fact that the photographs were torn out of albums adds to their allure, but it also alters the size and shape of the prints, adding to the repeated trope we find in criticism of Hawarden: that the pictures are mysterious, that our suppositions can be only speculative, and that the images are open for multiple interpretations (see Mavor; Dodier 1991 and 1999; Warner; and Rose 2000 and 2002, for example).

23. Craig Owens reminds us that in the nineteenth century there is an analogical relationship between photograph and mirror. As early as 1839, he reports, Jules Janin, introducing photography, urged readers to “imagine that the mirror has retained the imprint of every object it reflects, then you will have a more complete idea of the Daguerreotype” (Owens 75, fn. 1)

24. Lady Hawarden, whose mother was a Spanish Roman Catholic, would have understood Marian symbology. In one later set of photographs, Hawarden captures Clementina wearing a star at her forehead and a Roman-style dress, as if she were Venus. In comparison to a nun-figure in another of the photographs, perhaps she represents, in her costume, a lusting Venus. Surely the contradiction—Clementina as virgin, Clementina as goddess of love—is the point. Both aspects of femininity are alive and often at odds during adolescence.

25. It is also important to remember that photographed tableaux were connected with the instruction of children. See Lukacher in Handy 31, where he cites George Bernard Shaw’s 1883 “wry prospectus for the future of photography” in his novel An Unsocial Socialist: “Historical pictures replaced by photography of tableaux vivants formed and arranged by actors and artists, and used chiefly for the instruction of children. Nine-tenths of painting as we understand it at present extinguished by the completion of these photographs.” While I do not see Hawarden as posing her children to then instruct them with prints of themselves, I do see her as using the process of posing and dressing up, itself, as a form of instruction, not only as an imaginative escape but also in cultural narratives and rituals of romance, female independence, and female identity.

26. The mirror in art history has a long and distinguished history, particularly paired with the female figure in Western and Eastern traditions, and it is known that Hawarden visited the art galleries in Rome and Florence in 1841–42, as well as in London (Dodier 1999, 17). It is likely that she was schooled in Italian and other European art.
27. One can’t help but think of the many examples of children’s literature, early
nineteenth-century instances of which Hawarden’s daughters may have heard read
aloud or read to each other, in which alternate realities or parallel universes lie
behind a wall, a curtain, a mirror, or a layer like skin or in which figures emerge
from them. Some of the more prominent later examples include: Jean Ingelow’s
Mopsy the Fairy (1869), Carroll’s Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found
There (1871), Mary Louisa Molesworth’s The Tapestry Room (1879), and Frances
Hodgson Burnett’s “Behind the White Brick” (1881). Modern examples continue
this tradition: C. S. Lewis’s The Chronicles of Narnia (1949–54), Philip Pullman’s The
Golden Compass (1995), and many more. This is a common trope in poetry of the
nineteenth century as well, the most important, oft-cited, and photographically
interpreted example (Robinson’s “Sleep”) being Matthew Arnold’s “Tristram and
Iseult” (1852) in which a tapestry of a medieval warrior comes alive in Tristram’s
room and the figure comments on the scene.

28. Bryan J. Wolf’s discussion of Woman with a Pearl Necklace (1664) by Vermeer
has influenced my thinking about Hawarden’s photograph of Clementina in pro-
file. Although Carol Mavor connects Hawarden with Vermeer and Dutch realism,
my interest is independence; my argument is governed by the work of scholars
of perspective such as Elkins (1994, 1996, 2005) and Grootenboer and by the close
readings and research of Wolf.

29. Jette Kjeldsen reports that when Swinburne’s poem “Before the Mirror,”
ispired by Whistler’s The Little White Girl, was exhibited in London at the Royal
Academy in 1865 with the “poem printed on gold paper and pasted to the frame”
(87), Whistler was delighted with Swinburne’s “correspondence of mood and
atmosphere rather than of specific content” (87–88). Also see 120n2. On Picasso,
see Kimmelman and Grundberg (1986).

CHAPTER 4

1. During the nineteenth century, painting remained the art most frequently
compared to literature, though the function of the analogy altered. In the early
modern period, painting was elevated over literature. This hierarchy gradually
reversed itself. See Hagstrum all and Witemeyer (34). In the twentieth century,
narrative theory in confronting vision and language offered increasingly refined
explanations of objective knowledge and the subject. See Bal 1996, 170–71 and
Damisch.

2. For criticism of the novel and omniscience, besides essays on specific nar-
rators, see Jaffe; Freedman; and Buzard.

3. Miller (1963) and Beer approached nineteenth-century literature in terms of
its relationship to the “disappearance of God” and to the rise of scientific theories
such as evolution, respectively.

4. For comparisons of realism to Dutch painting or allusions to paintings in
fictions or poems, see Yeazell; Bullen; Witemeyer; Andres. For relations of the arts
see Mitchell 1977 and Hagstrum.

5. Caroline Levine (2007) also cites Dames for his interventions into formal-
ism.

6. Individual studies of authors and the sophisticated analysis of realism by
Welsh, Knoepflmacher, George Levine, McKeon, and others have led in this direction, but almost all critics of realism have stayed within novel studies and have not drawn on critical insights from the study of poetry. To appreciate the persistence of the association of realism with verisimilitude and mimesis, note the influence of theorists of the novel such as Ian Watt. Michael McKeon puts it this way: “Watt’s argument brings the novelistic aim of empirical objectivity to the forefront, but at the expense of the self-conscious reflexivity that his predecessors treat as an equal and obverse effect of the novel’s epistemological distance” (356). To illustrate the size of the problem, though, the reliance among almost all theorists of narrative, including the highly influential Gérard Genette, on linear teleology, rather than space, or rather than space-time coordinates, severely limits how we read representation. It perpetuates a temporally driven, realist-based model of interpretation (see Skordili, Introduction).

7. See J. Hillis Miller (2008; 82).

8. Chandler’s summary of the dramatic monologue, derived from Langbaum, is, however, far too simplistic. While Langbaum takes account of a dual reaction, he views judgment as a moral disciplining of sympathy.

9. In Smith’s The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759), the ongoing practice of sympathetic identification with an other by an observer establishes bases for judgment. The individual needs to be able to put himself into the position of the other, whether like or unlike the other, in order to judge neutrally another’s reaction to a situation: “As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation. . . . It is the impressions of our own senses only, not those of his, which our imaginations copy. By the imagination, we place ourselves in his situation.” http://www.und.nodak.edu/instruct/weinstein/The%20Theory%20of%20Moral%20Sentiments%20by%20Adam%20Smith.pdf. Downloaded February 10, 2008. See Schor on Adam Smith’s designation of sympathy for the dead as a key stage in the theory of moral sentiments (34–40).

10. The pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans, George Eliot, will be used in full in each instance, as is customary.

11. For a useful overview of case logic, see Lauren Berlant, “On the Case.”


14. Contemporary critics noted the relationship of the novel to the epistolary mode to claim Collins was not an innovator. Yet J. Taylor explains how the central voice in Basil, for example, is unlike confessional fictional texts before it, such as those by William Godwin or James Hogg (76–77).

15. See Kucich for a different reading: “One hallmark of Victorian fiction is its exploration of the conditions in which finessing the truth could be regarded as a sign of collective social skill and authority” (34).


17. Kendrick notes that the Preamble was included with Walter Hartright’s testimony after serial publication (24), though most current editions separate it, including those by Penguin and Broadview. Also see Gaylin 208 n. 10. The Preamble refers to Walter in the third person, which can be taken in two different ways. It can be read as signifying a different narrator who serves as editor and introduces Hartright first, or it can be read as Walter’s creation of a legal-like
opening to establish the authority of what follows as collected evidence, though,
as becomes evident later, he is also an editor. Technically a Preamble introduces a
constitution or statute that usually states the reasons for and intent of the law.

18. See Hughes on Collins’s relationship to the providential plot of stage melo-
drama (137). On the providential plot, see Qualls.

19. William Wilkie Collins, named after his father, William Collins, the well-
known landscape and genre painter, soon came to be known as Wilkie, after his
godfather, the painter David Wilkie. His brother Charles Allston Collins, also a
painter, is most famous for the Pre-Raphaelite–inspired canvas Convent Thoughts.

20. See Knoepflmacher 1975 on the similarities between Halcombe and Fosco.

21. The basis of “omniscience” seems to be the articulated but loose analogy
between God and the author, accompanied by an equally loose analogy between
the author and the narrator (the latter clearly untenable, as countless studies have
illustrated, but unable to be entirely shaken off). See Culler, who argues we should
do away with the term entirely (30–31).

22. For a penetrating study of Eliot’s narratorial self-interruptions in the later
Middlemarch, see Buzard chapter 11. “By the time Eliot writes Middlemarch,” he
suggests, “her narrator appears to recognize herself . . . and to acknowledge herself,
as endowed with the Midas-like power to turn virtually any character, however
unlikable or merely useful to the plot, into the gold of sympathy-stimulating
three-dimensionality” (282). He further suggests “her narrator exhibits conscious-
ness that she could ‘enter into’ any character . . . and that she ‘might’ do so, with
disastrous consequences” (fn 4).

23. For a useful charting of Eliot’s dialogue with Lewes about vision and the
imagination, from at least 1859 onward, see Flint 98–116.

24. Regarding Ruskin, Eliot wrote to Barbara Bodichon, “What books his last
two are! I think he is the finest living writer” (Eliot, Letters, II: 255; Haight 197). She
had read the third Volume of Modern Painters in 1856 and reviewed it in April of
that year. As Wittemeyer reports (142), George Eliot first saw examples of Turner’s
work in 1851 (Eliot, Letters, I: 347); she refers to “a Turnerian haze of network” in
“Janet’s Repentance” and “a faery landscape in Turner’s latest style” in Brother
Jacob. She appears, according to Edward Dowden in 1877, to be under the influence
of Turner in constructing the bridge scenes of Daniel Deronda. She mentions Turner
in relationship to a sunset in a letter to Barbara Bodichon (Eliot, Letters, IV: 476)
and clearly sees the painter in Ruskinian terms (radical in terms of perspective,
moral, and emotional) as going well beyond the picturesque.

25. Miller 1968, Ermarch 1985, Welsh, and Knoepflmacher 1968 are significant
exceptions.


27. Some critics have labeled the Cass plot realistic and the Marner plot a fairy
tale and have, by analogy, linked the two men, respectively, with logic and illogic,
chance and free will. Alternatively, critics argue for hierarchy. Others suggest that
the two perspectives, though in different modes, are progressively integrated partly
at the level of narration (Knoepflmacher 1968, 238–39). Kristin Brady suggests the
plots are knitted together only at the end. Thale notes that the “two visions, if not
reconciled, are at least each given their due” (Thale 68).

29. We are not in the realm of Genesis here, except in a Higher Criticism’s version of it. So too Turner’s *Light and Colour* (cover art), which George Eliot may well have seen in 1851, invites the eye not to behold Divinity in its rainbows, but to co-create bubbles of light and color while co-writing text. As Carroll definitively shows, each topic of discussion at the Rainbow Inn “centers on the impossibility of discovering absolute standards of judgment” (190).

30. U. C. Knoepflmacher helpfully notes that the name Cass is from *casus* (“fall,” as is the case), and Godfrey is a play on God-Free, at peace with God or, ironically, wishing to be free of God (1968, 241). The name also recalls Morris’s Godmar, who while acting like a god in determining who lives and who dies, mars one of our most cherished hopes—that the innocent will be spared an unjust, humiliating end.