NOTES TO PREFACE


3. Ibid., 63.

INTRODUCTION


7. See Peter Brooks’s *Realist Visions* for a thorough analysis of these intersections (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005).


11. Later, surrealists would playfully reject this boundary: Magritte’s *La trahison des images* (1929) is an excellent example, with its “ceci n’est pas une pipe” written beneath the image of a pipe.


13. Think of George Eliot’s anticipating readerly reaction in the seventeenth chapter of *Adam Bede*.


17. Michael Boyd, *The Reflexive Novel* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1983), 18. Boyd argues that the “reflexive” novels of Joyce, Woolf, Nabokov, and others are “anti-realist.” He thus cannot allow that the realist writer was similarly reflexive, and that the reflection was in fact constitutive of realism itself.


22. Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist* (London: Penguin, 1985), 34. Later in the preface, Dickens concludes about his novel that “It is true”; written in all caps, it echoes Balzac’s claim in *Le Père Goriot* that “All is true.”


24. A few years after Zola’s works were first translated into English and published, a “National Vigilance Association” was formed to quell the spread of “pernicious literature,” and Zola’s publisher, Henry Vizetelly, was tried for selling obscenity. Ernest Vizetelly, *Émile Zola, Novelist and Reformer* (London: J. Lane, 1904), 242–99.

25. England was not alone in its outrage at Zola’s novels: many in his own country (Brunetiere included) concurred with British assessments, and German critics (for example) responded in kind: Naturalism was called “pig literature [Ferkel-literatur],” in the German press, and Zola’s novels in particular ignited the following sentiments: “it is impossible to read a single page of [L’Assommoir] aloud before respectable people”; “one does not know how to take up this work critically without dirtying his fingers”; “the author wallows, and the reader with
him, in the vilest muck”; and “La Joie de vivre is an olla-porrida of blood, mucus, and stomach secretions.” Such reactions, from wherever they arose, did little to discourage the public from reading the novels, as Zola’s sales naturally increased as a consequence of the court’s attention. Winthrop Hegeman Root, *German Criticism of Zola, 1875–1893* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 7.

26. See also Lawrence Schehir in *Figures of Aléterity: French Realism and Its Others*: “Since the text is that which is woven and unwoven [. . .], realism would be that which most clearly shows the incompatibility of the real (or even the Real, in the Lacanian sense) with the literarary. Narrative can inscribe the absence of the real, so that anything that rewrites this act of inscription is rewriting the primary gestures of literature” (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 7.


29. Ibid., 6.

30. Ibid., 6 (author’s italics). Cf. Levine: “Perhaps in part because of this kind of danger, Evelyn Keller has sought to preserve an idea of objectivity as ‘the pursuit of a maximally authentic, and hence maximally reliable, understanding of the world around oneself.’” “Looking for the Real,” 11.


33. Ibid., 35.

34. Eliot’s resistance to wholesale detachment brings into focus perhaps the most investigated alterity of Victorian fiction: the colonized other, whose very difference amplifies or defines the Britishness of the novelist or a novel’s characters. Obviously, studies on Victorian engagement with colonization are myriad. If, as Regenia Gagnier writes, “the masked Other” functions “as the self, building itself through opposition to Others and undoing itself in the isolation of its own hard-bounded ego,” then the relationship between the British and the colonized exists outside of the radical alterity required of interpersonal relationships. “Review of Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914 by Patrick Brantlinger,” *Modern Philology* 87, no. 3 (February 1990): 316. Those relationships to the physically distant stranger are based not on a real apprehension of distinctive and individual alterity but on a wholesale dialectic that inhibits an ethical relationship. Focusing on the Realists’ relationship with the colonized in relation to Eliot’s nuanced formulations of representation allows Nancy Henry, for example, to explore “a disjunction between the expressed politics of a realist aesthetic that did not permit Eliot to represent what she had not seen, and life in a society that encouraged practical decisions based on abstractions—the colonies.” *George Eliot and the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9. While not dismissing this important work, I must note that my interest is in another kind of relationship depicted in these works—not with those whom characters assume are the wholesale other, but with those whom characters do not accord alterity.


38. Ibid., 271.

39. “As I conceive it, this moral perfectionism is a particular narrative form (rather than a concept, theory, or disposition) capable of great variation and extension. At its heart is the complex proposition that we turn from our ordinary lives, realize an ideal self, and perfect what is distinctly human in us—and that we do so in response to exemplary others. How exactly do we become better? Certainly we often imagine ourselves improving through following rules, commandments, laws, guidelines. Without denying this, moral perfectionism stresses another means of improvement, one in which individual transfiguration comes not through obedience to such codes but through openness to example—through responsive, unpredictable engagements with other people.” Andrew Miller, *The Burdens of Perfection: On Ethics and Reading in Nineteenth-Century British Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 4, 25.

40. Ibid., 272.

41. I do not claim to offer a comprehensive overview of notions of sympathy and empathy as understood from the eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries, as others have done that work far more effectively than I can here. See David Marshall’s *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), Rachel Ablow’s *The Marriage of Minds: Reading Sympathy in the Victorian Marriage Plot* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), and Suzanne Keen’s *Empathy and the Novel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), for clear overviews of the tradition.


43. Ibid., 15.

44. David Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy*, 1. Ethical literary criticism arises from the knowledge that readers do attempt to enter into the sentiments of characters within fiction. Wayne Booth’s description of the ethics of fiction is even less invasive, as one need not “enter into” a character’s sentiments but can learn from a character’s actions, the text itself serving as a “relatively cost-free offer of trial runs.” Wayne Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 485. As Jil Larson notes, the recuperation of ethical criticism begun by Booth and Martha Nussbaum sought to avoid the essentializing tendency of reductive moralizing without completely excluding ethics from literary analysis. Larson follows in their path, and her work along with the work of others reinvigorating ethical criticism paved the way for studies such as this one. *Ethics and Narrative in the English Novel, 1880–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).


47. Ibid., 4.
50. Ibid., 168.
51. Ibid., 169.
52. Suzanne Keen, Empathy and the Novel, xii.
63. Ibid., 164–65.
65. “[ . . . ] labor in its possessive grasp suspends the independence of the element: its being. The thing evinces this hold or this comprehension—this ontology. Possession neutralizes this being: as property the thing is an existent that has lost its being. [ . . . ] Possession masters, suspends, postpones the unforeseeable future of the element—its independence, its being [ . . . ] Labor in its primary intention is this acquisition, this movement toward oneself; it is not a transcendence.” Levinas, Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 158–59.
67. “the structure of the reader’s interpretative relationship to a literary text has affinities with a person’s ethical relationship to others.” Ibid., 38.
68. Ibid., 40.
69. Adam Zachary Newton, Narrative Ethics (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univer-
sity Press, 1995), 13. Newton goes on to make the parallel between the story and the person explicit: “Stories, like persons, originate alogically. As ethical performance, in Levinas’ sense, they are concussive; they shock and linger as ‘traumatisms of astonishment.’” Ibid., 13.


CHAPTER ONE


3. Bodenheimer argues that these moments are typical of Dickens’s anxiety to convince the reader who might not otherwise believe him, a hyperexertion of truth, but one that is overdetermined by his desire.

4. Forster, 23, 24, 27.


6. These failures are nevertheless constructive and instructive. John Fenstermaker addresses the often overlooked role of the failure of language in *Bleak House*: “The central symptom of much of the sickness Dickens examines is the failure of words, written and spoken, to express truth and to communicate genuine human fellow-feeling. Too often language is used, as the narrator says, ‘under false pretences of all sorts’ to effect ‘trickery, evasion, procrastination, spoliation [and] botheration,’ creating ‘influences that can never come to good.’” “Language Abuse in *Bleak House*: The First Monthly Installment,” in *Victorian Literature and Society*, ed. James Kincaid (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1984), 241.


10. Some examples: “don’t heed me any more than if I was a speaking machine” (25); “I am a mere machine” (25); and, as repeated several times, “I am a man of business” (25, 83, 101, 151, 210, 212). Its fullest iteration is uttered at the peak of the
Parisian drama, when Lorry is in danger of losing the only family he has known: “I have been a man of business, ever since I have been a man. Indeed, I may say that I was a man of business when a boy” (322).

11. A critique that applies regardless of the class of the perpetrator. Foulon’s dismissive “let them eat grass” is matched by the brutality of the mob’s attack and decapitation of Foulon.


14. The resonance between this statement and Eliot’s description of learning to read is impressive; see my discussion in chapter 2.

15. Monique Morgan contrasts this scene of misinterpretation with Pip’s last interaction with Magwitch, at the convict’s death. There, she argues, physical intimacy trumps written declarations, and Pip is able to understand Magwitch through just a squeeze of his hand. “Conviction in Writing: Crime, Confession, and the Written Word in *Great Expectations*,” *Dickens Study Annual* 33 (2003): 87–108.


18. See, for example, Q. D. Leavis’s “How We Must Read *Great Expectations*,” in *Dickens the Novelist* (London: Pantheon, 1970).


20. For example, handwriting serves to identify Dedlock’s former lover and Esther’s father. Here the issue is being able to discern the familiar shapes that identify an individual; the words written are, for this enterprise, meaningless. Much as Pip attempted to make out his parents in the shapes of the letters on their tombstone, character and personhood can be interpreted from the literalization of the writing.


22. Graham Hough, “Language and Reality in *Bleak House*,” in *Realism in European Literature*, ed. Nicholas Boyle and Martin Swales (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 59. Hough also echoes the formulations of Cowles and Humphreys cited above, noting that Dickens’s appeal in Esther’s narration is “not to experience, the conventional wisdom, or the social order; it is to the wisdom of the heart.” Ibid., 65.

23. The duality of the novel’s narration supports these distinctions, alternating as it does between Esther’s retrospective rendering of the tale and unnamed omniscient narrative voice. The narrative oscillations help to render distinctive language patterns in a uniquely Realist way. Realism, as Graham Hough writes
with particular attention to *Bleak House,* “speaks in the language of fallible human beings who have lived too close to the events they describe for the completeness of an inventory or the precision of a diagram.” Ibid., 51.

24. Harold Skimpole is another, and his aesthetic embrace of suffering and concomitant lack of action form a complement to Mrs. Jellyby. Connecting representations of such characters with altruistic action is a cornerstone of Dickens’s writing and the criticism of his works. “A Christmas Carol” is perhaps his best-known work devoted (ostensibly) solely to the promotion of altruistic action in his readers by depicting characters whose primary fault is a lack of empathic action. This dynamic is undeniable in Dickens’s work, but it is not my focus. Cf. Mary-Catherine Harrison’s “The Paradox of Fiction and the Ethics of Empathy: Reconciling Dickens’s Realism,” *Narrative* 16, no. 3 (October 2008): 256–78.


26. Her problem, then, is not one of blindness, but of focus.


30. “Among the many issues *Bleak House* explores is that of eloquence, of one person’s ability by means of language to persuade another to act in the world of gesture, a world which may contain, but does not necessarily depend on, language.” Sandra Young, “Uneasy Relations: Possibilities for Eloquence in *Bleak House,*” *Dickens Studies Annual* 9 (1981): 67.


32. Ibid., 44.


34. Ibid., 99–100.

CHAPTER TWO


3. In *Adam Bede,* Eliot writes, “Nature has her language, and she is not unveracious; but we don’t know all the intricacies of her syntax just yet, and in a hasty reading we may happen to extract the very opposite of her real meaning.” Ibid., 168.


9. “... her mind had glanced over the possibility, which she would have preferred, of finding that her home would be in a parish which had a larger share of the world’s misery, so that she might have had more active duties in it.” Ibid., 78. Perhaps equally problematic is the fact that she accepts the curate’s description as accurate.


12. Ibid., 19.

13. Critical assessments have begun to unseat Eliot’s heroines from these binaries. Nina Auerbach’s analysis of Hetty as a “fallen woman” hinted that Hetty and Dinah have more in common than is evident at first glance. “The Rise of the Fallen Woman,” Nineteenth-Century Fiction 35, no. 1 (January 1980): 29–53. Marina van Zuylan’s later Monomania breaks new ground by arguing that Dorothea, a pious heroine like many others in Eliot’s fiction, is the monomaniac of interest in Middlemarch (not Casaubon with his Key to All Mythologies), as her commitment to the purely altruistic bettering of others’ lives compels her disavowal of her own desire, and indeed her own physicality. Van Zuylan’s argument thus removes Dorothea from the seat of piety and in turn considers her as more fully human by noting the limitations of her self-understanding. Monomania (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005). Caroline Levine similarly complicates our understanding of Dinah through her analysis of visual alterity in Adam Bede; she views Dinah and Hetty as contrasting examples used by Eliot to communicate a message of ethical viewing, concluding that Eliot endorses a normative heterosexuality through the novel’s repudiation of Hetty’s actions. The Serious Pleasures of Suspense: Victorian Realism and Narrative Doubt (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003). I propose a further reconsideration of Dinah and Hetty by exploring not their differences (well-established both within the novel and in its criticism) but rather the similarities of their parallel journeys though the text by focusing not only on the way women see others or see themselves but also on the way they control others’ readings of their bodies. Eliot provides a useful paradigm for this consideration through the act of reading as defined in “Book Second” and throughout Adam Bede: learning to read offers a means of achieving humanity for the characters within the novel. See also Jennifer Uglow’s George Eliot (London: Virago, 1987) and Alan Bellringer’s George Eliot (New York: St. Martin’s, 1993). More current forays into Hetty’s plight include Neil Hertz’s George Eliot’s Pulse (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press: 2003), Bernard Paris’s Rereading George Eliot: Changing Responses to Her Experiments in Life (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), and


16. In chapter 3, I discuss a related dynamic in Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, where Tess’s similar complicity highlights the distinction between the individual and the narrative of her life.

17. This inability is mutual, as demonstrated by the marked use of animal or nonhuman metaphors to describe Hetty: her ears are like shells, her cheeks like rose petals, and her lashes like flower stamens (even the narrator describes her not as a girl, but as a “dear young, round, soft, flexible thing”). She is compared to a kitten no fewer than seven times through the novel, calling to mind not only the precocious cuteness of the animal but also its sharp claws: “It is a beauty like that of kittens” (92); “kitten-like maiden” (92); “this kitten-like Hetty” (403); “She was like a kitten, and had the same distractingly pretty looks” (228); “she put up her round cheek against his, like a kitten” (390); “kitten-like glances” (167); “as if he had seen a kitten setting up its back” (286).


19. Hetty’s most famous instance of being late is when, prior to marrying Adam, “she had waited and waited, in the blind vague hope that something would happen to set her free from her terror; but she could wait no longer” (396). Hetty is late; or rather, her period is late, as she is pregnant.


22. In this respect, my reading diverges from Miller’s in *Others*. While much of this chapter, and indeed much of this book, owes a debt to Miller’s unique analysis of alterities in Eliot’s (and others’) fiction, I want very much to suggest that the novel—through the narrator—insists on its own limits. Miller, on the other hand, sees a tension between the limitations of the characters and the omniscience of the narrator: “[ . . . ] the narrator of *Middlemarch* has precisely a ‘keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life’ and can deploy such vision at will. The narrator has the same kind of keen vision that destroys the protagonist of ‘The Lifted Veil.’ It is just such vision that the narrator of *Middlemarch* [ . . . ] says we are lucky not to have.” *Others*, 75.

23. Before she can love Adam and accept his proposal, Dinah must move into a space that is uncomfortable for her and that she has tried to avoid—a space where her conscious and psychical desire cannot be repressed. I discuss that movement more fully in “Learning to Read: Interpersonal Literacy in *Adam Bede*.”

24. In Marina van Zuylan’s characterization, Dorothea is intent on dulling the banality of a woman’s existence in rural England with an active devotion to causes that demand her selflessness. Via this active refutation of her self, the argument
goes, Dorothea manages to gain the very control that she is denied in most arenas of her life. *Monomania*, 99–119.

25. A typical example, from Sidney Colvin’s January 1873 review in the *Fortnightly Review*: “For the general lesson of the book, it is not easy to feel quite sure what it is, or how much importance the author gives it. In her prelude and conclusion both, she seems to insist upon the design of illustrating the necessary disappointment of a woman’s nobler aspirations in a society not made to second noble aspirations in a woman. And that is one of the most burning lessons which any author could set themselves to illustrate.” Cited in David Carroll, ed., *George Eliot: The Critical Heritage* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971), 337.

26. The *OED* cites first figurative usage dating from 1874, relatively contemporary with the writing of *Middlemarch*.

27. This is, of course, Emmanuel Levinas’s formulation.

28. Here Eliot’s difference from Dickens is clear, as in his novels a character’s insistence on his or her own difference from the crowd or the usual is often enough to ensure empathic extension.

29. *The Lifted Veil* easily deserves extended analysis. Given that such analysis has been performed by Thomas Albrecht in his article “Sympathy and Telepathy: The Problems of Ethics in George Eliot’s *The Lifted Veil*,” it is not worth revisiting ground he has covered so well. My primary dissension from his argument, which otherwise directly anticipates my critical approach, is that he does not go far enough in addressing the significance of Latimer’s relationship with the unknown. *ELH* 73, no. 2 (2006): 437–63.


33. Ib., 472.


35. Rae Greiner’s article on *The Lifted Veil* was published just weeks before this study was completed. In it, she gestures toward the idea that Albrecht articulates and that is the central focus of this study: empathic extension was not necessarily predicated on identification. She traces Eliot’s depiction of that idea to Adam Smith, emphasizing the narrative time in which sympathetic extension is always situated. She does not, however, go so far as to say that the other cannot be known, only that the movement into knowledge takes time and that Eliot acknowledges its limitation with regard to the reader: “Eliot had reservations about the degree to which such intimacy with others’ thought prompted ethical responses in us.” “Sympathy Time: Adam Smith, George Eliot, and the Realist Novel,” *Narrative* 17, no. 3 (October 2009): 306.

CHAPTER THREE


3. This is of course Brooks’s thesis in *Reading for the Plot*: “the absolutism of the desire from which narrative as narrating is born: it is in essence the desire to be heard, recognized, understood, which, never wholly satisfied or indeed satisfiable, continues to generate the desire to tell, the effort to enunciate a significant version of the life story in order to captivate a possible listener” (54); “desire comes into being as a perpetual want for (of) a satisfaction the cannot be offered in reality” (55) (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).


5. “That Sue is enmeshed in Jude’s limited point of view, then, helps account for our sense of inconsistencies in her character. We attempt to judge as a personality in her own right a figure intended to serve merely to define another personality. Often, when Jude looks at his cousin, he in fact gazes into a mirror which reflects the image of his own ambivalence” (ibid., 15). “Most critics have seen Sue’s inconsistency in this sway. But as we have seen, the consequences of this perspective are a sense that the grinder of analysis is an inadequate tool for capturing Sue’s characters. A more radical inconsistency emerges when the character is inconsistent with her own personality; that is, the creator has failed to create a completely credible individual, or the creator finds those adhesive tapes of shopworn philosophy—this time about women—easier to apply than to reexamine the premise of his narrative framework” (ibid., 17–18). Sue is not the only focus of attempts to erase ambiguity from Hardy’s heroines. W. Eugene Davis tries his best to sort out plot gaps that would explain Tess’s purity or lack thereof in “*Tess of the d’Urbervilles: Some Ambiguities about a Pure Woman*,” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 22, no. 4 (March 1968): 397–401.


8. The critical searching for stability thus mirrors the analogous seeking among the characters within the texts.

9. “Although one would think the past would be more stable and determinate than an uncertain future, in Hardy’s fiction it is as subject to change, chance, and unpredictability as anything else,” writes Jil Larson. *Ethics and Narrative in the English Novel, 1880–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 71.


11. Hardy’s works also call forth this distinction through their pictorial appeal. Hardy was trained as an architect before he became a writer, and his attention to visuality further situates his work in the pictorial traditions that eschew narrative moralizing; that is, his interplay with visuality aligns his work with the Dutch genre painters or the French Realists and protoimpressionists. Ruth Bernard Yeazell describes Hardy, in contrast to George Eliot, as being “more engaged in looking at pictures than in theorizing about them,” an engagement that rises to the fore in his
Under the Greenwood Tree, which Hardy subtitled “A Rural Painting of the Dutch School.” It was Hardy’s desire to “retreat from storytelling,” Yeazell argues, that led him to the subtitle. She also notes that Hardy was “an artist who continued to sketch as well as write,” which gave him “more reason than most to be conscious of the difference” between image and text. Art of the Everyday: Dutch Painting and the Realist Novel (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 134–35.

12. Larson, Ethics, 113.

13. See my introduction for a fuller exploration of this tendency. See also David Haney’s “Aesthetics and Ethics in Gadamer, Levinas, and Romanticism: Problems of Phronesis and Techne,” and Derek Attridge’s “Innovation, Literature, Ethics: Relating to the Other,” both in PMLA 114, no. 1 (January 1999).


15. Thomas Hardy, The Mayor of Casterbridge (London: Penguin, 2003), 127. Subsequent citations of The Mayor of Casterbridge will be given parenthetically in text.


17. Compare with Lady Dedlock’s insistence on applying the strictness of her self-evaluation to all others.


22. Note the connection to Emma Bovary, who fed her romantic illusions with novels. Reading more stories does not necessarily make one more aware of human nature. On the other hand, we see Tess’s desire for the stability and certainty provided by the never-changing novel, a desire she eschews in other places. We also see evidence of the desire to treat the novel as a behavior manual, offering trial runs for readers.

23. Narratorial and authorial constructions are included under this rubric as well; the novel’s insistence on the limitations of what is readable in the other invariably applies to the novel itself. Silverman provides a clear overview of the argument that Tess is always and only a construction of the gaze of others, as well as a useful complication of that model. Kaja Silverman, “History, Figuration, and Female Subjectivity in Tess of the d’Urbervilles,” Novel: A Forum on Fiction 18, no. 1 (Autumn 1984): 5–28.


25. Compare Tess’s anxiety about her genealogy and its permanence wrought through text with, for example, the confidence and authority conferred upon the
family lineage in Austen’s *Persuasion*. In that novel, the Elliots of Kellynch Hall find their sense of self in the very permanence that Tess finds problematic.

26. Hardy implicates the reader in this ambivalence by placing his characters in circumstances that consistently test the boundaries of the story’s believability. Is there a point when readers, like Angel Clare, will rebel against the events presented as a part of *Tess’s* plot? Those stretches—Angel and Tess stumbling across Stonehenge in the black of night, for example—demand of the assumed reader a generosity of vision very different from the suspension of disbelief often demanded of fiction’s audience.

28. Ibid., 129.
29. Ibid., 145.
30. Ibid., 149.
31. This characterization is true in both 1892’s *The Pursuit of the Well Beloved* and the later version. The “Well-Beloved” is Pierston’s ideal, which manifests periodically in women of all shapes and temperaments, only then to leave, and Pierston’s interest in these women coincides only with the duration of the Well-Beloved’s presence. He can thus argue that he has been ultimately faithful to the Well-Beloved, and if his devotion to her various incarnations falters, it is only because the ideal flees from those incarnations. He seeks a “repetition of one person in another” on three levels: his pursuit of the Well-Beloved, his pursuit of himself externalized, and his pursuit of multiple iterations of the same woman. His assessment, or even simple apprehension, of women is predicated on a mental project of matching the qualities of the existent to the qualities of the ideal and abstract. The sculptor’s seeming surprise at discovering the Well-Beloved incarnated in any individual is fleeting at best, and even he admits that these discoveries are overdetermined by his desire to find: “thus looking for the next new version of the fair figure, he did not consider at the moment, though he had done so at other times, that this presentiment of meeting her was, of all presentiments, just the sort of one to work out its own fulfillment” (219). The language Pierston uses to describe women once the Well-Beloved has abandoned them—“an empty caracase,” “a corpse”—suggests that the bodies of the women are simply containers for his idea, his ideal, the Well-Beloved. The one binding feature was Pierston’s ability to identify her; he was, in the final analysis, the determining factor, despite his attempts to project or exteriorize his desire. *The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved* and *The Well-Beloved* (London: Penguin, 1998).

32. Tess’s own solipsism is at the heart of this projection; men are not the only arbiters of this dynamic.

33. Clare’s is a tangled understanding, at times reducing her to archetypes, at times reveling in her individuality-as-he-understands-IT-to-be. As Kathleen Blake puts it, “the crisis of their relationship reveals his habit of generalization when it comes to Tess and his commitment to her purity in the erotic sense and as being so summed up by his conception of her that she must remain pure of any particular experience worth mentioning. Seeing Tess as essence and type, Angel cannot admit the relevance of experience for her, and so he refuses to hear her confession about her past affair with Alec.” In “Pure Tess: Hardy on Knowing a Woman,” *Studies in English Literature: 1500–1900* 22, no. 4 (Autumn 1982): 697.

34. Richard le Gallienne and Mowbray Morris cited in R. G. Cox, *Thomas Hardy:

35. In this sense, my reading complements Jan B. Gordon’s compelling reading of Tess’s relationship to her personal and familial past. In “Origins, History, and the Reconstitution of Family: Tess’ Journey,” Gordon suggests that the novel documents the characters’ various attempts to concretize a past, “filling the voids” that arise from incomplete family histories or interrupted family trees. While that desire pervades the text, it exists always in tension with the impossibility of doing so, and—even more importantly—that desire leads only to failed relationships or, more figuratively, to death. Gordon is concerned with the influence that characters’ relationships with their pasts have on those characters’ present actions. What Angel Clare, in Gordon’s telling, learns in the course of the novel is that “the history of man is not dead people or dead facts but the history of man’s imagination.” ELH 43, no. 3 (Autumn 1976): 366–88.

36. Whereas in George Eliot’s novels, recognition of alterity can be developed through education and experience, Hardy’s novels suggest that recognition depends not on education or development but instead on the relative cultivation of one’s sensitivity, represented by interpersonal literacy as well as kindness or affection. Means of literacy—handwriting or reading faces—indicate levels of achievement of that sensitivity, but, as Jude learns, education itself is not salve enough, and no book learning can account for the individual sitting across the dinner table from you.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. The catalogue at the Freer Gallery lists the title as The Miser (F1898.310), though the provenance of this title is murky, and it is possible, if not likely, that Whistler himself did not name the piece, especially as the title specifies the content in a way that is atypical of Whistler.

2. “Much of his work came to be anchored within restricted collections, with all the difficulties that ensured for the distant public to see the range of his work [. . .]. Published catalogues of his work were limited to those of his etchings (in 1910) and lithographs (in 1914) compiled by his much-forgiving friend E. G. Kennedy; a catalogue of his paintings did not appear until 1980, and the ink has only just dried on the catalogue of his works on paper, published in 1995. All this has meant that, except for a continuing appreciation of Whistler’s graphic art, Whistler’s fame has rested largely on his notoriety.” Nigel Thorp, “The Butterfly Takes Flight: A Whistler Revival Is Launched,” Archives of American Art Journal 34, no. 3 (1994): 16–25; 17.


went to court in November 1878; Ruskin himself was ill and psychologically unfit to appear. After two days of evidence from the plaintiff and several witnesses, the jury declared a verdict in Whistler’s favor, but awarded him only a farthing in damages.” Merrill, 1.


9. Teukolsky points to Whistler’s formal emphasis and especially his use of synaesthesia as indication of his Modernist proclivities, noting that his “modernist doctrine” is “epitomized in his musical titles” (155). Teukolsky does not overlook Whistler’s French connection entirely, and suggests that his use of musical titles and organizing ideas was inspired by mid-century symboliste poetry; and though she associates Whistler’s later painting with the work of the French impressionistes, his Realist roots do not figure in her analysis. *The Literate Eye* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

10. Michael Fried, “The Generation of 1863,” in *Manet’s Modernism: Or, the Face of Painting in the 1860s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Fried cannot resist narrativizing Whistler’s work. In his analysis of Whistler’s 1865–66 *The Artist in His Studio*, the author employs parenthetical suggestions with direct narrative statements to describe the scene: “Behind the painter and seemingly unaware of what he is doing, two women are conversing: one, standing, in a light robe (she has perhaps just been posing for the painter), the other, seated, in a white frock (it’s possible she too is a model, but the impression we get is that she is a visitor). The implicit narrative of the picture therefore reads as follows: . . . “ (392).


13. NB: “The history of art is more than a succession of stylistic and iconographic conventions modified by occasional ‘comparisons’ with perceived reality”; “But important though it might be, fidelity to visual reality was only one aspect of the Realist enterprise; and it would be erroneous to base our conception of so complex a movement on only one of its features: verisimilitude.” Linda Nochlin, *Realism* (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1971), 17, 22–23.


16. Francis Frascina, Nigel Blake, Briony Fer, Tamar Garb, and Charles Harrison, *Modernity and Modernism: French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven,
17. Clark: “He has given us, in an almost schematic form, the constituents of a particular ritual, but not their unison [. . . ] It is not exactly an image of disbelief, more of collective distraction; not exactly indifference, more inattention; not exactly, except in a few of the women’s faces, the marks of grief or the abstraction of mourning, more the careful, ambiguous blankness of a public face.” T. J. Clark, *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), 81.

18. The community gathered for Thias Bede’s funeral in *Adam Bede* forms a nice complement to the community gathered in Courbet’s *Burial at Ornans*.

19. “Are they mother and daughter? The woman is Victorine Meurent, Manet’s often used model, and the girl is purportedly the daughter of Manet’s neighbor; in short, no” (National Gallery of Art, http://www.nga.gov/feature/manet/intro.shtm, accessed December 19, 2008). In this friendly introduction to Manet’s oeuvre through *Chemin de Fer*, the text repeatedly refers to Manet’s uniting of high and low, wealthy and poor, dandy and ragpicker, as an indication of his modern impulse and his embrace of the Paris of that day. One risk of such readings is that they tend to blur the disconnection of such scenes. The gentleman may walk across the same bridge as the workman (as in Caillebotte’s *Le Pont de l’Europe*, 1877), but shared space does not ensure communality.


22. Manet did meet constantly with a critical reaction that was less than approving and often hostile; he remained befuddled by this response. Those paintings that caused the most furor—*Déjeuner sur l’herbe* and *Olympia*—both feature a kind of triangulation of gazes, wherein the paintings’ subjects do not look at each other, but instead cross gazes. They have neither the voyeuristic security of an image in which the subjects are completely unaware of the viewer’s gaze nor the ease of a conventional image that is oriented toward the viewer, even if not directly responding to him. But it is clear that critical response then, as now, insisted on reading into his paintings. Written in the 1990s, Michael Fried’s astute analyses of Manet’s works still depend on this reaching beyond the image. Fried argues that Manet’s incorporation of visual allusions situates his work within a global art-historical context while also asserting the innate French quality of his artistry. In addition to this interpainting relationship, some argue that Manet’s work depends on the assumption that his works enter a knowledgeable community; that is, finding the paintings meaningful depends on placing them in an art-historical context. As Fried suggests, that criticism and art-historical writing on Manet’s work do not adequately read the allusions in his works amounts to misreading his intentions. Fried, *Manet’s Modernism*, 4. These trends in painting and the art-historical constructions that insist on interpretation lead to the situation against which Whistler railed so strongly (and his response came even before art historians would considerably fortify their devotion to the strategy); such tendencies were contemporary with Whistler and have continued to flourish since that time.

23. One must imagine that Whistler fully anticipated his audience connecting his *White Girl* with Wilkie Collins’s immensely popular *The Woman in White*, which would still have been fresh in their collective imagination. NB: Robin Spen-


28. Compare with T. J. Clark’s reading of Manet’s Olympia above, wherein the decorative additions—the cat, the necklace, and so forth—are simply “lures” that work against a narrative. Here, those similar details are actually constitutive of that narrative, and nearly literal in their meaning.


30. Ten O’Clock, 17.

31. Despite Whistler’s clearly articulated views on these points, some still insist on pressing the point. Dan Nadenar, writing about the potentially fruitful pedagogical engagement of visual and textual intersections, suggests that both Whistler and Turner were painters who “write their images.” “On Relatedness between the Arts: Crossovers between Painting and Poetry,” Journal of Aesthetic Education 27, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 31–39.


34. Ibid., 192.


36. Ibid., 8.


41. See Manet’s Mme. Manet at the Piano (1868) and Degas’s M. and Mme. Manet at the Piano (1868–69) for reworkings of this element of Whistler’s work.

43. “With the exception of photographs.” Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer* (Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press, 1992), 116. Crary goes on to link the development of stereoscopic imagery to some of the strategies of depiction used by Realist painters: “A range of nineteenth-century painting also manifests some of these features of stereoscopic imagery. [. . . ] I am suggesting that both the ‘realism’ of the stereoscope and the ‘experiments’ of certain painters were equally bound up in a much broader transformation of the observer that allowed the emergence of this new optically constructed space.” Ibid., 126.

44. This most important aspect of the painting is merely glossed in the Taft’s gallery notes, which suggest that her blurred face might indicate motion (as if it were a photograph).

45. “The new canvas again utilized the music room [. . . ]. The impact is curious, for the massively black Miss Boot is almost surreal amidst the chintz-curtained and picture-hung fussiness of the quiet nineteenth-century room.” Stanley Weintraub, *Whistler: A Biography* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1974), 67. “Nearly a third of the area is occupied by the cream, green, and deep pink chintz drapery.” McMullen, *Victorian Outsider*, 88. “The focus of the house was the music room, where filtered sunlight and shaded gaslight managed to unify maroon carpeting, green-tinted walls, pictures in heavy gold frames, a large mirror, a grand piano, and a profusion of chintz drapery, cream colored with a floral pattern in green and deep pink.” McMullen, 81.

46. Manet, too, would capitalize on the claustrophobic setting of an image. His *Le Balcon* of 1868 reveals a similar setting of three figures, each facing a different direction, each contained in a small, cluttered space, and all appearing as if they were plucked from three disparate canvases and collaged onto this balcony by the artist. Whistler also painted a balcony scene, similarly cluttered; *The Balcony* (1864–70) is seen from the inside, and the sitters are united in their japonisme trappings, but it is otherwise quite similar to Manet’s.

47. Writes Florence Nightingale Levy in *Paintings in Oil and Pastel by James Whistler*, “The first title of the picture was The Morning Call” (New York: The Gilliss Press, 1910), 1. Weintraub writes that the original title was *The Music Room*. Whistler, vii. The title is satirized in *Punch*: a “Matron in Search of a Subject” likes the painting, thinking it pretty, and asking her daughter to see what it is called so as to clear up her confusion as to what it is about, what it depicts: “Do see what it’s called. ‘The Morning Canter,’ or ‘Back from the Row’—something of that kind, I expect it would be.” When her daughter replies that “all it says is, ‘A Harmony in Green and Rose,’” her mother retorts disappointedly, “Now, why can’t he give it some sensible name, instead of taking away all one’s interest!” “Wrestling with Whistlers,” *Punch* 102 (April 16, 1892): 181.

48. “There may be a narrative content once one brings to mind Whistler’s family relations. It then turns out that the most important figure in terms of visual presence is the least important one, i.e., Miss Boott [sic], a long-standing family acquaintance but without any apparent emotional ties. . . .” Gisela Schmidt, “I see, I see, said the Blind Man,” *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 4, no. 2/3 (2005): 151–65.

49. When Whistler sought to cancel a plate that had reached the end of its
printing run, he covered it with cross-hatchings that are remarkably similar to the markings in these dockland scenes.

50. “These three figures are sitting on the balcony of the Angel Inn in London’s docklands. The woman is a prostitute, and is apparently taunting the sailor on the right; the man in the middle may be a pimp.” “Thames Views: Wapping,” Tate Britain, http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibitions/turnerwhistlermonet/thamesviews/wapping.htm (accessed December 17, 2009).

“[Whistler’s] Wapping was painted at a ‘dive,’ the Angel Inn, Cherry Gardens, Rotherhithe. Its indecency was toned down, after a friend warned Whistler that the extreme décolletage of the prostitute (a ‘jolly gal’ with a ‘superlatively whorish air,’ as Whistler described her, modeled on his fiery mistress, Jo Hiffernan) would prevent the painting’s acceptance by the R.A. jury.” Alan Robinson, “Aesthetes, Impressionists, and Parvenus: Some Early Trials of Modern Painting in London,” in Aspects of Modernism, eds. Andreas Fischer, Martine Heusser, and Thomas Hermann (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1997), 24.

51. Whistler, Ten O’Clock, 9. Emphasis in the original.

CONCLUSION